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**File: Urban Agriculture Strategy
Planner: L. Maitland**

TO:	CHAIR AND MEMBERS PLANNING & ENVIRONMENT COMMITTEE
FROM:	JOHN M. FLEMING MANAGING DIRECTOR, PLANNING AND CITY PLANNER
SUBJECT:	URBAN AGRICULTURE STRATEGY MEETING ON NOVEMBER 6, 2017

RECOMMENDATION

That, on the recommendation of the Managing Director, Planning & City Planner, the following actions be taken with respect to the Urban Agriculture Strategy:

- a) the attached Urban Agriculture Strategy, consistent with the Food System policies of The London Plan, **BE ADOPTED** in order to guide and support the development of urban agriculture within the City of London as part of London’s food system;
- b) the attached Terms of Reference for an Urban Agriculture Steering Committee **BE ENDORSED**; and,
- c) the Managing Director, Planning & City Planner **BE DIRECTED** to implement the Urban Agriculture Steering Committee.

IT BEING NOTED that the initiatives in this strategy that are the responsibility of the City can be accommodated within existing budgets, and that any new initiatives may be considered in future multi-year budget cycles.

PREVIOUS REPORTS PERTINENT TO THIS MATTER
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- Draft Urban Agriculture Strategy – July 17, 2017
- Urban Agriculture Strategy – Terms of Reference, December 12, 2016
- Urban Agriculture Strategy – Draft Terms of Reference, September 6, 2016

OVERVIEW OF THE STRATEGY

Action Items

The following table outlines the action items identified for implementation of the Urban Agriculture Strategy as they are categorized in the strategy. The “X” indicates the identified responsibility for implementation. The report elaborates on how these stakeholders should move forward.

The responsibility for implementation can rest with the community, the City or some combination of the two.

- Community Leads. Where the primary responsibility to implement the action is that of community groups, institutions or individuals.
- Community partners with City. Where the primary responsibility to implement the action is that of community groups, institutions or individuals however both the community and the City have roles in the implementation and delivery of the action.

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- City enables Community. Where the City and community both have roles in the implementation and delivery of the action, however the City may be required to take a more active role through funding, regulatory change or operational support.
- City Leads. Where the responsibility is primarily regulatory or operational in nature and the primary responsibility is that of the municipality to implement the action.

GROWING					
Urban Farms	Community leads	Community partners with City	City enables Community	City leads	City Service Area Responsibilities
Determine community interest in and capacity for involvement in an urban farm.	X				No City cost – community effort
Develop a vision and model (including management structure), and identify lead partners for the farm project.	X				No City cost – community effort
Develop business plan to implement the proposed vision and model.	X				No City cost – community effort
Determine the most appropriate location and size for an urban farm, and if the City could facilitate access to a suitable area of land.		X			Administrative assistance of Planning staff to address site issues for proposed sites on case-by-case basis as they arise
Evaluate bylaws and zoning rules with respect to their role in enabling urban farms.				X	Administrative Study Required – Planning and licensing should issues come up on case-by-case
Ensure access to reasonably priced soil tests.			X		Funding Required
Urban “Foodscaping”	Community leads	Community partners with City	City enables Community	City leads	City Service Area Responsibilities
Distribute supportive resources such as topsoil, mulch, compost, and rain barrels to public food-growing projects along with education		X			Supported by existing City programs

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materials to ensure proper and safe usage of the resources.					
Coordinate seed exchanges through community centres, libraries, etc.	X				No City cost – community effort
Explore ways to encourage institutional involvement in foodscaping of landscapes at places such as churches, hospitals, etc.		X			Administrative assistance of Planning (Forestry) staff to address site issues for proposed sites as they arise
Consider education, awareness, and information-exchange events between municipal staff and community volunteers regarding foodscaping opportunities in the city.		X			City to support community efforts – Forestry and other groups already attends events as they occur
Examine existing food forests for potential expansion.		X			To be addressed through existing park review processes
Ensure good management practices are undertaken to prevent pests and locate edible trees in locations where they can be safely maintained over the long-term.		X			City to support community efforts – Locating on City lands to be incorporated in parks facilities reviews
Evaluate the potential of public land available in the city for public foodscaping.				X	Study to be undertaken through City parks master planning and facilities review processes
Replace municipal planter box plantings with native fruit/nut/edible species where appropriate and where a maintenance program is in place.				X	Through City parks master planning and facilities review processes establish locations as feasible and appropriate – consultation with Transportation may also be required

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Urban Livestock	Community leads	Community partners with City	City enables Community	City leads	City Service Area Responsibilities
Compile existing public health research into the risks and benefits of backyard hens from a public health perspective.		X			Licensing program to be developed in collaboration with MHLU, Planning and Licensing
Compile existing research into bylaws that allow backyard hens in other Canadian cities and look into these cities' experiences with backyard hens, including benefits and problems associated with backyard hens and how those cities addressed the issues.				X	Licensing program to be developed in collaboration with MHLU, Planning and Licensing
Investigate a Backyard Hen Demonstration Project in London working with key stakeholders including the Middlesex London Health Unit.		X			Licensing program to be developed in collaboration with MHLU, Planning and Licensing
Ensure that animal health, security, and welfare are priorities in the potential development of enabling urban livestock policies and demonstration projects.				X	Licensing program to be developed in collaboration with MHLU, Planning and Licensing
Consideration of an Official Plan amendment and any other regulatory amendments to permit the keeping of livestock within urban areas of the city.				X	Administrative Study Required - Planning
Increased pollinator habitat within the City		X			For City lands this falls under City parks master planning and facilities review processes

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Support for urban beekeeping in appropriate locations in the City of London.	X				No City cost – community effort
PROCESSING					
Community Kitchens	Community leads	Community partners with City	City enables Community	City leads	City Service Area Responsibilities
Work with public health to provide food handler training for community kitchen users.	X				Addressed through Existing MLHU programs
Continue to make upgrades to kitchen facilities (in both City and community spaces) to enhance food safety.		X			Addressed through existing City grant programs
Investigate health regulations related to food safety in the context of community kitchens and other forms of food processing.		X			Administrative Study Required in collaboration with MLHU on case-by-case basis
Inventory existing inspected facilities that could be used for community kitchens and community garden programs. Make this information available to the public.		X			List available through MLHU – City to provide through inventory - planning
Facilitate community access to appropriate kitchen spaces.			X		Addressed through existing grant programs including City grant programs.
Resource Sharing	Community leads	Community partners with City	City enables Community	City leads	City Service Area Responsibilities
Investigate existing tool libraries and tool- and resource-sharing projects in other cities to see if these models could be used in London.	X				No City cost – community effort

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Inventory possible locations and community partners to facilitate a site for sharing of resources.		X			Administrative assistance of Planning staff to address site issues for proposed sites
Provide grants to support the purchase of key tools for shared use.			X		Addressed through existing grant programs including City grant programs.
Mobile Assets	Community leads	Community partners with City	City enables Community	City leads	City Service Area Responsibilities
Investigate the feasibility of mobile cider presses, bake ovens, and other forms of mobile food processing that would also support community events.	X				No City cost – community effort
Consider grants to facilitate the purchase of shared assets in the community.			X		Addressed through existing grant programs including City grant programs.
DISTRIBUTION					
Farmers Markets	Community leads	Community partners with City	City enables Community	City leads	City Service Area Responsibilities
Work with community members and local farmers to assess the feasibility of starting new markets where there is demand for new farmers' markets across London.		X			Administrative assistance of Planning and Licensing staff to address site issues and set up for proposed sites
Provide support for farmers' markets in public places and community hubs.		X			Administrative assistance of Planning and Licensing staff to address site issues and set up for proposed sites
Expand the Middlesex-London Health Unit's Harvest Bucks program for use at more markets across the City.	X				No City cost – community effort

