



# Ottawa Food Action Plan

The Ottawa Food Action Plan is a community response to local food issues and concerns. Food for All has provided the structure, supports and resources, linkages to academic researchers, community partners and organizations, and a forum to explore food issues together, but these proposals have been written, researched, and edited largely by community members. The Action Plan Proposals are *community* solutions, and the document is a *living* document.

2012

Ottawa Food Action Plan is a community response to local food issues and concerns.

Food for All is a community process that involves everybody – residents, government, students, researchers, and organizations. The research, writing and editing work that went into this Food Action Plan has been a collaborative effort: the Food Action Plan proposals have been researched and written by policy writing teams made up of Ottawa community members. It was then reviewed, edited and further researched by a team of volunteer editors from the community, as well as the Food for All Steering Committee and Food for All project partners. Food for All has provided the structure, supports and resources, linkages between academic researchers, community partners and organizations, and a forum to explore food issues together.

The Action Plan Proposals are *community* solutions based on research and evidence, and the document is a *living* document. This work was guided by the Food for All Steering Committee.

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# The Ottawa Food Action Plan

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## The Ottawa Food Action Plan

### **SUMMARY**

The Ottawa Food Action Plan is a community response to local food issues and concerns. Food for All has provided the structure, supports and resources, linkages between academic researchers, community partners and organizations, and a forum to explore food issues together. These proposals have been written, researched, and edited largely by community members.

### **What is Food For All?**

Food for All is a collaborative, community-based food research and action project in Ottawa. Through capacity building, community-based research and action planning, Food for All is working towards community food security and a sustainable food system in Ottawa.

The core goals of this project are to:

- 1) Develop an OTTAWA FOOD ACTION PLAN;
- 2) Create and test a COMMUNITY FOOD ASSESSMENT to understand food issues on a neighbourhood level;
- 3) Build CAPACITY as a community to take action on food issues;
- 4) Record and SHARE experiences with others.

The Food Action Plan proposals document food needs in our community, examine ways of strengthening the activities that already exist, and propose actions that we can take as a community to make our food system more just and sustainable.

### ***Who is involved?***

Food For All is a community-based project led by Just Food and the University of Ottawa, made possible through three years of funding from the Canadian Institutes of Health Research. The process has been overseen by a Steering Committee comprised of representatives from community organizations, academic institutions, and others. The public has participated in multiple workshops, consultations, and policy-writing teams. Over 300 community members have participated in workshops, research, policy-writing teams, and volunteering for the Food for All project. This number continues to grow and is a reflection of the enormous energy within the community to participate in food action and food policy initiatives.

### ***What are the needs?***

Food is a multidimensional issue that touches on issues including zoning and by-laws, economic development, community programming and services, city and rural planning, poverty reduction, and social, cultural, economic and environmental sustainability. While food production was once considered an exclusively 'rural' issue and consumption considered a mostly 'urban' issue, those lines are being blurred with the rapid loss of farmland, increased rural-to-urban migration rates, and a loss of viable urban agricultural systems. Building a food secure community requires the participation of many organizations and individuals with involvements and interests in food, such as non-profit community groups, environmental organizations, small and medium-sized food enterprises, farmers

and food processors, municipal agencies, health units, and educational institutions - as well as multiple levels of government. Perhaps it is due to this complexity that few jurisdictions in Canada have a Food Policy Council or a comprehensive policy approach for tackling food issues.

Fortunately, that's changing. At the national level, the People's Food Policy Project engaged Canadians from coast to coast to coast in order to create a national food security strategy. At the provincial level, there are now organizations such as [Sustain Ontario](#) and the Metcalf Foundation that have proposed viable solutions for the identified "good food gap" between rising hunger rates and declining farm incomes. Municipally, cities right across Canada, including Toronto, Edmonton and Vancouver, have created Food Policy Councils with the explicit intent of assuring greater food security in their respective jurisdictions. Other smaller municipalities are following suit across Canada.

In Ottawa, the realities related to poverty and associated food security are:

In 2006, 14% of all Ottawa residents and 17% of all children lived below the Low Income Cut-off<sup>1</sup>;

In 25 Ottawa neighbourhoods, more than 20% of residents live below the Low Income Cut Off rate; children are among the hardest hit<sup>2</sup>;

Food Bank usage is rising; Ottawa experienced a 7.8% increase in food bank usage between 2008 and 2009<sup>3</sup>.

In addition,

Some neighbourhoods better access to healthy foods than others;

Agricultural land assets are shrinking; and

Energy costs are rising.

Millions of dollars of funding have supported various food programs in Ottawa. For example, the City's Community Funding invests approximately \$3.4M every year in food programs and services including multiple Emergency Food Programs. However these programs, whilst helping to mitigate some of the impacts of poverty, are themselves not necessarily secure or sustainable. Of twenty-eight nutrition and food programs that were reviewed across Ottawa, 15 organizations (54% of the sample) profiled relied on short-term grants and private donations to carry out their work<sup>4</sup>. Despite a variety of community activity and programming for food security and municipal support, there is neither a comprehensive food security policy nor a framework for assessment and coordination of community food interventions in Ottawa.

However, the current climate in Ottawa positively favours food policy action. A clear need for this work has been identified, the expertise and capacity clearly exist and the community has the excitement, interest, and energy to ensure that the results of the Food For All project succeed over the long term.

### ***What is the approach?***

Food for All is an iterative process: activities are planned based on academic research and evidence in the community, and then project plans respond and change based on what is learned as these plans are carried out. The project is constantly evolving to reflect the needs and interests of those who are involved as well as the community at-large. Overall, Food for All emphasizes an inclusive

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<sup>1</sup> Ottawa Neighbourhood Study (2011)

<sup>2</sup> Ibid.

<sup>3</sup> Ontario Association of Food Banks (2009). "Ontario Hunger Report," found online at <http://www.oafb.ca/assets/pdfs/OHR2009Red.pdf>

<sup>4</sup> Courtney, K (2010) "Furthering Food Security in Ottawa," Accessed online March 7, 2011 at [http://foodforall/documents/Ottawa\\_-\\_Furthering\\_Food\\_Security\\_in\\_Ottawa.pdf](http://foodforall/documents/Ottawa_-_Furthering_Food_Security_in_Ottawa.pdf)

process, rigorous research and evidence based policy making, learning from what we already do well, learning from other jurisdictions, and adapting as we go. Capacity building is crucial – as a community, we are all continually learning how to participate in policy and food activities, as well as how to engage one another in this work.

### Everybody has a role to play

The Food for All approach is inclusive and collaborative, based on the belief that everybody should be encouraged to participate and to play a role in building a better food system in Ottawa. Emphasizing the interconnectedness and complexity of the various aspects of the food system is a central aspect of the process. For example, the problem of access to affordable food is related to the problem of farmers requiring a fair return on their work: cheaper food is not necessarily a viable solution to assuring farmers of a fair income. However, solutions can be found and working collaboratively has shown to be in everybody's best interest.

### Based on Values

The Food For All project is grounded in community-defined values as well as in a working definition of *community food security*: "Community food security exists when all community residents have physical and economic access to sufficient, culturally acceptable and nutritious food to meet their dietary needs for an active and healthy life. Community food security implies community responsibility for building a local and sustainable food system that enhances everything from self-reliance to global social justice." The values that inform the Action Plan Proposals were determined through community meetings and workshops, and include statements regarding food rights & responsibilities, diversity & inclusivity, food knowledge & skills, long-term & collective planning, and environmental, economic & social sustainability.

### Leading to Action

Whereas some jurisdictions have created 'Food Charters'<sup>5</sup> to guide municipal food-related policies and programs, the Food For All project opted to create *Action Plan Proposals*. While Food Charters are important values statements that raise awareness and education about food issues and form a basis for action, they don't necessarily ensure action. Instead, Food for All opted for a more concrete Action Plan approach so that the end result is a set of values-based, action-oriented Proposals that are immediately implementable.

## ***What has been done to-date?***

### A. Action Plan Proposals

Food for All: An Ottawa Community Response - is just that, a community response to local food issues and concerns. Food for All provides the structure, supports and resources, linkages to academic researchers, community partners and organizations, and a forum to explore food issues together. The Action Plan Proposals are *community* solutions.

Between February and June of 2010, Food For All hosted Food Action Planning conversations to build a vision of what food in Ottawa can and should look like, identify issues that exist around food in

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<sup>5</sup> See for example, the [Toronto Food Charter](#) or the [Vancouver Food Charter](#).

Ottawa, come up with ideas to overcome those issues which exist, and set direction for concrete food policy action plan recommendations.

Food For All then facilitated volunteer policy writing teams. The teams were comprised of community participants who selected areas of interest and became informed about these areas of interest through a workshop series. Volunteers chose the topic or team they wished to participate in based on their own interests and expertise; all teams had access to the Policy Writing Team Toolbox provided by Food For All. The teams directed their own process, set the policy priorities based on evidence from academic research and research on other communities' experiences, and ultimately developed a set of food Action Plan Proposals. For many volunteers, this was the very first time they had engaged in the policy process.

#### B. Community Assessment Toolkit

A community food assessment toolkit called *Where's the Food? Finding Out About Food in your Community* was developed and piloted in two demographically different neighbourhoods, Sandy Hill (urban) and Fitzroy Harbour (rural). The *Where's the Food* toolkit guides a group of community members through conducting research about food issues in their neighbourhood or community. The objectives of the *Where's the Food* toolkit are building community capacity around food concerns, obtaining a better understanding of local food issues within a neighbourhood, building knowledge and education about food actions, initiatives, and projects that are possible, planting the seeds for action within a community, and developing baseline data about food security in Ottawa's neighbourhoods.

#### **Next Steps**

The Food Action Plan is intended to inform city-wide policies in Ottawa at the levels of the municipality, NCC, school boards, businesses, and organizations, through the Ottawa Food Policy Council. Creating public interest and momentum is critical for the implementation of the recommendations that came out of the research process.



## Healthy Food Environments

### *A. Toward a Breastfeeding Friendly Ottawa – A Call to Action*

#### **Vision:**

- A city where the value of breastfeeding for health and food security is recognized and supported, and where appropriate breastfeeding supports are available throughout the community.

#### **City of Ottawa Priority Recommendations**

Recognizing that parents and babies have different needs and life circumstances, this proposal makes the following recommendations to build on existing supports for breastfeeding:

- 1) Designate all City of Ottawa facilities as breastfeeding friendly. It is recommended that the City support women to breastfeed their children in any city facility by:
  - a) Providing a dedicated space for breastfeeding;
  - b) Posting signage that says why breastfeeding is important and welcomed;
  - c) Making women feel welcome to breastfeed anytime, anywhere;
  - d) Training staff on breastfeeding-friendly<sup>6</sup> practices, and
  - e) Providing resources and opportunities to help support breastfeeding in the workplace and for breastfeeding education and skills-building.
- 2) Encourage the Province to act on the recommendations in the December 2009 proposal, “Recommendations for a provincial breastfeeding strategy for Ontario,” which was developed by a collaboration of stakeholders in Ontario including the Montfort Hospital, Ontario Public Health Association Breastfeeding Promotion Workgroup, the Ontario Lactation Consultant Association, the Breastfeeding Committee of Canada, INFACT Canada, La Leche League and others.

*Precedent:* In Quebec, breastfeeding rates increased dramatically when a provincial breastfeeding strategy was implemented by that province in 2001<sup>7</sup>.

#### **Other Recommendations:**

- 3) The Champlain Local Health Integrated Network (LHIN) considers breastfeeding as a complementary component of the current priorities of (childhood) pre-diabetes and diabetes.
- 4) Ottawa Public Health (OPH) achieves a Baby Friendly™ designation (through the

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<sup>6</sup> An example of an appropriate training course is the one hour web-based course called Healthy Mothers, Healthy Babies from the Best Start Resource Centre (<http://www.beststart.org/courses/login/index.php>). All employees of Centretown Community Health Centre have completed training as part of their Baby-Friendly designation process.

<sup>7</sup> See the December 2009 Ontario Provincial Breastfeeding Strategy Position Paper which includes details regarding the Quebec provincial breastfeeding strategy and rates of breastfeeding after its implementation, [http://www.aom.on.ca/files/Communications/Position\\_Statements/2009\\_ON\\_Provincial\\_BF\\_Strategy\\_Dec\\_21.pdf](http://www.aom.on.ca/files/Communications/Position_Statements/2009_ON_Provincial_BF_Strategy_Dec_21.pdf)



WHO/UNICEF Baby Friendly Initiative in Canada - BFI™<sup>8</sup>.

*Precedent:* Other Ontario public health units are designated Baby Friendly (Appendix A2).

- 5) That Ottawa hospitals and Community Health Centres work towards Baby-Friendly™ designation.

*Precedent:* Centretown and Somerset West Community Health Centres have had experience of the process achieving Baby-Friendly designation<sup>9</sup>.

### **The Role of Businesses, Community Organizations, and Individuals –What You Can Do:**

- Learn more about the important role of breastfeeding for health and food security.
- Consider having your organization or business work towards Baby-Friendly designation, or take steps in your organization towards being more breastfeeding friendly by ensuring that women are welcomed to breastfeed in your business or organization.
- Ask the Ministry of Health and Health Promotion to implement a provincial breastfeeding strategy.

## **Appendix A1: Background**

### GLOBAL Baby-Friendly Initiatives™ (BFI)

The WHO defines “optimal breastfeeding” as exclusively breastfeeding for the first 6 months of life with continued breastfeeding, augmented by appropriate foods, up until two years of age and beyond.<sup>10</sup>

There are more than 20 000 Baby Friendly™ designated facilities in 152 countries thanks to a WHO-UNICEF initiative.

### Breastfeeding in CANADA/ONTARIO

In Canada, attaining a Baby-Friendly Initiative™ (BFI) designation requires hospitals and community health facilities to adhere to the *Integrated Ten Steps and WHO Code Practice Outcome Indicators for Hospitals and Community Health Services (Appendix A3)*.

Ontario Public Health Standards call for “an increased rate of exclusive and sustained breastfeeding for all children to attain and sustain optimal health and developmental potential<sup>11</sup>. Ontario breastfeeding rates fall short of the objectives. In 2005, 88% of mothers initiated breastfeeding but only 15.8% were breastfeeding exclusively at 6 months<sup>12</sup>.

<sup>8</sup> “Baby Friendly™” is a designation that requires hospitals and community health facilities to adhere to the *Integrated Ten Steps and WHO Code Practice Outcome Indicators for Hospitals and Community Health Services as outlined by the World Health Organization (WHO)/ UNICEF and World Health Organization (WHO)/UNICEF Baby Friendly™ Hospital Initiative (BFHI)* and interpreted by the Breastfeeding Committee for Canada (BCC). This document can be accessed online at:

[http://breastfeedingcanada.ca/documents/2011-03-30\\_BCC\\_BFI\\_Integrated\\_10\\_Steps\\_summary.pdf](http://breastfeedingcanada.ca/documents/2011-03-30_BCC_BFI_Integrated_10_Steps_summary.pdf)

<sup>9</sup> A timeline needs to be developed with and by Ottawa Public Health. Learning from the Centretown Community Health Centre's experience, the timeline suggests that completion of the full designation process may take 2-4 years; plan to allocate \$4000 should be allocated for paying the for accreditors' fees honoraria and expenses, about \$2000 allocated for staff training, and allocate staff time needed for coordinating and planning the effort from within the health unit.

<sup>10</sup> World Health Organization (WHO), (2010). “Infant and Young Child Feeding,” *Media Centre Fact Sheet No. 342*, accessed online April 2011 at <http://www.who.int/mediacentre/factsheets/fs342/en/>

<sup>11</sup> Ministry of Health and Long -Term Care (2008). “Implementation Guidelines for the Healthy Babies, Healthy Children Program – Phase II,” *Government of Ontario Public Health Standards 2008*, accessed online September 2011

[http://www.health.gov.on.ca/english/providers/program/pubhealth/oph\\_standards/ophs/progstds/pdfs/ophs\\_2008.pdf](http://www.health.gov.on.ca/english/providers/program/pubhealth/oph_standards/ophs/progstds/pdfs/ophs_2008.pdf)

<sup>12</sup> Public Health Agency of Canada (PHAC). (2009). “Recommendations for a provincial breastfeeding strategy for Ontario,” *Ontario Provincial Breastfeeding Strategy*, accessed online November 2010 at <http://www.breastfeedingontario.org/pdf/2009%20ON%20Provincial%20BF%20Strategy%20Dec%2021.pdf>

The sharp drop in breastfeeding within a few weeks of leaving hospital suggests a number of factors that contribute to the decision to discontinue breastfeeding, including lack of knowledge, support and encouragement or reinforcement within the family or community. *A number of studies have called on health care professionals to provide consistent, clear information about breastfeeding and support throughout pregnancy, childbirth and the postpartum period.*

### Breastfeeding in the City of Ottawa<sup>13</sup>

A 2005 City of Ottawa Infant Care Survey found that:

Between 42% and 46% of women planned to breastfeed their babies for 6 – 12 months.

Approximately 45% of women reported that formula feeding was provided to their baby during their hospital stay.

Of the women who chose to breastfeed their babies, 93% cited reasons of improved infant health while only 11% were aware of any potential health benefits for themselves as a result of breastfeeding.

The majority of Ottawa women (91%) initiated breastfeeding in the first few days after birth (56% were exclusively breastfeeding and 35% were breastfeeding with a supplement).

60% of women who had completed a university or postgraduate degree fed their baby breast milk at all feedings during first few days after birth. Half the women who had a college or high-school degree or less breastfed exclusively, during the first few days after birth.

The proportion of women who breastfed exclusively during the first few days after birth increased slightly, (though not significantly), as household income increased. Fifty percent of women in the lowest income bracket (<\$30,000) and 59% of women in the highest income bracket (>\$100,000) exclusively fed breast milk during the first few days after birth.

There was no difference in the proportion of women exclusively breastfeeding during the first few days after birth between English (59%) and French first language (58%), however, women with a first language other than English or French were least likely to breastfeed exclusively during the first few days after birth (46%).

*The most common sources of information/help about breastfeeding to mothers were nurses (36%), family or friends (32%), written information or the Internet (31%), and lactation consultants (24%).* Nearly one quarter of women reported that they had not required help with breastfeeding.

56% of women (in both a 3-month sample and 6-month sample) reported receiving free formula samples. Most of the women received free formula through the mail (75%). Twenty-seven percent of women received formula from hospitals and 13% received free formula from physicians. *Forty six percent of the mothers (in the 3 month group) and 63% of the mothers (in the 6 month group) used the free formula sample they received. Approximately 40% of these women used the free formula within the first 2 weeks after birth.*

43% of women reported that they had felt uncomfortable breastfeeding in public places.

Shopping malls (69.7%) and restaurants (55.3%) were the public places where women felt most uncomfortable to breastfeed. 20% indicated that they felt uncomfortable breastfeeding anywhere in public.

### BFI™ in Canadian Jurisdictions<sup>14</sup>

<sup>13</sup> City of Ottawa & Ottawa Public Health (2006). "Infant Care Survey 2005," *Ottawa Public Health and City of Ottawa*, accessed online at [http://www.ottawa.ca/residents/health/publications/ics\\_2005/ics\\_2005\\_en.pdf](http://www.ottawa.ca/residents/health/publications/ics_2005/ics_2005_en.pdf)

<sup>14</sup> The goal for the Breastfeeding Committee for Canada (BCC) is for each Canadian Province or Territory to establish a Provincial/Territorial Baby-Friendly Initiative™ Committee (P/T BFI Committee) approved by the BCC and recognized by the P/T government as the P/T BFI Authority. Where such a committee does not yet exist or does not have sufficient capacity, the Breastfeeding Committee for Canada (BCC) BFI Assessment Committee will serve in the place of the P/T BFI Committee.

In 2006, the Thunder Bay District Health Unit became the first community health service in Ontario to receive the designation of Baby-Friendly™ as outlined by the BCC, based on the WHO/UNICEF initiative<sup>15</sup>.

There are the other jurisdictions in Ontario with Baby-Friendly™ designated facilities including Toronto, Brampton, Kitchener, Sault Ste. Marie, Peterborough, Chatham, and Oakville<sup>16</sup>. Ottawa Public Health is currently working towards Baby-Friendly™ designation for its own facilities.

#### BFIs in Ottawa

Somerset West Community Health Centre achieved a Baby-Friendly™ designation in 2006 and is therefore up for reassessment in 2011.

Centretown Community Health Centre achieved Baby-Friendly™ designation in early 2012.

#### **Appendix A2:** Baby-Friendly™ designated facilities in Canada

[http://www.breastfeedingcanada.ca/documents/Completed\\_assessments.pdf](http://www.breastfeedingcanada.ca/documents/Completed_assessments.pdf)

#### **Appendix A3:** Breastfeeding Committee for Canada (BCC) Integrated 10 Steps & WHO Code Practice Outcome Indicators for Hospitals and Community Health Services (Summary)

[http://breastfeedingcanada.ca/documents/2011-03-30\\_BCC\\_BFI\\_Integrated\\_10\\_Steps\\_summary.pdf](http://breastfeedingcanada.ca/documents/2011-03-30_BCC_BFI_Integrated_10_Steps_summary.pdf)

#### **Appendix A4:** The December 2009 Ontario Provincial Breastfeeding Strategy proposal

[http://www.aom.on.ca/files/Communications/Position\\_Statements/2009\\_ON\\_Provincial\\_BF\\_Strategy\\_Dec\\_21.pdf](http://www.aom.on.ca/files/Communications/Position_Statements/2009_ON_Provincial_BF_Strategy_Dec_21.pdf)

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<sup>15</sup> Thunder Bay District Health Unit, (2011). "The Baby Friendly Initiative," *Healthy Babies & Families*, accessed November 2010 at <http://www.tbdhu.com/HBHF/Breastfeeding/Initiative.htm>.

<sup>16</sup> See Appendix A2 for more details

## **B. Healthy School Food Environments in Ottawa**

### **Vision:**

- A city where all school-aged children are provided healthy foods (local when possible), and knowledge about the food system through their educational institutions.
- A city where community groups, elected officials (at all levels of government), parents, students, and educational institutions work together to foster food citizenship - an awareness of the impacts of food choices on personal, community, and environmental health - in children and youth.

### **Policy Details:**

In order to create healthy school food environments in Ottawa, there are many changes that need to happen. Much of it will happen within the school community including School Boards, school staff, parents, students and food providers, however municipal support is also required. This policy provides some of the necessary steps to support the work that has already been initiated at the provincial level.

It is recommended that:

1. The four school boards, in collaboration with Ottawa Public Health, and other relevant community stakeholders, monitor and evaluate (at the municipal level) the implementation and progress of the PPM 150 (School Food and Beverage Policy) provincial initiative and post any findings regarding the PPM150 initiative publicly.
2. The four school boards implement purchasing policies to further increase the proportion of healthy foods and to increase the use of locally produced foods available in Ottawa schools.
  - a. A standardized training and certification program, developed and implemented Ottawa Public Health and the four school boards, would ensure that in-school vendors involved in the preparation and sale of food in the school are aware of the implications of purchasing policies, as well as PPM 150. This could be a one-day training program with a recertification every two years. Training components would not only include mandatory food safety training and PPM 150 regulations, but would also incorporate information about local food supply and distribution and the benefit of using local foods when possible.
3. The City of Ottawa, in collaboration with Ottawa Public Health and the four school boards, enhance the information available to parents regarding healthy lunchbox ideas, healthy food purchasing, and fundraising ideas that incorporate healthy foods or non-food items.
  - a. A number of initiatives are currently underway to provide information to schools and parents in providing healthy food for students. Some examples include:
    - i. The Champlain Cardiovascular Disease Prevention Network provides fact sheets and resources for schools on healthy lunches, healthy food fundraising, and healthy classroom rewards<sup>17</sup>.
    - ii. Ottawa Public Health provides nutrition and healthy eating information for parents

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<sup>17</sup> Champlain Cardiovascular Disease Prevention Network, "Healthy Schools 2020" initiative. Further information is available online, [http://www.healthyschools2020.ca/en\\_tools\\_and\\_resources.php#7](http://www.healthyschools2020.ca/en_tools_and_resources.php#7)

and schools.

- b. Additional resources could be provided in the form of newsletters, a website, a phone line, or meetings with parents provided within school hours and at other city facilities such as recreation centres.
4. The City of Ottawa, in collaboration with Ottawa Public Health and the four school boards, undertake an inventory of school facilities to determine what food preparation amenities currently exist. The city can play an important role in ensuring that a food production area, a dedicated eating area, and outdoor space for a garden are included in the construction of any new schools and considered when renovations are planned for existing schools.

**Pertains to:**

- School [Food and Beverage Policy PPM 150 \(School Food and Beverage Policy\)](#) of the Ministry of Education (Provincial)<sup>18</sup>;
- City of Ottawa Public Health;
- City of Ottawa Board of Health;
- 4 School Boards in Ottawa ([Ottawa-Carleton District School Board](#); [Ottawa Catholic School Board](#); [Conseil des écoles publiques de l'Est de l'Ontario](#); [Conseil des écoles catholiques du Centre-Est](#))

**Rationale:**

The goal of the new School Food and Beverage Policy ([PPM 150](#)) is to ensure that the food sold at publicly funded schools contributes to a well-balanced, nutritious diet. However this initiative targets only one part of a wide continuum of places where children and youth eat. Additionally, the notion of *food citizenship* is lacking from the PPM150, which has a narrow focus on nutrition. The term “food citizenship” is defined as the practice of engaging in food-related behaviours that support, rather than threaten, the development of a democratic, socially and economically just, and environmentally sustainable food system.<sup>19</sup> Thus, in addition to the introduction of PPM 150, there is still a need for fostering food citizenship both through educational institutions and augmented through city-supported community programming.

In order to maximize the impact of the School Food and Beverage Policy (PPM 150) consistent messaging is necessary both *in* and *out of* schools. A child who learns *in school* about the benefits of healthy habits for growth *should* receive the same messaging and healthy food choices outside of school, for example at the community recreational centre on weekends. This would complement the efforts of the PPM 150 initiative. According to research that examined the implementation of food policies in Quebec, “When a school food policy is adopted by a provincial government, it creates a framework for the policies adopted at the local level.”<sup>20</sup> The municipal government has an important role to play in developing and enforcing healthy food programming and messaging in all areas of a child’s life.

