

Thank you for your interest in the Agriculture & Food Security Plan.

Purpose of the open house

1. Learn more about agriculture and food security in Saanich.
2. Share your input on what is working and not working.
3. Identify your priorities to improve the sustainability of Saanich food systems.

Objectives of the project

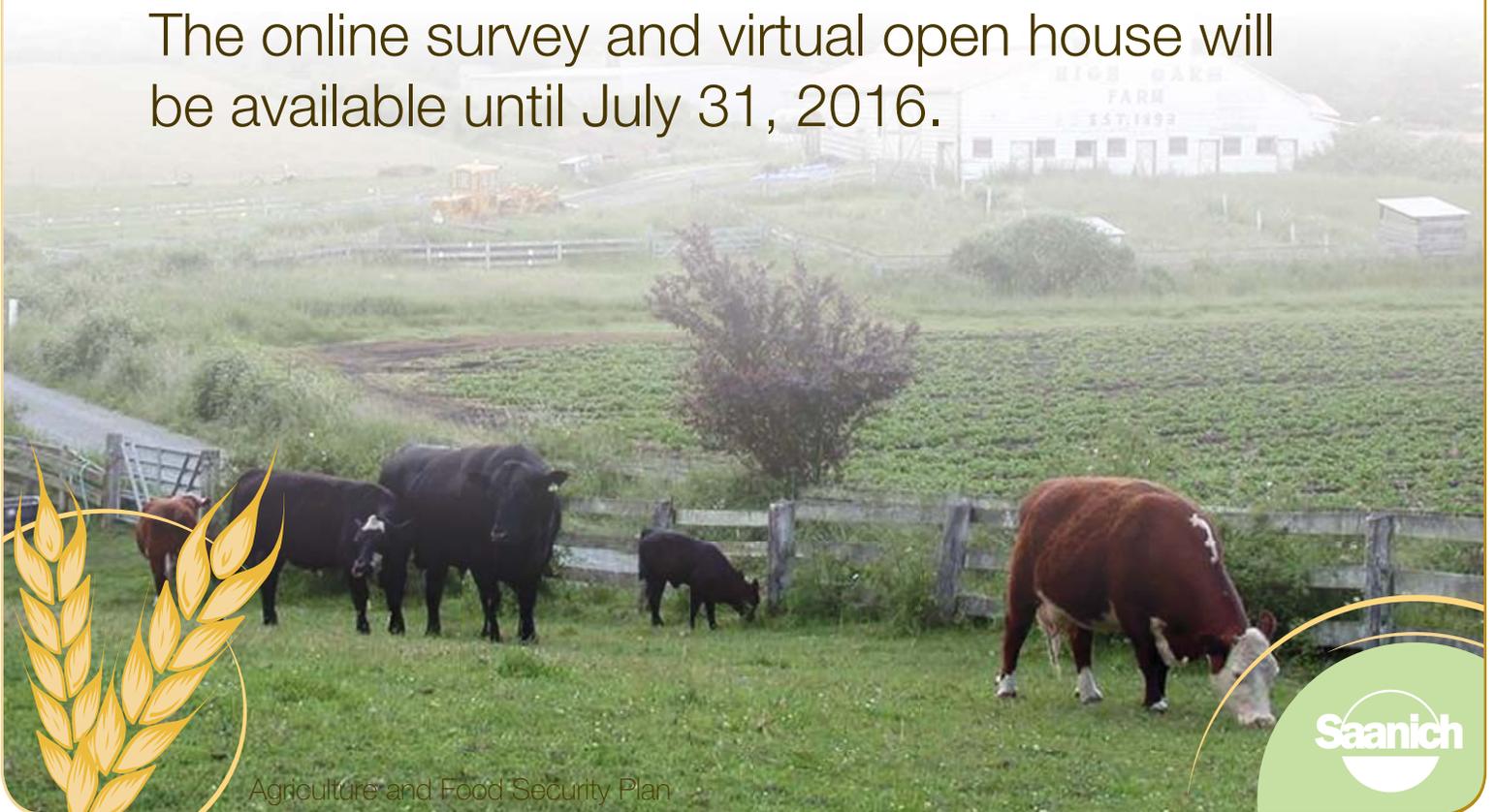
To develop a comprehensive plan and implementation strategy to enhance the viability and long term sustainability of Saanich agriculture and food systems.

Seek opportunities to establish partnerships in the community with individuals who have a working knowledge of local agriculture and food systems including the areas of: production; food processing; distribution; marketing; and recovery.

