

# COMMITTEE REPORT



**Date:** November 14, 2019

**RIM No.** 1210-22

**To:** Agricultural Advisory Committee (AAC)

**From:** Policy & Planning Department (TG)

**Application:** Agriculture Plan Progress                      **Applicant:** City of Kelowna

**Subject:** Agriculture Plan Progress Report

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## 1.0 Purpose

That the Agricultural Advisory Committee receives, for information, the report from the Policy and Planning Department, dated November 14, 2019, with respect to progress on implementing the recommended actions in the Agriculture Plan.

## 2.0 Proposal

### 2.1 Background

Endorsed by Council in August 2017, the Agriculture Plan has a vision that *"Kelowna is a resilient, diverse, and innovative agricultural community that celebrates farming and values farmland and food producers as integral to our healthy food system, economy and culture."* The Plan includes 52 recommendations that the City can take a lead role in implementing under four themes:

1. Strengthen local policies and regulations to protect agriculture;
2. Stewarding natural resources and the environment for food production;
3. Improving awareness of local agriculture and access to local food; and
4. Fostering and sustaining farm business and farmland.

The Agriculture Plan divides the actions into two separate categories. The first are actions that can be undertaken using existing staff resources. Most of these actions can be achieved with existing financial resources. The second category includes actions that require additional staff and/or financial resources to be achieved. The actions in each of the categories are then organized according to an implementation timeline:

- **Ongoing actions:** Actions that are required to be addressed throughout the life of the plan
- **Phase 1 (2017 – 2019):** This phase tackles the short-term high priority and short-term medium priority actions with a completion goal of one to two years after the Plan's endorsement.
- **Phase 2 (2020 – 2022):** This phase includes medium term medium priority actions. The goal is to address these actions approximately three to five years after the Plan's endorsement.
- **Phase 3 (2023 – 2027):** This phase addresses actions that are longer term in nature, approximately five to ten years after the Plan's endorsement.

## 2.2 Progress on actions

As summarized in Table 1 below, many of the Agriculture Plan's actions have been successfully implemented (Attachment A: *Agriculture Plan Implementation Progress* provides further details about the status of each of the actions).

**Table 1: Status Summary of Agriculture Plan Actions**

	Actions to be achieved with existing staff resources <i>(some actions may require additional budget)</i>				Actions to be achieved with additional staff and/or financial resources			
	Completed	In progress / ongoing	Not started	Total actions	Completed	In progress / ongoing	Not started / not proceeding	Total actions
Ongoing	1	8	0	9	0	2	2	4
Phase 1 (2017 – 2019)	13	0	0	13	5	3	4	12
Phase 2 (2020 – 2022)	1	2	3	6	1	1	3	5
Phase 3 (2023 – 2027)	0	2	0	2	0	0	1	1
<b>Total</b>	<b>15</b>	<b>12</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>30</b>	<b>6</b>	<b>6</b>	<b>10</b>	<b>22</b>

Of the actions that could be achieved with existing staff resources, all of Phase 1 and most of the ongoing actions have been implemented. In addition, five actions from Phase 2 and Phase 3 have been started or accomplished ahead of schedule.

Of the actions that require additional resources, twelve of the twenty-two actions have been started or completed. This is success in itself as these actions were executed without any additional staff or financial resources being committed to the Agriculture Plan implementation. This accomplishment was the result of staff from Policy and Planning and Development Planning working collaboratively to incorporate recommended Zoning Bylaw updates with other policy updates completed in 2018. Further, the Ministry of Agriculture and Agriculture Land Commission (ALC) have introduced several new regulations, achieving some of the Plan's recommendations initially intended for City staff to investigate. The ALC Act and ALR Use Regulations now require a maximum 500 m<sup>2</sup> total floor area for new homes (action 1.3b) and rules for removal or placement of soil (action 1.4f) on ALR properties.

Some of the Plan's implementation successes have included:

- 15 actions completed as part of the Agriculture Plan Policy Implementation amendments to the OCP and Zoning Bylaw adopted October 1, 2018;
- 3 actions are ongoing or in progress in conjunction with Kelowna International Airport including Farm to Flight and minimizing impacts to agriculture during expansion;
- 4 actions are ongoing or in progress related to agriculture water supply including initial engagement on water rate design as part of the SEKID/SOMID water integration project; and

- 1 action ongoing related to reducing smoke from agricultural wood waste burning by continuing to offer the Agriculture Wood Waste Chipping Program and introducing the mow/chip/rent-it rebate for farmers.

### 2.3 Evaluating Success

The Agriculture Plan includes a “Monitoring and Evaluation Strategy” to determine the progress of the Plan over time. Some of the measures are available annually or at the end of each Phase, but others rely on data available in five year or more increments, such as the federal Census of Agriculture or the provincial Agricultural Land Use Inventory. Attachment B summarizes the performance status of each of the indicators for phase 1 illustrating whether they are performing in the right direction, minimal change or performing in the wrong direction.

#### **5 indicators performing in the right direction**

1. **Number of completed actions.** One of the biggest successes to date, and the area the City has the most influence over, has been the number of Plan’s actions that have been completed. Forty per cent of all the Plan’s actions were completed during Phase 1 despite any additional resources being committed to the Plan’s implementation, exceeding the Plan’s target by ten percentage points. When including “ongoing actions” and “actions that are in progress”, this number jumps to seventy-five per cent, a target identified for the end of Phase 2 if the City invested additional staff and/or financial resources, which to date has not happened.
2. **Number of ongoing actions.** Sixty two percent of the ongoing actions are being implemented, nearly doubling the target set in the Plan.
3. **Compliance and Enforcement.** To ensure farmland is available for farming, 21 compliance and enforcement files for contraventions to the ALC Act, have been closed since the beginning of 2017. This is far beyond the five targeted for phase 1 in the Agriculture Plan. The success of the compliance and enforcement program is due in part to a permanent ALC Compliance and Enforcement Officer being based in the region. The success is also due to City Bylaw, Licensing and Planning staff meeting monthly with the Compliance and Enforcement Officer to identify problem sites and establish actions to bring properties into compliance.
4. **OCP amendments outside the Permanent Growth Boundary.** Since the Plan’s inception, only one OCP amendment has occurred outside the Permanent Growth Boundary (PGB) which was a designation change from single two unit residential to multiple unit residential. Although this designation change occurred in an area adjacent to agricultural lands, it is not anticipated to have an impact on agriculture as it has been found that there are less conflicts and complaints from those living adjacent to agricultural lands in higher density types of housing than there are from single family homes on larger properties.<sup>1</sup>


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<sup>1</sup> Ministry of Agriculture, *Guide to Edge Planning: Promoting Compatibility Along Agricultural-Urban Edges*, [https://www2.gov.bc.ca/assets/gov/farming-natural-resources-and-industry/agriculture-and-seafood/agricultural-land-and-environment/strengthening-farming/planning-for-agriculture/823100-3\\_edge\\_guide\\_2015.pdf](https://www2.gov.bc.ca/assets/gov/farming-natural-resources-and-industry/agriculture-and-seafood/agricultural-land-and-environment/strengthening-farming/planning-for-agriculture/823100-3_edge_guide_2015.pdf), page 10

5. **Changing Future Land Use Designation from Resource Protection.** Most agricultural properties are given the designation of Resource Protection in the Official Community Plan. In the past two years, zero parcels have changed from Resource Protection to another future land use designation.

**1 indicator with minimal change** 

1. **Farmland preservation.** The number of hectares of land in the ALR and/or land Zoned A1 have remained relatively constant since the Agriculture Plan's endorsement

**3 indicators performing in the wrong direction** 

1. **Land acreage in production.** This is an area that the City has the least influence over. While farmland can be preserved, the City does not have the ability to ensure it is actively farmed. The number of hectares in production has declined 7.2 per cent since 2017. This number is tracked through BC Assessment and when examining the data back to 2011 reveals annual variability in the indicator, although nowhere near the degree experienced over the past two years. The biggest decline was between 2017 and 2018 (14.0 per cent in the number of hectares farmed) so it is encouraging to see this number starting to rebound. This indicator should continue to be tracked annually and supplemented with provincial Agriculture Land Use Inventory and Census data when it becomes available to have a better overall understanding of active farming in Kelowna.
2. **Active farms.** The number of active farm operations has declined 3.9 per cent over the past two years. Like the land acreage in production indicator, this indicator varies year to year and should continue to be tracked annually and supplemented with other data as it becomes available.
3. **Retail opportunities for local food.** As the action to update the Business Licence Bylaw to include local food sales has not been implemented yet this indicator is performing in the wrong direction. It should be noted that this action was identified as needing additional resources to achieve, and will be reviewed in Phase 2.

### **3.0 Next Steps**

Phase 2 of the Agriculture Plan is from 2020 to 2022. In the immediate future, work will focus on completing those actions that are currently in progress as well as continue to implement ongoing actions. Many of the remaining actions, however, will require additional resources, either financial and/or staff to be undertaken. Funding and resourcing options will be investigated and budget requests for individual actions will be made as part of the normal budget cycle in 2021 or beyond.

**Report prepared by:**

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Tracy Guidi, Sustainability Coordinator

**Reviewed by:**

Danielle Noble-Brandt, Policy & Planning Department Manager

**Approved for Inclusion:**

Alex Kondor, Acting Agriculture Manager

**Attachments:**

Attachment A: Agriculture Plan Implementation Progress

Attachment B: Agriculture Plan Performance Indicators