Additionally, there is no review process that comprehensively looks at purchasing policies from pre-school establishments all the way through to post-secondary institutions. Successful revision of purchasing policies to healthy and increasingly local foods would be a part of an integrated, highly

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<sup>18</sup> To be fully implemented by all Ontario school boards by September 1, 2011

<sup>19</sup> Wilkins, Jennifer. (2005). “Eating Right Here: Moving from Consumer to Food Citizen,” *Agriculture and Human Values*, 22(3): 269-273.

<sup>20</sup> Baril, Gerald. (2008). “School Food Policies: A Knowledge Synthesis on the Implementation Process,” *Government of Quebec*, accessed online April 2011 at [http://www.inspq.qc.ca/pdf/publications/858\\_SchoolfoodPol\\_final.pdf](http://www.inspq.qc.ca/pdf/publications/858_SchoolfoodPol_final.pdf)

effective environment to enable children to learn and apply healthy eating habits throughout their learning and development.

Parents need additional opportunities to learn more about PPM 150 and what it takes to build a school environment that supports healthy eating. Although the PPM 150 addresses the food being sold in schools, there are currently no supplemental educational materials that can help students and parents to bring food from home that fits PPM 150 guidelines. This could be a great opportunity for children and their parents to enhance their knowledge and skills in preparing healthy lunches for the school day.

Finally, there are currently no plans for the monitoring or evaluation of the PPM 150 as it affects Ottawa. Nor are there any plans for reporting the progress of the implementation to Ottawa parents or the general public. Evaluation plans need to be developed before the policy implementation begins to ensure that the needs of the local community are being met through this provincial initiative.

According to the Province of Manitoba<sup>21</sup>, healthy school-based food programs are important because:

- 1) Education and health are intimately linked;
- 2) Students spend as much time at school as in any other environment;
- 3) Next to parents, schools have the most impact on shaping children's eating habits;
- 4) Students typically have at least one snack or meal at school per day

The PPM 150 initiative is set to be implemented by the beginning of the 2011-12 school year in all publicly funded elementary and secondary schools in the province of Ontario. School Boards have been working with the support of Ottawa Public Health to prepare themselves for this deadline. PPM 150 is the beginning of healthier school food environments.

## **Appendix B: Background**

### *Policy Detail #1 Evaluation and Monitoring*

Evaluating school food policies is critical to improving content, enhancing policy support and implementation, and ensuring that policies meet objectives. Additionally, policies must be flexible enough to respond to the changing needs of schools and students. Evaluations help assess resource utilization, the level of stakeholder involvement, the extent of policy implementation, and intended/unintended consequences. Finally, evaluation also provides much needed accountability to stakeholders and funders, and strengthens the evidence-base for future decisions.

Key aspects of proper evaluation include:

- a) Ensuring that a consistent framework is applied for monitoring and evaluation;
- b) Identifying existing evaluation activities so as to reduce overlap and increase efficiencies;
- c) Selecting appropriate indicators to monitor;
- d) Evaluating in a consistent and ongoing manner; and
- e) Repeating evaluations<sup>22</sup>.

### **Precedents:**

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<sup>21</sup> Government of Manitoba, (n.d.). "Healthy Foods in Schools – Policy," accessed online April 2011 at <http://www.gov.mb.ca/healthyschools/foodinschools/policy.html>

<sup>22</sup> Taylor JP, McKenna ML, Butler GP. (2010). "Monitoring and evaluating school nutrition and physical activity policies," *Canadian Journal of Public Health*; 101(SUPPL. 2):S24-S27



A comprehensive checklist for the evaluation of Healthy Food School Policies was developed by the Government of Saskatchewan and is available online: <http://www.education.gov.sk.ca/Healthy-School-Foods-Checklist>.

The USA has successfully created a new system that allows states to monitor changes in 11 policy areas, including school food, marketing and nutrition education;<sup>23</sup> Canada does not have the evaluation mechanisms developed to the same extent for school food policies.<sup>24</sup> Regardless of the monitoring and evaluations conducted at the provincial level, additional evaluations that take into account the local community dynamics should be conducted and made available to the public at the municipal level.

### *Policy detail # 2- Healthy and Local Purchasing Policies with Standardized Training and Certification*

The PPM 150 initiative has made significant changes to the types of food available in schools. However, to increase the amount of food that is locally sourced, school boards can implement additional purchasing policies that stipulate the types of food that should be prioritized within their schools.

Based on the requirements of PPM 150 initiative alone, establishing a program to educate and certify those who wish to prepare and sell food to schools would ensure that the updated provincial food and nutrition standards are met. The training program would be specific to each school board to ensure that any additional requirements (for example, a requirement to purchase a particular portion of locally produced foods) are included. The two objectives of food handling and safety (food handlers training) and healthy, seasonal food selection could be best met by combining them into a single course offered at the municipal level.

For over two decades the City of Ottawa has offered a food safety course to food providers and the general public. In 1989 food handler training became a one-day course with examination. The course is designed to meet the content requirements of the Ontario Ministry of Health Protection and Promotion Act to ensure safe food handling. This on-going training and certification process has been very successful in ensuring that certified food handlers meet basic health and safety standards. According to Sherry Beadle, Program Manager of Inspection for Ottawa Public Health, “a food handler trained in food safety is less likely to cause food borne illness”. Similarly, “food handler training can improve the knowledge and practices of food handlers; and selected community-based education programs can increase public knowledge of food safety.”<sup>25</sup>

### *Policy Detail #3 – Supporting Parents*

As early as 1990, Health Canada identified schools as the ideal setting to reach children about nutritional health. Children consume on average one third of their daily caloric intake at school<sup>26</sup>. Of course, this means that they consume up to two thirds of their intake elsewhere. As a research report

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<sup>23</sup> Although, according to Health Canada’s Environmental Scan, “*Food and nutrition surveillance is becoming an international priority*. This provides opportunities for collaboration with other countries on surveillance initiatives. For example, the United States is willing to share, at no cost, the knowledge and technologies it has developed as part of its very comprehensive and sophisticated food and nutrition monitoring system. There are also growing opportunities for internationally linked surveillance data bases.” April 2011 at [http://www.hc-sc.gc.ca/fn-an/surveill/environmental\\_scan-eng.php#a3.2](http://www.hc-sc.gc.ca/fn-an/surveill/environmental_scan-eng.php#a3.2)

<sup>24</sup> Smith D. (2010). “What policies exist in schools and school boards in Canada which encourage schools to increase the availability of healthy and/or local foods? What factors have an influence on the implementation of these policies?” *The Ottawa Hospital Internship Program*.

<sup>25</sup> Campbell ME, Gardner CE, Dwyer JJ, Isaacs SM, Krueger PD, Ying JY. (1998). “Effectiveness of public health interventions in food safety: A systematic review,” *Canadian Journal of Public Health*; 89(3):197-202

<sup>26</sup> Smith D. (2010). “What policies exist in schools and school boards in Canada which encourage schools to increase the availability of healthy and/or local foods? What factors have an influence on the implementation of these policies?” *The Ottawa Hospital Internship Program*.



from Quebec notes, “Although the school is an excellent intervention environment to reach this population, it is, nevertheless, not a closed world. The family, the surrounding community and the wider social context must also evolve in order to allow continuous improvement of the food environment for youth and the greatest possible access to an active lifestyle.”<sup>27</sup>

‘Facilitating factors’ for young people’s (11-16 years) eating habits consistently identify ‘encouragement from the family’ as an important support mechanism<sup>28</sup>. Therefore, ensuring the family has the information and support they need is crucial for changing youth eating habits.

In one Canadian study on the implementation of school food policies, the majority of the parents interviewed indicated that they were not aware of the nutritional policy at the school where their child attended. The study concluded that lack of effective communication among schools, parents, and students was a concern because support from parents and students is crucial to the success of school nutrition policy implementation; this partnership has been shown to be most successful where information exchange helps everyone become more engaged.<sup>29</sup>

Another facilitating factor for successful school nutrition policies is the utilization of multi-stakeholder working groups to develop and implement policies. A common barrier for the implementation of school nutrition policies is a lack of human resources<sup>30</sup>; for PPM150 to be successful, the Ottawa school boards and the school staff will require the full support of the parents and the community-at-large.

Ottawa Public Health has been preparing Ottawa schools and school boards to implement PPM 150 this past year. Enhancing their services would help parents to be better informed and more supportive of their children and the efforts of their children’s educational institutions.

#### *Policy Detail #4 School Food Facilities*

Currently the only Ottawa elementary schools preparing food on a regular basis are the 148 schools that participate in the [Ottawa School Breakfast Program](#). These schools have already had a facilities inventory and assessment<sup>31</sup>. However, those schools not participating in the School Breakfast Program may be lacking this assessment of food facilities.

Elementary schools in Canada were initially designed on the premise that students went home for lunch. About 30 years ago, that practice began to change and students began eating their home-prepared lunches in the classrooms. It is not the practice in Canada that elementary students eat together in one central location. Nor is it the practice to feed elementary school students common meals by food-service providers. Therefore if our goal is to provide healthy foods in Ottawa schools, dedicated food preparation and storage areas are necessary.

Christine Lauzon-Foley, Manager of the Ottawa School Breakfast Program, outlines the program’s challenges as follows: “*The School Breakfast Program currently supports student nutrition programs in 148 schools in Ottawa including breakfast and snack programs. Throughout our program’s 21-year*

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<sup>27</sup> Baril, Gerald. (2008). “School Food Policies: A Knowledge Synthesis on the Implementation Process,” *Government of Quebec*, accessed online April 2011 at [http://www.inspq.qc.ca/pdf/publications/858\\_SchoolfoodPol\\_final.pdf](http://www.inspq.qc.ca/pdf/publications/858_SchoolfoodPol_final.pdf), page 12.

<sup>28</sup> Shepherd J, Harden A, Rees R, Brunton G, Garcia J, Oliver S, et al. (2006). “Young people and healthy eating: A systematic review of research on barriers and facilitators.” *Health Educ Res*; 21(2): 239-257.

<sup>29</sup> MacLellan D, Holland A, Taylor J, McKenna M, Hernandez K. (2010). “Implementing School Nutrition Policy: Student & Parent Perspectives,” *Canadian Journal of Dietetic Practice and Research*, 71(4): 172-176.

<sup>30</sup> Smith D. (2010). “What policies exist in schools and school boards in Canada which encourage schools to increase the availability of healthy and/or local foods? What factors have an influence on the implementation of these policies?” *The Ottawa Hospital Internship Program*.

<sup>31</sup> de Abreu, Suzanne , Ottawa Network for Education, *Personal communication January, 2011*.

*history, we have worked closely with local school boards and Ottawa Public Health to provide nutritious meals for children in-need in a safe environment. Although every measure is taken to ensure that programs meet safe food handling standards, it is often challenging due to inadequate space and facilities. With the commitment currently being made by various levels of government to ensure that our students receive the proper nutrition they need to grow and learn, we would like to recommend that all new schools built, and that any renovations made to existing schools, include proper kitchen facilities. By doing so we can all work together to support the equitable delivery of student nutrition programs to students in-need."<sup>32</sup>*

Moreover, the type of breakfast program offered in each school is determined by the type of facilities available at each location. Schools without 3-basin sinks and/or dishwashers with sanitizing agents may not be able to certain types of foods such as eggs. Schools without fridges cannot serve dairy products and are less likely to serve fruits and vegetables. Moreover, some school facilities do not have access to water outside of bathrooms, fountains, and/or janitorial water supply. These schools will not be able to serve foods that require any preparation, limiting the types of food that they can provide to students. Currently, it is not clear how many elementary schools in Ottawa have adequate kitchen facilities and how many do not.

Ottawa elementary schools wanting to offer a hot lunch program must use off-site food service providers, which usually results in meals such as pizza or sandwiches<sup>33</sup>. If on-site kitchen facilities were available and run by trained food handlers, students would have access to a wider variety of nutritious foods. As well, for schools with food-producing gardens, foods grown augment meal programs as well as teach students valuable food growing and preparation skills. Food producing gardens provide children with a better understanding of where their food comes from and teaches children how to incorporate locally-grown produce into their daily menu-planning.

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<sup>32</sup> Lauzon-Foley, Christine, Ottawa Network for Education, *Personal communication January, 2011.*

<sup>33</sup> de Abreu, Suzanne, Ottawa Network for Education, *Personal communication January, 2011.*

## Food Access

### C. Access to Healthy Food and Local Food – Planning & Zoning

#### Vision:

- A city with equitable access to healthy foods for everyone.
- A city with an adequate supply of local<sup>34</sup> food, the infrastructure to distribute it, and equitable sale points for providing local food to consumers.

#### City of Ottawa Priority Recommendations:

In order to increase the supply of locally produced foods and to make the distribution of fresh and healthy foods more equitable in Ottawa, it is recommended that:

- 1) The City of Ottawa include a guiding principle of 'equitable access to *fresh and healthy food (locally produced as available)*' in all relevant growth, environment, and development plans, with the objective of explicitly including the consideration of neighbourhood access to food in all new development applications, zoning and by-law amendments, and community planning.
- 2) The City of Ottawa support the development of local food supply and infrastructure for local and regional food processing, storage, warehousing and distribution by:
  - a. Reviewing public institution food procurement policies with a view to encouraging and removing barriers to purchasing local products where possible to support the local food economy;
  - b. Providing expertise and assistance with business planning and feasibility studies for food and farming enterprises; and
  - c. Participating in advocacy efforts to the Province to encourage greater allocation of dollars directed to municipalities for the development of local and regional infrastructure for food processing, storage, warehousing and distribution.
  - d. Participating in advocacy efforts to the Federal government regarding the potential consequences for local food procurement of the proposed the Canada-Europe Trade Agreement (CETA).

#### Other Recommendations:

- L. The City of Ottawa conduct a review of food-relevant zoning by-laws and implement necessary revisions in order to address existing inequities in food distribution and to limit 'food deserts', which are low income neighbourhoods with only limited access to fresh, healthy food<sup>35</sup>:

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<sup>34</sup> Just Food and the City of Ottawa define Ottawa's local food region as including the City of Ottawa, and the Counties of: Prescott-Russell; Stormont, Dundas & Glengarry; Leeds & Grenville; Lanark; Renfrew; Frontenac; and the Outaouais. It is proposed that we continue to use this definition recognizing that many other terms are used to refer to local food, including: '*the 100-mile diet*,' (eating/using food grown within 100 miles of where the food was grown), '*food miles*' (to refer to how far food travels between farmer and eater), and '*foodsheds*' (taken from the concept of watersheds in terms of ecological health and sustainability).

<sup>35</sup> The United States Department of Agriculture maintains a comprehensive map of food deserts in the United States. This map displays low-income areas where a substantial number or share of residents have low access to a supermarket or large grocery store. The Food Desert Locator is available online: <http://www.ers.usda.gov/data/fooddesert/about.html>.

- a. Ensure that zoning regulations include grocery stores and other food retail outlets and that these are established on the basis of neighbourhood need; and
- b. Remove zoning by-law barriers to the establishment of farmers' markets (satellite and/or permanent) and farm stands in 'hub areas' such as community centres, schools, parks, churches, etc.

Recognizing that all public institutions have a role to play in building a local food system, it is further recommended that:

- M. All public institutions, including the NCC, school boards, educational institutions, hospitals, and provincial and federal government buildings in Ottawa review their institutional food procurement policies and 1) increase buying local food incrementally as supply increases to support the local food economy, and 2) include fair trade purchasing policies on items that cannot be sourced locally.
  - a. Example: University of Victoria's (UVIC) [Green Purchasing Policy](#), which aims to support locally-made, environmentally responsible products, including locally-produced foods.

### **The Role of Businesses, Community Organizations, and Individuals – *What You Can Do:***

Implement a local and ethical food purchasing policy at your organization or business.

Learn more about local food and support local farmers by buying local food.

Learn more about the Canada-Europe Free Trade Agreement and express any concerns you may have to your elected representatives.

Participate in initiatives in your neighbourhood to ensure that fresh and healthy foods are available.

Ask your provincial elected representatives to support a local food system by providing funding for local and regional food infrastructure for food processing, warehousing, storage, and distribution.

**Pertains To:** urban planners overseeing the ongoing development and redevelopment of the City of Ottawa. It includes, but is not limited to, planning, zoning, and building permits. That said, there is a role for everyone in realizing greater access to (local) food including policymakers, government agencies, elected officials, financial institutions, economic and community development partners, grocery industry members, social service agencies, community organizations, educational institutions, provincial & federal government agencies, hospitals and health-care facilities, and residents.

## Rationale:

### *Greater Access to Local Foods*

A recent review of Ontario provincial food policies by Sustain Ontario concluded that investing in local food infrastructure must become a priority if we are to increase the market share for local food and revitalize agricultural communities.<sup>36</sup>

*“While many provinces have established programs to market local food...Few provinces have invested in the infrastructure necessary for local food production and consumption such as storage and distribution...There remains opportunity for governments to promote the development of local agri-food industries, a process that would result in local job creation and rural development” ~ Manitoba Food Charter 2009, p 53*

The City of Ottawa currently supports the production, distribution and promotion of local food through City-funded programming such as Savour Ottawa, and through City management of two permanent farmer’s markets (see ‘Precedence’ under Appendix C1 for details on these initiatives). This support is recognized and appreciated by local partners, who envision the recommendations above as ways for the City of Ottawa to expand and diversify its support for local/regional food infrastructure, becoming a leader among municipalities both provincially and nationally.

### *Greater access to fresh foods*

The second guiding principle in the [Ottawa 20/20 Official Plan](#) of 2001 is “Access to the Basics,” in which food is included (although not explicitly *fresh, local* food). This means that access to food must always be a consideration by the City of Ottawa.

Food deserts, or neighbourhoods lacking adequate access to food retail outlets, also decrease the value of neighbourhoods, making it difficult to attract new residents and developers and lowering the resale value of homes. Market research has shown that food deserts hinder the marketability of residential projects<sup>37</sup>.

The [Ottawa Neighbourhoods Study](#) provides data that allows for the identification of ‘food deserts’ in Ottawa. As mentioned above, food deserts are low-income neighbourhoods or communities that have only limited access to fresh, healthy food<sup>38</sup>. Currently, in Ottawa, there are fourteen lower SES neighbourhoods<sup>39</sup> with limited access to a grocery store (here defined as no grocery store in neighbourhood and a distance of more than a kilometer to the closest grocery store)<sup>40</sup>. This is particularly problematic, as people living in poorer neighbourhoods may lack access to private transportation and thus face hardships getting to and from the grocery store. People living in rural neighbourhoods also face difficulties accessing grocery stores; in five rural Ottawa neighbourhoods,

<sup>36</sup> Sustain Ontario, (2010). “Local Food Infrastructure,” *Policy Initiatives*, accessed online May 2011 at

<http://sustainontario.com/initiatives/policy>

<sup>37</sup> Detroit Fresh Food Access Initiative. (2008). “Why Address the Issue of Food Access?” accessed online April 2011 at

[www.nasda.org/File.aspx?id=26777](http://www.nasda.org/File.aspx?id=26777)

<sup>38</sup> Cummins, S & Macintyre, S. (2006). “Food Environments and Obesity – neighbourhood or nation?” *International Journal of Epidemiology*, (35): 100-104

<sup>39</sup>According to the Ottawa Neighbourhood Study (2011), lower income neighbourhoods with poor access to a grocery store (none in neighbourhood and more than a kilometer to travel to nearest one from population centre) include: Bayshore, Bells Corners West, Carlington, Greenboro East, Hintonburg, Hunt Club - Ottawa Airport, Iris, Ottawa East, Pineview, Sandy Hill - Ottawa East, West Centretown (has many specialty stores but no grocery store), Whitehaven - Queensway Terrace North, Woodroffe - Lincoln Heights, and Woodvale.

<sup>40</sup> Adapted from USDA definition, available online: <http://www.ers.usda.gov/data/fooddesert/about.html#Defined>

the population centre of the neighbourhood is more than 10 kilometers away from the nearest grocery store. Even though the rural neighbourhoods and communities around Ottawa tend to be classified as higher income, there are many people living in such neighbourhoods who are living on lower income and thus face hardship accessing food.

## **Appendix C1: Background**

### **Barriers / Gaps:**

Municipalities in general have been slow to take on an active role in developing local food infrastructure, which has typically been left to NGOs and the private sector<sup>41</sup>. However, many municipalities are now starting to realize the connection between healthy environments, food access, and consumer health. Municipalities are now adopting food policies that work to improve local food infrastructure in a move towards greater food security and improved public health.

### Supply

Most of the food that we consume is imported, making Ottawa's food security susceptible to climate disasters, rising fuel and transport prices, and political instability abroad. By establishing and strengthening a local food supply, the National Capital region becomes more resilient to fluctuations and interruptions in the global food supply. Additionally, locally-sourced food is thought to be fresher and healthier as a result of reduced need for chemical treatments and preservatives used to lengthen shelf life when distance between producer and consumer is considerable.

### Distribution

The [Ontario Food Terminal Board](#) owns and operates the largest wholesale fruit and distribution centre in Canada, located in Toronto. Other jurisdictions, such as Niagara and Etobicoke also have the infrastructure in place to support food terminals. Despite the agricultural productivity of the Ottawa-Gatineau region, there is no food terminal for the national capital.

Not only does a local food terminal reduce the transport distances of food (currently, a percentage of the produce from the Ottawa region travels to Toronto, to then be bought by a Ottawa-based food supplier and transported back), but it also creates significant employment and volunteer opportunities for the local economy and more effective coordination of the distribution of locally-produced food.

While supply and distribution barriers are a confluence of federal, provincial and municipal policies, there are concrete actions that the City of Ottawa can take to increase the supply of locally-produced food in Ottawa, and thus improve local food security. Too many people lack access to healthy food and, despite growing demand for local food, our centralized, large-scale food processors, distributors, and retailers are unable to provide it<sup>42</sup>.

The chapter on [Food and Agriculture](#) in *Choosing our Future: From Vision to Action* lays out a food system as one that involves farming, transporting, processing, distributing, celebrating and recovering food waste in the context of natural, economic, social, and political driving forces.<sup>43</sup>

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<sup>41</sup> Tran, Jason, Liaison Officer, Ontario Agricultural College, *Personal communication April 2011*.

<sup>42</sup> Baker, L, Campsie, P, Rabinowicz, K. (2010). "Forward" *Menu 2020, Ten Good Food Ideas for Ontario*, Metcalf Foundation, page 4.

<sup>43</sup> De la Salle, Janine & Fix, Jennifer. (2011). 'Food and Agriculture – Introduction,' *Choosing our Future: From Vision to Action*, accessed online May 2011 at [http://www.choosingourfuture.ca/library/foundation\\_papers/food\\_agriculture\\_en.html](http://www.choosingourfuture.ca/library/foundation_papers/food_agriculture_en.html)



It goes on to state:

*Much of the agricultural products that are grown in the National Capital Region (and elsewhere in Canada, for that matter) are exported for processing to foreign markets. In this way, most of the value of existing major crops in the region – corn, soybeans, and cereals – is lost to an export-based agricultural economy that has less to do with a local people and bioregions, and more to do with single-bottom line economics. Processing, selling and celebrating that food locally can create a powerful economic multiplier effect for the local economy.*

## Precedents:

### Ottawa

- The [Savour Ottawa](#) network links local farmers with retailers and restaurants. The verification process guarantees that agricultural products are produced locally, and posters, labels, and other materials help business owners to promote locally produced products in their store. A growing number of local farms, restaurants, small grocers and specialty shops are [Savour Ottawa members](#). The City of Ottawa Rural Affairs and Markets Management Offices play key roles in supporting the work of Savour Ottawa, as does Ottawa Tourism.
- Currently the City of Ottawa supports two permanent farmers' markets year-round, the Ottawa Parkdale Market and the Byward Market, through the City of Ottawa Markets Management. Both markets offer a mix of fresh foods and handicrafts from local and non-local sources.
- The establishment of new farmers' markets and farm stands in urban areas and underserved areas are examples of ongoing community-based initiatives to increase access to fresh and local food and to provide multiple outlets for local farmers to sell their produce.
  - [The Main Farmers' market](#) in Old Ottawa East is located on the grounds of St. Paul's university. It began as a community initiative in 2007 and now operates with the support of St Paul's, numerous volunteers, and a rural partnerships grant from the City of Ottawa.
  - **The Quartier Vanier Merchants Association** established [a small outdoor market](#) in 2008 along Montreal Road with the express objective of creating a destination where people could purchase fresh food directly from the growers<sup>44</sup>. The BIA membership of 350 merchants is the sole funder of this neighbourhood-level initiative.
  - The [Little Italy \(Preston Street\) Business Improvement Association](#) has established a new farmers' market in the parking lot of the adult high school on the corner of Preston and Gladstone. The market runs from 9am to 2pm on Saturdays from May 7 through until Thanksgiving weekend. Vendors are required to bring their own tables and tents; the cost to vendors is \$30 per day for a 10x10 space.
  - The [Ottawa Farmer's Market](#) opened a new trial location at Bayshore Shopping Center in August 2011, adding to its previous locations at Lansdowne Park and Orleans. The trial was successful and the Bayshore location is opening for a full season in May 2012. In the summer of 2012 they opened another trial market in Westboro.

### Canada

- One of the key objectives of the [Ontario Food Terminal](#) is "to provide a central marketplace for Ontario growers and produce wholesalers to sell their produce directly to the wholesale and retail trade."<sup>45</sup> In 2009 the Ontario Food Terminal recorded over 25,000 vehicles delivering produce to

<sup>44</sup> Valiquet, Suzanne, Executive Director of the Quartier Vanier BIA, *Personal communication April 11, 2011*.

<sup>45</sup> Ontario Food Terminal Board. (n.d.). "Mandate & Objectives," accessed online April 2011 at <http://www.oftb.com/mandate.htm>



wholesalers. The farmers' market component of the terminal recorded 2,000 daily paid entries to connect with 33,000 stall tenants<sup>46</sup>. The Ontario Food Terminal is a key component of food and agricultural infrastructure in southern Ontario, making local produce available and convenient for local wholesale and retail buyers.

