

# Agriculture and Food Security Plan

## Introduction



### Purpose of the Plan:

The purpose of the Agriculture and Food Security Plan (AFSP) is to provide the District with a coordinated approach for supporting agricultural activity and improving food security in Saanich. The Plan is being developed to provide clear direction for decisions and action over the next 10-15 years.

The purpose of today's open house is to provide you with the opportunity to review and provide feedback on the draft Agriculture and Food Security Plan.

### How to provide feedback

1. Complete a comment sheet at the open house.
2. Share your comments with a Saanich staff member.
3. Add your input on one of the interactive display boards.
4. Complete an online survey at [saanich.ca/food](http://saanich.ca/food).
5. Email your comments to [planning@saanich.ca](mailto:planning@saanich.ca).

Copies of the open house display boards will be available online at [saanich.ca/food](http://saanich.ca/food).

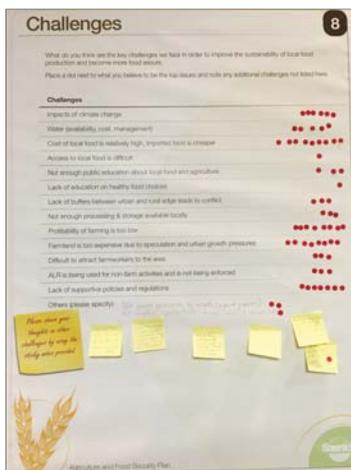


# Planning Process

The project began in February 2016 and is expected to be completed in early 2018. A Task Force of community experts is serving as a touchstone throughout the project. Key points of community engagement include:

- Five task force meetings
- Community survey on issues and opportunities completed by 289 community members and farmers
- Open House on issues and opportunities attended by 40 people
- Over 20 meetings with local community food stakeholders and organizations
- Pop-up displays at Saanich festivals and food-related businesses
- A community workshop to review potential actions attended by 70 people.
- Presentations and feedback sessions with Saanich Advisory Committees
- Promotion through social media, including Facebook and Twitter.