How to provide your input:

1. Complete a survey at the open house or online at www.saanich.ca/food.
2. Share your comments and ideas on the interactive display boards.
3. Email your comments to planning@saanich.ca.

The online survey and virtual open house will be available until July 31, 2016.



The Saanich Agriculture and Food Security Plan will cover a broad range of topics and will set clear priorities for future action.

The plan will explore ways to:

- support conventional agriculture;
- enhance food production in all areas of the municipality, including urban areas; and
- improve our food security.

Working definitions have been developed to help guide the project:

Agriculture:

Sustainable agriculture enhances environmental quality and the resource base on which it depends; provides for basic human food and fiber needs; is economically viable; and enhances the quality of life for farmers and society as a whole over the long term.



Food Security:

Food security exists when all people at all times have access to sufficient, safe, nutritious food to maintain a healthy and active life.



The project began in February 2016 and is expected to be completed in Spring 2017. A multidisciplinary Task Force of experts are serving as key advisors throughout the project.

Key points of community engagement are related to identifying issues and opportunities (April-July 2016), and reviewing potential actions and priorities (September-November 2016).



Phase 1

Jan. – Mar. 2016

Protect Initiation

- Form Task Force
- Draft Background Information Report



Phase 2

Apr. – Jul. 2016

Opportunities & Issues Identification

- Public engagement
- Develop Vision
- Explore community issues and opportunities



Phase 3

Aug. – Sept. 2016

Plan Development

- Develop draft policies and actions
- Public engagement

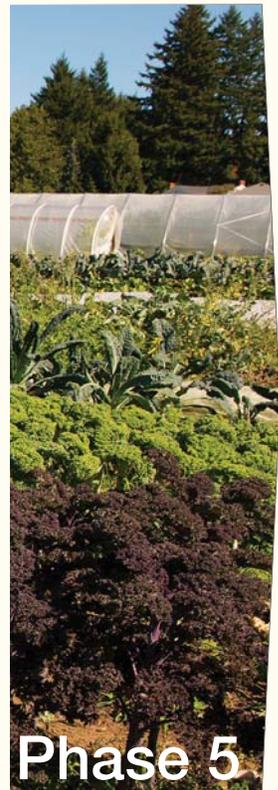


Phase 4

Oct. 2016 – Feb. 2017

Review & refine draft Plan

- Draft implementation strategy and monitoring & evaluation plan
- Public engagement on draft plan



Phase 5

Mar. – Apr. 2017

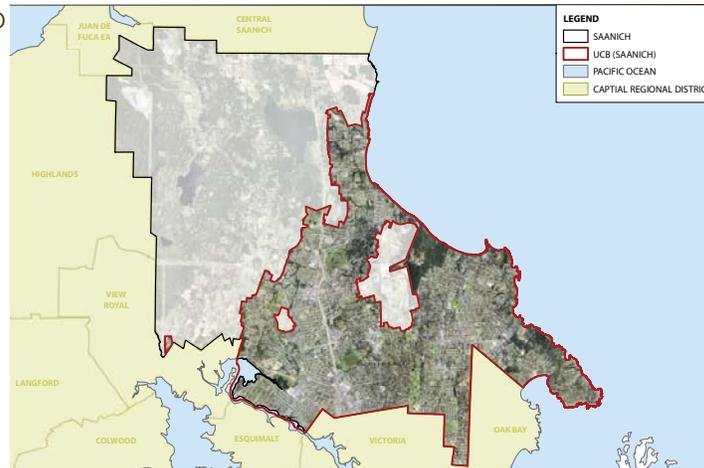
Final Plan Presentation

- Present final draft plan to Council



Saanich is a unique community with rural, agricultural, suburban and urban elements. Roughly half of the community is rural/agricultural. It is the Capital Regional District's largest municipality and shares the interests of both urban and rural communities in the region.

Regional Map



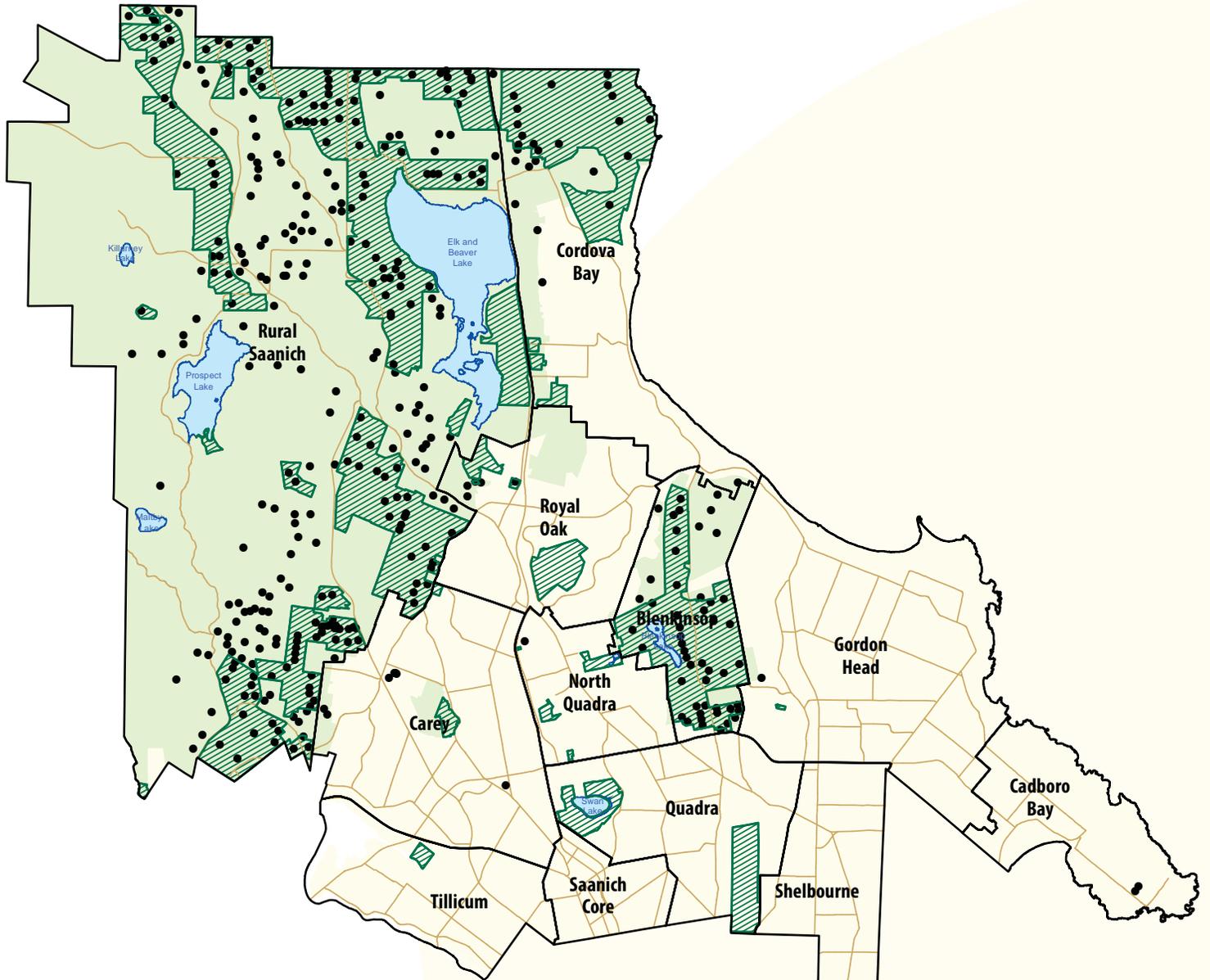
Two key tools have helped preserve farmland and protect rural lands from development pressure:

- The **Urban Containment Boundary (UCB)**, introduced in 1964, restricts development densities outside urban areas and also limits the provision of sewer and water service, outside the UCB.
- The **Agricultural Land Reserve**, introduced in 1974, is a Provincial land designation that restricts any non-farm use on properties with a high agricultural value.

Did you Know?

- Settlers in the late 1800s and early 1900s transformed the forested land of the Saanich Peninsula into one of the oldest agricultural settlements in British Columbia.
- Almost 20% of Saanich land is protected as Agriculture Land Reserve (ALR) but, not all farms in Saanich are necessarily located within the ALR.
- There are approximately 401 properties in Saanich that have farm status based on the BC Tax Assessment.
- The majority (67%) of farms in Saanich are under 10 acres (4.0 ha) in size.
- Agriculture capability of soils in Saanich are rated as high or very high, with minimal constraints to growing a variety of crops.
- There are 4 “community gardens” operating in Saanich.
 - At least 2 local farms supply food banks with fresh produce.
 - There are 2 community kitchen programs that support those who require help to access healthy food.
 - There are several farms that run “community-supported agriculture” (CSA) food box programs supplying residents with fresh produce on a weekly or bi-weekly basis.





