

LONDON

URBAN AGRICULTURE STRATEGY

November 2017



London
CANADA



EVERGREEN

Acknowledgements

This strategy builds on the active community interest in food systems issues in the City of London. The report was prepared by the Urban Agriculture Team, which includes Evergreen, the City of London and the community.

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Community art piece created by the London community, the City of London and Evergreen.

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What is Urban Agriculture?

Whatever the scale—backyard, balcony, and beyond—urban agriculture helps bring communities together, and offers many social, economic, environmental, and health benefits.

Defined simply and broadly, urban agriculture is the practice of growing, processing, sharing, and distributing food within the city. Urban agriculture is an important component of London's social, cultural, educational, economic, and ecological systems, and includes not only individuals growing food for their own use, but also commercial/entrepreneurial activities for which there is a sales component.

These practices complement the region's vibrant agricultural sector in the surrounding areas, and give residents the opportunity to play an active and important role in shaping and enhancing the interconnected pieces that make up the food system. A driving force in the development of the strategy is implementation of the Food System chapter of The London Plan. The City of London is open to a wide variety of urban agriculture initiatives, undertaken by individuals, communities, organizations, and businesses.

The goal of this Urban Agriculture Strategy is to help the municipality and the diverse communities of London work together, and support each other, in developing a positive, enabling environment for urban agriculture in the city.

THE BENEFITS OF URBAN AGRICULTURE

Cities around the world are recognizing the value of urban agriculture in terms of physical and mental health; quality of life; environmental resilience; and community-building. Some of the benefits of urban agriculture include:

- Provides access to nutritious, affordable food
- Builds food-preparation skills and encourages healthier food choices
- Provides economic development, small business and job training
- Promotes physical activity and time spent outdoors
- Can support urban regeneration, community improvement and the development of food districts
- Provides therapeutic benefits related to mental, physical, and emotional health
- Encourages interaction with neighbours and community-building
- Reduces greenhouse gas emissions when food is produced locally
- Creates habitat for pollinators
- Encourages stewardship and beautification of land
- Engages diverse communities

The development of this strategy has been community-driven, based on extensive consultation that includes public events, information sessions, and surveys. It builds upon the work of the Middlesex-London Food Policy Council in creating the Community Food Assessment. The City of London partnered with Evergreen (a Canadian charitable organization dedicated to making cities flourish) to develop the strategy, and the team would like to acknowledge and thank the hundreds of people who devoted so much time and energy to this initiative.

The recommended priority actions—some of which the City could lead, some of which the community could lead, and some of which could be joint initiatives—are grouped into five broad categories:



The Strategic Plan for the City of London 2015–2019 calls for more investment in “heritage restoration, brownfield remediation, urban regeneration, and community improvement projects.” London’s Urban Agriculture Strategy aligns with the Plan to help achieve these goals.



GROWING



PROCESSING



DISTRIBUTION



**FOOD LOSS
& RECOVERY**



**EDUCATION &
CONNECTION**

Urban Agriculture in London

A number of ideas were repeated throughout the community consultation – ideas that connect with all aspects of this strategy and that could be applied towards implementation and moving urban agriculture forward in London.

Urban agriculture promotes organic and ecological practices.

The City should not implement the Urban Agriculture strategy alone. It should be a community effort.

An Urban Agriculture Strategy evolves over time with opportunities for input and feedback.

Entrepreneurial activities are nurtured and located in scale-appropriate sites.

A strong food network takes the lead on many urban agriculture initiatives in the city.

Urban agriculture is a priority for the City of London. Supportive municipal policies, regulations, and bylaws create a positive environment for urban agriculture; existing barriers that restrict the development of urban agriculture should be removed.

Urban agriculture is accessible to everyone, including people with disabilities, low-income, and diverse communities.

The Urban Agriculture Strategy provides an opportunity for urban residents to participate in and advance London's food system.

Links between urban, local, and regional producers and consumers of food are cultivated, and coordination and sharing across communities is encouraged.

Social justice and equity, along with food security and food sovereignty, anchor all aspects of urban agriculture in London.

Health, well-being, and access to healthy, nutritious local food are priorities for the Strategy and implementation.

LONDON HAS TAKEN MANY STEPS TO SUPPORT A STRONG, RESILIENT FOOD SYSTEM

🍏 **The London Plan** includes an entire chapter dedicated to food systems and promotes community gardens and municipal investment in local food production, and includes the goal of eliminating food deserts (areas where nutritious and affordable food is not available).

🍏 **London's Food Charter**, developed by the Child & Youth Network and endorsed by Council in 2011, envisions the city as a food-secure community.

🍏 **The Community Garden Strategic Plan**, completed in September 2015, outlines the many ways the City is committed to improving community gardens on public land in London.

🍏 **The Middlesex-London Community Food Assessment**, released in June 2016, outlines actions needed to enhance the local food system and promote food security, and includes a section on community-based urban agriculture.

🍏 **The City has a number of related plans, policies, and strategies**, such as pollinator protection and the promotion of naturalization, which complement the Urban Agriculture Strategy and, together, help build a healthy city.



🍏 In partnership with the Middlesex-London Health Unit and the London Community Foundation, the City of London participated in the development of the **Middlesex-London Food Policy Council**, which guides actions and policies related to London's food system.

🍏 The City of London has developed an online **Urban Agriculture Inventory**—an interactive inventory based on public input—documenting existing assets, identifying available resources, supportive organizations, and potential lands that could be used for urban agriculture, in an effort to facilitate connections between urban agriculture, local government, and community priorities.

Guiding Principles

The principles below were developed by the community during the urban agriculture consultation process to inform the development and future use of the Urban Agriculture Strategy.

Guiding principles support the implementation of the Urban Agriculture Strategy by reflecting a shared vision while respecting and honouring diverse perspectives. These principles can be used as an evaluation tool as the Strategy is implemented.

🍏 London's Urban Agriculture Strategy is a living, dynamic strategy that facilitates action and complements the region's vibrant rural agricultural sector.

🍏 London's Urban Agriculture Strategy is part of the London Plan's broader city-building strategy for planning vibrant, healthy, safe, and fulfilling neighbourhoods.

🍏 London's Urban Agriculture Strategy promotes education, training, and food literacy for everyone. Building food skills and food literacy is essential to each part of the strategy.

🍏 London's Urban Agriculture Strategy strengthens urban agriculture assets by documenting and facilitating initiatives on public, private, and institutional land, and protecting and enhancing local food infrastructure.

🍏 London's Urban Agriculture Strategy facilitates links and coordination across communities and organizations.

"We will plan for the strengthening of our local food system so that we can grow and consume more of our food locally."

—The London Plan, December 2016

🍏 London's Urban Agriculture Strategy enhances the natural environment and builds ecological resilience in the face of climate change; conserves resources; and enhances biodiversity through sustainable and organic methods including native plants and separation from ecologically sensitive areas.

🍏 London's Urban Agriculture Strategy creates an enabling policy environment for urban agriculture by encouraging the development of supportive municipal policies, regulations, and bylaws, and removing policy barriers.

🍏 London's Urban Agriculture Strategy supports community-based decision-making and leadership, and promotes partnerships and collaboration.

🍏 London's Urban Agriculture Strategy engages diverse communities by recognizing the social and cultural importance of food and promoting access to healthy, local, culturally appropriate food.

How to Read This Strategy

The strategy is organized into 5 broad categories: growing; processing; distribution; food loss & recovery; and education & connection.

Within each category there are several community-identified priorities that informed the development of the strategy. The descriptions of each priority include a brief definition, summary of insights from community consultations, the actions to begin implementation, as well as identification of who holds responsibility for the action. Each category also includes a Growing into the Future section of inspiring initiatives for consideration.

An implementation lead was identified for each priority. Clarifying roles and responsibilities ensures there is accountability for the actions as ideas germinate and grow over time. The leadership groups include both the community and the City. **Community** refers to the residents, social service agencies, business groups and owners, and community organizations supporting and engaged in urban agriculture. **City** describes the staff and divisions of the City of London and includes

regulatory and operational activities.