- The [City of Vancouver](#) is currently [in the process of establishing a 'food hub'](#) for greater municipal-level food distribution. Called the *New City Market*, the development will aim to serve three main functions for Vancouver's burgeoning local food scene: 1) as a processing facility with certified kitchens for canning and other value-added food preparation; 2) as a permanent market space where farmers can store and sell produce wholesale or retail; and 3) as an aggregator of services such as education, community outreach and marketing<sup>47</sup>.
- Zoning laws can be, and have been, [amended under the justification of public health](#). The most widely cited example of this is when neighbourhood zoning is altered to *restrict* fast-food outlets from establishing themselves in close proximity to schools, under the justification that youth are unable to differentiate healthy from unhealthy eating choices. Research by economists at the University of California, Berkeley and Columbia University, provides scientific evidence that fast food near schools results in greater student obesity<sup>48</sup>.
- Under their [Green Purchasing Policy](#), the University of Victoria (UVIC) has decentralized its food budget allowing more chefs to make smaller purchases that aren't regulated by trade regulations in an effort to localize the campus food supply. They have recently passed a regulation that requires food distributors to provide locally-sourced foods. Additionally, where food products are unable to be sourced locally (as is the case with sugar, coffee, tea, etc), fair trade certified products must be offered at all food retail outlets on campus.
- [FarmStart](#) is a not-for-profit organization based out of Guelph, ON that supports the upcoming generation of farmers to develop locally-based, ecologically-sound, and economically-viable small farm enterprises. FarmStart works with the FarmON Alliance, a provincially coordinated alliance of organizations with a mandate to encourage the development of local food systems through the support of emerging, ecologically-oriented farmers.

### International

- The rationale behind Detroit's [Fresh Food Access Initiative](#) (2008) is clear – greater food access results in healthier, more vibrant communities. Additionally, there are health implications associated with poor fresh food access<sup>49</sup>. For example, In the United States, the presence of supermarkets was associated with higher consumption of fruits and vegetables among adults<sup>50</sup> and closer proximity to supermarkets was related to better diet quality during pregnancy<sup>51</sup>. An analysis in Detroit revealed that people wanted to eat healthier diets, but a lack of nutritious options hampered these efforts<sup>52</sup>.

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<sup>46</sup> Ontario Food Terminal Board. (n.d.). "Statistics as of March 31, 2009," accessed online April 2011 at <http://www.oftb.com/stats.htm>

<sup>47</sup> Kimmet, Colleen, (2011). "Building Vancouver's First Local Food Hub," *Open File*, accessed online April 2011 at <http://vancouver.openfile.ca/vancouver/file/2011/03/building-vancouvers-first-local-food-hub>

<sup>48</sup> Currie, J *et al.*, (2009). "The Effect of Fast Food Restaurants on Obesity," accessed online April 2011 at <http://elsa.berkeley.edu/~sdellavi/wp/fastfoodJan09.pdf>

<sup>49</sup> Cheadle Allen, Bruce M. Psaty, Susan Curry, Edward Wagner, Paula Diehr, Thomas Koepsell, and Alan Kristal. 1991. "Community-Level Comparisons Between the Grocery Store Environment and Individual Dietary Practices." *Preventive Medicine*. 1991, 20:250-261 **as cited in** Detroit Fresh Food Access Initiative. (2008). "Why Address the Issue of Food Access?" accessed online April 2011 at [www.nasda.org/File.aspx?id=26777](http://www.nasda.org/File.aspx?id=26777)

<sup>50</sup> Zenk, 2005, 2009

<sup>51</sup> Laraia, 2004

<sup>52</sup> The Detroit Fresh Food Access initiative hired the firm *handshake*, a marketing agency known as an industry leader in behavioural targeting. *Handshake's* analysis showed that Detroit's residents want to eat healthier foods but that a lack of nutritious options was preventing this behaviour. Detroit Fresh Food Access Initiative. (2008). "Why Address the Issue of Food Access?" accessed online April 2011 at [www.nasda.org/File.aspx?id=26777](http://www.nasda.org/File.aspx?id=26777), page 10

- New York City council recognized that zoning bylaws were a major impediment to the establishment of more fresh-food retailers in lower-income neighbourhoods<sup>53</sup>. As a result, *zoning amendments* were a key component to the F\*R\*E\*S\*H\* program, which was designed to create greater access to healthy foods in underserved neighbourhoods. Land-use regulations regarding supermarkets have since been modified, rezoning according to grocer needs have been implemented, and city-owned property has been discussed for future food-retailer sites<sup>54</sup>.
- In the last ten years, several older cities, such as Baltimore, Chicago, Milwaukee, and Pittsburgh, have streamlined their development processes, rewritten their zoning codes, and otherwise eased food-related development. Most notable of these is the comprehensive set of recommendations by the Building Industry Alliance Association of Philadelphia (BIA) issued in 2004. These 10 reforms addressed the need for increased transparency in the development process, improved user-friendly services, timely inspections, and zoning code reforms that reflected the city's current vision for its neighborhoods and attracted needed funding. The recommendations also called for the establishment of a land bank; the creation of an all-inclusive, publicly-accessible electronic zoning map; the distribution of a step-by-step guide to Philadelphia's development review process; and the creation of a Construction Permit Centre to allow representatives from all of the City's approving agencies to issue permits in a centralized location<sup>55</sup>.

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<sup>53</sup> Based on a study in 2008 conducted in collaboration between the City Departments of Health and Mental Hygiene (DOHMH), City Planning (DCP) and the New York City Economic Development Corporation (NYCEDC). More details about the study can be found here: <http://www.nyc.gov/html/dcp/html/supermarket/index.shtml>

<sup>54</sup> New York City department of City Planning, (2011). "Policy Recommendations and Next Steps," accessed online April 2011 at <http://www.nyc.gov/html/dcp/html/supermarket/index.shtml>

<sup>55</sup> Detroit Fresh Food Access Initiative. (2008). "Streamlined Development and Permitting Process" accessed online April 2011 at [www.nasda.org/File.aspx?id=26777](http://www.nasda.org/File.aspx?id=26777), page 16

## D. Healthy Corner Stores

### Vision:

- A research and a feasibility study conducted in partnership with community organizations and corner store owners with the end goal of creating a City-supported program that would work towards having smaller stores stock healthier, fresh, and locally- or regionally-sourced foods.
- A city where fresh, healthy (locally produced when possible) foods are available at competitive prices in all Ottawa neighbourhoods via small convenience and corner stores.

This proposal promotes sustainable, long-term improvements in the selection and quality of fresh foods, with minimal processing or packaging, sold in corner stores in order to ensure access to good food for everyone in Ottawa.

### Policy Details:

It is recommended that:

1. The City of Ottawa, in partnership with corner store business owners, Business Improvement Areas (BIAs), and community groups, conduct feasibility research and develop a proposal for a pilot project in an Ottawa neighbourhood with poor food access with the goal of increasing access to fresh, healthy, and locally grown foods in small, neighbourhood-based food retail outlets (i.e. corner stores). This model could be pilot tested in an Ottawa neighbourhood with poor access to fresh and healthy foods. Components of this would include:
  - Researching the key barriers faced by corner store owners to offering perishable and locally sourced foods, and finding solutions for these barriers;
  - Better integration of corner stores into existing business networks, such as BIAs, Chambers of Commerce, and Savour Ottawa to ensure that corner store owners can benefit from existing expertise and opportunities. This may also include networking corner store owners directly to local farmers;
  - The development of a “Healthy Corner Store” guide in order to facilitate the replication of healthy corner stores throughout Ottawa;
  - Addition of healthy food or local verification criteria in City retail recruitment;
  - Assessment of incentive-based programs that might help corner stores transition towards healthier foods, which may include but is not limited to:
    - Tax credits or service rebates;
    - Zoning incentives;
    - Façade redevelopment funds;
    - Provision of grants or loans to offset some of the costs of equipment, freezing/cooling units, or store renovation;
    - A tax receipt incentive program to encourage donation of perishable items near expiration date<sup>56</sup>;
    - Featuring participating corner stores on the City of Ottawa website, or other in-kind assistance with promotions; and
    - Linking participating corner stores to community organizations that can assist with

<sup>56</sup> Foods that are acquired through this means could be redistributed to various charitable community programs and community groups that provide meals and/or food services.

educating the local population about the benefits of healthy foods. Community organizations could provide recipe handouts, cooking demonstrations, or special labelling of healthy and local foods in order to promote these items.

### **The Role of Businesses, Community Organizations, and Individuals – What You Can Do:**

If you are a corner or convenience store business owner, consider increasing the proportion of healthy, fresh, and locally sourced foods that are available.

Let the owner of the corner or convenience store in your neighbourhood know if you would be interested in buying more fresh, healthy, and locally-sourced foods from them.

### **Pertains to:**

- City of Ottawa Departments of Economic Development, Planning and Public Health
- Business Improvement Areas
- Corner and Convenience Store Business Owners

### **Rationale:**

The lack of grocery stores in neighbourhoods limits residents' ability to make healthy food choices. In particular, residents with limited access to transportation rely heavily on corner stores for their food shopping. Most corner stores sell primarily soft drinks and pre-packaged convenience items; few offer fresh produce or other healthy food options, such as whole-grain baked goods or low-fat dairy products<sup>57</sup>.

1. *Improved access to food, particularly in under-served neighbourhoods addresses unequal food access.*

The [Ottawa Neighbourhood Study](#) (ONS) provides data that allows for the identification of 'food deserts' in Ottawa. As mentioned above, food deserts are low-income neighbourhoods or communities that have only limited access to fresh, healthy food<sup>58</sup>. Currently, in Ottawa, there are fourteen lower SES (socio-economic status) neighbourhoods with limited access to a grocery store (here defined as no grocery store in neighbourhood and a distance of more than a kilometer to the closest grocery store)<sup>59</sup>. This is particularly problematic, as people living in poorer neighbourhoods may lack cars and thus face hardships getting to and from the grocery store. People living in rural neighbourhoods also face difficulties accessing grocery stores; the centre of five rural neighbourhoods in Ottawa is more than 10 kilometers away from the nearest grocery store. Even though the rural neighbourhoods and communities around Ottawa are classified as higher income, there are many people living in such neighbourhoods who are living on lower incomes and thus face hardships accessing food.

The ONS also revealed that in Ottawa, the least-advantaged neighbourhoods had significantly more convenience stores per thousand people than the more advantaged neighbourhoods<sup>60</sup>.

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<sup>57</sup> Public Health Law & Policy (2009). "Why Healthy Corner Stores?" *Healthy Corner Stores: The State of the Movement*, accessed online March 2011 at <http://healthycornerstores.org/wp-content/uploads/resources/HealthyCornerStores-StateoftheMovement.pdf>

<sup>58</sup> Cummins, S & Macintyre, S. (2006). "Food Environments and Obesity – neighbourhood or nation?" *International Journal of Epidemiology*, (35): 100-104

<sup>59</sup> Adapted from USDA definition, available online at: <http://www.ers.usda.gov/data/fooddesert/about.html#Defined>

<sup>60</sup> Kristjansson E, Sawada M, Calhoun M, Leclair S, Herold S, Parenteau MP, et al. Spatial Inequalities and Health Inequalities: Neighbourhood Socio-economic Status, Resources for Health, and Health Outcomes in Ottawa, Canada. Ottawa: Institute of Population Health; 2008.

When the [food security assessment toolkit](#) called “Where’s the Food?” was applied to the community of Sandy Hill, it demonstrated that the area is rich with schools, community buildings, and community housing, but limited in terms of fresh/healthy food options in the Mann Ave/Strathcona Heights area of Sandy Hill<sup>61</sup>. The toolkit identified 58 total food outlets in Sandy Hill; there are only four (6.9%) fresh-food grocers in Sandy Hill, but there are 10 (17.2%) convenience stores and 12 (20.7%) fast food outlets in that particular community. In Fitzroy Harbour, the “Where’s the Food?” toolkit research revealed that there is only *one* ‘general store’ located in the village; it carries a limited range of fresh and non-perishable foods, including some local products<sup>62</sup>. However, the next closest food retail outlet is 22km away.

Since corner stores are often the only place where groceries are sold in “food deserts”, it is important to make fresh and local food options available at these establishments as one component in addressing unequal food access across Ottawa.

## 2. *Better [access to] food leads to better health.*

In the United States, the presence of supermarkets was associated with higher consumption of fruits and vegetables among adults<sup>63</sup> and closer proximity to supermarkets was related to better diet quality during pregnancy<sup>64</sup>. Furthermore, presence of supermarkets and in a neighbourhood has been related to lower rates of overweight/obesity in adults in the United States<sup>65</sup>; shorter travel time to grocery stores was also related to lower BMI<sup>66</sup>. By providing fruits and vegetables in their corner stores, owners can be contributing to the health of neighbourhood residents.

## 3. *Changes to food availability can be accompanied by education and awareness for greater impact.*

When fresh foods are introduced into corner stores it must be publicized so that people living in the neighbourhood are aware of the changes. Efforts to improve access to fresh and local food in corner stores should be accompanied by education. This food education would have a double benefit: it would help boost business for the small-scale retailer by promoting healthy items, and also contribute to a healthier local population.

Opportunities to learn about *why* it is important to make healthy food choices and how to prepare healthy food should be made available to people in the neighbourhoods surrounding these corner stores. Education campaigns could include handouts about recipes and healthy food choices, special labelling of newly available foods, improved signage, and partnerships with chef training programs, local restaurants, and community and Public Health dieticians. Diabetes research, prevention and education initiatives in several northern Ontario First Nations communities<sup>67</sup> have demonstrated how education – such as cooking demonstrations, labelling, and taste tests – can help to ensure that healthier foods are chosen more often, that people know how to cook with these foods, and that their health benefits are well understood.

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<sup>61</sup> White-Jones, Karen. (2010). “Where’s the Food? A Compilation of Research Gathered with the Food Security Assessment Toolkit in the Sandy Hill Community” *Food Security Assessment Toolkit*, accessed online March 2011 at [http://foodforall/documents/Wheres\\_the\\_Food-Sandy\\_Hill\\_research\\_compilation.pdf](http://foodforall/documents/Wheres_the_Food-Sandy_Hill_research_compilation.pdf)

<sup>62</sup> Fitzroy Harbour Where’s the Food community group, unpublished research results

<sup>63</sup> Zenk 2005, 2009

<sup>64</sup> Laraia, 2004

<sup>65</sup> Lopez, 2007, and Morland, 2006, 2009

<sup>66</sup> Ingami

<sup>67</sup> “Community Wide Diabetes Prevention Activities, Sandy Lake Health and Diabetes Project” webpage, accessed online March 2011 at: <http://www.sandylakediabetes.com/?q=node/6>; and “ZhiywaapenewinAkino’maagewin: Teaching to Prevent Diabetes” website, accessed online March 2011 at: <http://www.healthystores.org/ZA.html>

Ottawa elementary school teachers might be encouraged to incorporate information about junk-food advertising and navigating convenience stores in health and nutrition classes. Community Health Advisors employed through Ottawa Public Health might include in their information sessions – especially in neighbourhoods lacking a grocery store – tips for shopping healthfully at convenience stores and resources for lobbying corner stores to include healthier food options.

Educating and engaging youth, who often purchase snacks from corner stores on their way to and/or from school, was found to be a successful approach to garnering support for healthier food in corner stores in several American initiatives. For example, the [Healthy Corner Stores Network](#) recently released a brief detailing the achievements of corner store initiatives that focused on youths as agents of change in implementing and garnering support for healthier community stores<sup>68</sup>.

Community- and school-based nutrition education is another important means for reinforcing the importance of healthy snacking. Empowering children with the knowledge to select healthy food from convenience stores fraught with advertising for chips and pop on their way to and from school can go a long way in garnering support for healthier corner stores. For example, in the summer of 2008 D.C. Hunger Solutions piloted a series of lessons about healthy snacking targeted at middle-school children. Additionally, The Food Trust's youth leadership *Snackin' Fresh Crew*, has demonstrated to be an effective hands-on health intervention.

#### *4. Corner stores contribute to a resilient local economy and vibrant communities.*

Increasing the availability of healthy products can help to stimulate local economies by creating local jobs, capturing dollars that would otherwise be spent outside of the community and revitalizing neighbourhoods. Effecting change through corner stores would involve linking together corner store owners, community partners and local farmers to create and sustain healthy corner stores. However, given the current climate of economic downturn, an important consideration for any corner store considering adding healthy foods to its inventory is the profitability of such an endeavour. For many store owners, time and resources to invest in store upgrades are unavailable and therefore making financing options such as grants and loans available to store owners may be an essential strategy in transforming the corner store food-scape<sup>69</sup>.

Due to the small scale of their inventory, individual corner stores likely lack the purchasing power to access fresh food from distributors at a competitive cost. Developing a buying cooperative among several community convenience stores might help to offset this problem. Profit margins on dairy, bread, meat and fresh produce are often higher than on convenience foods and value-added products such as fruit salads have an even higher profit margin. However, perishable items demands additional labour and resources to market and successfully sell such products. Therefore, it is essential that training be available to help store owners effectively and profitably sell fresh foods. Support and resources such as equipment, infrastructure (such as refrigeration units), marketing, publicity, training on produce handling or business management. The Food Trust's Healthy Corner Store Network in Philadelphia, for example, offers a variety of services (such as marketing materials to promote healthy food, and consulting and training) to strengthen its members' businesses.

By supplying *locally-sourced* foods where possible, retailers can contribute to healthier regional economies by providing regular markets for farmers. Sourcing locally also reduces the carbon emissions of long-distance transportation and reduces the chemical preservatives used on fresh fruits

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<sup>68</sup> See <http://www.thefoodtrust.org/php/programs/Summer2011issuebrief.pdf> for a full description of youth-focused projects and their impacts on promoting healthy corner stores.

<sup>69</sup> For a complete brief on healthy corner stores as an economic development strategy, visit: <http://www.thefoodtrust.org/php/programs/Winter2011issuebrief.pdf>



and vegetables intended to lengthen shelf lives<sup>70</sup>.

Implementing creative strategies to bring locally produced foods into corner and convenience stores requires further research and consultation with corner store owners and farmers. Initiatives in other cities across North America can be instructive in this regard. One challenge may be the volume of food purchased by corner stores. Since corner stores would likely be purchasing their food in small volumes, the prices they pay for their produce would be greater than those produced in bulk and this can make produce too expensive for owners to stock. In order to combat this issue, stores might consider collective purchasing to lower the cost of produce and facilitate the distribution process. To achieve this, a collective of convenience store owners might approach a farm (or farms) that can supply them and establish a central drop-off location from which the stores can individually pick up their deliveries. For example, GrowNYC is an organization that connects corner stores with local produce by enticing regional farmers to drop off produce in one central location where retailers can purchase it at wholesale prices.

Necessary steps to facilitating a local food supply may include:

- Using collective purchasing power by engaging multiple corner store owners to create distribution hubs to reduce product and delivery costs;
- Identifying a supplier and distribution model that accounts for Ottawa's seasonality;
- Understanding consumer preferences and creating customer demand;
- Improving store infrastructure, if necessary, to accommodate new products; and
- Where local products can't be stocked in-store, consider implementing a farm-stand in front of the store so that the convenience store benefits from increased foot traffic and consumer loyalty can be built and developed.

Not all Ottawa corner stores are necessarily suitable to be transformed into a healthy food hub. In order to build confidence in the movement towards healthy neighbourhood stores, pilot stores should be carefully selected and connected with local institutions that can provide support by helping store owners to access various resources and opportunities.

Through collaboration between corner stores and small community-based food outlets, and existing networks such as Business Improvement Associations (BIAs) and Savour Ottawa, communities can overcome some barriers to eating fresh, healthy foods. Involving convenience stores in greater neighbourhood food security has economic benefits for the community as well as health benefits.

In Ottawa, the building blocks for these collaborative efforts are already in place.

The [Savour Ottawa](#) network links local farmers with buyers, including retailers and restaurants. The verification process guarantees that agricultural products are produced locally, and posters, labels, and other materials help business owners to promote locally produced products in their store. A number of small grocers and specialty shops are [Savour Ottawa members](#). The City of Ottawa Rural Affairs and Markets Management Offices play key roles in supporting the work of Savour Ottawa.

[Business Improvement Associations](#) organize, finance and carry out localized projects, such as improvements and promotional events, for a stronger and more competitive commercial district. As of February 2012, there were 17 active BIAs in Ottawa. Each of these can play an important role in enhancing neighbourhood availability of fresh, healthy, and locally produced foods. The City of Ottawa plays a key role in supporting BIAs, through assisting in the formal designation of a BIA, and in collecting and returning to BIAs a 'special zone levy'.

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<sup>70</sup> DeWeerd, Sarah. (n.d.). "Is Local Food Better?" *Worldwatch Institute*, 22(3): accessed online April 2011 at <http://www.worldwatch.org/node/6064>



According to the American Independent Business Alliance, when a consumer spends \$100 at a locally owned business, \$45 of it stays in the community. When that same \$100 is spent at a national chain store, only \$13 remains local<sup>71</sup>.

In the USA the group GoLocal Cooperative claims that when local businesses are supported, 1) money is circulated three-times longer in the local economy than when it's spent at big chain-retailers, 2) local businesses create new jobs, and 3) local businesses support community projects and not-for-profits, thus strengthening the overall community<sup>72</sup>. Some business areas in Ottawa are capitalizing on this recent 'support-local' movement, like Old Ottawa South's "Shop Local" campaign, which encourages residents to support independent businesses in the neighbourhood where possible.

Finally, smaller stores can more readily respond to particular food needs in the community, ensuring that cultural food preferences or other localized needs can be served. In fact, the Washington D.C. community group *DC Hunger Solutions* makes membership for the *Healthy Corner Store Program* contingent on corner stores "responding to customer requests for products."<sup>73</sup>

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<sup>71</sup> American Independent Business Alliance, as cited in Marsh, Marla. (2010). "Dollars Spent at local businesses build economy," *The Wichita Eagle*, accessed online March 2011 at <http://www.kansas.com/2010/10/14/1541441/dollars-spent-at-local-businesses.html>

<sup>72</sup> National GoLocal Cooperative, as cited in Marsh, Marla. (2010). "Dollars Spent at local businesses build economy," *The Wichita Eagle*, accessed online March 2011 at <http://www.kansas.com/2010/10/14/1541441/dollars-spent-at-local-businesses.html>

<sup>73</sup> D.C. Hunger Solutions (n.d.) "Membership Criteria" *Healthy Corner Store Program*, accessed online March 2011 at [http://www.dchunger.org/pdf/cornerstore\\_brochure\\_english.pdf](http://www.dchunger.org/pdf/cornerstore_brochure_english.pdf)

## Appendix D1: Background

### Precedents

#### A. F\*R\*E\*S\*H Food Stores<sup>74</sup> (New York City)

The [Food Retail Expansion to Support Health \(FRESH\) project](#) in New York City is a joint initiative between the city's Department of City Planning and the state's *Healthy Foods/Healthy Communities* program. Its goal is to provide greater access to fresh and healthy foods through opening of new grocery stores and upgrading existing small-scale grocers in underserved neighbourhoods. It is the first program in the USA to offer both zoning and financial incentives in multiple neighbourhoods. Some of the incentives offered by the F\*R\*E\*S\*H initiative through the New York City Industrial Development Agency (NYCIDA) and the city's Department of City Planning include, but are not limited to, real estate and building tax reductions, exemptions from sales tax on renovation materials, reduction in required parking, and to eligibility to apply for pre-development grants and loans.<sup>75</sup> Previously, localities have simply restricted unhealthy food outlets from opening or provided funding for supermarkets site-by-site. The FRESH program will help create an estimated 15 new grocery stores and upgrade 10 existing stores, creating 1,100 new jobs and retaining 400 others over 10 years.

The full press release for the NYC FRESH Food program, which includes details about zoning amendments and tax incentives, is included as *Appendix D2*

#### B. Sandy Lake Health and Diabetes Project (Sandy Lake First Nation, ON)

[The Sandy Lake Health and Diabetes Project](#), started in 1991 as a partnership between the Sandy Lake community and diabetes researchers, is a model for community-based primary prevention programs in diabetes, and incorporates participatory research. One component of this project is to address environmental factors that contribute to poor health – such as an excess of unhealthy foods available in local stores. To address this, the project encouraged local stores to feature healthy snacks (pretzels, fruit) on their food displays to make it easier for people to make healthy food purchases.

#### C. ZhiwaapenewinAkino'maagewin: Teaching to Prevent Diabetes (ON)

[ZhiwaapenewinAkino'maagewin: Teaching to Prevent Diabetes](#) is a community-based diabetes prevention program based in schools, food stores and health offices in seven First Nations in northwestern Ontario. Based on the Sandy Lake model, this project similarly emphasizes improving the food environment through healthier foods in corner stores. Stores owners are encouraged to stock healthy food choices, to use shelf labels that will identify healthy foods, and to feature cooking demonstrations and taste tests in the store. This trial project is being expanded to include 18-20 First Nations in Ontario, Manitoba, Michigan, and Wisconsin. A process evaluation includes suggestions for improving success of this project through additional actions in schools, food stores, and community and health services<sup>76</sup>.

#### D. Delridge Healthy Corner Store Project (Seattle)

<sup>74</sup> New York City Department of City Planning > Projects & Proposals > "FRESH Food Stores," accessed online March 2011 at <http://www.nyc.gov/html/dcp/html/fresh/index.shtml>

<sup>75</sup> See <http://www.nycedc.com/program/food-retail-expansion-support-health-fresh> for further details on financial incentives.

<sup>76</sup> A. M. Rosecrans, J. Gittelsohn, L. S. Ho, S. B. Harris, M. Naqshbandi and S. Sharma. (2008). "Process evaluation of a multi-institutional community-based program for diabetes prevention among First Nations," *Health Education Research* 23 (2): 272-286.

Funded jointly by the City of Seattle's Office of Economic Development and the Seattle Foundation's Healthy Kid Fund, the Delridge Neighbourhoods Development Association (DNDA) worked with select corner stores in the area to expand sales volume and customer base by selling more fruits and vegetables. A [Toolkit for Community Organizers and Store Owners](#) is a compilation of the project's lessons learned and recommendations for other jurisdictions.

