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The Corporation of the District of Saanich

Report

To: Mayor and Council
From: Sharon Hvozanski, Director of Planning
Date: July 31, 2018
Subject: Agriculture and Food Security Plan
File: 2110-55

RECOMMENDATION

That Council:

1. Endorse the Agriculture and Food Security Plan (Attachment A); and,
2. Allocate \$150,000 from the Council Contingency for Strategic Initiatives to support implementation.

PURPOSE

The purpose of this report is to:

- Provide a summary of the process used for developing the draft Agriculture and Food Security Plan;
- Provide an overview of the plan content and action items;
- Seek Council endorsement of the Plan; and
- Seek Council direction on resourcing implementation of the Plan.

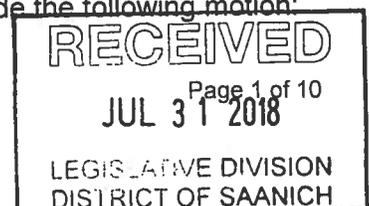
DISCUSSION

Council Direction

In October 2011, Council considered a report from Councillor Murdock and the late Councillor Derman and made the following motion:

"That Council forward the Joint Report from Councillors Derman and Murdock to Planning staff with direction to draft terms of reference for a Local Agriculture and Food Security task force with a mandate to create a draft Local Agriculture and Food Security Policy for Saanich."

In October 2014, staff presented a report to Council regarding a Terms of Reference for the Agriculture and Food Security Task Force. At that meeting Council made the following motion:



“That it be recommended that:

1. The Terms of Reference for the Agriculture and Food Security Task Force be endorsed; and
2. A consultant be hired through the Planning Department to coordinate the Agriculture and Food Security Task Force and draft an Agriculture and Food Security Plan.”

Task Force

As directed by Council, a project task force was established in early 2016. The purpose of the Task Force was to support and provide expertise and advice on the development of a comprehensive local Agriculture and Food Security Plan for Saanich.

The Task Force is made up of community members and local agriculture and food security experts who collaborated with staff and the project consultant during the development of the Plan. The Task Force was a key component at each phase of the planning process.

Planning Process and Public Engagement

The Plan was developed through five phases of work (Figure 1). The Task Force participated in development and review at every phase of the process. Public engagement throughout the project provided input on key issues, opportunities and priorities. The stakeholder and public engagement process during the project was based on an engagement strategy, developed with assistance from the Task Force, to effectively and collaboratively connect with the community and stakeholders. A variety of public engagement tools were used. The accompanying Engagement Summary (see Attachment B) provides details of these activities.

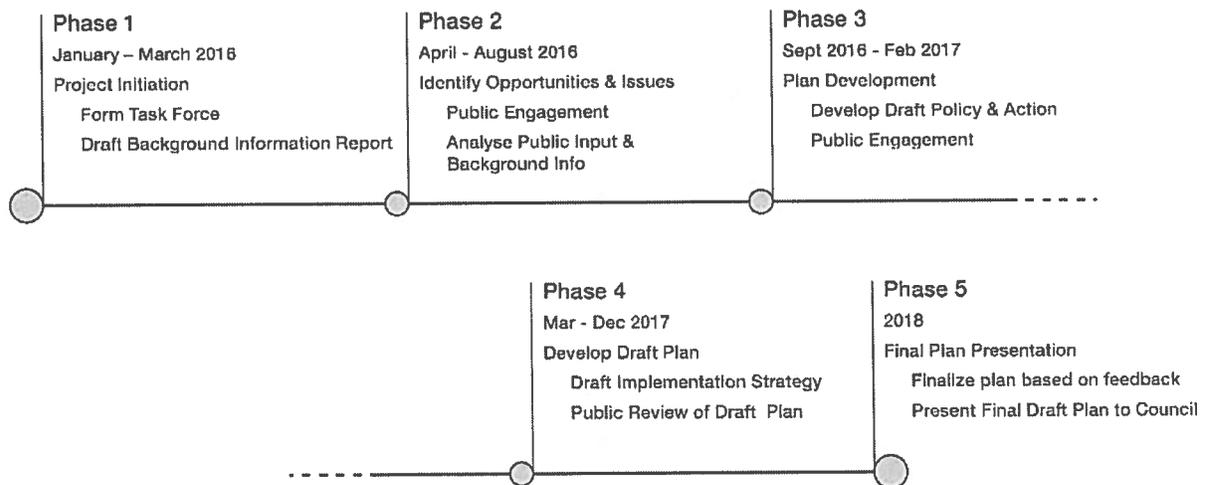


Figure 1: Agriculture and Food Security Plan - Planning Process

Included below is a description of planning phases and key activities:

1. Project Initiation:

The Agriculture and Food Security Plan Task Force was assembled in February 2016. The Task Force members were key players in the development of the draft Plan, providing guidance and a touchstone at each phase of the project.

Upland Agriculture Consulting was hired to manage the planning process, facilitate the Task Force and produce the Plan in consultation with staff. The first steps by the consultant included preparation of a background report and public engagement strategy.

2. Opportunities and Issues Identification

A Strengths Weaknesses Opportunities and Threats (SWOT) analysis was conducted during this phase. The SWOT analyses began at a Task Force meeting followed by stakeholder and public discussions to identify issues and opportunities for improving the local food system. Stakeholders included: Committees of Council; rural and urban farmers; food access organizations; community garden organizers; food retailers and distributors; and community associations. Staff and the consultant met with the Task Force, attended committee meetings and community events, hosted an open house and pop-up displays and released a community survey in an effort to gather input and identify opportunities and issues. The Peninsula and Area Agriculture Commission provided significant guidance and input to development of the issues and opportunities. A vision statement and key themes were developed to reflect the opportunities and challenges that were heard through the public engagement in this phase.

3. Plan Development (Objectives and Actions)

Based on public input and research findings, potential objectives and actions that the District of Saanich could undertake were developed in order to meet the key themes. Two types of actions were developed, "priority actions" and "ongoing actions". The priority actions are specific and implementable tasks that relate back to the overall Vision for the Agriculture and Food Security Plan. The Task Force reviewed and discussed objectives and actions prior to public review. A community workshop and open house was held in January 2017 to discuss and gather input on the draft objectives and recommended actions. Input was also gathered through committee and stakeholder meetings and staff consultation.

4. Drafting the Plan

The draft objectives and actions were revised based on input from the Task Force, the public, stakeholders and staff. An implementation strategy was drafted to provide a framework for accomplishing the actions and a monitoring and evaluation strategy was prepared to provide a method of assessing the effectiveness of implementation. These components were reviewed by the Task Force and presented at an open house and at pop-up events in the community in November 2017. A community survey was also available for the public to provide their input at this stage.

5. Presentation of draft Plan to Council

Changes to the Plan were made based on feedback on the draft. The proposed Plan is now being presented to Council for consideration for endorsement.

Plan Content

The purpose of the Agriculture and Food Security Plan (AFSP) is to provide the District with a coordinated approach for supporting agriculture and improving food security in Saanich over the

next 10 to 15 years. It provides a roadmap for achieving Official Community Plan (OCP) priorities and outlines a comprehensive approach to enhance the viability and long term sustainability of Saanich agriculture and food security.

The AFSP focusses on themes, objectives and actions that the municipality and partners can work on to enhance agriculture and improve food security in the community. The implementation strategy of the document sets up phased priorities for action. A monitoring and evaluation strategy is provided to help evaluate the progress of the AFSP. Key components of the AFSP include:

- A vision statement;
- Seven themes;
- Objectives, under each theme, that refer to desired outcomes;
- Actions under each objective that focus on activities where the District of Saanich can take a lead or supporting role;
- An implementation strategy; and
- A monitoring and evaluation strategy.

Key Themes

Key themes for the AFSP were developed with the guidance of the Task Force and through information gathered during the public engagement process. The seven key themes are:

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.

Objectives

Under each theme there are three or four objectives that refer to a desired outcome. There are 23 objectives outlined in the AFSP, with each objective generating several actions.

Actions

The actions under each objective focus on areas where the District of Saanich can take either a lead or supporting role. Some actions involve an ongoing commitment or principled direction for the District of Saanich, while others highlight direct actions. There are a total of 91 action items.

Implementation Strategy

The implementation strategy provides a framework for accomplishing the objectives and actions in the AFSP by outlining priorities and assigning a responsible municipal department for each action. The Implementation Strategy organizes all the actions under one of three priority phases or as ongoing actions.

The ongoing actions highlight much of the work already being done and emphasize the importance of supporting a range of partner initiatives. The ongoing actions also provide principled guidance to ensure decision-making works towards the objectives of the AFSP.

Priority actions within the implementation plan are organized into three phases and are intended to be undertaken sequentially. However there is flexibility to adjust priorities due to funding, partnership or other opportunities that may arise. The first phase of priorities includes the following actions:

- Provide staff resources to take a leadership role in Plan implementation;
- Implement the Council-approved concept plan for Panama Flats;
- Develop a policy for farmworker housing;
- Support the CRD in efforts to establish a regional food and farmland trust;
- Update the Saanich Climate Adaptation Plan and Climate Action Plan to expand actions that enhance the resiliency of the local food system;
- Explore opportunities to enhance business licence bylaw requirements to support the protection of agriculture lands;
- Investigate the issue of non-farm use on agriculture lands and develop options to address the protection of farmland; and
- Update the approved plant list for boulevard plantings to allow edible landscaping and pollinator habitat on boulevards.

Resources for Implementation

The Agriculture and Food Security Plan is action-focused and its success will largely be dictated by the resources made available for implementation. Action 1.1 of the AFSP recommends that Council consider providing staff resources to take a leadership role in the implementation of the Plan. Implementation of the Plan will require a variety of approaches and roles by Municipal staff. Key tasks include:

- Development and/or amendment of plans, policy and regulation, including staff time to lead reviews, research and manage public engagement processes;
- Establishment of programs or initiatives required to support agriculture and food security in Saanich;
- Partnerships with community organizations and other governments to advance projects of regional significance;
- Analysis of trends and outcomes as part of monitoring and evaluation framework; and
- Development of promotional or educational material.

Currently, Community Planning staff are working on the update of Local Area Plans, the Uptown Douglas Corridor Plan, a Garden Suite Study, heritage programs, public art projects, and other research and policy studies. Once the Agriculture and Food Security Plan project is complete there is a limited amount of time available from staff for implementation of the Plan. In order to accomplish implementation, monitoring and evaluation of the actions in the Plan, dedicated resources will be required.

ALTERNATIVES

1. Agriculture and Food Security Plan

- a. That Council endorse the Agriculture and Food Security Plan (Attachment A).

The implications of this alternative are discussed in detail in latter sections of this report.

- b. That Council provide alternate direction to staff.

Should Council decide to not endorse the AFSP at this time, they could provide staff with direction on additional consultation or additional areas to explore. This could delay the initiation of implementation actions.

2. Resources for Implementation

- a. That Council refer the prioritization of implementation and the allocation of resources to Strategic Planning sessions.

Referral of the resource decisions to the Strategic Planning process would enable implementation of the Agriculture and Food Security Plan to be assessed in the context of other municipal priorities. A potential downside is that there would not be immediate implementation resources assigned to actions that were identified by the community to be high priority.

- b. That Council allocate \$150,000 from the Council Contingency for Strategic Initiatives to support implementation (recommended)

The \$150,000 would allow a half-time Foods Systems Planner to be hired for a two-year term and also provide budget for implementation activities, including for hiring consultants, undertaking public engagement and producing educational material.

The additional resources would enable the majority of Phase 1 priority actions to be addressed within the first two years, addressing the highest priority community issues. The resources would also establish a sound foundation for future implementation and provide a dedicated resource to liaise with community partners on key initiatives.

- c. That Council re-allocate 50% of an existing Planner's position for implementation of the plan.

Re-allocation of current staff time would enable priority action items to be addressed without adding additional staff resources. However, there would be an impact to the capacity of the Planning Department to address existing Council identified priorities, including the update of Local Area Plans.

FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

The financial implications of implementation depends on which of the above-noted implementation alternatives Council endorses.

Referral of the AFSP to the Strategic Planning process (Alternative 2.a.) would not involve immediate financial expenditure over and above the current municipal budget until priorities are identified through the Strategic Planning session in 2019.

Endorsement of Alternative 2.b. would allocate \$150,000 from the Council Contingency for Strategic Initiatives for implementation over a two-year period. This would enable high priority items to be addressed in the short term. Future resourcing could be determined at the conclusion of the two-year period.

Re-allocation of staff time (Alternative 2.c.) would not require additional funding for a staff position, but some financial resources would be required for technical analysis, community engagement work and delivery of initiatives. If Council endorsed this option, a work plan would be presented to Council with estimated costs and impacts to other projects.

STRATEGIC PLAN IMPLICATIONS

This initiative is consistent with the District of Saanich 2015 – 2018 Strategic Plan which directs that a “Local Agriculture and Food Security Action Plan” be developed. The AFSP also supports the broad objectives of environmental integrity, sustainable environment, social well-being, healthy community and a vibrant economy. In particular, action areas identified in the Strategic Plan and supported by the AFSP include increasing amount of:

- taxable commercial farmland;
- properties that qualify for farm tax status;
- backyard vegetable gardens and poultry keeping;
- community gardens; and
- protection for the Agriculture Land Reserve.

Initiatives related to the implementation of the Agriculture and Food Security Plan could form part of future Strategic Plan review sessions.

PLANNING IMPLICATIONS

Policy

The following District of Saanich and Capital Regional District policies are the most directly connected to Agriculture and Food Security in Saanich.

Saanich Official Community Plan (2008)

- 5.1.1.1. “Ensure a healthy, sustainable and stable food supply by working with the Capital Regional District, the Province, food producers, the Vancouver Island Health Authority, municipalities, and other stakeholders to develop a long-term plan for improving local and regional food security.”
- 5.1.1.1. “Support innovative farming and local marketing techniques such as pocket farm markets, which help improve the economic vitality of food production in the community.”
- 6.2.8. “Encourage market diversification of agriculture by supporting specialty agri-tourism businesses on bona fide commercial farms, which are in keeping with the scale and character of rural Saanich.”

Regional Growth Strategy (CRD)

6.1 Food Systems

“Principles

- i. Support First Nations food interests and rights;
- ii. Protect and enhance the region’s food and farmlands;
- iii. Avoid urban/agricultural land use conflict; mitigate where avoidance is not possible;
- iv. Enhance local food security;
- v. Expand food system economic opportunities;
- vi. Encourage food system education and agri-tourism; and,
- vii. Foster resiliency in the face of an unpredictable climate, increased pest resistance, and declining, increasingly expensive water and energy supplies.”

Policy

- 6.1.1 "Implement initiatives in accordance with the principles outlined in Objective 6.1, based on voluntary participation of local governments in any new services."
- 6.1.2. "Enable food production, processing and distribution that will foster a place-based food economy that increases local food security."
- 6.1.3. "Support food waste management that is environmentally sustainable, benefits the regional economy and improves residents' connections to rural and agricultural landscapes."
- 6.1.4. "Monitor the status of agricultural land, including the amount of actively farmed land, with the objective of promoting agricultural viability and food production."

Policy Analysis

The District of Saanich's Strategic Plan, Official Community Plan (OCP), and Rural Saanich Local Area Plan all recognize agriculture as a significant contributor to the region's landscape, identity and economy. Collectively, these plans express a commitment to the preservation and strengthening of the region's rural economy and lifestyle, including the protection of lands capable of agricultural productivity, encouraging a diverse and profitable agricultural sector and supporting a sustainable and resilient local food system.

The following priorities are highlighted in the OCP:

- Protection of agricultural land for current and future generations
- Access to safe and nutritious food supply, at a reasonable cost; and
- Opportunities for food production in both rural and urban areas.

The Regional Growth Strategy identifies the need to foster a resilient food and agriculture system and works towards a regional alignment that will strengthen the food and agriculture sector. The Regional Growth Strategy supports a place based food economy, waste management that is environmentally responsible, and the protection of agricultural land and increased food production. The Growth Strategy policies are intended to work in tandem with the Regional Food and Agriculture Strategy to guide future decisions.

The themes, objectives and actions of AFSP work to implement the vision and policies of the OCP and Regional Growth Strategy in a more detailed way. AFSP actions that work towards managing land use to support farmland and improving interconnections to the environment are critical to achieving broader municipal sustainability goals. Additionally, actions that enhance food security and encourage urban agriculture support community well-being and resiliency.

Implementation Analysis

The AFSP positions Saanich in a stronger position to advance agriculture and food security in two ways. Firstly, ongoing actions highlight current initiatives or principled positions that will help ensure future decision-making is consistent with the broad objectives of the plan. Secondly, priority actions, which are grouped into three phases, assert tangible initiatives that can be completed to address community issues.

A number of the actions identify municipal departments other than Planning as the lead for the action. Additionally, some actions may be best accomplished by outside organizations with Saanich support. The Planning Department, however, will be instrumental in

management of AFSP implementation, inter-departmental communication and coordination with potential partners.

The pace that the priority actions are completed is dependent on resources allocated. Implementation could be achieved through the identification of staff resources and/or allocation of money for consultants. To be able to achieve action items in the envisioned 10 to 15 year time horizon, a minimum of a half-time staff person would be required. A full time dedicated Food Systems Planner would be able to enable implementation in a shorter time frame.

The staff recommendation is for \$150,000 to be allocated to implementation, which would provide resources to address action items over the first two years. The money would cover a half-time Food Systems Planner for two years plus approximately \$25,000 a year for consultant studies, public engagement activities and resource/information materials. Costs could potentially be offset through grant programs.

CONCLUSION

The Agriculture and Food Security Plan represents the culmination of a two year process that involved a Task Force of experts, many community members, agriculture and food security stakeholders, an agriculture planning consultant and staff from various departments. The Plan provides a coordinated approach for supporting agriculture and improving food security in Saanich over the next 10 to 15 years. It contains content that addresses many core Official Community Plan directions on protecting and enhancing agriculture, addressing climate change, fostering environmental restoration, supporting economic development and improving food security.

The Plan refers to and is consistent with issues and actions addressed within the Capital Regional District's Food and Agriculture Strategy. The Regional Food and Agriculture Strategy and the proposed Agriculture and Food Security Plan both recognize agriculture as a significant contributor to the region's landscape, identity and economy.

Through the planning and public engagement process, staff and the Task Force heard clear support for the existing farming community, emerging farmers and the importance of food security. The capacity of the land for growing food depends not only on retention of the land, but also on the protection of the surrounding natural ecology, nutrients in the soil and quality of the water. The Agriculture and Food Security Plan identifies actions that individually and collectively address these and many other issues.

The pace of AFSP implementation will be dictated by available resources. Staff recommend that \$150,000 be allocated from the Council Contingency for Strategic initiatives. This will enable dedicated resources within the first two years, including a half-time Food Systems Planner, to address high priority implementation actions.

Adoption of the Agriculture and Food Security Plan will provide staff and Council with a framework to address agriculture issues and opportunities in the future. It also provides priority actions where Saanich can take a leadership role or participate in the projects that enhance agriculture and improve our food security. Staff recommend that Council support adoption of the Agriculture and Food Security Plan.

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Manager of Community Planning

Approved by: 
Sharon Hvozdański

Director of Planning

CS/sd
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Attachments

cc: Harley Machielse, Director of Engineering
Suzanne Samborski, Director of Parks and Recreation

ADMINISTRATOR'S COMMENTS:

I endorse the recommendation from the Director of Planning.

For 
Paul Thorkelsson, Administrator



District of Saanich

Agriculture & Food Security Plan



DRAFT
Agriculture and Food Security Plan
March 2019



Prepared by the District of Saanich Planning Department & Upland Agriculture Consulting

Acknowledgements

The District of Saanich's Agriculture and Food Security Plan is a strategy and policy framework document, resulting from a planning initiative led by the District, in collaboration with Upland Agricultural Consulting and its consulting partners, specifically:

- Ione Smith, MSc, PAg – Upland Agricultural Consulting
- Andrea Shaw, MSc, PAg – AEL Agroecological Consulting
- Jeremy Murphy, MSc, MPlan, LEED AP – Sustainability Solutions
- Stephanie Lepsoe, BA, MA

Key input into the Plan and planning process was provided by the Agriculture and Food Security Plan Task Force. Members of the Task Force were:

- Tom Allen
- Richard Aspden
- Brenda Bolton
- David Chambers
- Doug Eng
- Barbara Hay
- Maurita Prato
- Blair Surridge
- Justine Wardle

Local citizens, stakeholders, survey respondents, and participants of public meetings and open houses also provided invaluable input and feedback, for which the authors express much gratitude.

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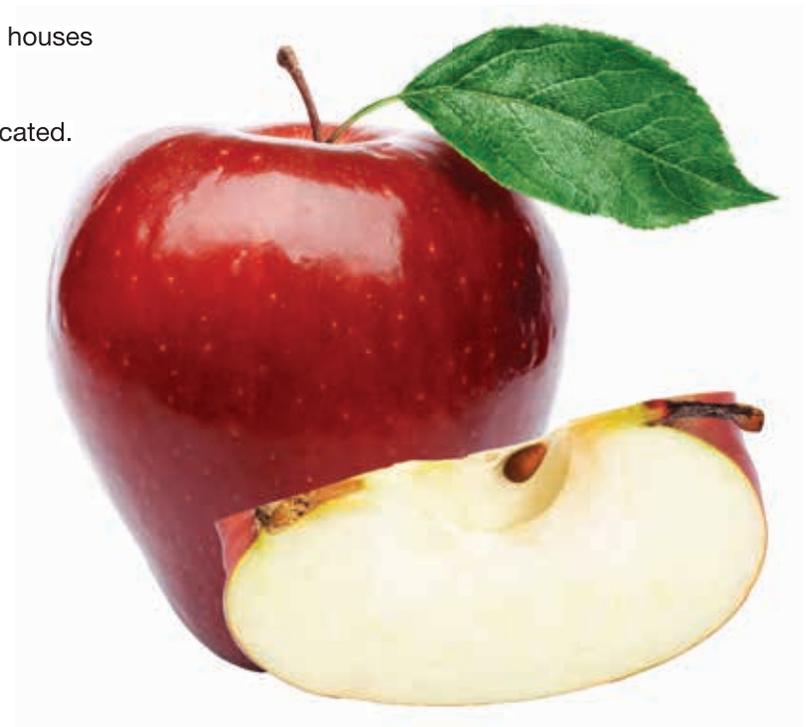


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Executive Summary

Introduction

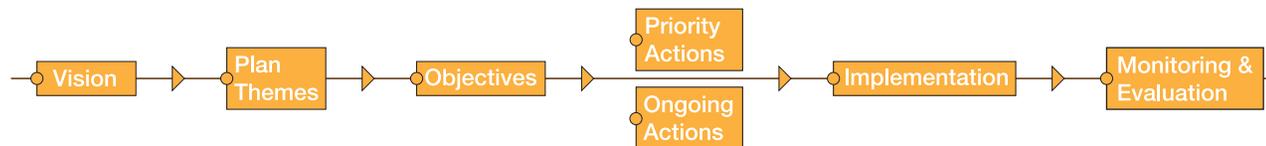
The purpose of the Agriculture and Food Security Plan (AFSP) is to provide the District with a coordinated approach for supporting agriculture and improving food security in Saanich over the next 10 to 15 years. It provides a roadmap for achieving Official Community Plan (OCP) priorities and outlines a comprehensive approach to enhance the viability and long term sustainability of Saanich agriculture and food security.

Saanich has a long history of farming and it is a major component of the community's identity. Key tools that have assisted in supporting agriculture are the Agricultural Land Reserve and

the Urban Containment Boundary. In addition, partnerships with surrounding municipalities, the Capital Regional District, non-profit organizations, and community groups have been and will continue to be vital in enhancing agriculture and food security in Saanich and the region.

The AFSP is guided by a Vision statement and objectives that are organized around seven themes. Actions contained in the Plan are of two types:

- Priority Actions – specific initiatives that can be undertaken to enhance agriculture and food security; and
- Ongoing Actions – principled directions to guide future decision making



Vision

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.



Plan 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

Implementation Strategy

The implementation Strategy includes 38 priority actions organized over three phases of work. The intention is that phases of work would be undertaken sequentially, with some flexibility to adjust priorities due to funding, partnership or other opportunities that may arise. These priority actions are supplemented by ongoing actions that provide guidance to inform decision making.

Key Short-Term Priority Action Highlights (Phase 1)

- Provide staff resources to take a leadership role in Plan implementation
- Implement the Council-approved concept plan for Panama Flats
- Develop a policy for farmworker housing.
- Support the CRD in efforts to establish a regional food and farmland trust.
- Update the Saanich Climate Adaptation Plan and Climate Action Plan to expand actions that enhance the resiliency of the local food system.
- Explore opportunities to enhance business licence bylaw requirements to support the protection of agriculture lands.
- Investigate the issue of non-farm use on agriculture lands and develop options to address the protection of farmland.
- Update the approved plant list for boulevard plantings to allow edible landscaping and pollinator habitat on boulevards.

Other Priority Action Highlights (Phase 2 and 3)

- Explore opportunities to increase access to local food in close proximity to residential areas through the Local Area Plan review process.
- Explore regulatory changes that support the establishment of farmers markets.
- Conduct an Agricultural Land Use Inventory and associated Water Demand Model.
- Explore the addition of a community grant category that specifically supports local food security initiatives.
- Develop a rural area sign program to support farming communities.
- Explore regulatory changes that will broaden opportunities for small-scale urban agriculture.
- Explore incentives to encourage farming and discourage non-farm uses on agricultural land.

Monitoring and Evaluation Strategy

The Monitoring and Evaluation Strategy includes 22 measurable performance indicators to determine progress of the plan over time. The indicators span all seven themes and will help to assess progress towards both the Plan's objectives and the overall state of agriculture and food security in Saanich.



INTRODUCTION





Purpose of the Agriculture and Food Security Plan

The purpose of the Agriculture and Food Security Plan (AFSP) is to provide the District with a coordinated approach for supporting agriculture and improving food security in Saanich over the next 10 to 15 years. It provides a roadmap for achieving Sustainable Saanich's Official Community Plan (OCP) priorities and outlines a comprehensive approach to enhance the viability and long term sustainability of Saanich agriculture and food security.

A community's food system is a fundamental part of our daily lives including components such as food production, processing, distribution, equitable food access and waste management. A sustainable food system plays a large role in building a strong, resilient community, supporting our economic development, promoting health, and conserving the environment. Throughout recent community planning processes, including development of the OCP, the District of Saanich recognized the importance of agriculture and food security as part of a sustainable community.

The AFSP's focus is to provide clear direction for action and to ensure that the District's agricultural policies are current, accurate, and defensible. The Plan is aligned with other major corporate policy documents, the Capital Regional District Food & Agriculture Strategy, as well as Provincial standards. An accompanying implementation strategy establishes a phased approach for accomplishing priority actions while a monitoring and evaluation strategy identifies indicators to evaluate the Plan's progress.



Definitions

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. (This definition of agriculture is similar to that used in other agricultural plans in BC).

Food Security

Food security exists when all people at all times have access to sufficient, safe, nutritious, affordable food to maintain a healthy and active life. (This definition of food security has been set forth by the World Health Organization).

Sustainable Food System

A sustainable community food system is a collaborative network that integrates sustainable food production, processing, distribution, consumption and waste management in order to enhance the environmental, economic and social health of a particular place. Farmers, consumers and communities partner to create a more locally based, self-reliant food economy.¹

1. Gafsi, Mohamed, & Favreau, Jean Luc. (2013). Indicator-Based Method for Assessing Organic Farming Sustainability. Methods and Procedures for Building Sustainable Farming Systems.

Plan Organization

The Agriculture and Food Security Plan (AFSP) is organized into five sections.

Section 1: Introduction

Describes the purpose, the planning process, the Vision for the Plan, and the themes that address the community's agriculture and food security related issues and opportunities.

Section 2: Saanich Context

Provides general information about Saanich and the context for the Plan including information on key planning tools and other plans and studies from the region.

Section 3: The Plan

Objectives and actions are identified under seven themes that address the issues and opportunities that were identified during the planning and public engagement process.

Themes

The themes presented in this Plan reflect both the vision statement and feedback received through engagement events. The themes are used in the AFSP to convey issues and challenges facing agriculture and food security in Saanich.

Objectives

Each theme is broken down into objectives that refer specifically to an expected or desired outcome. For each theme there are generally three or four objectives, each of which generate several actions.

Actions

The actions under each objective focus on areas where the District of Saanich can take either a lead or supporting role. Some actions involve an ongoing commitment or principled direction for the District of Saanich, while others highlight direct actions.

Section 4: Implementation Strategy

The implementation strategy provides a framework for accomplishing the objectives and actions identified in the Plan and assigns a responsible municipal department to each action.

The strategy is organized into two parts:

- 1. Priority Actions** that highlight specific activities that can be undertaken to advance the Plan's vision and objectives. These are organized into three phases that indicate a general order for implementation and will help guide workplan development. The phasing of work is based on community-identified priorities, potential for complementary initiatives and the acknowledgment that some initiatives will take more time to establish partnerships or require external funding.
- 2. Ongoing Actions** provide principled direction to guide decision-making and respond to community issues and opportunities.

Section 5:

Monitoring and Evaluation Strategy

The monitoring and implementation strategy includes 22 indicators that will help assess the effectiveness of the Plan implementation and the state of agriculture and food security in Saanich.





Plan Development Process

In October 2015, Saanich Council, endorsed a Terms of Reference that gave direction on the formation of an Agriculture and Food Security Task Force for the purpose of preparing a comprehensive Agriculture and Food Security Plan for the District of Saanich. Upland Agriculture Consulting was hired to manage the planning process including research, public engagement and facilitation of the Task Force.

Agriculture and Food Security Task Force

The Agriculture and Food Security Task Force was established in February 2016 to guide and contribute to the development of an Agriculture and Food Security Plan. The Task Force is made up of a group of community members and local agriculture and food security experts who collaborated with staff and the project consultant during the development of the Plan. The Task Force was a key component at each phase of the planning process.

Public Engagement

One of the strengths of agriculture and food security in Saanich is the vast range of community knowledge and expertise. Stakeholder and public input was gathered during phases two, three and four of the planning process. Engagement for the AFSP was based on an engagement strategy that was developed at the beginning of the project to effectively and collaboratively connect the Saanich community and key stakeholders.

