

URBAN AGRICULTURE COMMITTEE (UAC)
MEETING MINUTES
Wednesday, October 8, 2025
Grand Rapids City Hall MPR 143
(300 Monroe Ave NW, Grand Rapids, MI 49503)

Call to Order: 5:33pm

Roll Call

Present: Evvia Marshall, Dolli Lutes, Kim Moore (Committee Vice-Chair), Carlos Calderon (Committee Chair), Robert Cloy II, Connie Bohatch, Annabelle Wilkinson

Absent: None

Other: Kat Hart – *Office of Sustainability*, Amanda Faber – *Kendaville Farms LLC*, Austin Kanis – *Green Wagon Farm*, Alora Gleason – *Community member*, Megan Huxold – *Community member*, Aaron Newman – *Community member*

Approval of Agenda

Motion made by Dolli, supported by Kim, to approve the October 8, 2025, agenda was presented. Motion carried.

Approval of Minutes

Motion made by Kim, supported by Dolli, to correct the location of the previous meeting and approve the July 9, 2025, minutes as presented. Motion carried.

Public Comments

- Amanda Faber: inquired about the status of her 2 applications to UAC. She has not received a notice from the City about the acceptance or denial of her application(s) as of 10/8/2025.
 - She also suggested replacing “local food system” to “urban ag” to emphasize the inclusion of smaller producers in the UAC vision statement. Also suggested “food resilience” to embody the scales of food production and the potential disruption of “big-ag” supply chains during disasters.
- Megan Huxold: offered her volunteer services to the UAC and the Office of Sustainability and expressed her enthusiasm to support local growers and urban ag. organizations.

Round Robin Announcements – Committee Members

- Kim: shared that Kid’s Food Basket (KFB) is having their open house on 10/9/2025 for the [new facility in Muskegon, MI](#). KFB is providing 2,300 meals this year to youth in Muskegon. They acquired a six-acre property for food production that will also be open to the community for cooking lessons and support for growing.
- Connie: shared that Parks & Recreation has revised the job description for the upcoming Urban Ag Coordinator position based on the UAC’s feedback. She will forward this description to Kim and Robert for review.

Agenda Items

Meeting Schedule:

- Kim: the UAC has considered meeting monthly & adjusting the meeting time to earlier in the day. The UAC is the only committee meeting in the evening. She mentioned that Wednesdays work well for her.
- Connie: mentioned that other committee meetings are scheduled for the afternoon or morning. [Urban Forestry Committee](#) (UFC) meets at 4pm. The 2nd Wednesday of each month still works for her. She suggested 3pm as a starting time.
 - Evvia: Mentioned that 3pm is not her preference due to her full-time job, but could make 4pm.
 - Annabelle: suggested shorter meeting times while meeting monthly. For reference the UFC meets for 45 minutes.
- Kim: motion made to switch the 2026 schedule to monthly on the 2nd Wednesday from 4-5pm
 - Carlos: seconded the motion, let the group know that the November meeting will still be on 11/12 at the GRPL from 5:30 – 7pm.
- Connie: the 2nd Wednesday for November 2026 will be a federal holiday (Veteran’s Day) and suggested the 1st Wednesday of November 2026 as an alternative.
 - Carlos: the 1st Wednesday of November 2026 is the day after the 9/3/2026 election day.
 - Kat: suggested taking November 2026 off as the UAC will be meeting monthly for 2026. Further discussion of holding the November 2026 meeting will be held mid-2026.

UAC website updates:

- Kat: gave an update on the necessary fixes needed to make the [UAC page](#) accurate. The UAC agreed that these changes can be made immediately: these include the number of committee seats, the board liaison, and the updated vision & mission statements.
 - She gave an update on the upcoming GovStack platform for the City website and asked the UAC to consider utilizing the UAC page for education, recruitment, and outreach.
- Kim: added that at the previous strategic planning meeting, discussion was held about adding information about necessary permits for backyard animals and greenhouses to the UAC page.

3-year UAC Strategic Plan (SP):

- Kim: Working on the SP for about 6 months. Committee members evaluated the vision & mission statements during the last planning session on 9/8/2025 at Kids’ Food Basket.
 - Connie: mentioned that the SP will be transformed into a Word document for easier use.
- Carlos: provided overview of the 3 pillars and how they relate to the original scope of the UAC as designated in the [City Code 6.5 that grants its authority](#).
 - Kat: mentioned that they enjoy the separation of education and access into two pillars.
 - Connie: mentioned that the “original” UAC members expressed great interest in participating events and community outreach so that was the focus of the UAC’s activity prior to 2020.

- Carlos: brought up concerns/questions about internal staff supporting this work. Specifically, which responsibilities in the SP will fall to the committee members and which will fall to the City.
 - Annabelle: objectives are lined up with the Food Systems plan, OS will support building relationships with City dept.
- Evvia: requested more specificity on the community education opportunities and funding aspects in the SP. Does the UAC have events in mind? What is the theme of these events and is the UAC interested in attending community events *about* urban ag or events *not about* urban ag?
 - Kat: will provide a “City-sponsored events spreadsheet” from the Office of Special Events to review for 2026. This will allow the UAC to save the dates for large community events and prepare materials and schedules.
- Evvia: brought up concerns about lack of specific goals in the SP. She is unclear on what the UAC wants to accomplish.
 - Kim: mentioned that the SP is a 3-year plan and that the activities & metrics need the most consideration. The objectives & strategies are in a good spot but can be adjusted over the course of the 3 years as needed.
 - Rob: inquired about dedicating more time to reviewing the SP and identifying goals at the upcoming 11/12/25 UAC meeting.

Vision & Mission statements

- Kat: presented her recommendations for the UAC Vision & Mission statements and worked with the committee to adjust the statements into the final, approved, versions:
 - **Vision:** Grand Rapids will strengthen its local food resilience, quality of life and public health for all.
 - **Mission:** To educate and empower the community by providing policy review, recommendations and support for urban agriculture.
- Evvia: Agreed with Amanda Faber’s comment on the connotation of “urban ag” implies large, commercial operations and does not emphasize smaller, homesteading operations
 - Kim: Inquired about the coverage small growers, and homesteading, in the definition of “urban ag” that is also foundational to the UAC

Current committee vacancies:

- Carlos: wondering if out-of-City applications are ineligible and that is why Amanda Faber has not been notified.
- Rob: gave an update on the application process for the UAC appointment. He will follow up on Amanda Faber’s applications.
- Carlos: inquired about ways to promote the vacancies.
 - Kat: let the UAC know she promoted the vacancies in the 9/15/2025 Office of Sustainability e-newsletter

Adjournment: Meeting adjourned at 7:00pm

Next Meeting – Nov. 12, 2025, at the Grand Rapids Public Library (111 Library St. NE, Grand Rapids, MI 49503) at the Ryerson Auditorium (3rd floor) from 5:30pm – 7pm.