



Farm Buildings on Agricultural Land

Survey Response Report

June 2025



Background



- Feedback form ran from May 7 to June 9
- Letters to 1,175
- Translated in Punjabi

Let's Talk
Home / Farm Buildings



The City of Delta is exploring new options to help guide the approval of non-residential farm buildings on agricultural land. This would build on the existing City building permit process and align with the Agricultural Land Commission (ALC) Act, which sets out permitted uses for these structures.

Our goal is to ensure that our approach remains clear, consistent, and responsive to the evolving needs of farmers, while continuing to protect farmland for future generations.

If you farm in Delta or own farmland, we invite you to take a few minutes to complete a short anonymous survey (5-10 minutes). Your feedback will help us understand what matters most to the farming community as we consider possible updates. The survey will remain open until **June 9, 2025**, and no registration is required.

Once the survey closes, we'll use the results to prepare a set of recommendations for further consideration. If you're interested in following this work and/or participating in a follow-up workshop, you'll have the option to provide your name and contact information at the end of the survey. This information will only be used to invite you to that session.

If you have any questions, please contact **Celeste Barlow** at cbarlow@delta.ca or **604-946-3399**.

Thank you for your time and continued contributions to farming in Delta.



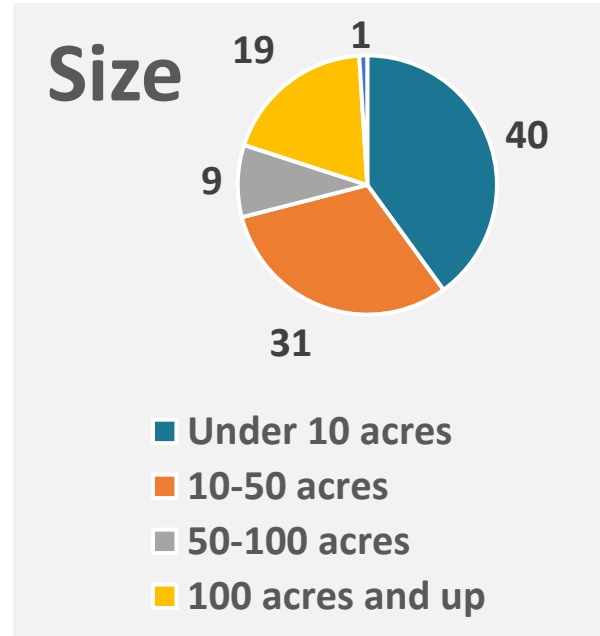
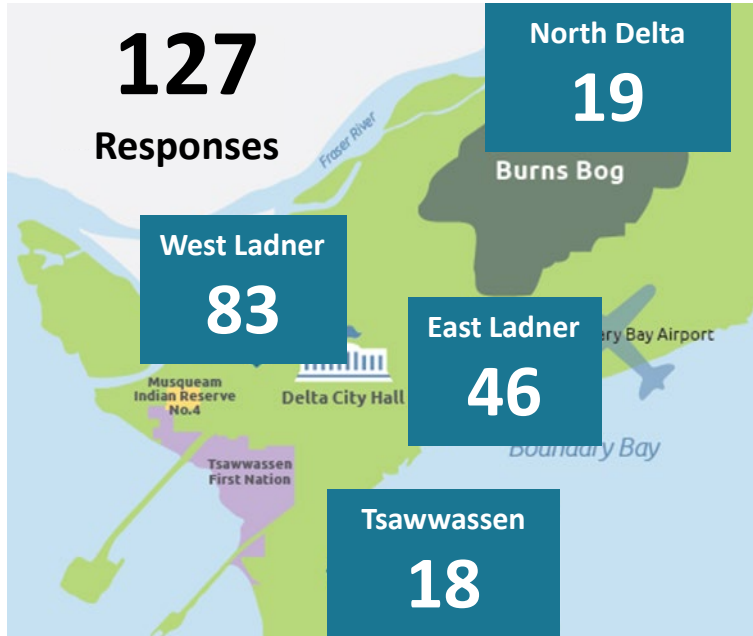
ਫੈਲਟਾ ਸ਼ਹਿਰ ਖੇਤੀਬਾੜੀ ਵਾਲੀ ਜ਼ਮੀਨ 'ਤੇ ਗੈਰ-ਰਿਹਾਇਸ਼ੀ ਫਾਰਮ ਬਿਲਡਿੰਗਾਂ ਦੀ ਮਨਜ਼ੂਰੀ ਨੂੰ ਸੋਧਾਂ ਦੇਣ ਲਈ ਨਵੇਂ ਤਰੀਕਿਆਂ ਦੀ ਭਾਲ ਕਰ ਰਿਹਾ ਹੈ। ਇਹ ਸਿਟੀ ਬਿਲਡਿੰਗ ਪਰਮਿਟ ਦੇ ਮੌਜੂਦਾ ਅਮਲਾ 'ਤੇ ਆਧਾਰਿਤ ਹੋਣਗੇ ਅਤੇ ਐਗਰੀਕਲਚਰਲ ਲੈਂਡ ਕਮਿਸ਼ਨ (ਏ ਐਲ ਸੀ) ਐਕਟ ਦੇ ਅਨੁਸਾਰ ਹੋਣਗੇ, ਜਿਹੜਾ ਇਹ ਨਿਰਧਾਰਿਤ ਕਰਦਾ ਹੈ ਕਿ ਇਹਨਾਂ ਬਿਲਡਿੰਗਾਂ ਦੀ ਵਰਤੋਂ ਦੀ ਆਗਿਆ ਕਿਸ ਲਈ ਹੋ ਸਕਦੀ ਹੈ।