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.
- **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	 PROCESSING	 DISTRIBUTION	 FOOD LOSS & RECOVERY	 EDUCATION & CONNECTION
Urban Farms	Community Kitchens	Farmers' Markets	Food Waste Reduction & Recovery	Food Hubs
Urban "Foodscaping"	Resource Sharing	Local Food Procurement	Community Composting	School Gardens
Urban Pollinators	Mobile Assets	Direct Food Sales		Community Education & Training

The background features a dark teal color with large, stylized, overlapping leaf and stem shapes in a slightly lighter shade of green. The shapes are composed of solid and hatched areas, creating a layered, organic feel.

GROWING

1. Urban Farms

An urban farm can take many forms—individual plots for commercial produce sales, or a community farm growing food collectively for a food bank, are just two examples. Likewise, the scale can vary from a demonstration plot to a small commercial operation. Urban farms can be hubs for local food activities and food literacy, and can have a variety of community and social benefits for those involved. Urban farms can be a viable interim use for lands that are intended for future urban development. Urban farms are not large-scale agricultural operations which would require provincial regulation for nutrient management and occupy large amounts of land within the City, preventing contiguous and efficient development.

What We Heard from the Community







There was a great deal of interest in developing an urban farm in London, but access to land was an issue.



165 Egerton Street

There are 15 community gardens across the City of London on public land, with a total of over 400 plots in all of the gardens combined. Of the total available plots, 468 community garden plots were rented in London in 2014. Half of households renting a plot had a household income of \$24,000 or less.

The London Community Gardens Program Vision is to establish “a community garden in every London neighbourhood, initiated and led by local residents.”









Action	Roles			
	Community leads	Community partners with City	City enables Community	City leads
Determine community interest in and capacity for involvement in an urban farm.				
Develop a vision and model (including management structure), and identify lead partners for the farm project.				
Develop business plan to implement the proposed vision and model.				
Determine the most appropriate location and size for an urban farm, and whether or not the City could facilitate access to a suitable area of land.				
Evaluate bylaws and zoning rules with respect to their role in enabling urban farms.				
Ensure access to reasonably priced soil tests.				

2. Urban “Foodscaping”

Making food production “visible” within the everyday life of the city—for example, through food-growing projects on boulevards and in parks—is a key feature of “foodscaping” the city. Also referred to as edible landscaping, one way this is effectively achieved is by providing people with multiple access points for involvement in urban agriculture, which enhances the public realm and helps to ensure inclusivity in public space.

What We Heard from the Community

There was a great deal of interest in inserting food production into urban spaces through community gardens, food forests, edible boulevard plantings, and public orchards, and in particular by utilizing unused, abandoned, or neglected land.

Action	Roles			
	Community leads	Community partners with City	City enables Community	City leads
Distribute supportive resources such as topsoil, mulch, compost, and rain barrels to public food-growing projects along with education materials to ensure proper and safe usage of the resources.				
Coordinate seed exchanges through community centres, libraries, etc.				
Explore ways to encourage institutional involvement in “foodscaping” of landscapes at places such as churches, hospitals, etc.				
Consider education, awareness, and information-exchange events between municipal staff and community volunteers regarding “foodscaping” opportunities in the city.				
Examine existing food forests for potential expansion.				
Ensure that good management practices are undertaken to prevent pests; locate edible trees in locations where they can be safely maintained over the long-term.				
Evaluate the potential of public land available in the city for public “foodscaping.”				
Replace municipal planter box plantings with native fruit/nut/edible species where a maintenance program is in place.				

3. Urban Pollinators



Urban pollinators are integral to the production of food in urban areas. This can include both wild and domesticated pollinators. Beekeeping is regulated by the Ontario Bees Act (1990), which specifies setback distances from residential, parkland, or other public spaces when locating hives. Seeking out opportunities for urban beekeeping and increasing pollinator habitat are both aims of this strategy.

What We Heard from the Community


There was a great deal of interest in urban pollinators, in particular backyard beekeeping, throughout the public consultations. There were strong opinions in favour of, and opposed to, promoting urban beekeeping in London, though there was unanimous support for maintain and improving pollinator habitats.





The City of Vancouver allows for urban beekeeping subject to local regulations that ensure good management practices.


Action	Roles			
	Community leads	Community partners with City	City enables Community	City leads
Increase pollinator habitat within the City.				
Support urban beekeeping in appropriate locations in the City of London.				

CASE STUDIES

 A recently formed organization, **Urban Roots**, has broken ground on a one-hectare organic farm on leased land in southeast London, and plans to supply produce to charities and host educational events.

 London's **Wood Street Park Food Forest** is a community-building project in which edible and medicinal plants are grown in a multi-functional ecosystem, mimicking a forest, with the fruits of the harvest shared communally.

 **McQuesten Urban Farm**, which helps bring food security to an east-end area of Hamilton with few nearby grocery stores, was built, in part, by students at Sir Winston Churchill Secondary School and provides a community space for people in the neighbourhood to grow, cook, and share food. In the summer, the farm hosts a nature-based camp program for children.

 In 2014, the **City of Edmonton** embarked on an urban hen-keeping demonstration project in order to study the impacts of urban hens, determine any issues and concerns, and ensure that there are appropriate regulations for the care and management of urban hens in Edmonton.



GROWING INTO THE FUTURE

- community greenhouses, with greenhouses heated by waste
- community composting
- community orchards
- vertical gardens
- rainwater collection
- hydroponics and aquaponics
- planting and maintaining fruit trees in new developments
- incentivizing food production on private lands with owners of apartment buildings and other institutions
- green roof bylaw requiring developers to include green roofs and/or living walls in developments
- creation of an "Agrihood," a neighbourhood where many urban agriculture opportunities are integrated into the design and fabric of the neighbourhood

The background is a solid dark green color. It features stylized, semi-transparent green illustrations of a plant with two leaves in the center and two jars with wavy tops on the left and right sides. The word "PROCESSING" is written in large, white, bold, sans-serif capital letters across the middle of the image.

PROCESSING

1. Community Kitchens

Community kitchens are integrated into existing community facilities to create spaces where people come together to learn about food preparation, healthy eating, processing, and preserving.

What We Heard from the Community

There are many community kitchens in London, but no central coordination of them. Community kitchens provide more than just access to kitchen space; they can be important community builders and provide excellent opportunities for newcomers to share their food skills and knowledge as well as getting to know their community. There was strong support for providing access to facilities such as community kitchens in various neighbourhoods in order to encourage local food processing and to address issues related to low-income and diverse communities.



Photo: Evergreen

Seventeen food bank locations in London provide food to those needing assistance.

The London Food Bank serves approximately 9,000 individuals a month.

According to the London Poverty Research Centre, **26,000 Londoners are food insecure**, and approximately 3,600 families access the food bank each month – an increase of 53.21% since 2004. To further add to this challenge, the price of food in Ontario has increased at a rate of 3.1% per year, while social assistance and employment rates have failed to keep pace.

Action	Roles			
	Community leads	Community partners with City	City enables Community	City leads
Work with public health to provide food handler training for community kitchen users.				
Continue to make upgrades to kitchen facilities (in both City and community spaces) to enhance food safety.				
Investigate health regulations related to food safety in the context of community kitchens and other forms of food processing.				
Inventory existing inspected facilities that could be used for community kitchens and community garden programs. Make this information available to the public.				
Facilitate community access to appropriate kitchen spaces.				

2. Resource Sharing

Tool libraries, seed swaps, and other forms of sharing and lending help make resources such as seeds and tools available to the public and serve to facilitate community projects. Examples include gardening equipment such as rototillers; heritage seeds, which are in general commercially unavailable; and food processing equipment such as dehydrators.



What We Heard from the Community

Access to tools—both for growing food and processing food—can be a barrier for people, so a method of sharing tools would be helpful.



Photo: Sammy Tangir

London's **Hamilton Road Area Food Security Initiative** builds the capacity of the neighbourhood to develop local and sustainable food systems, supported by Neighbourhood Food Coalition meetings, Food Families projects, and a Neighbourhood Food Hub.

