



DRAFT URBAN AGRICULTURE PLAN

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Treaty & Land Acknowledgement

The City of Leduc acknowledges we are situated within Treaty 6 Territory, comprised of the ancestral and modern-day territory of the Nêhiyaw (Cree), Dené, Niitsitapi (Blackfoot), Anishinaabe, Nakota Isga (Nakota Sioux), as well as the Métis Peoples. We acknowledge the many First Nations, Métis and Inuit, whose footsteps have marked these lands since time immemorial.

We acknowledge the relationship between the land, food production and urban agriculture and understand we are all Treaty people with shared responsibility to this land and to each other. At this time of truth and reconciliation, we welcome the opportunity to listen, learn and act.

DRAFT

Executive Summary

The City of Leduc has developed an Urban Agriculture Plan (UAP) to create a cohesive approach to support urban agriculture, promote its diversification within the city, and to meet the requirement for urban member municipalities of the Edmonton Metropolitan Region Board (EMRB) to adopt an Urban Agriculture Plan, as outlined in the Regional Agricultural Master Plan (RAMP). This Plan provides direction to enhance urban agriculture in Leduc based on local priorities identified through engagement with residents, interest holders, and local agriculture representatives.

This UAP is the first plan created for the City of Leduc to address urban agriculture within the city. It is envisioned that the plan will be implemented in a collaborative effort with residents, local businesses, community organizations, and various City departments all playing a role and championing urban agriculture initiatives they are passionate about.

The UAP sets up the foundation for future work based on four key principles described further below in Section 3. Each principle is supported by policies which outline specific outcomes related to each principle. The plan identifies seven action areas related to urban agriculture initiatives and 43 actions to support the principles.

While there are 43 actions identified in the plan, there are three big moves the plan will initiate:

1. **Establish an Urban Agriculture Champion** – Currently within the City, urban agriculture initiatives are supported as side of desk projects. To ensure consistent efforts related to urban agriculture are a priority, a department or employee will be identified as a Champion to lead implementation of the UAP. The Champion will liaise with the community and connect likeminded individuals as well as track City progress on City-led initiatives. This move is crucial to the success of the UAP. **Whether this can be accomplished with existing resources at the City is to be determined.**
2. **Build Capacity for Participation in Urban Agriculture** – During the development of the UAP, several barriers to participation in urban agriculture were identified. Many of the actions relate to removing barriers and providing education and skill development opportunities to enable more people within the community to engage with urban agriculture. This move will support residents to get involved and interested in urban agriculture which in turn will increase community capacity to complete the identified actions and establishes partnerships and champions within the community instead of the City leading all initiatives.
3. **Support Value-added Agriculture and Agribusiness** – Value-added agriculture is growing within the City and there are several agriculture related businesses in Leduc. Engagement confirmed there are opportunities to partner with local businesses and provide support to businesses through marketing, networking, startup spaces, and incentives. This move will support businesses already involved in urban agriculture to grow and encourage more businesses to startup in, or relocate to, Leduc.

1. Introduction

What is Urban Agriculture?

Urban agriculture refers to the practice of growing food and raising animals within a city environment. The purpose is to enhance local food production, provide access to affordable nutritious food, boost food literacy, enhance social connections, foster community pride, and strengthen historical connections to food production.

Urban agriculture programs already exist in the City of Leduc such as the backyard hen keeping, backyard beekeeping, and community gardens initiatives. Other examples of urban agriculture include market gardening, edible public landscaping, rooftop gardens, urban farms, and value-added processing.

Policy Context

Regional Agricultural Master Plan (RAMP)

The Regional Agriculture Master Plan (RAMP) provides direction on agricultural land, and agricultural related development for member municipalities of the Edmonton Metropolitan Region Board. RAMP directs that agricultural land in the vicinity of the built-up urban areas be kept in production until required for future growth and requires urban member municipalities to complete an Urban Agriculture Plan.

RAMP has requirements that stipulate each municipality's Urban Agriculture Plan must support the following outcomes:

- Create awareness and public support for urban agriculture,
- Identify opportunities and constraints for urban agriculture specific to each municipality,
- Identify how urban agriculture will be supported in the municipality, with particular attention to the needs of public and private forms of urban agriculture, and
- Ensure that urban agriculture is a vital component of complete communities and is integrated into the social fabric of the municipality.