LEGEND

Saanich Local Areas

Urban Containment Boundary (UCB)

Land Inside the UCB

Land Outside the UCB

Agricultural Land Reserve (ALR)

Land in the ALR

Farm Assessment

• 401 Farms received Farm classification status for tax purposes in 2015.

— Major Streets



Improving agriculture and food security in Saanich involves collaboration between all levels of government, farmers, non-profit organizations, residents and businesses. The Agriculture and Food Security Plan will focus on items that Saanich can influence.

Agriculture and food are regulated by several levels of government. As a result, local producers may be subject to municipal, regional, provincial and federal government policies.

Federal Role:

The Government of Canada plays an important role in regulating imports and exports and providing direction around food handling and safety. Other legislation, such as the Fisheries Act and the Species at Risk Act may influence agriculture indirectly.

Provincial Role:

The Province of BC primarily regulates agriculture through:

- Agricultural Land Commission (ALC) – who oversees the Agriculture Land Reserve (ALR); and
- Ministry of Agriculture; and
- Strategic initiatives on economic development, climate action and resource management.

Capital Regional District Role:

The Regional Growth Strategy is the primary tool that enables the regional government to support and enhance agriculture and food security in the Capital Region. The CRD is developing a Regional Food Systems Sub-strategy, which is anticipated to be completed this year.

Saanich Role:

The Local government has a role in enabling agriculture and food security primarily through:

- Policies set out in the Official Community Plan and Area Plans;
- Land use regulations described in the Zoning Bylaw;
- Initiatives such as the Climate Action Plan, the Climate Adaptation Plan, and the proposed Agriculture & Food Security Plan; and
- Partnerships with local non-governmental organizations.



Working with the Saanich Agriculture and Food Security Task Force, a vision statement has been developed for public consideration.

Draft Vision Statement

By 2030, Saanich is home to a thriving, accessible, and environmentally responsible food system, which is renowned for its vibrancy and resiliency. Our food is celebrated and recognized for its role in nourishing people, livelihoods, and relationships. Saanich is seen as a leader in advancing food security, including initiatives toward greater food self-sufficiency on the South Island, as well as dignified access to affordable, healthy food for all people. Ecosystems flourish as a result of responsible land and water stewardship on both urban and rural agricultural lands, which form the centre of our community. We protect and support our farmland and are proud to provide a vibrant agricultural legacy to future generations.

In Saanich, food security starts in our backyard!

What are your thoughts on the Vision Statement?

Add Sticky Notes Here

Please share your thoughts through our public survey or by using the sticky notes provided.



What do you think are the key challenges we face in order to improve the sustainability of local food production and become more food secure.

Place a dot next to what you believe to be the top issues and note any additional challenges not listed here.

Challenges

Impacts of climate change

Water (availability, cost, management)

Cost of local food is relatively high, imported food is cheaper

Access to local food is difficult

Not enough public education about local food and agriculture

Lack of education on healthy food choices

Lack of buffers between urban and rural edge leads to conflict

Not enough processing & storage available locally

Profitability of farming is too low

Farmland is too expensive due to speculation and urban growth pressures

Difficult to attract farmworkers to the area

ALR is being used for non-farm activities and is not being enforced

Lack of supportive policies and regulations

Others (please specify):



What do you think are the key opportunities to create more sustainable local food production and make Saanich more food secure.

Place a dot next to what you believe are the top opportunities and note any that may be missing.

Opportunities

Great soil & climate can be used to attract more producers

Water is available if planned for correctly

Education for realtors, developers, public around value of farmland

Ideas for making land available to new farmers (leases, cooperatives, incubator farms)

Agri-tourism potential (leverage “foodie” culture)

The ALR represents a strong urban rural boundary

Local processing & value-added infrastructure is available

A labour force is willing and able to work on local farms

Enforcement of activities allowed on ALR

Partnerships between the university, municipality, and non-profit food security organizations

Strong and supportive policies and regulations (OCP, zoning)

Others (please specify):