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Assess the current zoning and bylaw requirements for markets and the potential for allowing temporary food and other pop-up markets at locations such as community gardens, etc.				X	Administrative Study Required – Planning and licensing to address on case-by-case basis
Local Food Procurement	Community leads	Community partners with City	City enables Community	City leads	City Service Area Responsibilities
Review how other municipalities and institutions have approached local food procurement policy development.				X	Administrative Study Required - Through Purchasing review.
Partner with other groups and organizations interested in expanding local food procurement in the Middlesex-London region	X				No City cost – community effort MLFPC leading this through their working group
Direct Food Sales	Community leads	Community partners with City	City enables Community	City leads	City Service Area Responsibilities
Investigate bylaw issues related to food sales on private property and community gardens.				X	Administrative Study Required – planning and licensing
Investigate health and safety regulations related to food sales on private property and community gardens and methods of education on requirements applicable to direct food sales.		X			Administrative Study Required in collaboration with MLHU
FOOD LOSS AND RECOVERY					
Food Waste Reduction & Recovery	Community leads	Community partners with City	City enables Community	City leads	City Service Area Responsibilities
Investigate the feasibility of instituting a food waste reduction and recovery project with partners such as restaurants and grocery		X			Addressed through existing City waste programs

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stores, including health and safety issues.					
Provide public education promoting the idea of reducing food waste.		X			Addressed through existing City waste programs
Community Composting	Community leads	Community partners with City	City enables Community	City leads	City Service Area Responsibilities
Investigate potential linkages between rural compost production and urban users of compost in food-growing projects.		X			Addressed through existing City waste programs
Promote backyard composting of residential food and garden waste, through an education campaign that includes information about proper composting methods to reduce the potential for pests.		X			Addressed through existing City waste programs
Provide public education regarding composting.		X			Addressed through existing City waste programs
Investigate the potential for community, vermi-, and mid-scale composting.		X			Addressed through existing City waste programs
Investigate the feasibility of composting at restaurants and grocery stores.	X				No City cost – community effort
EDUCATION AND CONNECTION					
Food Hubs	Community leads	Community partners with City	City enables Community	City leads	City Service Area Responsibilities
Identify a leadership group that would manage the development and implementation of multiple food hubs.	X				No City cost – community effort
Research and prepare a food hub feasibility study and business plan.	X				No City cost – community effort

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Investigate various food hub models and consider which models would work best in London and at what locations.		X			Administrative assistance of Planning staff to address site issues for proposed sites
School Gardens	Community leads	Community partners with City	City enables Community	City leads	City Service Area Responsibilities
Engage school boards to increase the number and capacity of school gardens.	X				No City cost – community effort
Understand food systems-related curriculum linkages relevant to elementary and secondary school education.	X				No City cost – community effort
Support the development of curriculum connections and teacher training materials related to school gardens.	X				No City cost – community effort
Support teachers and schools to bring agriculture into the classroom through connections with farmers.	X				No City cost – community effort
Create linkages between school boards, the City, community groups, and parent councils in order to promote the goal of a garden in every school.		X			City administration of Provincial funding done through CYN already engaging here.
Integrate school gardens with school food and nutrition programs so that food grown in schools is served and eaten in schools.	X				No City cost – community effort
Community Education and Training	Community leads	Community partners with City	City enables Community	City leads	City Service Area Responsibilities
Develop city-wide community events focused on urban		X			City to support community efforts

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agriculture and food literacy in order to celebrate food growing and community gathering around cooking and eating together.					on a case-by-case basis
Develop workshop and training materials related to ecologically sustainable urban agriculture that promotes no-till production, biodiversity, heritage seeds, organic methods, and pollinator health, among other environmental issues, and their links to urban agriculture.		X			City to support community efforts on a case-by-case basis
Develop educational materials around composting, soil health, sustainable food production, and food processing in various languages, and distribute these materials to the community at large.		X			City to support community efforts on a case-by-case basis

COMMENTS RECIEVED

Through the circulation of the Draft Urban Agriculture Strategy, comments were received from Council advisory committees and individuals in the community. Internal groups in addition to Planning Division staff were also able to review the Draft Strategy for a final time. A summary of the comments and how they have influenced revisions to the Urban Agriculture Strategy are below.

Targets and Timelines

The establishment of specific targets and timelines for action items has been requested by one advisory committee and a two individual commenters. However, the establishment of specific targets runs counter to the desired approach of the Strategy. The Strategy is intended to acknowledge roles and responsibilities in implementation and it is intended and acknowledged that the bulk of the work would be done by the community at their pace and given their capacity. Designating, as an example, a specific number of new community projects or events to be added each year runs counter to the spirit of allowing the community to engage in urban agriculture at its own pace.

The proposed Steering Committee may establish such measures in fulfilling their mandate to support, promote and engage with the community in the implementation of the Urban Agriculture Strategy.

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Steering Committee

With regards to the establishment of a steering committee, the advisory committees requested clarification regarding who would participate in this steering committee and what their role would be on it. The Terms of Reference provided clarifies the role of the steering committee, the responsibilities of its members and its makeup. The committees which have provided input into the Strategy’s development have roles commensurate with their mandate.

The Advisory Committee on the Environment comments also request a dedicated staff member to focus on implementation of the strategy.

Sustainable methods

Both the Advisory Committee on the Environment and the Environmental and Ecological Planning Advisory Committee have asked for more emphasis to be placed on sustainable methods. EEPAC specifically noted that including more native species, setbacks from Environmentally Sensitive Areas and the banning of pesticides should be forefront in these efforts. Pesticide use is controlled at the Provincial level, with additional restrictions for urban use provided through recent legislation. ESA setbacks are already covered through existing by-laws. In order to emphasize this point within the Strategy, the guiding principles have been modified to highlight this aspect of the role of urban agriculture in creating a resilient community.

Animals and Human Health

The concerns around animals remain, although it is worthy of note that support for an urban hens program has had the largest number of community members writing in support over the course of the Strategy’s development.

One concern raised during the comment period by both EEPAC and the Animal Welfare Advisory Committee was around animal to human transmission risk. This would be addressed through the details of any program adopted and implementation includes the participation of the Middlesex-London Health Unit before any pilot was adopted. The AWAC provided further comment on the potential animal welfare concerns with an urban hen program, including mail-order chicks, animals and advised against attempting any pilot.

The AWAC also raised concerns about foodscaping attracting animals into urban areas, a concern which has been acknowledged by emphasizing a maintenance program with any municipal planter box food program. The committee also indicated that bee conflicts may arise from urban beekeeping. Although urban beekeeping is prevented through Provincial regulation at this time, the comments from the AWAC on bee conflict run counter to previous research through the development of the Strategy.

Rural Links

One comment received requested that future iterations of the Strategy include rural linkages. Although the defined scope of the Urban Agriculture Strategy is urban concerns, other local groups are taking on the urban-rural connection, namely the Middlesex London Food Policy Council

Update website to include tie-ins to other organizations

One request was made that additional government programs related to Urban Agriculture be accessible via the City of London’s Urban Agriculture Strategy webpage. A related links section has been added to acknowledge other urban agriculture related activities within the City and other government organizations including the Food Charter, the City’s community garden program and

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the Middlesex London Food Policy Council.

Accessibility

The Accessibility Advisory Committee (ACCAC) wrote to ensure that the City’s policy (City of London’s Accessibility Plan) and the provincial legislation (the Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act) be acknowledged within the appendix on best practices. The requested changes have been made.

Traditional Knowledge

One comment requested that actions be taken to ensure the incorporation of “traditional knowledge” within urban agriculture in London. While not explicit, the incorporation of traditional knowledge is a component of many of the Guiding Principles of the Strategy, including promoting education, training and food literacy for everyone-building food skills and food literacy, enhancing the natural environment and building ecological resilience, conserving resources and enhancing biodiversity through sustainable and organic methods including native plants, connections with neighbouring communities within and around London and engaging diverse communities by recognizing the social and cultural importance of food and promoting access to healthy, local, culturally appropriate food. The Education and Connection Category includes initiatives relates to community connections and knowledge sharing.

Modifications to the Draft Strategy Following Circulation

A number of primarily minor changes have been made to the draft Strategy before its finalization. The guiding principle which focused on enhancement of the natural environment has been strengthened to include references to native plants, and sustainable methods. References to accessibility including the proper references to legislation and other City documents within the appendices have been made. Within the actions the distinction between urban beekeeping and pollination has been made to reflect that the keeping of bees and creating, maintaining or improving bee habitat are separate actions. The action “support for soil testing” has been moved from the urban foodscaping to the urban farms section based on anticipated demand. Finally the appendix containing a draft Terms of Reference for a steering committee has been replaced by an appendix to this report containing the Terms of Reference for an implementation steering committee. Finally a number of minor typographical changes, addressing tense issues and spelling have been made.

IMPLEMENTATION

Funding

It is expected that funding for The Urban Agriculture Strategy will come from:

- i) the community partners who will be implementing various parts of the strategy;
- ii) existing municipal budgets relating to existing programs and services offered by the municipality; and,
- iii) budget requests through the 2019-2023 four year budget process, and subsequent 4-year budget cycles.

Internal review identified five actions which have potential for direct financial implications. These actions may require funding or other likely financial support beyond existing City programs to be implemented. These are actions which have been identified as City-led or City-enabled in terms of responsibility for implementation. The five identified actions are:

1. Access to reasonably-priced soil tests
2. Upgrades to kitchen facilities in City centres and others to enhance food safety

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3. Facilitate community access to appropriate kitchen spaces
4. Provide grants to support the purchase of key tools for shared use
5. Provide grants to facilitate purchase of share mobile assets

There is the potential for existing grant programs to provide funding towards some of the identified projects. The London Community Grants Program has a multi-year stream allocating grants to London community not-for-profits that align their outcomes with Council’s Strategic Plan. The London Community Grants Program is already funding projects that align with the Urban Agriculture Strategy. SPARKS! funding has been used for developing urban agriculture projects, but is limited to projects located on City-owned land and requires neighbourhood support and matching funds. The TreeME grant programs also exists to support tree-planting projects, which could include some food forest and related activities. There are also private foundations which support food and urban agriculture projects in communities.

It is worth reiterating that the London Community Grants Programs is competitive and not specific to urban agriculture. There is currently no identified existing funding program for access to “reasonably-priced” soil testing.

Steering Committee

Ensuring implementation of the Urban Agriculture Strategy will require on-going coordination and direction. The preferred implementation approach is to establish a steering committee to provide leadership, monitor implementation and report to Council on progress over the life of the Strategy. The committee would be comprised of community members, including representation from Council’s advisory committees that reflects the diversity of the City of London. Civic administration leads would be identified to ensure that required City divisions are present and available to assist the committee.

The Terms of Reference for the steering committee, appended to this report, sets out the purpose of the committee as follows:

The purpose of the Steering Committee is to support the implementation of the Urban Agriculture Strategy, to increase resident engagement, and to empower residents and community groups and institutions to participate in implementing the strategy by engaging in, promoting, supporting and otherwise ensuring the completion of action items set out within the strategy. Specifically, the Steering Committee will:

2.1. Engage residents and build awareness of the Urban Agriculture Strategy and programs across the city;

2.2. Seek to include all neighbourhoods, institutions and interested community groups in the implementation of the Strategy;

2.3. Encourage a diversity of residents to participate in the implementation of action items;

2.4. Support and inform City of London corporate efforts to implement the Strategy;

2.5. Facilitate stronger engagement with residents, community groups and institutions through relationships and networks identifying new opportunities for productive partnerships;

2.6. Participate in the implementation of the Strategy where they or the group they are a part of has an opportunity to implement a section of the Strategy.

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2.7 Monitor the implementation of the Strategy and report to City Council and the community on the progress of the actions.

Inventory

An inventory to identify potential sites for urban agriculture activities and current urban agriculture community assets was identified as an element of the Urban Agriculture Strategy. Through the development of the Strategy, an online Geographic Information System (GIS) tool has been developed to allow community members to identify locations they see as having potential for urban agriculture or sites where urban agriculture activities are occurring. This tool has already been used to connect one community group in the Southeast with a community member who had tools to assist in planting. The inventory remains available online (and is available via the Urban Agriculture Strategy webpage at: <http://www.arcgis.com/home/webmap/viewer.html?webmap=3e94014055ae462cba18d2937f75d93e&extent=-81.4701,42.9014,-80.997,43.0604>).

The long-term use of the inventory will continue as a 'living' document with the data shared amongst City and community partners. The Evergreen team has noted in other jurisdictions efforts to develop a comprehensive and static/paper inventory have been less effective than working directly with interested groups to find an appropriate location for their potential projects. It is suggested that the inventory continue to be maintained separately from the Strategy to be used as a data-sharing site with interested community groups such as the Friends of Urban Agriculture London and individuals providing information and updates.

PROCESS TO DATE

The Urban Agriculture Strategy development process was initiated as a result of two resolutions of Municipal Council. On September 1, 2015 Municipal Council resolved:

the Civic Administration BE DIRECTED to consult with key stakeholders and to report back at a future meeting of the appropriate standing committee, with respect to the feasibility of an overarching urban agriculture policy that will outline the following:

- i) an inventory of parcels of City-owned land that are potential location for urban farming;*
- ii) the role the City of London could play with regard to urban farming on public lands;*
- iii) a clear definition of "urban agriculture"; and,*
- iv) a review of the current license policies and by-laws to ensure that the City plays a role that does not hinder the various aspects of urban agriculture such as land preparation, food growth, food production and food sales. (2015-S12) (2/9/CPSC)*

On April 19, 2016, Municipal Council resolved:

that the Civic Administration BE DIRECTED to report back at a future meeting of the Planning and Environment Committee with respect to how the City can assist in facilitating community groups utilizing privately owned lands for the purposes of urban agriculture; it being noted that the attached communication was received from Councillor M. van Holst with respect to this matter.

that, for the purposes of urban agriculture, the Civic Administration BE DIRECTED to report back at a future meeting(s) of the appropriate committee with respect to how the City can assist community groups utilizing:

- i) privately-owned property; and/or*
- ii) the property at 31 Firestone Boulevard; it being noted that the attached communication was received from Councillor van Holst with respect to this matter.*

Terms of Reference

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Over the Summer of 2016, a draft Terms of Reference for the Urban Agriculture Strategy was prepared, which outlined the approach to be taken in the development of the City’s Urban Agriculture Strategy. The Terms of Reference was brought before the Planning and Environment Committee (PEC) on September 6, 2016 and received Council support for its circulation. A community meeting was held on September 29, 2016 and approximately 30 community members attended. Following modifications as a result of the community meeting, the final Terms of Reference was confirmed by PEC on December 12, 2016.