City of Leduc Municipal Development Plan

The City's Municipal Development Plan (MDP) is the municipal-wide plan for growth of the city which outlines policy direction on land use planning, community service priorities, and infrastructure investment. Urban agriculture is supported in the MDP by the goal that "the City will support agriculture in the region through compact urban development that provides services to the agricultural industry, and by promoting urban agriculture opportunities in the community." Additionally, the MDP supports urban agriculture with policies to:

- Preserve agricultural land until it is required for urban development.
- Encourage the development and maintenance of agricultural uses that will strengthen the local economy.
- Encourage soil management and topsoil relocation.

- Encourage the development of industries related to food production and the processing of agricultural products.
- Encourage the development of an urban agriculture strategy.

City of Leduc Environmental Plan

The Environmental Plan guides sustainability actions over a ten-year period to support the vision to “be a community leader in environmental sustainability and stewardship.” The Plan aims to:

- Promote land stewardship,
- Evaluate food security and opportunities for local production, and
- Encourage sustainable land management while supporting growth.

City of Leduc Parks, Open Spaces, and Trails Master Plan

The Parks, Open Spaces and Trails Master Plan guides decision making related to parks, open spaces, and trails. Urban agriculture is supported in the implementation strategies of this plan which recommend building more pollinator gardens and continuing to provide and expand community gardens.

City of Leduc Land Use Bylaw

The Land Use Bylaw (LUB) regulates the development and use of land within the city. Agriculture is a permitted use in the Urban Reserve district. Some elements of urban agriculture are defined and enabled such as greenhouses and farmers markets, while other elements like community gardens are not mentioned as a regulated land use.

City of Leduc Animal Licencing and Control Bylaw

The Animal Licencing and Control Bylaw establishes a system for the licencing and control of animals within the City of Leduc. In this bylaw, livestock (which includes hens) and bees are listed as prohibited animals. However, the Bylaw enables bee and hen licences to be obtained from the City.

Process

The Urban Agriculture Plan was created with the following three phases:

Phase 1: Information Gathering and Research

Phase 1 focused on gathering relevant information related to urban agriculture and how it applies to the local context of Leduc. Phase 1 highlights include:

Opportunities and Constraints

Through a review of supporting documentation, opportunities and constraints within existing policy were identified along with approaches to address these opportunities and constraints.

Background research also explored how agriculture has been a part of Leduc's history and the impacts of urban agriculture on urban environments.

Best Practices

A regional review of existing urban agriculture plans examined the trends in content, commonalities and differences, aspects considered innovative or interesting, and implementation approaches.

Phase 2: Engagement

Phase 2 looked to learn from residents, City staff, interest holders, and local agriculture representatives by visualizing the future of urban agriculture in Leduc. Phase 2 included the following engagement activities:

Internal Workshop

An internal workshop was held with City staff with roles related to urban agriculture to collaborate with internal departments through discussions on the current urban agriculture initiatives, identifying opportunities and constraints, and gathering ideas for the Plan.

Public Survey

A community survey was launched to gather feedback from the general public on the future of urban agriculture in Leduc, potential urban agriculture initiatives, and barriers to participating in urban agriculture.

External Workshop

An external workshop was held with local agriculture representatives to collect more in-depth community input and to collaborate with interest holders to create principles and identify potential urban agriculture initiatives.

Interest Holder Survey

An interest holder survey was launched to confirm what was heard in the external workshop and to gain perspective on the economic potential of urban agriculture.

Phase 3: Drafting the Urban Agriculture Plan

Phase 3 combined the knowledge gained in Phases 1 and 2 to draft an Urban Agriculture Plan. The Plan was shared with City staff for feedback and with the EMRB to review for conformity with the RAMP before being presented to City Council.

2. Local Context

History of Urban Agriculture in Leduc

Like many communities within Alberta, Leduc began as an agricultural community when settlers came to the area to homestead. The area began to grow as the rail line from Edmonton to Calgary was developed and a stop was placed in Leduc.

Since agriculture was a major economic driver in Leduc, the built form had many agricultural features such as markets, grocery stores, butcher shops, flour mills, dairies, stables, a grain elevator, and seed cleaning plant.

Today some of these features still exist such as the Stone Barn & Cultural Village which contains a structure that resembles the original stone dairy barn that used to be on the site, a milking shed, and landscaped garden. As well as the Alberta Wheat Pool Grain Elevator site, which features one of the last single composite wood crib grain elevators to be built in Alberta.

