5

Protection of Agriculture Development Permit Guidelines

Area

All lands wholly or partly within the Urban Development Boundary that are adjacent to lands in the Agricultural Land Reserve (ALR) are subject to these Protection of Agriculture Development Permit Guidelines. Lands that are separated from the ALR by a public right of way are deemed to be adjacent to lands in the ALR for the purposes of this designation.

Justification

The urban-ALR 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-ALR 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-ALR interface is designed in a manner that minimizes conflicts between urban and agricultural land uses, and helps to protect the viability of agricultural operations.

Objectives

The following guidelines are intended to protect farmland from impacts associated with urban development, reduce conflicts between farm operations and urban land uses, define a stable and clearly understood boundary between urban areas and the ALR, and encourage urban development along the urban-ALR interface that supports the viability of agriculture.

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.

AG1 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.

AG2 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.

AG3 Dead End Streets and Accessways

Streets and vehicle accessways that ‘dead end’ adjacent to the ALR are strongly discouraged, except as may be necessary for access by farm vehicles into ALR properties.

AG4 Lighting Impacts

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

AG5 Rainwater Management

Design development sites to manage rainwater runoff onsite, as required by the Development Bylaw and the Natural Environment and Steep Slope Development Permit Guidelines.
Along or near property lines adjacent to agricultural lands, landscape areas with the capacity to infiltrate or detain rainwater, such as rain gardens, planting beds, grassed areas and water features. Wherever possible, these features should be incorporated into the design of landscape buffers.

AG6 Mature Trees

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

AG7 Existing Fences

Wherever possible, utilize existing fencing (located along property lines between urban and ALR lands) and incorporate into landscape buffers, provided it is in good condition and meets landscape buffer fencing requirement.

LANDSCAPE BUFFERS

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

AG8 Landscape Buffering Requirements

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

- Landscape buffers shall be located entirely on the urban side of the Urban Development Boundary.
- Landscape buffers shall be designed to include setbacks, fencing and landscaping features that aim to minimize conflicts between urban and agricultural uses.
- Buildings, structures, streets, vehicle accessways, parking areas and paved areas are prohibited within landscape buffer areas.
- Vegetation within landscape buffer areas should be designed for a mature height of 6.0 metres, minimum crown density of 60% and minimum 60% conifers, with the exception of street trees within Street Edge buffers, which should reflect City street tree standards. Whenever possible, trees and shrubs should be native to the region.
- Walking and/or bike trails and associated passive open spaces may be incorporated into landscape buffers, provided they do not reduce buffer effectiveness, do not compromise pedestrian/cyclist safety and are located at the urban edge of the landscape buffer. Trails are strongly discouraged within environmental setback areas, and trail width is limited to a maximum of 1/3 of total landscape buffer width.
- 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.

AG9 Minimal Buffer

Where there is minimal risk of conflict between urban and agricultural land uses:

- 3.0 to 6.0 metre wide buffer as space permits
- single row of trees (deciduous or coniferous)
- trespass-inhibiting shrubs
- page wire or chain link fencing, minimum 1.0 metre high, along property line

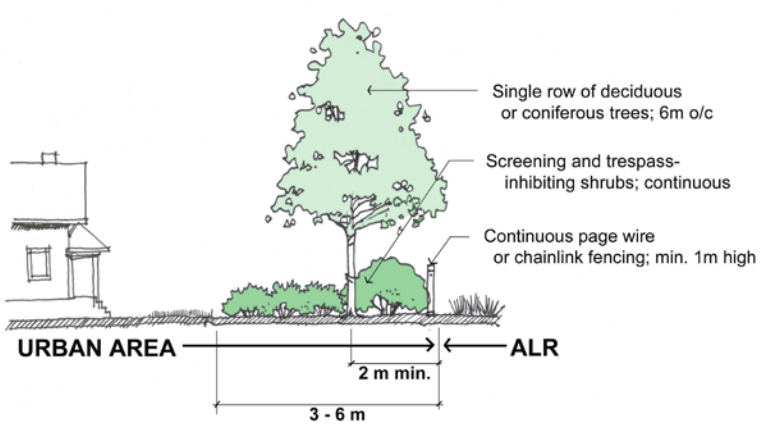

Figure AG9: Minimal Buffer

AG10 Street Edge Buffer

Where the urban-ALR interface is defined by a public road:

- 3.0 to 6.0 metre wide buffer as space in right-of-way permits
- single row of street trees, with trespass-inhibiting shrubs, or ditch, drainage swale (including rain gardens)
- page wire fencing, minimum 1.0 metre high, along property line

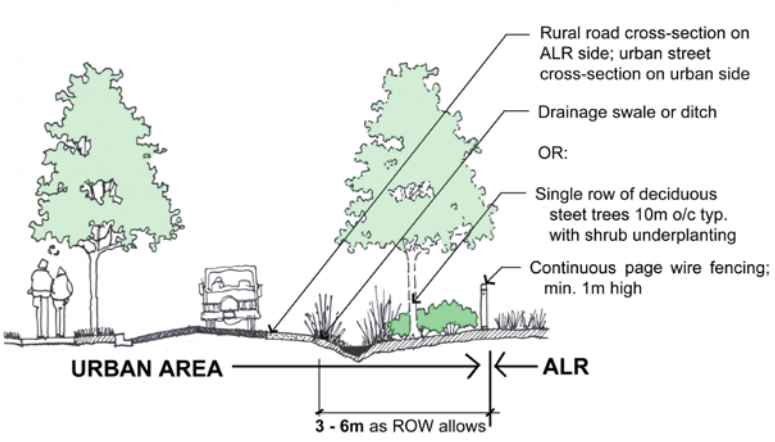

Figure AG10: Street Edge Buffer

AG11 Natural Edge Buffer

Where there is an existing or proposed natural edge (stream, topographical break) between urban and agricultural land uses:

- 15 to 30 metre wide buffer, as required by environmental setbacks
- trails may be developed at urban edge of buffer; trails are strongly discouraged within environmental setback areas
- native vegetation retained and/or augmented as required and appropriate
- page wire or chain link fencing, minimum 1.0 metre high, along property line

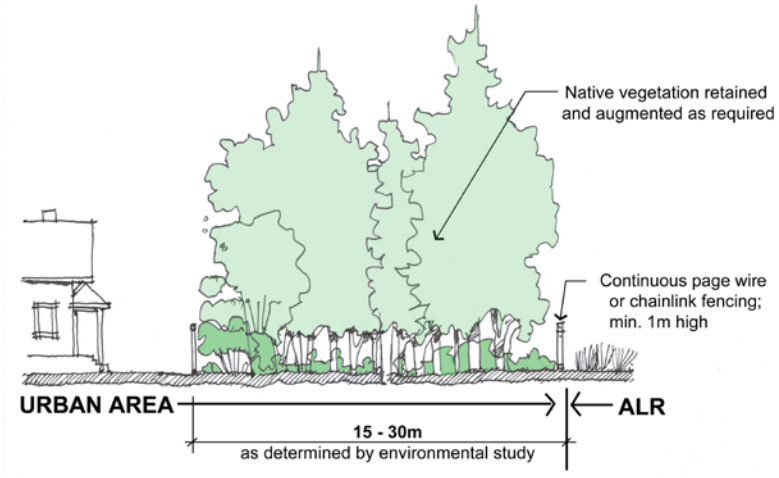

Figure AG11: Natural Edge Buffer

AG12 Moderate Buffer

Where there is a moderate risk of conflict, typically where industrial, commercial and residential land uses abut the ALR:

- 7.5 to 15 metre wide buffer, as space permits
- trails may be developed at urban edge of buffer
- double row of trees (deciduous or coniferous)
- trespass-inhibiting shrubs
- page wire or chain link fencing, minimum 1.0 metre high, along property line

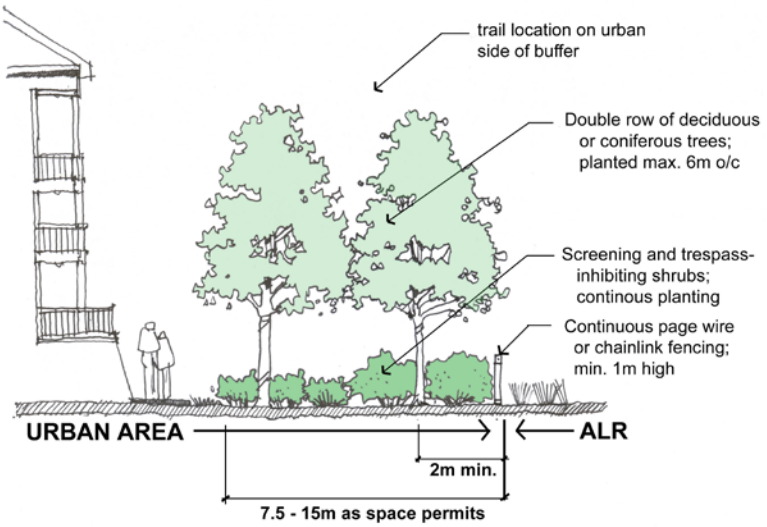

Figure AG12: Moderate Buffer

AG13 Maximum Buffer

Where there is a high risk of conflict between urban and agricultural land uses. This includes interfaces where there is a high risk of trespass from urban sites into agricultural areas, and a high risk of exposing urban land uses to impacts associated with intensive agricultural operations:

- minimum 15 metre wide buffer
- trails may be developed at urban edge of buffer
- use berms or detention ponds to create continuous barrier
- minimum three rows of trees (deciduous and coniferous required)
- trespass-inhibiting shrubs
- solid or chain link fencing, minimum 2.0 metres high, along property line

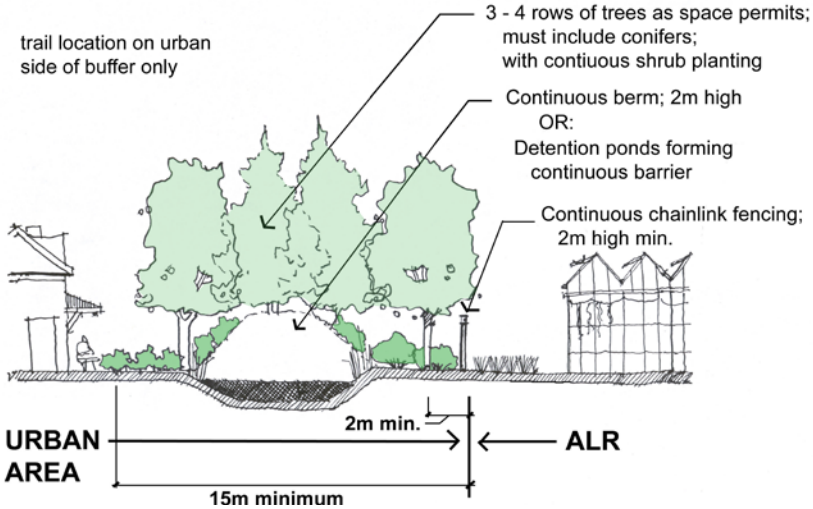

Figure AG13: Maximum Buffer

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