ਸਾਡਾ ਟੀਚਾ ਇਹ ਪੱਕਾ ਕਰਨਾ ਹੈ ਕਿ ਸਾਡਾ ਢੰਗ ਕਿਸਾਨਾਂ ਦੀਆਂ ਬਦਲ ਰਹੀਆਂ ਜ਼ਰੂਰਤਾਂ ਪੂਰੀ ਸਪਸ਼ਟ, ਇਕਸਾਰ ਅਤੇ ਜਵਾਬਦੇਹ ਰਹੇ, ਨਾਲ ਹੀ ਭਵਿੱਖ ਦੀਆਂ ਪੀੜ੍ਹੀਆਂ ਲਈ ਖੇਤੀ ਵਾਲੀ ਜ਼ਮੀਨ ਦੀ ਸੁਰੱਖਿਆ ਕਰਨੀ ਜਾਰੀ ਰਹੇ।

ਸੇਕਰ ਡੂਸੀ ਫੈਲਟਾ ਵਿੱਚ ਖੇਤੀ ਕਰਦੇ ਹੋ ਜਾਂ ਡੂਹਾਡੇ ਕੋਲ ਖੇਤ ਵਾਲੀ ਜ਼ਮੀਨ ਹੈ, ਤਾਂ ਅਸੀਂ ਤੁਹਾਨੂੰ ਇੱਕ ਛੋਟਾ ਜਿਹਾ ਗੁਪਤ ਸਰਵੇਖਣ (5-10 ਮਿੰਟ) ਪੂਰਾ



