

# Land Use Planning for Agriculture



*Sound land use planning is an essential part of building healthy, prosperous and sustainable communities. It's a process that allows agricultural communities to decide the future course of their growth and development and ensures agricultural producers are involved in the decision-making.*

## Why Get Involved?

Land use plans can have a significant impact on the agricultural industry, and in particular, livestock operations. For instance, re-designation of a parcel of farmland to non-farm use can affect:

### your farm management practices

- Loss of farmland, and the presence of non-farm development, may reduce your ability to adapt to changing economic and market conditions.

### land assessment values

- Increasing residential development in agricultural areas often leads to higher land assessment values and property taxes.

### the potential for land use conflicts

- The more non-farm uses in agricultural areas, the more likely land use conflicts will arise.

### your ability to expand

- The creation of a rural residential lot may impose a minimum separation distance that could prevent you from expanding your existing livestock operation or establishing any new operations.

## Understanding Land Use Planning in Manitoba

Under *The Planning Act*, municipal governments have the authority to regulate land use and make planning decisions at the local level. This is done through development plans and zoning by-laws. *The Provincial Land Use Policies* guide local and provincial authorities in preparing plans and making land use decisions.

The development plan is the core document in the local planning process. It sets out objectives and policies to guide future land use. For example, an area of land most suitable for sustainable food production should be designated 'agriculture area,' making it off-limits for anything other than agriculture and agriculture-related uses. A municipality implements its development plan policies through a zoning by-law, which contains the rules and regulations that control development. A zoning by-law then divides the municipality into land use zones and sets out criteria for each zone's development and operation (ex: minimum site area, separation distance requirements, etc.). The zoning by-law also establishes permitted and conditional uses within each zone.