The City retained Evergreen as a community development consulting group to assist in the development of the strategy. The project team of Jo Flatt; Lauren Baker, PhD; and Ashlee Cooper brought significant food policy and community development expertise, led the strategy workshops, and played a large role in developing and writing the Strategy.

Project Kick-Off at *London’s Food Future*

The Urban Agriculture Strategy development process kicked-off on November 19, 2016 at London’s Food Future – a local conference on urban agriculture held at the Central Library hosted by Council’s Advisory Committee on the Environment, Agricultural Advisory Committee and the Trees and Forests Advisory Committee. Attendance for the conference was well over one hundred people. At this conference, City staff gave a presentation outlining the Strategy process and inviting the roughly 70 community members present to contribute to the Strategy’s development. The City Urban Agriculture Strategy team also hosted a booth to engage conference attendees. Attendees were encouraged to identify locations within the city where they would like urban agriculture initiatives, describe in writing the urban agriculture actions they would like, and/or draw visually the urban agriculture initiatives they would like to see in their community.

Community Visioning Workshop

The second event in the development of the Urban Agriculture Strategy was an all-day community visioning workshop hosted at Goodwill Industries on February 4, 2017. Ninety-six people registered from the community including gardeners, community organizations and a handful of representatives from neighbouring farm communities. The intention of this community meeting was to build the framework for the Strategy and identify the areas of greatest community support for future implementation. The day featured three distinct sessions.

The first was a brainstorming session to discuss guiding principles for the Strategy. The aim was to discuss the vision that would guide the Strategy’s development. These principles have been incorporated into the Strategy and provide an indication of the direction the community wants to see urban agriculture take in the long term and how potential issues should be addressed. The guiding principles direct how the Urban Agriculture Strategy should operate into the future.

The second activity was about defining the activities and initiatives community members wished to see. Centred around growing, processing and distributing (from the Terms of Reference) as well as food loss/recovery/waste reduction/compositing and education (identified over the strategy development process as additional areas of focus) participants were able to define those activities they felt were needed, or more those activities. This was followed by a dot-poll where participants were able to identify the activities they felt should be prioritized. Those that were not seen as priority remain in the Strategy through the “growing into the future” boxes, which note activities identified by the community that may form part of the urban agriculture landscape in the future. Those items that were identified through the poll as priorities were used in the final session.

The final session was about focusing on the priority action items and providing more detail in terms of what achieving them would entail. Each identified priority action had its own facilitator and participants were able to provide details around what a given action would require. Necessary

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steps and sub-actions were identified including barriers to overcome and actions to be taken by the community and the City. These priority actions are the action items that are identified in the Strategy.

The community visioning workshop was followed by an online survey emailed out to the participants and those who were unable to attend. Seventy-nine survey responses were received. This survey offered an opportunity to confirm the priorities established at the session, and for community members to provide more specific feedback where they felt necessary.

The next step was to develop the draft Strategy. A first draft was circulated internally in April 2017, to allow associated City departments a chance to view and comment on the proposed priority actions developed with the community over the process to that point. Minor adjustments were made in advance of the next set of public meetings.

Draft Strategy Review Community Meeting

Two meetings were held on May 11, 2017 to get feedback on the first draft of the Strategy. The first was hosted by the Advisory Committee on the Environment (also the lead on hosting the November conference where the process had its kick-off) with attendance from members of the Agricultural Advisory Committee and the Middlesex London Food Policy Council.

The second meeting on May 11, 2017 involved 70 registrants and was held in the evening at St. Peter’s Auditorium. The aim of this meeting was to discuss the roles and responsibilities in implementing the identified action items, confirm the action items accuracy and add or remove action items as necessary. Additional written comments were received following the meeting and were reflected in the draft circulated following the July 17, 2017 PEC meeting.

Draft Reviewed for Circulation

Following support from Council for its circulation on July 17, 2017 City staff have received comments from community members and City advisory committees. The comments received and their implications are discussed above.

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CONCLUSION

The Urban Agriculture Strategy represents the results of over a year of City and community effort to provide a comprehensive and collective direction for urban agriculture in London. The Strategy is accompanied by policy review and an inventory which will aid in implementation. The Strategy has prioritized the actions necessary and identified the roles and responsibilities to implement the actions to deliver the Urban Agriculture Strategy. The Terms of Reference for a steering committee provides for oversight and monitoring in implementation. The Urban Agriculture Strategy implements The London Plan by providing policy guidance on food systems and the Strategic Plan by strengthening our community.

PREPARED BY:	SUBMITTED BY:
LEIF MAITLAND PLANNER I LONG RANGE PLANNING AND RESEARCH	GREGG BARRETT, AICP MANAGER LONG RANGE PLANNING AND RESEARCH
RECOMMENDED BY:	
JOHN M. FLEMING, MCIP, RPP MANAGING DIRECTOR, PLANNING AND CITY PLANNER	

October 20, 2017

LM/LM

“Attach”

Appendix A: Urban Agriculture Strategy - Steering Committee Terms of Reference

Appendix B: Comments on the Draft Strategy

Schedule 1: Urban Agriculture Strategy – November 2017

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“Appendix A”

November 2017

Urban Agriculture Strategy - Steering Committee Terms of Reference

- 1.0. Overview of Urban Agriculture Strategy**
- 2.0. Purpose**
- 3.0. Steering Committee Membership and Term**
- 4.0. Selection of Steering Committee Members**
- 5.0. Time Commitment**
- 6.0. Steering Committee Conduct**

1.0. Overview of the Urban Agriculture Strategy

In October 2017, City Council endorsed the Urban Agriculture Strategy (“the Strategy”). The goal of this strategy is to provide guidance to the municipality and the diverse communities of London in creating a positive and enabling environment for urban agriculture by working together and supporting each other.

2.0 Purpose

The purpose of the Steering Committee is to support the implementation of the Urban Agriculture Strategy, to increase resident engagement, and to empower residents and community groups and institutions to participate in implementing the strategy by engaging in, promoting, supporting and otherwise ensuring the completion of action items set out within the strategy. Specifically, the Steering Committee will:

- 2.1. Engage residents and build awareness of the Urban Agriculture Strategy and programs across the city;
- 2.2. Seek to include all neighbourhoods, institutions and interested community groups in the implementation of the Strategy;
- 2.3. Encourage a diversity of residents to participate in the implementation of action items;
- 2.4. Support and inform City of London corporate efforts to implement the Strategy;
- 2.5. Facilitate stronger engagement with residents, community groups and institutions through relationships and networks identifying new opportunities for productive partnerships;
- 2.6. Participate in the implementation of the Strategy where they or the group they are a part of has an opportunity to implement a section of the Strategy.

