

# DEVELOPMENT PERMIT AREA GUIDELINES

## DPA 8

## AGRICULTURAL INTERFACE



# General Regulations

## 12.8.1 Category

DPA 8 is designated under the following categories of Section 488 (1) of the *Local Government Act*:

- (c) Protection of farming.

## 12.8.2 Area of Applicability

- DPA 8 guidelines apply to all development on properties that are adjacent to properties in the Agricultural Land Reserve and/or properties zoned for agricultural uses, as shown on Appendix K. Lands that are separated from the ALR or agricultural zoned properties by a highway or public right of way are deemed to be adjacent to lands for the purposes of this designation.

## 12.8.3 Justification

The urban-agriculture interface is the site of potential land use conflict. Issues of trespass and vandalism to farm crops and operations, nuisance complaints related to odor, noise and dust, parking and traffic issues and urban impacts, such as increased light and noise, can strain the relationship between urban and agricultural uses. Although the urban-agriculture interface is mostly “built out”, there are areas along this interface that are either developing or redeveloping. As these areas transition to higher intensity urban uses, it is important to ensure the urban-agriculture interface is designed in a manner that minimizes conflicts between urban and agricultural land uses and helps to protect the viability of agricultural operations.


## 12.8.4 Objectives

The following guidelines are intended to:

- Protect farmland from impacts associated with urban development.
- Reduce conflicts between farm operations and urban land uses.
- Encourage urban development along the urban-agriculture interface that supports the viability of agriculture.
- Define a clearly understood boundary between urban and agriculture areas.

## 12.8.5 Exemptions

The following exemptions to DPA 8 may be applied:

- Interior Renovations not resulting in any change to the footprint of the building.
- Construction, addition, or alteration not exceeding 10m<sup>2</sup>.
- Parcel consolidation.
- A parcel is separated from an agricultural property by a slope of greater than 30%, over a distance that is reasonable in the opinion of the Approving Officer.
- A parcel zoned as a park.
- A parcel that has existing vegetation that meets the vegetated buffer requirements outlined in these Development Permit guidelines, as long as the intent of the guidelines for all other requirements has been met and the vegetation is maintained.
- Emergency circumstances to remove any immediate danger.
- Buildings that have been destroyed by fire and/or natural disaster less than 75%, as determined by the Building Official, provided the building’s massing, siting and general appearance are as prior to destruction and the use conforms to the City’s Zoning Bylaw, as amended from time to time.
-  Any servicing work undertaken by or on behalf of the City of Merritt.

# Guidelines

The following guidelines may be applied when setting Development Permit conditions.

## SITE PLANNING

To guide the design of development sites with suitable urban-ALR interfaces.

### 12.8.6 Orientation of High Intensity Uses

Orient buildings, structures, streets, vehicle accessways and outdoor amenity areas in a manner that directs high intensity uses, characterized by high levels of vehicle and pedestrian traffic and noise generators, away from adjacent agricultural lands.

### 12.8.7 Orientation of Low Intensity Uses

Orient low intensity uses, such as low activity service areas, residential rear yards and passive open space, in a manner that forms a buffer between higher intensity uses and adjacent agricultural lands.

### 12.8.8 Stormwater Management

Along or near property lines adjacent to agricultural lands, landscape areas with the capacity to infiltrate or detain stormwater, such as planting beds, grassed areas and ditches or swales. Incorporate these features into the design of landscape buffers.

## LANDSCAPE BUFFERS

To guide the design of landscape buffers that are adapted to specific urban-agricultural interface conditions.

### 12.8.9 Landscape Buffer Requirements

Include landscape buffers along urban-agricultural interfaces that meet the following requirements:

- Landscape buffers must be located entirely on the urban side of the urban-agricultural interface.
- Landscape buffers should be designed to include setbacks, fencing and landscaping features that minimize conflicts between urban and agricultural uses.
- Buildings, structures, streets, vehicle accesses, parking areas, and paved areas are prohibited within landscape buffer areas.
- Vegetation within landscape buffer areas should be designed as per Zoning Bylaw regulations.
- Multi-use paths or trails may be incorporated into landscape buffers, provided they do not reduce buffer effectiveness and are located at the urban edge of the landscape buffer.
- A restrictive covenant to maintain the buffer, according to the approved landscape plan, must be registered on title.
- Required landscape buffer widths do not supersede setbacks prescribed by environmental legislation.
- General Buffer, Street Adjacent Buffer, and Riparian Buffer are all Landscape Buffers.