A variety of public engagement tools were used to solicit feedback for the AFSP between February 2016 and September 2017. The accompanying Engagement Summary (see Appendix B) provides details of these activities and included:

- A community survey that was distributed and made available online between May and July 2016, which received 289 responses;
- An open house that was held on May 26, 2016, where issues and opportunities were identified by over 40 attendees;

- Pop-up community displays during the summer 2016 at various locations including the Root Cellar, Red Barn Market, and Saanich Strawberry Festival;
- A community workshop and open house in January 2017 attended by 60 people to discuss the draft list of recommendations;
- Meetings with the Peninsula and Area Agriculture Commission and Saanich Advisory Committees;
- Five Task Force meetings; and
- Over 20 meetings between District staff and community organizations, as well as individual meetings, phone calls and emails.

The District of Saanich acknowledges that the participation of local community organizations, senior levels of government, agricultural businesses, and the public is essential to realize a resilient, sustainable and profitable regional agricultural sector.

Planning Process Timeline



Vision Statement

A Vision statement answers the question: Where do we want to go? It provides a clear, comprehensive snapshot of a desired future state. It provides direction by describing what the scene should look like in the future, in order for the Plan to be deemed successful. The Plan's themes and actions all flow from the vision statement. The AFSP's vision statement was developed with input from the Task Force and was vetted through the public survey and open house.

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.





Plan Themes

Seven key themes developed through the public engagement and planning process address overarching directions that can strengthen a sustainable food system and increase food security in our community.



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



SAANICH CONTEXT

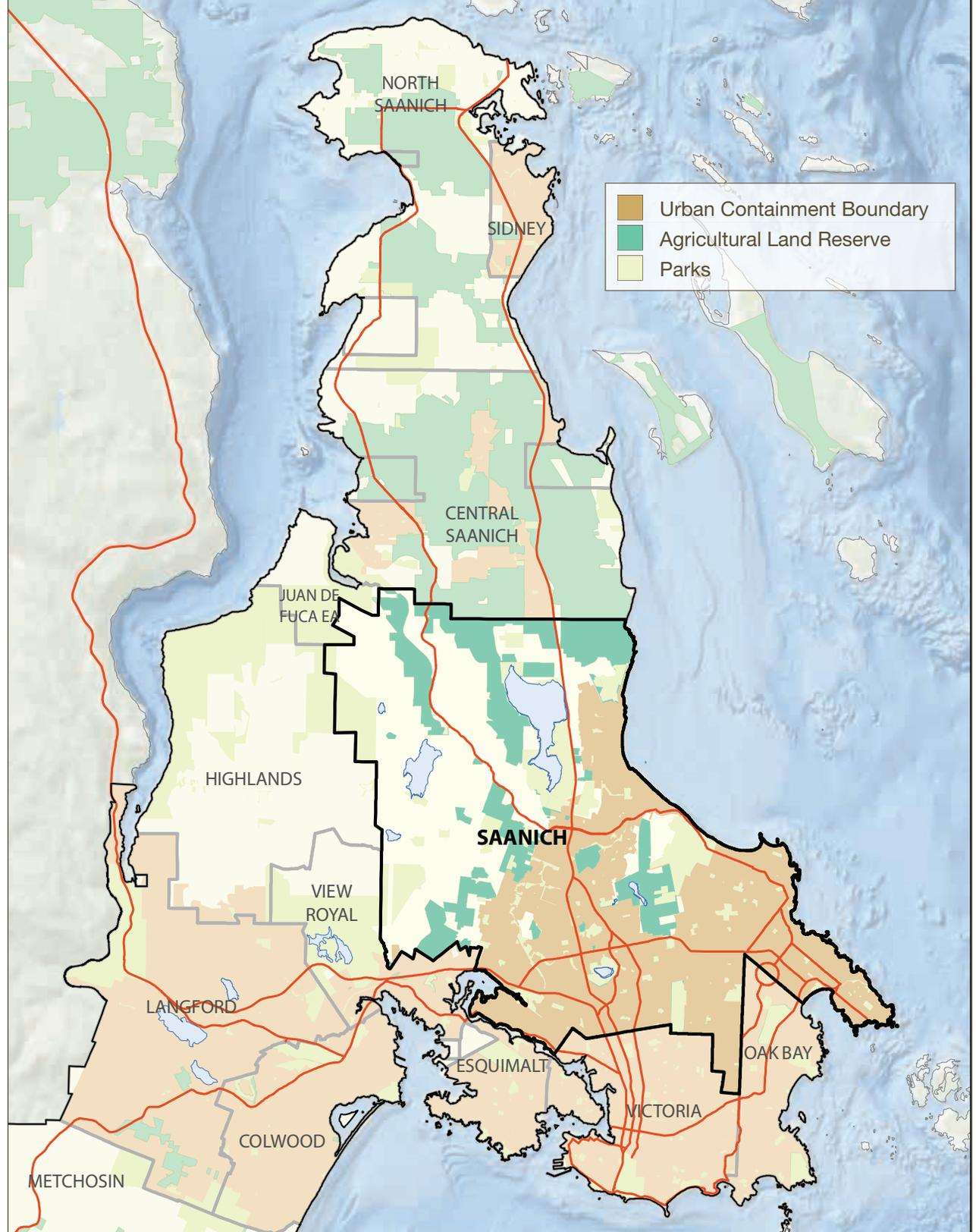


Context

The District of Saanich is 10,378 ha in area and is one of thirteen municipalities in the Capital Regional District. It plays a unique role in the region as a core municipality that is half urban residential and half rural agricultural. Saanich's land base within the Agriculture Land Reserve is approximately 1,872 ha and land that is zoned Agriculture totals approximately 3,800 ha. In total, approximately 2,222 ha, or 21%, of Saanich is actively farmed. The agricultural soils in Saanich are rated as having high or very high agricultural capability and have minimal constraints to growing a variety of crops.

Saanich protects rural agricultural land through a policy that limits urban sprawl. Despite this, much of Saanich is not actively farmed and access to healthy, local food is difficult for some households. As such, approximately 6% of households in Greater Victoria are considered "food insecure"¹. There exists an opportunity to raise the production levels of food on the local land base in Saanich as part of a larger set of solutions to addressing food insecurity for the community at large.

How can we ensure that there is an adequate and secure food supply in the community?



1. "Hungry & Homeless in Greater Victoria." 2011 study by UVic and the Centre for Addictions Research of BC.

Role of Local Government in Agriculture and Food Security Planning

Farmland and agricultural land uses are regulated by several levels of government. As a result, farmers may be subject to municipal, regional, provincial and federal government policies. Agriculture is not an issue addressed by one department, one piece of legislation, or single level of government. Some regulations are wide in scope and far-reaching, such as national and international trade agreements, while others are site-specific or issue-specific, such as local zoning or meat processing regulations. Awareness of jurisdictional responsibilities and authority is key in defining policy, strategies, actions and pilot projects that can be undertaken by local government.

Legislative tools outlined in B.C.'s *Local Government Act* (LGA) and *Land Title Act* assist local governments to encourage a secure and stable working environment for farming in their communities. The legislation works to ensure that agriculture is given appropriate consideration in planning processes. The manner in which agriculture is considered at the municipal policy level is through the Official Community Plan (OCP), and subsequently through regulations in the Zoning Bylaw. The OCP provides a long-term vision and strategies for future land use, development and servicing. The Zoning Bylaw regulates and permits uses within each zone, representing current land use. Through these documents, local governments can support local food production and increase farm viability.

This Plan was developed in accordance to Local Government Act provisions and focuses on the regulatory areas and conditions that support agriculture and food security in the community. The Agriculture Land Commission and BC Ministry of Agriculture actively support local government initiatives to develop these plans for agriculture.





Key Planning Tools and Other Plans & Studies

Goals and objectives for agriculture and food security expressed by other levels of government, Provincial and Regional, were referred to as key planning tools. Other Saanich plans and studies and those from surrounding municipalities were reviewed and considered as background context for this plan. Each recognize agriculture as a significant contributor to the region’s landscape, identity and economy. Collectively, they express a commitment to the preservation and strengthening of the region’s rural economy and lifestyle. They support the protection of lands capable of agricultural productivity; a diverse and profitable agriculture sector; and a sustainable and resilient local food system.

Key tools that have helped retain and support agricultural lands in Saanich include:

Agriculture Land Reserve (ALR)

The Province of BC introduced the Agricultural Land Commission Act in 1973 that regulates use on land identified within the Agriculture Land Reserve (ALR). The ALR is a provincial zone in which agriculture is recognized as the priority use. The Agricultural Land Commission (ALC) is a Provincial commission with the following mandate:

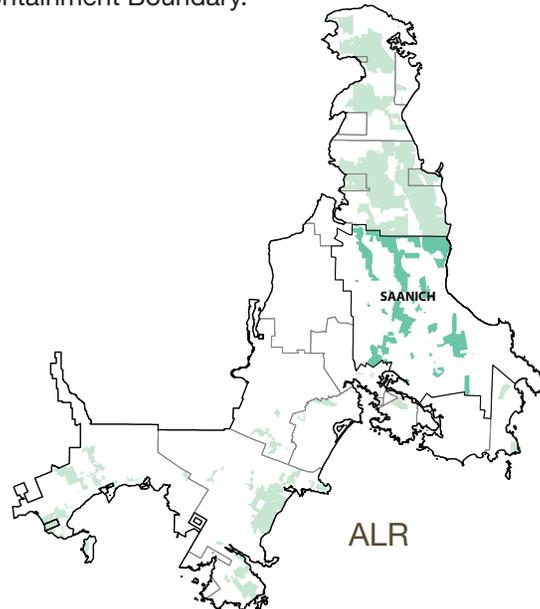
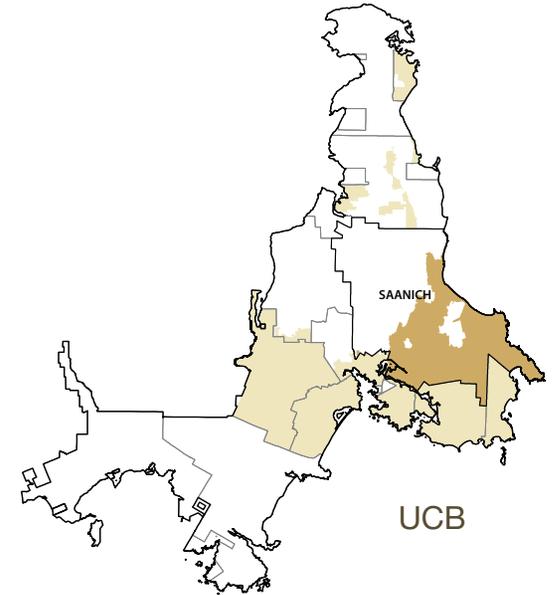
- To preserve agricultural land;
- To encourage farming on agricultural land in collaboration with other communities of interest; and
- To encourage local governments, first nations, the provincial government and its agents to enable and accommodate farm use of agricultural land and uses compatible with agriculture in their plans, bylaws and policies.

The ALC Act takes precedence over, but does

not replace, other legislation and bylaws that may apply to the ALR. Local and Regional governments, as well as other Provincial agencies, are expected to plan in accordance with the Provincial policy of preserving agricultural land.

Urban Containment Boundary (UCB)

The concept of urban containment as a means to manage growth in Saanich that was introduced in the 1960s. By 1968 the Urban Containment Boundary (UCB) was formally adopted by Council. The UCB identifies the division between urban and rural areas and is an important tool for growth management in Saanich. In 1974 the UCB was amended to exclude the areas of land that were designated as ALR by the Province. Saanich’s Official Community Plan (2008). Policy 4.2.1.2 states: “Maintain the Urban Containment Boundary as the principal tool for growth management in Saanich, and encourage all new development to locate within the Urban Containment Boundary.”



Peninsula & Area Agriculture Commission

The Municipalities on the Saanich peninsula and surrounding area are served by the Peninsula & Area Agriculture Commission (PAAC). PAAC has a mandate to advise the Municipal governments of North Saanich, Sidney, Central Saanich, Saanich, Metchosin and the Juan de Fuca Electoral Area on matters involving agriculture. The Commission advises on issues that the Municipal governments bring forward and facilitates educational initiatives to increase public awareness of agriculture issues and opportunities.

Saanich Official Community Plan (OCP), 2008

The District of Saanich's OCP policies highlight the following priorities connected to agriculture and food security:

- Protection of agricultural land for current and future generations;
- Access to safe and nutritious food supply, at a reasonable cost; and
- Opportunities for food production in both rural and urban areas.

Saanich Climate Action and Adaptation Plans

The Climate Action Plan and the Climate Adaptation Plan work together with the OCP to promote reduction of greenhouse gas emissions and adaption to climate change impacts.

Potential impacts to Saanich's agri-food system identified in these plans include:

- Increased or decreased crop productivity due to temperature changes;
- Lack of water;
- Temporary flooding;
- Increased disease;
- Increased demand for irrigation infrastructure;
- Increased population and resulting pressure to convert agricultural land; and
- Increased issues with pest management.

The Climate Adaptation Plan outlines prioritized action that can be taken to address some of these impacts.

Neighbouring Community Agriculture Plans

Agricultural plans developed for other communities on the Saanich Peninsula, namely North Saanich, and Central Saanich, also formed the development of this plan.

CRD Regional Food & Agriculture Strategy, 2016

The Capital Regional District (CRD) developed a Regional Food and Agriculture Strategy (RFAS) to provide a guide for action and to foster leadership. The RFAS identifies a continued role for the CRD in food and agriculture. The RFAS provides direction consistent with other CRD initiatives that are underway. The RFAS recommendations include:

- Support regional, cross-sector relationships;
- Improve CRD's capacity to address agriculture and food issues;
- Support regional organic matter recycling benefiting agriculture;
- Address chronic drainage issues across the region;
- Consider approaches to address wildlife and invasive species issues;
- Maintain affordability and improve access to irrigation water for food and agriculture;
- Encourage place-based food culture by building relationships between Aboriginal and non-aboriginal communities;
- Support Aboriginal food and agriculture activities;
- Increase access to agricultural and food lands; and
- Support regional economic development strategies for food and agriculture.





Agriculture Strategy for the Saanich Peninsula, 1997

An Agriculture Strategy for the Saanich Peninsula was developed in 1997 by the municipalities of North Saanich, Central Saanich, Saanich and Sidney. They collaborated with area farmers, the Agricultural Land Commission (ALC) and the Ministry of Agriculture to form the Saanich Peninsula Agriculture Strategy Committee in order to develop a set of solutions to preserve and enhance agricultural sustainability on the Peninsula. The AFSP builds on this work and delves further into issues that pertain to the District of Saanich. The intent is to update the actions laid out in the 1997 Agriculture Strategy and develop an implementation strategy to enhance the long term sustainability and viability of Saanich agriculture and food systems.

Food security was not a target of the 1997 Agriculture Strategy for the Saanich Peninsula, but plays an important role in the AFSP. Additionally, the AFSP focuses on the potential of urban lands and their potential to contribute to agriculture and food security.

Saanich Peninsula Agricultural Land Use Inventory, Summer 2005

In the summer of 2005, the BC Ministry of Agriculture (AGRI) conducted an Agricultural Land Use Inventory (ALUI) for the region. The ALUI provides detailed parcel-by-parcel information about land cover, land use, and irrigation practices when observed. The ALUI results can serve as a “snapshot” of agriculture in the region. The ALUI considers land to be “farmed” if it contains:

- Cultivated field crops: vegetation under cultivation for harvest or pasture including land temporarily set aside from farming and perennial crops that were not harvested or grazed in the current growing season;
- Farm infrastructure: built structures associated with farming such as barns, stables, corrals, riding rings, and their associated yards;
- Greenhouses: permanent enclosed glass or poly structures with or without climate control facilities for growing plants and vegetation under controlled environments; or
- Crop barns: permanent enclosed structures with non-translucent walls for growing crops such as mushrooms or bean sprouts.

Climate Projections for the Capital Region, April 2017

The CRD undertook a study to prepare the Capital Region for the impacts of climate change. This study provides climate projections for the region that include an increase in growing degree days (the number of days with the appropriate measurement of heat required to grow crops) and a reduction of frost days that will result in a longer growing season and potential increased agricultural capacity by the 2050s. The study also states that the Capital Region can expect noticeable changes to our climate in the coming decades, including:

- Warmer winter temperatures;
- Fewer days below freezing;
- More extreme hot days in summers;
- Longer dry spells in summer months;
- More precipitation in fall, winter, and spring; and
- More intense extreme events.



THE PLAN





Theme 1:

Provide a Foundation to Take Action on Agriculture and Food Security

In order to effectively make progress on the many agriculture and food security actions that are identified in this Plan, there is a need for a more deliberate commitment in adjusting municipal plans and actions and in providing municipal resources for plan implementation. Many of the issues that were raised during engagement relate to plans, policies, and regulations that the District of Saanich oversees. Some of the actions will involve small adjustments to existing bylaws while others will require a significant change.

Objective 1A:

Create Support and Structure within the District to Implement the Plan

Objective 1B:

Update Plans, Policies and Regulations to Advance Food System Priorities

Objective 1C:

Demonstrate Leadership through Key Municipal Initiatives





Theme 1

Objective 1A

Create Support and Structure within the District to Implement the Plan

To ensure that the Agriculture and Food Security Plan will be successful, resources will need to be committed to the implementation of the Plan itself. While external funding can be obtained to offset many project-related costs, a backbone of staff and stakeholder support will ensure that the Plan succeeds. This will require the assistance of staff and new, or existing committee input.

Actions

- 1.1 Provide staff resources to take a leadership role in the implementation of the Agriculture and Food Security Plan. This could include:
 - Hiring a food systems coordinator;
 - Assigning plan implementation responsibilities to an existing staff member;
 - Hiring a consultant to undertake implementation activities; and/or
 - A combination of the above.
- 1.2 Establish an Agriculture and Food Security Advisory Committee or delegate an existing committee (e.g. Healthy Saanich) to assist in the implementation of the Plan. The committee should include representatives with knowledge of food production and food access in Saanich.
- 1.3 Continue to appoint a Council representative to attend Peninsula and Area Agriculture Commission meetings.
- 1.4 Continue to refer to the Peninsula and Area Agriculture Commission for advice and comment on agriculture issues.





Theme 1

Objective 1B

Update Plans, Policies and Regulations to Advance Food System Priorities

This Plan identifies a number of objectives and actions that are needed to improve food systems outcomes in Saanich. While the current OCP lends support for rural areas and agricultural activities, the refinement of some of the policies and the addition of new policy statements can further strengthen and enhance the District's commitment to the local food system. Additionally, updates to the Zoning Bylaw and other plans and regulations will ensure more consistency and further emphasize the importance of food systems in many facets of municipal operations and community activity.

Actions

- 1.5 Continue to build on the commitment to agriculture and the enhancement of the local food system as part of future updates to the Official Community Plan and Zoning Bylaw.
 - Parks Recreation and Culture Master Plan;
 - Removal of Soil Bylaw;
 - Sign Bylaw;
 - Subdivision Bylaw;
 - Significant Tree Bylaw;
 - Street & Traffic Bylaw;
 - Urban Forest Strategy;
 - Water Utility Bylaw; and
 - Watercourse & Drainage Bylaw.
- 1.6 Review and update Saanich plans and bylaws, as the need and opportunity arises, to ensure that the objectives of this plan are reflected. Plans and bylaws to be reviewed include:
 - Animals Bylaw;
 - Boulevard Tree Policy;
 - Boulevards Management Bylaw;
 - Business License Bylaw;
 - Climate Action Plan and Climate Adaptation Plan;
 - Community Gardens Policy;
 - Deposit of Fill Bylaw;
 - Integrated Pest Management Policy;
 - Local Area Plans;
 - Local Food Procurement Policy;
 - Pesticide Bylaw;
 - Development Permit Area Guidelines;
 - Noxious Weeds Bylaw;
- 1.7 As part of updates to plans and bylaws, consider supporting a wide variety of food production and harvesting opportunities including: seed production, fishing, crustacean and shellfish aquaculture, backyard gleaning, innovative and emerging food growing techniques, as well as agriculture or traditional crop and livestock farming.
- 1.8 Encourage developers to make community contributions that protect farmland or provide funding for initiatives that enhance food security and agriculture.



Objective 1C

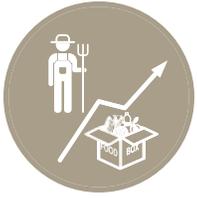
Demonstrate Leadership through Key Municipal Initiatives

Advancing the Plan will involve working in coordination with regional and community partners. Saanich plays, and will continue to play, a leadership role as a community that has a strong farming history. Key municipal initiatives and leadership on regional initiatives will help catalyze positive changes to the local food system.

Actions

- 1.9 Implement the Council-approved concept plan for Panama Flats to stimulate food production and bring new farmers onto the land. Explore potential models for the operation of public farmland.
- 1.10 Continue to support the cultivation of land and incubator farms at Haliburton Community Farm.
- 1.11 Explore the possibility of including a grant category within the District of Saanich Community Grants Policy to specifically support initiatives that focus on innovative and sustainable solutions to increase local food security.
- 1.12 Continue to support the CRD's Regional Food and Agriculture Strategy and participate in the Regional Food and Agriculture Task Force.





Theme 2:

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

The main components of the local food system include: production, storage, processing, distribution, retail, and waste management. Strengthening local food systems can help to increase self-reliance, decrease negative environmental and social externalities, improve health and nutrition, foster community capacity and ensure food security for all community members.

Objective 2A:

Reduce Barriers to Local Food Access

Objective 2B:

Enhance Community Capacity to Access Healthy Local Food

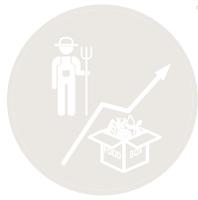
Objective 2C:

Create Supporting Infrastructure

Objective 2D:

Improve Composting and Waste Management Opportunities





Theme 2

Objective 2A

Reduce Barriers to Local Food Access

Even with increased availability, some barriers to improving food self-sufficiency remain. While it is difficult for the District to provide leadership in influencing the price of food, a local government can play a role in supporting local non-profit organizations and other government agencies with mandates to improve access to fresh, local, healthy foods for at-risk sectors of the community.

Actions

- 2.1 Continue to engage with and support local organizations who are working in the areas of food security, food access, and food self-sufficiency. This could include participating in (or hosting) annual meeting(s) to discuss how District plans, bylaws, or initiatives can enhance local food security.
- 2.2 Explore regulatory changes that support the establishment of farmers markets within the District of Saanich.
- 2.3 Conduct a community food assessment to identify existing food related activities, resources, and physical assets (i.e. grocery stores, cultural food markets, produce stands, food bank facilities, etc.) to help understand where there may be gaps in access to affordable food.
- 2.4 During the Local Area Plan review process, explore opportunities to increase access to local food within close proximity to residential areas. Opportunities could include support for a mix of uses within residential neighbourhoods, allowing some retail facilities, small markets, restaurants, coffee shops, delis, and / or temporary food sales (i.e farm stands, food trucks, etc.).



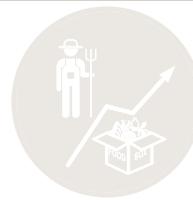
Saanich Greenhouse Growing:



Floriculture	61%
Vegetables	32%
Other	7%
Mushrooms	<1%

Census Canada Data 2016





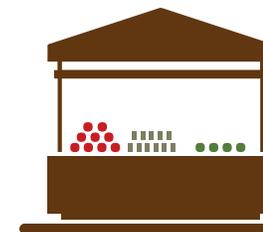
Objective 2B

Enhance Community's Capacity to Access Healthy Local Food

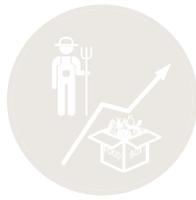
A key component of a healthy and food secure population is development of the necessary skills and awareness to access and prepare healthy, nutritious food. Overall community food resiliency can be enhanced through education and awareness programs.

Actions

- 2.5 Continue to provide food related educational opportunities through programs in the Parks and Recreation "Active Living Guide", such as kids cooking camp.
- 2.6 Work with the CRD to develop policies and programs to reduce the waste of food across the community and region. The "Food Rescue Project" run by a group of non-profit organizations in the Capital Region is an example of work toward food waste reduction.
- 2.7 If the opportunity arises, offer to support First Nations in their efforts to improve food security and increase public awareness of local indigenous food systems. Initiatives could include efforts to re-establish an indigenous food system in the region.
- 2.8 Increase Municipal staff awareness of opportunities available to access healthy local food through action such as:
 - Creating a list of local products available for Municipal events; and
 - Posting the Provincial "Eat Smart, Meet Smart Guidelines".
- 2.9 Continue to support outreach organizations that provide food security programming in the community, such as food skills workshops, community cooking and feasting events, a nutritious food bank pantry, garden skills and composting education, etc.
- 2.10 Conduct a public land inventory to determine the potential of Saanich-owned lands to accommodate community food production and community food processing operations (e.g. community food hubs and community kitchens).



Saanich Farm Sales:
60% Directly to Consumers
8% Farmer's Markets.
52% Farm gate sales, stands, kiosks or u-pick.



Theme 2

Objective 2C

Create Supporting Infrastructure

Currently the majority of the food consumed within our region is imported which increases Saanich’s vulnerability to market changes. Increasing the success of local food production, processing and distribution can help to increase community sustainability. Local farmers and other stakeholders have raised concern about the limited amount of supporting infrastructure.

A concern raised by local farmers and other stakeholders was the limited amount of supporting infrastructure there is for agriculture, including secure processing facilities, cold storage, and distribution opportunities. The District can play a role by partnering with other levels of government to provide opportunities and establish regulations that support these components of the food system.

Actions

2.11 Work with the CRD and other regional Municipalities to inventory existing food system infrastructure in the region and assess the potential demand for the future. Food system infrastructure includes storage, processing, transportation, etc.

2.12 Support existing food processors within Saanich and encourage the development of new food processing operations when the opportunity arises.

2.13 Partner with existing public programs to ensure the needs of farmers and food safety are addressed such as:

- Partnering with Island Health to develop best practices to reduce health risk in planting, growing, and harvesting; and
- Promoting opportunities for rural and urban farmers to conduct soil testing and analysis.

2.14 As part of future land use reviews of industrial zoned lands, consider impacts on the availability of land that permits food processing, storage and production facilities.

2.15 Support community food hubs and their work in redirecting food resources that would otherwise be disposed.

Number of Saanich Farms by Gross Farm Sales

174	Less than \$10k
65	Between \$10k and \$100k
19	More than \$100k





Theme 2

Objective 2D

Improve Composting and Waste Management Opportunities

A topic discussed frequently was the need for local commercial scale composting and waste management for farmers. Although it may be less expensive to buy chemical fertilizers, it is not sustainable. Soils do not produce if they are not replenished with organic matter. Many farmers find that there is a shortage of local organic matter available for agricultural lands. This issue was identified by the Peninsula and Area Agricultural commission, the Task Force and 37% of survey respondents. Many initiatives can also be taken to support improved small scale composting and waste management activities.

Actions

- 2.16 Support local organizations, such as the Victoria Compost Education Centre in their efforts to encourage composting in Saanich. Work with organizations to provide educational information to encourage and support gardeners, urban farmers, and rural farmers to compost organic material and return nutrients to the local soils.
- 2.17 Continue to provide leaf mulch or compost material to non-profit organizations, community gardens, and school gardens when supply is available.
- 2.18 Work with the CRD to develop long term solutions to regional organic matter recycling to benefit agriculture and the environment (i.e. minimize greenhouse gas emissions, return nutrients to local soil, etc.).
- 2.19 Review and update policies and bylaws to ensure organics and composting activities are promoted in the community and explore ways to encourage compost collection facilities in all new development.





Theme 3:

Strengthen Awareness of the Local Food System

The support for a local food system is largely based on general public knowledge and awareness of local food products and processes. The educational needs for both producers and consumers were key concerns raised by stakeholders in meetings and through the results of the community survey. The local food system can be strengthened by raising awareness.

Objective 3A:

Celebrate Local Food

Objective 3B:

Strengthen Public Education on the Local Food System

Objective 3C:

Support Promotion of Local Farms and Products





Theme 3

Objective 3A Celebrate Local Food

A lot of the positive comments and feedback that arose during public engagement related to how much the community enjoys attending local agricultural events and learning directly from farms and producers. The District can encourage this celebration by continuing to support these connections.

Actions

- 3.1 Continue to assist with the promotion of agricultural events, food festivals, and celebrations (e.g. Strawberry Festival, Flavour Trails, etc).
- 3.2 Support the development, updating, and promotion of community-based maps or directories (i.e. Farm Fresh Guide and BC Farms & Food) that showcase local farms, food businesses, and food organizations. Assist in distributing the information by having brochures or maps available at Recreation Centres, Libraries, on the Saanich website, and in social media.
- 3.3 Support First Nations communities in sharing information about traditional foods and traditional food harvesting. If the opportunity arises, support for First Nations efforts could include a speaker series, mapping exercises, interpretive signs, and demonstration gardens.

Saanich Farms Reporting What They Grow

69			40	29
TOTAL NUMBER OF FARMS REPORTING			OTHER VEGETABLES	TOMATOES
27	21	17	16	15
SQUASH / ZUCCHINI	CUCCUMBERS	ONIONS	SHALLOTS / GREEN ONIONS	PUMPKINS
25	21	15	12	12
GREEN BEANS	CARROTS	BEETS	SPINACH	RASISHES
23	18	13	10	9
LETTUCE	GREEN PEAS	BROCCOLI	CORN	CABBAGE
			9	5
			PEPPERS	RUTABAGAS
				BRUSSEL SPROUTS
				4
				ASPARAGAS
				4
				CELERY
				4
				CHINESE CABBAGE



Theme 3

Objective 3B

Strengthen Public Education on the Local Food System

Over half (57%) of survey respondents indicated that their knowledge of the local food system was “limited” or “very limited.” By supporting opportunities for the community to directly connect to local food products and growing their own food, the District can continue to strengthen the public’s understanding of the local food system.

Actions

- 3.4 Develop a resource inventory of educational material on food production skills and knowledge on topics such as seed saving, pollinators, native plant, organic pesticides, food forest ecosystem, traditional food systems, etc. Provide the inventory through a variety of avenues including the Saanich website, social media, brochures, other Saanich publications (Our Backyard, Sustainable Saanich Newsletter) or promotion of farming seminars held by outside organizations.
- 3.5 Continue to support the Greater Victoria Libraries and their work with the Lifecycles Project in providing a Seed Library and workshops on food production.
- 3.6 Support local educational institutions and partnering organizations in providing food security related programs such as fresh school lunches, food literacy and access to educational or demonstration food gardens.
- 3.7 Report out on Saanich’s agriculture and food security statistics at the end of each Stats Canada Census cycle (approximately every 5 Years).
- 3.8 Increase public awareness on the benefits of supporting local farmers and the challenges involved for farmers growing food in Saanich.
- 3.9 Support animal husbandry education through organizations in the community, such as BC 4H Clubs.



Saanich Honey Bee Facts

25
aparies

118
colonies of
honey bees





Theme 3

Objective 3C

Support Promotion of Local Farms and Products

The District can play a role in assisting local food producers with branding, signage, and marketing. The use of a brand to identify Saanich-grown or Saanich Peninsula-grown food and food products could help solidify support from the public while enhancing their understanding of the local food system.

Actions

- 3.10 Partner with the Peninsula and Area Agricultural Commission (PAAC) and the broader region to review and assess the success of local branding. As part of the review recommend possible actions for marketing local produce and products.
- 3.11 Develop a rural area sign program, according to best practices, to promote and support farming communities and reduce conflict between non-farm and farm use. Examples could include signs that identify farming areas, slow moving farm vehicles, specific farms, and types of agriculture products.
- 3.12 Continue to include agricultural informational signage along trails and in parks. Information could include historical context, current farming practices, links between farming and the environment, Indigenous food systems, and ways to respect farm use.
- 3.13 Encourage and support urban farming networks and explore opportunities for successful marketing and distribution techniques (see Vancouver Urban Farming Society as an example). This may involve co-hosting an initial meeting for the development of a network in Saanich.
- 3.14 Review the Zoning Bylaw to ensure that new regulations within the Agriculture Land Commission Act regarding agri-tourism are addressed.

Saanich Farms Reporting Livestock



112 farms	Poultry
47 farms	Sheep
23 farms	Cattle
66 farms	Other (including horses)



Theme 4:

Improve the Interconnection between Food Production & Environment

The Saanich Peninsula is one of the best growing regions in Canada. With its mild climate and good soil, the area can support a wide variety of crops. This area is also home to diverse and unique ecosystems that are highly valued by citizens. Optimizing farm operations, while respecting the functioning of natural ecosystems is a key direction for this plan.

There are environmental challenges facing farmers in the region. For instance, the Saanich Peninsula receives a surplus of water in the winter and a deficit in the summer, leading to flooding and drought issues, depending on the time of year. These challenges are expected to intensify as the impacts of climate change become more pronounced over time. Environmental considerations are highlighted through the following objectives.

Objective 4A:

Minimize Wildlife Impacts and Address Noxious Weeds and Invasive Species Concerns

Objective 4B:

Encourage Sustainable Water Management

Objective 4C:

Encourage Farm Practices that Integrate into Natural Ecosystems

Objective 4D:

Encourage the Implementation of Climate Change Adaptation and Mitigation Measures for the Local Food System





Objective 4A

Minimize Wildlife Impacts and Address Noxious Weeds and Invasive Species Concerns

Deer, waterfowl and invasive species pose threats to farmer's livelihoods and ecological health in the region. Over 40% of survey respondents cited wildlife crop damage as a significant challenge to agriculture in the region. The CRD has developed a Regional Deer Management Strategy in collaboration with municipalities, electoral areas, provincial wildlife authorities, stakeholders, and farmers to reduce human-deer conflicts. A Regional Canada Goose Management Strategy was also developed by the CRD to provide tools and guidance to municipalities in an effort to reduce Canada geese impacts.

In addition to wildlife concerns, the spread of noxious weeds and invasive species is an issue threatening the ecological integrity of farmland.

Actions

- 4.1 Work with the Capital Region Invasive Species Project (CRISP) to promote proper management and disposal of invasive species in agricultural areas. This could include the development of public education materials to assist farmers and land owners to comply with the existing Noxious Weeds Bylaw.
- 4.2 Consider participating in CRD initiatives to reduce crop or farm damage due to deer, waterfowl and other wildlife.
- 4.3 Develop educational resources to assist residents in the protection of urban crops from damage by wildlife.
- 4.4 Consider amending the zoning bylaw to allow an extension to fencing based on recommendations developed by the CRD for the protection of food crops from damaging wildlife.



Objective 4B

Encourage Sustainable Water Management

Concerns over stormwater management and irrigation needs were raised during the public engagement process. Several stakeholders also had concerns regarding the continued affordability of water for farming practices.

Actions

4.5 Continue to work to mitigate drainage impacts on agricultural lands from new development, such as:

- Support and encourage development that works within the natural topography and vegetation, rather than blasting and vegetation removal;
- Require storm water retention on the development site;
- Support and encourage development that includes pockets of natural areas that retain vegetation and provide room for natural water retention and absorption; and
- Consult farmers adjacent and downstream from the site.

4.6 Continue to support the Provincial Ministry of Agriculture and the Federal Department of Fisheries and Ocean to balance the stormwater drainage needs of agricultural lands with those of fish and wildlife habitat.

4.7 Support an integrated watershed planning approach for managing surface water, drainage and groundwater. An integrated watershed plan would involve efforts to promote low impact development, healthy stream ecosystems, and the reduction of contamination entering our watercourses and marine environment.

4.8 Continue to support a special water rate for agriculture and assess the potential benefits of extending lower water rates to include urban agriculture operations.

4.9 Encourage gardeners, urban farmers and rural farmers to harvest rainwater and reduce the pressure on existing water sources (e.g. CRD water, aquifers, surface water, etc.).

Water Consumption

Saanich residents consumed 12.7 million cubic metres of potable water in 2016

Overall farm use was 1.6%

7% of Saanich's agricultural land is served with pipe irrigation



Census Canada Data 2016





Objective 4C

Encourage Farm Practices that Integrate into Natural Ecosystems

Stakeholders, including farmers and survey respondents, noted the importance of the natural ecology of the land and environmentally sound farming practices to help replenish the soil, recharge water sources and provide habitat for natural pollinators, beneficial plants and a diversity of wildlife. The District may encourage land owners and farmers to retain a diverse land base and consider the benefits of protecting the natural ecology of the land.

Actions

4.10 Develop strategies to support farmers who establish sustainable farm practices that work with the natural ecosystem and purposefully integrate natural areas for the benefit of the environment and farm function. This could include:

- Encourage efforts of local organizations to partner with farmers to develop ecosystem initiatives that will benefit agriculture and the natural ecosystem (i.e. Langley Sustainable Agriculture Foundation initiative; Delta Farmland and Wildlife Trust); and
- Explore incentives for agricultural landowners who maintain areas that provide natural ecological benefit.

4.11 Increase community awareness on the benefits of maintaining natural ecosystems for agriculture production.

4.12 Encourage farmers to participate in the province’s Environmental Farm Plan (EFP) program and showcase program participants that incorporate:

- Energy efficiency;
- Renewable energy sources;
- Rainwater harvesting;

- Efficient water use;
- Soil management techniques; and
- Retention of greenways for wildlife habitat corridors.

4.13 Support initiatives being led by First Nations to explore the potential for traditional shellfish and other ocean-based food harvesting.

4.14 Promote the development and retention of pollinator habitat on farm land, private property, and public land. Ensure that educational informational is available on types of local pollinators, plants that enhance their habitat and on how pesticide use impacts pollinators.

4.15 Retain the restored wetland area at Haliburton Community Farm as a model of farming and a natural ecosystem functioning together.



Objective 4D

Encourage the Implementation of Climate Change Adaptation and Mitigation Measures for the Local Food System

Understanding how farming and food production impacts climate change and greenhouse gas emissions is an important step towards building a sustainable community and resilient food system. Similarly, understanding how projected climate change impacts can effect local food availability is critical to future agriculture planning.

Food accounts for 1/5 of our community's Carbon footprint from the energy required in its production, processing, distribution and sale. However, a considerable amount of this food is thrown away. Half of this waste is from households, with the average Canadian household wasting \$1,456 worth of food annually, impacting not only our pocket, but also our climate. Given this, reducing household food waste is a major action to mitigate climate change.

GHG emissions associated with our food production, processing and distribution can be reduced considerably through an enhanced local sustainable food system. A variety of climate mitigation measures can be identified and implemented through Saanich's Climate Action and Adaptation Plans, as well as Local Area Plans.

Actions

- 4.16 Support a regional food survey to gain knowledge about local food consumption, food waste and its impacts. Information from the survey can be used to track progress towards a goal of increasing the sustainability of food and agriculture products consumed in the community.
- 4.17 Support development of a local program that educates and encourages the reduction of household food waste similar to the education campaign Love Food Hate Waste program running in Vancouver and the United Kingdom.
- 4.18 Enhance the community's ability to adapt and respond to potential external impacts on our access to food through actions identified in the District's emergency plans.
- 4.19 Explore opportunities to partner with other levels of government in providing strategies for local farmers to prepare and adapt to climate and resource changes (e.g. longer growing season, less available water, etc.) and to reduce GHG emissions in farm operations.





Theme 5:

Manage Land Use to Support Farmland

There is a need for local government to protect agricultural land from the pressure of urban development and to manage potential conflict between farm operations and neighbouring land owners. Land use regulations, management of interface development, and education can help protect agricultural land and increase awareness and understanding of farm operation requirements for those living adjacent or near farms.

Objective 5A:

Maintain the Agricultural Integrity of Farmland

Objective 5B:

Reduce Conflicts between Farming and Non-Farming Areas

Objective 5C:

Improve Access to Information Regarding Saanich's Farmland



Objective 5A

Maintain the Agricultural Integrity of Farmland

A key success in Saanich has been the protection of rural and agricultural land from development. The community continues to support the Agricultural Land Reserve and Urban Containment Boundary. The District also needs to continue to ensure regulations are in place to support the use of farm parcels that are capable of production and encourage land uses that are consistent with a productive agricultural landscape.

Actions

- 5.1 Maintain minimum parcel areas for the Rural (A) zones.
- 5.2 Explore opportunities to enhance business licence bylaw requirements that will support the protection of agricultural lands.
- 5.3 Explore issues and regulations related to the deposit of fill on agricultural land in an effort to increase a commitment to:
 - Protect the agricultural capability of the soil;
 - Protect habitats that support native species of plants and animals;
 - Ensure there is no negative impact on water quality; and
 - Ensure no negative impact to the hydrological patterns in the area.
- 5.4 Investigate the issue of non-farm use on agricultural lands and develop options to address the protection of farmland. This could include:
 - Review regulations to ensure that exemptions for farm use only apply to properties that are classified by BC Assessment as properties with “farm status” for tax purposes;
 - Explore approaches to reduce non-compliance issues on A-zoned land; and
 - Identify non-farm uses that have the potential to impact future food production on agricultural land.
- 5.5 Work with regional partners to find regional and local solutions that will limit the infiltration of non-farm use on agricultural land such as industrial uses, truck parking, and deposit of fill from construction sites.



Objective 5A

Maintain the Agricultural Integrity of Farmland

- 5.6 Develop an information brochure to assist land owners/farmers in completing applications associated with alterations to agriculture lands and review application forms to ensure the process is clear and straightforward.
- 5.7 Require Agricultural Impact Assessments, performed by a Professional Agrologist, to be accompanied with ALR applications such as: non-farm use, deposit of fill, exclusions and/ or subdivision. Agriculture impact assessments should assess impacts to the subject property and adjacent property.
- 5.8 Do not forward applications to the Agricultural Land Commission to subdivide land within the Agricultural Land Reserve unless:
 - a. The owner has continuously owned and occupied the property as a principal residence since December 21, 1972 and no subdivision has occurred since that date; or
 - b. There are already two dwellings on the parcel; or
 - c. It would facilitate changes to an existing public institution; or
 - d. It would increase the agricultural capability of an existing farm as defined by the BC Assessment Authority and there is on-site evidence of keeping animals or land cultivation at a commercial level.
- 5.9 Maintain the Urban Containment Boundary as a principal tool for growth management in Saanich, and encourage all new development to locate within the Urban Containment Boundary in an effort to protect rural agricultural land.
- 5.10 Develop residential footprint policies as per the BC Ministry of Agriculture's Bylaw Standards including a maximum residential footprint size, building setbacks and total floor area of dwelling units.

Objective 5B

Reduce Conflicts Between Farming and Non-farming Areas

The CRD's Regional Food and Agriculture Strategy notes one of its core principles is to “avoid urban/agricultural conflict, mitigate where avoidance is not possible.” During meetings with the Task Force and various local committees, stakeholders noted that competing non-farm uses are one of the top challenges to farming and food production in the District of Saanich. Opportunities exist to improve awareness of farm operations on neighbouring properties and to ensure a suitable interface with urban areas.

Actions

- 5.11 Develop an educational awareness program (online, social media, brochures) to ensure that information is available for the public and real estate industry in an effort to reduce potential conflicts between farmers and non-farm neighbours. This could include information such as:
- What to expect when living on or adjacent to a farm;
 - Regulations for use on agriculture lands;
 - Best management practices for living and working on and adjacent to agricultural lands; and
 - Awareness of the dispute resolution process available to resolve concerns and complaints about agriculture practices established under the Farm Practices Protection Act.
- 5.12 Incorporate farmland protection guidelines within the current development permit area guidelines for future development adjacent to farmland.
- 5.13 Continue to work with bordering municipalities to buffer Saanich rural agricultural lands from conflicting use. Continue to communicate with neighbouring municipalities on agricultural issues.



Objective 5C

Improve Access to Information Regarding Saanich's Rural & Urban Farming

A lack of information regarding the current land base presents a barrier for those who are interested in investing in farming in Saanich. By partnering with provincial and regional government, data can be collected and disseminated publically. This objective also includes providing information regarding the policies and bylaws regarding permitted land uses and normal farm practices on farmland.

Actions

5.14 Work with the CRD and the Ministry of Agriculture to conduct an Agricultural Land Use Inventory (ALUI) and associated Agricultural Water Demand Model (AWDM) for the Region, including a database that is Saanich specific. Expand on the ALUI and AWDM to conduct an inventory and analysis of urban food production opportunities.

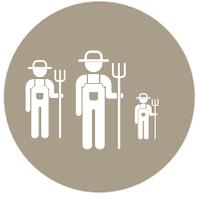
5.15 Develop an information brochure to explain regulations and permit requirements for urban farming operations.

Saanich Farm Operations

84% of farm operations own the land
16% of farm operations rent or lease the land



285 parcels of land were reported to have farm operations in 2016



Theme 6:

Support Multi-Generational Farmers and Emerging Farmers

The average age of farmers in the Saanich region was 57 years in 2016, unchanged since 2011. Furthermore, 60% of local farm operators were over the age of 55 and only 7% were under the age of 35. More significantly, the overall number of farmers in Saanich dropped by nearly 25% in 5 years (from 495 in 2011 to 380 in 2016). This plan seeks to put in place measures to support existing farm operations and help new farmers access land and establish their operations.

Objective 6A:

Support Succession Planning for Farmers

Objective 6B:

Support an Increase in the Local Farm Economy

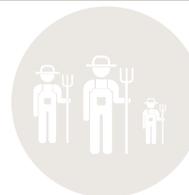
Objective 6C:

Accommodate Farmworker Housing

Objective 6D:

Support Affordable Access to Farmland





Theme 6

Objective 6A

Support Succession Planning for Farmers

Succession planning and the need to support new farmers was noted by 45% of the survey respondents as a significant challenge for farmers in Saanich and the region. Strategies can be developed to encourage young farmers to take on existing operations and make it possible for them to earn a living as a farmer.