Action	Roles			
	Community leads	Community partners with City	City enables Community	City leads
Investigate existing tool libraries and tool- and resource-sharing projects in other cities to see if these models could be used in London.				
Inventory possible locations and community partners to facilitate a site for sharing of resources.				
Provide grants to support the purchase of key tools for shared use.				

3. Mobile Assets

Mobile equipment, such as a cider press or bake oven, that can be moved from place to place within the community, which helps to facilitate projects.

What We Heard from the Community

There are many innovative ways to create community events and celebrations around food, such as making cider communally or baking pizzas in an outdoor oven, and these events and projects could be facilitated through mobile assets.





Photo: Vincent Luuk


Middlesex-London has **three abattoirs and two egg-shelling stations and one vegetable processor.**


Action	Roles			
	Community leads	Community partners with City	City enables Community	City leads
Investigate the feasibility of mobile cider presses, bake ovens, and other forms of mobile food processing that would also support community events.				
Consider grants to facilitate the purchase of shared assets in the community.				

CASE STUDIES

 **The London Food Incubator**, which opened in a vacant historic industrial building in the Old East Village in September 2016, provides low-cost space for new food-preparation businesses to develop and grow.

 **The London Training Centre** coordinates a number of food skills and food-related employment programs.

 **The City of London** is helping to fund 17 new neighbourhood projects and five tree-planting projects in 2017, one of which is the purchase of a community cider press for the Wood St. Food Forest.

 **The Hamilton Tool Library** has thousands of tools, such as seed spreaders, shovels, cultivators, and a rototiller, available to members free of charge. The organization also has a fully functional Makerspace (with a 3D printer) and hosts workshops.


 Known as **“the town that food saved”** (and the subject of a book of the same title), the rural community of Hardwick, Vermont, was revitalized by a group of “agripreneurs”—young agricultural entrepreneurs who demonstrated how a food-based enterprise can create sustainable economic development.



Photo: Mike Derblich

GROWING INTO THE FUTURE

- community canning
- community preserving
- community dehydrating



DISTRIBUTION

1. Farmers' Markets

Opportunities for local markets, where small-scale, local growers, along with regional farmers, can sell food, and increase the availability and accessibility of nutritious, fresh, healthy food for residents are key components of a local food system.





What We Heard from the Community

There was broad support for farmers' markets of various scales, including linkages with regional farmers, throughout London in public venues such as parks.



There are 12 farmers' markets in London, where consumers can buy fresh, locally produced fruits, vegetables, and other foods. As well, there are 30 farms that sell directly to consumers at the "farm gate" in Middlesex-London.

Many neighbourhoods in London can still be referred to as **food deserts**, and, for some, it is the norm to have better access to fast food than to healthy, nutritious options. For example, one neighbourhood has 90 fast food restaurants, 45 variety stores, and only 2 grocery stores.

Action	Roles			
	Community leads	Community partners with City	City enables Community	City leads
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.				
Provide support for farmers' markets in public places and community hubs.				
Expand the Middlesex-London Health Unit's Harvest Bucks program for use at more markets across the city.				
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.				

2. Local Food Procurement



Depending on the volume of food purchased by any municipality or organization, policies that encourage and/or require the purchase of locally produced food may help create a market and economic support for food that is grown and processed within the region.

What We Heard from the Community

There was broad support for local food procurement that would serve as an economic incentive for entrepreneurial urban agriculture activities, along with support for regional farmers, and as an important way to strengthen the local food system, increase food security, and address food sovereignty.



In 2014, the province of Ontario imported more than \$23.4 billion in food and exported just under \$12.5 billion. More than 50% of the \$20 billion in imported food products can be produced in Ontario. If Ontario produced 10% of the top fruit and vegetable imports, the Ontario economy could benefit by nearly an additional quarter of a billion dollars in GDP and 3,400 more full-time jobs.

Action	Roles			
	Community leads	Community partners with City	City enables Community	City leads
Review how other municipalities and institutions have approached local food procurement policy development.				
Partner with other groups and organizations interested in expanding local food procurement in the Middlesex-London region				

3. Direct Food Sales

Although many people engage in urban agriculture in order to grow food for private consumption, there are others who do so as an entrepreneurial, economic activity either to supplement their income or as their primary livelihood.



What We Heard from the Community

There was broad support for the idea of enabling small-scale economic development through food production, processing, and distribution.





Photo: Evergreen

More than 200 households in Middlesex-London purchase directly from farmers, through the five community-supported agriculture (CSA) farms in the area.

Action	Roles			
	Community leads	Community partners with City	City enables Community	City leads
Investigate bylaw issues related to food sales on private property and community gardens.				
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.				

CASE STUDIES

 **The Food Box Project** is a small food-buyers' group that offers pre-ordered boxes of organic produce for pick-up once a week in London and Dorchester. By purchasing as a group, participants are able to buy healthy food at a lower cost.

 **The Golden Horseshoe Food and Farming Alliance** is working with municipal partners to increase the procurement of locally sourced food in long-term care facilities in Durham, Halton, and York regions and the City of Hamilton, with a goal of increasing the amount of local Ontario food used in the facilities by 5% by January 2018.


 Demonstrating that farmers' markets can be incorporated into daily city life in unexpected ways and in unusual places, **Toronto's Downsview subway station** has a weekly pop-up food market right in the station.



Photo: Evergreen

GROWING INTO THE FUTURE

- mobile markets
- regulations allowing residential sales of produce
- small-scale farmers' markets
- neighbourhood market permits
- food trucks selling food produced and processed in the city

The background is a solid green color with large, stylized, semi-transparent leaf patterns in a slightly darker shade of green. The leaves have a fine, diagonal hatched texture. The text is centered in the upper half of the page.

FOOD LOSS & RECOVERY

1. Food Waste Reduction & Recovery

It is estimated that over one-third of all food produced in Canada is wasted along the food supply chain, with close to 50% of this waste occurring at the household level. Household food waste has considerable economic, environmental, and social impacts. In London, it is estimated that more than 15% of food purchased by London households becomes waste.

Food waste reduction and recovery can take many forms—from understanding and changing household behaviours related to meal planning and using leftovers, to collecting blemished or excess food and distributing it to serve community needs.

What We Heard from the Community



There is a great deal of concern about the amount of food that is wasted. Issues include the cost of sending it to landfill, the missed opportunity for seeing food “waste” as a resource, and failing to address hunger and poverty.



Approximately 45% of curbside garbage put out by residents consists of compostable organic materials.

In 2014, **the average food expenditure** per household in Middlesex-London was \$7,427.

Forty percent of all food produced, processed, distributed, and sold across Canada goes to waste. Fifty-one percent of this food waste is generated by households.

Action	Roles			
	Community leads	Community partners with City	City enables Community	City leads
Investigate the feasibility of instituting a food waste reduction and recovery project with partners such as restaurants and grocery stores, including health and safety issues.				
Provide public education promoting the idea of reducing food waste.				

2. Community Composting

Food scraps and garden waste comprise a valuable resource that can be turned into “garden gold” through composting.





What We Heard from the Community

There was strong and vocal support for encouraging the composting of food and garden materials in London, whether at the community or residential scale. Community gardens and urban farms are particularly in need of quality compost in order to build soil health and productivity.





Thirty-three percent of London households compost their kitchen waste.

Between 1995 and 1999, the City of London sold approximately 53,000 subsidized compost bins to residents.

Action	Roles			
	Community leads	Community partners with City	City enables Community	City leads
Investigate potential linkages between rural compost production and urban users of compost in food-growing projects.				
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.				
Investigate the potential for community, vermi-, and mid-scale composting.				
Investigate the feasibility of composting at restaurants and grocery stores.				

CASE STUDIES

 A group of Western University students has launched a “food rescue” project in London, called **reHarvest**, which aims to redistribute food from participating local businesses to people living in poverty.

