

Appendix B: Agriculture Plan Update Final Key Areas and Recommended Actions DRAFT

Introduction

Over the last year, several engagement events have taken place to craft a vision statement, identify key priority areas, and develop a list of recommended actions to include in the Agriculture Plan Update. Based on this process, four themes and associated actions have been developed. Priority actions are those that the City is able to take a leadership role in from a jurisdictional perspective.

The final vision statement for the *Agriculture Plan Update* is:

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 following four key themes are identified:

1. Strengthening 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.
4. Fostering and sustaining farm businesses and farmland.

These four themes align with the four pillars of sustainability: environmental, social, economic, and cultural as outlined in the City's Official Community Plan. The following pages identify 54 recommended actions that the City can take a lead role in, followed by an additional list of 10 actions that the City can support. Many of these recommendations are based on research conducted throughout the Agriculture Plan Update into best practices for local policies and regulations for the food system. This research is presented in a series of white papers, which are referenced in the relevant actions and are included in the Appendices.

Timeframe and priority levels are also identified for each of the actions in the tables. They can be interpreted as follows:

Timeframe

| | |
|----------|--|
| Short: | To be completed within 1-2 years. |
| Medium: | To be completed within 2-5 years. |
| Long: | To be completed within 5-10 years. |
| Ongoing: | Will require continued efforts over the short-long term timeframe. |

Priority

| | |
|---------|--|
| High: | Requires urgent action for progress to be made and/or for other actions to succeed. |
| Medium: | Not critical for actions to move forward, but necessary and important. |
| Low: | Less important but still necessary for improvements in the local agriculture system. |

Theme 1: Strengthening local policies and regulations to protect agriculture.

Kelowna residents are very supportive of the agriculture. In a spring 2017 survey, 96% of respondents indicated that policies preserving farmland were important or very important to them.

Issues that arose during consultation included:

- Farmland protection opportunities, such as vegetative buffers along the urban-rural boundary, were identified throughout the stakeholder engagement process.
- Challenges with regard to land use planning, where islands of residential areas have been created in farmland that now require connecting roads and other infrastructure
- Concerns over the non-farm use of ALR. One common concern, was the purchase of farmland with no intention of farming, followed by construction of extremely large homes.

Land use regulation by local governments is established under the Community Charter and the Local Government Act. In the following sub-sections, a series of recommendations are made to update policy in the Official Community Plan, OCP Farm Development Permit Guidelines, Zoning Bylaw and several other policies and regulations. Collectively, these policy recommendations express a commitment to the preservation and strengthening of farmland, including the protection of lands capable of agricultural productivity, encouraging a diverse and profitable agricultural sector and supporting a sustainable and resilient local food system. Further, these initiatives will help to limit non-agricultural development, minimize conflicts between producers and non-producers, and proactively use and manage farmland for agriculture.

This theme has 35 actions that fall within four sub-themes:

- 1.1 Official Community Plan updates (6 actions)
- 1.2 Farm Protection Development Permit Guidelines updates (6 actions)
- 1.3 Zoning Bylaw updates (12 actions)
- 1.4 Actions regarding other policies and regulations (11 actions)

1.1 Official Community Plan Updates

| ID | Actions | Timeframe | Priority |
|------|--|-----------|----------|
| 1.1a | Restrict the expansion of residential development, and resulting potential edge conflicts, into farm areas by prohibiting additional density (e.g. carriage houses) outside the Permanent Growth Boundary. | Short | High |
| 1.1b | Restrict municipal sewer extension into agricultural areas. | Short | High |
| 1.1c | Restrict and/or prohibit non-farm uses that do not directly benefit agriculture. Only support non-farm uses in farm areas that have a direct and ongoing benefit to agriculture. | Short | High |
| 1.1d | Protect and support the continued designation of Natural Resource Protection Lands for agricultural purposes regardless of soil types and capabilities given potential for non-soil based agriculture, and the importance of reducing edge effects through farmland. | Short | Medium |

| ID | Actions | Timeframe | Priority |
|------|--|-----------|----------|
| 1.1e | Discourage uses of urban land adjacent to the Permanent Growth Boundary by vulnerable populations (e.g. hospitals, senior care facilities, daycares, after school programs). | Short | Medium |
| 1.1f | Adopt a new OCP Land Use Designation: <i>Transition to Agriculture</i> for parcels within and outside the Permanent Growth Boundary that are within 300 m of the farm land boundary. | Medium | High |