Actions

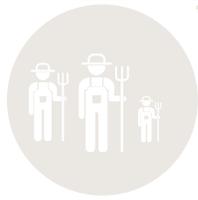
- 6.1 Promote and support apprenticeship and mentorship program(s) that connect new and emerging farmers with those who are transitioning into retirement.
- 6.2 Increase public awareness of succession planning resources developed by the BC Ministry of Agriculture such as the Family Farm Business Succession Plan Checklist, Estate Planning for the BC Farmer, and the succession planning documents posted on smartfarmbc.ca

Saanich Farm Operators

60% of farm operators in Saanich are 55 years of age or older



Census Canada Data 2016



Theme 6

Objective 6B

Support an Increase in the Local Farm Economy

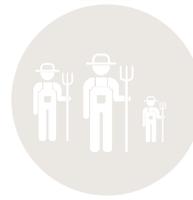
Farmers, stakeholders, and survey respondents indicate that economic viability of food and agriculture businesses is tenuous. While local governments may not play a principal role in improving the food economy they can be stakeholders in fostering relationships, supporting access to infrastructure, supporting agriculture expansion and diversity, and possibly helping to connect producers with food hubs and buyers.

There is a desire to increase production of local food within the community. This could be accomplished by encouraging increased production on underutilized parcels of farmland and facilitating the development of niche products.

Actions

- 6.3 Support efforts of farm operators to enhance farmland and increase crop yield through activities such as: improving water supply; erecting fencing; undertaking drainage improvements; improving soil capabilities; and protecting natural ecosystems that benefit agriculture.
 - Participating with organizations that connect wholesale, retail, and institutional buyers with local producers. This work could help farmers to adjust their crop planning to meet the needs of buyers and to help buyers in their plans to support local farmers.
- 6.4 Work with the CRD and the Ministry of Agriculture to support business development initiatives for the region's food and agriculture sector, including agritourism.
- 6.5 Provide support for the local food supply chain through projects, such as:
 - Providing "how to guidelines" for producers interested in selling product to retailers and institutional organizations. Guidelines could include a checklist of considerations, questions to ask the purchaser/client, safety considerations, and summary of regulations.; and
- 6.6 Support the development of innovative farm operations to diversify farm production, expand farm business, increase economic development, increase local food production, and improve farm income. Innovations may involve ideas such as: specialty crops, diversification of products, new growing techniques, new cultivation or processing techniques, partnering opportunities, or value added projects.
- 6.7 Explore incentives to encourage farming as the primary use on all agricultural land (including underutilized farmland).





Theme 6

Objective 6C

Accommodate Farmworker Housing

Stakeholder comments identified the need for farmworker housing for seasonal workers on the farm. Farmworker housing is not currently permitted in A-1, A-2, or A-3 Zones. Although Saanich farms are in close proximity to residential housing, some farmers in the area find it difficult to retain farmworkers due to lack of housing. Temporary rental housing for seasonal farmworkers is more difficult to find.

Actions

6.8 Develop a policy for farmworker housing including considerations such as:

- Criteria for the need of farmworker housing on agriculture land;
- Requirement for a review on a case by case basis;
- Parameters for construction and siting;
- Regulations for monitoring and enforcing the temporary aspect of the housing;
- Servicing of temporary housing;
- Temporary or permanent housing; and
- On or off site options.

Paid Agricultural Work in Saanich

The majority of paid agricultural work (73%) is temporary or seasonal. Part-time or full-time year-round employment is 27%.

265 Employees

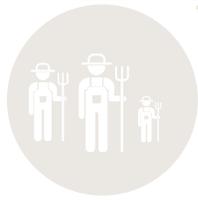


10% Full-time, year round

18% Part-time, year round

73% Seasonal or temporary employment

Census Canada Data 2016



Theme 6

Objective 6D

Support Affordable Access to Farmland

A total of 73% of respondents to the survey noted the high cost of farmland and capital inputs as a significant challenge in Saanich. Farmers responded overwhelmingly through the survey and one-on-one interviews that the cost of land, taxes, and inputs are some of the top concerns facing agriculture in the area. Over 200 young people attended a Farmer2Farmer workshop in the Spring of 2016, indicating that they are eager to farm, but lack the land they need. With appropriate policies and community initiatives in place, some of the burden of accessing land can be alleviated.

Actions

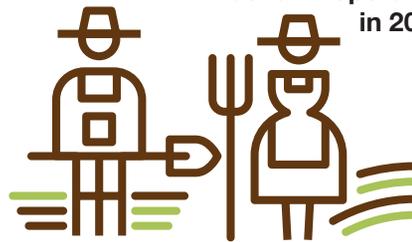
6.9 Increase the potential for farmers to access land by working with non-government organizations that help link new and existing farmers and land owners. Work with these organizations to provide:

- Access to information on alternative farm business development and land tenure models (e.g. stratas, co-ops, corporations); and
- A template for land sharing or leasing agreements for the purpose of farming.

6.10 Support the CRD in efforts to establish a regional food and farmland trust.

Saanich Farm Operators

380 people reported to be farm operators in 2016.



Census Canada Data 2016





Theme 7:

Expand Opportunities for Urban Agriculture

Interest in food production in urban areas has expanded dramatically in recent years and is seen as a key way to supplement conventional agriculture and bring community members in touch with local food and natural processes. Public feedback indicated a strong interest in broadening the range of urban food production opportunities on both private and public land.

Objective 7A:

Increase Food Production Opportunities on Public Land

Objective 7B:

Expand Opportunities for Small-scale Agriculture in Urban Areas



Objective 7A

Increase Food Production Opportunities on Public Land

Engagement feedback identified the need to expand urban food production opportunities, such as increasing the number of community gardens, edible landscaping opportunities, and food production locations in District gardens and parks. Supporting these within the context of other community objectives and health and safety considerations will help to expand access to and awareness of local food.

Actions

- 7.1 Support community gardening by working with community partners to identify, secure, and retain suitable garden sites; and contribute to site development activities (for example site planning and design, surveying, clearing, and irrigation improvements) as outlined in Saanich’s Community Garden Policy.
- 7.2 Supplement the existing Council Policy for community gardens by preparing guidelines to assist community groups who wish to initiate a food garden project. The guidelines could include:
- Ideas for finding land for the garden;
 - A template for preparing a proposal and preparing a use agreement; and
 - Steps to establishing the physical garden (see City of Vancouver, Community Garden Resources).
- 7.3 Update the Boulevard Management Bylaw and the approved plant list to allow edible landscaping and pollinator habitat on boulevards within specific criteria.
- 7.4 Create a strategy to promote the planting and harvesting of food producing trees and plants in public areas. The strategy should include consideration for:
- Promoting community awareness of local food systems;
 - The concept of “urban food forests”;
 - Public health and safety;
 - Avoiding impacts to natural areas; and
 - On-going maintenance.
- 7.5 Demonstrate sustainable urban agriculture and community food security by showcasing food production and food accessibility on municipal property. Demonstration projects could include:
- Growing produce in landscape beds;
 - Creating pollinator habitat;
 - Providing space and opportunity for public food hub operations; and
 - Showcasing water conservation techniques.





Objective 7B

Expand Opportunities for Small-scale Agriculture in Urban Areas

Significant community interest has been expressed around enabling and supporting small-scale agriculture operations in urban areas inside the Urban Containment Boundary. Backyard spaces provide a significant opportunity to build community capacity and make a contribution to food self-sufficiency.

Actions

- 7.6 Explore regulatory changes to broaden opportunities for small scale urban agriculture that will enhance access to local healthy food, including farm gate sales in urban areas.
- 7.7 Review and update the Business License Bylaw to coordinate and support the special characteristics of agriculture businesses in urban areas.
- 7.8 Support efforts of non-profit agencies in the gleaning of fruits and vegetables.



IMPLEMENTATION STRATEGY





Implementation Strategy

Purpose of Implementation Strategy

The implementation strategy compliments 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.

Implementation Considerations

The Agriculture and Food Security Plan will act as a guiding document for Council, staff, and the community for the next 10 to 15 years. There are a variety of recommended actions provided in the AFSP. They are a combination of activities that can be either led or supported by the District of Saanich. In the case of an action that identifies the municipality in a supporting role, another organization may have to take the lead role. This organization may be governmental (e.g. AGRI, CRD) or non-governmental (e.g. CR-FAIR, LifeCycles). At this time, no external organization has been asked to commit to these actions, however, the successful implementation of the Plan will require ongoing collaboration with community partners.

The rate of action will largely be dictated by resources available for implementation. AFSP priorities will need to be balanced with other Council priorities and fiscal considerations. Dedicated staff resources will enable focused efforts on key priorities and a sustained effort to liaise and collaborate with regional and community partners.

Types of Actions

Priority Actions

Nearly half of the actions in the Plan are characterized as priority actions, meaning they are specific activities that can be undertaken to enhance agriculture and food security in Saanich. Based on community input, previous Council direction and potential opportunities, priority actions have been grouped into three phases.

The intention is that all phases are worked through sequentially to implement the Plan. However, the priorities are subject to change based on opportunities that arise and direction from Council.

Ongoing Actions

Just over half of all the recommended actions are identified as “ongoing”. These actions span all seven themes and point to the need to establish (or maintain) relationships and partnerships that will support the local food system. The ongoing actions highlight much of the work already being done, emphasize the importance of supporting a range of partner initiatives and provide principled guidance to ensure decision-making works towards the objectives of the Agriculture and Food Security Plan.



First Steps for Implementation

The following steps are proposed to implement the AFSP:

1. Dedicate staff time towards implementing the AFSP beginning in 2018. This could entail hiring a foods system coordinator or assigning the responsibility for plan implementation to an existing staff member.
2. Adopt an initial workplan for the first 1-2 years of the AFSP, Focusing on Phase 1 Priority Actions.
3. Establish or appoint a committee to support and advise staff and Council on the implementation of the Plan.
4. Identify actions in the workplan that will require additional funding outside of dedicated staff time (e.g. consultants' time, event costs).
5. Beginning in 2018, ensure that the AFSP is designated as a line item in the municipality's annual budget for dedicated staff time and for additional funds that may be needed.
6. Review the AFSP workplan on a regular basis by hosting an annual prioritization workshop with a new Agriculture and Food Advisory Committee or an existing Council Committee chosen for this purpose.

Other key components of the Plan implementation may include:

- Promoting the completion of the Plan to the Saanich community;
- Participating in activities led by partnering organizations to implement supportive actions; and
- Monitoring progress of the AFSP implementation and delivering regular evaluation reports.

The following tables serve to organize the recommended actions into:

- Priority Actions - Phase 1
- Priority Actions - Phase 2
- Priority Actions - Phase 3
- Ongoing Actions²



2. For brevity, the actions are described here in abbreviated form. For the full content of each action please refer to the recommended actions in the previous section.

Priority Actions - Phase 1

	Action	Department
	1.1 Provide staff resources to take a leadership role in the implementation of the Agriculture and Food Security Plan.	Planning
	1.2 Establish a Saanich Agriculture and Food Advisory Committee, or delegate an existing committee to support Plan implementation.	Planning
	1.9 Implement the Council-approved concept plan for Panama Flats to stimulate food production and bring new farmers onto the land.	Planning
	2.2 Explore regulatory changes that support the establishment of farmers markets within the District of Saanich.	Planning
	2.4 Through the Local Area Plan review process explore opportunities to increase access to local food in close proximity to residential areas.	Planning
	3.12 Review the Zoning Bylaw to ensure that new regulations within the Agriculture Land Commission Act regarding agri-tourism are addressed.	Planning Engineering
	4.3 Develop educational resources to assist residents in the protection of urban crops from damage by wildlife.	Planning
	4.17 Support development of a local program that educates and encourages the reduction of household food waste.	Planning

Note: Many of the Actions in this section have been summarized. Please refer to the "The Plan" section for the complete action.

Priority Actions - Phase 1

	Action	Department	
	5.2	Explore opportunities to enhance business licence bylaw requirements to support the protection of agriculture lands.	Planning
	5.4	Investigate the issue of non-farm use on agriculture lands and develop options to address the protection of farmland.	Planning Inspections & Bylaw Services
	5.12	Develop residential footprint policies as per the BC Ministry of Agriculture's Bylaw Standards including a maximum residential footprint size, building setbacks and total floor area of dwelling units.	Planning
	5.16	Work with the CRD and the Ministry of Agriculture to conduct an Agricultural Land Use Inventory and associated Agricultural Water Demand Model (AWDM).	Planning
	6.8	Develop a policy for farmworker housing.	Planning
	6.10	Support the CRD in efforts to establish a regional food and farmland trust.	Planning
	7.3	Update the approved plant list referred to in the Boulevard Management Bylaw to allow edible landscaping and pollinator habitat on boulevards within specific criteria.	Engineering Parks & Recreation

Priority Actions - Phase 2

	Action	Department
	1.10 Explore the possibility of including a grant category under the District of Saanich Community Grants Policy to support initiatives that focus on local food security.	Planning Finance
	2.3 Conduct a community food assessment to identify existing food related activities, resources, and physical assets to help understand where there may be gaps in access to affordable food.	Planning
	2.10 Conduct a public land inventory to determine the potential of Saanich-owned lands to accommodate community food production and community food processing operations.	Planning Parks & Recreation
	2.19 Review and update policies and bylaws to ensure organics and composting activities are promoted in the community and explore ways to encourage compost collection facilities in all new development.	Planning Engineering
	3.7 Report out on Saanich's agriculture and food security statistics.	Planning
	3.8 Increase public awareness on the benefits of supporting local farmers and the challenges involved for farmers growing food in Saanich.	Planning
	3.9 Develop a rural area sign program, according to best management practices, to promote and support farming communities.	Parks & Recreation

Note: Many of the Actions in this section have been summarized. Please refer to the "The Plan" section for the complete action.

Priority Actions - Phase 2

	Action	Department
	4.4 Consider amending the zoning bylaw to allow an extension to fencing based on recommendations developed by the CRD for the protection of food crops from damaging wildlife.	Planning
	4.10 Develop strategies to support farmers who establish sustainable farm practices that work with the natural ecosystem.	Planning
	4.11 Increase community awareness on the benefits of maintaining natural ecosystems for agriculture production.	Planning
	5.3 Explore issues and regulations related to the deposit of fill to reduce impacts on agricultural land.	Planning Engineering
	5.11 Develop an information brochure to explain regulations and permit requirements for urban farming operations.	Planning
	7.2 Supplement the existing Council Policy for community gardens by preparing guidelines to assist community groups who wish to initiate a food garden project.	Planning
	7.5 Explore regulatory changes to broaden opportunities for small scale urban agriculture.	Planning
	7.6 Review and update the Business License Bylaw to coordinate and support the special characteristics of agriculture businesses in urban areas.	Planning Finance



Priority Actions - Phase 3

	Action	Department
	2.8 Increase Municipal staff awareness of opportunities available to access healthy local food.	Planning Parks & Recreation
	2.11 Work with the CRD and other regional Municipalities to inventory existing food system infrastructure in the region and assess the potential demand for the future.	Planning
	3.4 Develop a resource inventory of educational material on food production skills and knowledge on topics such as seed saving, pollinators, native plant, organic pesticides, food forest ecosystem, traditional food systems, etc. Provide the inventory through a variety of avenues including the Saanich website, social media, brochures, other Saanich publications (Our Backyard, Sustainable Saanich Newsletter) or promotion of farming seminars held by outside organizations.	Planning
	3.10 Partner with the Peninsula and Area Agricultural Commission (PAAC) and the broader region to review local branding of food products.	Planning
	3.13 Encourage and support urban farming networks and explore opportunities for successful marketing and distribution techniques.	Planning
	4.14 Promote the development and retention of pollinator habitat.	Planning Parks & Recreation
	4.16 Support a regional food survey to gain knowledge about local food consumption, food waste and its impacts so as to track progress towards a goal of increasing the sustainability of food and agriculture products consumed in the community.	Planning
	4.19 Explore opportunities to partner with other levels of government in providing strategies for local farmers to prepare and adapt to future climate and resource changes.	Planning

Priority Actions - Phase 3

	Action	Department
	5.6 Develop an information brochure to assist land owners/farmers in completing applications associated with alterations to agriculture lands and review application forms to ensure the process is clear and straightforward.	Planning
	5.9 Develop an educational awareness program to reduce potential conflicts between farmers and non-farm neighbours.	Legislative
	5.12 Incorporate farmland protection guidelines within the current Development Permit Area guidelines for future development adjacent to farmland.	Planning
	6.5 Provide support for the local food supply chain by enhancing connections between stakeholders.	Planning
	6.7 Explore incentives to encourage farming as the primary use on all agricultural land (including underutilized farmland).	Planning
	6.9 Increase the potential for farmers to access land by working with non-government organizations that help link new and existing farmers and land owners.	Planning
	7.4 Create a strategy to promote the planting and harvesting of food producing trees and plants in public areas.	Planning Parks & Recreation



Ongoing Actions

Action

Department



1.3 Continue to appoint a Council representative to attend the PAAC.

1.4 Continue to refer to PAAC for advice and comment on agriculture issues.

1.5 Continue to build on commitment to agriculture and enhancement of the local food system as part of updates to the OCP and Zoning Bylaw.