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2.7 Monitor the implementation of the Strategy and report to City Council and the community on the progress of the actions.

3.0. Steering Committee Membership and Term

3.1 The membership of the Steering Committee has been defined to align with the purpose of monitoring and guiding the implementation of the Strategy. The term of Steering Committee members shall be the same as the term of Council, and members shall not sit for more than two consecutive terms.

The Steering Committee will be composed of representatives that meet the following criteria:

Up to two (2) community member(s) who holds membership in a community group dedicated to urban agriculture;

Up to two (2) community member(s) who operates a business involved in urban agriculture;

Up to two (2) community member(s) who works with or for a community group or institution which is involved in urban agriculture activities; and,

One (1) Representation from each of the following groups, with the Steering Committee member to be appointed by the group:

- Advisory Committee on the Environment
- Agricultural Advisory Committee
- The Middlesex-London Food Policy Council
- Western Fair Association

The Steering Committee may invite the participation of members from the following Advisory Committees as requested from time to time to assist in the implementation of the strategy. These representatives shall be appointed by the Advisory Committee, but the representative shall not be a member of the Steering Committee.

- Accessibility Advisory Committee
- Animal Welfare Advisory Committee
- Trees and Forests Advisory Committee
- Environmental and Ecological Planning Advisory Committee

There shall be no remuneration for any member of the Steering Committee.

3.2 Civic administration will be represented by an identified staff member for support from each of the following City of London Divisions:

- Planning
- Neighbourhood, Children and Fire Services
- Environmental and Engineering Services
- Parks and Recreation

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4.0. Selection of Steering Committee Members

4.1. Steering Committee members shall be selected from a qualified pool of candidates and approved by Council upon the recommendation of the Managing Director, Planning and City Planner, in consultation with the Managing Director, Neighbourhood, Children and Fire Services and the Managing Director, Parks and Recreation.

4.2 In establishing the Steering Committee, priority will be given to achieve a membership which reflects the demographic diversity of the London.

5.0 Time Commitment

5.1 The Steering Committee will meet no more than four (4) times a year.

5.2 The Steering Committee will prepare one report to Council in the 4th quarter of each year to provide an update to Council and the community on the progress of the Urban Agriculture Strategy actions.

6.0. Steering Committee Conduct

6.1. Members of the Steering Committee will work to equally promote all aspects of the Urban Agriculture Strategy and will not advocate for personal projects.

6.2 The conduct of the Steering Committee members shall be in keeping with Council Policy.

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**“Appendix B”
Comments on the Draft Strategy
Advisory Committee on the Environment**

ACE Comments on the Urban Agriculture Strategy (Sept 6 2017)

Document link...

<https://www.london.ca/business/Planning-Development/current-topics/Documents/UAS-Draft-July-17-17.pdf>

Prepared with feedback from ACE Members

1. ACE commends the various engagement tools that were used in developing this strategy, especially
 - a. The development of a specific email list to which updates were sent.
 - b. “Save the date” notices that allowed those interested to plan ahead for meetings 3-6 weeks in advance.
 - c. The support of a joint advisory committee meeting on the strategy May 11, 2017 which allowed members of different advisory committees to meet in person, network and provide feedback in a timely manner at that stage.
2. ACE commends the effort put into this document which has significantly improved since the last draft.
3. ACE recommends that the following are addressed in the final version of the document:
 - a. The addition of specific targets and timelines. (e.g. by 2030 there will be a community garden and food forest in every neighbourhood; by 2018 the by-law to allow end of drive-way food sales will be rewritten, etc.). Measurable outcomes should also be specified.
 - b. Details on how the strategy will be funded. Ideally, a draft budget attached to the plan addressing funding for 2017 to 2019. As well as a funding proposal for the next 4 year budget starting 2020.
 - c. Recognition that where a role of “community leads” or “community partners with the city” is noted, that it is still important the city be involved and/or provide initiation, facilitation and leadership support as needed to support projects.
 - d. Incorporate a clear list (or map) of potential urban ag inventory parcels (with address) as asked in the original council resolution. This should appear in the strategy document in addition to being available on-line.
 - e. Include tangible action items on how we incorporate traditional knowledge on food systems within urban agriculture in London.
 - f. As the strategy evolves that links to rural resources be considered.
 - g. Encourage and expand upon the involvement of community organizations and businesses. Specifically mention Western Fair.
 - h. Encourage and further emphasize organic and/or sustainable practices.
 - i. In the Urban “Foodscaping” section incorporate in the chart points safety / logistical considerations regarding the location and maintenance of public foodscaping. For example, the location of utilities must be considered. Locates would be required prior to creating gardens due to underground risk and that there are standards related to tree species and locations relative to the overhead hydro distribution systems.
 - j. The strategy specifically states which advisory committees will be advised of updates/ future actions related to the strategy including the annual report mentioned. (page 34 /

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Section 3 of Moving Forward) To include at minimum, ACE, Agriculture, Animal Welfare, Accessibilty, EEPAC, Trees & Forests.

4. ACE recommends that the statement “Identify a City of London service area to coordinate...” (p34 Section 3 of Moving Forward) be more detailed. Staff resources – not just the service area should be clearly identified to support future development of the urban agriculture strategy and related actions. Ideally - a full-time staff person (or equivalent) should be dedicated to future support.
5. ACE recommends that all key documents sourced in the strategy (especially the food charter and food policy council related documents) are added and/or links clearly identified on the city’s main urban agriculture webpage.
6. ACE requests additional information regarding the Urban Agriculture Steering Committee be provided to them including the member make up of that committee.

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Animal Welfare Advisory Committee

Recommendations from The Animal Welfare Advisory Committee regarding the London Urban Agriculture Strategy Draft:

-it is the view of the Animal Welfare Advisory Committee, that they must be involved in process of the provision of policy and standards recommendations for ensuring animal welfare as it relates to urban agriculture.

Backyard Chickens pilot project:

Advise that there be no change to the current bylaw prohibiting backyard chickens for the following reasons:

-the current standard for handling, housing, and kept chickens does not meet the welfare needs of chickens.

-concerns regarding the risks to chickens in extreme weather conditions. Animal rescuers have raised concerns regarding admissions for chickens with frostbite. Keeping backyard hens requires a specialized level of education to ensure the health and welfare of the chickens is met. The optimal range in temperature for chickens is between 12-21 degrees Celsius. Without protection above or below this ideal range, they may suffer heat exhaustion and death at temperatures over 29 degrees Celsius, the inability to maintain body temperature at 0 degrees Celsius and frostbite and hypothermia at -9 degrees Celsius. (<http://www.chickenrunrescue.org/>)

-rodenticides/"pest control" methods can cause harm to both non target wildlife and domestic pets and also affect the health and welfare of non-target animals.

-wildlife are too often viewed as "pests" and the potential for trapping, killing, or relocating wildlife due to improper housing/security of chickens/chicken feed storage/refuse increases, adversely affecting wildlife. Our current wildlife conflict policy states that wildlife must not be intentionally injured, orphaned, or displaced and must be respected.