1.2 Farm Protection Development Permit Guideline Updates

| ID | Actions | Timeframe | Priority |
|------|---|-----------|----------|
| 1.2a | Adopt Residential Footprint policies as per the <i>Non-Farm Use White Paper</i> (see Appendix) in accordance with provincial standards including residential footprint size, building setbacks, and total floor area of dwelling units. This includes establishing a maximum specific floor area for the Residential Footprint of 2,000 m ² (0.2ha or 0.5 acres) within the ALR / A1 zone. | Short | High |
| 1.2b | Include underground services within the Residential Footprint as required for the structures within it. | Short | High |
| 1.2c | Require that only structures used exclusively for farm use may be located outside the Residential Footprint. | Short | High |
| 1.2d | On agricultural lands, where appropriate, locate farm retail sales, wineries, cideries, breweries, distilleries, and any other structures and services related to the public that are defined as farm uses under the <i>ALC Act</i> near the road entrance, in order to reduce the footprint and extent of services through the property. | Short | High |
| 1.2e | Ensure that the location of the Residential Footprint maximizes agricultural potential (e.g. soil, topography, etc.) and limits negative impacts of the farm, whether or not the parcel is currently farmed. | Short | Medium |
| 1.2f | Update OCP Chapter 15 Farm Protection DP guideline 1.7 to require statutory covenants on non-agricultural land through the development process to notify landowners that "normal farm practices" occur in close proximity as described in the <i>Edge Planning White Paper</i> (see Appendix). | Short | Medium |

1.3 Zoning Bylaw Updates

| ID | Actions | Timeframe | Priority |
|------|---|-----------|----------|
| 1.3a | Review and amend the A1 zone to ensure compliance with Provincial standards and objectives of the Agriculture Plan update. | Short | High |
| 1.3b | Investigate adopting a maximum home (principal dwelling) total floor area within the A1 zone based on Ministry of Agriculture guidelines, and other zones that may also be in the ALR, that shall be no greater than: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - 465 m² (5,005 sq ft) on lots greater than 8 ha - 300 m² (3,552 sq ft) on lots less than 8 ha | Short | High |
| 1.3c | Require that mobile homes on farmland be occupied by the owner's immediate family, be located on a non-permanent foundation without basement excavation, and be removed from the property within 90 days when no longer occupied. The site must be restored to a condition suitable for agricultural use following removal of the mobile home. | Short | High |
| 1.3d | Remove "carriage house" as a permitted use within the A1 zoning. | Short | High |
| 1.3e | Increase the minimum lot size in the ALR from 2.0 ha to 4.0 ha in order to create a consistent minimum lot size of 4.0 ha for all of the A1 zone. | Short | High |
| 1.3f | Update the Zoning Bylaw to reflect the vegetative buffer specifications as outlined in <i>Edge Planning White Paper</i> (see Appendix). | Short | High |
| 1.3g | Investigate parking limitations on agricultural lands including permeable surfacing, with the exception of the Residential Footprint. | Short | Medium |
| 1.3h | Create a clear definition in the Zoning Bylaw for local food retail opportunities outside of the ALR as described in the <i>Increasing Local Food Access White Paper</i> (see Appendix). | Medium | Medium |
| 1.3i | Revise the definition of "urban agriculture" to include the sale of farm products as a seasonal retail operation that is temporary in nature. | Medium | Medium |
| 1.3j | Designate specific sites and/or zones as suitable for "local produce stands" as per the <i>Increasing Local Food Access White Paper</i> (see Appendix). This may include farm gates of urban farms, existing public spaces and parks, commercially-zoned areas, transportation hubs, institutional lands, and/or parking lots. | Medium | Medium |
| 1.3k | Provide regulation for commercial assembly events on farmland except where permitted by provincial regulation. | Medium | Low |
| 1.3l | Further define the allowable structures where retail sales of food are permitted. | Medium | Low |

1.4 Actions Regarding Other Policies and Regulations

| ID | Actions | Timeframe | Priority |
|------|--|-----------|----------|
| 1.4a | Continue to enforce permitted uses using the City's <i>Agricultural Enforcement & Compliance Strategy</i> . Expand the current strategy and partner with ALC enforcement and compliance officers to maximize resource efficiencies. This may include meeting with the ALC to share data and information on enforcement efforts. Consider dedicating bylaw staff to issues outside the Permanent Growth Boundary. | Ongoing | High |
| 1.4b | Establish procedures for zoning compliance review for business license applications on agricultural properties. | Ongoing | High |
| 1.4c | Update the <i>Development Applications Procedures Bylaw</i> to allow for the Community Planning Manager to request an Agricultural Impact Assessment by a Professional Agrologist that quantifies the impacts of any proposed development that may affect agricultural activity, such as non-farm use on farmland, rezoning, temporary use permits, and subdivision on lands adjacent to farmland. | Short | High |
| 1.4d | Continue to work with other local government planners to discuss common agricultural and food security goals (e.g. Farm Bylaws; temporary farm worker housing). | Ongoing | Medium |
| 1.4e | Explore opportunities to better match tax rates with land production activities (e.g. tax rates higher for under-utilized land instead of lower farm rates). | Medium | Medium |
| 1.4f | Update the <i>Noxious Insect Control Bylaw</i> and <i>Noxious Weeds & Grass Control Bylaw</i> to include current noxious species and diseases. Work with the Invasive Species Council of BC and the Regional District of Central Okanagan on this action. | Medium | Medium |
| 1.4g | Revise the City's <i>Urban Tree Guide</i> to limit the use of trees for aesthetic purposes which can spread pests and diseases into farming areas if not properly maintained. | Medium | Medium |
| 1.4h | Update the <i>Soil Deposit and Removal Bylaw</i> to include reference to composting. | Medium | Medium |
| 1.4i | Update the <i>Business License Bylaw</i> to include the new definition of local food sales (as per related actions in 1.3). A license should be required for these retail operations whether the stand is on public or private property. | Medium | Medium |
| 1.4j | Require a business licence for commercial assembly events including conditions such as time parameters and parking requirements. | Medium | Medium |
| 1.4k | Investigate opportunities to minimize impacts to agriculture during expansion of YLW as outlined in the 2045 Airport Masterplan. | Long | Medium |

