

# Report to Council



**Date:** August 14, 2017  
**File:** 1210-22  
**To:** City Manager  
**From:** Danielle Noble-Brandt, Policy and Planning Department Manager  
**Subject:** Agriculture Plan Endorsement  
Report Prepared by: Tracy Guidi, Sustainability Coordinator

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## **Recommendation:**

THAT Council, receives, for information, the Report from the Policy and Planning Department Manager dated August 14, 2017 with respect to the *Agriculture Plan*;

AND THAT Council adopt the *Agriculture Plan* as attached to the report of the Policy and Planning Department Manager, dated August 14, 2017;

AND FURTHER THAT Council direct staff to begin implementation of Phase 1 actions as outlined in Table 9 of the *Agriculture Plan* as attached to the report of the Policy and Planning Department Manager, dated August 14, 2017.

## **Purpose:**

To present Council with the final Agriculture Plan for endorsement.

## **Background:**

Agriculture is historically significant in Kelowna, shaping both its development pattern and its economy. Over 12,000 ha (55 per cent) of the City's land base is zoned for agriculture. Yet, this land is often at risk as it tends to be flat, affordable, geographically appealing and often well located, making it attractive for urban development.

Council has identified a priority to "preserve agricultural land," a sentiment that is echoed strongly by the public.<sup>1</sup> Current agricultural policy is directed in part by the 1998 Agriculture Plan. While this Plan

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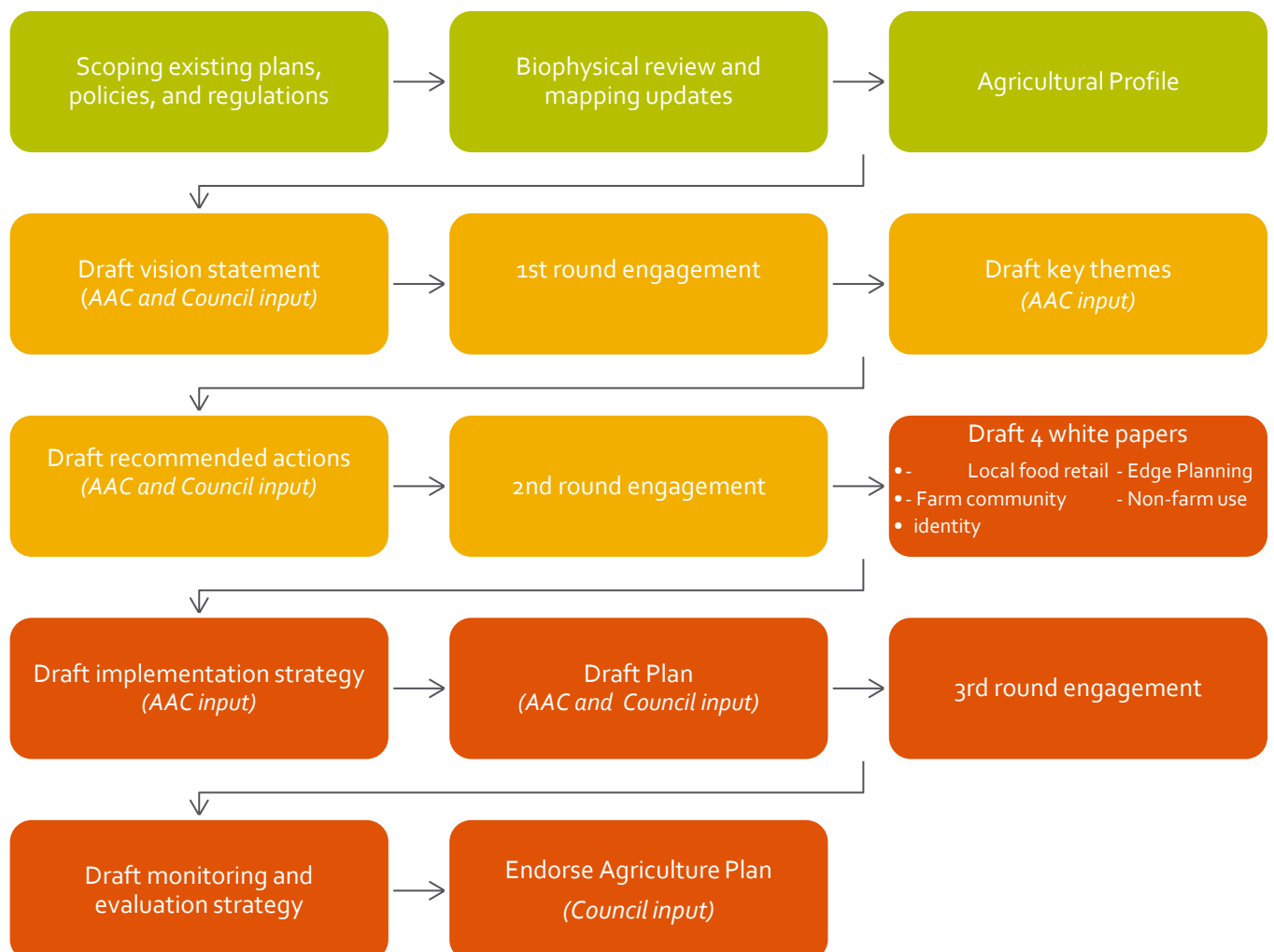
<sup>1</sup>In June 2016, as part of the Agriculture Plan update, a survey showed that 95% of 563 respondents felt that policies to preserve farmland were important or very important. Note: the results are qualitative in nature as they are not a statistically valid random sample of all Kelowna citizens.