Urban Agriculture Today

While this is the first Urban Agriculture Plan for Leduc, urban agricultural itself is not new to Leduc. Highlighted below are some of the existing opportunities for people to participate in urban agriculture in Leduc.

Backyard Hen Keeping

Residents can apply for hen keeping licenses to allow three to six hens to be kept in their rear yards in residential districts for the purpose of producing eggs.

Beekeeping

Residents can apply for beekeeping licenses to keep bees in rear yards of residential districts. The City has been establishing pollinator gardens and fruit bearing trees in support of bee colonies

Community Gardens

There are two community gardens managed by the City, and one managed by the local neighborhood. Plots can be rented and provide a space for residents to grow their own food and a place for community building. Community groups can also apply to create and independently manage neighbourhood gardens.

Local Farmers' Market

Leduc's Farmers' Market has been operating for over 50 years. The market has existing in several locations over the years and runs from mid-May to the end of September. The market supports the local food economy by providing local farmers and businesses a place to sell their goods and enables residents to purchase fresh locally grown foods.

Agrivalue Processing Business Incubator

The Agrivalue Processing Business Incubator provides new businesses the infrastructure and services to support and enhance the establishment and growth of their agribusinesses.

Existing Agriculture Lands

Within the City limits there are lands which will continue to be used for agricultural uses until they are needed for urban development.

Agri-Businesses

Leduc has a variety of agri-businesses or businesses that involve the agriculture industry such as food trucks, breweries, and agri-tourism. These businesses are part of the local food economy.

Leduc & District Food Bank

The Leduc & District Food Bank is a community organization that provides short-term relief of food insecurity to those in need.

Historic Sites

Historic sites such as the Alberta Wheat Pool Grain Elevator and the Stone Barn & Cultural Village provide educational opportunities to connect to the agricultural history of Leduc.

Community Input

Through discussion and brainstorming with the external workshop participants four guiding principles for urban agriculture in Leduc emerged:

1. Strong Local Food Economy
2. Food Accessibility & Affordability
3. Community Wellbeing
4. Education & Skill Development

Ideas for urban agriculture initiatives were identified throughout the engagement process. Key initiatives suggested are categorized below as they relate to one of the four principles.

Strong Local Food Economy

1. **Local Business Partnerships:** Ideas around collaborating with local businesses and producers to create agri-tourism, cross-promotional opportunities, and food waste reduction by food upcycling (taking food that may be disposed of and using it in other agri-businesses).
2. **Food Production Methods:** Exploring different options for growing food including roof-top gardens, vertical gardening in underutilized shopping centre spaces, commercial-style greenhouses in industrial parks, and converting parking areas into growing spaces using raised beds.

3. **Community-Based Value-Added:** Ideas around developing community kitchens for small-batch food processing to be distributed/consumed locally, and exploring value-added opportunities (e.g. food rescue).

Food Access and Affordability

1. **Supporting Food Access & Sharing:** Ideas around donating extra garden yields to the local food bank and partnering with/creating local food rescue societies to pick excess fruit; creating a 'community fridge' where people can drop off extra food and others can access food; and creating a 'community food kiosk' at community gardens where excess food is laid out for community members who need it.
2. **Promoting Local Food Production & Self-Sufficiency:** Ideas around expanding community gardens and removing barriers for people to start growing their own food (low-cost garden plots, seed/supplies swaps); exploring opportunities for year-round growing indoors (hydroponics).
3. **Improving Information Delivery:** Make access to education and resources easier and more equitable (e.g. Google Translate to create multi-lingual materials).

Community Wellbeing

1. **Community and Food Security Initiatives:** Expanding community garden spaces; donating extra food grown in gardens to the food bank; removing barriers for people to grow some of their own food; partnering with food rescue organizations; supporting community groups to promote events; supporting access to culturally appropriate food.
2. **Cultural and Historical Engagement:** Leveraging existing local historic sites (Leduc Heritage Grain Elevator, Dr. Woods House Museum, Stone Barn Garden) to boost agri-tourism; highlighting traditional agriculture practices of Indigenous peoples.
3. **Partnerships and Collaborations:** Ideas around partnering with Downtown Business Association to support edible landscapes; leveraging collaboration with existing events/tourism such as, the Black Gold Rodeo.
4. **Community Education and Awareness:** Creating an education campaign about urban agriculture in Leduc; hosting events that bring people together; ideas for supporting community connections.

