

PUBLIC ENGAGEMENT STRATEGY

District of Saanich Agriculture and Food Security Plan
March 24, 2016

The Public Engagement Strategy (PES) has been developed to effectively and collaboratively engage the Saanich community and key stakeholders in the *Agriculture and Food Security Plan (AFSP)* process.

The PES presents a commitment to undertake a citizen engagement process in the development and delivery of the *Agriculture and Food Security Plan*. As per the District of Saanich's *Public Participation Policy*, the District believes that decisions are improved by engaging citizens and other stakeholder groups. The District is committed to:

- undertaking public participation on issues that affect citizen's lives and their District.
- to reporting back to citizens on how their views have been considered in the decision making process and
- to a transparent and inclusive processes that is supported by factual information, are inclusive of the diversity of Saanich and are within the District's ability to finance and resource.

This strategy has been developed using the International Association of Public Participation (IAP2)'s core values and principles of Community Based Social Marketing (CBSM).

ENGAGEMENT GOALS

The development of the AFSP will involve working with a variety of community members and stakeholders. The following indicates how public engagement activities will relate to the IAP2 spectrum.

- **Inform:** To provide the public and key stakeholders with balanced and objective information to assist them in understanding the problems, alternatives, opportunities, and/or solutions facing agriculture and food security in Saanich;
- **Consult:** To obtain feedback and input from the public and key stakeholders on the analysis, alternatives, and/or decisions through the AFSP process;
- **Involve:** To work closely with the public and key stakeholders throughout the AFSP process to ensure concerns and aspirations are consistently understood and considered;
- **Collaborate:** To partner with the public and key stakeholders throughout the AFSP process on each aspect of the plan to find common ground and identify preferred solutions; and

GUIDING PRINCIPLES FOR ENGAGEMENT

The following principles, as outlined in the District's *Public Participation Policy*, will guide engagement activities conducted by the District:

- **Inclusiveness:** The District will endeavor to involve and enable the participation of all interested parties across the full range of our diverse population.
- **Transparency:** The District will endeavor to ensure decision processes, procedures and constraints are understood and followed. The purpose and limitations on public participation will be made clear. Respective roles and responsibilities will be clearly communicated. Feedback will be provided on what stakeholders said and how their opinion was considered by decision makers.
- **Access:** The District will ensure that accurate information is available to participants in a timely manner.
- **Respect:** Public participation requires the mutual respect of all participants. The District will listen with an open mind and show consideration and value for another person's point of view.
- **Honesty:** In conducting public participation the District will demonstrate our core value of honesty; we will tell the truth, follow through on commitments and act in a trustworthy manner.

DESIRED ENGAGEMENT OUTCOMES

- Effectively engage the Saanich community and key stakeholders to provide input to the AFSP;
- Advertise and notify the community on ways to become involved in the process and engagement events;
- Obtain media coverage for special events by issuing press releases at key points in the process;
- Allow opportunities for the Saanich community and key stakeholders to take ownership over the AFSP; and
- Gain support, acceptance, and “buy-in” for the AFSP and its implementation.

KEY STAKEHOLDERS

Engagement will include activities to connect with the general public, but also approaches that focus on primary stakeholders throughout the process. These stakeholders may include:

- Representatives from local farms—including livestock operations, dairies, greenhouses, nurseries, small-scale mixed vegetable operations, and others;
- Representatives with an interest in local food processing and distribution (e.g. Victoria Community Food Hub Society, local members of BC Food Processors Association, Sysco Victoria, and others);
- Peninsula and Area Advisory Commission;
- Healthy Saanich Advisory Committee;
- Local non-profits such as: LifeCycles, CR-Fair, Greater Victoria Compost Education Centre, , Mustard Seed, Cool Aid Society, Victoria Native Friendship Centre, Island Chefs’ Collaborative, and others;
- Community associations;
- Chambers of Commerce;
- Island Health;
- Academic institutions such as: Camosun College, Gaia College, Horticulture Centre of the Pacific, University of Victoria;
- Small and large grocers/retailers such as: Root Cellar Grocery, Share Organics, Red Barn, Thrifty Foods, Save-On Foods, LifeStyles Market, and others;
- Nursery stores and compost providers;
- Gardening/landscaping businesses emphasizing food security (e.g. Hatchet and Seed, Edible Living Landscapes);
- Local and regional government including First Nations;
- Local Schools interested in food security and food growing; and
- Provincial government agencies: Ministry of Agriculture, Agricultural Land Commission, others.

