Winnipeg Food Council 2026 Budget Considerations

2026 Operating Budget recommendation

Item	Budget Line	Budget allocation
1.	Urban agriculture and community gardens small grants program	$30,000
2.	Education, training and meeting expenses	$1,500
3.	Food and Agriculture Strategy/ Strategic Planning	$10,000
4.	Memberships and Subscriptions	$500
	Total	**$42,000**

2025 Current Operating Budget

Item	Budget line	Budget allocation
1	Urban agriculture and community gardens small grants program	$15,000
2	Education, training and meeting expenses	$1500
3	Memberships and Subscriptions	$300
	Total	**$16,800**

Justification

The Winnipeg food council was established in February 2017 with an aim to initiate the development of and support the implementation, maintenance and evaluation of a City of Winnipeg Agricultural and Food Strategy. This strategy will:

I. Include policy directions identified through community engagement, focused research, innovative initiatives, and other actions to identify proven practices;

II. Include evaluation and implementation components; and

III. Be operationalized in partnership with the Winnipeg Public Service, the local food movement, businesses, community agencies, stakeholders groups, and private citizens.

Progress made on the strategy is reported in the following documents:

- Winnipeg Food System Snapshot report – 2022
- Municipal food policy scan – 2022

- Food strategy jurisdictional scan – 2022
- Towards a Winnipeg Food Strategy FINAL (rebranded with Gourmand Award).pdf

The Winnipeg Food Council has not been able to move the development of the Agriculture and Food Strategy forward due to lack of funds. There is currently no budget item for the development of Agriculture and Food Strategy. In 2017, $8,000 was allocated to the initiation of the strategy and in subsequent years, there were no funds allocated to the strategy. However, due to increase in current market values, it can be proposed that $10,000 be allocated for the strategy. The amount will cover the cost of hiring a consultant to develop the strategy, consultation, raising awareness and strategic planning.

The Winnipeg Food Council runs an urban agriculture small grants program where it provides funds from $500-$2000 to community organizations to support their community gardens. This program started in 2022 and has provided funds to several community organizations within the city. In 2023, 39 applications were received with a total request of $57,000. The grant could only provide funds of $10,000. In 2024, 38 applications were received with a total request of $67,500. In 2025, 29 applications were received with a total request of over $48,014. This program has received many wonderful reports and has helped many community organizations, especially BIPOC groups, to increase local food production. The WFC believe that an increase in the amount allocated for the grants program would go a long way in supporting more organizations with their community gardens.

In 2024, two motions were submitted to the EPC to request an increase in the WFC budget, but they were received as information.