Education and Skills Development

1. **Educating:** Ideas for workshops on how to care for bees/hens, how to compost, what to plant/when to plant, how to prepare/process harvests, etc.; awareness campaigns about various urban agriculture topics, such as planting for pollinators and rainwater catchment.
2. **Engaging the Community:** Recognizing the importance of networking within the community and leveraging existing connections/groups to help disseminate information; supporting mentor/mentee arrangements to pass along knowledge.

3. **Sharing Resources & Information:** Ideas around creating a digital knowledge bank; providing QR codes to access edible plant information, recipes, etc.; mapping public fruit and berry trees/bushes around the city.

Opportunities and constraints identified from the community are discussed in the section below. The complete What We Heard Report containing a summary and analysis of the ideas and insights that were shared during the engagement can be found in Appendix B.

Opportunities & Constraints

Agricultural History

Opportunity - Celebrate Leduc's agricultural history and build off this history to promote urban agriculture within Leduc.

Existing Urban Agriculture Initiatives

Opportunity - Pilot programs for urban agriculture as initiatives such as backyard hens and bees have successfully turned into permanent programs at the city. There is an opportunity to enhance these programs and establish new programs building momentum for urban agriculture along the way.

Opportunity - Extra produce available at community gardens is not being used and has not made its way to people experiencing food insecurity.

Constraint - Some existing initiatives such as community gardens may be operating at capacity and newly interested residents may not easily be able to participate. In addition, it was expressed by the community there is a lack of understanding of what and how to plant gardens and various types of garden plants and/or trees/bushes.

Business Support

Opportunity - Programs such as the Western Innovation Initiative Program, Alberta Manufacturing and Fabrication Innovation Program, Agri-Innovation Program, and Sustainable Canadian Agriculture Partnership are available to provide resources and incentives to agribusinesses.

Constraint - There is limited municipal resources to incentivize and educate agribusiness or capacity to create incentives.

Innovation

Opportunity - The Agrivalue Processing Business Incubator is equipped with pilot plants and product development laboratories which can be utilized by new businesses that require food experts and research to launch their business.

Constraint - The Agrivalue Processing Business Incubator isn't right for all sized businesses.

Regulations

Opportunity - High level and strategic planning documents at the City support urban agriculture and can be used as justification to support further exploring urban agriculture.

Constraint - Regulations such as the Land Use Bylaw require updates to ensure various forms of urban agriculture are enabled throughout the city.

Space for Urban Agriculture

Opportunity - Urban agriculture can be accommodated in existing spaces and building throughout the community such as rooftops, parks, and private yards.

Constraint

There are limited lands available for non-residential growth and/or the cost of non-residential land can be prohibitive. This may be a barrier to new agriculture related businesses locating within Leduc.

Residents indicated access to space as a barrier to growing their own food.

There is a lack of volunteers or community organizations to run additional urban agriculture sites. As well as there is a need for insurance for these areas (if not run by the city), which then must be covered by the association or non-for-profit organization(s).

Perceptions

Constraint – community members and businesses may perceive changes to traditional landscaping or reduced parking as negative and may not support urban agriculture initiatives that incorporate these elements.

Partnerships

Opportunity – Build off existing urban agriculture initiatives and relationships with community organizations to jointly support and encourage urban agriculture.

3. Urban Agriculture Principles

Leduc's approach to urban agriculture is shaped by four guiding principles derived from the engagement process, as discussed above. The principles are:

1. Strong Local Food Economy
2. Food Accessibility & Affordability
3. Community Wellbeing
4. Education & Skill Development

Through consideration of what each principle means, ideas arise regarding how to promote and support initiatives, and how to encourage community involvement, partnerships and networking opportunities to foster urban agriculture in Leduc.

Strong Local Food Economy

Historically, agriculture was and remains a major economic driver in Leduc. Today, while oil and gas is the dominant industry in Leduc, local value-added agriculture is a growing industry. Existing agriculture-supported enterprises in Leduc include farm equipment sales and services, distilleries, food trucks, local bakeries and restaurants, dairy and meat processing, grocery stores, and farmers' markets which continue local and exported food production into Leduc's local economy.

