

Kelowna posted March 2, 2016 by [Molly Gibson Kirby](#)

Changes are Planned for the 1998 Kelowna Agriculture Plan

A plan is in place to enhance the agricultural sector in Kelowna.

City of Kelowna Councillors were presented this week with a strategy to update the city's Agriculture Plan, created in 1998.



The changes to the plan include updates to mapping tools to help with land use decisions, increased opportunities for locally grown food, preserving the local rural character, and to build community resilience towards climate change, and the rising costs of food and energy.

More than 12,000 hectares of City land is zoned as agricultural, and more than 8,600 hectares are within the Agricultural Land Reserve.

The report presented to Council said this update is a much-needed project.

“An Agriculture Plan Update is necessary to provide clear direction for the over 55 per cent of land zoned agricultural in Kelowna to ensure policy is current, accurate, defensible, and aligned with other major corporate policy documents. Timing for the project is ideal as the Ministry of Agriculture, with funding from the Okanagan Basin Water Board, has just completed an Agricultural Land Use Inventory for Kelowna.”

This plan, having to go three phases, will take about 15 months to complete.

The first phase will be background scoping and Agricultural Profile development.

Within this phase, an agriculture profile for Kelowna will be created. The profile will include information about the number of farms, farm type, production levels, under-utilized agricultural land, and demographic and financial information. This phase is expected to be finished by May.

The second phase of the plan is public consultation and issues identification.

During the consultations with stakeholders across the community, an emphasis will be put on collective and individual's needs. This phase will begin in May and will continue until the spring of 2017.

The final phase will be the agricultural plan update.

Using all of the information gathered during the 15-month process the new Agriculture Plan will be drafted.

The new plan will include:

- Vision, goals, and priority areas
- Extensive updated agricultural mapping
- Local government market opportunities
- Policy development
- Recommended actions
- Farmland protection strategies*
- Policy directions to inform future bylaw updates (i.e. Recommended policy amendments for dwellings on farmland, building footprints/ratio, Temporary Use Permits, agri-tourism, etc.)*
- Climate change adaptation and mitigation*
- Building connections with the community*
- Bridging gaps with the existing local food system*
- Monitoring framework and implementation strategy