has served the City well over the past two decades, it is out of date. A major update was necessary to reflect the evolution of local and provincial regulations, and to provide clear and prescriptive policies to preserve and protect agricultural lands for the decades to come.

In the spring of 2016, the City embarked on a process to update the 1998 Agriculture Plan. The process, as outlined in Figure 1, included extensive public and stakeholder engagement, combined with best practice research and input from provincial authorities. A vision was developed for Plan: “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,”. Guided by this vision, the 2017 Agriculture Plan established the following goals:

1. Develop clear policies that serve to protect and promote agriculture;
2. Identify opportunities to strengthen farming as an economic driver;
3. Increase the amount of, and access to locally grown and produced food;
4. Promote and celebrate the agricultural character of Kelowna; and
5. Build resilience in communities against rising costs of food and risks from climate change

**Figure 1: Agriculture Plan development process**



Throughout the process, public and stakeholders provided input during three rounds of engagement which helped shape the *Agriculture Plan*. During the third and final round of engagement, hosted in June, 2017 the public and stakeholders demonstrated general support for the Plan, with several organizations providing support letters including Agriculture Land Commission, BC Fruit Growers Association and the Central Okanagan Food Policy Council (see attached).

The 2017 *Agriculture Plan* focuses on providing clear policy and land use direction, ensuring City agricultural policies are current, accurate, defensible, and aligned with other major corporate policy documents as well as provincial standards. The Plan presents 51 actions the City can take a lead role in implementing under four themes:

- **Theme 1: Strengthening local policies and regulations to protect agriculture.** Thirty-four actions are recommended including updates to the Official Community Plan, Farm Development Permit Guidelines, Zoning Bylaw and other key policies and bylaws. Collectively, these actions express a commitment to the preservation and strengthening of farmland and will help to limit non-agricultural development, minimize conflicts between producers and non-producers, and proactively use and manage farmland for agriculture.
- **Theme 2: Stewarding natural resources and the environment for food production.** The eight actions in this theme involve integrating the agricultural sector's needs into existing and/or future environmental initiatives to address concerns over water, climate and buffers.
- **Theme 3: Improving awareness of local agriculture and access to local food.** This theme's eight actions will help increase the visibility of, and access to, local food products as well as to raise the level of understanding about agriculture.
- **Theme 4: Fostering and sustaining farm business and farmland.** The purpose of the only action in this theme is to investigate and support alternative ownership for farmland to ensure it is farmed to its fullest capacity over the long term.