Leduc is well positioned to leverage existing successes into new opportunities and a more diversified local economy. Urban agriculture can contribute to local economic development, reduction of our carbon footprint, and diversification through:

1. **Job Creation:** It generates employment opportunities in farming, processing, and retail, supporting local labor markets.
2. **Boosting Local Economies:** Urban agriculture stimulates local economies by attracting customers to farmers' markets and nearby businesses.
3. **Reducing Food Costs:** By producing food locally, urban agriculture can lower transportation costs, leading to more affordable prices for consumers.
4. **Encouraging Entrepreneurship:** It provides a platform for small businesses and businesses that support agriculture, such as food trucks, value-added products, and culinary ventures, fostering innovation.
5. **Increasing Quality of Life:** Proximity to green spaces and urban farms can enhance quality of life make living in Leduc more attractive, encouraging investment, revitalization in neighborhoods, and providing low impact and purposeful physical activity and access to healthy foods.
6. **Attracting Investment:** Urban agriculture initiatives can draw funding and resources, including grants and community support, leading to further development.

Food Accessibility & Affordability

Food is essential for people to survive and thrive and everyone should have access to the food they need. Stable access to enough, affordable, nutritious and preferred food is required for food security to exist. It is notable that 1 in 4 households in Alberta experiences food insecurity,¹; and, the public survey identified that of almost 40% of the 76 respondents knew someone in Leduc who experienced food insecurity.

Food insecurity is a symptom of financial strain and social inequities. Addressing food insecurity requires a level of complexity beyond the scope of the UAP. However, the UAP can shine a light on the need to reduce barriers to access, support existing resources and foster collaboration to help reduce food insecurity in the community.

Urban agriculture can enhance food accessibility and affordability through:

1. **Local Food Production:** By growing food within cities, urban agriculture reduces the need for long-distance transportation, which can drive up costs. Local production helps ensure a more consistent and affordable food supply, especially for areas that may be underserved by grocery retailers.
2. **Reduced Food Costs:** Urban agriculture can lower food prices for local consumers by cutting out middlemen and reducing logistics costs. Community gardens or urban farms allow individuals to grow their own food, reducing the need to buy expensive produce, at least for part of the year, unless year-round growing opportunities exist.
3. **Improved Access:** Urban agriculture provides a reliable food source in cities, particularly in low-income neighborhoods. It offers a form of food sovereignty, allowing communities to produce and control their own food, which helps buffer against price volatility or supply chain disruptions.
4. **Waste Reduction and Sustainability:** Urban agriculture can use waste streams like compost or organic waste to enhance soil fertility, reducing input costs. This element of sustainability can contribute to making food production more affordable in the long term, while also reducing environmental impacts.

Community Wellbeing

Urban agriculture can support social connections and promote healthier lifestyles, improving overall community wellbeing.

Gardening activities can help reduce stress, increase physical activity and improve mental health. Urban gardens can help enliven and revitalize neighbourhoods, improving the livability of our communities. Participating in collective urban gardening activities such as community gardens or farmers markets can also help create a meaningful sense of belonging.

¹ <https://www.albertahealthservices.ca/nutrition/Page18436.aspx>

Urban agriculture can also provide opportunities for increasing awareness of and appreciation for green spaces and the role of natural systems in supporting the health of people.

Community social development and wellbeing is supported by urban agriculture through:

1. **Building Community Cohesion:** It fosters social interaction and collaboration among residents, creating a sense of belonging and shared purpose.
2. **Promoting Mental Well-Being:** Engaging in gardening and green spaces can reduce stress and improve mental health, contributing to overall community well-being.
3. **Cultural Exchange and Identity:** Urban farms can reflect the cultural diversity of a community, preserving traditions and fostering intercultural dialogue.
4. **Encouraging Volunteerism:** Many urban agriculture projects rely on community volunteers, promoting civic engagement and active participation in local issues.

Education & Skill Development

Awareness, access to resources and perception of value are keys to community buy-in and successfully implementing urban agriculture initiatives. Generating awareness is linked to effective, timely and targeted messaging about the benefits of urban agriculture.

Access to resources means everyone can obtain information about urban agriculture topics in the manner most appropriate for them, which could require a range of mediums and locations. However, there is also a need to standardize information so that it is kept up-to-date and accurate, and so that everyone has access to the same information; which lends support for a centralized information hub.

Building community capacity through skill development is another aspect of this principle. The public survey identified that many respondents feel a lack of 'know how' or skills is a barrier to participating in urban agriculture.

