



City of Delta

## MEMORANDUM

**To:** Council

**From:** Tanya Mitchner, Acting General Manager, Development

**Date:** February 27, 2026

**Subject:** Farm Home Plate Regulations and Development Variance Permit at 3475 41B Street

**File No.:** LU009948

**CC:** Peter Weeber, City Manager

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At the February 23, 2026 Regular Meeting, Council deferred consideration of Development Variance Permit Application LU009948 and requested that staff provide background on the farm home plate regulations in Delta's Zoning Bylaw and the rationale for the proposed expanded farm home plate at 3475 41B Street.

### **Farm Home Plate Regulations**

In 2006, Delta was the first municipality in Metro Vancouver to regulate farmhouse house size, as well as farm home plates. These changes to Delta's Zoning Bylaw were supported by the Ministry of Agricultural and were designed to address the increasing loss and fragmentation of agricultural land resulting from large residential developments. In 2019, the Agricultural Land Reserve (ALR) regulations were updated to limit house sizes on farmland. Neither the ALR nor Ministry of Agriculture regulations address farm home plate requirements.

Delta's Zoning Bylaw defines a farm home plate as the specific, limited portion of a farm lot where the farmhouse, additional houses, and associated residential amenities such as garages, landscaping and pools must be clustered within. Delta's Zoning Bylaw further regulates a farm home plate's maximum area, size, location, depth, setbacks and permitted associated residential amenities.

Since its adoption in 2006, the farm home plate framework has become a foundational component of Delta's agricultural land use policy and has been a model referenced by Metro Vancouver and other municipalities. Key regulatory provisions relating to the size and location of the farm home plate have remained largely unchanged since adoption. Any requests to vary the farm home plate requirements are thoroughly reviewed by staff before being forwarded to Council for consideration.



### **Background for Variance Request at 3475 41B Street**

The following provides additional context to the Council report dated February 9, 2026:

- The ALC has confirmed that the parcel is exempt from restrictions under Section 23(1) of the ALC Act and associated regulations, based on the parcel's size under 0.8 ha (2 ac) and its existence prior to December 21, 1972. As such, the property remains in the ALR but is exempt from ALC soil and fill use regulations only. Other ALC regulations pertaining to subdivision would still apply.
- The owner initially applied for a building permit for an agricultural building, which is not required to be contained within the farm home plate. The subject property is not currently being farmed and the owner acknowledged that there are no immediate plans to initiate an agricultural operation. As such, staff advised that the proposed structure cannot be considered an agricultural building as it does not meet the definition within Delta's Zoning Bylaw.
- While the proposed accessory residential structure is larger than the existing structure it is generally situated in the same location.
- The proposed increase to the farm home plate would not preclude current or future agricultural use of the property, as farming activities are permitted anywhere on the property including within the farm home plate area. However, accessory residential facilities and structures would be permitted within the expanded farm home plate without further Council consideration subject to obtaining building permits where required.
- This property and the nine other properties to the north and west are rural residential lots created in 1958. This historical lot pattern would not be replicated or permitted under Delta's current Official Community Plan policies and A1 Zone regulations that require a minimum lot size for subdivision of 8 hectares (20 acres). Larger lot sizes are encouraged as smaller properties are less likely to be farmed.



### **Summary**

Farm home plate regulations have governed agricultural properties in Delta for 20 years. The owner has applied for a development variance permit to vary the maximum depth and size of the farm home plate in order to accommodate a new accessory residential building at the rear of the subject property at 3475 41B Street. A report was presented for Council consideration at the February 23, 2026 Regular Meeting recommending that the variance be approved. Should Council not approve the variance request, the applicant has the option to construct a smaller accessory residential structure within the allowable farm home plate.

Tanya Mitchner  
Acting General Manager, Development  
CB/jl