-insufficient avenues for the provision of both veterinary care and shelter resources for those birds whose welfare has been jeopardized. At present, there are no veterinarians within the city who specialize in the treatments of chickens. There is also the concern of whether urban poultry owners would aim to receive appropriate and/or prompt care should their animal become ill.

-Mailing of Chickens: Canada Post offers mail service for day old chicks as to courier companies. This can leave animals with the possibilities of suffocation, starvation, as well as the impacts of temperature variation and physical injury. (See: <https://www.canadapost.ca/tools/pg/manual/PGnonmail-e.asp#1378261>)

-Disposal of spent backyard chickens: After two years of age the production of eggs is drastically reduced and at this point most chickens are considered spent. Unwanted hens can be abandoned, kept in inhumane circumstance and/or sold at open market as well as left in the care of the London Animal Care Centre who does not currently have housing for such.

-Rental Chickens: A company serving southern Ontario who offers chickens on a rental basis seasonally. There is a lack of information as to what happens to the chickens when they are spent.

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-urban wildlife conflicts increase when attractants are present in the environment. As London is home to natural predators of chickens such as skunks, raccoons, coyotes, etc., there is a potential that these animals may prey on backyard chickens increasing potential incidents of human/wildlife conflicts. Additionally, mice and rats as well as flies and other insects are attracted to both the food and droppings and often remain in unwanted areas around homes, under porches, in sheds, backyards and garages creating what many homeowners may see as 'pest' problem.

-increased burden placed upon Animal Services, lack of shelters/rescues, and by law officers to attend to the welfare protection and enforce standards for backyard chickens. Bylaws prohibiting the keeping of pigs have remained in place due to the same concerns.

-risks of predation on quails and chickens by companion cats and dogs, wildlife.

-the use of the word "pest" in this document to describe wildlife who come into direct conflict with residents due to inadvertent attractants adversely affects how our urban wildlife are viewed by the public and such language puts the onus on wildlife to avoid conflict, rather than on residents to ensure attractants are not provided and that chickens, by products, feed, etc. are properly secured.

-concern exists regarding the ethics and welfare of mailing chickens, as well as the welfare of chickens who have reached the average of two year egg laying peak and the potential for abandonment, slaughter, or need to be sheltered.

-how will welfare concerns such as inadequate husbandry practices will be dealt with. London Animal Care and Control, as well as animal shelters are already often overburdened with regards to domestic animals not properly cared for, abandoned, or mistreated.

-raising quails and chickens require a high degree of animal husbandry knowledge.

-zoonosis such as avian flu between urban kept birds and wild flocks, waterfowl, and the commercial industry. <http://extension.oregonstate.edu/gardening/keep-backyard-chickens-away-waterfowl-protect-against-avian-flu>

-Public Health Concerns:

-Public health concerns for humans and companion animals as it relates to the keeping of quails and chickens: See <http://www.cbc.ca/news/health/salmonella-outbreak-linked-to-live-chicks-at-alberta-hatchery-1.3087825>: **"The Public Health Agency of Canada is investigating a salmonella outbreak linked to live chicks at an Alberta hatchery"**. The public health agency was quoted "Children under five years old, pregnant women, the elderly and people with weak immune systems shouldn't handle or touch live poultry" and "Since live animals can transmit the bacteria in their feces, you can also contract salmonella from a bird, its droppings or from environments where birds have been." "Veterinarians have also advised precautions, such as avoiding contact with dogs and cats less than six months old, reptiles, amphibians, rodents and chicks or ducklings, especially in homes with very young children or high-risk patients, including those being treated for cancer."

Salmonella Infection: Between Jan 4th-May 13 2017 the CDC reports 352 cases of Salmonella Infection associated with contact of backyard flocks. Out of this number, 71 have required hospitalization & 36% of those infected were children under 5 years of age. This number increases to 961 cases, 215 hospitalizations as well as one death as of July 13th of this year. (<https://www.cdc.gov/salmonella/live-poultry-06-17/index.html>)

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Food Safety: Provincially, urban egg producers can only sell their ungraded eggs for a consumers own use under certain circumstances (eggs must be clean, not leaking and sold only from the producer’s premises). All poultry sold in Ontario is required to be inspected by a meat inspector & slaughtered at a licensed abattoir. (<http://www.omafra.gov.on.ca/english/livestock/urbanagricul.html>) As access to such may prove difficult to the average chicken owner, this can raise a concern regarding the safety of the food should chicken owners choose to use ‘backyard slaughter’ as a method of disposal for food purposes. There are ample resources online as to how to “quickly and easily slaughter your own chicken”.

Concerns Regarding Bee Keeping:

Bee Keeping and its impact on native pollinators informed by a local and recent study and article quoted as:

10.1111/cobi.12839. “Questioning public perception, conservation policy, and recovery actions for honeybees in North America” By Sheila R. Colla & J. Scott MacIvor, Faculty of Environmental Studies, York University Ontario, Canada as follows:

“Although losses of managed honeybee colonies are recorded annually, we argue that honeybee losses are not a conservation problem, but instead a domesticated animal management issue. By focusing attention on honeybees, policies and subsequent resources may undermine native bee conservation and have negative impacts ecologically and socially. The popularity of hobby and commercial beekeeping outside of intensive agricultural systems has increased dramatically (Moore & Kosut 2013). Of concern is that beekeepers are increasingly given access to natural areas (e.g. PPAP 2016) often without prior environmental impact assessments or ongoing monitoring of native bee communities. These initiatives are often portrayed as conservation initiatives; to ‘save the bees’, increase wildflower pollination, and connect with nature. From a beekeeper’s perspective, bringing hives into natural or urban areas can decrease exposure to agrochemicals and increases access to floral diversity for honey production and nutrition (Lorenz & Stark 2015). However, these habitats are usually high in native bee diversity (e.g. Hendrix et al 2010; Bates et al 2011; Tonietto et al. 2011; Murray et al 2012; Fortel et al. 2014) and not pollinator-limited (Wagenius & Lyon 2010; Williams & Winfree 2013).

While honeybees have received significant positive press and public support there are important yet often ignored, reasons why increasing their numbers outside of intensive agricultural systems should be avoided. Honeybees have large colonies and have become invasive in many regions outside of their Old World origin (Cane, 2003; Moritz et al. 2005; Aizen & Harder, 2009). Honeybees are prone to a number of diseases which can vary in prevalence due to many factors. For example, Youngsteadt et al. (2015) found worker survival decreased significantly with increased urbanization and management suggesting that strict regulation and training of beekeepers are needed. Additionally, lab studies show honeybee diseases can transfer to other species (Hoffman et al. 2008; Graystock et al. 2016), though there are many knowledge gaps surrounding the impacts of this on wild populations, increasing the number of hives in cities or natural areas could lead to sources of diseases into surrounding areas. In addition to disease transmission, honeybees compete with wild bees for pollen and nectar (Kato et al. 1999; Dupont et al. 2003, Paini, 2005; Watts et al. 2012; Hudewenz & Klein, 2013). A typical apiary of 40 hives removes the equivalent of the larval mass pollen provisions of 4,000,000 solitary bees (Cane & Tepedino 2016). Honeybees can forage 2-3 km covering large fragmented areas and visit thousands of flowering species (Beekman & Ratnieks, 2000). Once a good food source is found, they recruit colony mates to maximize pollen and nectar foraging (Seeley et al. 1991). This has negative impacts on native bees; for example, Thomson (2004, 2006) documented declines in foraging activity of native bees with proximity to honeybee colonies, especially among species active at the end of the summer.”