Who Did We Hear From

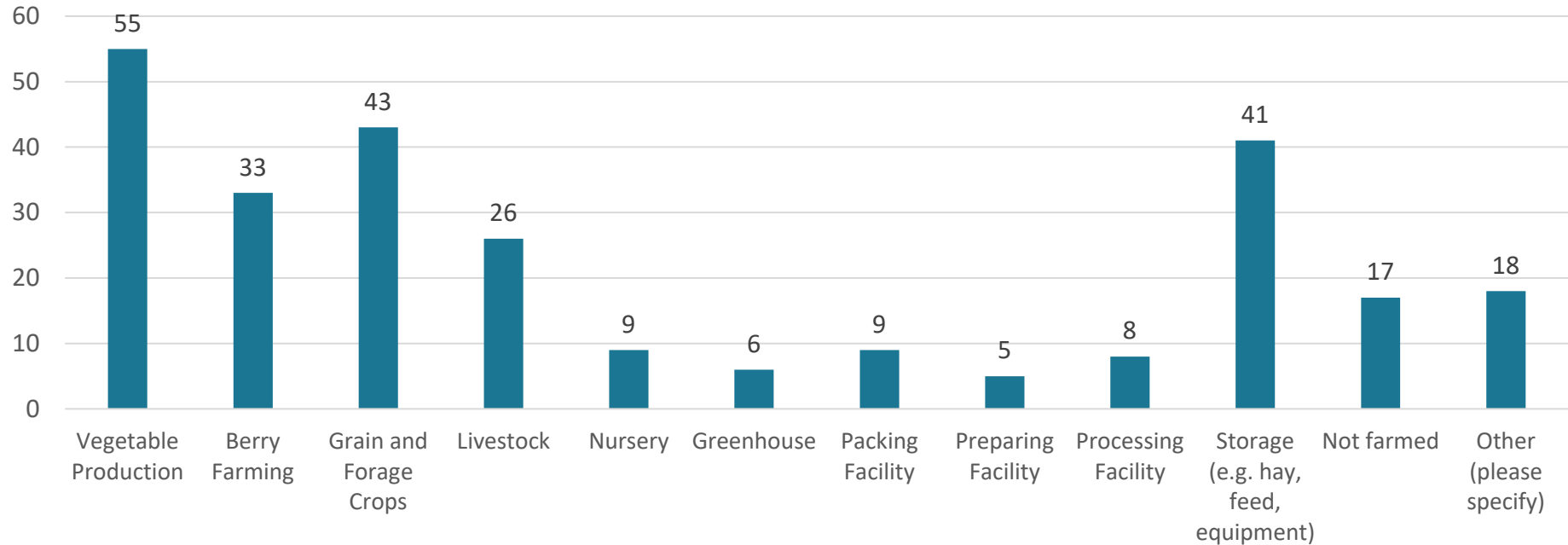


75%
Farm Class

72%
Owners



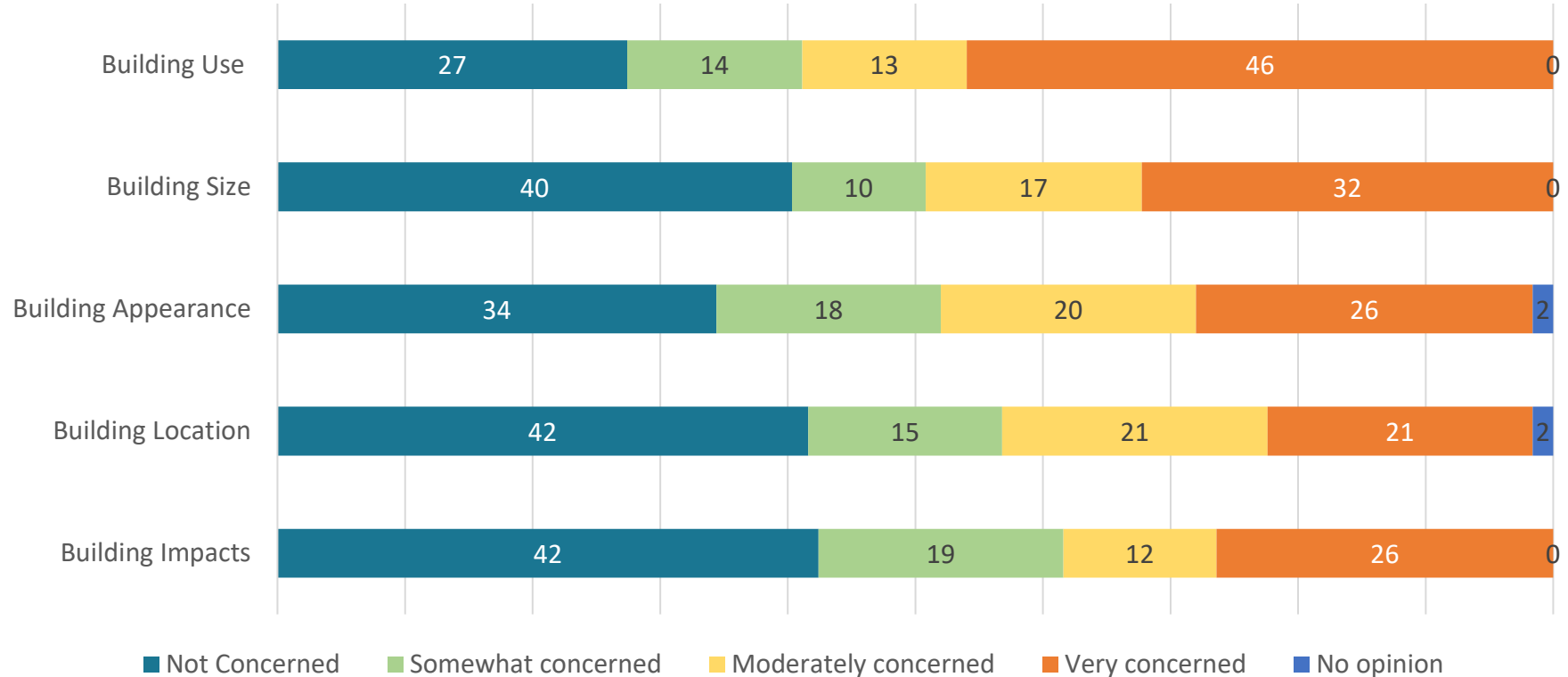
Types of Agricultural Activities*



**Participants invited to select those that apply.*

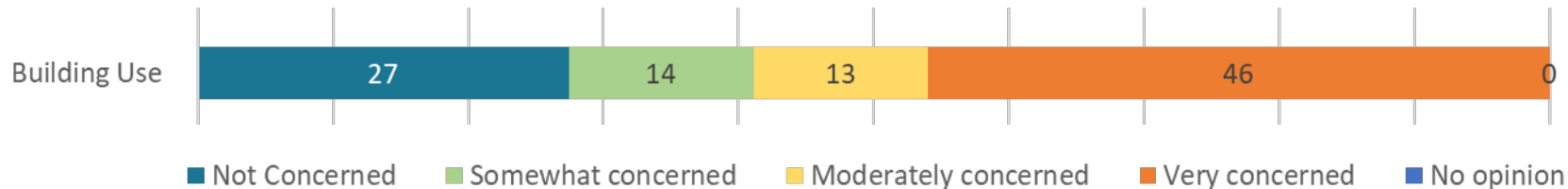


Building Criteria & Level of Concern (%)





1. Building Use



TOP COMMENTS

- Concern about non-farm uses (e.g., weddings, events, storage, residential use) (45+)
- Recognition of economic pressures / need for flexibility (23)
- Desire to preserve farmland / protect ALC intent (17)
- Need for worker housing / housing flexibility (11)
- Need for enforcement / lack of enforcement (11)
- Concern about oversized or 'suspicious' buildings (11)