E. DC Hunger Solutions: Healthy Corner Store Program (Washington D.C.)

In this project, funded by the DC Department of Health and managed by the community group D. C. Hunger Solutions, corner stores are encouraged to become *members* of the [Healthy Corner Store Program](#). Members receive a \$150 stipend funded through the D.C. Department of Health for purchasing new products that meet certain health criteria as well as support for processes such as applying to be a food stamp vendor, accessing small-business funding, and assistance working with fresh food distributors.

F. Food Financing Initiatives (California & Pennsylvania)

The [California Healthy Food Financing Initiative](#) aims to assist grocers and farmers' markets in opening new locations in poorer neighbourhoods and to help existing corner stores expand their stock of fresh foods. A fund created in the state treasury would compile federal, state, and private funds for the purposes of expanding access to healthy foods in underserved communities.

The California model is based on a similar program in Pennsylvania where the non-profit financing institution The Reinvestment Fund (TRF) has created the [Fresh Food Financing Initiative](#). This initiative financially supports supermarkets and small-scale grocers state-wide in order to increase access to healthy foods in underserved neighbourhoods. Under this program, TRF provides predevelopment grants and loans, land acquisition financing, equipment financing, capital grants for project funding gaps and construction and permanent finance. However, important to note is that this initiative in Pennsylvania is only available to supermarkets and grocery retailers, convenience stores do not qualify.

G. West Oakland Youth Standing Empowered (WYSE) (Oakland, California)

In California, the WYSE afterschool youth leadership program connected youth with the Healthy Neighborhood Stores Alliance (HNSA) to improve access to fresh produce in corner stores. Youth employees were heavily involved in all the activities – from produce inventory to delivery, to customer education – to launch and support the HNSA. According to Quinton Sankofa, program director of the organization that launched the HNSA project, the youth-partnership of the program has been met with “tremendous” support from the community who appreciate the healthy selection and opportunities for youth fostered by the program.<sup>77</sup>

## **Appendix D2: F\*R\*E\*S\*H Food Program (NYC) Press Release**

May 16, 2009: MAYOR BLOOMBERG, GOVERNOR PATERSON AND SPEAKER QUINN ANNOUNCE COMPREHENSIVE STRATEGIES TO INCREASE AND RETAIN GROCERY STORES IN NEW YORK CITY

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<sup>77</sup><http://www.thefoodtrust.org/php/programs/Summer2011issuebrief.pdf>

<http://www.nyc.gov/html/dcp/html/about/pr051609.shtml>

### **Appendix D3: Healthy Corner Stores Network Resources and Toolkit**

The Healthy Corner Stores Network offers a wealth of resources including toolkits for developing healthy convenience store initiatives, issue briefs, and consultant profiles.

<http://www.healthycornerstores.org/resources>

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## **E. OC Transpo & Food Access**

### **Vision:**

A City where pedestrians and public transit riders have ample and easy access to retail outlets along transportation routes which sell healthy and fresh foods that are locally-produced when possible.

### **City of Ottawa Priority Recommendations:**

In order to determine the feasibility of municipal policy supporting fresh and healthy foods (locally-produced when possible) at OC Transpo stations, it is recommended that:

- 1) The City of Ottawa implement a pilot project to provide retail access to healthy and fresh (locally produced foods when possible) at one major OC Transpo station. An eligible pilot site could be determined by neighbourhood need, a central location, high traffic, few or no food retail outlets, proximity to large City of Ottawa operations and other buildings such as educational facilities (e.g. colleges, universities), and the feasibility of implementing the project at the proposed location. The proposed features of this pilot project include:

Food vendors would be invited to apply to set up a fresh food stand<sup>78</sup> at the station. Proposals could be assessed based on criteria that could include nutritional quality of foods to be served, proportion of fresh foods, proportion of local foods and other criteria determined by community groups in consultation with OC Transpo and the [relevant licensing/zoning office](#). This could include both fresh, uncooked foods as well as cooked and prepared food items.

The pilot project would be broadly advertised at a launch to promote the initiative, and to celebrate OC Transpo and the City of Ottawa as leaders among North American cities on issues of sustainability and food access and local economic development associated with transit systems.

The pilot project would include a baseline evaluation, and it would then be evaluated after a period of 1 year, and renewed or expanded as appropriate. Evaluation criteria would be developed in partnership with OC Transpo, Ottawa Public Health, and interested community-level organizations and groups.

### **The Role of Businesses, Community Organizations, and Individuals – *What You Can Do:***

If you operate a food store at an OC Transpo station, consider stocking more fresh, healthy, and locally-produced options for your customers.

Let the owner of the food outlet at the OC Transpo stations that you frequent know if you would be interested in purchasing fresh, healthy and locally-produced foods from them.

**Pertains to:** OC Transpo, Ottawa Public Health, Food Businesses, Community organizations

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<sup>78</sup> Depending on the site, this food stand could be a mobile unit, like a food truck or cart, or a permanent stall or small store.

## Rationale:

By combining food access, environmental sustainability, and local economic development through addressing 'access to food' and the public transportation system simultaneously, this initiative has potential to make OC Transpo and the City of Ottawa leaders among cities throughout Canada and North America.

OC Transpo and the City of Ottawa could create multiple benefits through such an initiative:

### Improved access to healthier foods

This pilot project would be one step towards addressing the current lack of fresh and local food that is available to OC Transpo riders and pedestrians. It would address the disparities between the higher number of fast food outlets and smaller number of fresh food vendors that are conveniently located for transit users and pedestrians in Ottawa.

Residents of lower income and minority neighbourhoods in most urban areas face a double bind that severely limits their access to fresh, healthy food. First, full service supermarkets and farmers' markets are often scarce in low-income areas, which results in longer travel times, whether by car, bicycle, walking, or public transportation<sup>79</sup>. Second, lower income residents are also more likely than the general public to be transit-dependent, making it more challenging to travel to food markets located outside of their immediate neighbourhoods or off of main bus routes<sup>80</sup>.

The Ottawa Neighbourhood Study provides data that allows for the identification of 'food deserts' in Ottawa. Food deserts are neighbourhoods or communities, often low-income, that have only limited access to fresh, healthy food<sup>81</sup>. Currently, in Ottawa, there are fourteen lower income neighbourhoods with limited access to a grocery store<sup>82</sup> (here defined as no grocery store in neighbourhood and a distance of more than a kilometre to the closest grocery store)<sup>83</sup>. This is particularly problematic, as people living in poorer neighbourhoods may lack personal transportation and thus face difficulties getting to and from the grocery store. People living in rural neighbourhoods also face difficulties accessing grocery stores; the centres of five rural neighbourhoods in Ottawa are more than 10 kilometres away from the nearest grocery store<sup>84</sup>. Even though the rural neighbourhoods and communities around Ottawa are classified as higher income than urban neighbourhoods, there are many people living in such neighbourhoods who are living on lower income and thus face hardships accessing food. Over the past 10 years, OC Transpo has recorded ridership levels that average 86 million transit uses per year. On an average weekday in 2010, OC Transpo recorded a ridership level of 384,000 over an urban transit area of 442 sq. km<sup>85</sup>. By locating fresh food vendors at major transit hubs, the City could dramatically increase the accessibility of healthier foods to the population of transit users.

<sup>79</sup> Transform. (2002). "San Francisco: Long Travel Times to the Store," in Sustainable Cities Collective *Studies Show the Connection between travel times to food stores and public health*, accessed online April 2011 at

<http://sustainablecitiescollective.com/thecityfix/18142/studies-show-connection-between-travel-times-food-stores-and-public-health>

<sup>80</sup> The People's Grocer: Healthy Food for Everyone. (n.d.). "Transportation and Food Access in Urban Areas" *Linking Food and Transportation*, accessed online April 2011 at [http://www.peoplesgrocery.org/index.php?topic=funstuff\\_articles](http://www.peoplesgrocery.org/index.php?topic=funstuff_articles)

<sup>81</sup> Cummins, S & Macintyre, S. (2006). "Food Environments and Obesity – neighbourhood or nation?" *International Journal of Epidemiology*, (35): 100-104

<sup>82</sup> According to the Ottawa Neighbourhood Study (2011), lower income neighbourhoods with poor access to a grocery store (none in neighbourhood and more than a kilometer to travel to nearest one from population centre) include: Bayshore, Bells Corners West, Carlington, Greenboro East, Hintonburg, Hunt Club - Ottawa Airport, Iris, Ottawa East, Pineview, Sandy Hill - Ottawa East, West Centretown (has many specialty stores but no grocery store), Whitehaven - Queensway Terrace North, Woodroffe - Lincoln Heights, and Woodvale.

<sup>83</sup> Adapted from USDA definition. (<http://www.ers.usda.gov/data/fooddesert/about.html#Defined>)

<sup>84</sup> Ottawa Neighbourhood Study. (2011)

<sup>85</sup> OC Transpo (2010). "Ridership as of Dec 31, 2010" *Reports & Stats*, accessed online April 2011 at <http://www.octranspo1.com/about-octranspo/reports>



### Public support for healthy eating

Only twenty percent of Canadian adults eat the recommended 5-10 servings of fruits and vegetables per day, while twenty-five per cent of Canadians report having eaten fast food in the last twenty-four hours<sup>86</sup>. In order to help Ottawa citizens increase their consumption of fruits, vegetables and other healthy foods, fresh foods need to be readily available for purchase in accessible locations throughout the city.

If food carts and fruit and vegetable stands are available at OC Transpo locations throughout the city, foods that are fresh, healthy and locally produced where possible, including both whole foods and prepared foods, could be available for purchase to everybody within walking distance of a major OC Transpo station and those riding the buses. These foods would therefore become “convenient” to consume and may enhance regular consumption of fruits and vegetables and other ‘healthy’ foods for people ‘on-the-go’, and offering an alternative to fast food menus.

Increasing the availability of fresh, locally-produced food including fruits and vegetables to transit users in Ottawa, through collaborative projects between OC Transpo, the City of Ottawa and community groups such as Just Food, has potential to improve the health of Ottawa citizens.

### Enhanced convenience of public transit

The presence of food stands for commuters could make Ottawa’s public transportation system unique. Fresh food terminals at transit hubs would service existing transit users, and pedestrians within walking distance of the hubs. This pilot project also has the potential to inform OC Transpo’s longer term plans for light rail and systems expansion in general.

The Ottawa Neighbourhood Study (ONS) public poll asked residents how far they have to travel to get to the nearest grocery store; the largest category of respondents (33.5% or 269 respondents) indicated that they must travel more than 2km to get to a grocery store. Incorporating fresh and local produce at transit stations will potentially make food more accessible and provide an incentive to Ottawa residents considering making a shift from personal transportation to public transportation. The initiative will be particularly important for those Ottawa residents who do not own a vehicle, and depend on public transportation.

### Promoting environmental sustainability

Many so-called ‘convenience foods’, including some ‘fast food’, do not contribute to a healthy diet, are also unsustainable and have been shown to have negative environmental impacts (i.e. increased pollution and decreased quality of soil) as a result of processing, packaging, and shipping, and negative social implications (i.e. increased health care costs). These costs of cheap ‘convenience’ foods are not reflected in retail prices. Making fresh and local food options more readily available will give Ottawa residents opportunities to choose food which is more ecologically sustainable.

Additionally, if healthy foods are accessible on public transit routes, people may choose to purchase groceries as part of their regular commute rather than making a separate trip by car. Building access to healthy food into our public transportation system has the potential to reduce car trips, fossil fuel use and greenhouse gas emissions, helping the City to meet its own targets around climate change and transportation demand management<sup>87</sup>.

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<sup>86</sup> Canwest News Service. (Dec 19, 2007). “Canada Turning into Fast Food Nation,” citing the *Canadian Community Health Survey: Nutrition (2004)*, accessed online April 2011 at <http://www.canada.com/topics/news/politics/story.html?id=284fbbac-3be5-4498-92cb-065ebf37ab77>

<sup>87</sup> See p. 40 of the City of Ottawa’s *2020 Air Quality and Climate Change*

*Management Plan* for a discussion of climate change targets related to reducing car trips and enhancing public transit use: <http://ottawa.ca/cs/groups/content/@webottawa/documents/pdf/mdaw/mdc4/~edisp/cap078824.pdf>

## Appendix E1: Evidence/Precedents:

### *Involving Public Transit in greater Food Justice in Other Communities*

- The City of Seattle & King County aims to be a national leader in encouraging healthy, active lifestyles. Under the Department of Planning & Development the city has “...partnered with the Puget Sound Transit to develop a mobile food program that will create low-cost opportunities for Rainier Valley entrepreneurs to start small businesses at the Mt. Baker Link light rail station.” The goal of the project is to improve access to locally grown food; institutionalize the City’s health assessment efforts and provide healthy food at transit stations. More information can be found [on the King County website](#).
- The City of Philadelphia and the South-eastern Pennsylvania Transportation Authority (SEPTA) are working together to eliminate food deserts – areas of the city where it is difficult to access fresh food. As the sixth largest transit system in the USA that serves 4 million people, “SEPTA plans to use its real estate to host farmers’ markets at transit centres in partnership with the Food Trust.” More information can be found online at [smartercities.nrdc.org](http://smartercities.nrdc.org).

### *Food Carts<sup>88</sup>*

- It is clear that people in Ottawa are interested in fresh and healthy food carts. In 2012, with the goal of increasing the diversity of food offered on City streets, Ottawa City Council approved up to 20 new food cart or truck spaces be established for 2013. Applications will be evaluated by The Ontario Restaurant, Hotel & Motel Association (ORHMA), the Ottawa Branch of the Canadian Culinary Federation, Savour Ottawa, Just Food and Ottawa Public Health. The selection criteria are based on the proposed menu, business plan, level of vendor experience and overall contribution to Ottawa’s street food scene.<sup>89</sup>
- As part of its plan to combat rising obesity levels, New York City issued 1,000 additional permits for mobile fruit and vegetable stands in low-income neighbourhoods. According to a [2008 Reuters article](#), “there are more than 4,000 permits for so-called green carts in New York and the stands are a common sight in wealthy Manhattan. But low-income New Yorkers are left with little choice but to buy unhealthy “convenience” foods, most of which are packaged and processed, supporters of the bill said”<sup>90</sup>. No indication was made in the report as to whether or not food carts would be strategically placed along major transit routes/hubs.
- The City of Portland has a thriving food cart industry, many of them catering to ethnic tastes and palates for healthier food. Food carts are seen in Portland as supporting small, locally-owned businesses and small start-ups that might not have capital nor credit to open up full-fledged restaurants. Food carts are also appreciated for creating a vibrant downtown and centralized city by bringing what planners call a “social fabric on the street”, which is important in cultural terms, but in economic terms also attracts other spenders, retail outlets, and restaurants and cafes<sup>91</sup>. Although there is no formal agreement between public transit and food cart vendors, [maps](#) show

<sup>88</sup> The City of Ottawa’s bylaw regulations around food carts are available through the City of Ottawa’s By-Law Services.

<sup>89</sup> For details see [http://ottawa.ca/sites/ottawa.ca/files/attachments/ottpage/nsf\\_vend\\_info\\_en\\_0.pdf](http://ottawa.ca/sites/ottawa.ca/files/attachments/ottpage/nsf_vend_info_en_0.pdf)

<sup>90</sup> Reuters (February 28, 2008). “New York using food carts in latest obesity fight”, accessed online June 1 2011 at <http://www.reuters.com/article/2008/02/28/us-green-carts-idUSN2738591320080228>

<sup>91</sup> Food Carts Portland. (2011). “About – Portland Hearts Food Carts,” accessed online April 2011 at <http://www.foodcartsportland.com/about-2/>

the various food carts are located in clusters around high foot- and transit- traffic areas of the city.

## Strengthening Food Programs and Services

### F. Income and the Cost of Eating

#### Vision:

A city in which:

- all residents live with dignity and have access to adequate and nutritious food;
- income support and lower cost food programs reduce barriers to healthy eating, promoting positive personal and health outcomes for people living in poverty;
- the community works together towards the elimination of poverty.

#### City of Ottawa Priority Recommendations:

To reduce poverty and related food insecurity in Ottawa, it is recommended that:

- 1) The City of Ottawa maintain a focus on poverty reduction, despite ending the municipal Poverty Reduction Strategy, by:
  - a. Naming food security as a key issue for the City of Ottawa
  - b. Designating access to food as one of the priority areas in City calls for funding from other levels of government
  - c. Supporting the Future Directions for Food Security Programming identified by Ottawa Public Health in its November 2011 Report to the Board of Health: *Improving access to nutritious food, Increasing breastfeeding rates, Supporting community action related to food security, and Continuing to monitor and report on affordability*<sup>92</sup>
- 2) Ottawa City Council and Ottawa's Medical Officer of Health join the community in advocating for better supports for those living in poverty through endorsing, supporting, promoting and participating in the [Put Food in the Budget Campaign](#). This campaign acknowledges that Ontario Works and the Ontario Disability Support Program do not provide enough for recipients to afford the basics of a healthy diet (i.e. items in the Nutritious Food Basket) and therefore calls for an immediate \$100 per month Healthy Eating Supplement for all recipients of Ontario Works and the Ontario Disability Support Program as an interim measure until a fair and transparent review of rates can be completed.
  - a. Example: City of Ottawa staff could be encouraged and supported to take the Put Food in the Budget challenge.
  - b. City staff could encourage other municipalities to take part in the Put Food in the Budget campaign.
- 3) The City of Ottawa continue its advocacy to the Province of Ontario<sup>93</sup> around the linkages between poverty and access to healthy food; specifically by asking the province:
  - a. To follow through on its own provincial *Poverty Reduction Strategy*, including

<sup>92</sup> For details, see [http://ottawa.ca/calendar/ottawa/citycouncil/obh/2011/11-21/2\\_food%20security%20BOH%20report.htm](http://ottawa.ca/calendar/ottawa/citycouncil/obh/2011/11-21/2_food%20security%20BOH%20report.htm)

<sup>93</sup> In November 2011, the Ottawa Board of Health sent a letter to Ontario Minister of Health Deb Matthews, asking the province to take specific measures to reduce poverty and improve access to healthy food for all residents:

[http://ottawa.ca/calendar/ottawa/citycouncil/obh/2011/11-21/2Dn\\_BOH%20Letter%20to%20MOHLTC%20\\_Access%20to%20Healthy%20Foods.pdf](http://ottawa.ca/calendar/ottawa/citycouncil/obh/2011/11-21/2Dn_BOH%20Letter%20to%20MOHLTC%20_Access%20to%20Healthy%20Foods.pdf)

commitments in the following areas:

- i. Student nutrition;
  - ii. Healthy schools;
  - iii. After school activities;
  - iv. Mental health; and
  - v. The creation of “community hubs” for service.
- b. For increases to social assistance (Ontario Disability Support Program and Ontario Works) based on standardized market basket assessment approach to reflect current costs of living; and to make transparent the criteria for determining rates; and
  - c. For a broadly available Healthy Food Supplement in recognition that many people living in poverty – for example, students, seniors, and the working poor – are not receiving Ontario Works or the Ontario Disability Support.

In order to increase access to nutritional food at a lower cost, it is further recommended that the City of Ottawa:

- 4) Continue to support community organizations in city-wide programs that provide high quality, nutritious, and affordable food (such as the [Ottawa Good Food Box program](#))
- 5) Support public awareness of the [Community Harvest program of the Ottawa Food Bank](#) to increase volunteer participation and the involvement of local farms. In its first two growing seasons this program has grown, harvested and distributed an average of 47,000 lbs of fresh produce resulting from partnerships with the local agricultural community.
- 6) Ensure that the [Nutritious Food Basket](#) and [Cost of Healthy Eating in Ottawa](#) research tools produced by Ottawa Public Health are widely distributed and available. (See Also: Community Programming for Food Security and Food Education and Awareness Policy for recommendations around food cupboards, collective kitchens, the Good Food Box, etc.)

## Rationale

### *Food Insecurity in Canada and Ontario*

The World Health Organization (WHO) considers household food and nutrition security as a basic human right. The Public Health Agency of Canada (PHAC) has also recognized food security as a determinant of health, and identified that food insecurity is “largely the result of low income and financial insecurity”<sup>94</sup>. Other barriers to greater food security include lack of access to fresh foods (i.e. food deserts), food knowledge and skills, access to land, and environmental health<sup>95</sup>. The Canadian Community Health Survey from 2005 indicates that in Ontario, 5.3% of households were moderately food insecure and 2.3% of households were severely food insecure<sup>96</sup>. People living on low-income, single parents, people with disabilities and visible minorities are all more vulnerable to food insecurity.

For the past decade the province’s 36 local health units have been reporting the annual cost of a [Nutritious Food Basket](#) – a listing of the foods needed for a healthy and active life. Each year this

<sup>94</sup>[http://www.phac-aspc.gc.ca/ph-sp/oi-ar/08\\_food-eng.php](http://www.phac-aspc.gc.ca/ph-sp/oi-ar/08_food-eng.php), 2004

<sup>95</sup> Courtney, K (2010). “Furthering Food Security in Ottawa: Examining Partnership-based Policy between Local Government and Civil Society”, accessed online March 7, 2011 at [http://foodforall/documents/Ottawa\\_-\\_Furthering\\_Food\\_Security\\_in\\_Ottawa.pdf](http://foodforall/documents/Ottawa_-_Furthering_Food_Security_in_Ottawa.pdf)

<sup>96</sup> Health Canada, (2011). “Household Food Insecurity,” *Household Food Insecurity In Canada in 2007-2008: Key Statistics and Graphics*, accessed online at <http://www.hc-sc.gc.ca/fn-an/surveill/nutrition/commun/insecurit/key-stats-cles-2007-2008-eng.php>

survey makes it obvious that there is a gap between the money people have and the money they need to meet their basic food requirements along with other necessities of life.

### *Food Insecurity in Ottawa*

According to the community profile conducted in the fall of 2000 in collaboration between the Ottawa Food Security Group and the Region of Ottawa-Carleton Health Department, food insecurity is a growing problem for many residents within the Ottawa-Carleton region<sup>97</sup>. After amalgamation 10 years ago, it was predicted that 75,000 Ottawa residents could be affected by food insecurity<sup>98</sup>. While the overall percentage of the population that is considered 'low income before taxes' fell between 1995 and 2000, it actually increased for all demographics but seniors (the rate of seniors +65 that were low income fell from 14.1% in 2000 to 11.9% in 2005)<sup>99</sup>. Low-income is a strong indicator of food insecure populations; since 2001 there has been little socioeconomic evidence to suggest that there has been overall progress towards food security in Ottawa<sup>100</sup>.

In an average month, the Ottawa Food Bank serves 43,000 clients, 37% of whom are children, through its network of 135 member agencies<sup>101</sup>. However, emergency food relief is a band-aid solution to long-term food insecurity. The Public Health Agency of Canada (PHAC) has reported that at the local level, the most common response to community food insecurity is the food bank, which offers valuable immediate assistance but not long-term solutions<sup>102</sup>.

While the spectrum of recommendations contained within this Food Action Plan document has the potential to enable and support healthy and sustainable eating, the bottom line is that inadequate income puts a severe limit on food choices. According to [The Cost of a Nutritious Food Basket in Ottawa for 2011](#), a family of 4 (consisting of a middle-aged man, woman, teenage son and younger daughter) can anticipate spending approximately \$759/month on healthy, nutritious foods. This same family living on social assistance with all available tax benefits would have a monthly income of about \$1124 ([The Price of Eating Well in Ottawa 2011](#)).

Unfortunately, when incomes are inadequate to meet all needed expenditures, the family food budget is often cut so that the family may meet fixed costs like rent and bills. The annual report, *The Price of Eating Well in Ottawa* confirms that food becomes a 'discretionary expense' when utilities and rent compete for limited funds. Due to cost and lack of availability (i.e. through community organizations like food banks), fruit, vegetables and proteins are the hardest food items to acquire. Consequently, people living in poverty often go without these important basics and suffer from linked medical conditions such as diabetes, heart disease and poor dental health<sup>103</sup>.

Municipal and community food programs can mitigate some of the effects of poverty but these alone cannot solve the problem of hunger and food insecurity. Therefore, in Ottawa, this problem must be approached from both sides: advocating for an end to poverty through income support and living wage programs that are set at the provincial and federal level, and through local programs that make

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<sup>97</sup> City of Ottawa, People Services Department, and Ottawa Food Security Group, (2001). "Food Security in Ottawa: A Community Profile," *City of Ottawa*, accessed online at <http://207.112.105.217/library/resources/food/food-security/index.en.html>

<sup>98</sup> Ibid., page 7.

<sup>99</sup> The Social Planning Council. (2009e). *Incidence of low income in 2006*. Found in Courtney, K (2010) "Furthering Food Security in Ottawa," accessed online March 7, 2011 at [http://foodforall/documents/Ottawa\\_-\\_Furthering\\_Food\\_Security\\_in\\_Ottawa.pdf](http://foodforall/documents/Ottawa_-_Furthering_Food_Security_in_Ottawa.pdf)

<sup>100</sup> Ibid., page 52.

<sup>101</sup> Ottawa Food Bank (2011). "What Hunger Looks Like" webpage, accessed online at <http://ottawafoodbank.ca/face-of-hunger/>

<sup>102</sup> Government of Canada (2004). "The Social Determinants of Health: Food Security as a Determinant of Health," *Public Health Agency of Canada*, accessed online at [http://www.phac-aspc.gc.ca/ph-sp/oi-ar/08\\_food-eng.php](http://www.phac-aspc.gc.ca/ph-sp/oi-ar/08_food-eng.php)

<sup>103</sup> Poverty Issues Advisory Committee. (2005). "The Poverty Crisis 2005: Report on the People's Hearing II Held December 2004 To April 2005," accessed online April 2011 at <http://www.spcottawa.on.ca/sites/spcottawa.on.ca/files/pdf/2005/Publications/Peoples%20Hearing%20Final%20Report.pdf>



healthy food available at a lower cost. Along these lines, [Ottawa's Poverty Reduction Strategy](#) (2009) made specific recommendations to our municipal government such as advocating for better income support from the provincial government, improving access to existing city services through streamlined applications, and boosting the strength of supports like employment and immigrant integration services. Related directly to food policy, the *Strategy* calls for universal school meal programs, monthly diet supplements, greater fresh produce available via food banks, & better access to community kitchens.