Education and skill development can be imparted in support of urban agriculture through the following approaches:

1. **Community Workshops and Training:** Organizing hands-on workshops and training sessions on topics like gardening techniques, composting, hydroponics, and sustainable farming practices allows individuals to learn directly from experts or experienced practitioners.
2. **Community Gardens and Urban Farms:** Establishing shared spaces where community members can participate in urban agricultural activities provides both a learning environment and a practical platform. Working together in these spaces builds skills and fosters a sense of ownership.
3. **Educational Programs in Schools:** Integrating urban agriculture into school curricula can teach students from an early age about food production, sustainability, and nutrition.

School gardens, including indoor hydroponic or aquaculture gardens, can provide real-world experience and encourage future interest in urban agriculture.

4. **Mentorship and Peer Learning:** Pairing beginners with experienced urban farmers or gardeners through mentorship programs promotes knowledge exchange and peer learning. This can help individuals gain confidence and build skills in a supportive environment.
5. **Online Resources and Digital Platforms:** Offering online courses, tutorials, and virtual community forums can make agricultural knowledge more accessible, especially for people who may not have access to in-person workshops.
6. **Collaborative Networks and Partnerships:** Partnering with local organizations, universities, and food initiatives can expand resources, expertise, and training opportunities. Collaborative efforts often result in stronger community networks and increased access to knowledge.
7. **Public Demonstrations and Events:** Hosting community events like farmers' markets, open days at urban farms, or demonstration gardens helps showcase urban agriculture in action. These events can spark interest and inspire people to get involved and learn more.

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4. Policies & Actions

Policies

The five policy areas support the principles and implementation of the Plan. The Implementation Section of the Plan has further information on the actions and strategies to complete each of the five policies.

4.1. Strong Local Food Economy

1. Leverage existing value-added food industry success to develop new opportunities.
2. Encourage the diversification of the local urban agriculture economy including value-added production and processing.
3. Support existing agricultural activities in Leduc.
4. Avoid premature conversion of agricultural land for urban development.

4.2. Food Accessibility & Affordability

1. Support stable access to local, affordable and nutritious food.
2. Reduce barriers to accessing urban agriculture education, resources and programs.
3. Require new planning documents reflect the importance of urban agriculture at the community and neighbourhood scales.
4. Require conservation of topsoil during development.
5. Encourage topsoil replacement in new residential developments to support urban agriculture and retain soil resources locally.
6. Explore how to engage and increase volunteers and organizations as the city expands potential community garden spaces.
7. Explore opportunities to incorporate urban agriculture activities into existing spaces and buildings.

4.3. Community Wellbeing

1. Promote community collaboration through urban agricultural activities.
2. Support existing food security resources in the community.
3. Support existing community-lead urban agriculture initiatives.
4. Encourage healthy lifestyle and community health through urban agricultural activities.
5. Encourage neighbourhood development and revitalization around urban agriculture.
6. Create meaningful opportunities for community togetherness through urban agriculture.
7. Evaluate opportunities to enhance food security in Leduc.
8. Partner with community groups to support urban agriculture initiatives and events.

4.4. Education & Skill Development

1. Increase awareness of urban agriculture opportunities in Leduc.

2. Generate directed messaging to increase awareness and access to urban agriculture resources.
3. Ensure equitable access to urban agriculture information.
4. Encourage land stewardship through urban agriculture.
5. Employ organic gardening principles in all publicly owned community garden plots.
6. Partner with community groups to create urban agriculture educational materials.

4.5. Implementation

1. Establish an urban agriculture 'Champion' within the City of Leduc to oversee the implementation of the urban agriculture plan and to liaise with community urban agriculture leaders.
2. Establish an urban agriculture initiative fund to support existing and new community initiatives.

Actions

Seven action areas arose from the principles and policies above. Each area is linked to what was learned in the engagement phase and contains a list of 3 - 11 actions per area.

Home Gardening

The community strongly supports home gardening whether it be private gardens on residential properties or community gardens on public lands. Home gardening was also the most popular topic the community wanted to learn more about. Below are suggested actions to encourage home gardening:

- Create a home gardening guide.
- Host annual gardening supplies/tools/seed swap.
- Create a community gardening and composting guide.
- Create a water harvesting guide.
- Create a link within an online resource hub for organic gardening resources.
- Create an educational campaign around front yard gardening.
- Create a pollinator gardening guide.

Edible Landscaping

Public engagement revealed edible landscaping on public lands was a popular option to expand urban agriculture in Leduc. Below are suggested actions to support edible landscaping:

- Establish pilot project for edible landscaping in the city.
- Partner with gleaning societies/food rescue groups to help harvest excess fruit and produce.
- Partner with downtown business association to create edible landscaping flower boxes along store fronts.