- Frustration with regulations / confusion between ALC and Delta (9)
- Traffic and neighbourhood impacts (7)
- Support for farm-related diversification (e.g., processing, equipment repair) (6)



1. Building Use

“Many parcels are small and not really viable farmland on a standalone basis. Need other sources of income to survive.”

“All farmers have their own needs and should be able to use their property as they see fit.”

“Building use is important but the farm activities is the question. I think ag land should be used to support all aspects of ag business.”

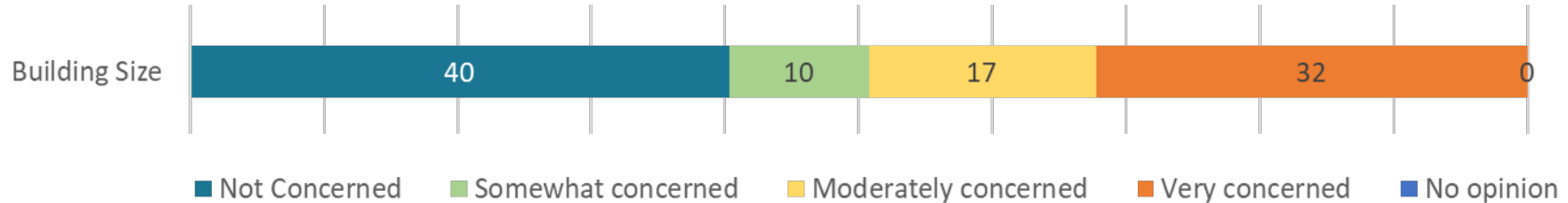
“Loss of farmland is a significant threat to food security and buildings can significantly and even irreversibly impact soil conditions and productivity.”

