

Zoning By-law Review Project



Agricultural and related land uses

The regulation of land uses allowed in agricultural areas is important to help protect limited and prime farm lands for long-term use and to ensure a sustainable agricultural industry.

The review of Clarington's Zoning By-laws has looked at provincial policies and local operations, and is working to find a balance between the need to protect prime agricultural areas while allowing more flexibility for other uses.

Policy framework

Ontario's Provincial Policy Statement with guidelines from Permitted Uses in Ontario's Prime Agricultural Areas provide policies that protect farm operations and promote healthy rural economies. Provincial policy divides agricultural areas into three use categories: **agricultural, secondary and agriculture-related**.

AGRICULTURAL USES are strongly encouraged and supported by provincial policy and includes land being used primarily for things such as growing crops or raising livestock, including associated buildings.

SECONDARY USES allow farmers to supplement their income to help maintain the viability of their farm. Also known as "on-farm diversified uses," secondary uses can include home businesses,

bakeries, corn mazes or art studios. Secondary uses must be limited in size, secondary to, compatible with, and not hinder the primary agricultural uses.

AGRICULTURE-RELATED USES are commercial or industrial uses that are directly related to farming operations, but are not usually carried out on a farm. These include farm equipment sales, feed and flour mills, sawmills or other operations that add value to crops grown in the area, such as a large-scale cidery that uses apples from across the region.

Clarington's Official Plan includes these policies to support primary agricultural uses while permitting limited secondary uses on farms and directing agriculture-related uses off farmland.



Where we are today

Currently, non-residential uses allowed on lands zoned Agricultural are limited to primary agricultural uses, farm produce sales outlets, bed and breakfasts and home businesses. Any other secondary use on a farm requires a Zoning By-law amendment. Larger agriculture-related industrial uses also require a Zoning By-law amendment and are directed to rural lands.

What have we reviewed?

During the Clarington Official Plan review, Clarington Council asked the Zoning By-law review team to consult with Clarington's Agricultural Advisory Committee and to consider greater flexibility toward agricultural and non-agricultural uses. The consultations provided **ZONE Clarington** with a better understanding of the different types of primary agricultural, secondary, and agriculture-related uses that could exist and their potential impacts. As we finalize the Zoning By-law, we will continue to consult with the Agricultural Advisory Committee and community to review potential secondary uses.

What is proposed?

The draft Zoning By-law states what primary agricultural uses are, along with what and where agriculture-related uses are permitted. It also permits a wider range of secondary on-farm uses not currently allowed. Anything not specifically permitted in the Agricultural Zone must go through a Zoning By-law amendment.

AGRICULTURAL USES

The draft Zoning By-law permits primary agricultural uses, such as growing crops and raising livestock, along with their associated buildings such as barns. Agricultural uses also include greenhouses, farm-worker accommodations and related processing facilities, defined as **Farm Processing – Value-Retaining**.

Farm Processing – Value Retaining

The activity of processing and/or storing crops to maintain their quality and ensure they remain saleable. Examples include controlled-atmosphere storage, cleaning, grading, sorting, drying, simple bulk packaging, evaporation of maple sap into syrup and honey extraction.

Farm Processing – Value Retaining is permitted on farms if the majority of crops processed are from the farm. Value-retaining facilities that process crops not grown on the farm would be considered a Farm Related Industrial Establishment.

SECONDARY USES

The Zoning By-law permits specific secondary on-farm uses that work with and fit within agricultural areas, including:

- Farm processing – value added
- Farm experience activities
- Farm produce outlets
- Home businesses
- Home industries
- Bed and breakfasts

Farm Processing – Value Added

The activity of turning crops into a new product to enhance their value, such as making cider from apples or jam from berries. Farm Processing – Value-Added facilities are permitted on farms in the Agricultural Zone but they are subject to some regulation.

Farm Processing – Value Added facilities must be secondary and directly related to the principal farm use, and the majority of the crop processed in the final product must come from the farm. The floor area of the facility is limited to 560 metres squared, some of which may be used for retail space. The draft Zoning By-law contains other regulations about outdoor storage and displays. Value-Added facilities that process crops not grown on the farm would be considered a Farm Related Industrial Establishment.





Farm Experience Activities

Farm Experience Activities can include horseback riding, hay rides, farm tours, cooking classes and apple picking. The draft Zoning By-law permits these activities in the Agricultural Zone. Farm experience activities must be secondary and directly related to the primary agricultural use of the farm with ongoing interaction with the agricultural activities. The draft Zoning By-law contains regulations about the size and location of a farm experience activity.