ENGAGEMENT APPROACHES

1. TASK FORCE

The Task Force is expected to act as a touchstone throughout the planning process, providing guidance and advice at key junctures in the process. The Task Force members will include a mix of representatives from the farming community, NGOs, Island Health, food security groups, and interested citizens. The Task Force will: provide input on vision, goals, and priorities; identify approaches to help engage the community the process; provide feedback on draft policy directions; and vet the draft plan before it is presented to the public. There will be five Task Force meetings to provide project updates, to develop a strong rapport with Task Force members, and to ensure that their feedback is incorporated into all deliverables. The

format of the Task Force meetings will take an interactive discussion approach. Each participant will receive background information prior to each meeting.

- Task Force meeting #1: Introduction to the AFSP, scoping and review of public engagement strategy.
- Task Force meeting #2: Vision statement, goals, and objectives for the AFSP.
- Task Force meeting #3: Identification of issues and opportunities.
- Task Force meeting #4: Review and refine proposed priority issues and recommended actions.
- Task Force meeting #5: Feedback on the draft AFSP.

2. MEDIA, PRINT, AND ON-LINE COMPONENTS

The consultant team will assist District staff in creating media content with all relevant materials for engagement events (postcards, posters, invitations), workshop notes (including graphic facilitation visuals), and other information useful to the community throughout the project. Media interviews and media briefings/columns/articles will be drafted for local media outlets at key points along the project timeline.

Website and social media content may also be produced for the District. This may include a project page hosted by the District, and promotion through Facebook and Twitter to help build a following and keep people, including staff and directors, up to date as much as possible. Digital media is an excellent way for people to engage in quick conversations across the region.

3. OPEN HOUSES OR SIMILAR EVENTS

Three open houses (or similar events) will be conducted throughout the AFSP process. Feedback from the Task Force will help inform the design of events.

First Open House - will be conducted in April 2016 in order to launch the AFSP, help refine the vision statement, and identify priority issues and opportunities. The overall timeline for the AFSP will be presented. The first open house will pose the questions “Where are we now?” and “Where are we going?”. Facilitated exercises will help to achieve these goals.

Second Open House - will be held in September 2016 in order to gain feedback on key themes and recommended actions. A short presentation will be conducted followed by a facilitated discussion. The key themes and proposed associated actions will be displayed around the venue. Attendees will be given the opportunity to provide feedback on the overall themes, individual recommendations, priority levels, key players, and resources required for the action to succeed. The intent of this second open house is to spark ideas for implementation of the AFSP.

Third open house - will be held in February 2017 in order to reveal the draft AFSP and provide a final opportunity for input. A presentation of the draft AFSP will be followed by a world café style roundtable discussion that will gain feedback on the recommendations, implementation plan, monitoring strategy, and the evaluation plan.

At all open houses an “exit survey” will be distributed for the participants to evaluate the event and provide an opportunity for regarding agricultural-related issues. Efforts will also be made to ensure that locally-sourced refreshments are served.

The option to host an alternative event is a possibility. This may be especially relevant for Open House #1, which will serve to introduce the AFSP process to the community. Instead of an Open House, the consulting team could attend a pre-existing event and information could be distributed to participants at this alternative event. This option may be further explored with the District.

4. ONLINE SURVEY

An electronic survey will be developed by the consultant with input from District staff and the Task Force to solicit feedback from individuals and businesses involved in the food system and the general public on a proposed vision for the plan and potential economic/policy opportunities, alternatives, and strategies. The survey will be posted online using the FluidSurveys platform (a web content management system). A postcard will also be developed, printed, and distributed to guide people to the online survey. A member of the consulting team and/or District staff (as appropriate) will attend local events to distribute the postcards and speak to people directly about the online survey. Postcards/ posters could be prominently displayed at public locations such as local library branches and recreation centres to help direct attention toward the survey. Local businesses and organizations with an interest in food security (e.g. key stakeholders listed above) could also be invited to include postcards in prominent areas to engage their customers/members.