“Should be used for farm purposes but the definition needs help. We need housing for workers.”

“If buildings are not being used for farm purposes, they shouldn’t get farm privileges.”



2. Building Size



TOP COMMENTS

- Concern About Large Buildings for Non-Farm Use (24)
- Size Should Match the Farming Operation (21)
- Opposition to Strict Size Limits or Regulation (18)
- Desire for Flexibility and Future Growth (16)
- Concern About Loss of Farmland / Impact on Soil (10)
- Suggestion for a Formula or Approval-Based Approach (8)
- Frustration with City or ALC Oversight / Inconsistency (7)



2. Building Size

“Not concerned about size but very concerned about the purpose of the building.”

“Who’s to decide what size is needed for farming operations! I see no problem as long as it is bona fide farming.”

“There should be a formula such that farm buildings can only make up 10% of active farm property, for example.”

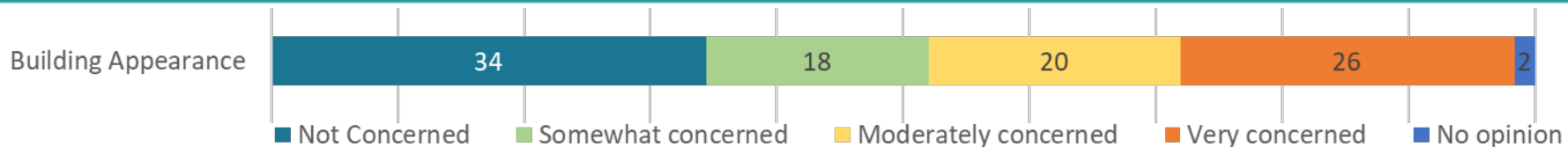
“The size should not be regulated as the need for size depends on equipment size etc. there should be no min. or max.”

“Some buildings seem to be unreasonably large. They don’t seem appropriate to the use.”

“Size is important but shouldn’t be heavily enforce if reasoning is justified.”



3. Building Appearance



TOP COMMENTS

- Design Should Be Consistent With Farming Purpose (33)
- Appearance Should Not Mask Non-Farm Use (19)
- Preserve Delta's Rural and Traditional Character (17)
- Farmers Should Have Design Flexibility if Purpose is Allowed (11)
- Location Near Roads or Neighbours Raises Concerns (7)
- Protect Visual Quality and Natural Environment (6)
- Maintain a Clean and Tidy Appearance (4)
- Conformity with ALR and Agricultural Policies (4)



3. Building Appearance

“It’s nice to keep a farming community look and feel. Has to be practical.”

“As long as they fit in with accepted farm building designs.”

“Delta must not make it difficult for a farmer to build a building for a genuine farm use.”

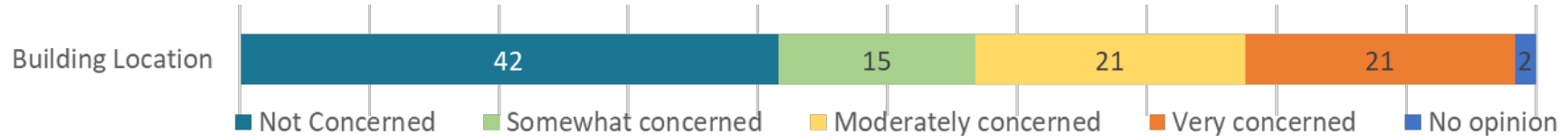
“Ideally farm structures should retain a semblance of their purpose and follow the traditional appearance of a farm building.”