Recent reports and forums explore the troubling link between low income and race. Statistics show that poverty rates for visible minorities and recent immigrants in Ottawa are at least double the national average, 40% of visible minority children and youth live in poverty, representing over half of all children living in poverty and the racialization of poverty has begun to result in the segregation of neighbourhoods along race and income lines. In response to these statistics, the forums [Rethinking Poverty I](#) and [II](#) (2007 and 2009) were hosted by Coalition of Community Health and Resource Centres of Ottawa. Importantly, the resulting reports highlight that as poverty becomes increasingly racialized, the negative effects of poor nutrition and hunger on health and life opportunities are disproportionately felt.

## G. Community Programming for Food Security, Food Education and Awareness

### Vision<sup>104</sup>:

- A city where all people, regardless of the community in which they live, have access to adequate amounts of healthy and affordable food without relying on food charity as a long-term solution.
- A city where all people, regardless of their socio-economic status, culture, language, level of physical ability, etc. have access not only to healthy and affordable food, but also access to *knowledge, information, and opportunities to learn* about:
  - Food and nutrition;
  - Food systems, including a local food system;
  - How to access food, including local food;
  - Culinary, food preservation, gardening, and other food-related skills;
  - Agriculture and food production; and
  - How they can take action on food issues in their community.
- A city that supports partnerships and linkages between emergency food relief services, food security programs, and a broad spectrum of community-based and city-run food programs and services.
- A city where a *Local Food, Urban Agriculture and Community Learning Hub* builds capacity for greater community-based food information, resources, services, and training.

### City of Ottawa Priority Recommendations:

In order to improve Ottawa's food-related awareness and education, it is recommended that the City of Ottawa continues to support greater capacity building and coordination along the spectrum of existing community food programs and services in the city. Support to these initiatives, with an emphasis on neighbourhood-based initiatives that promote food security, will further the City's own goals with respect to the Community Development Framework.

Specifically, we ask that the City of Ottawa commit to the following actions:

- 1) Designate 'access to food' as one of the priority areas in applications for City funding<sup>105</sup> (e.g. Community Sustainability grants, calls for one-time funding, etc.);
- 2) Continue allocation of City staff time to engage in food-related planning with community partners (e.g. Steering Committees, Advisory bodies), and across City departments
- 3) In collaboration with community partners and stakeholders, support Just Food's *Local Food, Urban Agriculture and Community Learning Hub* to act as a demonstration site and learning centre that facilitates greater neighbourhood-level food programming, by providing in-kind expertise and assistance related to planning and feasibility studies for the establishment of

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<sup>104</sup> NOTE: The vision of this proposal shares many of the values and goals identified by the City of Ottawa's Community Development Framework, such as; increasing neighbourhood capacity to enact positive change, improved planning and service delivery, improving the social determinants of health, increasing neighbourhood safety, and promoting sustainable positive change at both the neighbourhood and systems levels.

<sup>105</sup> The goal of the Community Funding Program is to "support, through viable non-profit community based organizations, the provision of community services and programs that increase access to basics". While food is considered a basic need, specifically naming access to food as a priority area would further enhance the ability of these community services and programs to function.

such a centre.

- 4) The City of Ottawa provide funding for a Food Education and Awareness Coordinator to liaise between a *Local Food, Urban Agriculture and Community Learning Hub*, community organizations working on food-related programming, the City, and Ottawa neighbourhoods. This funding would include an operating budget in order to offer further education and outreach services, and to lead the development and implementation of a training and networking model. To start, this would be a 3-year pilot of this program and position. This staff person would work to build partnerships between existing community dietitians, community organizers, community organizations, and others to:
  - a. Develop and lead the implementation of a Food Education and Awareness Strategy.
  - b. Develop a new training and networking model for volunteers in order to strengthen neighbourhood-based food programming and build connections between groups involved in food-related activities. With the inclusion of baseline studies and a yearly review, this model would be founded on collaboration with existing community food and health-related experts in Ottawa. This model would include training within and across sectors to build greater capacity and strengthen the linkages between the *Local Food, Urban Agriculture and Community Learning Hub* and Ottawa's different neighbourhoods, with the ultimate goal to strengthen and enhance community-level food programs and services.
  - c. Strengthen and expand the network of those working towards municipal food security.
  - d. Expand the diversity of current food-related education and outreach (i.e. socio-economic status, mobility, culture, etc.).
  - e. Facilitate and raise the profile of public food-related educational workshops and information sessions and find new and effective ways of offering food education programming by drawing on a variety of jurisdictions, current programming, local expertise, and community support.
  - f. Perform food-related outreach at community events and fairs, cultural celebrations, and others as appropriate.
  - g. Support existing food-related awareness campaigns such as the Cost of a Nutritious Food Basket in Ottawa.
  - h. Ensure that the existing materials and resources around food awareness (i.e. the Buy Local Food Guide, the Food Link Directory, etc.) are accessible to all members of our communities through financial and expertise supports to develop, translate into multi-languages (beyond French and English) and distribute these resources and materials.

Some sample projects that the Food Education and Awareness Coordinator could be tasked with, for example, include:

Promotion of the Plant-a-Row, Donate-a-Row program, whereby the local gardening community donates fresh vegetables, fruit and herbs to food banks and/or soup kitchens in need.

Education in the community about the new Ministry of Education Policy PPM 150, with a focus on providing information on the challenges faced by schools and school boards, and the potential roles that community organizations can play to support healthy school food environments.

- 5) Continue to support projects such as the *Food Link Directory*, which centralizes food-related service information for Ottawa residents.

## Other Recommendations:

- 6) In conjunction with community partners, facilitate access to spaces and facilities to increase the neighbourhood-based community food programming and services that currently exist, through:
- a. Examining how organizations that receive City funding can make their meeting space, garden space, and kitchen facilities available for access by community groups. (I.e. this could be modeled upon the [Community Use of Schools](#) program, which operates in all four of Ottawa's School Boards<sup>106</sup>.)
  - b. Establishing a fund to support retrofits and upgrades of kitchen facilities to meet food safety and associated regulations so that cultural centres, churches, businesses and other buildings can be used for greater community-based food programming. This fund could be allocated based on the following criteria and tied to enhanced community usage:
    - i. where existing facilities are inadequate to support community-based programming;
    - ii. where there is demonstrated need in the neighbourhood; and
    - iii. where the group/organization applying has a plan in place to provide and encourage the use of the space for community groups, in which any fees charged are to recoup costs of supplies, services, and operational needs only and not to render a profit for the sponsoring group/organization.
  - c. Providing an online portal that lists spaces available for use by community groups, organized by neighbourhood and by type of facilities/spaces available.

## Pertains to:

- “Choosing Our Future” (City of Ottawa, City of Gatineau, NCC), > Foundation Paper > [Food and Agriculture](#)
- Ottawa Public Health (OPH) > [Healthy Living: Nutrition](#)
- City of Ottawa food-related programs and services

## Rationale:

The City has a unique opportunity to leverage existing knowledge and infrastructure for the betterment of food security in Ottawa. Key opportunities include:

*Greater flow of resources and expertise across programs to facilitate individuals and communities moving towards greater long-term food security.*

*Facilitating opportunities for knowledge and information sharing to allow individuals and groups working in the areas of public health and food security to strengthen existing services between and within programs and organizations.*

## **Existing Community Food Programs and Services: Challenges and Opportunities**

Community programs and services that deal with food and hunger include a variety of activities and services that support and strengthen food security at the community level, from emergency food relief (i.e. food banks), to more sustainable capacity building workshops and programs, [community kitchen facilities](#), and bulk buying programs (i.e. [Ottawa Good Food Box](#)) that allow people to increase their own access to adequate and nutritious food.

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<sup>106</sup> See Appendix G5 for further details on the Community Use of Schools program.

A wide range of stakeholders are presently involved, to different degrees, in community food programs in Ottawa, including

- ✓ all levels of government;
- ✓ community organizations;
- ✓ community groups and associations;
- ✓ business improvement areas;
- ✓ farmers and farm co-operatives;
- ✓ local school boards;
- ✓ universities and colleges;
- ✓ non-government organizations (NGOs);
- ✓ food banks and emergency food providers;
- ✓ the National Capital Commission (NCC);
- ✓ private enterprises;
- ✓ and individual citizens.

The strength of these programs is that they address needs at both neighbourhood and city-wide levels. They can be enhanced by increasing capacity and connections amongst programs and services, thereby building synergies and creating opportunities for innovative food programming and services.

The challenge with having so many actors and key stakeholders in food-related community programming comes with cross-promotion, information sharing, cross-training, and communication. Some areas of the city are better served by community food programs and services, while others require further capacity building and support in order to meet the diverse food needs of residents.

A 2010 survey of food-related programming in Ottawa reviewed 28 nutrition and food programs across the city<sup>107</sup>. Of these 28 programs, 15 of the organizations profiled (54%) relied on short-term grants and donations to carry out their work. While these programs help to mitigate some of the impacts of poverty, they themselves are not necessarily secure or sustainable. Funding for these programs is often pieced together from a variety of different sources, leading to a heavy reliance on unpaid or low-paying work and donations from private or business members of the community. This is not a solid foundation on which to build a more food secure city.

A lack of funding and cross-program support limits the ability of programs to meet the food needs of all citizens and to better leverage sharing of resources and facilities. Better coordination of community food programs results in greater awareness among stakeholders and the public of the full range of community food options available.

Using a food animator model to connect food-related services and support capacity building would strengthen the ability of community-based service providers to reach a greater number of residents, increasing access and effectiveness of services.

### ***Gaps in Food Education and Awareness***

The terms *food awareness* and *food education* have, with respect to many food-related policies and programs, come to mean education and awareness about *nutrition* and *food safety*, and to a lesser extent, *cooking skills*. Although these are important components of a healthy, sustainable, and accessible food system, there are other vitally important components that are being missed by such a

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<sup>107</sup> Courtney, K (2010). "Furthering Food Security in Ottawa: Examining Partnership-based Policy between Local Government and Civil Society", accessed online March 7, 2011 at [http://foodforall/documents/Ottawa\\_-\\_Furthering\\_Food\\_Security\\_in\\_Ottawa.pdf](http://foodforall/documents/Ottawa_-_Furthering_Food_Security_in_Ottawa.pdf)

narrow interpretation of the concept of food education and awareness.

Food for All believes that food education and awareness can – and should – refer as well to the following, equally important aspects of the food system:

- practical information about how to grow, harvest, handle, and cook food;
- food (in)access for different communities;
- agriculture and the environment;
- labelling regulations;
- the difficulties faced by small-scale farmers in Canada;
- the decline of food growing, harvesting, preserving and cooking skills in Canada;
- the health, social, and economic costs of “cheap” foods which are often subsidized;
- action for change at the local, national, and global levels;
- and many other issues.

It is our view that these gaps in education and awareness programming (and by extension, in our community’s knowledge about food issues) are best filled at the local level, where people interact with their food systems daily.

A more informed and educated public is a more resilient population. Broadening food education and awareness beyond the limited scope of basic nutrition and food safety is the foundation for a healthier society. Making better use of Ottawa’s existing food education and awareness opportunities will lead to increased numbers and diversity of people benefitting from these services. Improved coordination, stronger partnering, and a greater provision of information can enhance outcomes for both the City of Ottawa and its community partners. A Food Education & Awareness strategy must be inclusive of *all* stakeholders and service providers in order to be successful and sustainable over the long-term.

### ***A Local Food, Urban Agriculture and Community Learning Hub for the City of Ottawa: connecting the dots***

A model to enhance community food programming can be found in “community food centres,” which successfully integrate and coordinate various food programs across a diverse municipality. In Ottawa, the establishment of a *Local Food, Urban Agriculture and Community Learning Hub* would provide the following services, reflecting challenges and opportunities that are unique to the Ottawa context:

Act as a **hub for food programming** in Ottawa, gathering and managing information related to neighborhood food programs and services offered by various stakeholders, including community health centres, community associations and community centres, City of Ottawa Public Health, and non-profit and non-governmental organizations.

Act as a **centre of knowledge sharing for capacity building and training** for those organizations in the city that are engaged in food security, nutrition and public health, facilities development (e.g., establishing a community kitchen), and skill building/demonstrations (e.g. canning workshops, cooking classes). The Hub would leverage the collective experience of its network (for example, the experience of the community dietitians in CHRCs and the dietitians in public health) to provide ‘train the trainer’ and other shared learning opportunities in order to strengthen the food related community in Ottawa.

Serve as a location to **develop, pilot, model and build food programming** that doesn’t currently exist in Ottawa, but that has been identified as a promising practice or innovative solution in other



jurisdictions.

House a **Food Education and Awareness Coordinator**, a full-time position funded by the City of Ottawa. This position would act as the key contact for the coordination and facilitation of knowledge sharing and training delivered at the *Local Food, Urban Agriculture and Community Learning Hub*. The Food Education and Awareness Coordinator would work closely with the Food Animators to assist in the deployment and implementation of programs and services at the neighbourhood level.

Facilitate the **training and collaboration of Food Animators** to act as important liaisons between the Hub and the various communities in which the Animators serve.

Benefits of such an integrated food programming hub include:

Creating new and comprehensive partnerships that build efficiencies in leveraging existing community food infrastructure (e.g., community kitchens, university and college kitchens, NCC lands for community gardens) to enhance programs and services at the neighbourhood level.

Identifying gaps in programming at the neighbourhood level and applying and sharing existing skilled human resources across public, private, and non-profit sectors (e.g., public health resources, health care providers, gardening networks, schools, universities, colleges) to ensure that the largest possible portion of Ottawa's population will receive consistent and high quality food programming.

#### ***A Food Training and Networking Model in Ottawa:***

The proposed model to strengthen community food education is to use food and community experts already embedded within the community that they serve, who facilitate and develop opportunities for knowledge and resource sharing across community stakeholders. The strength of this model comes from the fact that these individuals are already working within the community (e.g. health-care professionals, educators, community advocates, etc.) and are passionate about food-related community building.

A network of people trained to provide information and support community action on food issues would provide the following benefits:

Build connections within neighbourhood food systems by facilitating outreach and strengthening collaboration among partners, including community organizations, farmers' markets, community centres, schools, community gardens, citizens' groups and organizations, and private enterprise. This would strengthen the network of people, information and resources related to food access, food production, skills development, and nutrition.

Increase food education and awareness in a way that is unique to each neighbourhood by utilizing the University of Ottawa and Just Food's community assessment toolkit *Where's the Food?* This would build a greater awareness of the demographics, services, resources and programs offered in a particular locale.

Target food educational programming at hard-to-reach populations (e.g. children, the elderly, those with reduced mobility, low-income families, new Canadians) through increased collaboration with various community partners in the dissemination and sharing of information, community facilities, resources, and knowledge.

Serve Ottawa communities by leveraging support via a *Local Food, Urban Agriculture and Community Learning Hub*. As experts already embedded within the community, the network of trained food animators would work collaboratively to address shared challenges and to create opportunities for knowledge sharing across neighbourhoods and between organizations.

The benefits that come from within the community include:

Pooling the collective information and knowledge of neighbourhood food services and challenges in order to provide more targeted food related programming to meet the food-needs of all residents.

Identifying and acting upon community needs for food education and food related programming can augment existing services and strengthen existing institutional knowledge.

Facilitating opportunities for cross-training, cross-cultural, and inter-generational food growing, preserving, cooking and eating. This model fosters civic engagement, community ownership of local food-based programming, community based resilience in a turbulent global food system, and social cohesion because the solutions come from within the community rather than being imposed from external experts.

## **Appendix G1: Background – Food Insecurity in Ottawa**

The World Health Organization (WHO) considers household food and nutrition security to be a basic human right. The Public Health Agency of Canada (PHAC) has also recognized food security as a determinant of health, and identified that food insecurity is “largely the result of low income and financial insecurity”<sup>108</sup>. Other barriers to greater food security include access to fresh foods (i.e. food deserts), food knowledge and skills, access to land, and environmental health<sup>109</sup>. See the Food Action Plan proposal on Income and the Cost of Eating for further information about food insecurity and its effects on health and well-being.

As an indicator of food insecurity in Ottawa, in an average month, the Ottawa Food Bank serves 43,000 clients, 37% of whom are children, through its network of 135 member agencies<sup>110</sup>. According to [The Cost of a Nutritious Food Basket in Ottawa for 2011](#), a family of 4 (consisting of a middle-aged man, woman, teenage son and younger daughter) can anticipate spending approximately \$759/month on healthy, nutritious foods. This same family living on social assistance with all available tax benefits would have a monthly income of about \$1124 ([The Price of Eating Well in Ottawa 2011](#)). Unfortunately, when incomes are inadequate to meet all needed expenditures, the family food budget is often cut so that the family may meet fixed costs like rent and bills.

While much broader and far reaching actions are required to address the root causes of poverty, of which food insecurity is merely a symptom, there are actions that can be taken immediately to strengthen the communication, cross-promotion and programming and ultimately the long-term sustainability of food-related programming in Ottawa’s communities.

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<sup>108</sup>[http://www.phac-aspc.gc.ca/ph-sp/oi-ar/08\\_food-eng.php](http://www.phac-aspc.gc.ca/ph-sp/oi-ar/08_food-eng.php), 2004

<sup>109</sup> Courtney, K (2010). “Furthering Food Security in Ottawa: Examining Partnership-based Policy between Local Government and Civil Society.”, accessed online March 7, 2011 at [http://foodforall/documents/Ottawa\\_-\\_Furthering\\_Food\\_Security\\_in\\_Ottawa.pdf](http://foodforall/documents/Ottawa_-_Furthering_Food_Security_in_Ottawa.pdf)

<sup>110</sup> [Ottawa Food Bank \(2011\). “What Hunger Looks Like” webpage. accessed online at http://ottawafoodbank.ca/face-of-hunger/](http://ottawafoodbank.ca/face-of-hunger/)

## Appendix G2: Background – Current community food programming, education and awareness opportunities in Ottawa

In Ottawa, food programming, education and awareness activities are delivered or coordinated by a range of actors, including:

- the City of Ottawa and Ottawa Public Health;
- school curriculum programs (provincial and municipal via the four school boards);
- Ottawa's community health and resource centres;
- a variety of other community groups businesses, not-for-profits, and charities.

While a wide range of programs and services are offered (see below for examples), there can be some barriers to accessing these programs. Geographic location can be an impediment to citizens wanting food-related information or services; unless you have connection to the internet, food-related information and programs are scattered around the city. Additionally, much of the food-related materials in Ottawa require individuals to seek out this information using their own time and resources, which can vary considerably based on socio-economic conditions, language, mobility, etc. Unlike information about, for example, recycling or emergency services, information about food requires that people know what they are looking for before they start their search. Some programs charge a fee for participation, or are open only to members of an organization, a school, or who are registered in a particular program. Transportation, language, child-care and culture can be additional barriers to accessing the food education and awareness programming that currently exists in Ottawa.

The following is a sample of *some* of the current food-related programming in Ottawa:

### a) *The City of Ottawa*

The City of Ottawa's [Community Funding](#) provides funding for many community-based organizations that work on access to basic needs – which includes food.

The City of Ottawa's [Nutrition and Food Services in Ottawa](#) web page provides a gateway to a number of City and external resources for healthy eating, food security, and local food programs.

City of Ottawa recreational courses on food, nutrition and cooking offered through Community Centres are detailed on pages 111-112 of the [Spring/Summer 2011 Parks & Recreation Guide](#).

Ottawa Public Health runs informational awareness campaigns, such as the [Nutritious Food Basket](#) and [Price of Eating Well in Ottawa](#), as well as skills-building programs. [Home Management Counsellors](#) are a part of the City of Ottawa's Home Support Services and work out of Community Health and Resource Centres to provide a range of services to Home Support clients, including assistance with the planning and preparation of meals and budgeting, amongst other household tasks.

The [Community Food Advisor \(CFA\) Program](#) trains long-term volunteers in areas that include the Canada Food Guide, food safety, food budgeting and planning, food preservation (canning, pickling, drying), food preparation skills, presentation and leadership skills, and working with multicultural groups. CFAs then take this training into the communities, working with community groups, schools, and/or organizations on an as-requested basis. The Ontario Ministry of Agriculture, Food and Rural Affairs (OMAFRA) established the [Community Food Advisor](#) peer education program in 1992 to address a knowledge deficit in food education and awareness amongst Ontarians. The program is currently funded by the Ontario Ministry of Health and Long Term Care and administered by municipalities. There are currently 31 trained CFA volunteers in Ottawa; some have been

with the program since the initial training session in 1995. In 2010, the CFAs in Ottawa received over 100 requests for their presentations and services. In the end, 75 workshops were given by CFAs in 2010<sup>111</sup>.

#### b) Community Organizations

Community organizations in Ottawa deliver a wide array of food education and awareness programming, as well as food-related services and resources. The range of programming includes community kitchens, support to residents to start community gardens, food demonstrations, nutrition education groups, grocery store tours, meal and snack programs, emergency food cupboards, food vouchers, and more. Some specific examples are highlighted here:

Just Food: Part of the mission of Just Food is to provide education and awareness regarding the food system to the public.

- Just Food hosts workshops open to the public on a variety of food-related topics, including hands-on skills for cooking and food preservation, organic gardening, food policy, farming, and other topics. Internships with local farmers provide an opportunity for potential farmers to learn the skills necessary to start their own operation.
- The REEL Food Film Festival provides an additional opportunity for Ottawa residents to learn about food issues.
- The [Community Gardening Network](#) supports groups to establish and maintain community gardens throughout Ottawa. This is done in partnership with the City of Ottawa and community groups. For example, [Sustainable Living Ottawa East \(SLOE\)](#) and [Sustainable Living Ottawa West \(SLOW\)](#) are two neighbourhood-based organizations involved in establishing and coordinating community gardens. Both groups have matched local landowners with landless gardeners to establish new backyard gardens. SLOE also created a children's garden in a neighbourhood park. Community associations are also involved in community garden projects, such as the Hintonburg Community Association which created a small community garden on Wellington West near the Hintonburg Community Centre.
- The [Buy Local Food Guide](#) disseminates information about where Ottawa residents can buy food from local farmers with farm-gate sales, farmers' markets, Community Supported Agriculture (CSAs) and local food box programs in both English and French. A paper based guide was produced annually by Just Food and supported by the NCC, and was disseminated to residents via public libraries, community organizations and private businesses, and at various food and environment-related events around the city. The directory is now an interactive "google" map on the Just Food website.
- The [Food Link Directory](#) is a service that concentrates all food-related programming into a single directory that can be accessed either online or by telephone (211). Prior to 2008, it was supported financially by the City of Ottawa and made available via the city's [Nutrition Services](#) website. It is now housed on the Just Food website and is being updated for 2013.
- The [Where's the Food](#) toolkit (in partnership with the University of Ottawa) is an Ottawa-specific tool for community groups to assess the food resources, services, and programs within their neighbourhood. This toolkit is designed to help a community group understand the strengths and gaps in their neighbourhood, in terms of food, and to plan the types of actions that would improve, enhance, or introduce these food resources, services, or programs. The Toolkit has been included as Appendix G3.

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<sup>111</sup> Hammingh, Jane, RD, Public Health Dietitian at Ottawa Public Health, *Personal communication March 2011*

The [Ottawa Food Bank](#) distributes 12 tons of food per day through its network of over 140 member agencies, which include emergency grocery programs, soup kitchens, drop-in centres, recovery programs, women's and men's shelters and school meal programs. The Ottawa Food Bank is also involved in food education and awareness activities and in engaging volunteers and community members.

*[School Breakfasts and School Gardens](#)*: Community organizations have teamed up with the four school boards and individual schools to provide food programming, and healthy meals and snacks to many Ottawa students. In the city of Ottawa approximately 11,000 children in 146 schools begin each school day with a nutritious meal provided by the [Ottawa School Breakfast Program](#). Founded by the Ottawa Centre for Research and Innovation, the program provides funding for equipment, program monitors and food. The Ottawa branch of Canadian Organic Growers Ottawa organizes school gardens in Ottawa area schools. The [Growing Up Organic](#) program supports child and youth education in partnership with schools and farms in the region. They have partnered with 28 schools across the region in establishing organic school garden programs. The program partners with individual schools to build organic food gardens on school grounds, and develops and delivers garden-based workshops that are linked to the Ontario curriculum. It also identifies regional organic farms to host class field trips through which farmers share aspects of organic farming, introducing students to an important part of the food production system – the producers. While at the farms, students harvest food to bring back to the classroom, where they prepare a meal in collaboration with a local chef and/or nutritionist as well as with parents and volunteers.

*[Community Health and Resource Centres](#)*: Ottawa's 14 community health and resource centres offer a range of programming including community kitchens, support to residents to start community gardens, food demonstrations, nutrition education groups, grocery store tours, meal and snack programs, emergency food cupboards, food vouchers, and more. The common goal of all of these programs is to increase nutrition knowledge and food skills to support individuals and families to buy, grow, and prepare healthy and low-cost food.

The [Ottawa Good Food Box](#) is a non-profit community-based initiative bringing neighbours together at 32 sites across the city once a month to buy a variety of delicious and nutritious fresh fruits and vegetables at wholesale prices. People can purchase a \$10, \$15, or \$20 box; a \$5 fruit bag; and during the local growing season, a \$25 organic box. The goal is to purchase food that is in season and is grown as close to home as possible. It works like a large buying cooperative with centralized buying and coordination. The program is open to everyone, with no membership fees. Ottawa GFB is funded by City of Ottawa and by donations, and operated out of the Centretown Community Health Centre (CHC).

*[Food-related social enterprises](#)*: Non-profit organizations offer training opportunities for community members to gain food-related skills and experience that will support them in finding employment. For example, [Causeway Work Centre](#) operates a catering business, [Krackers Katering](#), which offers training and skills development in a commercial kitchen, helping individuals to reach their employment goals. Another example is the upcoming Start-Up Farm project to build vegetable growing skills for new farmers through Just Food.

