



HOMEGROWN MISSISSAUGA

Urban Agriculture Strategy
2022



TABLE OF CONTENTS

Mayor’s Message	2	Strengthen Networks	29
Acknowledgements	3	Link City and Regional Partners	31
Executive Summary	6	Educate and Communicate	33
Introduction	8	2. Grow and Share the Harvest	36
What is Urban Agriculture?	9	Enable Urban Agriculture Through Policies, By-laws, and Plans	39
Benefits of Urban Agriculture	10	Facilitate Equitable Access to Land and Space	41
Connection to Climate Change	11	3. Plant and Steward Seeds	44
Vision for Urban Agriculture in Mississauga	14	Resource, Guide, and Offer Incentives	47
Vision and Goals	14	Innovate, Cultivate, and Grow	49
Guiding Principles	15	Implementation, Monitoring, and Accountability	51
Who Participates in Urban Agriculture	16	Conclusion	54
Leading the Way – City and Community Roles	18	References	56
Policy Connections	19	Glossary of Terms	62
Mississauga Projects	21	Appendix 1: Key Stakeholder and Public Engagement Strategy	67
Community Engagement	24	Appendix 2: City Actions Chart	74
Action Pathways	25	Appendix 3: Community Actions Chart	77
1. Cultivate Relationships	27	Appendix 4: Best Practices from Beyond Mississauga	78

MAYOR'S MESSAGE



Food has the ability to bring people together. It creates unity, community and celebrates diversity. All our residents, especially vulnerable community members, have a right to access fresh and healthy food. We are proud of the work that we have done to support local food and its distribution in Mississauga. Each year since 2015, for example, I have hosted a city-wide food drive campaign with The Mississauga Food Bank, and we also support local food initiatives through our Community Gardens Program with Ecosource. While these initiatives are vitally important, we know there is much more work to be done. That is why I am excited to introduce the City's first urban agriculture strategy. This strategy represents the incredible effort to bring to the table all those who are interested, and have knowledge and experience, in urban food growing in Mississauga. As a City, we are committed to continuing the important conversations that have taken place since we have embarked on this journey together.

Urban agriculture is also a key way that cities can prepare for and combat climate change. In 2019, Council adopted the City of Mississauga's first Climate Change Action Plan. It is the City's roadmap and commitment to reduce greenhouse gases and make our city more resilient to a changing climate. Within the plan, urban agriculture is identified as a strategy to support both of these goals.

Like many cities, Mississauga is largely dependent on the global food system, which is vulnerable to climate change. This is a critical time for the City to invest in and increase our capacity to not only grow food locally for the environmental benefits, but also for the economic benefits and to improve the health and well-being of our residents.

We look forward to rolling up our sleeves, getting our hands in the soil, and getting to work.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in white ink that reads "Bonnie Crombie". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Bonnie Crombie
Mayor of Mississauga

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

LAND ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

We acknowledge the lands which constitute the present-day City of Mississauga, and on which we cultivate relationships, grow, and share the harvest, and plant and steward seeds, as part of the Treaty Lands of the Mississaugas of the Credit First Nation, the Traditional Territory and Treaty lands of the Haudenosaunee, and the Traditional Territory of the Anishinaabe, Huron-Wendat First Nation and Wyandot First Nation. We recognize these peoples and their ancestors as peoples who inhabited and stewarded these lands since time immemorial. The City of Mississauga is home to First Nations, Métis, and Inuit peoples.

Indigenous food traditions, past and present, are integral to, and intimately connected with, the land. The City of Mississauga recognizes and respects the traditions and stewardship of Indigenous Peoples. We are committed to continuing to learn, engage, and participate in the process of truth and reconciliation.

EQUITY STATEMENT

The City of Mississauga is committed to equity, inclusion, and diversity. We welcome and encourage participation from all communities in urban agriculture-related programs and initiatives in Mississauga. We especially encourage involvement from equity-deserving groups who have been under-represented. We continuously seek to improve food access and literacy across Mississauga, recognizing that food insecurity is often most present in vulnerable communities. This strategy reflects the City's efforts to support equity-deserving groups and build a more resilient food system in Mississauga.

APPRECIATION TO MEMBERS OF THE PUBLIC AND READERS

This strategy has come about through the contributions of more than 2,400 people in under a year. We offer heartfelt thanks to the many members of the public who contributed through surveys, community consultation sessions, and the City of Mississauga's website. To all readers of this strategy, thank you. We appreciate your time and consideration.

COMMUNITY AND CITY STAFF ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

While many have contributed to the development of urban agriculture in Mississauga, Ecosource has contributed significantly to creating a foundation upon which an urban agriculture strategy could be built. Ecosource has played a fundamental role over the past 15 years. They have led the development and growth of Mississauga's city-wide Community Gardens Program, school gardens, community access and capacity, educational programs and tools and skills sharing. Ecosource team members have contributed significantly to the urban agriculture community for Mississauga and Peel Region in many ways. They have nurtured relationships and networks while helping others to have opportunities and time to engage meaningfully in the development of this strategy.

We are deeply grateful to the many individuals who gave their time and ideas, joining us through invitations to the following community groups, organizations, public institutions, and businesses:

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Blooming Boulevards
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Credit Valley Conservation (CVC)
Deeper Roots Farm
Dixie Bloor Neighbourhood Centre
Dufferin-Peel Catholic District School Board
Eagle Spirits of the Great Waters
Ecosource
Eden Food for Change
Environmental Action Committee (EAC)
EnviroMuslims
Erin Mills Farmers Market
Evergreen
Faith and the Common Good
Families of Virtue
Halton Environmental Network
Happy Plant

Malton Neighbourhood Services
EarlyOn
Mississauga Food Bank/Aquagrow
Mississauga Urban Agriculture Network
Peel Environmental Youth Alliance (PEYA)
Peel Food Action Council
Region of Peel – Peel Public Health
Peel Poverty Reduction Committee
Peel Poverty Reduction Committee, Lived Experience Table
Rick Hansen Secondary School Ecoclub
Ryerson Rooftop Urban Farm
Second Harvest
Secure the Food Mississauga
Services and Housing in Province
Seva Food Bank
Shade of Miti
Steve's Bees
The Daniels Corporation
Toronto and Region Conservation Authority (TRCA)
University of Toronto
Young Urban Food Growers

City staff from several departments have also been essential to the creation of this strategy. Contributors include:

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We also acknowledge and thank Paul Silbiger, Copywriter.

*Now with a different organization.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The City of Mississauga has been active in supporting residents to grow or have access to local food through the Community Gardens Program and through relationships with local food banks. To further enhance and strengthen these efforts, the City identified a need to develop a comprehensive Urban Agriculture Strategy. The strategy was included as an action of the Climate Change Action Plan adopted by Mississauga City Council in 2019. The plan identified both urban agriculture and food security as key factors in mitigating climate-related risks and enhancing community resilience.

Urban agriculture includes activities such as community gardens, vertical growing, urban farming, and composting that enhance health and well-being while stimulating the local economy. These activities help our city adapt to and mitigate climate-related impacts by strengthening community-level resilience from extreme weather events and flooding.

Food systems contribute a significant percentage of greenhouse gas emissions (anywhere from 21 to

37 percent). However, there are ways that food systems can be transformed to reduce these emissions and be more sustainable and resilient.¹

Food System Components, Processes, and Activities



Niles, M.T., et al. 2017. Climate change and food systems: Assessing impacts and opportunities. Meridian Institute. Washington, DC.

1. Mbow, C., et al, 2019: Food Security. In: Climate Change and Land: an IPCC special report on climate change, desertification, land degradation, sustainable land management, food security, and greenhouse gas fluxes in terrestrial ecosystems [P.R. Shukla, et al (eds.)].

Providing everyone with access to healthy, affordable food can be a challenge for urban communities. Through this strategy the City of Mississauga will support access to healthy and culturally appropriate food, preserve the ecological and cultural heritage of the land, increase creative and diverse opportunities for urban agriculture, support skills learning and sharing in the community, improve food security, and support local businesses.

ACTION PATHWAYS

Three action pathways have been identified to encourage, remove barriers to, and enable urban agriculture.

- 1. Cultivate Relationships: Encourage Urban Agriculture**
- 2. Grow and Share the Harvest: Remove Barriers to Urban Agriculture**
- 3. Plant and Steward Seeds: Enable Urban Agriculture**

These pathways and the associated actions will support urban agriculture activities in Mississauga.

This strategy aims to remove barriers and engage equity-deserving groups in the decision-making. Equity-deserving groups experience climate impacts more severely. Poverty, racism, and other forms of oppression create barriers that prevent equitable access to food and restrict participation in urban agriculture. Recommended actions within the strategy have been developed to ensure that the knowledge and strengths of equity-deserving groups are reflected in the vision for Mississauga's Urban Agriculture Strategy and the action plan.

This strategy was developed through extensive consultation with the public, including people working or volunteering in urban agriculture-related projects, City staff, and the business community. It outlines recommendations for actions that the City and the community can take often in collaboration – to advance urban agriculture in Mississauga.

INTRODUCTION

This strategy invites readers to connect with urban agriculture and its benefits. Growing food for ourselves and our families is a healthy, enjoyable, and productive activity. Growing food with others, helps build a stronger community.

Mississauga's Urban Agriculture Strategy will:

- Enhance and grow urban agriculture efforts throughout Mississauga
- Promote, support, and enable inclusive, culturally relevant, local food initiatives which prioritize Mississauga's diverse communities - including the most vulnerable and those who are equity-deserving
- Support individuals, communities, and local businesses in developing creative ideas to expand local food initiatives and improve food security in Mississauga
- Help to identify the City's role in supporting City and community efforts to increase local, urban-scale food production
- Respond to the City's Climate Change Action Plan, specifically Action 9-4 in the Climate

Change Action Plan: Develop an urban agriculture and food security strategy

Cities around the world are recognizing urban agriculture as an important part of their climate mitigation and adaptation strategies. Important steps include keeping food supply chains local, ensuring strong urban-rural connections, enhancing pollinator habitat, and supporting community food initiatives to build resilient food systems and greener, healthier cities.

Urban agriculture can enhance health and well-being, stimulate the local economy, and help the city adapt to and mitigate climate-related impacts by strengthening community resilience and preparedness. Urban agriculture in Mississauga includes gardens and other food-growing initiatives in a variety of settings and scales. Examples include, small balcony gardens, large market gardens, manufacturing food-related products and processing, food preservation, teaching and sharing food skills, creating pollinator habitat, bee-keeping, farmers markets and other ways of distributing local food, education and community building, and composting.

WHAT IS URBAN AGRICULTURE?

Urban agriculture:

- Is the practice of growing, processing, sharing, and distributing food in a city
- Can include growing fruits, vegetables, and herbs, and raising livestock for personal consumption, sale, for educational purposes, and to promote community health and wellness
- Includes community gardens, urban farms, rooftop gardens, hydroponics, aquaponics, farmers markets, composting, and food waste reduction



Urban gardens (Left to right: backyard garden, balcony garden, community garden)

BENEFITS OF URBAN AGRICULTURE

Sustainable urban agriculture provides multiple environmental, social, economic, and public health benefits.

ENVIRONMENTAL

- Reduces food miles and carbon emissions
- Improves soil health and fertility
- Supports biodiversity
- Creates pollinator habitat
- Increases green spaces
- Reduces urban heat island effect
- Increases permeable surfaces
- Helps to prevent flooding
- Eliminates the need for synthetic fertilizers and pesticides, preventing toxins and contaminants from polluting waterways
- Reduces and recycles food waste



ECONOMIC

- Supports local food entrepreneurship
- Helps to reduce personal grocery costs
- Enhances tourism
- Strengthens connections between urban and rural communities



SOCIAL

- Improves food security
- Provides educational opportunities to increase food literacy for all ages
- Provides opportunities to grow culturally diverse food
- Supports community-building and a sense of belonging
- Strengthens community togetherness
- Enhances safety when people work together in public spaces



PUBLIC HEALTH

- Encourages eating healthy and nutritious foods such as fruits and vegetables
- Offers an enjoyable way to exercise
- Improves physical and mental health
- Reduces social isolation and enhances nature experience



BENEFITS OF URBAN AGRICULTURE CONT.

The benefits of urban agriculture exist to enhance community and ecological health. The relationship between people, communities and the land is at the heart of urban agriculture.

While growing food in the city helps to create healthy communities for residents, it is also a restorative activity that brings people into close contact with the ecological processes of the natural world. Urban agriculture connects us, intimately and directly, with the health of the soil and pollinators, air and water, and the natural cycles on which all life depends.



CONNECTION TO CLIMATE CHANGE

The global food system is a significant contributor to climate change and is responsible for an estimated 21 to 37 per cent of human-caused greenhouse gas emissions². It is also vulnerable to climate change impacts including extreme heat and weather events (such as flooding and drought), land degradation, water scarcity, and wildfire damage. These impacts are projected to affect the stability of the global food supply, disrupt food chains, and lower the nutritional quality of crops. This will lead to higher food prices and increase the risk of food insecurity and hunger, severely affecting vulnerable populations.

Urban agriculture can mitigate climate change effects in cities when:

- Food is grown in the city – to reduce food miles (the distance food travels from farm to plate) and greenhouse gas emissions
- Local food systems are supported – to increase resilience and local control when there are disruptions to supply chains
- More green spaces exist – to increase biodiversity, provide habitat for pollinators (bees, in particular, upon which food

2. IPCC, 2019: Summary for Policymakers. In: Climate Change and Land: an IPCC special report on climate change, desertification, land degradation, sustainable land management, food security and greenhouse gas fluxes in terrestrial ecosystems [P.R. Shukla, et al (eds.)]. In press.

production depends), and cool the urban environment (by reducing the urban heat island effect)

- Green infrastructure is supported – to allow for more stormwater absorption, reduced heat island effect, and overall cooling benefits
- Organic, sustainable growing methods and composting are promoted – to improve overall soil health (better water storage and drainage, microbial activity, fertility, and productivity), which improves the soil’s capacity to store carbon
- Food waste is reduced – a significant contributor to greenhouse gas emissions
- Plant-based diets are encouraged – to help reduce greenhouse gas emissions and environmental degradation related to animal agriculture



Garden of the Valley, Mississauga Valley Park

CASE STUDY

In 2015, after a series of severe storms, the City of Boston’s Office of Food Initiatives, Office of Emergency Management, Office of Environment, Energy and Open Space, and the Transportation Department commissioned research on the vulnerabilities of Boston’s food system. The goal was to see if the food system could withstand and recover from future emergencies. The report identified ways that Boston’s food system could be strengthened to ensure that it could return to normal operations after a natural disaster. Proactive planning and implementation can help municipalities create food systems that are resilient enough to withstand natural disasters.

ELEMENTS OF THE FOOD SYSTEM: FIELD TO TABLE



Food production

Growing and raising plants and animals for consumption



Food chain workers

People working in growing, processing, distribution, and selling of food



Food distribution

Transporting food from field to table



Food safety

Measures ensuring safe food handling practices



Food processing

Transforming whole and raw food for cooking, consumption or storage



Food labeling

Nutritional information on or attached to food to promote its sale



Food marketing

Advertising that promotes the sale of food or food products



Food environments

The physical, economic, political, and socio-cultural contexts in which people make their decisions about acquiring, preparing, and consuming food



Food waste

The amount of edible food, after harvest, that is available for human consumption but is not consumed



Hunger and food insecurity

The lack of regular access to enough safe and nutritious food for normal growth and development and an active, healthy life



Food policy

Government actions including policies, bylaws, strategies, and regulations that shape the food system

VISION FOR URBAN AGRICULTURE IN MISSISSAUGA

VISION

The City of Mississauga will support access to healthy and culturally appropriate food, while preserving the ecological and cultural heritage of the land. Through community education, health, wellness and healing, the City will increase creative and diverse opportunities for urban agriculture where entrepreneurship and innovation will be encouraged. Through the Urban Agriculture Strategy, the City will encourage healthier lifestyles; support communities' existing skills related to growing and harvesting produce; empower communities in learning new skills; improve food security; and support local businesses.

GOAL

To grow a better future for all; a resilient city where everyone has access to food and is included in creating and enjoying the benefits of a just, equitable, and prosperous community.



Parkway Green Generation Garden, Parkway Green Park

GUIDING PRINCIPLES

The following principles have guided the development of the Urban Agriculture Strategy and informed the recommended actions.

- Reduce barriers and enhance participation
- Support access, equity, and inclusivity
- Invest in community-building and networks
- Foster leadership
- Link regional and City priorities and approaches
- Support the region's rural agriculture sector as an important part of a resilient food system and of local natural and cultural heritage
- Stimulate creativity, collaboration, and innovation
- Promote health and well-being through an ecological/environmental lens
- Value and enlist the diversity of natural and social systems
- Utilize appropriate technology



Garden plot cared for by the Wasa-Nabin Youth Program, Parkway Green Generation Garden

WHO PARTICIPATES IN URBAN AGRICULTURE?

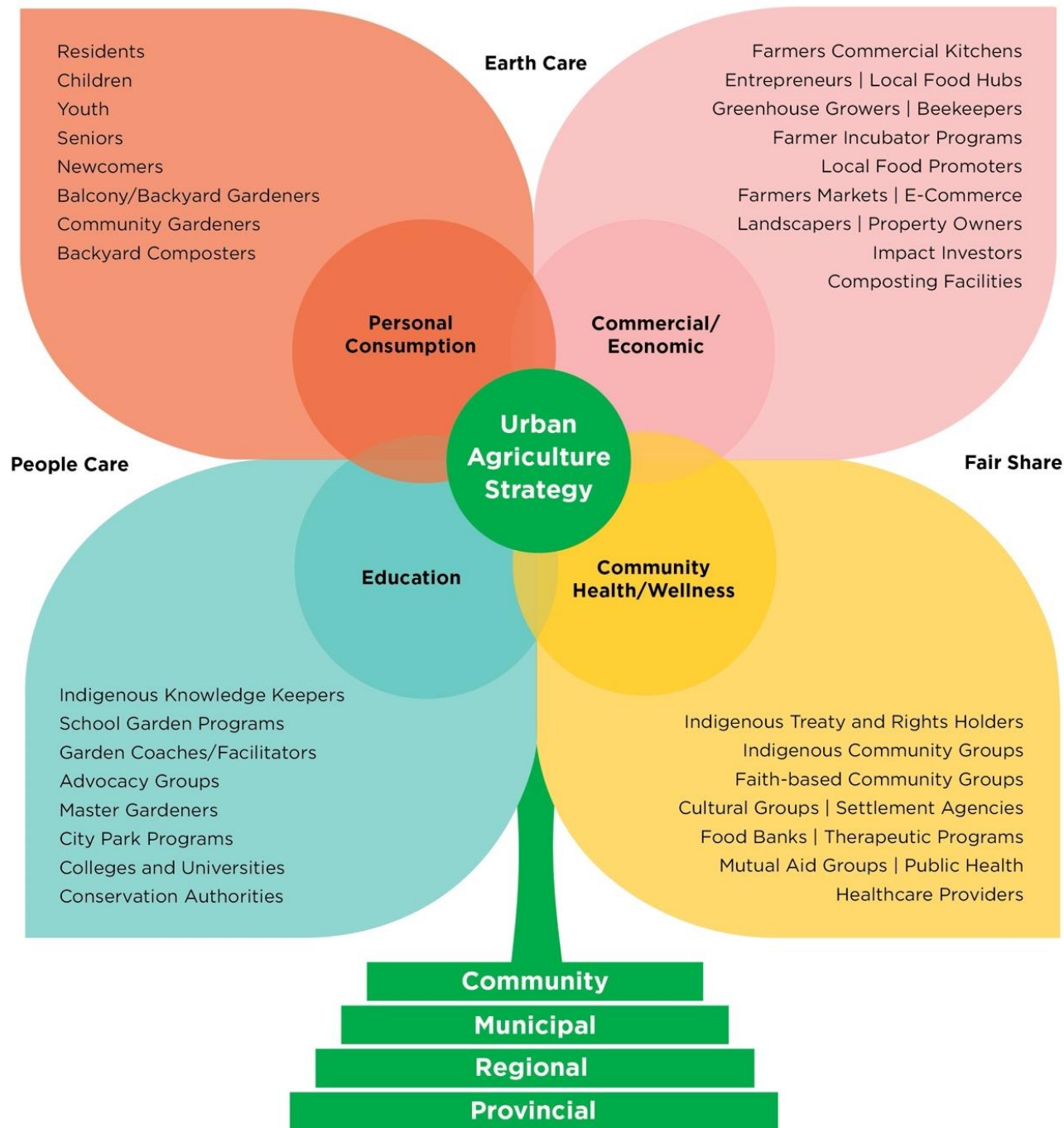
The urban agriculture community in Mississauga is diverse. It includes people who grow food for personal consumption, those involved in educational programs, commercial agriculture, urban agriculture businesses, and those who work to improve and enhance community health and wellness.

People participate in urban agriculture in many ways and for many reasons, some of which intersect or overlap (see Figure: Urban Agriculture Interactions on the following page). For example, a balcony gardener growing food mainly for personal consumption might also be interested in growing food at a community garden to donate to a food bank.