 **The Ontario Food Collaborative (OFC)**, a Sustain Ontario network, is bringing together stakeholders to take a holistic food systems approach to supporting individuals and families to eat well and reduce food waste. The OFC is beginning to work with the national Zero Waste Council on a strategic messaging campaign to prevent food waste and promote healthy eating. There is an opportunity for the City of London and the Middlesex-London Health Unit to promote this messaging.

 Noting that in 2007 Canadians wasted the equivalent of 183 kilograms of solid food per person between the retail level and the plate, the **Toronto Food Policy Council** publishes on its website a list of resources with tips to help people reduce residential food waste.



Photo: Sammy Tangir

GROWING INTO THE FUTURE

- mid-scale composting facility
- neighbourhood vermi-composting
- system for exchanging compostable materials for finished compost



EDUCATION & CONNECTION

1. Food Hubs

Different communities define food hubs in different ways. What distinguishes the idea of a food hub is that it is a place (whether physical or virtual) in which a community's food-related resources can be found—for example, a community kitchen where people come together to cook, or a tool library where people come to borrow shared equipment, or a distribution centre where a farmers' market is held, a Community Shared Agriculture (CSA) project's produce is distributed, or food from urban or regional farmers are aggregated for sale.

What We Heard from the Community

The London community envisions multiple food hubs across London. However these food hubs are organized in London, the strong message was that gathering and sharing information and resources in order to advance urban agriculture was an important priority. As well, there was a great deal of interest in the ways that urban agriculture can bring communities together through celebration and enjoyable events related to growing and eating food. There was also interest in linking food hubs with food banks, depots and/or emergency food cupboards, to ensure that food is accessible to all.



Food Literacy is a set of interconnected attributes. These include food and nutrition knowledge, skills in food preparation, the confidence and self-efficacy to apply the knowledge and skills to influence dietary behaviour and access to resources (eg. adequate income, housing, food, equipment, learning opportunities, social support, and a healthy and sustainable food system).

Source: Locally Driven Collaborative Project "Measuring Food Literacy in Public Health," 2016

Action	Roles			
	Community leads	Community partners with City	City enables Community	City leads
Identify a leadership group that would manage the development and implementation of multiple food hubs.				
Research and prepare a food hub feasibility study and business plan.				
Investigate various food hub models and consider which models would work best in London and at what locations.				

2. School Gardens







School gardens serve many important functions and offer many benefits: they connect children to food production and thus enhance their understanding of the food system; they make food production “visible”; they can be connected to the curriculum and thus create an engaging learning environment; they can serve as community “hubs,” increasing parental and community involvement in the school and they can be used as an entry point for other sorts of environmental education.

What We Heard from the Community

There was a great deal of interest in promoting the use of schools as sites of urban agriculture activity and in integrating gardens at every school in London. We heard that there were a number of exciting initiatives that the City of London could support and promote, including funding indoor Good Food Machines for schools, promoting the Ontario Fresh from the Farm fundraising program, and supporting programs that bring farmers and agriculture into the classroom.



The Thames Valley District School Board has gardens or planter boxes at **15 schools**.

Action	Roles			
	Community leads	Community partners with City	City enables Community	City leads
Engage school boards to increase the number and capacity of school gardens.				
Understand food systems-related curriculum linkages relevant to elementary and secondary school education.				
Support the development of curriculum connections and teacher training materials related to school gardens.				
Support teachers and schools to bring agriculture into the classroom through connections with farmers.				
Create linkages between school boards, the City, community groups, and parent councils in order to promote the goal of a garden in every school.				
Integrate school gardens with school food and nutrition programs so that food grown in schools is served and eaten in schools.				

3. Community Education & Training




As a component of urban agriculture, community education and training can take many forms, from workshops at garden sites, to community festivals, to written materials in various languages spoken in the community. Food literacy, food skills, education, and training are essential components of the Urban Agriculture Strategy, with links to each priority action area.

What We Heard from the Community


There was a great deal of interest in the many ways that food literacy, education, and training can be integrated into urban agriculture activities, particularly as they relate to healthy eating and environmental sustainability in terms of biodiversity, pollinator health, organic production, climate change, etc. It was noted that many newcomers to London already have a great deal of knowledge about urban agriculture and could be an important resource for knowledge sharing. As well, many people felt that youth education should be a priority.





The London Training Centre supports the local food system through their Local Food Skills program in which participants gain real skills and work with real food in a state-of-the-art commercial kitchen. The program introduces participants to the food industry through a three-week educational program. The food for the program is provided by the London Training Centre's one-acre farm located just west of London and other farms in Middlesex County, Elgin County, and Oxford County.


Action	Roles			
	Community leads	Community partners with City	City enables Community	City leads
Develop city-wide community events focused on urban agriculture and food literacy in order to celebrate food growing and community gathering around cooking and eating together.				
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.				
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.				

CASE STUDIES

 **Friends of Urban Agriculture London** is spearheading the conceptual development of a food hub that would bring groups together for multifaceted and diverse expressions around the common goal of expanding urban agriculture activities in London.

 **John Paul II Secondary Catholic School** in London has an Urban Garden Project that teaches students about sustainable agriculture through hands-on gardening in an outdoor classroom.

 **The Ontario Edible Education Network** brings together groups in Ontario that are connecting children and youth with healthy food systems, and seeks to better enable these groups to share resources, ideas, and experience; work together on advocacy; and facilitate efforts across the province to get children and youth eating, growing, cooking, celebrating, and learning about healthy, local, and sustainably produced food.

 **The Local Community Food Centre**, in Stratford, provides a place, and initiates programs, for people to come together to grow, share, cook, access, and advocate for good food for everyone.

 **The Hamilton Road Area Food Prosperity Initiative**, a project of the Crouch Neighbourhood Resource Centre in London, builds neighbourhood capacity to develop local, sustainable food systems through activities such as gardening and cooking.

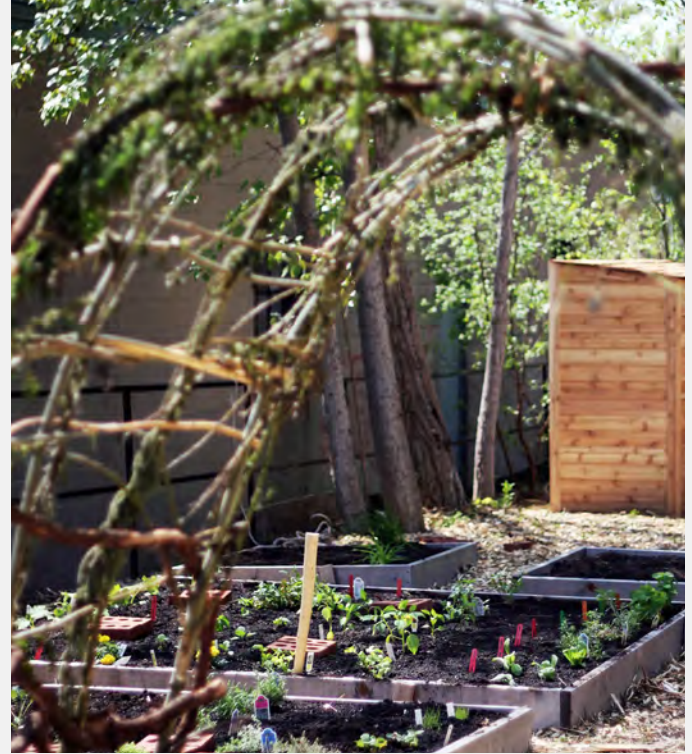


Photo: Sammy Tangir

GROWING INTO THE FUTURE

- urban farm for high school students
- promotional campaign on urban agriculture
- partner with Indigenous community organizations and leaders on urban agriculture initiatives as a way to share knowledge
- document and disseminate information about London's many food literacy and food skills initiatives

Moving Forward

The London Urban Agriculture Strategy is aspirational, action-oriented, and supports seizing emerging opportunities.

The Strategy is intended to guide action, and, along with the priorities and respective actions, act as a basis for evaluating progress. The following are three key elements of implementation that were raised throughout the public consultations and surveys and present opportunities for bringing London's urban agriculture vision to fruition.