TIMING

Engagement Action	Date
Meetings with District (semi-monthly)	Ongoing
Stakeholder identification	Jan – Feb 2016
Print media and online social media support	Ongoing
Task Force Meetings (x5)	Feb 2016 March 2016 April 2016 September 2016 January 2017
Public Open Houses (x3)	April 2016 September 2016 February 2017
Online Survey	April to May 2016

MATERIALS AND TOOLS

- Press Releases with quotes
- Posters for Open Houses
- PowerPoint presentations at Open Houses
- Maps printed for display at Open Houses
- Postcards for public distribution to advertise the online survey
- Advertisements (PSAs) in local papers for Open Houses
- Open House summary on outcomes

MEDIA OUTLETS

- Radio and Television (local channels such as Chek news, CBC's All Points West)
- Print (local newspapers): Victoria Times Colonist, Saanich News, EAT Magazine, and others
- Web Media: District of Saanich website, Facebook, Twitter

ENGAGEMENT TARGETS

Audience	Engagement Objective	Key Discussion Points	Channels	Timing
General public	<p>To bring awareness of the history, extent, importance and economic potential of agricultural activity in Saanich.</p> <p>Target level of engagement: Educate, inform, consult.</p>	<p>How can we help our hard working local farmers be more competitive?</p> <p>How can we encourage new and young farmers in our region?</p> <p>Where do you source local food? How can we help bring local food to local people?</p> <p>How can we encourage more local food production and awareness in urban areas?</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Media (print and online) • Survey • Open Houses 	At all points throughout the development of the AFSP
Task Force	<p>The Task Force will provide specialist advice to help guide the process.</p> <p>Target level of engagement: Advise, guide, inform, consult, involve, collaborate.</p>	<p>What is your vision for agriculture and food security in Saanich?</p> <p>What needs to be done to support agriculture and food security in Saanich?</p> <p>What are the most effective ways we can engage the public to identify issues and opportunities?</p> <p>Does the content of the Plan reflect what we heard in engagement?</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Meetings • Emails • Survey • Open Houses • Community Events 	Check-in meetings at critical times throughout the AFSP process
<p>Local Farmers:</p> <p>Individual farms, Young Agrarians, City Harvest, Halliburton Farm, GTUFF, Galey's, Mitchel's, Jack Marr.</p>	<p>To gain input and feedback on what is working, what isn't and how to improve the current situation; and to solicit ideas for potential recommended actions.</p> <p>Target level of engagement: Input & feedback, issues identification, ideas & inspiration, inform, consult, involve, collaborate, learn from.</p>	<p>How can we encourage more new and young farmers to the region?</p> <p>Where, how and to whom do you sell your products?</p> <p>How can we help grow your sales and market your products?</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Media (print and online) • Interviews and conversations • Survey • Open Houses • Emails • Community events 	At all points throughout the development of the AAP