Although primarily focused on what the City can take action on, the *Agricultural Plan* acknowledges that the participation of local governments, senior levels of government, agricultural businesses, community organizations and the public is essential to realize a resilient, sustainable and profitable regional agricultural sector. As such, an additional ten actions have been identified that the City can support but cannot lead due to jurisdictional or capacity constraints.

The *Agriculture Plan* has had several revisions compared to the draft presented to Council on June 12, 2017. These revisions were based on input from last round of engagement, external agencies and staff and are summarized in Table 1.

**Table 1: Agriculture Plan Changes since June 12, 2017 Council Presentation**

Action	Draft version	Final version	Reason
-	-	Monitoring and Engagement Strategy	Included to determine progress of the <i>Agriculture Plan</i> over time.
-	-	Appendix C: Engagement Summary	Included to provide highlights of engagement activities that took place during the Plan's development.
-	-	Highway markers have been added to the maps.	Open house attendees asked for road names for ease of location identification.
1.1	-	Actions have been renumbered in Theme 1.1	Actions in this section were numbered incorrectly in the draft.
1.1a	Restrict additional density (e.g. carriage houses) outside the Permanent Growth Boundary.	Restrict additional density outside the Permanent Growth Boundary.	'e.g. carriage house' was removed.
1.1f	-	Expand urban agriculture opportunities as a way to improve food system resiliency and promote social inclusion, such as community gardens or urban farming.	Comments received that urban agriculture policy was not addressed in the draft plan. Note: the action to develop a Healthy Food Strategy also addresses urban agriculture policy.
1.2g	Locate uses of urban land adjacent to agricultural land by vulnerable populations to limit interface incompatibilities.	Discourage vulnerable population land uses (i.e. care facilities, schools, etc.) adjacent to agricultural lands to limit interface incompatibilities.	This action was identified as confusing by many who attended the open house and/or completed the online survey.
1.3e	Increase the minimum lot size in the ALR from 2.0ha to 4.0ha.	Update subdivision regulations to increase the minimum lot size in the ALR from 2.0 ha to 4.0 ha.	Action clarified due to confusion of open house attendees.
1.4d	Explore opportunities to better match tax rates with farmland production activities.	Changed from medium priority to high priority.	Industry feedback saw this as a high priority.
2e	Ensure that drought management and response plans are clear and consistent across existing and future water systems.	Action has been removed and subsequent actions in Theme 2 have been renumbered.	Action is beyond the scope of the Agriculture Plan.
2f	Continue to work towards ensuring sustainable, redundant and secure water for all agriculture.	Changed from long timeframe to ongoing timeframe.	Work on the Water Integration Supply Plan has begun and will continue for the long term.
3d	Develop a Healthy Food Strategy for Kelowna.	As part of the Healthy City Strategy, complete the Healthy Food Systems theme area."  Note: Additional detail was added to the detailed action (Appendix D) "Pollinator protection strategies should also be addressed as part of the Healthy Food System Theme Area."	Input received from Border Free Bees group demonstrated positive linkages for pollinator policy and agriculture.

Action	Draft version	Final version	Reason
5e	Encourage farmers to work with the Province to manage troublesome wildlife.	Changed from medium priority to high priority.	Industry feedback saw this as a high priority.
5j	-	Partner and build relationships with community based organizations working on pollinator protection initiatives.	Input received from Border Free Bees group demonstrated positive linkages for pollinator policy and agriculture.

It should be noted that 2 companion documents supplement the *Agriculture Plan* and that both are available on [kelowna.ca/planningprojects](http://kelowna.ca/planningprojects):

1. **Agriculture Plan Background Report** – The Background Report provides an overview of the agricultural context of Kelowna, including farming history, summary of biophysical characteristics, types of crops and livestock currently being produced, and the financial health of farms.
2. **Agriculture Plan Engagement Summary** – While Appendix C of the *Agriculture Plan* provides an overview of engagement that took place throughout the development of the Plan, the Engagement Summary provides a comprehensive report on the results from all the engagement sessions.