Community member at their garden plot
Photo Credit: Ecosource

Figure: Urban Agriculture Interactions



LEADING THE WAY – CITY AND COMMUNITY ROLES

The City and community play important roles in encouraging, removing barriers to, and enabling urban agriculture. The City plays a key role in creating conditions for urban agriculture to flourish in Mississauga. Some of the most important roles for the City include creating policies that support urban agriculture, facilitating access to land, supporting community members and organizations working at the frontlines of urban agriculture, and being responsive to the needs of the community. The City can enable and collaborate with community partners and other levels of government to grow a healthy urban agriculture sector in Mississauga.

Mississauga has an active, committed and growing community of people involved in urban agriculture. This includes gardeners and farmers, social service agency staff, business owners, chefs, staff from institutions such as schools and hospitals, as well as real-estate developers. The community's role is to continue to collaborate to grow gardens, farms and networks; welcome new leadership; participate, co-create, and share resources; and integrate urban agriculture into programs, businesses, and organizational priorities.



Sharing the work of seed planting
Photo Credit: Ecosource

POLICY CONNECTIONS

The Urban Agriculture Strategy is supported by and exists within a broader policy framework, building on the goals of the City to help create a vibrant, healthy community.

POLICY/PLAN	CONNECTIONS TO URBAN AGRICULTURE
City of Mississauga	
<u>City of Mississauga Strategic Plan</u>	The plan outlines strategic goals to create great public spaces, build healthy communities, attract and retain youth, create partnerships for innovation and attract innovative businesses.
<u>Official Plan</u>	In the plan, urban agriculture is identified as enhancing local food security and contributing to sustainability and environmental health. The City commits to supporting urban gardening, community gardening, the creation of rooftop gardens and farmers markets. An Official Plan Review is currently underway.
<u>Mississauga Climate Change Action Plan</u>	The Climate Change Action Plan specifies the development of an urban agriculture and food security strategy as an action that can help mitigate climate-related risks and enhance community resilience (Action 9-4).
<u>Community Garden Site Selection Policy</u>	This policy sets out criteria for appropriate sites for community gardens and protocols for getting public comment prior to approving garden locations.
Regional and Provincial	
<u>Peel Food Charter</u>	The Peel Food Charter envisions a just, sustainable, and secure food system for now and the future. This aligns with the Urban Agriculture Strategy’s goals of cultivating a thriving local food economy, strengthening relationships within the food system, ensuring that the community drives food-related decision-making, increasing access to healthy food and enhancing physical spaces to improve health.
<u>Ontario Local Food Act</u>	Ontario’s Local Food Act was created in 2013 and amended in 2018. Its purpose is to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Foster successful and resilient local food economies and systems throughout Ontario • Increase awareness of local food in Ontario, including the diversity of local food • Encourage the development of new markets for local food

CASE STUDY: PEEL FOOD ACTION COUNCIL STRATEGIC PLAN

The Peel Food Action Council brings together people involved in Peel’s food system from a variety of perspectives to work towards a just, sustainable, and secure food system. In a survey to inform the Peel Food Action Council Strategic Plan, stakeholders identified “community gardens and urban agriculture” as one of the top five activities that they believe Peel Region could benefit from.

Opportunities named in their strategic plan that support the vision and actions in this strategy include:

- Improving access to healthy, local, and culturally appropriate food
- Increasing education and skill-sharing around growing and storing food
- Engaging with communities who face oppression when considering approaches to strengthen the food system
- Enhancing co-operation and co-ordination across the food system



Small Arms Community Garden
Photo Credit: CreativeHub

MISSISSAUGA PROJECTS

There are many urban agriculture projects and organizations already active across the city helping to build a stronger and more resilient food system. The City continues to support and promote collaboration with community groups and organizations working to establish a healthy urban agriculture sector in Mississauga.

Since 2006, the City of Mississauga has partnered with [Ecosource](#), a local charitable, environmental organization, to deliver the City's Community Garden Program. There are currently 10 community gardens, including an urban agriculture teaching site, in City parks. The community gardens facilitate shared spaces to grow food, encourage active, healthy living, and help green the city. Mississauga residents can sign up for an individual plot or volunteer to care for community plots. Community plots are shared among a community group, corporate group, or organization. Food from these plots is donated to local food banks or used in a community program. Ecosource has many other programs that support community food access and justice. The organization has been a long-standing member of the urban agriculture community in Mississauga and Peel Region.



Garden summer camp, a partnership of the City and Ecosource

The [Erin Mills Farmers Market](#) brings farmers, bakers, food producers, and food educators to Mississauga, providing fresh, local, and culturally diverse food. As a community development project, the needs and priorities of the local community shape the market, which serves as an urban food hub.



Local products at Erin Mills Farmers Market
Photo Credit: Hoffmann Hayes

The [Eagle Spirits of the Great Waters](#) has partnered with Ecosource to engage Indigenous community members in growing food at the Small Arms Community Garden. The group grows a traditional Three Sisters garden consisting of corn, squash, and climbing beans, as well as produce for the local food bank.



Eagle Spirits of the Great Waters plots at Small Arms Community Garden
Photo Credit: CreativeHub

Bees, butterflies, and other insects pollinate a third of all food plants. There are 400 species of native bees and other pollinators in Mississauga that contribute to healthy ecological functioning and the production of food. Honey beekeepers, such as [Steve's Bees](#), tend urban hives and sell honey at farmers markets. Community projects, such as [Blooming Boulevards](#), create important habitat for all pollinators.



Steve's Bees booth at Erin Mills Farmers Market
Photo Credit: Zhanna Konovalova

In 2019, Mississauga was designated a [Bee City](#), joining other cities across Canada who are supporting pollinator protection by establishing and maintaining healthy pollinator habitat. Through the program, the City is educating the community about the importance of pollinators and celebrating the role that they play in the urban environment. In 2018, a honey bee hive was installed at City Hall as an educational tool to increase awareness about pollinators and their role in urban agriculture. The City also has a number of other ongoing initiatives to enhance pollinator habitat including planting pollinator gardens, incorporating native plants in park gardens, planting trees, shrubs and natural area stewardship through the [One Million Trees](#) program.



One Millions Trees stewardship program

COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

The Urban Agriculture Strategy was developed through public consultation with more than 2,400 people. This involved consultation on the Urban Agriculture Strategy as well as urban hen-keeping. Approximately 100 individuals and representatives from 30 organizations participated in in-depth discussions over a period of six months. The process was adapted when questions arose and as more policy research was done, which contributed to further information and ideas. See Appendix 1 for a detailed stakeholder and public engagement summary report.

Needs and priorities were identified through community input. The ideas gathered through this process have guided the development of the strategy and actions. Central to every aspect of the strategy is the recognition that urban agriculture in Mississauga can only reach its full potential when it is inclusive of the community's diversity.

Poverty, racism, and other forms of oppression create barriers that prevent equitable access to food and limit participation in urban agriculture, particularly for racialized and marginalized groups. Recommended actions in this strategy aim to

remove barriers and centre decision-making by equity-deserving groups, whose knowledge and strengths inform this vision and action plan.

Throughout the consultation process, a broad range of voices were invited to speak and share perspectives. This strengthened City/community relationships and identified opportunities for future collaboration.



ACTION PATHWAYS

The actions in this strategy are organized into the three Action Pathways identified during the community consultation.

- 1. Cultivate Relationships: Encourage Urban Agriculture**
- 2. Grow and Share the Harvest: Remove Barriers to Urban Agriculture**
- 3. Plant and Steward Seeds: Enable Urban Agriculture**

Each Action Pathway is accompanied by actions that were identified as most appropriate for either the City or the community to lead. City refers to municipal staff who are involved in urban agriculture-related work. Community refers to residents, not-for-profit groups, local businesses, institutions, and community groups.

- **City Leads:** The City is identified to lead the implementation of the action; the community may be involved with and/or support the action, as needed.
- **Community Leads:** The community is identified to lead the implementation of the

action; the City may be involved with and/or support the action, as needed.

- **Actions:** The actions identify the necessary steps to advance urban agriculture and provide direction on the City and community's roles for achieving Mississauga's urban agriculture vision. Several actions outline specific policy changes that will remove barriers to urban agriculture. Other actions relate to enhancing a variety of resources to encourage urban agriculture, outline communications, and develop and collaborate on educational opportunities.
- **Ideas for Implementation:** These ideas represent examples of specific and more detailed opportunities to implement the strategy actions and have been gathered throughout the consultation process. While the ideas presented within the strategy are a sample of the many ideas gathered, a more extensive list of ideas provided by the community will be assessed and prioritized during the creation of the implementation

plan (see Figure: Next Steps Timeline, page 53). The ideas range in ease of implementation and priority, and could be achieved immediately or over the long-term, depending on resources available. Some ideas identify and/or require further research in order to advance.

- **Community Voices:** The City consulted with the community to help develop the strategy. Mississauga residents, community partners, and groups contributed and continue to contribute, their voices, ideas, and visions around urban agriculture for Mississauga and the surrounding region. To highlight the value of ongoing community action and conversations, community participants are highlighted throughout the document.
- **Case Studies:** Examples of the strong and growing urban agriculture movement both in and beyond Mississauga demonstrate best practices and innovative urban agriculture ideas.



Learning how to tend to a garden during the City's garden summer camp

CULTIVATE RELATIONSHIPS:
ENCOURAGE URBAN AGRICULTURE

WHERE MISSISSAUGA IS TODAY

A number of evolving and vibrant food action and urban agriculture networks exist in Mississauga and Peel Region. The Peel Food Action Council brings together stakeholders from across Peel Region to work collectively towards a just, sustainable, and secure food system. Ecosource is a well-established environmental organization with a focus on enhancing local food literacy, establishing community gardens, and promoting local food procurement in schools. The Mississauga Urban Agriculture Network is an emerging network established to support and grow the urban agriculture sector.

HOW CAN URBAN AGRICULTURE BE SUPPORTED?

The importance of strong relationships and networks was highlighted throughout the consultation process. People spoke about the importance of social connections in a resilient city, as well as the need to nurture ecological connections. Urban agriculture represents an opportunity to enhance resilience, community well-being and environmental sustainability. Opportunities to improve equity, inclusion, diversity, justice, food security and food sovereignty were of great importance.

Urban agriculture is understood in the context of pre-existing Indigenous and land-based relationships that have been and continue to be impacted by colonialism, oppression, and racism.

The City has a strong relationship with Ecosource to lead the Community Garden Program. Other relationships with the Region of Peel, the Peel Food Action Council, neighbouring communities, and provincial and federal governments can be strengthened to support urban agriculture and ensure a common goal.

The actions outlined below focus on creating strong relationships and connections – social and ecological – throughout Mississauga and between the City, the community, and the Region of Peel. Urban agriculture networks are growing and should be strengthened to provide the ideal conditions, resources, targets, and metrics to ensure the successful implementation of the actions.