Theme 2: Stewarding natural resources and the environment for food production.

The Central Okanagan, is one of the best growing regions in Canada. With its warm summer climate and fertile soil, it can support a wide variety of crops. Climate and soil were listed as the top strength of farming and food production in Kelowna by survey respondents. However, there are still some environmental challenges facing farmers in the region. Stakeholders and survey respondents commented on the importance of the natural ecology of the land and environmentally sound farming practices to help replenish the soil, recharge water sources and provide habitat for natural pollinators, while using water conservation methods and efficient waste management. Climate change was listed as both an opportunity and a threat by 58% of survey respondents and was a key issue of focus at meetings with stakeholders. It will have effects on nearly all the other issues in this theme, including invasive species and water management.

The 9 actions in this theme involve integrating the agricultural sector's needs into future and/or existing environmental initiatives.

| ID | Actions | Timeframe | Priority |
|----|---|-----------|----------|
| 2a | Maintain water pricing that is supportive of sustaining agriculture in the community. | Short | High |
| 2b | Include agriculture in municipal climate change strategies and plans. | Ongoing | Medium |
| 2c | Implement the actions of the 2015 Central Okanagan Clean Air Strategy to reduce smoke from burning (e.g. expand agriculture wood waste chipping program, review, update and harmonize burning policies). | Ongoing | Medium |
| 2d | Create consistent water restriction/drought level messaging within affected areas or watersheds to ensure highest compliance by users. | Medium | Medium |
| 2e | Ensure that drought management and response plans are clear and consistent across existing and future water systems. | Medium | Medium |
| 2f | Continue to work with the Regional District of Central Okanagan to enforce the <i>Noxious Insect Control Bylaw</i> and <i>Noxious Weeds & Grass Control Bylaw</i> . Consider communicating information to residents seasonally through a press release. | Medium | Medium |
| 2g | Integrate agricultural water systems in order to create redundancy, resiliency, and water security for agricultural users through the 2017 Integrated Water Supply Plan. | High | Medium |
| 2h | Develop emergency plans (i.e. wildfire, drought) that are inclusive of agriculture. | Long | Medium |
| 2i | Investigate creative approaches to providing existing neighbourhoods on the urban side of the Permanent Growth Boundary with vegetative buffers. Examples may include incentives to increase the number of trees planted in the community. | Long | Low |

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Theme 3: Improving awareness of local agriculture and access to local food.

Support for local agriculture is strong in Kelowna. Almost all of the survey respondents (97%) indicated that they “always” or “sometimes” buy locally grown items when they have that option. While Kelowna residents have indicated strong levels of interest in purchasing local foods, 46% of survey respondents noted that limited access to local products is a challenge. This points to an opportunity to develop alternative local retail opportunities.

Over half (55%) of survey respondents indicated that they were not knowledgeable about the *Right to Farm Act* and normal farm practices. Further, education of community members in regards to agriculture and educational needs for farmers were key concerns raised by stakeholders at community meetings. Farmers themselves indicated they would like opportunities to enhance professional development, yet lack the time. Over half (52%) of the survey respondents noted that a lack of education about the local food system was a challenge for the agricultural sector.

A total of 83% of farmers responding to the survey indicated they were not involved in agri-tourism, which points to an opportunity to expand this aspect of the industry.