Value-Added Agriculture

Stakeholder engagement highlighted opportunities around urban agriculture in Leduc. The following actions support value-added agriculture:

- Host networking events to bring producers and processors together.
- Confirm access to existing community kitchens to act as a resource hub and provide smaller-scale food processing opportunities.
- Network with Agrivalue Processing Business Incubator to facilitate up-scaling of startup value-added business.
- Include value-added industry with potential incentives to attract new investment, in the economic development strategy.

Hen Keeping & Beekeeping

Almost 20 per cent of survey respondent were not aware of the City's existing backyard hen and bee keeping programs. Public perception and participation of these programs could be supported through the following actions:

- Promote existing bees and hens programs.
- Host educational sessions to learn about caring for bees and hens.
- Host workshop to learn how to build a chicken coop.
- Seek sponsorships to support coop workshop building materials.
- Explore ways to remove barriers to participating in existing programs.
- Investigate opportunities for partnering with local home builders to secure 'waste' construction materials that could be used to build chicken coops.
- Explore if the 'backyard' bee program could be expanded to include non-residential land use districts.
- Resolve discrepancy between fence height regulations and backyard hen's requirements.

Awareness & Education

One of the main barriers to participating in urban agriculture was lack of knowledge. Respondents were interested in learning about urban agriculture through websites, webinars and video tutorials, and in person workshops.

- Identify an internal urban agriculture 'Champion' at the City of Leduc.
- Promote/market existing programs, opportunities, and events.
- Create low cost or subsidized options to remove barriers to education around urban agriculture.
- Create map of edible landscaping.
- Apply QR codes to edible landscaping to provide information about the plant, how/when to harvest and how to use/process.
- Build awareness campaign around shifting aesthetic ideals of front yards to increase support for front yard gardening.
- Ensure awareness of current grants, and examine the possibility of new funding opportunities to fund community organizations to undertake urban agriculture initiatives.

- Piggyback on existing events to promote urban agriculture initiatives.
- Partner with schools to promote urban agriculture through specific activities, such as having student plant downtown garden beds.
- Create and maintain online information portal for all things urban agriculture with links to community organizations.
- Create a series of education videos and/or webinars on key topics identified in survey.
- Support garden tours and garden award program

Food Security

Close to 40 per cent of survey respondents know someone living in Leduc who has experienced food insecurity. The City can directly support community efforts to address food insecurity through the following actions:

- Identify public land suitable for use as community gardens.
- Promote 'grow a row' for the food bank in community garden groups.
- Investigate options for waiving fees or allowing sponsorship of community garden plots for people experiencing food insecurity.
- Explore opportunities for community gardens to be incorporated into co-operative, and affordable housing developments.
- Investigate opportunities for re-purposing parking lots and other unused areas for garden plots

Rooftop Gardens & Urban Farms

Less familiar options for implementing urban agriculture in Leduc include rooftop gardens and urban farms. Actions to explore the feasibility of these options are listed below:

- Investigate location opportunities and structural and material requirements for developing rooftop gardens.
- Develop a process and/or policy for the development of rooftop gardens ensuring bylaw and code implications are understood and addressed.
- Identify land suitable for creating urban farms.
- Confirm existing large-scale farming operations are supported by bylaw.
- Explore opportunities for establishing commercial vertical gardens.
- Establish a demonstration urban farm or urban garden.
- Investigate tax options to support urban agriculture in commercial or industrial areas.

5. Implementation

Approach

TBD

Implementation Plan

It is intended that the four key principles of this UAP be upheld through the implementation of the policies through the actions listed above. The actions related to each policy are found in Appendix A: Implementation Table. Columns in the table are described below:

Icons have been created for each of the Plan's principles. Icons are shown next to each action to show which principle the action helps achieve.

The Responsible Party column identifies whether the action is one that is meant to be done by the City, the community or jointly.

Timeframes indicated whether the action will be done in the short term (1-3 years), mid-term (4-6 years) or long-term (7+ years). Actions may also be 'ongoing' meaning they are expected to commence in the short term and continue without a defined end point.

The budget impact column associates the action with a monetary range that it will cost the City to implement.

\$ = within existing budgets

\$\$ = some additional funds required

\$\$\$ = significant funds requiring Council approval

The Implementation Table contained within this document is a point in time exercise and if for information purposes only. All activities undertaken by the City are reviewed annually through Council's strategic plan, the Corporate Business Plan, and resourced through the annual budget process. Setting annual budget priorities and to report on progress on an annual basis is a process undertaken by the City annually that will now include implementation of this Plan in addition to other priorities and activities undertaken by the City.