Planning

1.6 Ensure that objectives of this plan are considered during review and update of Saanich plans and bylaws.

Planning

1.7 As part of updates to plans and bylaws, consider supporting a wide variety of food production and harvesting.

Planning

1.8 Encourage developers to make community contributions that protect farmland or provide funding to enhance food security.

Planning

1.10 Continue to support the cultivation of land and incubator farms at Haliburton Community Farm.

Various
Departments

1.12 Continue to support the CRD's Regional Food and Agriculture Strategy and participate in the Regional Food and Agriculture Task Force.

Various
Departments



2.1 Continue to engage with and support local organizations who are working in the areas of food security, food access and food self-sufficiency.

Planning

2.5 Continue to provide food related educational opportunities through programs in the Parks & Recreation "Active Living Guide".

Parks & Recreation

2.6 Work with the CRD to develop policies and programs to reduce the waste of food across the community and region.

Planning

Note: Many of the Actions in this section have been summarized. Please refer to the "The Plan" section for the complete action.

Ongoing Actions



	Action	Department
2.7	If the opportunity arises, offer to support First Nations in their efforts to improve food security and increase public awareness of local indigenous food systems.	Planning Parks & Recreation
2.9	Continue to support outreach organizations that provide food security programming in the community, such as food skills workshops, community cooking and feasting events, a nutritious food bank pantry, garden skills education, etc.	Planning Parks & Recreation
2.12	Support existing food processors within Saanich and encourage the development of new food processing operations when the opportunity arises.	Planning
2.13	Partner with existing public programs to ensure the needs of farmers and food safety are addressed.	Planning Parks & Recreation
2.14	As part of future reviews of industrial zoned lands, consider impacts on the availability of land that permits food processing, storage and production facilities.	Planning
2.15	Support community food hubs and their work in redirecting food resources that would otherwise be disposed.	Planning
2.16	Support local organizations, such as the Victoria Compost Education Centre in their efforts to encourage composting in Saanich.	Planning
2.17	Continue to provide leaf mulch or compost material to non-profit organizations, community gardens, and school gardens when supply is available.	Parks & Recreation
2.18	Work with the CRD to develop long term solutions to regional organic matter recycling to benefit agriculture and the environment	Planning Engineering





Ongoing Actions



	Action	Department
3.1	Continue to assist with the promotion of agricultural events, food festivals, and celebrations.	Planning Parks & Recreation
3.2	Support the development, updating and promotion of community-based maps or directories that showcases local farms, food businesses, and food organizations.	Planning
3.3	Support First Nations communities, if the opportunity arises, in sharing information about traditional foods and traditional food harvesting.	Planning
3.5	Continue to support the Greater Victoria Libraries and their work with the Lifecycles Project in providing a Seed Library and workshops on food production.	Planning
3.6	Support the local School Districts and partner organizations in providing programs such as Farm to School lunches, food literacy and educational produce gardens.	Planning
3.9	Support animal husbandry education through organizations in the community, such as BC 4H Clubs.	Planning
3.12	Continue to include agricultural informational signage along trails and in parks.	Parks & Recreation
4.1	Work with the Capital Region Invasive Species Project (CRISP) to promote proper management and disposal of invasive species in agricultural areas.	Planning
4.2	Participate in CRD initiatives to reduce crop or farm damage due to deer, waterfowl, and other wildlife.	Planning Parks & Recreation
4.5	Continue to work to mitigate drainage impacts on agriculture lands from new development.	Planning Engineering



Ongoing Actions



	Action	Department
4.6	Continue to support the Provincial Ministry of Agriculture and the Federal Department of Fisheries and Oceans to balance stormwater drainage needs for agricultural lands with the needs of fish and wildlife habitat.	Planning Engineering
4.7	Support an integrated watershed planning approach for managing surface water, drainage and groundwater.	Planning Engineering
4.8	Continue to support a special water rate for agriculture and assess the potential benefits of extending lower water rates to include urban agriculture operations.	Planning Engineering
4.9	Encourage gardeners, urban farmers and rural farmers to harvest rainwater and reduce the pressure on existing water sources.	Planning Engineering
4.12	Encourage farmers to participate in the Province's Environmental Farm Plan (EFP) program and showcase the farms that participate.	Planning
4.13	Support initiatives being led by First Nations to explore the potential for traditional harvest of shellfish and other ocean based food.	Planning
4.15	Retain the restored wetland area at Haliburton Community Farm as a model of farming and a natural ecosystem functioning together.	Planning
4.18	Enhance the community's ability to adapt and respond to potential external impacts on our access to food through actions identified in the District's emergency plans.	Fire





Ongoing Actions



	Action	Department
5.1	Maintain minimum parcel areas for agriculturally zoned land.	Planning
5.5	Work with regional partners to find regional and local solutions that will limit the infiltration of non-farm use on agricultural land.	Planning
5.7	Require Agricultural Impact Assessments, performed by a Professional Agrologist, to be accompanied with ALR applications.	Planning
5.8	Do not forward applications to the Agricultural Land Commission to subdivide land within the Agricultural Land Reserve unless proper criteria is provided, as outlined in Saanich OCP.	Planning
5.9	Maintain the Urban Containment Boundary as a principal tool for growth management in Saanich, and encourage all new development to locate within the Urban Containment Boundary in an effort to protect rural agricultural land.	Planning
5.13	Continue to work with bordering municipalities to buffer Saanich rural agricultural lands from conflicting use.	Planning

Ongoing Actions

	Action	Department
	6.1 Promote and support apprenticeship and mentorship programs that connect new and emerging farmers with those who are transitioning into retirement.	Planning
	6.2 Increase public awareness of succession planning resources available in the community.	Planning
	6.3 Support efforts of farm operators to enhance farmland and increase crop yield.	Planning
	6.4 Work with the CRD and the Ministry of Agriculture to support business development initiatives for the region's food and agriculture sector.	Planning
	6.6 Support the development of innovative farm operations to diversify farm production, expand farm business, increase economic development, increase local food production, and improve farm income.	Planning
		7.1 Support community gardening by working with community partners to identify, secure, and retain suitable garden sites; and contribute to site development activities as outlined in Saanich's Community Garden Policy.
7.5 Showcase examples of sustainable urban agriculture and community food security on municipal property.		Planning Parks & Recreation
7.7 Support efforts of non-profit agencies in the gleaning of fruits and vegetables.		Planning Parks & Recreation



MONITORING & EVALUATION STRATEGY





Monitoring and Evaluation Strategy

Purpose

A monitoring and evaluation strategy has been developed to help guide the implementation process of the AFSP. It includes measurable performance indicators to determine progress of the Plan over time. Through tracking the indicators, an assessment will be provided both of how many actions are being accomplished, but also of the general state of agriculture and food security in Saanich.

Overview

To create the monitoring and evaluation strategy, a series of short and long term performance indicators have been identified. Many of the indicators presented here are similar to targets being tracked by the monitoring outcomes of Towards Good Food 2025, a food system initiative being led by CRFAIR.

Indicators may be reviewed and adjusted as changes occur over time within the local food system or data availability changes.

List of Indicators

The following tables presents indicators for each of the seven themes of the Plan. Each indicator is followed by the:

- Suggested frequency of evaluation;
- Baseline measurement, if available;
- Desired trend for the future; and
- Source of the information.

The indicators do not attempt to provide a complete analysis of all variables, but rather assess general trends and provide a picture of community health and the effectiveness of Plan implementation.

Performance indicators include:

- Updates and amendments to some Saanich policies and regulations to further support agriculture.
- Increase in number of farms;
- Increase in number of farm operators;
- Enhance farm profitability;
- Increase in community gardens within Saanich;
- Presence of a farmers market in Saanich; and
- Increase in the number of business licences for local food retailers.



Indicator and Evaluation Table

Theme	Indicator	Frequency	Baseline	Desired Trend	Source
Theme 1: Provide a foundation to take action	Number of AFSP Phase 1, 2 and 3 priority actions implemented	Annual	n/a	Steady progress	Staff research
	Number of Plans, Bylaws or Policies updated to incorporate AFSP objectives	Annual	n/a	Steady progress	Staff research
Theme 2: Improve self-sufficiency	Number of business licenses for local food retailers	Annual	33 (EST)	Increase	Tempest
	Number of agriculture and food education and/or networking programs in Saanich. (eg. Food growing courses, food hubs, kitchen programs, farmer networks)	Annual	9	Increase	Staff research
	Organics diverted from waste stream to composting	Annual	24,367 tonnes	Increase	Saanich / CRD
	Number of farms with community sponsored agriculture food box programs (CSA).	Annual	6	Increase	Staff research
Theme 3: Strengthen awareness	Number of local (& regional) food related festivals / events in Saanich	Annual	5	Increase	Staff research
	% Farms report using farm gate sales, stands, kiosks, U-pick	5 Year	90%	Maintain	Stats Canada
Theme 4: Connect food production and the environment	Number of organic farms in Saanich.	Annual	3	Increase	Staff research & COABC website
	Hectares of land in ALR with environmental covenants	Annual	16.07 ha. 0.9% of ALR land	Increase	Saanich





Theme	Indicator	Frequency	Baseline	Desired Trend	Source
Theme 5: Manage land use to support farm land	Hectares of land in Saanich within the ALR	Annual	1,843.2 ha	Maintain or increase	Saanich
	An Agricultural Land Use Inventory has been completed.	Once	n/a	Complete & follow-up with updates	
	number of properties qualifying for Farm tax status	Annual	401	Increase	Tempest
Theme 6: Support multi-generational and new farmers	Average age of farmer	5 Year	57.3	Decrease	Stats Canada
	Average profit rate for farms (2016)	5 Year	20.97%	Increase	Stats Canada
	Number of farms	5 Year	285	Increase	Stats Canada
	Number of farm operators	5 Year	380	Increase	Stats Canada
	Number of farms with succession planning	5 Year		Increase	Stats Canada
Theme 7: Expand opportunities for urban agriculture	Number of community gardens	5 Year	6	Increase	Staff research
	Number of garden plots (size ranges 100 sqft to 100 sqft)	Annual	280	Increase	Staff research
	number of opportunities to sell produce in urban areas (e.g. farm stands, food trucks, farm markets)	Annual	n/a	Increase	Staff research
	Number of Farmers Markets within Saanich	5 Year	1	Increase	Stats Canada

Footnotes

Ave farm Profit Rate:

13,718,239 (Rev) - 11,339,951 (Cost) = 2,378,288 (Gross Profit)

2,378,288 (Net Profit) / 11,339,951 (Cost) = 20.97%

APPENDICES





APPENDIX A - Definitions and Acronyms

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. (Similar definitions to agricultural plans in BC).

Food Security

Food security exists when all people at all times have access to sufficient, safe, nutritious, affordable food to maintain a healthy and active life. (World Health Organization).

Food System

A sustainable community food system is a collaborative network that integrates sustainable food production, processing, distribution, consumption and waste management in order to enhance the environmental, economic and social health of a particular place. Farmers, consumers and communities partner to create a more locally based, self-reliant food economy. (Gafsi, Mohamed, & Favreau, Jean Luc. (2013). Indicator-Based Method for Assessing Organic Farming Sustainability. Methods and Procedures for Building Sustainable Farming Systems)

Food Self-sufficiency

Food self-sufficiency is being able to meet consumption needs (particularly for staple food crops) from own production rather than by buying or importing. (Food Secure Canada)

Food Resiliency

Having the ability to continue to provide subsistence food in a time of disaster or difficulty.

Backyard Gleaning

Harvesting fruits or vegetables in backyards where the land owner provides permission.

Carbon Footprint

Totals of greenhouse gas emissions caused by a source, expressed as a carbon dioxide equivalent.

Food Hubs

A strategically located facility with a business management structure facilitating the aggregation, storage, processing, distribution, and/or marketing of locally/regionally produced food products. Food hub refers to both facilities that distributes food to increase food security in the community and/or facilities that are set up to provide small farmers access to a markets they would normally have be able to access.

- AFSPI | Agriculture and Food Security Plan
- AGRI | BC Ministry of Agriculture
- ALC | Agricultural Land Commission
- ALR | Agricultural Land Reserve
- ALUI | Agricultural Land Use Inventory
- ARDCorp | Agriculture Research and Development Corporation
- BCAA | BC Assessment Authority
- BMP | Best Management Practices
- CRD | Capital Regional District
- CR-FAIR | Capital Region Food and Agriculture Initiatives Roundtable
- DPA | Development Permit Area
- EFP | Environmental Farm Plan
- FPPA | Farm Practices Protection (Right to Farm) Act
- IH | Island Health
- LGA | Local Government Act
- LUI | Land Use Inventory
- MoE | BC Ministry of Environment
- OCP | Official Community Plan
- PAAC | Peninsula & Area Agricultural Commission
- ZB | Zoning Bylaw

APPENDIX B - Summary of Engagement

The following approaches were used to engage stakeholders. The purpose of each is indicated as well as a description of how the tool has been used in the process to date.