1. STRENGTHEN NETWORKS

What we heard: Strong urban agriculture networks and diverse leadership, with active participation from the City and community, will provide the foundation for a vibrant urban agriculture sector. It was emphasized that meaningful relationships with Indigenous and equity-deserving groups should be a priority for the City of Mississauga.



Gathering under the willow dome, Erin Mills Farmers Market
Photo Credit: Hoffmann Hayes

COMMUNITY VOICES

“Urban agriculture is an important opportunity to address colonial legacies, Land and Treaty rights, our Two Row relationships, and relationships with treaty holders, knowledge keepers, seed keepers, and Indigenous partners.”

“A lot of people are asking to hear the [Indigenous] teachings. There could be pilots at many gardens, with many groups, reflecting diverse backgrounds of the community in Mississauga, some Indigenous, and many others as well.”

“We are interested in highlighting and bringing forward the under-represented community voices of Black, Indigenous and people of colour, youth, seniors, and newcomers.”

“We are already doing a lot of work on the ground. We need investment in the relationship-building piece.”

“More spaces for growing and connection are needed.”

“Strengthen food security by connecting *all* food banks to local food growers.”

CULTIVATE RELATIONSHIPS - ACTIONS	LEAD	IDEAS FOR IMPLEMENTATION
1-1 Work with a broad range of community partners, including Indigenous organizations and equity deserving groups, to encourage participation and leadership in the urban agriculture sector	City	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Seek out opportunities to collaborate with equity-deserving individuals and organizations • Explore reconciliation, healing, and collaborative relationships with land and community through urban agriculture • Provide support for urban agriculture programs and events hosted by Indigenous partners
1-2 Continue to grow and collaborate as a network of diverse urban agriculture partners; welcoming leadership from diverse communities	Community	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Work with Ecosource to create opportunities for Indigenous knowledge sharing, teachings for all community gardens • Work with groups such as Peel Food Action Council, Mississauga Urban Agriculture Network, University of Toronto Mississauga, and Sheridan College to invite marginalized, underserved, equity-deserving groups, youth groups, newcomers, etc.

CASE STUDY:

The City of Toronto’s [Indigenous Health Strategy](#) outlines the need to advocate for affordable, healthy food for Indigenous People using an Indigenous perspective.

Deliverables include:

- Creation of community garden initiatives that are supported
- Policies for green spaces for food sustainability that are researched and reported
- Strategies to increase access to affordable, healthy food that are developed and put into action
- Continuing the advocacy work underway to provide free access to prenatal vitamins

2. LINK CITY AND REGIONAL PARTNERS

What we heard: Regional organizations including Peel Public Health, the Peel Food Action Council, United Way, and food banks have done a lot of work on issues related to food security. The City needs to connect and align more strategically with this work. Community organizations are calling for better support and resources to continue contributing to this work. Connections between the City and regional partners could be strengthened to create environments and conditions that advance a number of policy priorities: food security, healthy food access, community safety, climate change, and more.

COMMUNITY VOICES

“Bridge various municipalities and levels of government to ensure messaging is consistent would help the community.”

“[We need] more conversations with each other to build a strong network together.”



City and community come together to participate in a conversation about urban agriculture in Mississauga

CULTIVATE RELATIONSHIPS - ACTIONS	LEAD	IDEAS FOR IMPLEMENTATION
2-1 Explore and coordinate opportunities to align with other City of Mississauga plans (including Official Plan); Regional, Provincial and Federal policies, strategies, and programs; particularly those aimed at tackling climate change adaptation through urban agriculture	City	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Add policies that support urban agriculture to the new Official Plan, where appropriate • Comment on the Region of Peel’s Official Plan • Endorse the Peel Food Charter (Council action) • Work with regional partners to help carry out Peel Food Action Council’s Strategic Plan • Explore opportunities to coordinate funding for urban agriculture programs through the Region’s Community Investment Program • Work with Peel Public Health to adopt soil assessment guidelines from the City of Toronto • Link to ministries that are focused on climate action and equity, diversity, and inclusion (e.g., Ministries of Infrastructure, Environment and Climate Change Canada, Crown-Indigenous Relations, Agriculture and Agri-Food, and Diversity and Inclusion and Youth)
2-2 Participate in emerging regional and community food security initiatives (e.g. align with and contribute to Peel Food Map)	Community	

CASE STUDY:

The City of London is encouraging collaboration between supporting networks by creating an Urban Agriculture Steering Committee, including representatives from City divisions, Advisory Committees, the Middlesex-London Food Policy Council, and members of Friends of Urban Agriculture London. Connections are also being developed with agricultural and rural organizations and regional farmers to ensure collaboration.

3. EDUCATE AND COMMUNICATE

What we heard: There are several ways the City can support urban agriculture education and communications. This is key to growing public interest in urban agriculture and deepening knowledge about the urban agriculture community.



Children learn about food growing during the City's garden summer camp

COMMUNITY VOICES

“Support and provide opportunities for local schools to grow their own food to enhance children’s knowledge of food supply.”

“Senior groups could take an active role in supporting gardens and experience health and social benefits from them.”

“Establish local community indoor and outdoor garden/hydroponic spaces for the purpose of outreach, teaching, and community food production that feeds into local food banks.”

“I want to be able to have one place to go to learn about what’s allowed for urban agriculture, and what it takes to facilitate it.”

CULTIVATE RELATIONSHIPS - ACTIONS	LEAD	IDEAS FOR IMPLEMENTATION
3-1 Educate and engage internal staff to support and communicate the City's urban agriculture priorities and initiatives	City	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provide training and resources for City front-line staff (e.g., 311 call centre, libraries, recreation, parks) • Ensure multilingual resources and translation services are available
3-2 Collaborate with the community on urban agriculture events, programs, and outreach efforts	City	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Collaborate to provide communications and outreach support for events and workshops, including agri-tourism, tours, garden competitions and community engagement • Promote local food, community gardens, and farmers markets (e.g., social media, website, other media)
3-3 Expand and grow urban agriculture programs and demonstration sites (i.e., City's seed lending library, Ecosource Iceland Teaching Garden and urban farm)	City	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provide education on urban agriculture activities such as food gardening, hydroponics, and bee keeping • Educate and encourage children and youth to be interested in urban agriculture through camp programs
3-4 Discuss strategies and opportunities to co-create, integrate, and share urban agriculture resources across organizations and within environmental and educational institutions, programs, and initiatives for all ages, from children to older adults	Community	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Work with special interest groups in urban agriculture-related programming (i.e., older adults, cultural groups, faith-based organizations) • Communicate about the importance of urban scale-appropriate food safety and food processing guidance
3-5 Collaborate to advocate for and promote local food, food programs and food banks, farms, gardens, growers, and farmers markets using traditional and non-traditional media to showcase and celebrate community-led urban agriculture (e.g., promote Peel Food Map)	Community	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provide guidance on ways to avoid attracting wildlife • Promote the seed library and include a wide range of organic and culturally diverse seeds

CASE STUDY:

The Port Credit Seed library has been successful at “lending” vegetable seeds to the community, and there is strong demand for the program. “Borrowers” grow the plants and then harvest seeds from the plants to donate back to the library. Students at Rick Hansen Secondary School placed in the top three at the City’s Climate Change Youth Challenge with the vision to expand the Port Credit Seed Library to other locations. Ecosource’s Young Urban Growers and the Erin Mills Farmers Market have offered support, and the students are now connected with the City and are thinking about how to further grow a network of seed libraries.

CASE STUDY:

The Urban Farm at Ryerson University (renaming in process) began as a student-led initiative to grow fresh food on campus. The Urban Farm is now funded entirely by the university’s administrative department, operating two rooftop farm spaces spanning a half-acre. The farm uses ecological and sustainable growing methods, and provides an opportunity for education and research. The green roof was built in 2004 and was developed into a rooftop farm in 2013. The rooftop farm currently produces 10,000 pounds of produce each year, which is distributed amongst students and staff through a community-supported agriculture program, farm stands, and garden grab-bags. Much of the food that is grown is also donated to community projects and organizations in the surrounding area. This innovative project demonstrates the potential for green roofs to produce food, as well as to contribute to the health and well-being of the local community and environment.

GROW AND SHARE THE HARVEST:
REMOVE BARRIERS TO URBAN AGRICULTURE

WHERE THE CITY IS TODAY

The City's current [Official Plan](#) references urban agriculture and community gardens. With the review of the Official Plan (2019-2022) underway, additional support for a wider range of urban agriculture activities and uses is being supported. This includes a review of specific policies, rules, and regulations related to land-use designations for urban agriculture and farmers. Urban agriculture activities and uses also need to be better defined in the City's zoning bylaw, which currently focuses on community gardens and farmers markets. While the City allows produce to be sold on public land through a permit process, raising livestock including backyard urban hens is restricted. The City consulted the public on starting an urban hen program but the idea received mixed results. The City will continue to consider an urban hen program following the completion and assessment of a small urban hen pilot in 2023.

There is minimal land and space suitable for urban agriculture in Mississauga, where extensive soil remediation and maintenance plans may also be needed for projects to move forward. Additionally, there are no requirements for developers to include urban agriculture in their plans, and they are currently not being actively encouraged to do

so. The City has a successful community gardens program managed by Ecosource; however, there are large waitlists to access plots. The [City's Community Garden Site Selection Policy](#) currently governs the process and criteria for selecting appropriate sites for gardens. Currently, Mississauga has 3-5 active farmers markets operating seasonally from late spring to early fall. A Special Events Licence and insurance are required for farmers markets to operate in the city.



Hancock Woodlands Community Garden
Photo Credit: Ecosource

HOW CAN URBAN AGRICULTURE BE SUPPORTED?

The public consultation process identified barriers faced by the community when engaging in urban agriculture. These include land cost and ownership, policy barriers around growing and selling locally produced food, and access to land for equity-deserving groups.

Urban agriculture is well suited for underused spaces such as commercial facilities, rooftops, greenhouses, front lawns, boulevards, and other spaces, which would be made available by creating appropriate land-use categories. City facilities can also be used for urban agriculture, where appropriate. The City plays an important role in encouraging other institutional land holders to make space available for urban agriculture activities that are accessible for all ages and abilities.



Accessible garden beds at the Small Arms Community Garden

4. ENABLE URBAN AGRICULTURE THROUGH POLICIES, BYLAWS, AND PLANS

What we heard: City policies, bylaws, and plans can either work for or against urban agriculture. These should be developed in collaboration with the community to address barriers and facilitate urban agriculture activities.



Harvest time at the community gardens
Photo Credit: Ecosource

COMMUNITY VOICES:

“Please ensure that on-the-ground volunteer groups are in the policy development and at the table to help with ground-truthing.”

