

Hello Mayoral and Councillor Candidates!

We are a group of interested urban agriculturalists representing an online presence of over 300 Lethbridge Residents interested in urban agriculture, particularly urban hen-keeping. In recent years, the Council has been approached to consider implementing an Urban Hen-Keeping program in Lethbridge, beginning with a pilot-project similar to other cities and towns in Alberta and across North America.

Below we have included 3 questions regarding the keeping of Urban Hens in Lethbridge, as well as some other urban agricultural practices. We appreciate your time and attention to this matter. Please respond no later than **October 12** so we can share the information with our followers on Urban Hens YQL on Facebook.

Thanks very much!
Urban Hens YQL Team

Question 1: As other jurisdictions in Alberta are allowing the keeping of small numbers of carefully regulated hens on privately owned urban and suburban properties, would you support the implementation of an urban hen program in Lethbridge? Why or why not?

Yes, I would support exploring urban hens (and other urban ag projects). When I was the owner and editor of Lethbridge living magazine we did a story on urban hens. As with anything new, people need to feel comfortable with the change by understanding the purpose, process and outcomes. Communication with the public would be paramount. The way the City of Edmonton rolled out its urban hens program was well-considered and the program is quite successful.

Question 2: In the most recent Strategic Plan (2017 – 2021) the City of Lethbridge recognizes a need for resilient local food systems which includes the promotion of local urban agriculture, as well as expanding opportunities for community gardens. Do you agree that urban hen-keeping can play a role in creating more resilient local food systems? Explain your view.

Yes, I do. This would be an element of my “Neighbourhoods” platform where neighbours could meet, strategize, plan and implement a truly “local” food network. Food is a social event and goes far to create social interaction and inclusion.

Question 3: Do you view urban agricultural practices such as community gardens, boulevard gardens, urban food forests, and other such programs as beneficial to the community? Why or why not?

Absolutely. Urban food production makes sense for food sustainability and security, as well as general environmental sustainability. Such production can result in better water management practices (if the City is going to be watering a tree, why not have it bearing fruit we can all enjoy), GhG reductions (food is not transported great distances), and fewer chemical being used. I would love to have a neighbourhood garden on our Boulevard.