

Food and Agriculture

Draft Objectives and Policies

Objectives

- The City recognizes the important role food and agriculture have in ensuring a sustainable community; improving the environment, the economy, the health of our population, and our community's well-being.
- The City recognizes the importance of and is supportive of the Agricultural Land Reserve (ALR) and its aim of preserving farmland encouraging the maintenance of farming. The ALR is intended to provide a protected zone for agricultural development, and its purpose is supported by the city.
- The City will promote, support and expand on existing community agricultural and food security initiatives and partnerships to:
 - Diversify and strengthen the food and agriculture sector
 - Improve local food infrastructure to support a resilient local economy
 - Increase public support for the agricultural sector and interest in locally produced high quality food.
 - Decrease growth pressure on farmlands and contain urban expansion by focusing on sustainable community development strategies.
- Integrate a sustainable regional food and agriculture system perspective into:
 - (a) Policies and Regulations
 - (b) Partnerships, Programs, and Special Projects
 - (c) Public Services (e.g. water and sewage), Corporate Operations\ (e.g. park maintenance), and Corporate Assets (City-owned land, buildings, etc.)

Policies

General

1. Consider adopting a community-generated food charter that sets out a vision for a just and sustainable food system in Prince George.
2. Work closely with partners to support the undertaking of an Agricultural and Food Systems Plan and Strategy to establish the current state of food systems (inventory agricultural resources), set a vision, and determine strategies for strengthening agriculture and food self-sufficiency in Prince George.
 - Food systems and Agricultural strategies should consider Climate Change Adaptation and mitigation actions concurrently. Projected precipitation and temperature changes should be considered when creating agricultural plans and agricultural land allocations (i.e. potential for increased agricultural capacity in the future).

- Facilitate cooperation amongst individuals or groups working towards increasing community agricultural activities.
 - The City will undertake a review of existing policies and bylaws to work towards eliminating barriers to sustainable food and agriculture systems.
3. Work in partnership with the Regional District of Fraser Fort George to examine the feasibility of a curb-side compost pick-up system as well as composting systems for municipal facilities.
 4. Promote the development of new businesses and the expansion of existing businesses in partnership with business improvement associations, Community Futures, and Initiatives Prince George that improve access to locally produced, affordable, and nutritious food.

Community Education and Promotion

5. Support food and agricultural opportunities in places of education such as schools and community centres to foster a connection between children and the process of growing, harvesting and eating fresh and healthy produce.
6. Promote attractive agricultural and community garden opportunities in highly visible, public, or semiprivate spaces.
7. Encourage and support a healthy and active community, work to achieve an expanded Communities in Bloom application to profile our community gardens.
8. Promote the City's achievements in areas of food policy and security.

Agricultural Land Reserve

9. Where lands are contained within the Agricultural Land Reserve, development is subject to the regulations of the Agricultural Land Commission.
10. Encourage all agricultural and farming operations to comply with the following regulations and guidelines as administered by the province:
 - environmental guidelines for farming practices as produced by the provincial ministries;
 - regulations pertaining to agricultural waste control; and
 - code of Agricultural Practice for Waste Management.
11. Not support farmland subdivisions in the ALR or agriculturally valuable land that produce any parcels smaller than 15 ha (38 acre) parcels.
12. Support ALR designation within the City's boundaries. Changes to the designation will be supported only if land is shown to have limited agricultural suitability by a qualified professional.
13. As it relates to exclusion applications of farm lands from the Agricultural Land Reserve (ALR), the City will support exclusions provided there is considerable benefit that can be provided

such as farmland dedications for community trust and/or upgrades to farming/ farmland infrastructure as part of exclusions.

Land Use Planning and Growth Management

14. Direct incompatible land uses away from land identified with high agricultural capability.
15. To adapt to climate change, a neighbourhood plan should include recommendations for the protection of lands that may be more suitable for different uses or less suitable to their intended use, such as those lands that may be potentially viable for agriculture.
16. Development on the urban edge should consider integration of urban and agricultural uses and activities through design and layout.
17. Incorporate within new design guidelines for neighbourhoods and/or buildings support for food and agricultural uses.
18. Neighborhood development projects that have significant green space should be encouraged to take an integrated agricultural urbanism approach.
19. Include within development review approvals and incorporate into a Sustainability Checklist that new multi-family residential development applications proposals demonstrate a sustainable food system approach for example providing growing space, locating close to farmers markets, and providing community kitchen amenities and/or allocation of funds toward such community amenities.
20. Support initiatives to develop infrastructure for food preparation, outdoor eating, and special event areas that enable people to build community and celebrate food.

Public Realm Management

21. Ensure the design of food and agricultural spaces so they are accessible to all people.
22. Encourage initiatives aimed at local food self-reliance such as community kitchens and community gardens.
23. Incorporate and advance Smart Growth on the Ground Concept Plan Projects and Plans, which includes year-round Farmer's Market and the development of a Food security / Food Systems plan supported with food banks, community gardens, and community kitchen.
24. Support community gardens in priority growth areas such as City endorsed revitalization areas. It will provide land and work with organizers for community gardens based on existing community interest and initiative, and will consider designating a staff liaison should be considered.

The City will support community organizers in the creation of a permanent indoor/outdoor farmer's market location downtown as identified within the Smart Growth on the Ground Concept Plan

25. Include community gardens as a permitted use within the Downtown Commercial zone and in public places (parks, right of ways, utility corridors, etc.).
26. Consider the use of City parks, open space, school yards, rights-of-way, City owned facilities, surplus properties, and redevelopment parcels at least in part for food production and distribution. ensuring it does not conflict with the Urban Interface Policies (human-bear conflict).

Corporate Practices

27. Through the development of an institutional procurement strategy, the City will commit to purchasing as much local food (fresh and processed) as possible for use in City facilities.
28. Consideration is given to include City-owned vacant or underutilized land to permit community gardens as an interim use and/or end use for vacant, underutilized or derelict sites as identified within the Smart Growth on the Ground Concept Plan for Public Works: Civic Improvements.
29. City Acquisition and Disposition Policy to consider incentives for new development proposals that realize the importance of food security and agriculture and incorporate into development plans.

Notes: