



# Model Official Plan Amendment

## *For Agricultural Economic Development and Adaptive Reuse of Legacy Heritage Resources*

### *Purpose*

These policies support the integration of adaptive reuse of legacy agricultural heritage assets with UA, innovation, environmental sustainability, and reconciliation objectives. They are intended to help municipalities foster food-secure, culturally rooted, and ecologically resilient communities. The framework aligns with the Provincial Policy Statement (2024), regional official plans, and local strategies, while encouraging partnerships with Indigenous Nations and conservation authorities

### *Policies*

#### **1. Adaptive Reuse of Agricultural Heritage Resources**

a) Municipalities shall support the adaptive reuse of agricultural buildings and cultural heritage resources (barns, silos, sheds, etc.) for uses that advance UA, agri-food innovation, community food access, and cultural programming.

Adaptive reuse shall be permitted where it:

1. Conserves or enhances the identified cultural heritage value;
2. Demonstrates compatibility with surrounding land uses;
3. Complies with the Ontario Heritage Act.

b) Development proposals should incorporate food system-related functions, such as:

- Controlled Environment Agriculture;
- Value-added processing;
- Incubator kitchens or training facilities;
- Farm stands, CSA hubs, or market kiosks;
- Educational/interpretive facilities tied to local food and heritage.

#### **2. Greenway Integration and Indigenous Stewardship**

a) Municipalities shall collaborate with conservation authorities, Indigenous Nations, and stakeholders to integrate agricultural heritage sites into expanded greenways and riparian corridors that:

- Protect cultural landscapes and Indigenous hunting, fishing, and foraging grounds;

- Enable low-impact agricultural uses, demonstration farms, incubator plots, and cultural programming;
- Incorporate Indigenous design principles and co-stewardship objectives.

### 3. Stormwater Reuse and Green Infrastructure

a) Municipalities shall support stormwater reuse for agricultural irrigation where safe, integrating cisterns, swales, and bioswales into subdivision and site design.

b) Reused farmsteads within green infrastructure corridors shall be prioritized where they:

- Retain heritage character;
- Support food production and ecological resilience;
- Contribute to the local food supply;
- Incorporate Indigenous design principles and co-stewardship objectives.

### 4. Permitted Uses and Zoning Framework

a) Zoning by-laws should permit, as-of-right or through site-specific provisions:

- Rooftop agriculture and greenhouses;
- Vertical/CEA farming;
- Agri-food innovation centres;
- Processing and packaging;
- Ancillary agriculture-supportive structures.

b) Height/GFA limits may be exceeded where heritage conservation is maintained and impacts are mitigated.

c) Rooftop agriculture should not count toward building height/GFA if designed primarily for food production and compliant with code requirements.

### 5. Special Policy Areas and Overlay Zones

a) Municipalities may establish UA and Innovation Overlay Zones, permitting:

- Rooftop and vertical farming as-of-right;
- Adaptive reuse of heritage agricultural structures;
- Performance-based flexibility in setbacks, materials, and massing.

b) New non-residential buildings should be encouraged to be structurally and mechanically 'rooftop-ready.'

## 6. Accessory Structures and Supporting Infrastructure

- a) As-of-right permissions should extend to wash/prep stations, cold storage, compost facilities, and storage sheds linked to food production and heritage reuse.

## 7. Accessory Structures and Supporting Infrastructure

- a) Establish coordinated interdepartmental review processes for adaptive reuse and urban agriculture proposals.
- b) Use minor variances, site-specific zoning, or special site policies to enable projects that deliver community/economic benefits and are compatible with local character.
- c) Develop performance-based design guidelines covering materials, fire safety, setbacks, and screening.

## 8. Economic Development and Regional Alignment

- a) Municipalities shall work with regional governments and partners to:
  - Promote investment in agri-food innovation;
  - Support workforce development and educational initiatives;
  - Integrate reused agricultural buildings into agri-tourism and local food economies.
- b) Financial/regulatory tools may include:
  - Community Improvement Plans (CIPs);
  - Development charge exemptions;
  - Tax incentive programs (where authorized).

## 9. Implementation and Monitoring

- a) Municipalities should maintain records of:
  - Properties adaptively reused;
  - Agricultural lands irrigated through stormwater reuse;
  - Co-stewardship agreements with Indigenous partners.
- b) Performance monitoring should integrate cultural heritage, agricultural viability, green infrastructure, and Indigenous access as linked objectives.