## Project Timeline

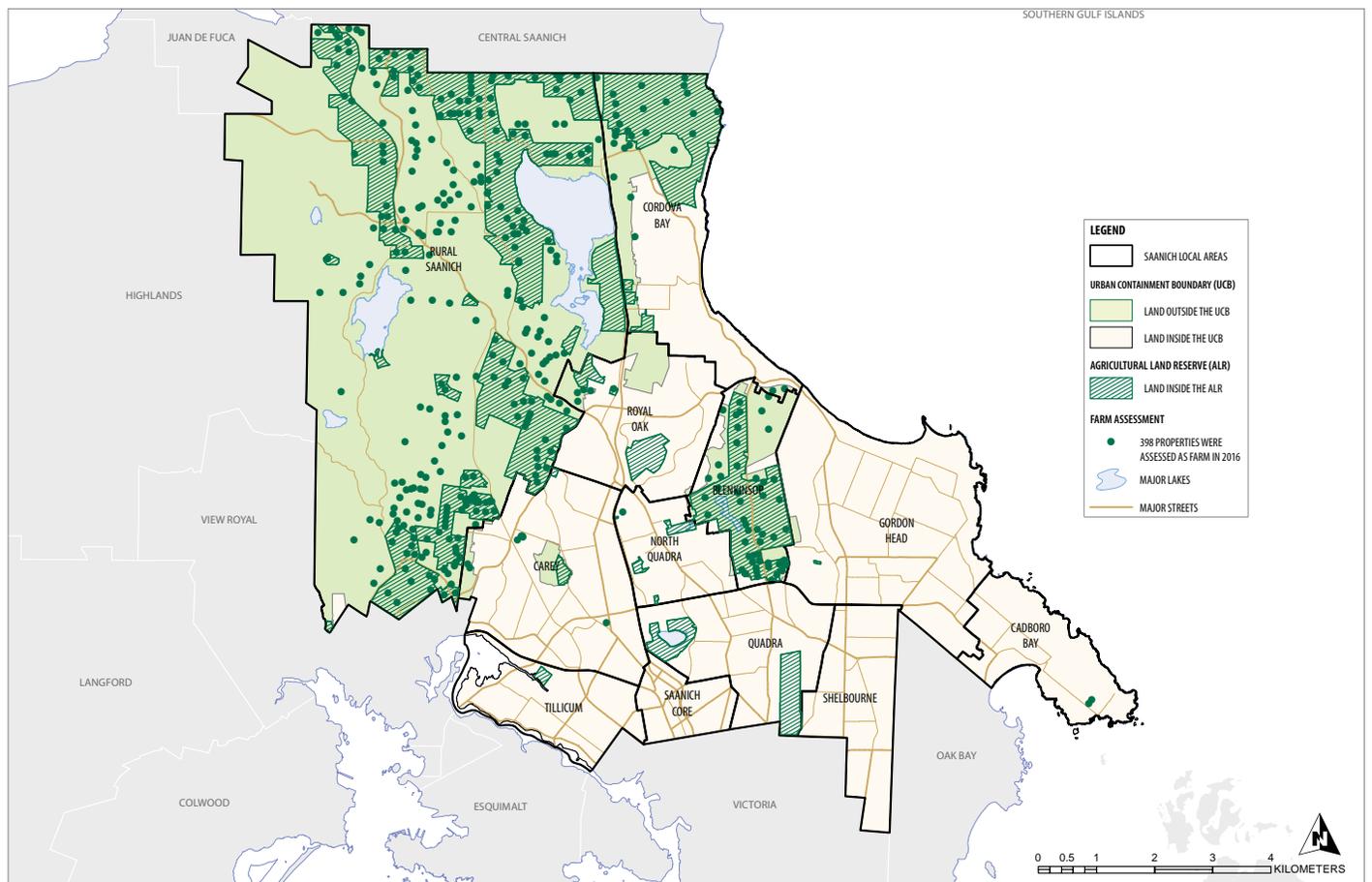


# Saanich Context

Saanich is the largest municipality in the Capital Regional District and has the unique characteristic of being roughly half rural and half urban.

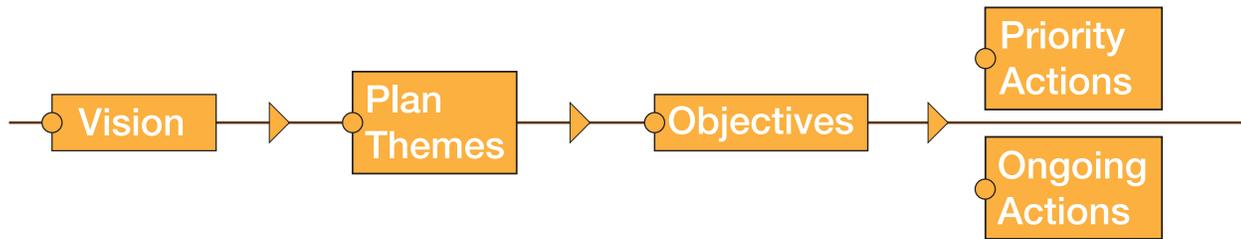
**Two key tools have helped preserve farmland and protect rural lands from development pressure:**

- The **Urban Containment Boundary**, introduced in 1964, restricts development densities outside urban areas and also limits the provision of sewer and water service.
- 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.



# From Vision to Action

## Plan Organization



## Vision Statement

**In Saanich, food security starts in our backyard.**

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.

## Key Themes

1. Provide a foundation to take action on agriculture and food security.
2. Connect gaps in the local food system to improve food self-sufficiency.
3. Strengthen awareness of the local food system.
4. Improve the interconnection between food production and the environment.
5. Manage land use to protect and support farmland.
6. Support multi-generational farmers and emerging farmers.
7. Expand opportunities for urban agriculture





# Theme #1

## Provide a Foundation to Take Action on Agriculture and Food Security



**Objectives:**

**1A:** Create Support and Structure within the District to Implement the Plan

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**1B:** Update Plans, Policies and Regulations to Advance Food System Priorities