1. Engage institutions and other levels of government

- 🍏 Outreach to hospitals, schools, churches, businesses, universities and colleges, etc., to consider possible urban agriculture engagement and activities.
- 🍏 Host a meeting with these institutions to engage them in the Strategy's implementation.
- 🍏 Advocate for provincial and federal policies that support urban agriculture.
- 🍏 Partner with the Middlesex-London Food Policy Council to support implementation of the strategy, establish common ground, and coordinate implementation efforts.

2. Support demonstration projects

- 🍏 Utilize existing City of London, provincial, federal, and charitable foundation granting programs to support urban agriculture initiatives.
- 🍏 Consider an additional granting program or programs to support urban agriculture initiatives.

- 🍏 Consider Requests for Proposals to move urban agriculture initiatives forward.

3. Establish a governance, monitoring, and evaluation framework to oversee implementation

- 🍏 Identify a City of London service area to coordinate the City's role in implementing the Urban Agriculture Strategy, to liaise with the community, and to track the progress of the Urban Agriculture Strategy implementation.
- 🍏 Create an Urban Agriculture Steering Committee including representatives from appropriate City divisions, appropriate City of London Advisory Committees, the Middlesex-London Food Policy Council, and members of Friends of Urban Agriculture London. Define the mandate of ([see Appendix E](#)) and terms of reference for the Steering Committee.
- 🍏 Report annually on the Urban Agriculture Strategy implementation progress to Council from the Steering Committee. Reports would include annual accomplishments and goals for the following year.

Successful implementation of the urban agriculture strategy will require the City and community to work together to scale up urban agricultural practices in London.

Appendices

Appendix A: Definitions

This Appendix provides formal definitions from other municipalities related to urban agriculture activities. The intent of this Appendix is to guide the City of London in the development of urban agriculture policy, bylaws, and programs.

Urban Farm

Chicago

Growing, washing, packaging, and storage of fruits, vegetables, and other plant products for wholesale or retail sales. Includes hydroponic systems, aquaponic systems, and apiaries.

Reference:

https://www.cityofchicago.org/content/dam/city/depts/zlup/Sustainable_Development/Publications/Urban_Ag_Ordinance_9-1-11.pdf

Seattle

Where plants are grown for sale of the plants or their products, and in which the plants or their products are sold at the lot where they are grown or off-site, or both, and in which no other items are sold. Examples may include flower and vegetable raising, orchards, and vineyards.

Reference:

https://library.municode.com/wa/seattle/codes/municipal_code

Detroit

A zoning lot, as defined in this article, over one acre, used to grow and harvest food crops and/or non-food crops for personal or group use. An orchard or tree farm that is a principal use is considered an urban farm. An urban farm may be divided into plots for cultivation by one or more individuals and/or groups or may be cultivated by individuals and/or groups collectively. The products of an urban farm may or may not be for commercial purposes.

(The term Urban Garden is used when the lot is less than one acre.)

Reference:

City of Detroit, 2013, p.3

http://detroitagriculture.net/wp-content/uploads/2013_Sharable_UA-Ordinance.pdf

Market Garden

Toronto

Premises used for growing and harvesting vegetables, fruits, flowers, shrubs, trees, or other horticultural products for the purpose of sale.

Reference:

http://www.toronto.ca/zoning/bylaw_amendments/ZBL_NewProvision_Chapter800.htm

<researchresourcespublications/resources/foodfriendlymunicipalities.pdf>

Farmers' market

Detroit

A pre-designed non-municipally owned or operated area, with or without temporary structures, where vendors and individuals sell vegetables or produce, flowers, orchard products, locally-produced packaged food products, or animal agricultural products.

Reference:

http://detroitagriculture.net/wp-content/uploads/2013_Sharable_UA-Ordinance.pdf

USDA

Two or more farmer-producers that sell their own agricultural products directly to the general public at a fixed location, which includes fruits and vegetables, meat, fish, poultry, dairy products, and grains.

Reference:

<https://www.fns.usda.gov/ebt/definitions-farmers-markets-direct-marketing-farmers-and-other-related-terms>

Temporary Farmers' Market

Waterloo

Outdoor food stands using temporary structures to sell food products to the public. The foods sold would be primarily from local sources, and may include processed foods such as jams and preserves and other farm-made products. Stand operators could be farmers or staff or volunteers of a business or organization with a permit to operate the stand.

Reference:

Page 10

<http://chd.region.waterloo.on.ca/en/>

Community/Collective Kitchen

Community kitchens (also called "collective kitchens") are community-based cooking programs where small groups of people come together to prepare meals and take food home to their families. In a community kitchen every member contributes by planning, preparing, and cooking food.

Reference:

Food Security Network of Newfoundland and Labrador

http://www.foodsecuritynews.com/Publications/Community_Kitchen_Best_Practices_Toolkit.pdf

A group of 4 or 5 people who pool their time, money, and abilities in order to come up with healthy, delicious, and money-saving dishes that they then take home to their families. Participants plan recipes together, make up grocery lists, and go shopping. Then they collectively prepare their meals.

Reference:

Association of Collective Kitchens Quebec

<http://www.rccq.org/en/a-propos/quest-ce-quune-cuisine-collective/>

Community Composting

Community Compost NYC

There are hundreds of community compost sites operating in NYC. Presently, 225 of these diverse sites are affiliated with a municipally coordinated network. They range in size from 10 square feet (the size of a small shed) to 20,000 square feet (more than four basketball courts); they are located in gardens, parks, schools, urban farms, private properties, churches, rooftops, and other locations; and they employ different composting methods and management models.

Reference:

Page 6

http://www1.nyc.gov/assets/dsny/docs/about_2014-community-composting-report-LL77_0815.pdf

Chicago

The ordinance creates two new categories of composters: larger scale urban farms, and tier two facilities, like community gardens. After registering with the city, these agricultural organizations can increase the size of their operation and include offsite materials. Though they cannot accept money for taking organic waste, urban farms will be able to sell their compost.

Reference:

Search: New Ordinance Brings New Opportunities for Urban Agriculture

<http://news.medill.northwestern.edu/chicago/>

Appendix B: London's Urban Agriculture Strategy Process

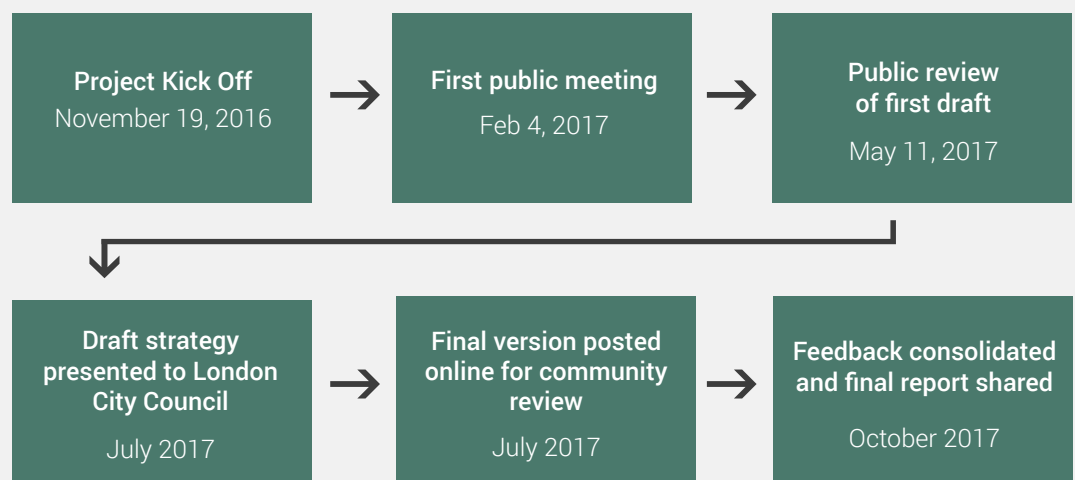
Throughout the development of the Strategy, Londoners demonstrated their steadfast dedication to strengthening urban agriculture. London residents continuously participated and provided feedback. The Urban Agriculture Team was delighted with the consistently strong turnout of stakeholders.