Community Inventory

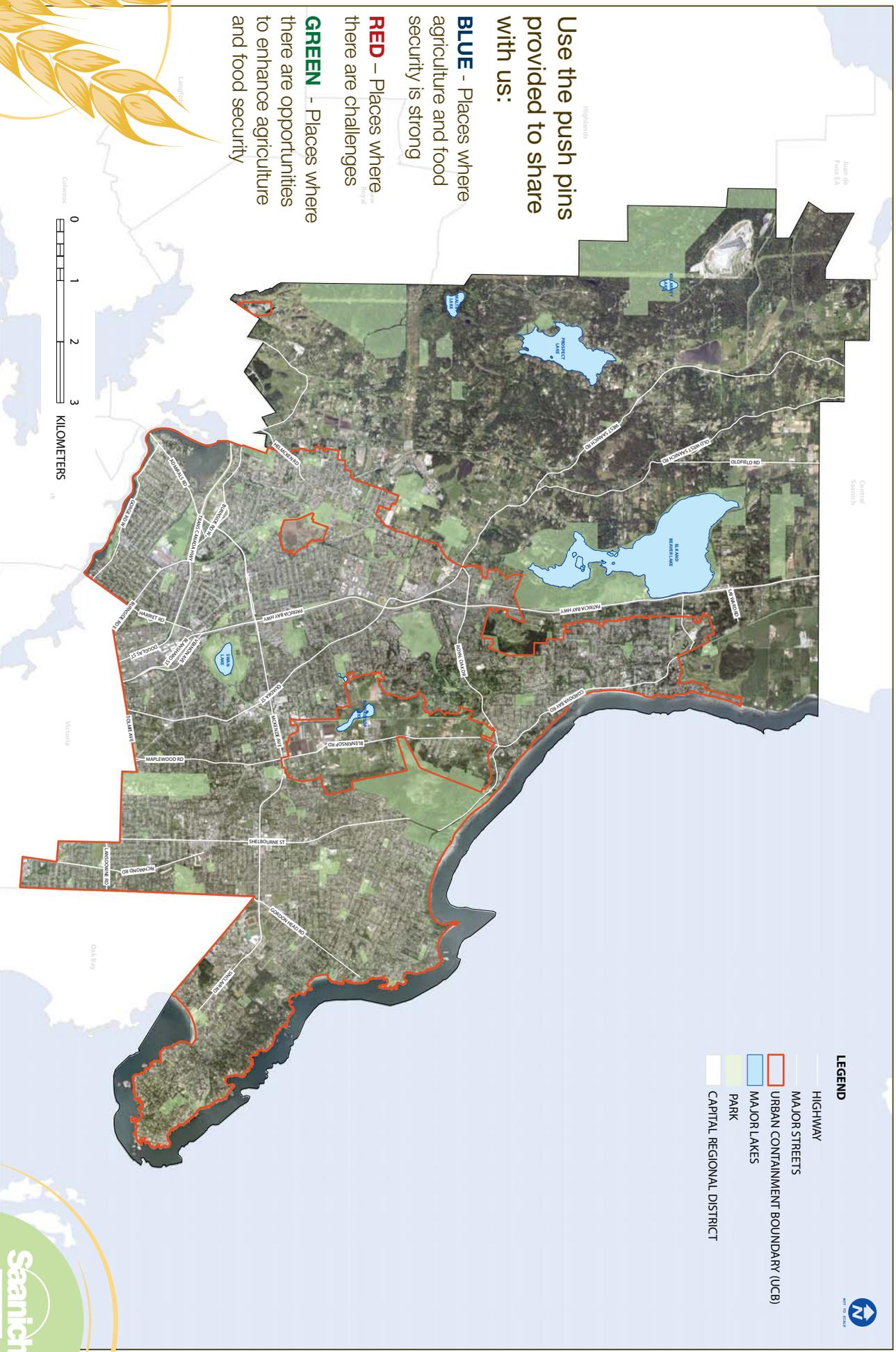
We want to know what places are important to you from a food systems perspective.

Use the push pins provided to share with us:

BLUE - Places where agriculture and food security is strong

RED - Places where there are challenges

GREEN - Places where there are opportunities to enhance agriculture and food security



If you would like to provide more detail, please use the attached forms to share your thoughts.



Thank you for attending the Open House and filling in the survey. Your input is important.

Online Survey and Virtual Open House

Available until July 31, 2016. Please visit saanich.ca/food

Additional Comments or Questions

Please contact Jane Evans: jane.evans@saanich.ca or 250-475-5494 ex.3401

Next Steps

Your feedback on issues and opportunities will be gathered until July 31, 2016. After that date, staff, the consulting team and the Task Force will work together to assess the feedback and explore policy options.

A draft plan will be developed and we will be seeking your input and feedback to make sure we have identified the right priorities and actions. That public engagement will take place in the Fall of this year.