“The special event licence [that applies to farmers markets] is a barrier for us. We have to spend more money and time on recruitment of every [farmers market] vendor. This creates a lot of work for the market and the vendors, and we lose the vegetable vendors. [There are] not a lot of people growing food close to cities. How can we work through the barriers together?”

“I believe there should be a farmers market within walking distance of every community.”

GROW AND SHARE THE HARVEST - ACTIONS	LEAD	IDEAS FOR IMPLEMENTATION
<p>4-1 Reduce barriers to urban agriculture activities on public and private lands (i.e., growing and selling food on public land; establishing farmers markets; farmer attendance at markets; a city-wide Urban Hen program)</p>	<p>City</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Work with the community in reviewing policies and by-laws that enable growing and selling food on public land • Review and update the City's Community Garden Site Selection Policy and raised bed standard • Review the special event licence and fees with farmers market managers • Link farmers with markets and people by addressing financial needs, marketing, logistics, and distribution bottlenecks • Explore opportunities to support farmers markets by encouraging procurement from local growers (i.e., through "market to chef" program) • Expand urban agriculture activities and uses as defined in the City's Zoning By-law beyond only community gardens • Work internally to include and prioritize urban agriculture into land-use planning and City facilities (i.e., parkland, golf courses, fire stations, libraries, etc.)

CASE STUDY:

The City of Victoria allows small-scale commercial urban agriculture and sales in all zones, including homegrown produce, eggs, honey, and other agriculture products in front lawn farm stands. Victoria also allows boulevard gardening.

5. FACILITATE EQUITABLE ACCESS TO LAND AND SPACE

What we heard: Access to land is a significant barrier to urban agriculture. Community groups and growers should be offered an opportunity to access land through creative partnership programs with landowners. The cost of raised beds or soil remediation for community gardens are barriers.



Community member harvesting at the community garden
Photo Credit: Ecosource

COMMUNITY VOICES:

“I believe strongly in community garden space being more available and for city food gardens to become a regular part of the City’s outdoor program.”

“Encourage apartment/condo buildings to turn large swaths of lawn into community gardens and provide a water source for them.”

“We need more community gardens throughout the city.”

“As a first-generation Canadian, there is a huge barrier in terms of access to land, and an even bigger barrier to land ownership.”

GROW AND SHARE THE HARVEST - ACTIONS	LEAD	IDEAS FOR IMPLEMENTATION
5-1 Identify and engage businesses and institutions to support local food initiatives and to support and encourage inclusion of urban agriculture on private lands	City	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Explore opportunities in the refresh of the Community Green Development Standards to add local food infrastructure (i.e., community gardens, greenhouses) as amenity spaces • Encourage new developments/institutions to include urban agriculture features • Work with Ecosource and other community partners to increase plot availability and reduce waitlists at community gardens, especially in high priority communities • Develop underused, innovative spaces for growing and processing food and food waste (hydroponic farms, rooftops, greenhouses, community kitchens, community composting facilities, food hubs) • Ensure the land inventory criteria provides equity-deserving groups more access to urban agriculture projects, initiatives, and ventures • Develop a process to improve access to available land for the community
5-2 Expand the Community Garden Program's capacity and accessibility	City	
5-3 Create a city-wide urban agriculture land inventory to facilitate access to land for the community	City	
5-4 Partner and collaborate around access to land and space for community groups and work with the City to identify land and growing spaces for urban agriculture based on need and/or community interest	Community	



Cherry tomatoes growing in a community plot

CASE STUDY:

The City of Toronto's [Community Engagement and Entrepreneurial Development Garden Program](#) improves access to land for agriculture while supporting training and income supplementation opportunities for marginalized and/or vulnerable groups. These plots of land are significantly larger than a community garden plot, allowing for increased production and food to be sold. Flemo Farm, a new half-acre urban farm located in a Hydro corridor in Flemington Park, emerged through the program as part of a pilot initiative to grow food in Hydro corridors and make land available to equity-deserving groups. As a community-owned and-developed initiative, Flemo Farm connects with the community through events, volunteer opportunities, and a weekly on-site market. Using an application process, Flemo Farm invited five community members to be Community Farmers in 2021. The program provides access to prepared garden space, growing equipment, workshops, and community training. Farmers keep the money they make from selling the food they grow.



Immigrant Seeds, City of Mississauga's We are Resilient Photo Contest
Photo Credit: Crystal Zhu

**PLANT AND STEWARD SEEDS:
ENABLE URBAN AGRICULTURE**

WHERE THE CITY IS TODAY

The City's Community Grant Program provides funding to the Community Garden Program as well as other local food initiatives. The City also provides operational support to establish and maintain community gardens. There are a number of innovative gardens, farms, businesses, and initiatives in Mississauga, but they need resources to grow and thrive. Urban agriculture resources, grants, incentives, and rebates are limited and not easily accessible, making it a challenge to grow programs and expand gardens. There is currently no long-term dedicated funding source related to local food from the City or Region of Peel.

Entrepreneurs face barriers to entry for new ventures such as navigating planning and land-use policies, accessing land and space, business development, technical assistance and marketing. The City can play a key role in supporting, cultivating, and promoting urban agriculture innovation by addressing these barriers. Additionally, there are few entry points to a career in urban agriculture for youth, and limited mentorship opportunities.



Helping hands from the community and City support stewardship initiatives and community gardens

HOW CAN URBAN AGRICULTURE BE SUPPORTED?

Funding, resources, guidance, and incentives are key elements to supporting urban agriculture. Acting on these elements will help grow urban agriculture activities across Mississauga. Programs that support development and growth will help drive innovation and new opportunities not only in the city, but throughout the region.

Both the City and community must commit resources towards supporting urban agriculture, focussing on equity and access. These resources include time and capacity for relationship building, network development, supporting existing activities, and testing new initiatives and projects. Funding is required for staff and for material expenses. Other resources are also required and include educational materials, guidelines, guidance, and incentives.

Urban agriculture innovation is occurring all around the world as communities, entrepreneurs, organizations, and cities seek creative ways to grow food, enhance urban sustainability, and create economic opportunities. Community initiatives, social enterprises, and institutional or entrepreneurial projects can all be cultivated and scaled when opportunities for growth are provided.



Planting seeds today, for the future

6. RESOURCE. GUIDE. AND OFFER INCENTIVES

What we heard: The City can provide a range and variety of funding and resources to promote and support urban agriculture. The City is already funding some important work, such as the development of community gardens.



A diversity of seeds
Photo Credit: Hoffmann Hayes

COMMUNITY VOICES:

“Organizations are having to spend a lot of volunteer time to access the right funding opportunities, taking away from the work they could be doing in the community.”

“We are a small not-for-profit, trying to get beyond writing tiny grants to grow to the capacity we can achieve.”

“Lots of people are interested and we could use help and funds to respond to the interest.”

“Urban agriculture requires more grassroots involvement with ample policy support, tech access, and finance for innovation.”

“Investment in urban farming will make the food supply in the city more reliable, healthy, and local. It would reduce the cost of transportation and help the city be resilient to climate change. Encouraging community farms and backyard farms will make the city a better place to live.”

PLANT AND STEWARD SEEDS - ACTIONS	LEAD	IDEAS FOR IMPLEMENTATION
6-1 Support a variety of urban agriculture opportunities by exploring financial and non-financial tools	City	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Research and document existing and new relevant grants, incentives or rebates and make available to the community • Connect community groups with non-financial tools such as training, workshops, shared spaces, and networking opportunities.
6-2 Build community capacity to secure funding opportunities (e.g., grants and sponsorship)	Community	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Explore the creation of a new urban agriculture funding program • Establish a joint working group (either new or as part of an existing, related committee) to support the strategy's implementation and evaluation.



Planting an herb seedling
Photo Credit: Ecosource

7. INNOVATE. CULTIVATE. AND GROW

What we heard: The urban agriculture sector can be grown through programs that cultivate and support innovation and opportunities throughout Mississauga.



Vertical gardening at a local school
Photo Credit: Ecosource

COMMUNITY VOICES:

“We have lots of requests from businesses for support to help their employees grow for the food bank, but we need support to do it.”

“Skills development training with farmers is transferable to those interested in farming and growing in an urban environment.”

“Create youth opportunities to make a difference and engage in urban agriculture activities that impact climate change.”

“We have the chance to work with the growing group of community partners and community members to establish criteria for innovation and corporate social responsibility as it applies to the Urban Agriculture Strategy.”

PLANT AND STEWARD SEEDS - ACTIONS	LEAD	IDEAS FOR IMPLEMENTATION
7-1 Work with community partners, agriculture/food-related businesses, and entrepreneurs to explore the development of programs to support urban agriculture growth and innovation in Mississauga	City	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Engage the Mississauga Board of Trade (MBOT), Business Improvement Areas (BIAs), and other interested business groups • Connect and collaborate with other City departments and divisions who are supporting local entrepreneurs
7-2 Grow the urban agriculture sector by engaging, mentoring, and training individuals to support community and entrepreneurial innovation	Community	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Develop a food and public markets plan • Explore opportunities for training and mentoring programs to encourage careers and education in food systems, especially for youth • Explore the establishment of food hubs that encourage and support urban agriculture innovations

CASE STUDY:

Farmers markets can build connections with restaurants to open up another income stream. In San Francisco, the Market to Chef program offers benefits to chefs who shop regularly at farmers markets, including invitations to cooking demonstrations, recognition on market websites and in the City’s dining guide, and priority parking. This creates a reliable source of revenue for farmers while also boosting the profile of local chefs.

IMPLEMENTATION, MONITORING, AND ACCOUNTABILITY

Moving the strategy beyond aspiration and into action represents a pivotal moment in the advancement of urban agriculture in Mississauga. It also offers an important opportunity for the City and residents to work together, in positive and productive collaboration to address climate change mitigation and adaptation.

The City understands that accountability is necessary to ensure the success of this strategy both in the actions achieved and the level and quality of community engagement maintained throughout its implementation. With this in mind, the City commits to regular updating on the implementation of the strategy. The City also commits to continuing the collaborative work with the community and will ensure that reporting tools are inclusive, reflect the community's feedback, and are grounded in community experience. One possible accountability measure could be to establish a joint working group (either new or as part of an existing, related committee) to work with the community directly in the strategy's implementation and evaluation.

This strategy represents a starting point for continuing the urban agriculture work in Mississauga. Several recommendations outlining next steps for moving forward on the strategy as well as a suggested timeframe for actions and ideas for implementation provide a framework to create a more comprehensive implementation plan in collaboration with the community.

Recommendation 1: Dedicate internal City resources to support urban agriculture activities in Mississauga and oversee the initial planning for implementation of the strategy.