“What a barn looks like should not matter. These are packing facilities built for ag purposes.”

“The character of rural Delta should be maintained.”



4. Building Location



TOP COMMENTS

- Buildings should be clustered or grouped (7)
- Support home plate policy or ALR regulations (6)
- Respect neighbours and road visibility (4)
- Location should support efficient farm operations (3)
- Placement should follow environmental/farm planning guidelines (3)
- Avoid placing buildings on farmable/prime land (2)
- Placement flexibility should be given to farmers (2)
- Buildings should not reduce land resale value or restrict sale (2)



4. Building Location

“If it is a true farm building, it’s use should dictate its location.”

“Why would it effect me or the city where someone builds on their property?”

“Determining location based on soil quality makes sense however it must be balanced with the location of services.”

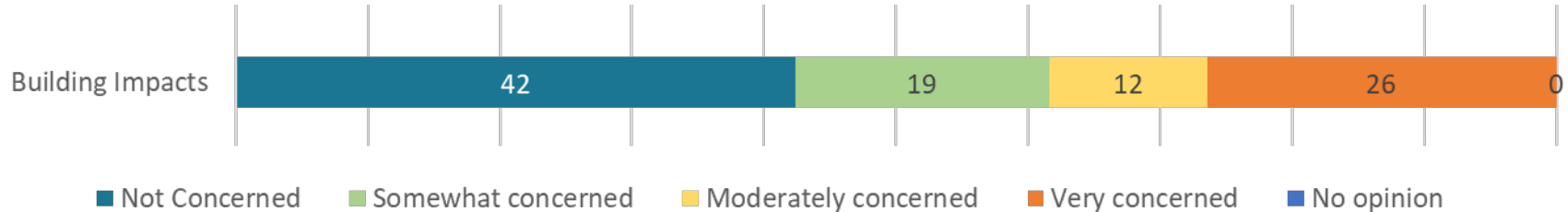
“Barns should be built to have the least impact on the land.”

“Buildings should be built on appropriate areas of the farm – near other building if possible.”

“Home plate has been in place for ages, this is important to continue.”



5. Building Impacts



TOP COMMENTS

- Non-farm (commer., residential, or event) venues are inappropriate (17)
- Noise concerns, particularly related to events or large equipment (13)
- Traffic and parking impacts from non-farm activities or visitors (10)
- Soil degrad., compaction, or contamination due to construction or misuse (9)
- Concerns about industrial scale buildings and dev. raising farmland costs (7)
- Visual/aesthetic impacts, including large structures and poor drainage (6)



5. Building Impacts

TOP COMMENTS CONTINUED

- Disturbance to neighbouring properties and residential interface (6)
- Env. impacts including wildlife disruption, drainage, and pollution (6)
- Concern about animals (horses, livestock) from noise or proximity (4)
- Greenhouses and worker housing are distinct concerns impacts (4)
- Farmer rights and need for operational flexibility were emphasized (4)

“Comfortable if everything falls in the City noise and business operations.”

“As long as nothing leaks into the ditches, I don’t give a rat’s petunia!”

“Soil compaction and movement and potential invasive species introduction are of concern.”



Other Comments or Suggestions

- City should screen applicants to ensure genuine farm use on ALR land
- Stronger enforcement and severe penalties for non-compliant construction
- Clearer, streamlined permitting processes that reduce red tape for farm uses.
- Reconcile and clarify differences between ALC and Delta requirements.
- Direct engagement with farmers and community stakeholders throughout the approval process
- Allow for non-farm uses on lands actively farmed
- Mandatory post-approval inspections to verify ongoing compliance
- Support farm viability by encouraging flexible, agriculture-focused infrastructure (e.g., greenhouses).



Summary

- Most (73%) have some level of concern with use of the building
- Those that are concerned cite desire to preserve farmland and need for enforcement
- Those that aren't concerned cite economic pressures and the need for flexibility
- Other criteria were more split between not concerned (42%) and some level of concern (58%)
- Many of the concerns on other criteria were largely related to use

Questions?



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