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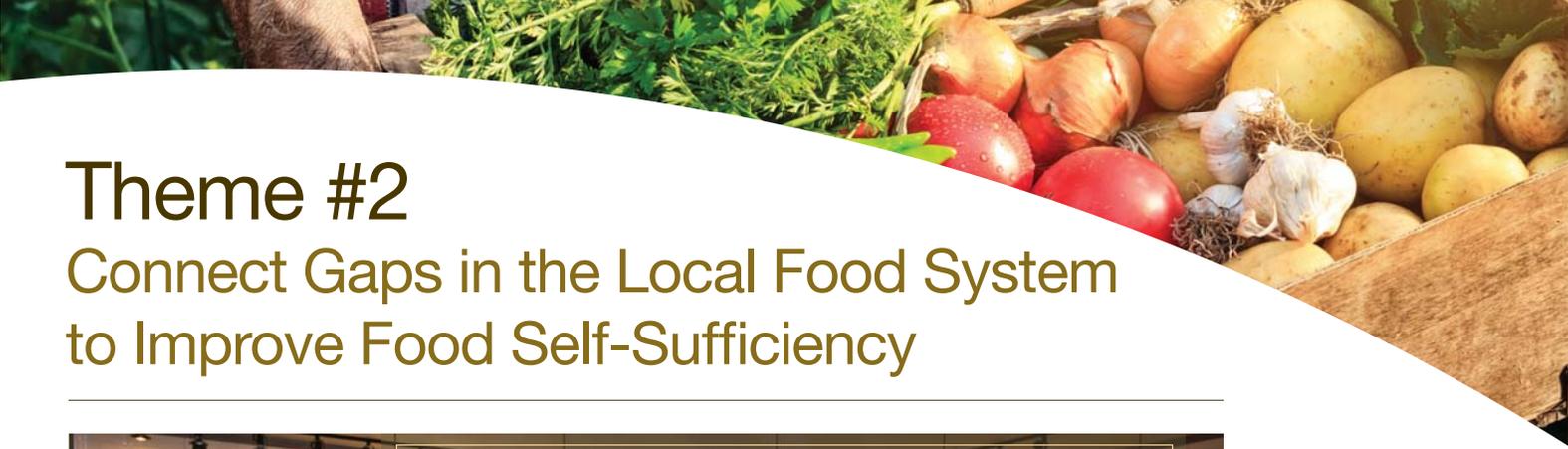
**1C:** Demonstrate Leadership through Key Municipal Initiatives

### Action Highlights - See Draft Plan for complete list.

- Provide staff resources to take a leadership role in implementing the Agriculture and Food Security Plan.
- Update Saanich Plans and Bylaws to support agriculture and food security objectives.
- Implement the concept plan for Panama flats to stimulate food production and bring new farmers onto the land.
- Explore a specific community grant category that focuses on local food security.

Please provide your feedback or comments:





# Theme #2

## Connect Gaps in the Local Food System to Improve Food Self-Sufficiency



### Objectives:

2A: Reduce Barriers to Local Food Access

2B: Enhance Community Capacity to Access Healthy Local Food

2C: Create Supporting Infrastructure

2D: Improve Composting and Waste Management Opportunities

### Action Highlights - See Draft Plan for complete list.

- Change regulations to support the establishment of farmers markets.
- Conduct a community food assessment to help understand gaps and needs.
- As part of Local Area Plan updates, explore opportunities to increase access to local food in residential areas.
- Continue to support community organizations and educational opportunities related to food security.
- Work with the CRD to develop long-term solutions to organic matter recycling that benefits agriculture and the environment.

Please provide your feedback or comments:





# Theme #3

## Strengthen Awareness of the Local Food System



**Objectives:**

**3A:** Celebrate Local Food

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**3B:** Strengthen Public Education on the Local Food System

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**3C:** Support Promotion of Local Farms and Products

### Action Highlights - See Draft Plan for complete list.

- Regularly report out on Saanich agriculture and food security each Census cycle (every 5 years).
- Support local education institutions and community organizations programs that relate to food system education and demonstration
- Encourage urban farming networks and explore opportunities for successful marketing and distribution techniques.