Chart of specific actions will be added at a later date.

6. Definitions

This section defines various terms and abbreviations found throughout this Plan. The terms and abbreviations are listed alphabetically.

A

Agriculture means the practice of cultivating soil, growing crops, and raising animals for food, fiber, medicinal plants, and other products used to sustain and enhance human life.

Agribusiness means a sector of the economy that involves the production, processing, and distribution of agricultural products. It encompasses everything from farms to food manufacturers, transport companies, and retail businesses that sell agricultural products.

Agri-tourism means a form of tourism that involves visiting agricultural areas to experience farm life, participate in farming activities, and learn about agricultural practices. It may include activities like farm stays, farm tours, and picking produce.

B

Beekeeping means keeping of bees for honey, pollination, or both, either in yards or on the tops of buildings.

Backyard hen keeping means raising hens within the backyard of a residential property for egg production.

C

Champion means a City employee or City department who is responsible for implementation of the Urban Agriculture Plan.

Community garden means a plot of land gardened collectively by a group of people. These gardens are often used to grow food, flowers, or other plants, and promote social interaction, local food production, and environmental sustainability.

Compost means organic matter that has been decomposed and recycled as a fertilizer and soil amendment. It is created from plant materials, food scraps, and other biodegradable waste, and enriches soil by adding nutrients

D

E

Edible landscaping means a form of landscaping that incorporates food-producing plants, such as fruits, vegetables, and herbs, alongside ornamental plants. It allows for the aesthetic appeal of a landscape while producing edible items.

EMRB means the Edmonton Metropolitan Region Board.

F

Farmers' market means a public market where farmers and other vendors sell locally produced goods such as food, drinks, and artisan wares.

Food literacy means the understanding of food systems, including knowledge about where food comes from, how it's produced, how it affects health, and the environment. It also encompasses skills like cooking and understanding nutrition.

Food security means the condition where all people, at all times, have access to sufficient, safe, and nutritious food to meet their dietary needs for an active and healthy life. It depends on factors like food availability, affordability, and access.

Food sovereignty means the right of people to define their own food systems, including the right to healthy and culturally appropriate food produced through ecologically sound and sustainable methods. It emphasizes local control over food production and distribution.

G

Greenhouses means a building used to grow, acclimate, propagate, harvest, display and sell plants.

H

Hydroponics means a method of growing plants without soil, using mineral nutrient solutions in an aqueous solvent. The plants are typically grown in a controlled environment with a liquid solution that provides all the nutrients they need.

Home gardening means growing plants and food within the yards of a residential property for personal use.

I

Interest holder an individual or group that has a stake or vested interest in a particular issue, project, or outcome. In agriculture, this can include farmers, consumers, policy makers, environmental groups, and more.

J

K

L

LUB means the City of Leduc's Land Use Bylaw.

M

MDP means the City of Leduc's Municipal Development Plan.

N

O

P

Q

R

RAMP means the EMRB's Regional Agriculture Master Plan.

Rooftop gardens means growing plants and food on the rooftop of a building.

S

Sustainability means the ability to maintain or improve systems and processes over the long term without depleting natural resources or harming the environment. In agriculture, it refers to practices that are environmentally sound, economically viable, and socially responsible.

T

U

Urban agriculture means the practice of cultivating, processing, and distributing food in or around urban areas. This can involve growing food in backyards, on rooftops, or in community gardens, and aims to reduce food transportation distances, enhance food security, and promote local food systems.

Urban development means the process of planning and building urban areas, including infrastructure like roads, housing, schools, and parks. It encompasses both the growth of cities and the transformation of rural areas into urban environments.

Urban farm means a farm within an urban area that grows plants and may include hen keeping or beekeeping for commercial purposes.

V

Value added agriculture means the process of increasing the economic value of an agricultural product through processing, packaging, branding, or creating new products from raw agricultural materials. This includes things like turning milk into cheese or fruit into jam.

Vertical gardens means a gardening method where plants are grown in vertically stacked layers, often in a structure like a wall or tower. This method is often used in urban areas to save space and can be employed for growing vegetables, herbs, or flowers in smaller environments.

W
X
Y
Z

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Appendix A: Implementation Table

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Appendix B: What We Heard Report

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