Tool	Purpose	Activities to Date
<p>Media coverage</p>	<p>District staff created media content along with assistance from the consulting team. This included press releases and Public Service Announcements (PSAs) to advertise the open house and the online survey.</p>	<p>Press Releases:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • May 18, 2016 • July 27, 2016 • December 19, 2016 <p>PSAs:</p> <p>Times Colonist</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • May 21, 2016 <p>Saanich News:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • May 18, 25, 2016 • November 10, 2016 • January 13, 2016 • November 24, 27, 2017 <p>Facebook</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • May 24, 2016
<p>Website, Social Media, Postcard and Planning Process Brochure</p>	<p>A dedicated web page has been created for the project and is hosted by the District. Promotion of public events, such as the Open House and Online Survey, was conducted through the webpage and through the social media. A postcard was developed and distributed throughout the community to advertise the online survey and an information brochure was distributed at regional farming and food events.</p>	<p>The website can be viewed at: saanich.ca</p> <p>Postcards were distributed at key events and community facilities throughout the month of May 2016.</p> <p>The information brochure was distributed at the March 2017 Farmer 2 Farmer event and a regional food garden tour in August 2017.</p> <p>Postcards were distributed for workshop from December 2016 to January 2017.</p> <p>Postcards were distributed regarding the Draft Plan from November 2017 to January 2018.</p>
<p>Task Force (TF) meetings</p>	<p>The Task Force acts as a touchstone throughout the planning process, providing guidance and advice at key junctures. The nine members of the Task Force represent various aspects of the local food system. There were five Task Force meetings held 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 purpose of the Task Force meetings were as follows:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Introduction, scoping and review of public engagement strategy. 2. Vision statement, goals, and objectives. 3. Identification of issues and opportunities. 4. Review and refine proposed priority issues and recommended actions. 5. Feedback on the draft AFSP themes, objectives and actions. 	<p>Five Task Force meetings occurred.</p> <p>March 3, 2016: Meeting #1 – Introduction to the project and the scope of the project, review of community engagement strategy, and stakeholder mapping exercise.</p> <p>March 31, 2016: Meeting #2 – Vision statement was drafted and an initial discussion on key issues.</p> <p>April 21, 2016: Meeting #3 – A SWAT analysis was workshopped.</p> <p>September 22, 2016: Meeting #4 – Discussion on key themes and brainstorming for recommended actions.</p> <p>March 29, 2017 – Review and consult on themes and recommended actions and review of draft implementation strategy.</p>





Tool	Purpose	Activities to Date
Phone Calls and Emails	In order to target specific stakeholders to let them know about the online survey, open house, and otherwise engage in a discussion with them regarding issues and opportunities for the AFSP, emails and phone calls were used.	Members of the Task Force, District staff and consultants used their existing networks to spread the advertisement of the online survey and the open houses held in May 2016 and January 2017.
Community Meetings	District staff attended several community events and meetings in order to distribute postcards and brochures with links to the website and information to talk to stakeholders about the AFSP.	Committee meetings were attended by District staff during April and May 2016. Retail stores, farms, and community centres were visited by District staff and members of the consulting team between February and June 2016, again in May and June 2017, and in November 2017. A full list is provided in the section below.
Open House	<p>The intent of the open house is to provide members of the public with information regarding the AFSP, the project's progress, and to allow opportunities to collect input and feedback on draft deliverables.</p> <p>Three Open Houses were held for the project:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. May 2016 2. January 2017 3. November 2017 <p>Open House #1 was held on May 26th. The purpose of the first Open House was to launch the project publically, refine the vision statement, and obtain initial feedback on issues and opportunities. Launching the survey was another objective of the first Open House. Paper copies of the survey were available for attendees to fill out.</p> <p>Open House #2 was held to present the themes, objectives and potential actions to stakeholders and the public. This open house had information boards and interactive boards in the room to give individuals time to read through and provide feedback. A workshop was also held where participants could take part in conversations regarding the major themes and potential action for the Plan. Several members of the Task Force attended the event as well.</p> <p>Open House #3 was held to present the Draft Plan to the public and solicit feedback on actions and priorities.</p>	<p>The first Open House was held from 3pm to 7pm on May 26, 2016.</p> <p>There were approximately 40 people who participated in the event, which was facilitated by staff and consultants. There was good discussion with those members of the public who attended regarding a diversity of topics including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Non-farm use of agricultural land. • Compliance and enforcement issues within the ALR. • Improving local food education programs at school. • Water resource management and climate change. • Future outreach and engagement opportunities regarding the AFSP. <p>A copy of feedback received during the open house was posted on the District's website.</p> <p>The second Open House and Workshop was held on January 18, 2017. There were approximately 60 people who attended and participated in the event. The event provided attendees an opportunity to peruse project information posted on large boards as well as participate in deeper discussions regarding the proposed key themes and recommended actions in a small group format.</p> <p>The third Open House was held on November 30, 2017. Approximately 40 people attended to review the Plan, speak to staff and the consultant and provide feedback on the actions and implementation strategy</p>

Tool	Purpose	Activities to Date
Survey	<p>Two surveys were prepared to solicit feedback from the public. The first survey available from May to the end of July 2016 solicited feedback on a proposed vision for the AFSP and potential policy opportunities, alternatives, and strategies.</p> <p>The survey was prepared in both digital and hard copy formats. A postcard was also developed to guide people to the online survey. The postcards were left at locations that are frequented by the public such as transit stops, the library, retailers, and recreation centres.</p> <p>The second survey was available in November and December 2017 and asked for feedback on the actions in the Plan and the priorities outlined in the implementation strategy.</p>	<p>An online survey was made available during the planning process from May 12 to July 31 using SurveyMonkey. Hardcopies of the same questions were also available for completion.</p> <p>A total of 289 people filled out the 2016 survey, 30 (just over 10%) of which self-identified as farmers.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 1st survey ran May 12 to July 31, 2016 • 2nd survey ran November 26 to December 15, 2017 <p>A total of 49 people filled out the 2017 survey.</p>



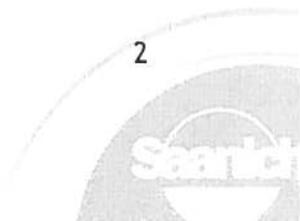


**Attachment B:
District of Saanich
Agriculture and Food Security Plan
Engagement Summary**

June 2018

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Introduction

This report provides a summary of engagement activities that have taken place during the development of the District of Saanich's *Agriculture and Food Security Plan*. A review of the project's engagement strategy is provided followed by an assessment of who was engaged and how they were engaged. Any gaps in stakeholder engagement are also identified.

The Engagement Strategy

Engagement for the *Agriculture and Food Security Plan* has been based on a strategy that was developed at the beginning of the project to effectively and collaboratively engage the Saanich community and key stakeholders in the planning process. The strategy uses a combination of the International Association of Public Participation (IAP2)'s core values, as well as principles of Community Based Social Marketing (CBSM).

The development of the AFSP involves working with a variety of community members and stakeholders to:

- **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; and
- **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.

The following desired outcomes are stated within the engagement strategy:

- 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.



Engagement Approaches

The following approaches were used to engage stakeholders. The purpose of each is indicated as well as a description of how the tool has been used in the process to date.

Tool	Purpose	Activities to Date
Media coverage	District staff created media content along with assistance from the consulting team. This included press releases and newspaper ads to advertise the open house and the online survey.	Press release: May 18, 2016, Dec. 2016, July 2017 & Nov. 2017. Advertisements: May 18, 20, & 24, 2016 Saanich News May 21 Times Colonist May 25 Saanich News Jan 13, 2017 Saanich News Articles: Nov. 9, 2016 Nov. 27, 2017
Website and Postcard	A dedicated web page was created for the project and is hosted by the District. Promotion of public events, such as the Open Houses, pop-up events and Online Surveys, were conducted through the webpage and through the social media. Postcards were distributed throughout the community to advertise the online surveys and some events.	The website can be viewed at: http://www.saanich.ca/food Facebook & Twitter throughout the process. Postcards were distributed at key events and community facilities throughout the months of May and June 2016 and Nov and Dec 2017. Saanich Climate Action Newsletter: Winter 2017
Task Force (TF) meetings	The Task Force acts as an advisory body for the development of the plan, providing guidance and advice at key junctures. The nine members of the Task Force represent various aspects of the local food system. There were five Task Force meetings held to provide project updates, to involve and consult Task Force members at each phase, and to ensure that their feedback is incorporated into all deliverables.	Five Task Force meetings occurred as follows: March 3, 2016: Meeting #1: Introduction to the project, scoping and review of community engagement strategy and stakeholder mapping exercise. March 31, 2016: Meeting #2: Vision statement was drafted and an initial discussion on key issues. April 21, 2016: Meeting #3: A SWOT analysis workshop. September 22, 2016: Meeting #4: Themes discussion and actions brainstorming. March 29, 2017: Meeting #5: Discussion on action items and implementation strategy draft.
Phone Calls and Emails	Communication to notify specific stakeholders about the online surveys, open houses, and draft documents. Encouraged stakeholders and the public to contact us to provide input, comments and/or ask questions.	District staff and consultants also used their existing networks to spread the advertisement of the online surveys and receive input on issues and opportunities, themes, objectives, and actions for the plan. Members of the Task Force distributed email advertisements regarding the initial online survey to any relevant list-serves during the month of June.
Community Meetings	District staff attended several community events and meetings in order to distribute postcards with links to the online surveys and to talk to stakeholders about the AFSP.	Council Advisory Committee meetings were attended by District staff in April and May 2016; May and June 2017, and November 2017. Retail stores, farms, and community centres were visited by District staff and members of the consulting team between February and June 2016 and November 2017. A full list is provided in the section below.
Saanich Staff meetings	Planning staff forwarded drafts of opportunities and issues and the themes, objectives and issues phases of the process for consultation.	Draft opportunities and issues reviewed with staff from all departments in April and May 2016. Draft Actions reviewed by Saanich staff from May to September 2017.

Tool	Purpose	Activities to Date
<p>Open Houses</p>	<p>The intent of the public open house is to provide members of the public with information regarding the AFSP, the project's progress, and to allow opportunities to collect input and feedback on draft deliverables.</p> <p>Three Open Houses were held for the project:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - #1: May 2016, - #2: January 2017, and - #3: November 2017. <p>Open House #1 was held on May 26th. The purpose of the first Open House was to launch the project publically, refine the vision statement, and obtain initial feedback on issues and opportunities. Launching the survey was another objective of the first Open House. Paper copies of the survey were available for attendees to fill out.</p> <p>Open House #2 and a Facilitated Workshop was held January 18, 2017 to gather input on the development of objectives and actions from stakeholders and the public.</p> <p>Open House #3 was held on November 30, 2017 to present the draft plan for review and input from stakeholder and the public.</p>	<p>Open house #1 was held from 3pm to 7pm on May 26th, 2016.</p> <p>There were approximately 40 people who participated in the event, which was facilitated by staff and consultants. There was good discussion with those members of the public who attended regarding a diversity of topics including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Non-farm use of agricultural land. - Compliance and enforcement issues within the ALR. - Improving local food education programs at school. - Water resource management and climate change. - Future outreach and engagement opportunities regarding the AFSP. <p>Open house #2 and public workshop was held from 2:30 – 5:30 January 18th, 2017. There were approximately 60 individuals who attended and participated in themed workshop tables facilitated by Planning Department staff and members of the Consulting team. People also provided input through interactive display boards and handouts.</p> <p>Open house #3 was held on November 30, 2017 to present the draft plan to the community and receive comment and input on the actions and implementation strategy developed for the plan.</p> <p>Copies of public input received during the open houses were posted on the District's website.</p>
<p>Surveys</p>	<p>Two surveys were developed to solicit feedback from both farmers and the general public. Survey one requested feedback on a proposed vision for the AFSP and potential policy opportunities, alternatives, and strategies. Survey two requested feedback on the proposed objectives and actions for the plan.</p> <p>The surveys were prepared in both digital and hard copy formats. Postcards were also developed to guide people to the online survey. The postcards were left at locations that are frequented by the public such as transit stops, the library, retailers, and recreation centres.</p>	<p>Survey #1 was made available online from May 12 to July 31 and Survey #2 was available from November 28 to December 16 2017. The surveys were developed using SurveyMonkey. Hardcopies of the same questions were also available for completion at the Open Houses.</p> <p>A total of 289 people filled out survey #1, 30 (just over 10%) of which self-identified as farmers. The survey was divided up into a number of topics including: Local Agricultural Knowledge and Awareness, Opportunities and Issues for both Agriculture and Food Security.</p> <p>A total of 46 people filled out survey #2. This survey supplemented feedback received from discussions from pop-up events, the November open house, and stakeholder meetings. The survey was divided into questions on the actions within the seven themes and the proposed implementation strategy.</p>



Who Has Been Reached?

During the first Task Force meeting, members of the consulting team took the Task Force through a stakeholder mapping exercise. The purpose of the activity was to determine which stakeholders need to be reached during the engagement phase of the project. The list of who was identified is presented here, along with information regarding how they have been connected to the project so far. Task Force members are also instrumental in connecting, informing and receiving input from their colleagues, some of them are represented here.

Target Stakeholder	Approach				
	Phone or email	Meeting face to face or committee	Task Force	Survey Ads/ Postcards	Open House
Agricultural Land Commission					
Agriculture and Agri-Food Canada					
Camosun College –(Sustainability Symposium)		X		X	
Centre for Plan Health					
City Harvest	X			X	
City of Victoria - Food Policy Coordinator	X	X			
Community Associations & groups	X				
Community garden groups (Gorge Park / Kent St. / Capital City Alotment / Serentiy / UVic)				X	X
Compost Education	X				X
CRD (Indigenous Relations / First Nation Health)	X	X		X	X
Capital Region Food & Agriculture Initiative Roundtable (CRFAIR)	X	X		X	X
Department of Fisheries and Oceans in Sidney					
Distributors of food (Island West Distributors)			X	X	
Farmers – local (Galey's / Madrona / Healing Hands / Glanford Greenhouses)	X	X	X		
First Nations (Songhees, Esquimalt, Tsawout, Tsartlip)	X	X			
First Nations / Indigenous foods representatives	X	X			
Food access NGOs (BC Food Share Network / Mustard Seed)	X	X	X		
Food system (processing & distribution) representatives			X		
Haliburton Farm	X	X			
LifeCycles	X		X	X	
Vancouver Island Health Authority			X		
Victoria Immigrant & Refugee Centre Society	X				
Wsanec School Garden	X	X			
Ministry of Agriculture	X				X
Ministry of Health – Healthy Families Program					
Municipality of Central Saanich	X	X			
Municipality of View Royal					
Municipality of North Saanich		X			
Retail (Red Barn, Root Cellar, Peppers, Country Grocer, Thrifty's Foods)	X	X		X	
Saanich Neighbourhood House	X				
Saanich Community Kitchen	X	X			
School District				X	X
Schools: Craigflower elementary, Campus view				X	X
Seachange Conservation Society					

Target Stakeholder	Approach				
	Phone or email	Meeting face to face or committee	Task Force	Survey Ads/ Postcards	Open House
Victoria butchers					
Victoria Foundation	X				X
Young agrarians	X	X		X	
Saanich Committees & Staff					
Healthy Saanich Advisory Committee	X	X		X	
Peninsula & Area Agriculture Committee	X	X		X	
Saanich Env and Natural Areas Committee	X	X			
Saanich Engineering Department	X	X			
Saanich Parks Department	X	X			
Saanich Planning Department	X	X			
Saanich Recreation Department	X	X			

Conclusion

Engagement activities during the planning process reached a large number of people (over 400) to seek involvement, consultation and input for the *Agriculture and Food Security Plan*. In-depth discussions regarding specific issues and opportunities took place with targeted stakeholders during Task Force meetings and other meetings and events that District staff and consulting team members have been invited to participate in. Several events and opportunities were offered for the public and stakeholder through meetings, email referrals, open houses, a workshop, and pop-up events to provide input and feedback on objectives and actions developed through the process.

In some cases organizations or groups, such as Federal, Provincial, and Local Government representatives, were contacted through email to request feedback in the later stage of the process. In other cases engagement was sought through face to face meetings, such as, a meeting with a staff member at the Tsarlip First Nations community centre, or through conversations at community held events such as CRFAIR Youth Leadership session held at the Tsartlip First Nations School, Farmer2Farmer, Saanich Fair, Saanich Strawberry Festival, and others.