### c) *Educational institutions*

Elementary and secondary schools, as well as post-secondary institutions offer varying amounts of programming in nutrition and food-skills development. Better linkages between community groups and schools can provide opportunities to make better use of food education and awareness programs

that are located in the community, or within schools by the broader public. For example, a community group may benefit from attending a college lecture on a horticultural topic; or a school group may be able to learn about gardening and healthy eating from a visit to a nearby community garden.

#### d) *Businesses*

Private enterprises that operate food preparation facilities and educational programs, such as the [Urban Element](#), play an important role in delivering food education and awareness programming, recognizing that costs can be a barrier for many people. Major grocery chains sometimes provide in-store workshops or demonstrations. Community organizations, and the City, can work with businesses to better leverage their capacity to deliver food education and awareness programming for a wider community benefit.

### **Appendix G3: Background – Community Food Centres**

Community Food Centres or Food Hubs current exist in a variety of different models in both urban and rural jurisdictions. While each of these models has a specific focus, this Food Action Plan proposal envisions a food hub in Ottawa that would bring together the best of what each model has to offer in an integrated food hub addressing multiple needs.

The [Stop Community Food Centre](#) in Toronto began as a local food bank almost 30 years ago, and has since evolved into “a thriving community centre where people come together to grow, cook, and eat food, as well as to advocate for measures that can increase food security in the wider community. It maintains its emergency food programs, but has complemented them with a range of capacity- and skills-building programs.”<sup>112</sup> The Stop has pioneered a new model for addressing a multitude of food issues, one that confronts the basic needs of all Torontonians while supporting local agriculture, combating diet-related illness, and building community around the notion of healthy, good food for all. For example, the Stop pairs the food-hamper distribution with educational programs that are designed to reduce reliance on cheap, non-nutritional foods. [The Stop's programs](#) include: urban gardens that supply fresh produce for the programs it runs as well as actively involves citizens in the process; affordable community cooking programs that offer both social and educational benefits; year-round farmers' markets and a community bake oven to bring people together around food; the Food Bank which gives people a 3-day supply of high-quality food once a month; After School Programs that teach children basic gardening and cooking skills; and family support services that offer pre- and post-natal nutritional programming. This holistic, multi-faceted, yet centrally organized approach reaches a wide population. For example, in their 2006/2007 Annual Report, The Stop recorded over 6,200 registrants at the food bank, 2,000 pounds of fresh produce harvested from the community gardens, 50 varieties of tomatoes started in the community greenhouse, 158 community kitchen sessions offered, 98% of babies born with a healthy birthweight through the Healthy Beginnings program, and over 450 people served *weekly* at the year-round farmers' market<sup>113</sup>. The Stop has supported new community food centre models in Perth and Stratford Ontario in collaboration with local groups.

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<sup>112</sup>Scharf, K., Levkoe, C., Saul, N. *In Every Community, a Place for Food*. The Metcalf Foundation, 2010

<sup>113</sup> The Stop 2006/2007 Annual Report, accessed march 2, 2011 at [http://www.thestop.org/sites/thestop.org/files/annual-reports/Annual\\_Report\\_2006\\_2007FINAL\\_0.pdf](http://www.thestop.org/sites/thestop.org/files/annual-reports/Annual_Report_2006_2007FINAL_0.pdf)



[Evergreen Brickworks](#) (Toronto, Ontario): Evergreen Brick Works is a community environmental centre that inspires and equips visitors to live, work and play more sustainably. It includes a 20,000-square-foot native plant demonstration space in which native plant and food gardens are planted, cared for, and maintained by partly by school groups, community groups, home gardeners, and families. Evergreen Brickworks hosts a weekly Farmers' Market, and in the summer of 2011 was a "hub" for local CSAs. The centre also offers office and meeting space for like-minded community organizations, as well as a wide variety of educational opportunities, including interactive cooking demonstrations, wine tastings, discussions exploring important issues for the modern food movement, communal meals, and workshops on cooking and food for children 8-12.

[McVean Incubator Farm](#) (Brampton, Ontario): The McVean Farm leases 50 acres from the Toronto Land Conservation Authority. Launched with four farmers in 2008, the program now encompasses over 20 farmers. Participants accepted into the program must prepare a business plan, have their own insurance and go through a tiered system of support that gives greater support to enterprises during the early stage of development and phases out support as the enterprise matures. The program **encourages new, alternative, and innovative business ideas** that include a primary consideration for overall and long-term sustainability.

[Intervale Centre](#) (Burlington, Vermont): Founded in 1986, Intervale has grown into an internationally renowned headquarters for sustainable agriculture that employs 12 people. In addition to the incubator farm, it has a farmers' equipment company, which purchased farm equipment with a grant, and rents to farmers, taking care of maintenance and repair. It also has a compost company, a multi-farm CSA and bulk produce business, and a conservation nursery, in addition to providing consulting, training and workshops, and sharing space for other like-minded organizations. Over the years it has evolved into a multifunctional food hub with education, food distribution and other value-added businesses.

[Everdale](#) (Hillsdale, ON): Everdale is a local hub for surrounding farmers and farm produce. The farm is 150-acres, certified organic (vegetables, grain, oil seeds, pasture, hay, cover crops) and includes livestock: poultry, pigs, sheep, goats, cows, draft horses and bees. They have several specialty gardens: an heirloom and rare seed garden in partnership with Seeds of Diversity Canada, a bio-intensive garden, cut flowers, and rooftop gardens. Marketing includes a CSA, farm store, farmers markets, and direct sales to urban businesses. Everdale offers curriculum-linked school workshops, field trips, and a *Farmers in the Schools* program, which brings farmer-educators into the classroom. The group coordinates workshops in Toronto, Guelph and Erin on topics ranging from raising chickens in the city, growing mushrooms, food preparation and preservation, permaculture, and beekeeping.

[Stone Barn Center for Food and Agriculture](#) (Pocantico Hills, NY) helps young farmers become skilled in resilient farming. They provide training, knowledge, and hands on experience to create the next generation of sustainable food producers and consumers. Through their children's education programs, thousands of kids have the opportunity to get their hands dirty and see where their food comes from.

Albion Hills Community Farm (AHCF) (Caledon, ON) is located in Ontario's oldest conservation area and within the Toronto Greenbelt. AHCF is currently being established as a demonstration site for sustainable farming practices and a learning centre for local food, farming and conservation. It will serve students who come to AHCF to learn and also a wide

variety of community groups, institutions and individuals that are looking for locally grown, healthy food and opportunities to connect with the land, farming and with each other. AHCF is a unique partnership of the *Caledon Countryside Alliance*, *Palgrave Environment Committee*, *Chesslawn Farm*, and *Toronto and Region Conservation*.

[Appalachian Sustainable Development](#) (Abingdon, Virginia) is a non-profit working in southwest Virginia and northeast Tennessee since 1995. They connect farmers, forest landowners, and those who make food and forest products with markets and other resources in the region. They conduct education programs for children, communities, farmers, forest landowners and others on nutrition, childhood obesity, low impact farming and forestry practices, local foods, and much more. They have 14 staff.

[Growing Power](#) (Milwaukee, Wisconsin): Growing Power is a non-profit organization and land trust supporting people from diverse backgrounds, by helping to provide equal access to healthy, high-quality, safe and affordable food for people in all communities. Growing Power implements this mission by providing hands-on training, on-the-ground demonstration, outreach and technical assistance through the development of Community Food Systems that help people grow, process, market and distribute food in a sustainable manner. Growing Power demonstrates replicable growing methods through on-site workshops and hands-on demonstrations. There are farms in Milwaukee and Merton, Wisconsin, and in Chicago, Illinois, and the organization has also established satellite-training sites in Arkansas, Georgia, Kentucky, Massachusetts, and Mississippi. The centre provides education through local, national, and international outreach for farmers and communities, by hosting a number of youth programs, engaging volunteers, and participating in agricultural policy initiatives. Food production occurs in the organization's demonstration greenhouses, rural farm site in Merton, and urban farms in Milwaukee and Chicago. The organization also distributes food produced by over 300 small family farmers in the Rainbow Farmers Cooperative, and the organization's year-round food security program, the Farm-to-City Market Basket Program.

## **Appendix G4: Background – Food Awareness Programming in Other Communities**

### *Food Education and Awareness in Canada*

The last environmental scan of food awareness levels in Canada was conducted in 2000 through Health Canada. The objective was to improve Canada's food and nutrition surveillance capacity in order to address public concerns over food safety, rising poor nutrition, weak child healthcare policies, and growing food insecurity in Canada<sup>114</sup>. Prior to this study, only one other national food and nutrition study had ever been conducted in Canada; the *Nutrition Canada Survey* of 1970-72, which has since been followed by other smaller initiatives but nothing to indicate the national nutrition needs of Canadians<sup>115</sup>.

As the Globe & Mail reported on March 22, 2011 in the article [Teaching People to Cook outside the Box](#):

“An entire generation of Canadians have no idea how to transform raw ingredients into edibles. They don't know how to cook. They're learning how to shop in big box stores and use a microwave – a lot of their parents are just living off convenience foods. To reverse that, children and their parents need

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<sup>114</sup> Health Canada. (2000). “Executive Summary,” *in* Food and Nutrition Surveillance in Canada: An Environmental Scan, Pg. 4. Accessed online March 2011 at [http://www.hc-sc.gc.ca/fn-an/alt\\_formats/hpfb-dgpsa/pdf/surveill/environmental\\_scan-eng.pdf](http://www.hc-sc.gc.ca/fn-an/alt_formats/hpfb-dgpsa/pdf/surveill/environmental_scan-eng.pdf)

<sup>115</sup> Ibid. “Existing Food and Nutrition Surveillance Data Sources,” pg. 5

to be schooled in how to handle food that doesn't come in a package."<sup>116</sup>

The [Canada Food Guide](#) is perhaps the best attempt at a national program on food-awareness for Canadians. However, its focus is on *nutrition* and does not address other aspects of food awareness for the public, such as where our food comes from, agriculture and the environment, food preparation and handling skills, and food access for different communities.

More local models of food education and awareness programming at the community level include the following:

a. *FoodShare Food Animators (Toronto, ON)*

The Food Animator model in Toronto is described as overwhelmingly successful, according to Angela ElzingaCheng, the Community Food Program Manager with FoodShare Toronto.<sup>117</sup> Using the Food animator model, FoodShare has supported the start-up and running of 42 projects in collaboration with 72 local partners, focusing on increased food access, building community capacity, and improved environmental impacts (in order of importance).

A pilot project was implemented for one year between August 2004 and October 2005 with four Community Animators seconded from their respective organizations for the duration of the project. Having the food animators come from *within* the community (rather than externally imposed upon a community) made it easier to navigate the bureaucracy, successfully fundraise, build leadership teams, share success stories, and bring like-minded people together.<sup>118</sup>

Funding is currently provided by the City of Toronto and the Toronto Community Foundation. Under this initiative, [Food Animators](#) work closely together to support the initiation and development of best-practice based food projects across the three streams – 1) Community Gardens, 2) Good Food Markets (not Farmers' markets) and 3) Community Kitchens – by working with local leaders and community agencies in Etobicoke, North York and Scarborough. The Animators engage communities in the effort to build community food security, reduce isolation, and create public space.

b. *Belo Horizonte Food Security Programme: Basic Basket Research & Education for Food Consumption (Belo Horizonte, Brazil)*

The municipality of Belo Horizonte, Brazil's fourth largest city with 2.5 million citizens, has received international recognition<sup>119</sup> for its policies and programs on food security. The municipal government passed Municipal Law No. 6.352, 15/07/1993, which "*set out a policy framework that is committed to the concept of food sovereignty: the right of peoples to define their own food and agricultural policies, to protect and regulate their production and trade in such a manner as to secure sustainable development, to determine the degree of their autonomy and to eliminate dumping on their markets*". In addition to the initiatives pertaining to food education and awareness detailed below, the Belo Horizonte Food Security Programme also includes the following activities<sup>120</sup>:

- Subsidized sale of healthy, high-quality foods at 'popular restaurants', open to everybody

<sup>116</sup> Mr. Finklestein, chef and teacher at Northwestern Secondary School in Stratford, ON as quoted in the Globe & Mail March 22, 2011 "Teaching People to Cook outside the box," Accessed online March 25, 2011 at <http://www.theglobeandmail.com/news/national/teaching-people-to-cook-outside-the-box/article1952289/>

<sup>117</sup> ElzingaCheng, Angela, Community Food Program Manager, FoodShare Toronto, *Personal communication, May 2011*

<sup>118</sup> ElzingaCheng, Angela, Community Food Program Manager, FoodShare Toronto, *Personal communication, May 2011*

<sup>119</sup> Belo Horizonte's Zero Hunger campaign won the World Future Council's "Future Policy Award" in 2009 for "the world's most comprehensive policy that tackles hunger immediately and secures a healthy food supply for the future." **Source:** World Future Council, (2009). "Celebrating the Belo Horizonte Food Security Program," *Future Policy Award 2009: Solutions for the Food Crisis*, accessed online September 2011 at [http://www.worldfuturecouncil.org/fileadmin/user\\_upload/PDF/Future\\_Policy\\_Award\\_brochure.pdf](http://www.worldfuturecouncil.org/fileadmin/user_upload/PDF/Future_Policy_Award_brochure.pdf)

<sup>120</sup> Ibid.

- and through ‘popular food baskets’, available to registered low-income participants.
- Food assistance for at-risk groups through the provision of healthy and nutritionally fortified foods at public schools, day-care centres, health clinics, nursing homes, homeless shelters, and other charitable institutions.
- Incentives and regulations pertaining to food retail outlets, to ensure adequate distribution in low-income areas, and subsidies for the vending of food at below-market prices in some instances.
- Provision of public venues for farmers’ markets and organic food markets, as well as support for direct sales between rural producers and urban consumers.
- Support for urban agriculture, including community and school gardens.
- Job training relating to food businesses and food skills.

One of the newly formed municipal councils was the *Department for the Promotion of Food Consumption and Nutrition*, which is responsible for education on healthy eating. Some of the programs in this department’s mandate include:

- **Basic Basket Research:** The city compiles weekly price lists for 45 basic household consumption items (mostly food) found in 60 supermarkets around the city. The lists are posted at bus stops and printed in newspapers and also accessible by phone and internet. Consumers are thus informed on lowest prices, which encourages competition among bigger commercial establishments;
- **Education for Food Consumption:** Workshops, manuals, posters and lessons on the internet provide information on safe handling and storage of food, cooking and healthy diets to address malnutrition in the form of hunger and obesity.

In 2009, some of the successes of the Belo Horizonte policy were highlighted by the World Future Council<sup>121</sup>:

- 60% fewer children are dying compared to 1999
- 25% fewer people live in poverty
- 75% fewer children under 5 are hospitalised for malnutrition
- 40% of the population benefit directly from the program
- 40% of people in Belo Horizonte report frequent intake of fruit and vegetables; the national average is just 32%
- 2 million farmers have access to credit, 700,000 for the first time in their lives

c. *Municipal Food Skills – Baseline Research (Waterloo, ON)*

The region of Waterloo Public Health was the first to conduct and publish research on food skills of adults within a Canadian Community. This baseline survey was completed in 2009 (and published in January 2010) by 703 adults (18+ yrs) who represented a fair cross-section of gender and place-of-birth residents in the Waterloo region based on the 2006 Census; young adults and those living in rental housing were under-represented<sup>122</sup>.

Participants were asked to ‘self-rate’ their food skills as an indication of both experience and confidence in planning and preparing food. While most adults believe they have some food skills, their skills may be limited or not fully used. Such limitations of skill, as well as food insecurity or inadequate access to food among one-tenth of the Region’s population, result in barriers to eating and enjoying healthy, culturally-acceptable, safe foods.

<sup>121</sup> Ibid.

<sup>122</sup> Region of Waterloo Public Health. (2010). “Food Skills of Waterloo Region Adults.” Available online at [http://chd.region.waterloo.on.ca/web/health.nsf/0/54ED787F44ACA44C852571410056AEB0/\\$file/Food%20Skills.pdf?openement](http://chd.region.waterloo.on.ca/web/health.nsf/0/54ED787F44ACA44C852571410056AEB0/$file/Food%20Skills.pdf?openement)

Continued surveillance of food skills, beyond this baseline assessment, will help to track changes and trends in food skills and behaviours, and to plan and provide opportunities for food skill development within the local population.

Some key findings were that people who gardened and grew their own food were more likely to have 'good' or 'very good' food preservation skills than non-gardeners e.g. freezing skills were 67% and 48.5% respectively, and canning skills were 43.2% and 24.2% respectively. Less than half (43.6%) of the respondents ate five or more meals per week that were prepared "at least partly from scratch." The percentage of respondents indicating they cooked regularly ("always, almost always or most of the time") was much higher among households with annual incomes under \$30,000 (71.2%) compared to households with incomes over \$70,000 (31.5%).

The full report, published by the Region of Waterloo Public Health in January 2010, is available online at: <http://chd.region.waterloo.on.ca/en/researchResourcesPublications/resources/FoodSkills.pdf>

### **Appendix G5 – Where's the Food? Finding Out About Food in Your Community toolkit**

The PDF version of this toolkit, edited in August 2011, is available online at:

<http://www.justfood.ca/wheresthefood/>

## Growing Urban Agriculture

### *H. Community Gardening on Private Land and City of Ottawa Land*

#### **Vision:**

- A city where residents have access to community garden space within their neighbourhood. A city where private businesses, community organizations, and public institutions support food security through providing access to land and spaces for food production.

#### **City of Ottawa Priority Recommendations:**

Recognizing the City of Ottawa's vital role in establishing and maintaining community gardens to date, the following recommendations offer ways for the City to expand its successful contribution to community gardens, and to help meet the increased demand for garden space.

It is recommended that:

- 1) The City of Ottawa give direction to staff<sup>123</sup> to develop an inventory that permits an assessment of vacant and underutilized lands<sup>124</sup> in Ottawa, and to assess the possible contribution of vacant and underutilized lands to urban food production.
  - a. These lands should include lands currently designated by the City of Ottawa as brownfields<sup>125</sup>, as well as lands that are or may be designated as Community Improvement Project Areas<sup>126</sup>.
- 2) Public lands that are being considered by the City of Ottawa for sale or transfer to other bodies should be first assessed for their suitability for neighbourhood use as community gardening space.
- 3) The City of Ottawa provide and promote economic incentives for private organizations, homeowners and industries that give space and resources for community gardening. The following list includes some possible incentives that could be provided.
  - a. Landowners who provide an in-kind donation in the form of land with an assessed financial value to a community group that is affiliated with a registered charity could receive a charitable donation receipt, which could be used for tax reduction purposes.
  - b. The City could offer a property tax reduction for property that is offered for long-term community gardening use.
  - c. The City could return Property Tax Sale lands<sup>127</sup> to public use when those lands may be

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<sup>123</sup> Staff with expertise in mapping, as well as the Community Gardening Liaison, would be part of this initiative.

<sup>124</sup> Vacant and underutilized lands here refer to any lands that may be vacant, abandoned, otherwise underutilized due to a variety of reasons, or that could be better used as spaces for community gardening. They include areas designated by the City of Ottawa as brownfields, as well as areas that are currently, or may be designated as Community Improvement Project Areas.

<sup>125</sup> The City of Ottawa uses the term "brownfields" to describe vacant, underutilized, and abandoned lands that are characterized by actual or perceived contamination, and/or derelict or deteriorated buildings. Information about brownfields is available on the City of Ottawa website: [http://www.ottawa.ca/en/city\\_hall/planningprojectsreports/planning/brownfields/index.html](http://www.ottawa.ca/en/city_hall/planningprojectsreports/planning/brownfields/index.html).

<sup>126</sup> The City of Ottawa designates certain areas as "Community Improvement Project Areas" when they meet any of a number of conditions, including: being vacant, underutilized, in need of preservation, of poor visual quality, lack of community/social services in the area, any other environmental, energy efficiency, social or community economic development reasons, and other reasons. Information about Community Improvement Project Areas is available on the City of Ottawa website: [http://www.ottawa.ca/en/city\\_hall/planningprojectsreports/planning/brownfields/appendix\\_a/index.html](http://www.ottawa.ca/en/city_hall/planningprojectsreports/planning/brownfields/appendix_a/index.html)

<sup>127</sup> Property Tax Sale lands are lands that the City may advertise to be sold through public tender when property taxes have not been paid for a period of time. More information about Property Tax Sales is available on the City of Ottawa website:



suitable for redevelopment as community gardening sites. Where Property Tax Sale lands are offered for public tender and no successful bid is received, suitable lands transferring to the City of Ottawa could be redeveloped as community gardening sites.

- d. The City could provide economic incentives for private organizations to support community gardens.
- 4) In addition to providing economic incentives, the City of Ottawa could issue a formal support statement that gardening groups can refer to when they approach private organizations to request land access for community gardening purposes.
- 5) The City of Ottawa encourages private organizations (including universities, churches, privately-owned residential and commercial buildings, and large industrial complexes) to creatively use their own rooftop, balcony, and terrace spaces for food producing gardens.
  - a. The City of Ottawa should lead by example through opening up suitable balcony, terrace, and rooftop spaces at City of Ottawa facilities for food production.
    - i. For example, a green roof was installed at [Chicago City Hall](#), and Toronto City Hall has installed a [public garden on the roof of Nathan Phillips Square](#).
  - b. The City of Ottawa and the Community Gardening Network can work collaboratively to promote rooftop, balcony, and container gardening for private businesses. Practical information about how these types of gardening can be successful, types of safeguards and/or guidelines that should be incorporated into the planning (i.e. adequate insurance) and the benefits of gardening could be provided to those interested in establishing gardens at their building(s).
    - i. For example, one useful resource is The Rooftop Project's "[How-To](#)" manual, which provides information on rooftop and container gardening (Appendix H-3).
- 6) The City of Ottawa collaborate with developers to ensure that adequate green space for community gardening is allocated in all residential development applications (i.e. designated space for community gardens would be a requirement for applications similarly to how schools, greenspace, and/or other community features are required components of development applications). These spaces should remain prioritized for community gardening purposes throughout subsequent stages of the development and community planning processes, so that at a future date this space remains available for a community garden.
  - a. For example, the City of Kitchener [Community Garden Grants](#) document, approved by that City Council in 2009, states that the city will support community gardens by "encouraging developers to make available suitable land for community gardens as part of the overall design of subdivisions, senior citizens complexes and homes".

### Other Recommendations:

- 7) The Community Gardening Network extend outreach and education around the possibility of gardening on private property.
- 8) Private landowners can be provided with information about the benefits of community gardening and how they can make land available to community gardening groups and for food production<sup>128</sup>.

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[http://ottawa.ca/en/city\\_hall/budgettaxes/proptaxes/property\\_sales/index.html](http://ottawa.ca/en/city_hall/budgettaxes/proptaxes/property_sales/index.html)

<sup>128</sup> For example, Food Share in Toronto offers workshops that encourage landowners to begin food gardens.

## **The Role of Businesses, Community Organizations, and Individuals – *What You Can Do:***

Plant your own garden if you can, join a community garden near you, or work with others in your neighbourhood to establish and maintain a new community garden. If you don't know how to garden, join a workshop or course or learn how to garden from others that already have experience, or volunteer your assistance with a neighbourhood community garden.

Let others in your community know if you have space available for gardening.

Consider establishing a food-producing garden/containers at your workplace or at your apartment building.

For housing developers, consider how you can incorporate food-producing gardens, and food-producing plants into the landscaping plans for your housing development.

### **Pertains to:**

- Community Gardening Network
- City of Ottawa's March 2009 Community Garden Action Plan,
- City of Ottawa Zoning By-law 2008-250 Consolidation > Part 3 - Specific Use Provisions (Sections 80-93) > Community Gardens (Section 82), and
- City of Ottawa Official Plan.

## **Rationale**

The Community Gardening Network of Ottawa's Garden Guide<sup>129</sup> defines a community garden as the following: "...a collection of garden plots in an urban, suburban or rural setting, which provides residents with access to land for growing food. Community gardens beautify previously barren or unused land. Run by members of the community, they are a place where neighbours can meet and work together to care for the garden while growing fruits, vegetables, flowers, and herbs." For more information about how the Community Gardening Network operates, please see Appendix H6.

In 2009, the City of Ottawa passed a motion acknowledging that community gardening "is a valuable community activity that can contribute to community development, civic participation, neighbourhood revitalization, environmental awareness and a healthier lifestyle"<sup>130</sup>. The City of Ottawa's March 2009 Community Garden Action Plan states that "the demand for new gardens has increased substantially: from one request in 2005 to 15 requests in 2008. The number of new gardens started in Ottawa has reflected this heightened interest; with five new gardens started in 2008, compared to two new gardens in 2006."

As of January 2012, there were 31 community gardens with approximately 1485 garden plots in Ottawa. The City of Ottawa's March 2009 Community Garden Action Plan successfully promotes the establishment and maintenance of community gardens on public land. However, given that there is an increasing demand for garden space, options for increasing public access to other types of land, including privately owned land, for the purposes of vegetable gardening needs to be explored. A breakdown of the Community Garden Network budget has been included in Appendix H6.

## **Solutions**

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<sup>129</sup> [http://foodforall/documents/CGN\\_Garden\\_Guide\\_2010\\_English.pdf](http://foodforall/documents/CGN_Garden_Guide_2010_English.pdf) p3.

<sup>130</sup> See the Community Gardening Action Plan, available online: <http://ottawa.ca/calendar/ottawa/citycouncil/occ/2009/04-08/cpsc/01%20-%20ACS2009-COS-RCS-0005%20Gardens.htm>

In order to make Ottawa more food secure, the City of Ottawa and the Community Gardening Network should continue to encourage the use of public and private lands for food cultivation. Implementing incentives and programs that increase residents' access to areas for food cultivation is more important now than it has ever been before. For many people, food is becoming less affordable; food produced from afar increases the risk of delivery failures over distances travelled and contributes to greenhouse gas emissions; and the use of chemical fertilizers and pesticides raises concerns about the health of foods grown in this manner.