Audience	Engagement Objective	Key Discussion Points	Channels	Timing
<p>Food and Agriculture-related non-profit organizations (NGOs):</p> <p>CRFAIR, LifeCycles, Raincoast Conservation Foundation, Mustard Seed, Saanich Neighbourhood House, Food Share Network, Coalition of Neighbourhood Houses, Seachange Conservation Society; Council of Canadians; Food Not Bombs; Victoria Foundation (Vital Signs), Give Food Get Food website.</p>	<p>To solicit ideas for key priorities and recommended actions.</p> <p>Target level of engagement: ideas & inspiration, identify issues and opportunities, inform, consult, involve, collaborate, provide input and feedback.</p>	<p>Many local community groups and organizations have a role in helping reach greater food self-sufficiency and accessibility in the community. What's yours?</p> <p>What role can local organizations play in encouraging new and young farmers onto the land? How can they be supported in this role?</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Media (print and online) • Survey • Emails • Open Houses • Community events 	<p>At all points throughout the development of the AFSP</p>
<p>Retailers and Health Food Stores:</p> <p>Local retailers, farm stands, Victoria Butchers Pepper's Food, Root Cellar Market, Thrifty's, Red Barn.</p>	<p>To solicit ideas for key priorities and recommended actions.</p> <p>Target level of engagement: Inform; consult; involve; collaborate where possible.</p>	<p>Retailers have a significant role in helping improve access to local food. What's yours?</p> <p>What would you like to see from the local food system in terms of product type and supply?</p> <p>How can we encourage more purchasing of local products?</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Online webpages • Social Media • Newspapers and other print media • Radio • Open houses 	<p>At all points throughout the development of the AFSP</p>
<p>Education Partners:</p> <p>Local school district, Craigflower Elementary, Campus View, higher education institutions (Camosun College, University of Victoria), curriculum experts.</p>	<p>To solicit ideas for key priorities and recommended actions.</p> <p>Target level of engagement: Inform; consult; involve; collaborate where possible.</p>	<p>Educators have an important role to play in providing information and hands-on access to food and agricultural knowledge through classroom based and experiential knowledge.</p> <p>What projects and initiatives is your institution or agency involved with in regards to food and agriculture?</p> <p>What types of food and agriculture-related educational programs would you like to see supported by local governments?</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Online webpages • Social Media • Newspapers and other print media • Radio • Open houses 	

Audience	Engagement Objective	Key Discussion Points	Channels	Timing
Municipal and Regional Partners: CRD, Central Saanich, North Saanich, City of Victoria. Municipality of View Royal, Peninsula and Area Agricultural Commission (PAAC), Agriculture and Agri-Food Canada	To encourage participation in the AFSP process; and To remain consistent on regulatory policies. Target level of engagement: Inform; consult; involve; collaborate	All local governments have a role in helping improve food self-sufficiency. What policy and regulatory changes are needed to encourage production of local food? What regulations and policies can help get new and young farmers onto the land?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Emails • Meetings • Presentations 	At all points throughout the development of the AFSP
First Nations: Esquimalt, Songhees, Tsartlip, Tsawout.	To gain support for the AFSP process; and To gain feedback on the AFSP and raise any potential red flags. Target level of engagement: Government to Government. Inform; consult; involve and collaborate depending on the level of involvement desired by First Nation	All local governments have a role in helping improve local food self-sufficiency. What is currently happening in the region? What programs could/should be expanded or added?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Government to government meetings and other forms of communications • Survey • Open Houses • Community events 	At all points throughout the development of the AFSP
Island Health: VIHA Island Food Hubs, Community Dieticians, Medical Health Officers, Health Care Food Providers.	To gain support for the AFSP process; and To gain feedback on the AFSP and raise any potential red flags. Target level of engagement: Input and feedback; inform; consult; involve; collaborate where necessary	Island Health has a unique role in increasing local food self-sufficiency. What programs are already in existence? What could be expanded or added?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Email • Meetings • Task Force • Phone • Presentations 	At all points throughout the development of the AFSP
Provincial Authorities: Ministry of Agriculture; Agricultural Land Commission; Ministry of Health; Provincial Health Services Association (PHSA), BC Institute of Agrologists, BC Agriculture Council.	To gain support for the ASFP process; To provide guidance on the issue of bylaw standards and provincial level policies. To gain feedback on the AFSP and raise any potential red flags. Target level of engagement: support, guidance, input and feedback, inform, consult.	This process needs your help and ideas to overcome a few key barriers to realize potential benefits. What are the current challenges for agriculture in Saanich / the CRD? What initiatives could be undertaken / regulatory changes could be undertaken to improve conditions?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Email • Meetings • Interviews • Phone calls 	At all points throughout the development of the AFSP
Audience	Engagement Objective	Key Discussion Points	Channels	Timing
Federal Authorities: Canadian Food Inspection Agency (CFIA), Fisheries and Oceans Canada.	To gain support for the ASFP process; and To gain feedback on the ASFP and raise any potential red flags. Target level of engagement: Inform; consult	This process needs your help and ideas to overcome a few key barriers to realize potential benefits.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Email • Meetings • Interviews • Phone calls 	At all points throughout the development of the AFSP