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Risks to native plant and natural ecosystems: “There are also potentially important impacts on native plant communities and natural ecosystems with the introduction of honeybee colonies. For example, honeybees can facilitate invasive plants through pollination that enhances seed set and out competition of native vegetation (Barthell et al. 2001).”

Societal Impacts: “areas where there is high human density, sting risk and anaphylactic reactions might also increase. More nuanced is the growing disconnect people may have with understanding the importance of native biodiversity and ecosystem integrity. The act of beekeeping under the auspice that one is ‘saving the bees’ is akin to domesticating nature, whereby natural processes are lost in exchange for human welfare (Kareiva et al. 2007). Redirecting public attention and policy away from domesticated honeybee management to evidence-based conservation management is critical for pollinator biodiversity, which will benefit native plant communities and increase the resilience of our agricultural and natural ecosystems.”

Fruit Trees and plant based foods:

-concern regarding fallen fruit/decomposing fruits and vegetables/inadequate composting practices and containment as it relates to attracting wildlife and increasing wildlife conflicts.

-the use of the word “pest” should not be used for the purpose of the London Urban Agriculture Strategy, which further perpetuates negative views and impacts for urban wildlife and insects that are important to healthy urban ecosystems.

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Accessibility Advisory Committee

August 8, 2017

City of London, Advisory Committee on the Environment

Att'n: Susan Ratz, ACE Chair

Re: **ACCAC Review – Urban Agriculture Strategy (UAS), July, 2017**

Thank-you for your recent request (July 31st) for our Accessibility Advisory Committee (ACCAC) to review your most recent Draft UAS document with regards to inclusive strategies and/or design elements.

Once again though, timing for this review is a challenge for us as your requested response date of August 8th pre-dates our next scheduled meeting. However, in this regard we have circulated your draft version amongst 4 notable members of our committee (listed below) for their input going forward.

Background is that through our Built-Environment Sub-Committee we were able to review and provide input towards your document through the first draft of the Urban Agriculture Strategy – Terms of Reference (dated 2016-11-08).

From that review we presented a three-part Motion to Council within the minutes of our Jan 26, 2017 meeting.

<http://sire.london.ca/advisory/mtgviewer.aspx?meetid=1422&doctype=MINUTES>

Namely: The following actions be taken with respect to the Built Environment and Facilities Sub-Committee reports from the meetings held on December 12, 2016 and January 9, 2017:

- a) a member of ACCAC BE REQUESTED to attend the upcoming Urban Agriculture Planning Meeting to be held on February 4, 2017; it being noted that if a member of ACCAC is not able to attend, a member of the Urban Agriculture Planning Meeting will come to the February ACCAC meeting to give an update;
- b) the Urban Agriculture Team BE REVISED to include ACCAC as a Council Committee “stakeholder” that supports an Urban Agriculture Strategy that recognizes accessibility and provides inclusive design considerations for our community; and,
- c) prior to the development of a newly constructed Urban Agriculture project location, the ACCAC BE PROVIDED with a proposed site plan for review and opportunity for comments related to design considerations for accessibility.

In review of this final strategy draft, we (the undersigned) note that at no place within your strategy do you reference any legal, social, or practical obligations to meet the requirements of the AODA (Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act) or the City’s Inclusive Community. Although broad references are made to accessibility through the ideals and benefits of Urban Agriculture (page 4, 6th bullet point) (page 6 speech bubble), as representatives of ACCAC we would like to see that a stronger and more direct connection is presented to confirm that the needs and benefits of accessibility and inclusive use are being recognized through all stages of your strategic plan.

Note: just as with the City’s Community Garden projects, we see any/all Urban Garden opportunities as inclusive of the City’s mandated requirements for Built-Environment “Facilities” in terms of both the AODA Legislation and its present Facilities and Design Standard (FADS, 2007).

Suggestions would be that:

- a) within the descriptive paragraph of your governance (page 34, par. 3, point 2), instead of the general statement that “appropriate City of London Advisory Committees” will be included,

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you specifically name the individual Committee(s) that will be represented and include ACCAC as a supportive stakeholder*

- b) within the descriptive paragraph of your steering committee (page 49, composition), instead of the general statement that “appropriate City Advisory Committees” will be included, you specifically name the individual Committee(s) that will be represented and include ACCAC as a supportive stakeholder*
- c) that within your various Policy Considerations “best practices and references” that both the AODA legislation and the City of London’s Accessibility Plan be given credit for assuring that inclusive design and communication considerations will be recognized at all levels of implementation

* Note: the above referenced term “supportive stakeholder” should not imply that a member of ACCAC need be directly connected with your Steering Committee as a sitting member. Our intent is that with regards to accessibility our committee will be available, upon request, to provide assistance towards that goal as an advisory resource.

Trust this note helps present our position in this regard. And we look forward to further development of Urban Agriculture for our city.

Sincerely,
 Michael Dawthorne, ACCAC,
 Committee Chair Jacqueline Madden,
 ACCAC, Committee Vice-Chair
 Jim Sanders, ACCAC, Chair of the Built-Environment Sub-
 Committee Michael Cairns, ACCAC, Chair of the Policy Sub-
 Committee

Email: accessibility@london.ca
 Phone: 519-661-2500 ext 2425

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Environmental and Ecological Planning Advisory Committee

EEPAC Working Group Comments on Draft Urban Agriculture Strategy

Reviewed by: C. Dyck, E. Dusenge, and J. Stinziano

The document was well-written and thorough. However, some concerns have been identified, and need to be clearly addressed.

Concerns are summarized into five main points:

Pesticides

Foremost, it should be encouraged that the projects be as organic and environmentally sensitive as possible (i.e. no use of chemical fertilizers or pesticides). On city property it would be assumed that pesticides are off limits as the city pushed to ban lawn spraying, etc. However, those requirements should be clearly outlined.

As mentioned in the document (Page 12), the soil tests will be key. Growing food in traditionally urban soils may increase the risk of exposure to industrial pollutants and pesticides/herbicides that may be banned from traditional agriculture.

If using compost on land growing food for consumers, the pesticide load of the compost and its influence on pesticides in the soils it is used on needs to be considered.

Native plant species:

It should be highly encouraged to promote edible native species. This could have several positive outcomes including helping pollinators and preserving knowledge of indigenous plant species that have perhaps been forgotten.

Urban livestock:

Due to the risk of animal-to-human disease transmission, urban livestock rearing should have a health and safety regulatory framework in place BEFORE it is permitted (page 13).

Due to the presence of chicken feed, rats regularly become a problem around chicken coups. Perhaps the city should look into how it would deal with that particular problem as an explosion of rats within the city would not be good.

ESAs

Urban agriculture projects should be separated from ESAs. The minimum distance from ESAs, according to the city regulations, should be taken into account. Potential problems that would arise due to proximity of urban agriculture projects to ESAs include potential invasion of non-native, invasive plant species, and also potential pollution from runoffs with traditional fertilizers and manure. Therefore, the final plan with city regulations may have to be more clear, such that private land owners next to an ESA can't raise any form of livestock or cannot plant certain non-native and invasive species within a certain distance of an ESA.

