

Promoting Calgary's local food system: Land use bylaw amendments

The CalgaryEATS! Food System Assessment and Action Plan is Calgary's Council-endorsed food strategy. Its vision is to create a sustainable and resilient Calgary food system so that every citizen has access to local, healthy and environmentally-friendly food.

Over the past year, City teams have been working with interested stakeholders to identify various food-related areas of our bylaws. We are currently in the process of reviewing these identified areas to create as many opportunities as possible to increase accessibility to locally-grown food in our city. By updating some of our bylaws, we hope to:

- Create more opportunities to build a sustainable and resilient food system through land use and development;
- Support and promote the growing of local food through community gardens and urban agriculture initiatives;
- Expand opportunities for commercial growers; and
- Support increased access to healthy food for Calgarians.

The following panels outline what we'd like to present to Council and we'd like your input, feedback, and thoughts on these ideas.



1

Growing food

There are many expectations about the types of gardens and locations of gardens allowed for food production.

Opportunity: Should our bylaws explicitly state that growing food, including raised beds and hot boxes, be allowed anywhere on parcels of land where people live as long as the land is maintained and safe?

Current rules: There are no definitive rules written, but The City allows what it refers to as 'customary and acceptable' uses of growing food outside.

Possible idea: Make it clear in our bylaws that as long as a resident follows all of the other food regulations of our city, growing food outside is acceptable on parcels of land that are safe and being maintained.

What do you think of this idea?

2

Opportunities for small-scale urban farming

- Opportunity:** Can small-scale urban farming be allowed outdoors on vacant land or on some of the open landscaped areas around residential, commercial or industrial buildings?
- Current rules:** There are no rules for small-scale urban farming in Calgary.
- Possible idea:** Allow small-scale urban farming on vacant land and on landscaped areas of developed land and allow limited 'farm gate' sales with a permit (subject to existing bylaws, regulations and guidelines).

What do you think of this idea?

3

Community Gardens

Opportunity: It's not clear where community gardens can be built and which developments they can be combined with; should we allow them everywhere?

Current rules: Although not explicitly written, community gardens are included in our city's definition of 'a park', so they can be established almost anywhere in Calgary.

Possible idea: Define 'community garden' in writing and list it in the land use bylaw; this would make people more aware of the community garden option and residents/developers might build more of them as part of new developments.

What do you think of this idea?

4

Indoor commercial agriculture

Opportunity: Should commercial indoor food production be allowed in more places?

Current rules: Businesses can grow food indoors in industrial districts.

Possible idea: Should we define growing food indoors separately from other manufacturing uses and allow it in commercial districts as well?

What do you think of this idea?

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Food processing

Opportunity: Food manufacturing is unique compared to other types of manufacturing because a provincial regulation requires it to be located away from landfills and sewage treatment plants.

Current rules: Food manufacturing is included in the same definition as other manufacturing businesses which means that there are no explicit land use bylaw rules that require it to be set back from landfills and sewage treatment plants.

Possible idea: Define food manufacturing separately in the land use bylaw with a rule that separates it from landfills and sewage treatment plants.

What do you think of this idea?

6

Extensive Agriculture

- Opportunity:** Livestock can graze and food can be grown outside on land in the city that is yet to be developed for urban purposes, but should small greenhouses and buildings also be allowed pending urban development?
- Current rules:** Most extensive agricultural activities are expected to take place outdoors and not inside of buildings.
- Possible idea:** Refine the rules to allow small greenhouses, agricultural buildings and animal shelters as part of extensive agriculture on undeveloped land..

What do you think of this idea?

7

Intensive Agriculture

Opportunity: Although it is a listed development, there is currently no definition of what intensive agriculture is – should we define it?

Current rules: Intensive agriculture is undefined but can only be approved by Council via a public hearing.

Possible idea: Define intensive agriculture and include in its definition feedlots, animal barns, etc., but let it remain as a development that can only be approved by Council.

What do you think of this idea?

8

Urban grazing

- Opportunity:** There is a lot of city-owned land where weeds and grass can be managed by livestock grazing.
- Current rules:** Livestock grazing in the city is regulated by the 'Responsible Pet Ownership Bylaw' and is generally not allowed.
- Possible idea:** Allow The City to use livestock to manage weeds and grass on city-owned land.

What do you think of this idea?

9

Growing food on boulevards

Opportunity: Can I grow food on a boulevard (the city-owned land between the sidewalk/curb and a residential property line)?

Current rules: The 'Streets Bylaw' requires permission from The City.

Possible idea: Put in place rules that allow residents to garden on boulevards without the need of official permission.

What do you think of this idea?

10

'Pop-up' local food sales on city-owned land

Opportunity: Can The City help promote local healthy food by allowing 'pop-up' food sales on city-owned land?

Current rules: There are currently no rules that allow 'pop-up' sales.

Possible idea: Allow temporary 'pop-up' local food sales on city-owned land when permission is given by The City.

What do you think of this idea?

11

An 'Agriculture Land Use District'

- Opportunity:** Should The City have a land use district or zone to accommodate permanent agricultural uses within city boundaries?
- Current rules:** Low impact or 'extensive agricultural uses' are allowed, such as crops and animal grazing, but new permanent agricultural developments such as large barns or greenhouses are not permitted.
- Possible idea:** Create a new 'Agriculture Land Use District' so that land can be used for permanent agricultural activities.

What do you think of this idea?

12

Breweries, wineries and distilleries

- Opportunity:** Now that The City has had some experience approving permits for breweries, wineries and distilleries, should they be allowed as a 'permitted use' (uses that are automatically approved if they meet city rules) in some industrial districts?
- Current rules:** They are currently considered 'discretionary use' in existing buildings (which means they can be approved or refused based on The City's discretion).
- Possible idea:** Move breweries, wineries and distilleries under permitted use bylaws in the I-G districts when in existing buildings.

What do you think of this idea?

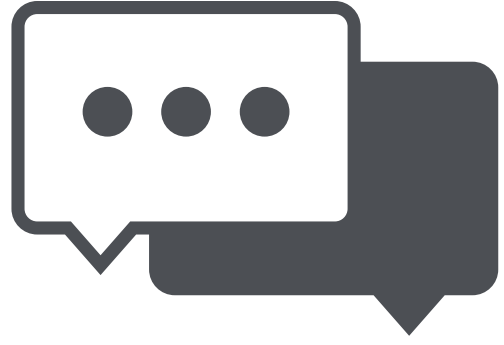
13

Rooftop greenhouses

- Opportunity:** Some developments provide few, if any, opportunities to grow food on the ground; should The City encourage rooftop greenhouses?
- Current rules:** Rooftop greenhouses are allowed but are included in a building's maximum height.
- Possible idea:** Exempt rooftop greenhouses from maximum building height.

What do you think of this idea?

Next steps



We are here



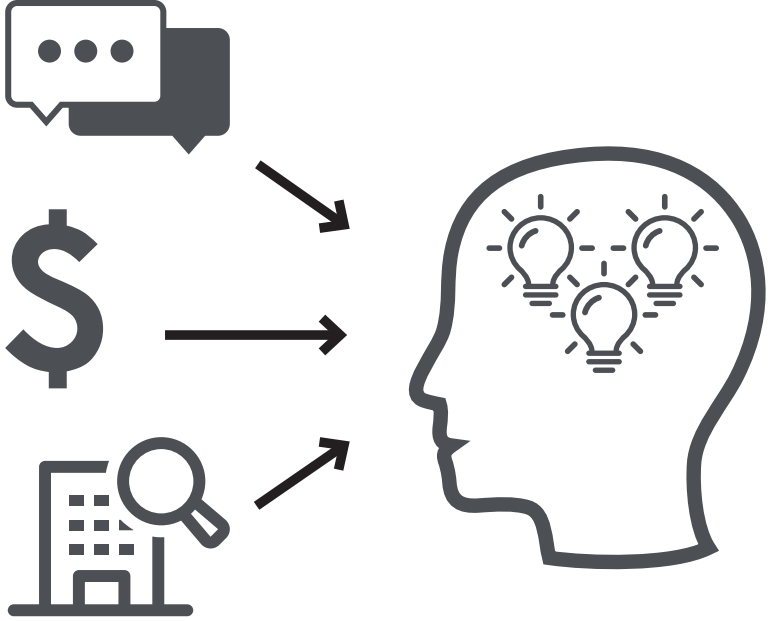
November-December 2016

Review feedback collected from stakeholders and shape bylaw amendments accordingly.



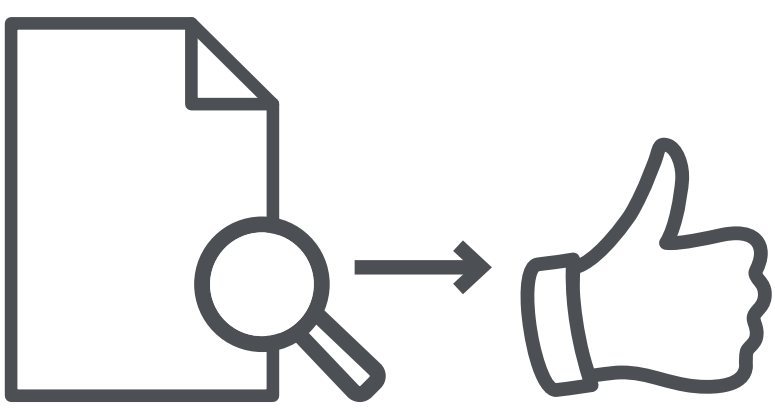
January 2017

Post amended bylaws to the www.calgary.ca/pd project page for public review.



Q1 2017

Present amended bylaws to Council for consideration at a public hearing. Interested members of the public will be able to publicly support or oppose the amendments at this hearing.



Q1 2017

If Council approves the amendments, the bylaws come into effect immediately.