Once endorsed, implementation of the 51 actions will be initiated according to the *Agriculture Plan's* Implementation Strategy. The Implementation Strategy outlines a phased approach based on timing and priority level associated with each action. The actions are separated into "actions that can be undertaken using existing staff resources" (Table 9) and "actions that require additional resources" (Table 10). In both tables, some actions may require additional budget beyond staffing. Funding options will be investigated and/or budget requests will be made as part of the annual budget cycle if and when necessary.

While the 2017 *Agriculture Plan* will help the City achieve its OCP's goal to "Enable Healthy and Productive Agriculture," it goes well beyond that. It will:

- Inform upcoming updates to the Official Community Plan;
- Inform upcoming updates to the 20-year Servicing Plan;
- Help achieve the goals of Healthy City Strategy by preserving agricultural land needed to feed a growing population;
- Help the City meet its climate goals by sequestering carbon in perennial crops and reducing transportation emissions to import food from other countries; and
- Help continue the growth of the agricultural economy.<sup>2</sup>

Ultimately, the Plan's actions are practical solutions that will strengthen agriculture and contribute to Kelowna's long-term sustainability for future decades.

#### Internal Circulation:

Divisional Director, Community Planning and Strategic Investments  
Divisional Director, Corporate Strategic Services  
Director Strategic Investments

<sup>2</sup> Gross farm receipts for all sizes of farms in the Central Okanagan increased 24.4% to \$120,147,514 between 2011 and 2016, [Central Okanagan Economic Profile for Agriculture](#), July 2017.

Director, Business and Entrepreneurial Development  
Suburban and Rural Planning Manager  
Community Planning Department Manager  
Infrastructure Operations Department Manager  
Utility Services Manager  
Senior Engineer Infrastructure  
Senior Airport Finance and Corporate Services Manager  
Planner Specialist  
Communications Advisor  
Engineering Technical Support Coordinator  
Design Technician

**Existing Policy:**

One of the goals of the Official Community Plan is to Enable Healthy and Productive Agriculture by promoting healthy and productive agriculture through diverse strategies that protect farmlands and food production. Policies in the OCP that support this goal include:

- OCP Objective 5.33 Protect and enhance local agriculture. (and all associated policies);
- OCP Objective 5.34 Preserve productive agricultural land. (and all associated policies);
- OCP Policy 7.20.1 Water Availability for Agriculture. Work with stakeholders to ensure the continued delivery of sufficient quantities of water as per best practices for water conservation to ensure continued agricultural productivity; and
- OCP Chapter 15 Farm Protection DP Guidelines.

Agriculture Policy is also currently guided by the 1998 Agriculture Plan.

**Financial/Budgetary Considerations:**

The cost to complete the 2017 *Agricultural Plan* is approximately \$65,000. The City of Kelowna acknowledges the support of the Real Estate Foundation of BC who granted \$20,000 towards this project. A grant of \$18,590 was also received by Agriculture and Agri-Food Canada and the BC Ministry of Agriculture through programs delivered by the Investment Agriculture Foundation of BC. The remainder of the funds are sourced from the Policy & Planning Department budget.

It should be noted that the full implementation of the Agriculture Plan requires additional funding and possibly resources at various stages. Funding and resourcing options will be investigated and/or budget requests will be made as part of the normal annual budget cycle if and when necessary.