While community gardening alone cannot solve these problems, it can address some of them by providing gardeners with an opportunity to play an active role in their food system. Community gardening decreases 'food miles' – the distance between the source of the food and where it is consumed – and subsequently lowers the amount of greenhouse gas emissions caused by imported food. The plants/trees grown will provide a positive impact on the local climate. Promoting local food production lends the opportunity for Canada's multicultural society to grow foods that may not be otherwise available within neighbourhood food markets. Growing one's own food also allows people to control the production methods (e.g. use of chemicals) and provides a source of fresh, nutritious food for a cost that can be significantly lower than purchasing these foods.

As stated in the 2009 City of Ottawa Community Garden Action Plan, "Demands from the community for community garden space are increasing, particularly in the urban core where there are few options; including limited availability of surplus City land". The need for additional garden space is also evidenced by the waiting lists for plots in existing community gardens. Despite having 31 gardens with over 1485 plots, the wait time for a plot can be up to two years. These numbers continue to grow as gardens are developed over time, while other gardens or garden plots are lost to development. A full list of the existing community gardens, their plot size, and location is included in Appendix H-6.

The City of Ottawa Community Garden Action Plan Evaluation<sup>131</sup> from 2009 states that the [existing] gardens operate on property owned by school boards, churches, universities, private landowners, Ottawa Community Housing, Community Health and Resource Centres as well as City land and City parkland. The City of Ottawa has played a large and positive role in supporting and encouraging community gardening in Ottawa to date. However, because community garden space is at a premium in Ottawa, better access to space in private yards, commercial properties, industrial areas, and public lands is needed so that more Ottawa residents can enjoy access to a community garden within their neighbourhood. Rooftop, terrace, and balcony gardening developed by private businesses also needs to be encouraged.

## **Appendix H1: Benefits of Community Gardening**

### **FOOD SECURITY and NUTRITION**

Community gardening can provide people with fresh, nutritious fruits, herbs and vegetables throughout the gardening season, and beyond through food preservation. Community gardens can play an important role in improving access to fruits and vegetables for those who may otherwise have difficulty affording a wide variety and sufficient amount of healthy food<sup>132</sup>. Community gardeners from low-income neighbourhoods have reported that the produce they harvest from their community

<sup>131</sup> City of Ottawa, (2009), "Community Garden Action Plan (Revised 2009)" accessible online at <http://www.ottawa.ca/calendar/ottawa/citycouncil/occ/2009/04-08/cpsc/01%20-%20ACS2009-COS-RCS-0005%20Gardens.htm>

<sup>132</sup> Wakefield, S., Yeudall F., Taron, C., Reynolds, J., Skinner, A. (2007). Growing urban health: Community gardening in South-East Toronto. *Health Promotion International*, 22(2), 92-101.

gardens plays an important role in supplementing their diets and reducing household costs<sup>133</sup>. Gardens also provide those on low incomes with the opportunity to grow food organically<sup>134</sup>. For newcomers to Canada, and ethnically diverse communities, community gardens also provide the opportunity to grow culturally appropriate foods that are fresh with little or no out-of-pocket expense<sup>135</sup>. On an individual level, food security planning, through improving access and affordability of fresh produce as well as coordinating local nutrition education programs, promotes health and good nutrition, and builds food security<sup>136</sup>.

#### PHYSICAL and MENTAL WELL-BEING

Community gardening has a positive impact on both physical and mental health. Horticultural therapists recognize gardening as a form of physical exercise with activities ranging from fine motor involvement to aerobic activity<sup>137</sup>. Digging, squatting, turning a compost pile, and walking to and from the community garden plot are just some examples of the actions and tasks gardeners may be engaged in that increase their physical activity. For activity-limited individuals, such as the elderly and individuals with physical limitations, gardening and adaptive gardening, provides a way for most to increase their physical activity level<sup>138</sup>. Gardening is also reported to have a stress-reducing effect, by providing opportunities for psychological restoration through contact with nature<sup>139</sup>. This contact with nature results in stress, fear and anger reduction, which can lower blood pressure and muscle tension<sup>140</sup>. The physical and psychological benefits of gardening are being increasingly recognized and embraced, and as such, gardening programs have been successfully implemented with positive results in institutional settings such as hospitals and correctional facilities<sup>141</sup>.

#### ACCESS TO GARDENING SPACE

Community gardens attract people who do not have access to yard space, especially those who live in apartment buildings. Community gardens are accessible spaces within walking distance where people can participate in recreational gardening and growing healthy food for themselves. The presence of community gardens provides opportunities for residents, regardless of socio-economic status and place of residence, to benefit from the positive health and social impacts of gardening and growing food<sup>142</sup>.

#### ENVIRONMENTAL SUSTAINABILITY

A community garden allows individuals to have control over the food they produce and eat. Many individuals are also concerned about the larger environmental impacts of food production and may use organic methods in their gardens, thus reducing pesticide exposure to themselves. Growing food in the city reduces the environmental costs associated with transporting food over long distances<sup>143</sup>.

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<sup>133</sup> Ibid

<sup>134</sup> Ibid

<sup>135</sup> Ibid

<sup>136</sup> Fisher, A. & Gottlieb, R. , (1995). "Policy Proposals. Community Gardening and Urban Food Production 1. Background 2. Benefits," p 23-24 in *Community Food Security: Policies for a More Sustainable Food System in the Context of the 1995 Farm Bill and Beyond*, The Ralph and Goldy Lewis Center for Regional Policy Studies – Working Paper Series No. 13. , available at <http://escholarship.org/uc/item/9nm3c0gk>

<sup>137</sup> Brown, K., Jameton, A. (2000). Public health implications of urban agriculture. *Journal of Public Health Policy*, 21, (1), 20-39.

<sup>138</sup> Austin, E., Johnston, Y., Morgan, L. (2006). Community gardening in a senior centre: a therapeutic intervention to improve the health of older adults. *Therapeutic Recreation Journal*, 40, 48-56.

<sup>139</sup> Brown, K., Jameton, A. (2000). Public health implications of urban agriculture. *Journal of Public Health Policy*, 21, 20-39.

<sup>140</sup> Ibid

<sup>141</sup> Ibid

<sup>142</sup> Some of these benefits are outlined in the 2009 Community Gardening Action Plan, available online: <http://ottawa.ca/calendar/ottawa/citycouncil/occ/2009/04-08/cpsc/01%20-%20ACS2009-COS-RCS-0005%20Gardens.htm>

<sup>143</sup> Bethany Mazereeuw. "Urban Agriculture Report." Region of Waterloo: Public Health Planner. November 2005:11

Gardening connects people to the seasonal food cycle and local ecology, and can thus build knowledge about local environments. It also encourages the recycling of food and garden waste through composting, which reduces the amount of domestic garbage.

## COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT and EDUCATION

Community gardens have a positive influence on community development and social cohesion. As a physical space, they have the potential to offer a safe and secure communal space for community members, including children, youth and women<sup>144</sup>. The garden becomes a neighbourhood meeting spot, where community members interact and get to know one another, while working together towards the common goal of improving community food security and enhancing the beauty of the physical environment<sup>145</sup>. This creates a closer-knit, more cooperative neighbourhood with positive impacts reaching beyond the garden borders. The presence of community gardens has been shown to break down prejudice, and improve interactions between community members from various racial, educational and socio-economic backgrounds<sup>146,147</sup>. Community gardens have also been shown to contribute to a decrease in neighbourhood crime rates<sup>148</sup>. On a community level, local food security planning efforts have been shown to result in healthier, more empowered communities with expanded economic development opportunities in food related activities<sup>149</sup>. Information sharing and communication contribute to increased community resilience and self-efficacy<sup>150</sup>. Learning opportunities resulting from the presence of a community garden improve community relations and contribute to important skill development among community members that might otherwise not take place<sup>151</sup>. Along with important gardening and food related skill development, community gardens also provide opportunities for leadership development and community organizing, which strengthens community networks. The collaboration and effort required to develop and sustain a community inspires community participation and can lead to positive social change<sup>152</sup>.

## Appendix H2 – Municipal-Level Initiatives to Support Gardening on Private Lands

Below are examples of programs and practices to support gardening on private lands that exist in other cities. While this list includes both municipal and community-based initiatives, any of these could potentially be adopted/adapted by the City of Ottawa. (See Appendix H4 for details of community gardening policies in other Canadian municipalities.)

### Canadian Cities

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<sup>144</sup> Schmelzkopf, K. (1995). Urban community gardens as a contested space. *Geographical Review*, 85(3), 364-381.

<sup>145</sup> Hendershot, W., Turmel, P. (2007). Is food grown in urban gardens safe? *Integrated Environmental Assessment and Management*, 3(3), 458-467.

<sup>146</sup> Shinew, K., Glover, T., Parry, D. (2004). Leisure spaces as potential sites for interracial interaction: community gardens in urban areas. *Journal of Leisure Research*, 36(3), 336-355.

<sup>147</sup> Maller, C., Townsend, M., Pryor, A., Brown, P., St. Leger, L. (2006). Healthy nature healthy people: 'contact with nature' as an upstream health promotion intervention for populations. *Health Promotion International*, 21, 45-54.

<sup>148</sup> Brown, K., Jameton, A. (2000). "Public health implications of urban agriculture". *Journal of Public Health Policy*, 21, 20-39.

<sup>149</sup> Fisher, A. & Gottlieb, R. (1995). "Policy Proposals. Community Gardening and Urban Food Production 1. Background 2. Benefits," p 23-24 in *Community Food Security: Policies for a More Sustainable Food System in the Context of the 1995 Farm Bill and Beyond*, The Ralph and Goldy Lewis Center for Regional Policy Studies – Working Paper Series No. 13. , available at <http://escholarship.org/uc/item/9nm3c0gk>

<sup>150</sup> King, C. (2008). "Community resilience and contemporary agri-ecological systems: reconnecting people and food, and people with people". *Systems Research and Behavioural Science*, 25, 111-124.

<sup>151</sup> Maller, C., Townsend, M., Pryor, A., Brown, P., St. Leger, L. (2006). "Healthy nature healthy people: contact with nature as an upstream health promotion intervention for populations". *Health Promotion International*, 21, 45-54.

<sup>152</sup> Brown, K., Jameton, A. (2000). "Public health implications of urban agriculture". *Journal of Public Health Policy*, 21, 20-39.

The City of Victoria has developed a license for use agreement between the landowner and the community association that allows the development and maintenance of a community garden for 3 years, with an option of renewal. The City of Victoria also provides a grant for private landowners, providing an incentive to provide space for urban agriculture. See Appendix H4 for greater detail.

The City of Saanich, BC, has a program that supports community gardening by working with community partners, assisting groups to find suitable private land, securing the land and development of lease agreements. See Appendix H4 for greater detail.

The City of Vancouver recognizes that garden plots shared by community members can be coordinated in a variety of ways, as well as spaces including:

1. On rooftops, balconies, or on the ground;
2. In private gardens that are part of the [Sharing Backyard](#) program; and
3. Through the City's [Grow a Row, Share a Row](#) program.

The organization [City Farmer](#)<sup>153</sup> is working on analyzing satellite images of Vancouver and surrounding municipalities in order to identify possible plots of land that could be suitable to grow food and whose owners could be approached by potential gardening groups to set up food gardens.

In Kitchener-Waterloo the group KW Urban Harvester works with [Sharing Backyards](#), an online mapping service, to connect land seekers with those private land owners willing to lend out their land for food cultivation.

The City of Montreal is home to the very successful group called the [Rooftop Garden Project](#). This project is funded by the international NGO "Alternatives", and creatively transforms private rooftops, balconies, and terraces within urban Montreal into productive container-based<sup>154</sup> gardens. They have published a "how-to" manual for groups or individuals interested in starting up rooftop gardens; the manual has been included as Appendix H5.

The City of Toronto does not have a formal process for use of private lands; arrangements are typically negotiated between gardeners/not-for-profits and landowners. For example, The Stop Community Food Centre liaises between private landowners and those looking for land for gardening in a program called Yes In My Backyard (YIMBY). The City of Toronto does not currently offer any incentives for urban agriculture on private land. However, the City is investigating the issue through an inter-divisional working group on urban agriculture<sup>155</sup>. Toronto does have a green roof bylaw that requires commercial, industrial and institutional buildings of a certain size to include a percentage of green space on their rooftop. They also have an eco-roof incentive program for businesses, which provides financial support for green roofs. Neither of these mandate food gardens, but are examples of how municipalities can encourage and support additional food growing space on privately owned lands.

### *International*

In the United Kingdom, allotments programs have officially been in place since the General Enclosure Acts of 1836, 1840 and 1845, and the subsequent Allotments and Cottage Gardens Compensation

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<sup>153</sup> City Farmer is a not-for-profit organization established in 1978 and based in Vancouver, BC. Its aim is to highlight the experiences and successes of urban agricultural practices happening around the world.

<sup>154</sup> Container-based is also sometimes referred to as 'soil-less' gardening. This production method requires no topsoil for growing and is therefore ideal for roofs. Rooftop Garden Project website. Accessed online January, 2012 at <http://rooftopgardens.ca/?q=en/about>

<sup>155</sup> Oates, L & Patterson, B. (2009). "Identifying Urban Agricultural Opportunities in the City of Toronto." Staff report, Action Required, accessed online March 2011 at <http://www.toronto.ca/legdocs/mmis/2009/pe/bgrd/backgroundfile-21648.pdf>



for Crops Act of 1887, but such programs are said to have been in place for hundreds of years.<sup>156</sup> Allotments, briefly, are intended to provide citizens with land to grow food. Current estimates of allotment plots across the U.K. are below 270,000 while in 1943 there were over 1,400,000. The decrease was largely due to the land being sold to housing developers. An example of an allotment program is an organization called [Land Share](#) that links people wanting to garden, private land owners willing to offer their land, and gardening experts online. The organization has over 58,000 member participants since starting in 2009 and is now looking to spread the concept internationally.

The municipality of [Oakland, CA](#) has a satellite map by the organization [Urban Food](#) in order to identify potential urban food-production sites. The map (2009) includes both existing food-producing gardens as well as vacant or open spaces where food could potentially be produced. Publicly owned land with productive potential totals 1,201 acres while private vacant land totals 848 acres. Food production at these sites could potentially produce as much as 15 to 20 percent of Oakland's fruit and vegetable needs<sup>157</sup>.

### Other Specific Examples

[Sharing Backyards](#) is a web-based service that matches private landowners with landless gardeners for cities across Canada and the United States. However, this service does not currently include Ottawa.

Various private lands and buildings in Ottawa and other Canadian cities already have vegetable gardens that are excellent examples of how privately-owned land can be privately used for food production, for entrepreneurial gardens, or made accessible for public groups to engage in community gardening:

- Saint Paul University [Community Garden](#) (Ottawa, ON)
- Concordia University [Greenhouse project](#) (Montreal, QC)
- [The Rooftop Garden Project](#) (Montreal, QC)

Some examples of food gardens operated as, or in conjunction with, business ventures include:

- The [Veggie Patch](#) (Ottawa, ON)
- Whalesbone Restaurant garden (Ottawa, ON)
- Other [SPIN](#) gardening<sup>158</sup> techniques (Saskatoon, SK)
- The Fairmont Royal York Hotel's [Rooftop Garden](#) (Toronto, ON)

### **Appendix H3 – “How-to” Manual for container gardening on rooftops by The Rooftop Garden Project (Montreal, QC) and Alternatives**

Available at [http://rooftopgardens.ca/files/howto\\_EN\\_FINAL\\_lowres.pdf](http://rooftopgardens.ca/files/howto_EN_FINAL_lowres.pdf)

### **Appendix H4 – Community Gardening Policies in other Canadian Municipalities**

1. Saanich, British Columbia, Community Garden Policy, March 31, 2003<sup>159</sup>

According to this policy, Saanich supports community gardening by working with community partners,

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<sup>156</sup> Allotment Vegetable Growing website. Accessed February 2012 online at: <http://www.allotment.org.uk/articles/Allotment-History.php>

<sup>157</sup> Full report by Urban Food available here: [http://www.urbanfood.org/docs/Cultivating\\_the\\_Commons2010.pdf](http://www.urbanfood.org/docs/Cultivating_the_Commons2010.pdf)

<sup>158</sup> SPIN gardening is a phrase that stands for S-small P-lots IN-tensive (SPIN) and encourages food growing in small urban spaces. See [www.spingardening.com](http://www.spingardening.com) for more information.

<sup>159</sup> City of Saanich. “Council Policy: Community Gardens”. March, 2003. Accessed online December 2011 at: <http://www.saanich.ca/living/pdf/communitygardenspolicy.pdf>

helping to identify/secure/retain suitable sites, and contributing to site development activities.

Assistance will be provided in the following ways:

- Assisting interested groups in searching for suitable land for the development of community gardens from an inventory of municipal land, land owned by other government agencies, and privately-owned land; and,
- Assisting in securing land for community gardens through the use of zoning, lease agreements, and partnerships with private and public sector organizations.

Considering the challenge of establishing new community garden sites, protection of existing sites is an essential part of this policy. Saanich endeavours to do the following to retain existing community garden sites as a valuable use of public open space:

- Provide assistance to community gardening organizations in securing lease agreements from public and private property owners

## 2. City of Victoria Community Gardens Policy<sup>160</sup>

According to this [policy](#), “A license for use agreement must be signed between the property owner and the community association for the purpose of developing and maintaining a community garden. This license will be for a maximum of three years with an option to renew.

Community Gardens on Private Lands

Community gardens and rooftop gardens on non-City lands that adhere to the goals of the policy will be encouraged during re-zonings if there is a policy supporting their provision at the site. In these instances a restrictive covenant would be required to be registered on the title to secure access, hours of operation, maintenance, liability and other relevant matters.

Community Gardens on private lands not requiring re-zoning are encouraged in this policy and would require a minimum of three years lease agreement with the property owner and the non-profit gardening organization, in order to qualify for City Matching and Greenway funds”.

“Greening” of worksites is encouraged through gardening on rooftops, decks and balconies to assist in the beautification and greening of buildings.

Backyard gardening and sharing of backyard gardens are encouraged as additional ways of promoting food security and food production in the City.”<sup>161</sup>

## 3. City of Vancouver Food Charter and Urban Agriculture Guidelines for the Private Realm<sup>162</sup>

According to the City of Vancouver’s Greenest City Quick Start Recommendations<sup>163</sup>:

“In 2007, the City adopted the Vancouver Food Charter, based on five principles:

- community economic development;
- ecological health;
- social justice;
- collaboration and participation; and,

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<sup>160</sup> City of Victoria. “City of Victoria Community Gardens Policy”. September, 2005. Accessed online December, 2011 at: [http://www.victoria.ca/cityhall/pdfs/cmmnty\\_garden\\_policy.pdf](http://www.victoria.ca/cityhall/pdfs/cmmnty_garden_policy.pdf)

<sup>161</sup> The City of Victoria has a 50-year plan to develop a network of “greenways” linking schools, parks, tourist destinations and recreation areas. These would be green spaces that are free of motor vehicles. Community groups that raise funds to create green spaces that would link into this network can have their funds matched through a Greenway Matching Grant Program. The city has put aside \$25,000 annually for this purpose, administered through the Parks, Recreation and Community Development Department. “City of Victoria Greenways Plan”. August 2003. Accessed online December, 2011 at: [http://www.victoria.ca/cityhall/pdfs/departments\\_plnpub\\_grnwys.pdf](http://www.victoria.ca/cityhall/pdfs/departments_plnpub_grnwys.pdf)

<sup>162</sup> For more information on the Urban Agriculture Guidelines for the Private Realm, please see memorandum “P2: Policy Report, Development and Building” (December 15, 2008). Accessed online December 2011 at: <http://vancouver.ca/ctyclerk/cclerk/20090120/documents/p2.pdf>

<sup>163</sup> City of Vancouver. “Greenest City Quick Start Recommendations” (2009). Accessed online January 2012 at: <http://vancouver.ca/greenestcity/PDF/greenestcity-quickstart.pdf>

celebration

“The goals of the Food Charter include encouraging:

- Consumers to purchase more locally-produced food;
- Regional farmers to direct more of their production to local markets;
- Restaurants to feature more local, sustainable food;
- Retailers to shift their inventory to local and sustainably-produced food;
- Increased levels of “edible gardening;”
- Enhanced backyard and neighbourhood-level composting; and,
- Efforts to recover larger volumes of edible food.

“Vancouver is committed to creating 2,010 new food producing plots by 2010 as an Olympic legacy. When this pledge was made in 2006, Vancouver had approximately 950 plots in 18 community gardens. Since then, 1,620 new plots have been created, mostly on private or semi-public lands”.

Municipal support is clearly a critical factor to the success and longevity of urban agriculture in Canadian cities. Increased numbers of edible-gardens are an important part of realizing the potential of urban agriculture for municipal food security.

#### **Appendix H5 – Community Gardens in Ottawa (as of 2012)**

Number of gardens in the City: 34 gardens; approximate number of plots: 1485

1. Jardin Arrowsmith Thyme-less (11 plots) (2040 Arrowsmith Drive, Gloucester)
2. Bayshore Community Garden (Bayshore Park, 175 Woodridge Crescent)
3. Bethany Baptist Church (25 plots) (382 Centrepointe Dr. & Baseline Rd., Nepean)
4. Brewer Park Community Garden (Brewer Park bet. Sloan Ave. & Brewer Way)
5. BUGs in Glebe Memorial Park (6 plots) (75 Glendale Ave.)
6. Carlington Community Garden (158 plots) (900 Merivale Rd.)
7. Centretown Community Gardening Project (36 plots) (461 Lisgar St. at Lyon St)
8. Children's Garden in Leggett Park (1 communal garden) (Main St. & Clegg St.)
9. Chateau Donald Community Garden (12 plots) (251 Donald St.)
10. Debra Dynes Family House Community Garden (1 communal garden) (955 Debra Ave. & Eiffel)
11. Friendship Community Garden (12 plots) (1240 & 1244 Donald St.)
12. Gloucester Allotment Gardens (270 plots between both sites) (Blackburn Hamlet site)
13. Gloucester Allotment Gardens (Anderson Rd. site)
14. Canadian Organic Growers School Gardens (6 teaching gardens) (Glebe school gardens)
15. Orleans Community Garden (70 plots) (10th Line Rd. & St. Joseph Blvd., Orleans)
16. Kilborn Allotment Gardens (340 plots) (City-run garden)
17. Lees Avenue Community Garden (166 Lees Ave.)
18. Leslie Park Community Garden (58 plots) (Abingdon Dr. & Costello Ave.)
19. Lowertown Community Garden (6 plots) (40 Cobourg St.)
20. Michele Heights Community Garden (23 plots) (w. in Michele Park)
21. Nanny Goat Hill (80 plots) (Bronson Ave. & Laurier Ave.)
22. Nepean Allotment Gardens (200 plots) (Merivale Rd. & Fischer Ave., Nepean)
23. Ottawa East Community Garden (47 plots) (Main St. & Clegg Ave. behind St. Paul's University)
24. O-YA Community Garden (approx. 4 plots) (Osgoode)
25. Pinecrest Terrace (1 communal garden) (2483B Iris St.)
26. Rochester Heights Community Garden (1 communal garden) (Booth St. & Rochester St.)
27. Russell Heights (10 plots) (1799E Russell Rd.)

28. Sandy Hill Community Garden (16 plots) (w. in Dutchy's Hole Park)
29. Strathcona Heights Community Garden (40 plots) (Queensway & Lees Ave.)
30. Sweet Willow Organic Community Garden (12 plots) (31 Rochester St. & Primrose Ave.)
31. Trinity Community Garden (Riversale Park, 480 Avalon Place)
32. Jardin communautaire Vanier Community Garden (36 plots) (w. in Richelieu Park, Vanier)
33. Vars Community Garden (5859 Centre St. Vars)
34. West Barrhaven Community Garden (approx. 12 plots) (3058 Jockvale Road, Barrhaven)

## **Appendix H6– The Community Gardening Network of Ottawa: Context and Budget**

### Context of the Community Gardening Network

The Community Gardening Network (CGN) is a project within Just Food. The CGN works closely with the City of Ottawa's Community Garden Liaison and community volunteers to start-up, resource and fund new community garden projects and to maintain already established community gardens around the City.

The coordinator of the CGN works out of Just Food. It is the role of the coordinator to work with the community volunteer garden coordinators to ensure that they are successful with their community gardening projects. This is done through offering a series of resources to the gardens that they can take advantage of. Fiscal resources are available to the gardens in the form of the Community Garden Development Fund (CGDF). This annual fund of \$75,000 was created in 2009 by the City of Ottawa, to be managed out of the Just Food office, to start new community gardening projects and to expand and enhance the network of existing gardens. Skills building resources are available for the gardens to use in the form of the gardening workshop series; beginner level organic gardening, pest control, seed saving, composting and food preservation workshops are free to all community garden members. Along with the gardening workshop series, a *How to Start a Community Garden* workshop is offered 3 times per year for those who are interested in starting new community garden projects, and a tutorial on *How to Apply to the Community Garden Development Fund* is offered once per year.

It is also the role of the Community Gardening Network Coordinator to liaise with the City of Ottawa to determine processes when working with City properties or when the community garden coordinators have questions that are City-related. There is a dedicated Community Garden Liaison staff-person at the City of Ottawa. It is the responsibility of the Liaison to advocate for community gardening at City level and to support community gardening projects through gathering of information and consultation with appropriate departments when questions regarding city-related matters occur. It is also the responsibility of the Liaison to work with the Community Gardening Network and the CGN Coordinator to work out processes and procedures to install community gardens onto City sites.

The City of Ottawa Community Garden Liaison sits on the Allocations Committee, along with the CGN Coordinator and 3 volunteer garden coordinators, to make decisions around allocating the Community Garden Development Fund when all of the applications are received.

The volunteer community garden coordinators are the keys to successful gardens and the network. These are community members who volunteer their time, and most of their summer, to handle the daily management of the gardens at the sites. Their responsibilities include organizing garden members to fill the garden plots, allocating plots, organizing garden meetings, determining garden opening and closing practices, enforcing garden rules. As well, these volunteer coordinators attend CGN events, such as the bi-annual meeting and volunteer on committees, such as the Community

Garden Development Fund Allocations Committee.