Farm Produce Outlets

The draft Zoning By-law permits farm produce outlets in the Agricultural Zone so farmers can sell their crops directly to customers. Buildings or structures are permitted for these sales, but may not exceed 100 metres squared and must be operated by the owner of the farm. Along with crops, these outlets may also sell a limited amount of value-added products produced on the farm, along with locally produced home-crafts, flowers and bedding plants.

Home Businesses

The draft Zoning By-law permits home businesses in residential dwellings in the Agricultural and Rural Residential Zones, and within existing homes in the Environmental Protection Zone. Home businesses include childcare, instructional services, personal services and food catering. The draft Zoning By-law outlines a number of regulations, such as the maximum floor area and number of employees, and types of businesses permitted in certain types of dwellings.

Home Industries

Home industries are similar to home businesses but are more intensive in their use. Home industries include activities like a carpenter's or electrician's shop, engine repair and the repair and sale of antiques. Home industries are permitted in the Rural Residential Zone on lots of at least one hectare and in the Agricultural Zone on lots of at least two

hectares, and some regulations depend on which of these zones the home industry is in. These regulations include maximum floor area and number of employees, outdoor display and storage and retail sales.

Bed and Breakfasts

The draft Zoning By-law permits bed and breakfast establishments in all Zones within the Rural Residential Zone Category, within existing dwellings in the Environmental Protection Zone, and in the Agricultural Zone. In all cases, the bed and breakfast must be within a single-detached dwelling and is limited to three guest rooms.

Other secondary on-farm uses that are not specifically permitted in the draft Zoning By-law would be considered on a case-by-case basis and would require a Zoning By-law amendment.

Only uses that are compatible with and do not hinder the primary agricultural use of the farm would be permitted.

The approach of permitting some secondary uses in the Agricultural Zone without requiring an amendment tries to strike a balance between the protection of farmland and flexibility for economic opportunities.

Farm Event Venue

A "farm event venue" is not permitted in the draft Zoning By-law. These commercial event venues operating secondary to a farm would require a Zoning By-law amendment. The draft Zoning By-law applies "farm event venue" as an exception to specific locations that previously received a zoning by-law amendment for such a use.

Agriculture-related uses

Agriculture-related Uses can be commercially or industrially related to farming but are more intensive or large scale than secondary on-farm uses and are directed away from prime agricultural lands.

Farm Related Commercial Establishments include uses such as small tractor dealerships or farm equipment repair shops. These are not permitted on farms in the Agricultural Zone, but in two Rural Commercial Zones: RC1 and RC2. These are areas in the countryside where there are shops and services, but not farming operations.

Farm Related Industrial Establishments include large-scale value-added or value-retaining processing facilities, such as biomass pelletizers, and abattoirs. Farm-related industrial establishments are not permitted and would require a Zoning By-law amendment on a site-specific basis.

There are other land uses related to agriculture, many of which would be permitted under a different zone category. For example, a farmers' market or farm supply store would be considered "retail" which is permitted in the Rural Commercial Zones RC1 and RC2. Other agriculture-related uses not specifically permitted or that do not fall under an appropriate permitted use would require a zoning by-law amendment.



What do you think?

The Zoning By-law review is an ongoing exchange between the Municipality and the community. We want to hear your thoughts on the proposed zoning for **agricultural and related land uses** in Clarington.

- What types of uses do you feel meet the definition and criteria for a secondary use?
- There are specific types of secondary on-farm uses permitted currently. Are there other types of secondary uses that should be permitted without a Zoning By-law amendment?
- Are there types of secondary uses that would concern you if they were permitted, and if so, why?
- Should value-added facilities have their retail area limited, or should these facilities have a maximum permitted total area and leave it to the operator to determine how much of that area is devoted to retail?

Ensure your ideas are considered during the review and submit your feedback online at www.clarington.net/ZoneClarington, email ZoneClarington@clarington.net or call 905-623-3379 ext. 2415.

Stay up-to-date

Visit www.clarington.net/ZoneClarington and subscribe to ZONE Clarington updates, register as an interested party and find out about upcoming information centres, public meetings and revised drafts of the Zoning By-law.

Resources

Current Clarington Zoning By-laws:
www.clarington.net/Zoning

Clarington Official Plan:
www.clarington.net/OfficialPlan

Guidelines on Permitted Uses in Ontario Prime Agricultural Areas:
www.omafra.gov.on.ca/english/landuse/permitteduses.htm

Clarington By-law 2010-139 (Site Plan Control):
weblink.clarington.net/WebLink/0/doc/28953/Page1.aspx