The City of London's Urban Agriculture Strategy was developed during 2016 and 2017. Two foundational community meetings in the fall of 2016 set the stage for the development of the strategy. These included a community meeting to discuss the Urban Agriculture Strategy Terms of Reference on September 29th, and an additional session on November 19th at the Urban Agriculture Conference. At these sessions participants envisioned what the

future of urban agriculture in London could look like. On December 19th, Londoners participated in an online survey in which the community was asked to provide input on municipal definitions of urban agriculture. Respondents rated the submissions based on their relevance to the London context. Choosing an appropriate definition for urban agriculture was important to ensure that the community was using shared language as work began on developing the strategy.

On February 4th, a collaborative visioning event was held to articulate and establish guiding principles and prioritize areas of action for urban agriculture. The agenda included broad discussions, intriguing breakout sessions, and creative thinking

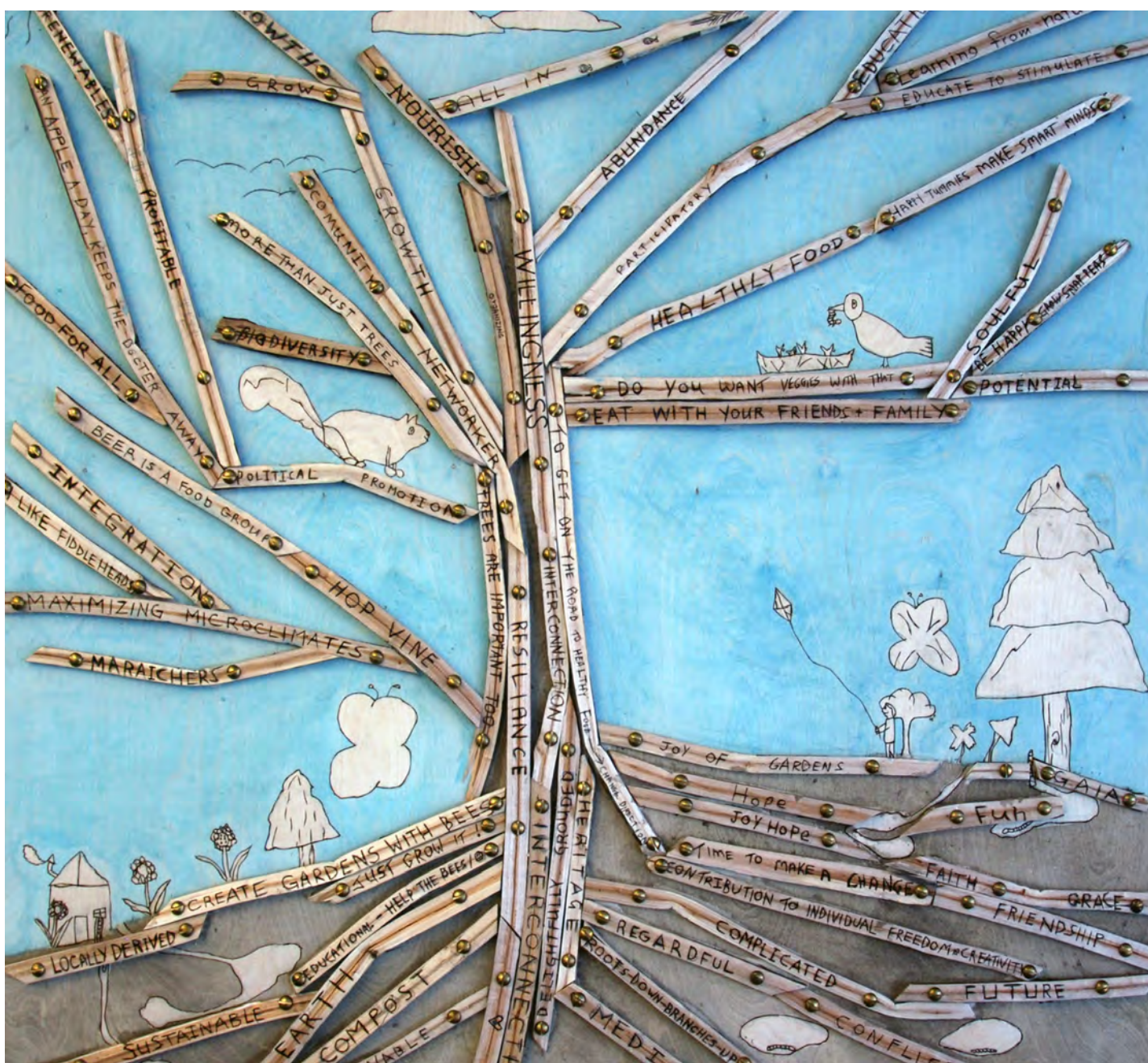
LONDONS URBAN AGRICULTURE STRATEGY DEVELOPMENT



to contribute to the development of a community art piece. We followed up with an online survey to hear final thoughts on the revised definition of urban agriculture, the guiding principles, and action items. In March, the City presented an online mapping tool for the community to inventory the urban agriculture initiatives across London.

identified in the strategy. The collaborative art piece was unveiled, and can be seen in the image below. On July 17th, 2017, the draft report will be shared with the Planning and Environment Committee before a final review from the community.

The first draft of the Strategy was circulated in April. In May, we invited the community to another consultation to clarify the community and municipal roles and responsibilities related to each action



Appendix C:

London Urban Agriculture Strategy Policy Considerations

London's Urban Agriculture Strategy is being led by the City of London's Planning Division, as part of its efforts to implement the London Plan, the new Official Plan. Across Ontario, Official Plans describe the municipal council's policies on how land in the community should be used for future growth and change.

"The London Plan sets out a new approach for planning in London. It emphasizes growing inward and upward, so that we can reduce the costs of growth, create walkable communities, revitalize our urban neighbourhoods and business areas, protect our farmlands, and reduce greenhouse gases and energy consumption. The plan sets out to conserve our cultural heritage and protect our environmental areas, hazard lands, and natural resources. Through the London Plan our community is planning for vibrant, healthy, safe and fulfilling neighbourhoods, attractive and viable mobility alternatives and affordable housing that is accessible to those who need it. At the root of the London Plan is the goal of building a city that will be attractive as a place to live and invest in a highly competitive world and one that will offer the opportunity of prosperity to everyone—on their own terms and in their own way."

<https://www.london.ca/business/Planning-Development/Official-Plan/Pages/The-London-Plan.aspx>

The London Plan has a chapter on the Food System. In the chapter the City defines London's food system and why this is important to the future. The chapter sets out what the City is trying to achieve, encourage, foster, and support related to

London's food system, and how they are going to do this.

"A food system refers to all the processes, networks, and infrastructure that are involved with the growth, harvest, processing, packaging, distribution, transport, marketing, sale, serving, consumption, and disposal of food within a city or a region. London's food system includes the prime agricultural land in and around our city, as well as the significant agri-food industry that exists in London that processes, packages, and transports our food to the world. Our food system includes such things as backyard and community gardens, local businesses, and restaurants that sell and serve food, and farmers markets that bring residents, food businesses, and local growers together."

The priorities identified in the Urban Agriculture Strategy align with the London Plan. Many of the urban agriculture priorities identified also align with the London Strengthening Neighbourhoods Strategy (<https://www.london.ca/residents/neighbourhoods/Documents/LSNS%202017-2020%20Report.pdf>).

Policy documents like the London Plan govern the substantive aspects of the City's work. It is an overarching, strategic policy document, developed to guide subsequent operational decision-making throughout the City. There will be multiple pathways towards achieving the goals and aspirations of the London Plan. The London Urban Agriculture Strategy sets out priorities that will become part of the London Plan's implementation, and represents one path towards strengthening, fostering, and supporting London's food system.

Given the strong and enabling language in the London Plan for the food system as a whole and urban agriculture specifically, this section of the Urban Agriculture Strategy reviews the existing bylaws and programs in London related to the implementation of the strategy.