Please provide your feedback or comments:





# Theme #4

## Improve the Interconnection between Food Production & Environment



**Objectives:**

- 4A:** Minimize Wildlife Impacts and Address Noxious and Invasive Species Concerns
- 4B:** Provide Sustainable Water Management
- 4C:** Encourage Farm Practices that Integrate into Natural Ecosystems.
- 4D:** Encourage the Implementation of Climate Change Adaptation and Mitigation Measures for the Local Food System

### Action Highlights - See Draft Plan for complete list.

- Participate in CRD initiatives to reduce crop or farm damage due to deer, waterfowl, and other wildlife.
- Support farmers who establish sustainable farm practices that work with the natural ecosystem.
- Update Saanich Climate Action Plan and Climate Change Adaptation Plan to enhance the resiliency of the local food system.
- Support initiatives being led by First Nations to explore the potential for traditional shellfish and other ocean-based food harvesting.
- Promote the development of pollinator habitat in parks, farmland and private property.

Please provide your feedback or comments:





# Theme #5

## Manage Land Use to Support Farmland



**Objectives:**

**5A:** Maintain the Agricultural Integrity of Farmland

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**5B:** Reduce Conflicts between Farming and Non-Farming Areas

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**5C:** Improve Access to Information Regarding Saanich's Farmland

### Action Highlights - See Draft Plan for complete list.

- Explore opportunities to enhance business licence bylaw requirements that will support the protection of agricultural lands.
- Investigate the issue of non-farm uses on agriculture lands and develop options to address the protection of farmland.
- Develop a public educational awareness program to reduce potential conflicts between farmers and non-farm neighbours.
- Work with the CRD and the Ministry of Agriculture to conduct an Agricultural Land Use Inventory and Water Demand Model.

Please provide your feedback or comments:





# Theme #6

## Support Multi-Generational Farmers and Emerging Farmers



### Objectives:

- 6A: Support Succession Planning for Farmers
- 6B: Support an Increase in the Local Farm Economy
- 6C: Accommodate Farm Worker Housing
- 6D: Support Affordable Access to Farmland

### Action Highlights - See Draft Plan for complete list.

- Work with the CRD and the Ministry of Agriculture to support business development initiatives for the region's food and agriculture sector.
- Develop a policy for farmworker housing.
- Support the development of innovative farm operations to diversify farm production.
- Work with non-government organizations that help link new and existing farmers and land owners.
- Support the CRD's efforts to establish a Regional Food and Farmland Trust.

Please provide your feedback or comments:





# Theme #7

## Expand Opportunities for Urban Agriculture



### Objectives:

**7A:** Increase Food Production Opportunities on Public Land

**7B:** Expand Opportunities for Urban Agriculture

### Action Highlights - See Draft Plan for complete list.

- Prepare community garden guidelines to assist community groups who wish to initiate a food garden project.
- Create a strategy to promote the planting and harvesting of food producing trees and plants in public areas.
- Explore regulatory changes to broaden opportunities for small scale urban agriculture, including farm gate sales in urban areas.
- Review and update the Business License Bylaw to coordinate and support the special characteristics of agriculture businesses in urban areas.

Please provide your feedback or comments:

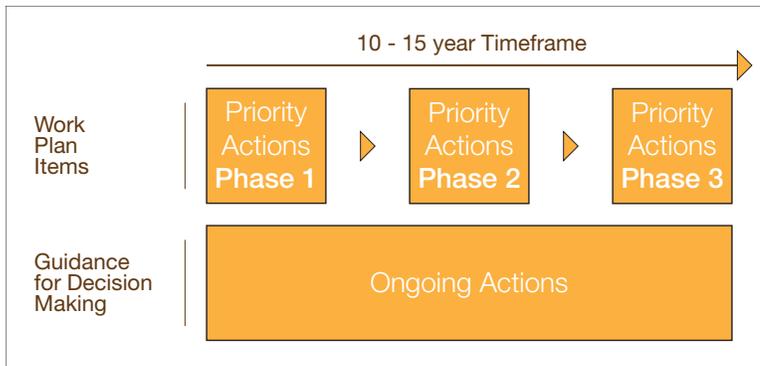


# Plan Implementation

## Implementation Strategy

The implementation strategy complements the broader Agriculture and Food Security Plan by helping provide clarity around how the Plan will be implemented. It sets priorities for action and helps to differentiate between priority actions that can be undertaken as specific projects and ongoing actions that will provide continual guidance for decision making. All actions in the Plan were developed in consultation with the Task Force and input from the public.

