

Land use zones for rural and agricultural uses are largely located in north Pickering. Rural areas also have supportive uses, including farm homes, residential hamlets, and some commercial or light industrial activities. The new Zoning By-law will continue to regulate these uses and protect farmland from more intensive, urban development.

How does the new draft Zoning By-law protect and support our agricultural and rural areas?

Rural areas are subject to many provincial, regional and municipal plans, policies and regulations (See Summary Sheet 1). The overall goal of these documents is to protect the agricultural land base, protect the environment and maintain the character of rural settlements. To support agricultural operations, many policies limit land use changes, the creation of new lots, and promote the viability of farmland.

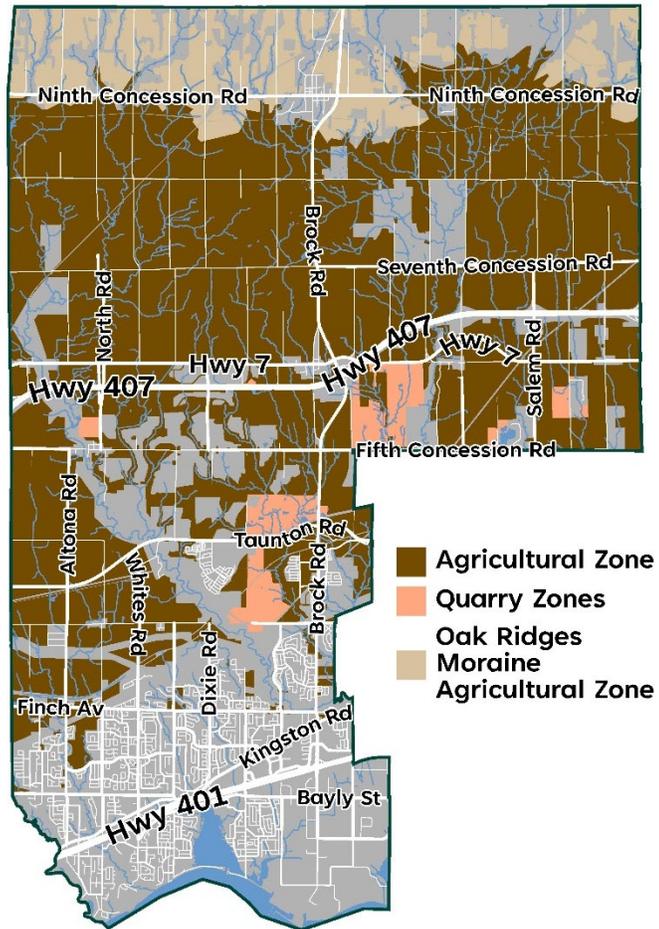
The new draft Zoning By-law protects agricultural lands by maintaining agricultural zoning for prime agricultural lands and limiting non-farm development in these zones. It also permits existing farm uses in other zone categories. In addition to protecting farmland, the new draft Zoning By-law supports the viability of agricultural operations by allowing a greater variety of uses related to agricultural operations or that help provide economic diversification for farm operators.

Changes Related to Prime Agricultural Lands

The agricultural zones from the previous zoning by-laws were consolidated into a new Agricultural (A) zone. This new zone aligns with the Prime Agricultural Area designation in the Official Plan and maintains the basic lot and building requirements from the previous by-laws. The Oak Ridges Moraine Agricultural (ORMA) zone has specific regulations that help to implement the Oak Ridges Moraine Conservation Plan.

The biggest change in the new draft Zoning By-law is providing more flexibility in the types of uses that can occur on agricultural lands by adding new agricultural-related and on-farm diversified uses subject to certain requirements. These uses are described on the next page in more detail.

Which areas of the City are zoned to allow agricultural and rural uses?



Prime agricultural lands are included in the Agricultural Zone which helps to maintain these lands as farming areas into the future. However, not all farms are located within the agricultural zone. Some existing farms are in the environmental protection or open space zones. The Zoning By-law allows for the continuation of these existing agricultural operations.

Related Information

[Discussion Paper 6: Agricultural, Rural and Open Space Areas](#)

[Pickering Official Plan](#)

[Summary Sheet #5: Environmentally Sensitive Areas](#)

[Summary Sheet #6: Residential Areas](#)

On-Farm Diversified Uses

On-farm diversified uses refer to smaller-scale commercial uses on a farming property that help to provide additional revenue to the farm to sustain farming operations. The new by-law permits the following uses on agricultural lands where they are associated with a farm operation:

- agri-tourism such as farm tours, “pick your own” businesses, farm related educational opportunities, hay rides, etc.; and
- bed and breakfast or vacation home accommodations.

Agriculture-Related Uses

Agriculture-related uses are commercial and industrial uses that support nearby farm operations. These are typically separate businesses located on a different property than the farm. The new by-law identifies the following agriculture-related uses and permits these uses in appropriate zones:

- farm equipment sales;
- farmer’s markets;
- winery, microbrewery, distillery; and
- seasonal farm stands.

Oak Ridges Moraine Conservation Area

The Oak Ridges Moraine Conservation Area contains prime agricultural lands as well as lands with high environmental value. The high value agricultural lands have been zoned as Oak Ridges Moraine Agriculture (ORMA). Within the ORMA zone, uses are mainly limited to agricultural or conservation uses and limited residential uses on existing lots.

Quarries

There are several quarries located within the Pickering boundary. The Pit and Quarry zoning from the old zoning by-laws has been carried forward in the new by-law as the Quarry (Q) zone. This zone permits existing quarries, as well as agriculture uses.

Related Features



MDS Formulae

The Minimum Distance Separation Formulae is a tool for ensuring that new lots and new or expanding livestock facilities will be compatible with existing uses with respect to odour and other impacts. The formulae determine appropriate separation between these uses.



Rural Settlements

Settlement areas within the rural landscape include clusters of dwellings along main roads (RC zone), historic hamlets (RH zone), and country estates (RE zone). The draft Zoning By-law continues to recognize these existing residential clusters.



Outdoor Storage

Outdoor storage uses are generally not permitted in rural settlement areas, but outdoor storage is permitted where it is part of typical farm, quarry, or forestry operations. In some cases, outdoor storage subject to criteria, such as setbacks.

For More Information



Visit the City’s project website at:
<http://letstalkpickering.ca/zonereview>



To find out what your property is zoned in the new by-law, try the [interactive zoning tool!](#)



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