Recommendation 2: Develop a community engagement plan, with guidance from community stakeholders, to ensure that ongoing opportunities for the full range of community perspectives are shared and integrated into the implementation phase. The success of the strategy must involve working with the community and supporting those who wish to participate. The engagement plan should be reviewed to ensure equity and prioritize participation of equity-deserving groups to ensure a fair and transparent process. The community should also be invited to continue conversations

with other community groups and stakeholders, along with the City, to further understand potential gaps and identify opportunities.

Recommendation 3: Work collaboratively with identified community stakeholders to create a detailed implementation plan including the action pathways, actions, and ideas for implementation gathered throughout the community and stakeholder consultation. Identify which divisions, sections, and teams at the City of Mississauga, and community stakeholders will lead the work, the resources required, timelines, as well as key metrics and indicators for each of the actions. While work has already begun to prioritize ideas for implementation into short-term (1-5 years) and longer-term opportunities (5+ years), further assessment and prioritization will be needed for the ideas collected but not included in this strategy. This plan should be dynamic and respond to new developments, opportunities, and stakeholders.

Recommendation 4: Explore City and external community grants and funding for new and emerging local food projects as well as funding models for established urban agriculture initiatives to ensure sustainability of these projects in the city.

Recommendation 5: Identify the best process, tools, and schedule for tracking, assessing, and reporting on the progress of the strategy. A strong emphasis should be placed on transparency in support of the level of collaboration needed to achieve the strategy's goals. Progress updates to both City and community stakeholders should provide insight into both the work accomplished and the process of implementation, highlighting areas for improvement to be prioritized for future years. Updates should include progress on actions (including those completed, ongoing, not yet started), key lessons learned, and adjustments/next steps for moving forward.

Based on feedback from the community, the City has more control, opportunity, and resources to implement, monitor, and be accountable to the actions in the strategy. When putting the strategy into action, the City should continue to remove barriers, encourage leadership, engagement and participation, and support community groups in working collaboratively towards the strategy's vision. With this in mind, it is recommended that the City lead the initial work of developing the implementation, reporting, and evaluation processes for the strategy but actively engage with the community throughout the work to ensure the processes developed are in line with the collective

vision for accountability and action. The City is committed to achieving the initial recommendations and providing progress updates within the first three years upon the strategy's approval in order to continue further implementation.

Figure: Next Steps timeline



CONCLUSION

Urban agriculture connects with many of the most pressing issues of our time, such as food security, pollinators and biodiversity, public health, systemic inequities, and climate change. There is a growing understanding of the importance and complexity of these issues. It is important to note that while urban agriculture is just one of many potential solutions, it can inspire and motivate people to get involved and inspire ongoing and future action.

Urban agriculture is an accessible way to approach community aspirations and creative actions for improving health, well-being, connectedness, sense of belonging, equity, and opportunity for all members of the community.

There is a tremendous amount of interest within the City and community to work together on urban agriculture. This is an exciting time for urban agriculture in Mississauga: a time of collaboration, drive and focus. This strategy brings together ideas and actions to harness the energy and enthusiasm of this moment and to help build a community that is responsive to the tremendous challenges and opportunities ahead.



Showing some garden love, carrots harvested from a garden plot
Photo Credit: Ecosource



Garden of the Valley, City of Mississauga's Imagine2050 Photo Contest
Photo Credit: David Coulson

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GLOSSARY OF TERMS

ADAPTATION

Actions in response to actual or projected climate change impacts, which reduce the vulnerability of social, environmental, physical and economic systems.

AQUAPONICS/AQUAPONIC GARDENING

Aquaponics/aquaponic gardening are a growing system that includes plants and fish or other aquatic animals. The fish supply nutrients to the plants and the plants purify the water.

COMMUNITY GARDEN

Community gardens are shared growing spaces. Ecosource runs Mississauga's public Community Gardens Program. Community gardens consist of member plots where residents can sign up for an individual plot to grow their food as well as community plots where volunteers grow food for local food banks or use in community programs.

EXTREME WEATHER EVENTS

Meteorological conditions that are rare for a particular place and/or time, such as an intense storm or heat wave and are beyond the normal range of activity. They can be the result of sudden and drastic changes in temperature, precipitation and sea-level or they may be the result of a more gradual, but prolonged, shift in temperature or precipitation that is beyond the normal range.

EQUITY-DESERVING GROUPS

Equity-deserving groups are those with barriers to equal access, opportunities, and resources due to systemic inequities, disadvantages, and discrimination.

FARMERS MARKET

Farmers Markets are 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.

FOOD HUB

Food hubs provide the physical connections between small-scale production and a larger market. This enables small farmers to expand production and share resources with other farmers to reach a greater production capacity and enter a larger, more stable market than they could otherwise be able to access.

FOOD INSECURITY

Food insecurity is the inability to acquire or consume an adequate diet quality or sufficient quantity of food in socially acceptable ways.

FOOD MILES

Food miles is the distance food travels from where it is grown to where it is eaten and can provide a measure of the environmental impact or carbon footprint of food.

FOOD SECURITY

Food security is defined by the United Nations as meaning that all people, at all times, have physical, social, and economic access to sufficient, safe and nutritious food that meets their food preferences and dietary needs for an active and healthy life.

FOOD SOVEREIGNTY

Food sovereignty is the right of people to healthy and culturally appropriate food produced through ecologically sound and sustainable methods. It is their right to define their own food and agriculture systems.

FOOD SYSTEM

Food system is all the interconnected activities and infrastructure that combine to provide food within a region, including growing, harvesting, processing, packaging, transporting, marketing, consuming, distributing, and disposing of food.

GREEN DEVELOPMENT

Green development takes into account the environmental and social impacts of a development. It also takes steps to reduce negative impacts and create positive impacts.

GREEN INFRASTRUCTURE

Green infrastructure is an approach that uses natural, ecological systems to provide infrastructural services in the human-built environment.

HYDROPONICS/HYDROPONIC GARDENING

Hydroponics/hydroponic gardening is a growing method that doesn't use soil but instead delivers nutrients to sustain plants using water.

INDOOR FARMS

Indoor farms are located within a building. The farm area is managed and maintained by an individual or group of individuals to grow and harvest food crops or non-food crops (e.g., flowers), for sale or distribution.

MARKET GARDEN

Market garden is an area managed and maintained by an individual or group of individuals to grow and harvest food crops or non-food crops (e.g., flowers), for sale or distribution.

MITIGATION

Measures that contribute to the stabilization or reduction of greenhouse gas emissions.

ORGANIC AND SUSTAINABLE GROWING METHODS

Organic farming is a method of crop and livestock production that involves much more than choosing not to use pesticides, fertilizers, genetically modified organisms, antibiotics, and growth hormones. Organic production is a holistic system designed to optimize the productivity and fitness of diverse communities within the agro-ecosystem, including soil organisms, plants, livestock, and people. The principal goal of organic production is to develop enterprises that are sustainable and harmonious with the environment. Organic is certified through an independent review while sustainable growing methods may use organic practices, but may not be certified.

POLLINATORS

Pollinators are the animals (primarily insects) that transfer pollen and enable reproduction in roughly 80% percent of the world's flowering plants. (Wind-pollination and self-pollination are other ways). For plants that rely on animal to transfer pollen, bees are the primary pollinators. Flies, beetles, moths, and butterflies are also pollinators. Plants produce nectar and pollen, rich sources of food that attract pollinators. Approximately one-third of the world's food crops depend on animal pollinators in order to reproduce.

RESILIENCE

The ability of systems and communities to absorb the impacts of climate change and maintain an acceptable level of functionality and service.

ROOFTOP FARM/GARDEN

A rooftop farm/garden is an area where food and non-food crops are grown on the roof of a building for sale or distribution. This includes growing in raised planters or a green roof system. A green roof system is an extension of the existing roof, which involves, at a minimum, high-quality waterproofing, root repellent systems, drainage systems, filter cloth, a lightweight growing medium, and plants.

URBAN FARM

Urban farms are spaces where growing, washing, packaging, and storage of fruits, vegetables, and other plant products take place for wholesale or retail sales. Urban farms can include hydroponic systems, aquaponic systems, rooftop gardens, indoor growing, and apiaries among other technologies and activities.

URBAN HEAT ISLAND EFFECT

Urban heat island effect occurs when urban areas experience higher temperatures than surrounding rural areas due to the heat-trapping and heat-radiating qualities of dense buildings and paved surfaces.

LIST OF APPENDICES

Appendix 1: Key Stakeholder and Public Engagement Summary

Appendix 2: City Actions

Appendix 3: Community Actions

Appendix 4: Best Practices from Other Cities

APPENDIX 1: KEY STAKEHOLDER AND PUBLIC ENGAGEMENT SUMMARY

This report outlines the community and public engagement processes taken to support the development of the Urban Agriculture Strategy. Community and public engagement planning took into account the COVID-19 pandemic, replacing in-person workshops and meetings with online opportunities.

The “key stakeholder”/community consultation process was launched on March 30, 2021 and continued through to October 8, 2021 with community meetings, consultations, and conversations.

Community engagement goals were approached as follows:

GOALS:	APPROACH:
Diverse, inclusive participation to support people to engage and feel welcome to participate	Offered and disbursed honorariums to acknowledge the contributions of equity-seeking individuals and groups and to support their participation in the community consultation process
Build in time for informal “get to know you” discussions, story swapping, making connections to mimic the great “extras” that come from an in-person event	Included Voices of Urban Agriculture segments in all engagement sessions to showcase and invite inspiring projects and stories from a wide range of people; hosted small group discussions in each engagement session, in part to welcome and include everyone
Make technology user friendly and allow multiple ways to engage in sessions	Offered technical, social, and financial support to help people contribute; chat moderators invited all to write into the chat, speak in small groups, as well as email or call in with questions, concerns and ideas
Feed the system with timely information, providing organizers and participants information in advance	Provided a detailed agenda and discussion points in advance of meetings, with adequate time for participants to review, ask questions, and provide meaningful input

Early in the engagement process, categories of individuals, organizations, and groups were identified as likely stakeholders. These were:

- Indigenous leaders/inherent rights holders
- Urban agriculture programs and networks (e.g., community gardens, farmers markets, food banks)
- Equity-deserving groups: urban Indigenous and Black, racialized, youth, seniors and/or those who have lived experience of poverty/oppression
- Small businesses (e.g., farmers, local food producers)
- Regional: government, institutions, action groups, and networks (e.g., Peel Public Health; Peel Food Action Council; School Boards; Conservation Authorities; faith-based groups)

Community Organizations, Groups and Strategic Partners engaged, March - October 2021

People who participated in the engagement process in some instances represented their organizations and sometimes were participating out of personal interest in urban agriculture.