The Implementation of the Plan is organized through three phases of work with approximately 13 Priority Actions per phase. The Priority Actions are specific activities that can be undertaken over the next 10 –15 years to advance the vision and objectives of the Plan. The three phases of work would be undertaken sequentially, with some flexibility to adjust priorities according to funding available, partnerships or other opportunities that may arise.



## Monitoring and Evaluation Strategy

A Monitoring and Evaluation Strategy has been developed to assess the effectiveness of the Plan in enhancing agriculture and food security in the community. Twenty two indicators have been identified and will be reviewed regularly.

Theme	Indicator
<b>Theme 1: Provide a foundation to take action</b>	Number of AFSP Phase 1, 2 and 3 priority actions implemented
	Number of Plans, Bylaws or Policies updated to incorporate AFSP objectives
<b>Theme 2: Improve self-sufficiency</b>	Number of business licenses for local food retailers
	Number of agriculture and food education and/or networking programs in Saanich. (eg. Food growing courses, food hubs, kitchen programs, farmer networks)
	Organics diverted from waste stream to composting
<b>Theme 3: Strengthen awareness</b>	Number of farms with community sponsored agriculture food box programs (CSA).
	Number of local (& regional) food related festivals / events in Saanich
<b>Theme 4: Connect food production and the environment</b>	% Farms report using farm gate sales, stands, kiosks, U-pick
	Number of organic farms in Saanich.
	Hectares of land in ALR with environmental covenants

Theme	Indicator
<b>Theme 5: Manage land use to support farm land</b>	Hectares of land in Saanich within the ALR
	An Agricultural Land Use Inventory has been completed.
<b>Theme 6: Support multi-generational and new farmers</b>	number of properties qualifying for Farm tax status
	Average age of farmer
	Average profit rate for farmers (2016)
	Number of farms
<b>Theme 7: Expand opportunities for urban agriculture</b>	Number of farm operators
	Number of farms with succession planning
	Number of community gardens
	Number of garden plots (size ranges 100 sqft to 100 sqft)
	number of opportunities to sell produce in urban areas (e.g. farm stands, food trucks, farm markets)
	Number of Farmers Markets within Saanich



# Priorities for Action

Thirteen Actions have been identified as the top short-term priorities to implement the AFSP based on community input, previous Council direction and alignment opportunities. An additional 25 priority actions have also been identified for the 2nd and 3rd phases of implementation. (See *Handout*)

**Please identify your top three priorities for implementation.**

Action	Top 3 Priorities
1.1 Provide staff resources to take a leadership role in the implementation of the AFSP.	
1.2 Establish a Saanich Agriculture and Food Servicing Advisory Committee, or delegate an existing committee to assist in Plan Implementation.	
1.8 Implement the Council-approved concept plan for Panama Flats.	
2.2 Explore regulatory changes that support the establishment of farmers markets.	
2.4 Through the Local Area Plan update process, explore opportunities to increase access to local food.	
3.12 Review the Zoning Bylaw to ensure that new provincial regulations regarding agri-tourism are addressed.	
4.14 Update the Saanich Climate Adaptation Plan and Climate Action Plan to continue and expand on actions that enhance the resiliency of the local food system.	
5.2 Explore opportunities to enhance business licence bylaw requirements to support the protection of agriculture lands.	
5.4 Investigate the issue of non-farm use on agriculture lands and develop options to address the protection of farmland.	
5.13 Conduct an Agricultural Land Use Inventory.	
6.8 Develop a policy for farmworker housing.	
6.10 Support the CRD in efforts to establish a regional food and farmland trust.	
7.3 Update the Boulevard Management Bylaw to allow edible landscaping and pollinator habitat on boulevards.	
Other:	
Other:	
Other:	



# Next Steps

Thank you for attending the Saanich Agriculture and Food Security Open House. Your input is important.

## What Happens Next:

- Public input from today's open house and the AFSP online survey will be used to revise the draft Plan.
- Staff will check in with key community and internal stakeholders as needed.
- Results from public input will be available online at [Saanich.ca/food](http://Saanich.ca/food).
- The completed draft Plan will be presented to Saanich Council for their consideration for approval in early 2018.

## Please visit [Saanich.ca/food](http://Saanich.ca/food) to:

- Complete the online survey. Survey will be open until December 15, 2017.
- Review the virtual open house.
- Send additional comments on the draft Plan.

## For more information please contact

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