The 9 actions in this theme involve increasing the visibility of, and access to, local food products.

| ID | Actions | Timeframe | Priority |
|----|---|-----------|----------|
| 3a | Expand programs such as Farm to Flight at YLW to highlight local food and beverage products. | Ongoing | Medium |
| 3b | Use existing communications channels (e.g. website, social media, printed signs) to raise the level of understanding about agriculture policies and activities. Options for consideration are outlined in the <i>Farm Community Identity White Paper</i> (see Appendix). | Short | Medium |
| 3c | Investigate and communicate opportunities for pop up markets to sell local produce as described in the <i>Increasing Local Food Access White Paper</i> (see Appendix). | Short | Medium |
| 3d | Develop a Healthy Food Strategy for Kelowna. The strategy would address food security issues that are not included within the scope of this Agriculture Plan Update. Ensure the strategy also includes an investigation of options to update the Zoning Bylaw to allow for the keeping of bees and chickens by sub-urban and urban residents. Explore opportunities for establishing requirements and incentives for shared gardens in new multi-unit developments. | Medium | High |
| 3e | Undertake an Agricultural Signage Program to raise awareness and appreciation for agricultural areas within the City. The signs should be placed along roads used by farm vehicles, along recreational trails, and in agricultural edge planning areas. | Medium | Medium |
| 3f | Encourage opportunities to meet with community groups, including real estate groups to communicate existing land use policies and the impacts of non-farm use on agricultural land. The impacts of farmland speculation on the local agriculture sector should be highlighted. | Medium | Medium |

| ID | Actions | Timeframe | Priority |
|-----------|---|------------------|-----------------|
| 3g | Establish regular farm tours for elected officials and staff. The City, in partnership with the agricultural industry, could create opportunities to tour agricultural properties and learn about the role agriculture plays within the city. | Medium | Low |
| 3h | Identify opportunities to increase YLW's air cargo service, which could potentially provide the opportunity to ship local agricultural products to additional markets. | Long | Medium |
| 3i | Develop a "Good Neighbours" pamphlet that provides landowners with information about normal farm practices. | Long | Low |

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Theme 4: Fostering and sustaining farm businesses and farmland.

Whether a producer is just starting out or coming from a long family history of farming, how to obtain land is challenging. Farmers may decide to switch crop varieties, upgrade equipment, or modernize practices. These activities all entail investment costs. The cost of farmland in most regions of BC is prohibitive: not only for new farmers but also for those who are taking over longstanding family farm businesses. The top challenges to farming and food production in Kelowna, indicated by survey results, were: difficulties accessing land for farming due to speculation, high costs, and capital inputs (73%); competing non-farm uses for farmland (urban - rural edge issues) (70%); and lack of succession planning (age of farmers, no new young farmers) (56%). During stakeholder meetings, there was interest raised by both farmers and non-governmental groups in having the City pursue the option of establishing a farmland trust. This is one area that the City can take a lead role in this theme. Many of the other actions brought forward during the stakeholder sessions that fall within this theme would require that the City play a supporting role, and those are outlined in section 5.

The action in this theme relates to the City's role in ensuring that farmland is farmed to its fullest capacity over the long term.

| ID | Action | Timeframe | Priority |
|----|---|-----------|----------|
| 4a | <p>Investigate and support opportunities for alternative ownership models for farmland for the purpose of increasing production levels on farmland.</p> <p>The alternative models may include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Allotments (large garden leases);• Incubator farms for new farmers;• A Local or Regional Farmland trust;• Institutional partnerships to increase food production; and/or• Co-operative farming models. | Ongoing | Medium |

5.0 Actions where the City of Kelowna plays a SUPPORTIVE role

There are 10 actions that the City would like to assist with, but does not have the jurisdiction or capacity to play a lead role in implementing.

| ID | Actions | Timeframe | Priority |
|----|--|-----------|----------|
| 5a | Support OK Sterile Insect Release program and advocate for similar initiatives for other pests. | Ongoing | High |
| 5b | Support the agricultural economic development goals of the Central Okanagan Economic Development Commission (COEDC), Okanagan Indian Band and Westbank First Nation. | Ongoing | Medium |
| 5c | Re-evaluate organic waste diversion opportunities and investigate changes to encourage improved waste diversion (including yard waste collection) as per the 2017 Solid Waste Management Plan. | Ongoing | Medium |
| 5d | Support community groups on initiatives to determine infrastructure required for a permanent, year-round farmers market location. | Short | High |
| 5e | Support opportunities for addressing deer and other wildlife impacts on crop yields. | Short | Medium |
| 5f | Support an inventory of food storage, distribution, and processing capacity for small and medium-scale producers. | Medium | Medium |
| 5g | Support initiatives for land linking and mentorship programs for farmers. | Medium | Medium |
| 5h | Work with Agriculture and Agri-Food Canada Summerland Research Station and BC Ministry of Environment to determine opportunities for soil maps to be digitized and made available online. | Medium | Low |
| 5i | Support agriculture-related tourism through Enterprise Kelowna. | Medium | Low |
| 5j | Support the province in re-establishing agricultural liaison services. | Medium | Medium |