### 12.8.10 General Buffer

Where there is a risk of conflict due to industrial, commercial, residential, or institutional land uses abutting agricultural lands:

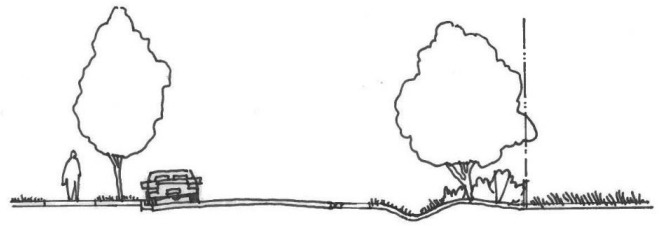
- Adherence to the ALC's Guide to Edge Planning is recommended, and where those guidelines are not feasible, a minimum buffer width of 8.0 m is required
- Plant a double row of trees and trespass-inhibiting shrubs
- Where possible, include low growing or no vegetation within the 2 m area immediately adjacent to the agricultural lands
- Trails may be developed at the urban edge of buffer and may be a maximum width of 1/3 of the buffer width
- Install page wire or chain link fencing along the property line. Fencing height should adhere to the ALC's Guide to Edge Planning, and must be a minimum of 1.8 m in height



### 12.8.11 Street Adjacent Buffer

Where the urban-agricultural interface is defined by a street:

- Provide a 3 to 7.5 metre wide buffer, as space in right-of-way permits
- Plant a single row of street trees, with trespass-inhibiting shrubs, and ditch or drainage swale
- Where possible, include low growing or no vegetation within the 2 m area immediately adjacent to the agricultural lands
- Install page wire or chain link fencing along the property line. Fencing height should adhere to the ALC's Guide to Edge Planning, and must be a minimum of 1.8 m in height



### 12.8.12 Riparian Buffer

Where there is an existing riparian area between urban and agricultural land uses:

- Provide a 15 to 30 metre wide buffer, as required by riparian setbacks
- Retain or restore native vegetation as required
- Where possible, include low growing or no vegetation within the 2 m area immediately adjacent to the agricultural lands
- Trails may be developed at urban edge of buffer, and may be a maximum width of 1/3 of the buffer width; trails are strongly discouraged within riparian setback areas
- Install page wire or chain link fencing along the property line. Fencing height should adhere to the ALC's Guide to Edge Planning, and must be a minimum of 1.8 m in height



## LANDSCAPE

To guide the design of landscaping to minimize impacts on adjacent agricultural lands.

### 12.8.13 Mature Trees

Where possible, preserve mature trees in areas along or near property lines adjacent to agricultural lands and incorporate them into landscape buffers.

### 12.8.14 Fencing

Install fencing along shared property lines with agricultural lands and incorporate the fencing into landscape buffers. The fence specifications must be consistent with Zoning Bylaw regulations and the Ministry of Agriculture's Guide to Edge Planning.

### 12.8.15 Xeriscaping

Landscape with drought tolerant and native plant and tree species.

### 12.8.16 Fire Smart Planting

Use fire resistant plants, where possible. Deciduous trees are preferred. Avoid the use of highly flammable plants and trees, including coniferous trees with cones or needles. Cedars, junipers, spruce, pine other than Ponderosa, tall grasses, and mulch are prohibited.

## LIGHTING

To guide the design of lighting for the protection of farming uses on adjacent agricultural lands.

### 12.8.17 Dark Sky

Avoid light pollution by directing lighting downwards.

### 12.8.18 Lighting Impacts

Design development sites, buildings and signage in a manner that minimizes lighting impacts on adjacent agricultural lands.