

June 18, 2002

Information Bulletin #3

I. **ISSUE:** Delegation to Local Government

[Section 26](#) of the *Agricultural Land Commission Act* provides for the delegation of Section 25 powers relating to applications for subdivisions and non-farm land uses to local governments. (Note: the Delegation of powers to other authorities is discussed in [Information Bulletin # 4](#)).

II. **CHANGES:**

The powers remain basically the same as those of Section 23 of the existing legislation, enacted in 1994. Some minor changes have been made relating to audit and reporting procedures. The process is voluntary.

III. **WHY:**

The Commission has long recognized the need to work more collaboratively with local government and this approach was strengthened by the Core Review which identified this approach as one of several needed to make the Commission more effective and efficient. The delegation of these powers to local government is seen as an important element of this approach.

IV. **HOW:**

The implementation of the strategy will be achieved through collaboration with local government. Each local government is encouraged to assess the benefits of a voluntary agreement and engage in discussion with the Commission to gain further insight and information.

V. LOCAL GOVERNMENT IMPLICATIONS:

The benefits to local government can include:

- The provision of one-stop shopping with a reduction in processing time of around 50%
- Decisions that are more accountable and sensitive to local government
- More easily arranged on-site meetings with applicants
- A more likely recognition of special local government circumstances
- The enabling of a change in direction of Commission staff that will provide more opportunities for a pro-active collaboration with local government, for example, with regard to growth strategies, Official Community Plans, land use plans and agricultural area plans.

V. PROCESS:

The Commission recognizes the need for flexibility that accommodates each local government's specific circumstances and responds to regional differences. Generally the basis of the agreement will be an Official Community Plan and/or land use bylaw that has been endorsed by the Commission in the context of delegation. However other mechanisms may be appropriate in certain circumstances, for example where no bylaws are in place. The process might include, sequentially:

- Initial discussion between the new Commission panels and local government.
- Follow up discussion including the identification of issues and opportunities.
- The provision of an information package by the Commission identifying some of the key issues, for example critical elements of the OCP and land use bylaws, a sample delegation agreement and information about monitoring and reporting.

- Further discussion leading to a formal agreement signed by both parties.

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