4 Directions of Conservation Consulting Services	Happy Plant
Association for Canadian Educational Resources (ACER)	Malton Neighbourhood Services EarlyOn
Blooming Boulevards	Mississauga Food Bank/Aquagrow
Boreal Greens	Mississauga Urban Agriculture Network
Colliers International	Peel Environmental Youth Alliance (PEYA)
Community Climate Council	Peel Food Action Council
Credit Valley Conservation (CVC)	Region of Peel/Peel Public Health
Deeper Roots Farm	Peel Poverty Reduction Committee
Dixie Bloor Neighborhood Centre	Peel Poverty Reduction Committee, Lived Experience Table
Dufferin-Peel Catholic District School Board	Rick Hansen Secondary School Ecoclub
Eagle Spirits of the Great Waters	Ryerson Rooftop Urban Farm
Ecosource	Second Harvest
Eden Food For Change	Secure the Food Mississauga
Environmental Action Committee (EAC)	Services and Housing in Province
EnviroMuslims	Seva Food Bank
Erin Mills Farmers Market	Shade of Miti
Evergreen	Steve's Bees
Faith and the Common Good	The Daniels Corporation
Families of Virtue	University of Toronto
Halton Environment Network	Young Urban Food Growers

SUMMARY OF ENGAGEMENT ACTIVITIES

- Key City stakeholder engagement sessions engaged key City staff members across departments to understand the role of the City in urban agriculture.
- Key community stakeholder engagement sessions and communities of interest focus group sessions were hosted by the City. Sessions included Voices of Urban Agriculture segments featuring Mississauga growers, stories, and project examples.
- An Urban Agriculture Strategy webpage was launched on April 12, 2021 (<https://mississauga.ca/homegrown>). The webpage included a place to share visions about urban agriculture and a Frequently Asked Questions page. An Urban Agriculture Strategy survey ran from April 12, 2021 to May 23, 2021. A second survey, focusing on urban hens, occurred between June 12, 2021 and August 8, 2021.
- One public engagement and one public consultation meeting were conducted, both with a focus on public interest and concerns about urban hens in Mississauga. These sessions also informed the public about a small-scale urban hens pilot project being conducted.
- Local media showed interest and supported communications about opportunities to engage in the strategy. Social media also generated significant interest.
- A community consultation meeting to receive input and discuss the Urban Agriculture Strategy draft was held on September 17, 2021.

ENGAGEMENT DATA

To date, more than 2,400 people have engaged in the City’s Urban Agriculture Strategy project.

COMMUNITY ENGAGED:	HOW MANY?
Community organization members/individuals who attended ≥ 1 session or conversation	95
Community organizations and strategic partner groups engaged	40
Group engagement sessions (March 30, 2021-September 18, 2021)	4
PUBLIC ENGAGEMENT:	
Social media reach	324,935
Impressions on City’s urban agriculture webpage “EHQ” portal	6,900
Completed the urban agriculture Survey (April 12, 2021 to May 23, 2021, six weeks)	318
Completed the Urban Hens Survey (July 12, 2021 to August 8, 2021, four weeks)	1,858
Expressed a vision through City’s urban agriculture webpage “EHQ” portal	44
Attended urban hens public education and engagement sessions	72
CITY STAFF ENGAGEMENT	
Staff involved	39
Departments involved	5

WHAT WAS HEARD: SUMMARY OF COMMUNITY CONSULTATIONS

Community input has been documented in detail. Much of the input has informed the Urban Agriculture Strategy's action pathways, actions and "what we heard" sections. Some of the input was quoted as community voices. Some of the earlier ideas that came in through community consultation are shared below. These, and many more ideas, have been shared with the City to inform future work plans.

Cultivate Relationships: Encourage Urban Agriculture

- Create strong relationships and connections throughout Mississauga and between the City, community, and region.
- Regional partners have done a lot of work around food security, and it is important for the City to align strategically with that work.
- Understand pre-existing Indigenous and land-based relationships that are impacted by colonialism, oppression, and racism.
- Urban agriculture networks are emerging and should be strengthened.

Grow and Share the Harvest: Remove Barriers to Urban Agriculture

- Address barriers to growing and selling locally produced food.
- Access to land is a significant barrier.
- Facilitate equitable access to land and resources.
- Strengthen urban agriculture infrastructure, operations, and distribution.
- Policies and plans should be developed in collaboration with the community in order to address barriers.

Plant and Steward Seeds: Enable Urban Agriculture

- Education, communication, incubation and support, and innovation are key elements of urban agriculture.
- There is growing public interest in urban agriculture.
- The urban agriculture sector can be grown through programs that cultivate and support innovation and opportunities throughout Mississauga.

OTHER IDEAS AND FEEDBACK

- Develop initiative(s) with one or more real-estate developers or institutions related to access to land, procurement, and programming.
- Create youth opportunities to make a difference and engage in urban agriculture activities that impact climate change.
- Clarify the difference between urban agriculture and food security and how they're connected.
- Describe how urban agriculture can enhance food security as well as its limitations for reducing food insecurity.

ABOUT URBAN HENS

There was strong interest in urban hens, and a Council request for focused public consultation on the topic, which ran from July 12, 2021 to August 8, 2021 through an online survey, a public education session, and a public engagement session. Key findings of the public engagement:

- Urban hens attract significant public interest and concern, illustrated by the number of people who engaged in the four-week urban hens public consultation.
- A slim majority of survey respondents – 53.88% – support residents being allowed to keep urban hens in backyards on residential properties in Mississauga.

Main reasons for supporting urban hens:

- Educational opportunities, e.g., opportunities and benefits for all to learn about food systems and the environment through personal interactions with hens.
- General enjoyment, e.g., shared positive experiences of hen ownership or of interactions with hens at neighbouring properties.
- Access to eggs.

Main concerns around urban hens: Pest/wildlife attraction (e.g., rats, coyotes, and foxes); Noise and odour; Animal welfare.

Public education sessions and information about urban hens can help inform, but may not shift opinions of those who are against hens. With the level of interest and concern in Mississauga, it is likely that there will need to be a continued investment in public education and communication of any proposed City of Mississauga urban hens program. Themes around starting a hens program emerged and include:

- Rules and regulations: While some people want fewer regulations around hen-keeping, others shared suggestions on setbacks, restrictions based on ward or plot size, and number of hens.
- Need for training and support: e.g., education for hen-keepers to ensure animal welfare.
- Permission from neighbours: Most think that hen-keepers should not have to ask neighbours for permission.
- Communal hen-keeping: e.g., an urban hens program with communal coops hosted on public property, similar to community gardens.
- Any potential urban hen program for Mississauga should consider equitable access for Mississauga residents.

IMPLEMENTATION, MONITORING AND ACCOUNTABILITY

- People want to know what urban agriculture activities are happening in Mississauga and information on how to get involved.
- People want the City to be supportive of a diverse range of urban agriculture activities and groups including, youth, newcomers, people with lived experience, BIPOC, and 2SLGBTQIA+, and for these groups and individuals to be engaged in the leadership and development of urban agriculture policies.
- Develop a framework to ensure transparent decision-making, planning, and implementation of the strategy.

APPENDIX 2: CITY ACTIONS CHART

PATHWAY	ANCHORING PATHWAY	ACTION	CITY DIVISION/ SECTION LEAD	CITY DIVISION/ SECTION SUPPORT
Cultivate Relationships	1. Strengthen Networks	1-1 Work with a broad range of community partners, including Indigenous organizations and equity deserving groups, to encourage participation and leadership in the urban agriculture sector	Culture (Heritage Planning and Indigenous Relations Office) Parks, Forestry & Environment (Environment)	Parks, Forestry & Environment (Environment) CMS Community Development
	2. Link City and Regional Partners	2-1 Explore and coordinate opportunities to align with other City of Mississauga plans (including Official Plan); Regional, Provincial and Federal policies, strategies, and programs; particularly those aimed at tackling climate change adaptation through urban agriculture	Parks, Forestry & Environment (Environment)	City Planning Strategies Environmental Services Strategic Initiatives (Strategic Leader Diversity & Inclusion) Strategic Financial Initiatives
	3. Educate and Communicate	3-1 Educate and engage internal staff to support and communicate the City's urban agriculture priorities and initiatives	Parks, Forestry, Environment (Environment)	
		3-2 Collaborate with the community on urban agriculture events, programs, and outreach efforts	Parks, Forestry, Environment (Environment)	Recreation, (Sports & Community Dev; Aquatics, Therapeutic, Fitness, and Programs) Tourism Culture (Museums and Small Arms Building, Heritage Planning and Indigenous Relations Office) Business and Marketing Solutions Corporate Communications

PATHWAY	ANCHORING PATHWAY	ACTION	CITY DIVISION/ SECTION LEAD	CITY DIVISION/ SECTION SUPPORT
Cultivate Relationships	3. Educate and Communicate	3-3 Expand and grow urban agriculture programs and demonstration sites (i.e., City's seed lending library, Ecosource Iceland Teaching Garden and urban farm)	Library Parks, Forestry & Environment (Environment)	Parks, Forestry, & Environment (Environment, Park Operations, Park Planning, Park Development)
Grow and Share the Harvest	4. Enable Urban Agriculture through Policies and Regulations	4-1 Reduce barriers to urban agriculture activities on public and private lands (i.e., growing and selling food on public land; establishing farmers markets; farmer attendance at markets; a city-wide Urban Hen program)	Parks, Forestry & Environment (Environment)	Culture (Heritage Planning and Indigenous Relations Office)
			City Planning Strategies	Strategic Initiatives (Strategic Leader Diversity & Inclusion)
			Development and Design	Enforcement (Mobile Licensing)
Grow and Share the Harvest	5. Facilitate Access to Land and Space	5-1 Identify and engage businesses and institutions to support local food initiatives and to support and encourage inclusion of urban agriculture on private lands.	Enforcement (Animal Services)	Recreation-Community Development
			Parks, Forestry, & Environment (Environment)	Parks, Forestry & Environment (Environment, Park Development, Park Planning)
			Parks, Forestry, & Environment (Environment)	Development and Design
Grow and Share the Harvest	5. Facilitate Access to Land and Space	5-2 Expand the Community Garden Program's capacity and accessibility	Parks, Forestry, & Environment (Environment)	Economic Development Office
			Parks, Forestry, & Environment (Environment)	Parks, Forestry, & Environment (Park Operations, Park Planning, Park Development)
Grow and Share the Harvest	5. Facilitate Access to Land and Space	5-3 Create a city-wide urban agriculture land inventory to facilitate access to land for the community	Information Technology (GIS)	Heritage Planning and Indigenous Relations Office
			Parks, Forestry & Environment (Environment)	Strategic Initiatives (Strategic Leader Diversity & Inclusion)

