

Terms of Reference: Food and Agri-Business Diversification Initiative

Council Term:	2017-2021 Council Term
City Council Sponsor:	Councillor A. Paquette Councillor M. Walters
Supporting Department:	Regional and Economic Development
Administration Lead:	Gary Klassen/Paul Ross Intergovernmental Affairs
Initiative Status:	New

Background

The global food system is complex and interconnected, which presents challenges and opportunities to individual municipalities and to regions. In 2012, City Council approved *fresh*, Edmonton's Food and Urban Agriculture strategy. At the time Edmonton, was among only a few cities in Canada that took on an urban agricultural agenda that addressed all elements of the food system, including economic development and food security. And while *fresh* focuses on what the City of Edmonton can do within its boundaries, it also recognizes that this agenda must be connected to, and aligned with, the agricultural agenda in the greater region. Since the development of *fresh*, Edmonton's rural neighbours have undertaken similar work and the region as a whole has elevated its focus on the role of agriculture in economic development, and food sustainability. The opportunity now exists for Edmonton to recalibrate its approach to urban agriculture, strengthen its ties to work in the region on agri-business and food sustainability, and advance its interests in climate adaptation within the city and the region.

The City Council passed a motion on March 20, 2018 to add provisions to examine the initiative's activities relative to regional work to ensure alignment and prioritization of regional initiatives and advocacy.

Mandate

City Council will anticipate and respond to strengths and opportunities in agri-business, food processing and Edmonton's food sector/food industry in order to support a thriving food economy and develop resilience to future climate impacts.

Desired Outcomes

- Outcome #1: Develop an integrated, effective and efficient approach to progress key agri-business and food security initiatives that support adaptation to climate change, community food sustainability and regional agri-business diversification.
 - Explore joint opportunities to leverage combined food security and agri-business initiatives to drive new partnerships and funding opportunities.
 - Prioritize food security and agri-business initiatives that leverage combined strengths to achieve Edmonton's targets for adaptation to climate change, sector diversification and community empowerment.
 - Review existing and upcoming initiatives on food security and agri-business to identify opportunities to resource and implement key strategic priorities.

- Outcome #2: Support the regional agri-business mandate to transform the Edmonton Metropolitan Region into a competitive food processing and supply hub.
 - Align with Edmonton Global on agri-business for food and agri-technology innovation, food processing, crop production and market access.
 - Participate in the development and implementation of the Edmonton Metropolitan Region Board's Regional Agriculture Master Plan (RAMP) to: conserve and maintain a secure supply of prime agricultural lands; and to stimulate/create activities on those lands. This may include supporting the regional food system, diversifying the agri-food production base and value added growth of the agri-economy, and guiding agriculture supportive infrastructure investments.
 - Realize and execute opportunities to realize economic potential as a result of land preservation, food processing, food security and skill-development.

- Outcome #3: Promote, integrate and incentivize effective strategies (research, innovation, energy efficiency, diversification) to adapt to expected impacts of climate change on local food security.
 - Review and monitor the risks and opportunities from climate change to Edmonton's food system and engage with stakeholders and citizens to define prioritized actions necessary to prepare the food system for changes to Edmonton's climate.
 - Explore and develop opportunities for synergies to diversify the use of different energy sources for food production to increase efficiencies and reduce waste and emissions.
 - Integrate meaningful, affordable community food assets into the planning and development of Edmonton's existing and future neighbourhoods.

- Outcome #4: Enable and execute community-informed actions to support sustainable local food systems. Build partnerships with community organizations and local educational institutions to build food literacy and support community-level food programs, startups, and initiatives.
 - Explore scale-up and capacity building opportunities for local businesses in the food economy.
 - Optimize productive agriculture land in urban and peri-urban area while it transitions into urban spaces.
 - Support the development of both neighbourhood-scale food hubs and a City-wide food hubs to maximize small food business development; support distribution and aggregation of local food, support development of emerging agriculture sectors and technologies; and improve urban food literacy and access.
 - Build on community strengths and capacity to play a role in developing human-centred solutions to support Edmonton's most urgently food insecure populations.
 - Re-visit strategies and plans to progress priorities on food and urban agriculture.

Existing Related Corporate Programs

- Edmonton Food Council
- fresh: Edmonton's Food & Urban Agriculture Strategy
- Urban Henkeeping Program
- Urban Beekeeping Program

- City of Edmonton Community Gardens program, supported by Sustainable Food Edmonton
- Vacant Lot Cultivation Pilot Project
- Waste Management - household food waste research
- EndPoverty Edmonton
- Energy Transition and Climate Resilience Initiative, Community Energy Transition Strategy and Community Climate Change Adaptation and Resilience Strategy
- Healthy City Initiative
- Community Hubs Initiative
- Recover: Urban Wellness Strategy
- Municipal Emergency Plan
- Municipal Development Plan/Transportation Master Plan
- Breathe: Edmonton's Green Network Strategy
- Goods Movement Strategy
- Open Window (Small Business Supports)

Timelines

- The Work Plan will be presented to Council on June 12, 2018.
- This Council Initiative will report to the Executive Committee twice a year, with the exception of the final year in which the second report will be made to City Council.

Key Stakeholders

- Further details of stakeholder and public engagement will be included in the work plan that will be presented to Council on June 12, 2018.

Financial Implications

Any estimated required financial and human resources for future work will be identified in the work plan that will be presented to Council on June 12, 2018.