Below, the policy considerations related to the Urban Agriculture Strategy have been identified. Recommendations are provided to further enable urban agriculture to flourish.

Considerations for Implementation

- Identify a City point person to provide advice and guidance on policies and access to land and space.
- Raise awareness among relevant City staff on the implications of the Urban Agriculture Strategy.
- Develop a mechanism to facilitate access to appropriate land and space for urban agriculture activities.
- Support demonstration projects in order to document outcomes and impacts, and reveal unanticipated policy barriers.
- Review direct farm sales to urban farms.
- Review licensing fees to encourage smaller mobile fresh food vendors, smaller format farmers' markets, and pop-up local fresh food vendors.
- Work with Middlesex-London Health Unit to enable selling of prepared foods by certifying community kitchens as "commercial" for small-scale, community-based sales.
- Consider edible landscaping demonstration projects.
- Explore opportunities for local food procurement.
- The City of London's Accessibility Plan and the Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act.

It is important to note that much of the land in London is identified for future growth and development. Over time, many of the existing vacant parcels will be developed for urban uses. Urban agriculture may be an appropriate interim use on lands that have been identified for future development but it is important that those lands be available in the future so that the

City is not under pressure to expand the urban growth boundary into productive agricultural land.

Growing Food

Space for growing food was identified as a priority in the Urban Agriculture Strategy.

Growing food is permitted in London in multiple locations:

- backyards and private property (i.e., homes and apartment buildings)
- institutional property (i.e., schools and churches)
- land zoned for development as an interim activity
- land zoned open space
- land zoned agricultural or commercial agriculture
- rooftops

There are no significant barriers to growing food in London; however, access to land is an issue for some community groups interested in entrepreneurial urban agriculture. The City can facilitate access to land once the group's specific requirements are understood. In the future, activities such as hydroponics, aquaponics, and aeroponics may emerge as opportunities for London. These should be encouraged and enabled.

When supporting food-growing activities within the built part of the City, the following issues should be considered:

- community access/proximity to community groups
- soil testing
- siting, access to sun and water
- minimum distance separation requirements
- food safety and handling
- insurance
- aesthetics
- identified future use of land and/or development potential

Best practices and resources:

- London Community Garden Program <http://www.london.ca/residents/Parks/>

[Community-Projects/Pages/London-Community-Gardens.aspx](#)

- A Guide to Growing and Selling Fresh Fruit and Vegetables in Toronto
https://www1.toronto.ca/City%20of%20Toronto/Environment%20and%20Energy/Programs%20for%20Residents/PDFs/A1500114_GrowingSelling_WEB_June23.pdf
- Hamilton zoning for community gardens and urban farms
<http://www2.hamilton.ca/NR/2014-Bylaws/14-274.pdf>
- Digging for a Just and Sustainable Food System: A Scan of Municipal Policies Influencing Urban Agriculture Projects across Durham Region
<https://static1.squarespace.com/static/555e0f61e4b0d488441001b4/t/58863a1ff7c505d7c16d6a9/1485191762061/DIG++FINAL+Urban+Ag+Policy+Scan+%28Nov+17+2016%29.pdf>
- City of London Zoning By-Law No.Z.-1
<https://www.london.ca/business/Planning-Development/zoning-by-law/Pages/Z1-Zoning.aspx>
- Agriculture Zone
<https://www.london.ca/business/Planning-Development/zoning-by-law/Documents/CHAPTR45.pdf>
- Agriculture Commercial Zone
<https://www.london.ca/business/Planning-Development/zoning-by-law/Documents/CHAPTR46.pdf>
- Open Space Zone
<https://www.london.ca/business/Planning-Development/zoning-by-law/Pages/Z1-Zoning.aspx>
- London Community Resource Centre has supported soil testing in the past

Selling Food

Londoners identified selling food grown or made during their urban agriculture activities as a priority. Except for direct farm sales or a “garage sale”-type pop-up market, most sales need to take place through a designated retail location (i.e., food retail outlet or

store), a farmers’ market, or require a permit for other sales venues. Opportunities for and barriers to selling food include:

➤ **Direct farm sales**

The business licensing bylaw states that “local farm growers are exempt from obtaining a hawker or pedlar’s license and paying a license fee for “day sales” or “seasonal sales” if the produce they are selling is being sold from their own property and has been grown and harvested by them.” It is recommended that this be reviewed to be extended to urban farms (see possible definition below).

➤ **“Garage” sales**

Backyard gardeners may sell to their neighbours through a garage sale. Households are entitled to two garage sales each year.

➤ **Mobile sales**

Mobile sales are regulated through the business licensing bylaw. It is recommended that reduced licensing fees are considered to encourage smaller mobile fresh food vendors. This could support increased access to healthy food in London.

➤ **Farmers’ markets and pop up markets**

Farmer’s markets or “seasonal sales” are regulated through the business licensing bylaw. It is recommended that reduced licensing fees are considered to encourage smaller format farmers’ markets and pop-up local fresh food vendors. This could support increased access to healthy food in London. The ATN in association with the Westminster Working Group and the Child and Youth Network have developed an “Operations Manual: How to Start a Farmers’ Market” resource. This resource is being adapted into a City of London community development tool.

➤ **“Cottage” food**

All prepared and processed food sold to the public must be made in a commercial kitchen, and is governed by food safety rules contained in Ontario’s Food Premises Regulation 562 under the Health Protection and Promotion Act. Middlesex-London Health Unit could enable this activity by certifying community kitchens as “commercial” for small-scale, community-based sales. In London there are a number of kitchen incubators that enable “cottage” food processing and preparation.

When supporting food-selling activities within the

built part of the City, the following issues should be considered:

- potential conflicts with food businesses and other urban activities
- basic infrastructure such as a handwashing station
- food safety and handling
- insurance

Best practices and resources:

- Ottawa bylaw changes on selling from community gardens and farms (Comprehensive Zoning By-Law 2008-250) and changes to farmers' market regulations to allow for more markets in a wider variety of zones
<http://ottawa.ca/en/residents/laws-licenses-and-permits/laws/city-ottawa-zoning-law/2016>
- OMAFRA business development resources
<http://www.omafra.gov.on.ca/english/food/business-development/food-selling.htm>
- London Business Licensing Bylaw (see hawkers, pedlar; eating establishments and food shops; refreshment vehicles)
<http://www.london.ca/city-hall/by-laws/Documents/business-licence-L6.pdf>
- London Food Premises Inspection and Mandatory Food Handler Bylaw PH-16
<http://www.london.ca/city-hall/by-laws/Documents/foodhandlerPH16.pdf>

Composting

Backyard composting is encouraged by the City of London. The City of London's Interim Waste Diversion Plan identifies a number of initiatives in Road Map 2.0 The Road to Increased Resource Recovery and Zero Waste (2014) that relate to the Urban Agriculture Strategy:

- Began a Community Composting Demonstration Project (In progress—demonstration projects at six locations in the community started in 2015).
- Began a Food Reduction Awareness Demonstration Project (In progress—a demonstration project began in 2016).

There are a number of benefits to community-scale

composting:

- engages non- and for-profit operations, social enterprises, urban and community farms, and centres with gardening activities and community kitchens, in waste management and social enterprise
- reduces the volume of waste that would otherwise be the City's responsibility
- reduces the carbon footprint and direct transport costs of the City's waste management system
- supports local food production by minimizing expenses, including purchasing compost
- provides a valuable connection to food production through creating a closed-loop cycle by producing high-quality compost where it is in high demand and cycling nutrients back into local, productive use

Larger-scale composting operations using pooled feedstock (waste resources brought in from off-site) are regulated by the Ontario Ministry of Environment. These regulations place many low-risk community and mid-scale composting activities, including bringing residential food scraps onto community gardens and urban farms, into a high-risk category. This lack of criteria or clear thresholds for different kinds of composting and sizes of operations can be a barrier to community composting, as mid-scale composting operations must go through costly Environmental Compliance Approvals, testing, and monitoring procedures. London should continue participating in the Provincial process for food and organic waste management (through the Strategy for a Waste-Free Ontario: Building a Circular Economy) to ensure that composting and anaerobic digestion facilities are properly sited and where community scale operations could be established, appropriate regulation is available that matches the scale of the operation.