PATHWAY	ANCHORING PATHWAY	ACTION	CITY DIVISION/ SECTION LEAD	CITY DIVISION/ SECTION SUPPORT
Plant and Steward Seeds	6. Resource, Guide and Offer Incentives	6-1 Support a variety of urban agriculture opportunities by exploring financial and non-financial tools	Parks, Forestry & Environment (Environment)	Economic Development Office Recreation (Community Development) Culture (Community Development)
	7. Innovate, Cultivate, and Grow	7-1 Work with community partners, agriculture/food-related businesses, and entrepreneurs to explore the development of programs to support urban agriculture growth and innovation in Mississauga	Parks, Forestry, Environment (Environment)	Economic Development Office Recreation (Aquatics, Therapeutic, Fitness, and Programs) Culture (Museums and Small Arms Building)

APPENDIX 3: COMMUNITY ACTIONS CHART

PATHWAY	ANCHORING PATHWAY	ACTION
Cultivate Relationships	1. Strengthen Networks	1-2 Continue to grow and collaborate as a network of diverse urban agriculture partners; welcoming leadership from diverse communities
	2. Link City and Regional Partners	2-2 Participate in emerging regional and community food security initiatives (i.e. align with and contribute to Peel Food Map)
	3. Educate and communicate	3-4 Discuss strategies and opportunities to co-create, integrate, and share urban agriculture resources across organizations and within environmental and educational institutions, programs, and initiatives for all ages, from children to older adults
		3-5 Collaborate to advocate for and promote local food, food programs and food banks, farms, gardens, growers, and farmers markets using traditional and non-traditional media to showcase and celebrate community-led urban agriculture (i.e. promote Peel Food Map)
Grow and Share the Harvest	5. Facilitate Access to Land and Space	5-4 Partner and collaborate around access to land and space for community groups and work with the City to identify land and growing spaces for urban agriculture based on need and/or community interest
Plant and Steward Seeds	6. Resource, Guide and Offer Incentives	6-2 Build community capacity to secure funding opportunities (i.e., grants and sponsorship)
	7. Innovate, Cultivate, and Grow	7-2 Grow the urban agriculture sector by engaging, mentoring, and training individuals to support community and entrepreneurial innovation

APPENDIX 4: BEST PRACTICES FROM BEYOND MISSISSAUGA

This table contains examples of best practices from beyond Mississauga linked to the action pathways for this Urban Agriculture Strategy.

ANCHORING PATHWAY	EXAMPLES
Strengthen Networks	<p>In response to COVID-19, the City of Victoria launched the Get Growing, Victoria! Program. The program distributed more than 81,500 edible plant seedlings along with garden materials to residents in 2020 with the support of more than 44 community partners.</p> <p>The Kamloops Food Policy Council, established in 1995, is the longest-standing independent food policy council in Canada.</p> <p>In La Paz, Bolivia, the Municipal Food Security Committee (or Food Council) has brought together government, citizens, and food actors in a working group that meets to discuss issues related to food. The first Council included representation from non-governmental organizations, government agencies, food movements, farmer and market vendor associations, and more. The Council’s work has included the development of a proposal for a regional food supply system, and has lead to the creation of two other Bolivian food councils.</p>
Link City and Regional Partners	<p>The City of London’s “Food Charter,” developed by the Child & Youth Network and endorsed by Council in 2011, envisions the city as a food-secure community, and guides and informs all levels of government, businesses, non-profit organizations, communities, families, and individuals by linking sustainable food security policies to community action.</p> <p>The City of Edmonton’s “Climate Resilient Edmonton: Adaptation Strategy and Action Plan” calls for integrating climate change resilience into plans, programs, policies, and actions related to Edmonton’s food system, as well as exploring agriculture business opportunities to ensure that, in the face of climate change, Edmonton’s food systems are resilient, reliable, and secure.</p> <p>The City of Brampton’s “Grow Green Environmental Master Plan,” approved in 2014, acknowledges urban agriculture as an element of sustainable urban development and outlines municipal actions to support urban agriculture, such as policies related to encouraging community gardens and working with partners to develop a food strategy supportive of urban agriculture.</p> <p>Liberian governments are integrating agricultural lands in urban land-use planning and management to strengthen rural-urban linkages. In the Greater Monrovia District, multi-stakeholder platforms on urban and near-urban agriculture have emphasized the importance of food systems planning. A forum with stakeholders representing more than 25 institutions (including municipal, township, and ministry officials) has led to the creation of a geographic</p>

	<p>information system database on urban agricultural land use and the Monrovia City Strategic Agenda on urban and near-urban agriculture.</p>
Educate and Communicate	<p>The City of Toronto’s “Toronto Agriculture Program” (TAP), approved by Council, establishes a working group of various City divisions and, with allocated resources, encourages collaboration both within City departments and in unity with partners, leaders, and community agencies.</p> <p>Pasay City, Philippines launched an urban farm tourism program in 2021 to support livelihoods and food security, as well as to promote city greening. With the support of the mayor, the Pasay City Tourism and Cultural Development Office and the International School of Sustainable Tourism, the program brought together 60 local officials for a three-day training course on urban farm tourism.</p>
Enable Urban Agriculture Through Policies and Regulations	<p>Amendments made in 2015 to the City of Edmonton zoning bylaw established land use classes for Urban Outdoor Farms, Urban Indoor Farms, and Urban Gardens.</p> <p>In 2009, the City of Toronto adopted the Green Roof By-law, making it the first city in North America to adopt a bylaw to require and govern the construction of green roofs.</p> <p>The City of Hamilton amended its Zoning By-law in 2014 to allow community gardens and urban farms in any area zoned residential and to permit farm stands.</p> <p>The City of Edmonton runs a “Contaminated Site Management Program” that maps contaminated sites and ranks their risk.</p> <p>New York City zoning permits agriculture (including commercial agriculture) in all residential districts, all manufacturing districts, and the vast majority of commercial districts. Permitted agricultural uses include personal gardening, community gardening, commercial farming, indoor farming such as hydroponics and aquaponics, rooftop greenhouses, and more. Community farms and gardens are permitted to sell their produce.</p> <p>In 2002, the Municipality of Quito, Ecuador launched the Participatory Urban Agriculture Program (AGRUPAR) as a strategy to improve food security and provide income opportunities for residents. The program promotes household organic food production for consumption and sale. Growers sell surplus produce through “bioferias” – local alternative markets where healthy food consumption is promoted as a civil right. Quito also committed to the development of a resilient local food system as one of eight cities worldwide to implement the City Region Food System project in 2015.</p> <p>Farmers Markets Ontario (FMO) offers members special group rates on farmers market insurance, including \$5 million in Commercial General Liability. Some Ontario farmers markets, such as the Brampton Farmers Market, offer coverage through FMO to vendors for a</p>

	<p>fee. At the Leslieville Farmers Market in Toronto, the \$30 membership fee for vendors pays for collective insurance.</p> <p>In Nova Scotia, the Nourishing Communities Food Coupon Program connects farmers markets to non-profit organizations that provide participant households with "food bucks" to spend at markets. Similar programs exist in other Canadian cities and in the United States (e.g., Michigan's "Double Up Food Bucks" program).</p> <p>The City of Brampton's Animal Control By-Law 261-931 permits residents to keep up to two hens on a lot size of less than an acre; residents can apply for a licence to keep up to 10 hens on a larger property.</p> <p>Edmonton's Urban Hens Program allows residents to keep a minimum of three and a maximum of six hens per site. Applicants for the hen-keeping licence are required to take an urban hen-keeping course that is approved by the City of Edmonton.</p> <p>Kamloops Animal Control By-law No. 34-48 permits residents to keep between two and five hens on a residential zoned property, subject to registration and other requirements.</p>
Facilitate Access to Land and Space	<p>Langford, B.C.'s Zoning By-law includes a "Green Development Checklist" with points assigned for features such as green roofs and public community gardens, which may decrease the developer's required amenity contributions.</p> <p>In Ontario, the cities of Richmond Hill, Vaughan, Markham, and Brampton have collaborated on the Sustainability Performance Metrics, which are green development standards that aim to encourage developers to go beyond provincial and municipal requirements. This scoring system includes a section on urban agriculture with points awarded for dedicating land for food production, including on rooftops.</p> <p>Edmonton's "Fresh Food and Urban Agriculture Strategy" includes guidance to work with developers to provide land and infrastructure for urban agriculture and to work with partners such as universities to support innovation in urban agriculture.</p> <p>New York City, which has more than 550 community gardens and farms, offers community garden resources in multiple languages to increase accessibility, including a Gardeners Handbook, Garden By-law, and garden signage.</p> <p>In 2020, the City of Edmonton created a Pop-Up Community Gardens Pilot program that funded up to 30 pop-up gardens serving 300 gardeners in locations such as parking lots, with the City supplying containers and soil.</p> <p>The City of Hamilton, Ontario, adopted a Community Garden Policy in 2010, which set out a budget to establish new community gardens annually and to transfer existing gardens to community partners. A 2019 City of Hamilton survey report included recommendations to ensure that community gardens are within a 10-minute walk of people's homes and to assist</p>

	<p>volunteer garden co-ordinators with communication and social events to maximize gardens' benefits to participants.</p> <p>The City of London Ontario's Community Gardens Program Vision is to establish a community garden in every London neighbourhood, started and led by local residents.</p> <p>Since 2016, the City of Paris has hosted an annual competition to develop new urban agriculture projects. The "Parisculteurs" competition aims to find spaces – including rooftops, walls, and ground-level sites – with potential for urban agriculture, and offers urban farmers the opportunity to develop projects on these sites in connection with community members. More than 50 projects have emerged through the program so far, with many more in development.</p> <p>The City of Toronto's CEED (Community Engagement and Entrepreneurial Development) Garden Program seeks to facilitate access to land for agriculture while supporting training and income assistance opportunities for marginalized and/or vulnerable groups.</p> <p>The City of London's Urban Agriculture Inventory documents and maps existing urban agriculture and also identifies gaps and opportunities, priority action areas, and criteria for land required to put policies into action.</p>
Resource, Guide and Offer Incentives	<p>The City of Victoria's Community Garden Start-Up Grants provide up to \$5,000 for the design phase and up to \$10,000 for the build phase to create community gardens, with priority given to neighbourhoods without existing community gardens and to higher-population-density neighbourhoods. The City also offers grants to support the work of Community Garden Volunteer Coordinators.</p> <p>Sustainable Food Edmonton provides more than \$30,000 in grants each year to community gardens to support the creation of new gardens as well as for expansions, renovations, and renewals of existing gardens.</p> <p>The Singapore government's "30 by 30" campaign aims to meet 30% of nutritional needs locally and sustainably by 2030. The Singapore Food Agency has launched a \$60-million fund to help farms expand their production capacities and awarded \$23 million in research and development on sustainable urban food production. Other supports include working with industry to brand and market local produce, launching an online farmers market, and creating diploma programs to help equip the food agriculture workforce.</p>