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Human health

There is only minimal consideration for human health impacts from mismanagement of urban agriculture (e.g. soil pollutants, animal-to-human disease transmission, pesticides in composting materials). There really should be more consideration of these impacts in the document.

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Community Comments

Good evening,

I am a resident of London, Ontario and have been watching as other cities within our province have passed by-laws to allow their residents to have backyard chickens. I have a good sized vegetable garden in my backyard, which I use to feed my family of 5, and am very much in favour of allowing residents to have backyard chickens. As other municipalities have recognized, there are many benefits to helping citizens become more agrarian.

Please keep me informed of any changes or opportunities to provide input as they become available.

Kind regards,

Andrea Vincent

TO: Leif Maitland

Aug. 31, 2017

Having read over briefly the Draft Strategy on Urban Agriculture, I find it to be unacceptable in its current scope. I feel it is paperwork with no clear benefit to London. Nothing is slated for change, it is all ideas.

I request to know the cost of this to taxpayers. Note I will be sending a briefer version of this to city Councillors.

The draft needs detail, and most importantly it need to be a STRATEGY and have an ACTION PLAN that involves specific actions. I believe the current document does not satisfy the dictionary definitions:

strategy: a careful plan or method for achieving a particular goal usually over a long period of time

action plan: A sequence of steps that must be taken, or activities that must be performed well, for a strategy to succeed. An action plan has three major elements

- (1) Specific tasks: what will be done and by whom.
- (2) Time horizon: when will it be done.
- (3) Resource allocation: what specific funds are available for specific activities

I had made this comment before and sent it out, and note that there were some additions of relevant statistics concerning London and Ontario, which is a good start; but the document remains pretty much devoid of figures and facts as to WHO is going to do WHAT by WHEN. These are essential to a “strategy”. Name the people, the institutions, the targets, some methods of monitoring.

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I was going to make a list of items that I thought should be addressed, but this is the job of the people hired to do the strategy. Instead, I will refer to the format of the Draft Strategy for a Waste-Free Ontario:

http://www.downloads.ene.gov.on.ca/envision/env_reg/er/documents/2015/012-5834_DraftStrategy.pdf

Note the use of many statistics, the use of timelines, charts, and section 4.0 Measuring Progress

I take particular issue with page 31 regarding the education of children in schools and the providing of gardening opportunities for children. According to the “dotmocracy” done by Evergreen (I have photos) one of the TOP concerns of people was this topic, yet the chart says the community is going to lead this massive undertaking? I don’t believe we said this. If that is Evergreen’s interpretation, I believe the wording was not right and would like to see this topic addressed again publicly. In fact, I think that whole final meeting was rather confused and got mired in the giant graph pages of paperwork. Our group did not complete, we found some questions unclear.

Also, more mention of greenhouse gas reduction and planned waste reduction figures need to be estimated and acted upon.

It is the age of computers, we have tons of figures; where is the data?

A quick fact I gleaned (from one of the government pages) that is relevant to London, where jobs are so scarce:

Every 1,000 tonnes of waste diverted from landfill generates seven full-time jobs, \$360,000 in wages (paying above the provincial average) and \$711,000 in GDP. Perhaps someone can tell us how many London jobs we can create by this?

I think we now have a good OUTLINE of a draft for an urban agriculture strategy. I propose some city staff, and educated persons (be they staff or students) from Western and Fanshawe use more London-based information to bring this draft up to a higher standard that will make it a more usable document. A strategy.

I am calculating my own garden production this year in order to better it by far next year. I am well aware of the health benefits of local, organically grown food, and the impact this can have on the planet if done widely. Not to mention food security, poverty reduction, sense of community, etc.

In closing, I apologize for taking what may seem like a harsh stance on this issue. But rather than try to calculate the tipping point of climate change, or the number of children now with unexplained IBS and obesity; there are lots of numbers we could examine. I would prefer those numbers to be calculations aimed at improvement in pollution levels, our health, and the health of coming generations...

...and to see some of those positive number goals in our UA draft.

Sincerely,

Kathryn O’Neill

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Dear Leif,

It is with a sense of pride of my city that I am able to give comment on the Urban Agriculture Strategy. I comment as a stakeholder: I was born in London and raised in small towns and villages around its North-West. After many years of living and traveling abroad, I recently bought a house in the Old East Village and have happily returned to London and made it my home again.

I support the Urban Agriculture Strategy. Living in New Orleans, LA, from 2011-2015 I was able to witness and participate in, an urban farming boom. As an urban farmer myself and an active community member, I saw first hand the power of urban agricultural practices to fertilize some of the most essential and valuable social, environmental, and economic components of a community. The proposed strategy speaks to this and outlines a process that I have seen successfully implemented in another community. I believe wholeheartedly that the proposed strategy it would be a healthy for London to adopt. I would like to offer some specific support to the urban livestock initiative since it may receive the biggest opposition. I understand some concerns about the well-being of neighbours of urban farmers with livestock and the voices of the concerned should be heard and considered. However, a harmonious co-existence between farmers and non-farmers can be found in urban neighbourhoods, even when livestock are involved.

Don't hesitate if I can be of further support in any way,

Ben Haffie (aka Ellio Blox)

Comments:

1. Strategy lacks targets and timelines. (e.g. by 2030 there will be a community garden and food forest in every neighbourhood; by 2018 the by-law to allow end of drive-way food sales will be rewritten, by 2018 Backyard hen pilot project will be in place, etc).
2. Strategy lacks dollars and cents (budget) attached to this ambitious plan.
3. Strategy does not have a clear list (or map) of potential urban ag inventory parcels (with address) as asked in the original council resolution. This should appear in the strategy document and not just on-line somewhere.
4. There are no tangible action items on how we incorporate traditional knowledge on food systems within urban agriculture in London.
5. UAS should be supported by a full-time staff person.
6. All UA documents and relevant programs should be linked on the city's main urban agriculture webpage.
7. Identify sister cities like Curitiba, Brazil in the UAS that would allow the sharing of information and best practices related to UA
8. Identify UA as an ecosystem service providing goods and services to Londoners along other ecosystem service providers like forests and wetlands (UA should be highlighted with other green infrastructure elements as providing economic value and therefore elevated in terms of planning decisions).

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Hi Leif;

I apologize for the delay in sending this email regarding the Urban Agriculture Strategy.

On page 14. Case Studies; under "Growing into the future" there is mention of "Green roof Bylaw requiring developers to include green roofs and/or living walls in developments". The strategy is open to removing obstacles, allowing for the growth and expansion of Urban Agriculture. The city has offered incentives to developers to implement "Green strategies since at least 2012. Perhaps, more direct incentives toward green roofs (green houses on top floor of buildings) and living walls would be more practical than a new bylaw. If incentives are not going to accomplish this than stronger policy and perhaps a new bylaw would be required. This type of infrastructure helps cool the heat island of cities as well as opening up space for Urban Agriculture.

In section 2. Resource Sharing pg 17 of the draft, there is mention that seeds and tools should be available to the public at no cost.

I would like to see "no cost" deleted from this statement. This would not eliminate the possibility of "no cost to users" but it would reflect the reality that our economy requires there to be a cost, whether private or public funds are used, to be sustainable. I will bring the event equipment that the City loans to people hosting community events to your attention. While this was a free service, there is now a cost to cover expenses.

Thanks,

Stephen Harroff