When supporting mid-scale composting activities within the built part of the City, the following issues should be considered:

- siting
- odour

- pest control
- compost management and distribution

Best practices and resources:

- City of London waste management
<https://www.london.ca/residents/Garbage-Recycling/Pages/default.aspx>
- FoodShare Toronto operates a model mid-scale composting facility
<http://foodshare.net/program/compost/>
- Toronto Food Policy Council mid-scale composting brief, unpublished
- Illinois State Law requires “garden compost operations” that process off-site waste to obtain permits if they are composting more than 25 cubic yards at one time and/or are engaged in commercial activities pertaining to composting
<http://www.epa.illinois.gov/Assets/iepa/waste-management/composting/regulatoryrequirementsforcompostingfacilities.pdf>
- The Illinois Environmental Protection Act allows urban farms to accept donations of food scraps
<http://www.ilga.gov/legislation/ilcs/ilcs5.asp?ActID=1585>
- Direct-to-farm initiatives allow food scrap drop off locations at farmers’ market (e.g., Paw-tucket/Wintertie Market in Rhode Island collected 1,100 lbs of organic waste over 6 weeks, and Lower East Side Ecology Center in New York City handles 2000kg+/weekly)
<https://www.grownyc.org/compost>

Edible landscaping

Edible landscaping and boulevard planting are identified as priorities in the Urban Agriculture Strategy. The City currently regulates boulevard tree planting. Opportunities to introduce edible landscaping into boulevard plantings should be pursued.

When supporting edible landscaping activities within the built part of the City, the following issues should be considered:

- siting and soil contamination

- planting height
- soil run-off
- limiting attraction of unwanted animals and other pests
- foraging guidelines aligned with naturalization goals

Best practices and resources:

- Oshawa has developed a boulevard garden exemption
http://app.oshawa.ca/agendas/community_services/2016/06-23/REPORT_CS-16-63.pdf

Beekeeping

Beekeeping is identified as a priority in the Urban Agriculture Strategy. Beekeeping is regulated by the Ontario Bees Act (1990), which specifies setback distances from residential, parkland, or other public spaces when locating hives. The Ontario Bees Act does not reflect the growing existence of beekeeping in urban and peri-urban locations, nor does it acknowledge the supportive role beekeeping plays in urban agriculture. This is a barrier to urban beekeeping.

When supporting beekeeping activities within the built part of the City, the following issues should be considered:

- distance from adjacent property and siting
- number of hives and flight path
- bee care and health
- potential impacts on native bees

Best practices and references:

- Some municipalities have provided supportive policies that are compliant with this Act. For example, the Municipality of Meaford permits “hobby beekeeping” to a maximum of four hives in community gardens and residential lots with some restrictions (Municipality of Meaford, 2014).
- Towards a New Approach to Beekeeping Policy in Urban Ontario by Sustain Ontario

<https://sustainontario.com/custom/uploads/2012/12/FINAL-REPORT-Urban-Beekeeping-Policy-in-Ontario-December-2012.pdf>

- Digging for a Just and Sustainable Food System: A Scan of Municipal Policies Influencing Urban Agriculture Projects across Durham Region
<https://static1.squarespace.com/static/555e0f61e4b0d488441001b4/t/58863a1ff7c505d7c16d6a9/1485191762061/DIG+-+FINAL+Urban+Ag+Policy+Scan+%28Nov+17+2016%29.pdf>

Local Food Procurement

Local food procurement emerged as a priority in the Urban Agriculture Strategy. London does not have a local food procurement policy. Sustain Ontario has developed a tool kit to support municipalities to begin sustainable local food procurement, and this could be a valuable guide for the City of London as it considers this issue.

<https://sustainontario.com/2015/12/02/28067/news/new-toolkit-initiating-sustainable-food-procurement-policies-in-your-region>

Appendix D:

Urban Agriculture

Existing Assets

Inventory

While developing the Strategy, the City of London launched an Urban Agriculture Inventory. The Inventory will continue to be a companion to the Strategy through the implementation phase, documenting urban agriculture initiatives, providing baseline data on initiatives, and supporting the identification of gaps and opportunities for urban agriculture initiatives.

Purpose of the inventory

- › facilitate connections between urban agriculture and local government and community priorities such as sustainable communities and capacity building
- › increase awareness about the potential of urban agriculture
- › support the implementation of London's Official Plan
- › identify land and space appropriate for urban agriculture activities, including activities related to growing, processing, distribution, and food loss and waste resources
- › create a benchmark to monitor urban agriculture activities
- › aid in developing policies and bylaws supportive to urban agriculture
- › generate data and create targets towards implementing effective urban agriculture policies
- › enhance information base to assist land use decision-making to ensure the implementation of the Urban Agriculture Strategy
- › capitalize and support emerging opportunities in urban agriculture

Scope of work

- › document and map existing urban agriculture activities
- › identify gaps/opportunities
- › identify priority action areas for urban agriculture in London
- › develop list and criteria for land/space required to implement priorities
- › develop criteria for assessment of land/space for future urban agriculture projects
- › find and assess suitable land/space

The Inventory will not be a list of all suitable land/space available in London for urban agriculture activities. The Inventory will align with the Urban Agriculture Strategy and be a tool that facilitates implementation of the priorities identified.

The Inventory is available here:

<http://www.arcgis.com/home/webmap/viewer.html?webmap=3e94014055ae462cba18d2937f75d93e&extent=-81.4701,42.9014,-80.997,43.0604>

The form to add an asset to the Inventory is available here:

<http://london.maps.arcgis.com/apps/GeoForm/index.html?appid=c86521a33f224b918c6102ae76126e86>

Urban Agriculture Inventory – Example entries/activities

Growing	Processing	Distribution	Food Loss & Recovery	Education & Connection
Community gardens	Smaller-scale, artisanal or cottage processing businesses	Food box programs	Composting facilities	Organizations/programs that provide support for urban agriculture
Orchards		Farmers' markets and farm stands	Food reuse programs	Education and training programs related to urban agriculture
School gardens		Retailers selling local food		
Urban farms				

Plus: Identify suitable locations (across the five categories) for future urban agriculture initiatives as a category for the online map.

Appendix E:

Generic RFP for Urban Agriculture Demonstration Projects

Request for Proposals for Urban Agriculture
Demonstration Projects
RFP Deadline: XXX

Section 1: Project Description and Purpose

Introduction

- › background and information about the Urban Agriculture Strategy
- › what the City seeks to achieve through this demonstration project
- › objectives of the demonstration project

Goals, vision, and anticipated outcomes

- › key considerations: public participation and engagement, alignment with Urban Agriculture Strategy principles, etc.
- › description of the kind of demonstration project requested (i.e., urban farm, beekeeping, urban hens, etc.)
- › proposed goals and outcomes for the demonstration project

Section 2: Project details and location

Location and siting requirements

- › description of site available

Physical criteria to consider in relation to locating the demonstration project (will depend on demonstration type)

- › zoning and bylaws
- › current and future land-use plans
- › size
- › sun exposure
- › land surface
- › soil/site contamination
- › maximum slope
- › existing infrastructure (access to water, fencing, greenhouses, buildings)

Social criteria to consider in relation to locating the demonstration project

- › accessibility (public transportation, parking, bike racks, sidewalks, wheelchair)
- › socio-economic demographic
- › proximity to schools and community facilities
- › proximity to other urban agriculture projects
- › proximity to markets
- › existence of active community groups
- › security

Financial feasibility

- › business plan
- › fundraising strategy

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- › budget
 - › ongoing financial sustainability
 - › capacity of applicant to sustain funding required

Community engagement

- › community engagement plan and process

Project management

- › project management plan
- › project leadership
- › governance and evaluation

Section 3: Review of eligibility and selection procedure

Describe the criteria that will be used to evaluate proposals and select the final applicant.

Other sections as appropriate

- › property description
- › terms of lease
- › other requirements the City has for proposers and partnerships