**External Agency/Public Comments:**

Below is a summary of the engagement to date that has helped inform the 2017 *Agriculture Plan*:

*Agricultural Advisory Committee Meetings:*

- April 14, 2016 - Strengths, weakness, opportunities, threats, (SWOT) analysis
- May 11, 2016 - Vision workshop
- October 13, 2016 - Policies, recommendations and themes
- December 8, 2016 - Engagement summary and recommended actions
- March 13, 2017 - Draft policy and recommendations

- April 13, 2017 - Implementation strategy  
**Moved by Jeff Ricketts/Seconded by Keith Duhaime**  
 THAT the Agricultural Advisory Committee recommends that Council support the phasing of the draft Implementation Strategy for the City of Kelowna Agriculture Plan Update with the following amendments:
  - Action ID 3f under Phase 2 being "Encourage opportunities to meet with community groups, including real estate groups to communicate existing land use policies and impacts of non-farm use on agricultural land. The impacts of farmland speculation on the local agriculture sector should be highlighted." be moved to ongoing and noted as high priority; and
  - Action ID 4a under Phase 3 being "Investigate and support opportunities for alternative ownership models for farmland for the purposes of increasing production levels on
- Moved by Yvonne Herbison/Seconded by Jeff Ricketts**  
 THAT the Agricultural Advisory Committee recommends that Council support the additional financial and staffing implications of the draft implantation strategy for the City of Kelowna Agriculture Plan Update as presented by staff at the April 13, 2017 Agricultural Advisory Committee meeting.
- June 8, 2017 - Draft Agriculture Plan  
**Moved by Ed Schiller/Seconded by Pete Spencer**  
 THAT the Agricultural Advisory Committee recommends that Council support the 2017 Draft Agriculture Plan as presented to the Committee on June 8, 2017.

#### *Round 1 Engagement*

- June 2016 Online Survey (563 completed responses)
- June 8, 2016 Stakeholder Session
- June 8, 2016 Open House (29 people attended)
- June 11, 2016 Open House (40 people attended)
- June 22, 2016 Agriculture Industry Group session
- June 2016 Meeting via phone with Young Agrarians
- June 2016 Meeting via phone with Central Okanagan Food Policy Council

#### *Round 2 Engagement*

- November 22 Meeting with YLW
- November 22 Meeting with South East Kelowna Irrigation District
- November 22 Meeting with Okanagan Basin Water Board and the BC Agriculture and Food Climate Action Initiative
- November 22 Small to medium sized farmer conversation (12 participants representing 8 farm operations)
- November 23 Agriculture Industry Group session
- November 23 Stakeholder session
- November 23 Meeting with Tourism Kelowna

#### *Round 3 Engagement*

- June, 2017 Online and In-Person Survey (74 completed)

- June 13, 2017 Stakeholder Session
- June 13, 2017 Agriculture Industry Group Session
- June 21, 2017 Open House (40 people attended)

It should be noted that the results from open surveys such as those done in the first and third round of engagement are a collection of opinions and perceptions from interested or potentially affected residents, and not a statistically valid random sample of all Kelowna citizens. The results are qualitative in nature and cannot be said to represent views of all Kelowna citizens.

In addition, letters of support for the *Agriculture Plan* were received from the Agriculture Land Commission, BC Fruit Growers Association and the Central Okanagan Food Policy Council (see attached).

**Considerations not applicable to this report:**

**Legal/Statutory Authority:**

**Legal/Statutory Procedural Requirements:**

**Personnel Implications:**

**Communications Comments:**

**Alternate Recommendation:**

Submitted by:

D. Noble-Brandt, Policy and Planning Department Manager

**Approved for inclusion:**



DNB

cc:

Divisional Director, Community Planning and Strategic Investments

Divisional Director, Corporate Strategic Services

Director Strategic Investments

Director, Business and Entrepreneurial Development

Suburban and Rural Planning Manager

Community Planning Department Manager

Utility Services Manager

Senior Engineer Infrastructure

Senior Airport Finance and Corporate Services Manager

Planner Specialist

Communications Advisor

Engineering Technical Support Coordinator

Design Technician



**Attachments:**

Agriculture Plan

Letters of Support:

Agriculture Land Commission Letter of Support

BC Fruit Growers Association Letter of Support

Central Okanagan Food Policy Council Letter of Support