Community Gardening Network Budget

The Community Garden development fund allocated from City budget = \$75,000 + staff time (annually). In 2011:

Community Garden Development Fund (CGDF) was worth \$78,413 (annual renewal fund of \$75,000)

Of the \$78,413:

\$12,750 went to administering the fund (CGN coordinator's salary portion)

\$5,000 gets held onto for garden emergencies. Any unused portion of this \$5,000 gets rolled back into the fund for re-allocation for other garden or CGN projects, to be used before Dec. 15.

\$5,000 is held and used to go for printing items and promotion of the CGDF.

The remaining \$55,663.00 went to supporting both new garden start-up projects as well as existing garden projects.

## ***I. Community Gardening and Urban Agriculture on National Capital Commission (NCC) Lands in Ottawa***

### **Vision:**

- A city where residents and visitors to Canada's national capital have access to community gardens, edible landscapes, and urban agriculture on National Capital Commission lands<sup>164</sup>.

### **Food Action Plan Recommendations:**

It is recommended that:

1. The NCC re-instates community gardening as an allowable activity on both Greenbelt and Urban NCC lands in Ottawa, with clear roles of each party defined, in partnership with the City of Ottawa and Just Food.
  - a. It is recommended that the NCC allocate a minimum of 7 sites for the purpose of community gardening within the next year (March 2012-March 2013). The garden sites are to be selected in consultation with Just Food's Community Gardening Network (CGN) and other community stakeholders who are actively seeking garden space. The following 7 sites are suggested for the initial NCC-allocated community gardens; these sites represent a balance between the urban core and the Greenbelt and are highly recommended for their accessibility, visibility, and the need for community gardens in these areas.

### **❖ Hintonburg**

*Proposed Site:* on Hinchey Ave., between Burnside Ave. & the Ottawa River Parkway

*Supported By:* Somerset West Community Health Centre and Sustainable Living Ottawa West (SLOWest)<sup>165</sup>.

This site is a high priority for the Community Gardening Network as it relates to NCC land. All other sites in the area have been proposed as community garden sites, and this use agreed to by the City of Ottawa and other stakeholders, however after soil testing contaminant levels proved too high for all sites. This community has been trying for more than 4 years to create a community garden; the proposed site is across from social housing, and there are a high number of Hintonburg residents that desire a garden.

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<sup>164</sup> Urban agriculture refers to the various activities - from bee-keeping to community gardening - concerned with producing and distributing food within and around towns and cities. Community gardens, an important manifestation of urban agriculture, are parcels of land collectively gardened by a group of people.

<sup>165</sup> <http://slowest.ca/index.php>



### ❖ **Woodpark**

*Proposed Site:* East of the Ottawa River Parkway, between Richmond Rd. and Carling Ave., near the corner of Lawn Ave. and Edgeworth Ave. This site is just west of the Woodpark neighbourhood.

*Supported By:* Woodpark Community Association

The Woodpark Community Association has been seeking access to land for community gardening for some time and is committed to seeing a garden site established in the community.

### ❖ **Orient Park Community Garden expansion**

*Proposed site:* Between the Blackburn Bypass and Orient Park Dr. (site of the former Budd Market)

*Supported By:* Gloucester Allotment Garden Association

This garden would be an expansion of the current Orient Park Allotment Gardens, which are on City-owned lands. The proposed expansion site would allow this successful community garden to grow.

### ❖ **Smyth**

*Proposed Site:* Between Rideau River and Riverside Drive, South of Smyth Rd.

*Supported By:* SLOEast<sup>166</sup> and the Ottawa East Community Association.

Ottawa East has developed gardens on Oblate land with Saint Paul University, as well as a Children's Garden at Leggett Park, however the availability of the land is uncertain at Saint Paul University with the proposed development of a library. There is currently a waiting list for community garden plots in this area.

### ❖ **Kanata**

*Proposed Site:* No one site has been specified to date, a location between Kanata North & Kanata South (along March Road/Eagleson Drive) would be preferred.

*Supported By:* Kanata Environmental Network (KEN), and Western Ottawa Community Resource Centre.

### ❖ **Barrhaven/Nepean**

*Proposed Site:* No one site has been specified.

*Supported By:* Nepean, Rideau, and Osgoode Community Resource Centre (NROCRC).

Community interest is high in this area for a community garden.

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<sup>166</sup> Sustainable Living Ottawa East. [www.sustainablelivingottawaeast.ca](http://www.sustainablelivingottawaeast.ca)

## ❖ Blackburn Hamlet

*Proposed Site:* 16 Tauvette/2389 Pepin Ct.

*Supported By:* Just Food and the Ottawa Food Bank as part of the Just Food request for the full farm property at 16 Tauvette St. Community gardening opportunities would figure prominently, including garden plots for volunteers to raise food for the Ottawa Food Bank.

- b. The NCC establish a process for identifying other suitable locations within the NCC lands for community garden use, and work with Just Food and the City of Ottawa to establish leasing agreements for those lands, upon demonstration of viable community interest.
  - c. In urban core areas, the NCC would be approached for garden space only after City-owned land options for community gardens in a given neighbourhood have been determined unsuitable, either due to lack of available land or contamination issues.
  - d. Land for gardens would be leased by the NCC to the City under a long-term lease.. The City of Ottawa would in turn offer a lease of occupancy to the community stewarding the project, (sponsored by a community organization). All community gardens would be included under the City of Ottawa's community insurance policy. These are already practiced protocols within the City of Ottawa's Community Garden Action Plan.
  - e. The NCC would provide support to establish water infrastructure for all new gardens on NCC property. All other expenses would be the responsibility of the community garden, which has access to the Community Garden Development Fund through Just Food.
  - f. Community Gardens on NCC lands would be part of the CGN and follow its rules and protocols, as well as the bylaws and policies under the City of Ottawa's Community Garden Action Plan. Gardens would be managed by community groups, with support from Just Food/CGN and the City of Ottawa. *(See Appendix I-2 for information on the context and operating budget of the Community Gardening Network).*
  - g. NCC-leased gardens will be monitored and evaluated every 5 years to see how they are working; this could be rolled into ongoing 5-year reviews of the City's Community Garden Action Plan. New gardens would also be assessed yearly and adjusted as needed.
  - h. Partnership could be expanded to Gatineau to incorporate the National Capital Region as a whole – the NCC and the City of Gatineau could partner to support community gardens on NCC lands in Gatineau, Quebec. Just Food would commit to helping such a partnership develop in an advisory capacity.
2. The NCC provides access to its lands in Ottawa for edible landscaping that would be maintained and harvested through a collaborative program between the City of Ottawa and community groups.
  3. The NCC shifts funding and allocates line items in its landscaping budget towards edible landscaping practices.

## **The Role of Businesses, Community Organizations, and Individuals – What You Can Do:**

Learn more about urban agriculture opportunities in your neighbourhood. Are there spaces suitable for edible landscaping or community gardening on NCC lands near you? Support urban agriculture initiatives in your neighbourhood.

### **See Also:**

The [Edible Landscaping](#) proposal for further details, rationale, and background regarding edible landscaping.

The [Community Programming for Food Security, Food Education and Awareness](#) proposal for further details on the *Local Food, Urban Agriculture, and Community Learning Hub* project.

### **Pertains to:**

- National Capital Commission
  - Greenbelt Master Plan (2011)
  - Capital Urban Lands Master Plan (expected completion 2012)
- City of Ottawa Recreation and Community Services Department
  - Community Gardening Action Plan (2009)
- Community Gardening Network at Just Food
- Choosing Our Future<sup>167</sup>

### **Rationale:**

The National Capital Commission (NCC) is a Crown corporation of the Government of Canada mandated to ensure Canada's Capital Region remains a place of national pride and significance to Canadians. The National Capital Commission (NCC) is our region's single-largest landowner<sup>168</sup>. With a network of lands including the Greenbelt and various sites in the urban core, the NCC owns large amounts of green space throughout the city of Ottawa. Creating new community gardens on NCC land would increase accessible gardening space to residents throughout the city, particularly those in neighbourhoods currently under-served by existing community gardens. These gardens would also allow the NCC to strengthen its commitment to sustainable agriculture, and would create a national model for sustainable and innovative land use.

These gardens could serve as demonstration sites for public education and engagement (for children as well as adults), raising awareness about urban agriculture, community gardens, and local food across the capital region and beyond. The gardens would provide a model of sustainable land use, urban agriculture and local food systems for all Canadians, and could be marketed as tourism destinations. The initiative would promote the capital region's commitment to urban revitalization, quality of life, community engagement and public health, strengthening the NCC's profile as a leader in sustainability to both residents and visitors.

Ottawa is currently facing a growing demand for community garden space, which is expected to

<sup>167</sup> [http://choosingourfuture.ca/index\\_en.html](http://choosingourfuture.ca/index_en.html)

<sup>168</sup> NCC. Summary of the NCC Corporate plan 2011-2012 to 2015-2016, page 7. Accessed online February 2012 from: [http://www.canadascapital.gc.ca/sites/default/files/pubs/corpplsummm11\\_e.pdf](http://www.canadascapital.gc.ca/sites/default/files/pubs/corpplsummm11_e.pdf)

increase as the City's population intensifies and ages. However, as the City's Community Garden Action Plan notes, available land for new gardens is limited, especially in the city centre.

The City of Ottawa's [2009 Community Garden Action Plan](#) (approved by City Council April 8, 2009) recognizes that "community gardening is a valuable community activity, which revitalizes neighbourhoods, increases environmental awareness, enhances community development and contributes to a healthier lifestyle". There are many benefits to community gardening, including health, nutrition, food security, and social benefits for gardeners and wider benefits including environmental sustainability and community building.<sup>169</sup>

The Community Gardening Network (CGN) is a project within Just Food. The CGN works closely with the City of Ottawa's Community Garden Liaison and the community volunteers to start-up, resource and fund new community garden projects and to maintain already established community gardens around the City.<sup>170</sup> See Appendix I-2 for more information on the Community Gardening Network, including a typical annual operating budget.

At the end of 2011, there were 30 community gardens within the Community Gardening Network<sup>171</sup>. Of those:

- 15 community gardens were on City owned property;

- 5 on Ottawa Community Housing property;

- 3 on National Capital Commission property (NCC)<sup>172</sup>;

- The remaining 7 gardens were on private property ranging from church land to community centre to private business property.

The Kilborn Allotment Garden is the only City-managed garden in the City of Ottawa. This site is highly resourced; it has paid coordination and grounds people and has many 'luxuries' that other volunteer community-led gardening projects do not.

Each year, interest in and demand for community gardens increases, influenced by rising food costs and gas prices, concerns about food security, interest in growing and eating organic and locally-produced food, urban greening projects and urban agriculture. In Ottawa, the demand for new gardens has increased substantially: from one request by a group wishing to start a community garden in 2005 to 15 requests in 2008. The number of new gardens started in Ottawa has reflected this heightened interest, with five new gardens started in 2008, compared to two new gardens in 2006. The need for additional garden space is also evidenced by the waiting lists for plots in existing community gardens. Eighty percent of existing gardens have waiting lists for plots; waiting time can be up to two years

## **Appendix I-1 – Evidence and Precedents:**

This proposal aligns with existing policy and plans of both the NCC and the City of Ottawa, and contributes to both organizations meeting their sustainability goals.

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<sup>169</sup> These benefits are described more fully in Appendix H1, appended to the proposal on Community Gardening on Private Land and City of Ottawa Land.

<sup>170</sup> O'Neill, Terri, Just Food Community Gardening Network Coordinator, *Personal Communication May 2011*.

<sup>171</sup> *Ibid.*, April 2011.

<sup>172</sup> Kilborn Allotment, the Anderson site of Gloucester Allotment Gardens and Nepean Allotment Gardens, are on NCC property under a special leasing arrangement between the NCC and the City of Ottawa. When the NCC gave up management of the community gardens on these sites, the NCC made an arrangement with the City of Ottawa to lease these properties from the Commission for the cost of \$1.00/year.

### *NCC's Environmental Goals*

The [NCC's environmental strategy](#) defines five action areas aligned with the organization's core operations. These include enhancing biodiversity on NCC lands, using leading environmental practices in visible areas of high environmental importance, and reducing the carbon footprint of "all aspects of its business"<sup>173</sup>. Establishing community gardens could enhance biodiversity through the planting of diverse species, serve as a visible demonstration of innovative and sustainable land use, and enable the production of more local food.

### *NCC's Real Asset Management goals*

In addition to meeting many goals of the NCC's environmental strategy, community gardens also provide an opportunity to optimize the contribution of the NCC's physical assets to further enhance the natural environment of Canada's National Capital Region. Through the partnerships described in this proposal, this can be done with little to no overhead, while ensuring that the assets are appropriately accessible to the public.

### *Ottawa Greenbelt Master Plan Review*

The Greenbelt, while not the only option for locating new community gardens, is of particular interest given its intended uses. The [NCC's website](#) defines the Greenbelt as "a place where **Canadians can experience their rural roots and natural heritage** and where sustainable farming and forestry can be practised". The Greenbelt Master Plan Summary (1996, p.8) describes the Greenbelt as a national asset that is "a living demonstration of Canada's concern for the environment, and promotes Canada's green image abroad". The Plan also states that "The Greenbelt will be used extensively for ecological research and education (p. 12)".

Creating new community gardens on NCC land would address all five themes that emerged from a public workshop hosted by the NCC in November 2009 as part of the [Greenbelt Master Plan review](#):

- improving **ecological connectivity** within and outside of the Greenbelt;
- activating **citizen participation and stewardship** of the Greenbelt;
- providing opportunities for **sustainable agriculture** and local food production;
- using the Greenbelt as an **environmental showcase** for sustainable best practices;
- maintaining **ongoing partnerships** through open communication between Greenbelt tenants, government agencies, municipal partners, the public and other interested stakeholders.

### *The Central Experimental Farm*

The Central Experimental Farm (CEF) in Ottawa is both a National Historic Site and an active research centre<sup>174</sup>. The CEF's 427 hectares of agricultural land serve as a public space of recreation and education. The Dominion Arboretum, Ornamental Gardens, and the Canada Agriculture Museum already act as excellent educational sites that showcase past agricultural innovation. The volunteer organization, Friends of the Central Experimental Farm (FCEF), which cares for the Arboretum and Ornamental Gardens among other public areas of the CEF, works to "preserve, maintain, protect and enhance this beautiful and historic green space."<sup>175</sup> Expanding urban agriculture and community gardening on NCC lands can build upon the CEF's tradition of learning and experimentation.

### *Choosing our Future*

The NCC and the City of Ottawa, along with the City of Gatineau, have embarked on a joint planning

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<sup>173</sup> NCC. "Environmental Strategy: Building a Greener Capital" 2011. See action areas 2 (page 8), 4 (page 12) and 5 (page 14). Accessed online February 2012 at: <http://www.canadacapital.gc.ca/sites/default/files/pubs/NCC-EnvironmentStrategy-2011.pdf>

<sup>174</sup> Central Experimental Farm. Accessed February 2012 from <http://www4.agr.gc.ca/AAFC-AAC/display-afficher.do?id=1170701489551&lang=eng>

<sup>175</sup> "Who are we?" *Friends of the Central Experimental Farm*, accessed online January 2012 at <http://www.friendsofthefarm.ca/who.htm>

process to develop a long-range sustainability strategy for the National Capital Region, known as Choosing our Future (CoF). This strategy could serve as a vehicle to support a long-term partnership on community gardens between the NCC and City of Ottawa.

The strategy is intended to increase awareness of the limits of our natural resources and our environment, as well as community and municipal action that can contribute to the mitigation of climate change. CoF aims to implement sustainable practices such as planning land for mixed uses to reduce car trips; using resources more efficiently; using natural systems in ways that ensure continued health and productivity; and reducing our reliance on fossil fuels. Under its [Principles and Goals](#), CoF also sets a goal of a sustainable local food system that provides residents with healthy, affordable food.

Creating new community gardens allows residents to produce their own food organically and close to home, and could help the NCC and the City of Ottawa to meet the goals described in Choosing our Future.

#### *Ottawa 20/20*

The City of Ottawa's Environmental Strategy, [Ottawa 20/20](#), sets out the city's first Corporate Environmental Action Plan for the period of 2004-2008 (and is currently under review). This plan commits the City to demonstrate and promote leadership in environmental stewardship (p.33), including the promotion of land stewardship and sustainable land management throughout the community.

#### *City of Ottawa's 2009 Community Garden Action Plan*

The Community Garden Action Plan notes that for older adults, gardening is an excellent physical activity. The growing population of seniors in Ottawa, coupled with growing interest in participating in gardening will add to the demand for community gardens. The continued intensification of the urban core and decreased access to individual garden space has added to and will continue to put additional pressure on the need for more community garden space.

Under the Community Garden Action Plan there is an established process to identify surplus City land for community garden development and community gardens are included in the evaluation of priority use of City surplus land. However, demands from the community for community garden space are increasing, particularly in the urban core where there is limited availability of surplus City land. This highlights the importance of prioritizing urban NCC lands for garden sites as well as in the Greenbelt.

Recommendation 1(b) of the Community Garden Action Plan commits specific City departments (Planning and Growth Management - Planning, Environment and Infrastructure Policy Branch, and Community and Protective Services - Cultural Services and Community Funding) to collaborate with the Community Garden Network (CGN), through the City of Ottawa staff liaison, to *identify opportunities where community gardens may be established on non-City owned space and / or adjacent to non-City owned facilities.*

#### **Other precedents:**

As the NCC is a federal agency unique to the National Capital Region, it is difficult to find similar policies in other Canadian communities. However, using high-profile public land for community gardens is gaining ground with municipal and federal governments. The NCC's commitment to fostering a green and sustainable Capital Region can go beyond the Greenbelt surrounding the city and into the heart of urban Ottawa by supporting community gardens.



For example, the [City of Vancouver](#) established a community garden in the spring of 2009 at Vancouver's City Hall. As part of Vancouver's pledge to create 2010 new garden plots by the 2010 Olympics, 30 plots were created in a new, organic community garden on the north lawn of City Hall. Part of the produce from the garden was donated to inner-city shelters.

At the federal level, [Parks Canada](#) recently designated community gardens as an allowable use of their lands. They describe a community garden as 'a site operated and maintained by committed volunteers where a publicly owned parcel of land is used for growing ornamentals and/or produce for non-commercial use through individual and common (community garden) or entirely shared plots (collective garden)'.

Another notable precedent was set when Michelle Obama, the wife of President Barack Obama, established an organic vegetable garden in 2009 on the White House lawn in the United States. The 1,000 pounds of [food harvested in](#) 2009 fed many people, both at the White House and at nearby homeless shelters. Equally importantly, it has stimulated a national conversation about healthy eating, and has been used to educate children about healthful, locally grown fruit and vegetables at a time when obesity and diabetes have become major issues. Encouraged by their gardening success in their first year, the Obamas and their staff expanded their [organic edible garden](#) by 400 square feet in 2010, raising the total growing space to 1,500 square feet. Local elementary school children participated in the planting both years.

Even H. M. [Queen Elizabeth II](#) has installed a vegetable patch in the gardens at Buckingham Palace. In 2009, vegetables were grown on the Palace grounds for the first time since the Victory Gardens war effort of World War II, alongside ornamental plants<sup>176</sup>. All of the vegetables in the 8 by 10 yard patch are grown organically by the Royal Family's gardeners. The move comes amid a surge in demand from people in the United Kingdom to have their own allotment to grow their own food during the recession.

Finally, some [land conservancies](#) are utilizing space as community gardens. For example, the Cascade Land Conservancy in Washington, United States has seven gardens and in 2010 hired a full-time gardening coordinator to support the Conservancy's gardens as well as other community gardens throughout the Tacoma area<sup>177</sup>.

## **Appendix I-2– The Community Gardening Network: Context and Budget**

### Context of the Community Gardening Network

The Community Gardening Network (CGN) is a project within Just Food. The CGN works closely with the City of Ottawa's Community Garden Liaison and the community volunteers to start-up, resource and fund new community garden projects and to maintain already established community gardens around the City.

The coordinator of the CGN works out of Just Food. It is the role of the coordinator to work with the community volunteer garden coordinators to ensure that they are successful with their community

<sup>176</sup> Alderson, Andrew (2009). "The Queen installs a vegetable patch at Buckingham Palace," *The Telegraph*, accessed online January 2012 at <http://www.telegraph.co.uk/news/uknews/theroyalfamily/5523619/The-Queen-installs-a-vegetable-patch-at-Buckingham-Palace.html>

<sup>177</sup> Cascade Land Conservancy (2010). "Cascade land Conservancy hires new community gardens coordinator," *Press Release*, accessed online April 2011 at <http://www.cascadeland.org/news/press-releases/cascade-land-conservancy-hires-new-community-gardens-coordinator>

gardening projects. This is done through offering a series of resources to the gardens that they can take advantage of. Fiscal resources are available to the gardens in the form of the Community Garden Development Fund (CGDF). This annual fund of \$75,000 was created in 2009 by the City of Ottawa, to be managed out of the Just Food office, to start new community gardening projects, as well as, to expand and enhance the network of existing gardens. Skills building resources are available for the gardens to use in the form of the gardening workshop series; beginner level organic gardening, pest control, seed saving, composting and food preservation workshops are free to all community garden members. Along with the gardening workshop series, a How to Start a Community Garden workshop is offered 3 times per year for those who are interested in starting new community garden projects, and a tutorial on How to Apply to the Community Garden Development Fund is offered once per year.

It is also the role of the Community Gardening Network Coordinator to liaise with the City to determine processes when working with City properties or when the community garden coordinators have questions that are City-related. There is a dedicated Community Garden Liaison at the City of Ottawa. It is the responsibility of the liaison to advocate for community gardening at City level and to support community gardening projects through gathering of information and consultation with appropriate departments when questions regarding city-related matters occur. It is also the responsibility of the liaison to work with the Community Gardening Network and the CGN Coordinator to work out processes and procedures to install community gardens onto City sites.

The City of Ottawa Community Garden Liaison sits on the Allocations Committee, along with the CGN Coordinator and 3 volunteer garden coordinators, to make decisions around allocating the Community Garden Development Fund when all of the applications are received.

The volunteer community garden coordinators are the keys to successful gardens and the network. These are community members who volunteer their time, and most of their summer, to handle the daily management of the gardens at the sites. Their responsibilities include organizing garden members to fill the garden plots, allocating plots, organizing garden meetings, determining garden opening and closing practices, enforcing garden rules. As well, these volunteer coordinators attend CGN events, such as the bi-annual meeting and volunteer on committees, such as the Community Garden Development Fund Allocations Committee.

#### Community Gardening Network Budget

The Community Garden development fund allocated from City budget = \$75,000 + staff time (annually). In 2011:

Community Garden Development Fund (CGDF) was worth \$78,413 (annual renewal fund of \$75,000)

Of the \$78,413:

\$12,750 went to administering the fund (CGN coordinator's salary portion)

\$5,000 is retained for garden emergencies. Any unused portion of this \$5,000 gets rolled back into the fund for re-allocation for other garden or CGN projects, to be used before Dec. 15.

\$5,000 is held and used to go for printing items and promotion of the CGDF.

The remaining \$55,663.00 went to supporting both new garden start-up projects as well as existing garden projects.

## J. Edible Landscaping in the City of Ottawa

### Vision:

We envision a city:

- that uses public urban green spaces for food production;
- that integrates food production into its public landscaping; and
- that leads by example and adopts an 'edible planting strategy' at City Hall.

### City of Ottawa Priority Recommendations:

In order to increase food security in Ottawa and strengthen the biodiversity of Ottawa's green spaces, it is recommended that the City of Ottawa:

- 1) Initiate a pilot project and test area for an edible planting strategy on public lands<sup>178</sup> by establishing formal partnerships between the City and interested community groups to develop planting options, maintenance and harvesting strategies, as well as food allocation protocols.
  - a. This will foster stewardship through citizen participation in the development of edible landscapes on public land and provide new educational, social and recreational opportunities for citizens.
- 2) Shift line items in existing landscaping budgets towards edible planting strategies for municipal public lands, such as:
  - a. Gradually integrating and/or replacing ornamental plants with food-producing plants
  - b. Replacing dead, dying and diseased trees with food-producing trees, such as fruit trees, nut trees and maple trees<sup>179</sup>.
  - c. Selecting native and non-invasive species over exotic, foreign species that may require more maintenance and/or horticultural inputs.
  - d. When community groups are involved in maintenance and harvesting, prioritizing their input on variety choice – for example, varieties that have higher yields of edible fruit or nuts. When community groups are not involved in maintenance and harvesting, edible species that require less maintenance may be favoured<sup>180</sup>.
- 3) Ensure that existing City programs that offer trees (or funding for tree-planting) to local

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<sup>178</sup>Existing liability insurance for public parks may cover these additional activities, however this would need to be examined. Liability issues are covered in greater depth, below.

<sup>179</sup> For example, many of the City's ash trees are dying due to Emerald Ash borer. When they are removed for safety concerns, they could easily be replaced by food-producing trees such as crab-apple trees (*Malus* spp., *Prunus* spp., etc), walnut trees (*Juglans* spp.), or sugar maples (*Acer* spp.).

<sup>180</sup> For example dwarf apple trees produce considerably less harvest than standard sized trees.

residents and organizations provide or require food-producing tree species wherever possible. Such City programs include the Community Tree Planting Grant Program, Trees in Trust, and others<sup>181</sup>.

- 4) That the City of Ottawa and community groups, including the Community Gardening Network at Just Food actively promote edible landscaping to private businesses, households, and other institutions.

### **The Role of Businesses, Community Organizations, and Individuals – *What You Can Do:***

Learn more about the types of plants that are edible and how you can use them.

If there are edible plants at your home, workplace, or community organization that are not being used, connect with a community group that is interested in harvesting and using the produce.

If you are planning landscapes for a new garden, park, housing development, or other greenspace, use edible species where possible.

### **See Also:**

Community Gardening on NCC Lands for NCC inclusion in edible landscaping initiatives.

### **Pertains to:**

- *Ottawa 20/20*: Section 2.3 “A Green and Environmentally-Sensitive City” that strengthens ecosystems planning and designs
- *Choosing Our Future* (City of Ottawa, City of Gatineau, NCC): “Challenges for the 21<sup>st</sup> Century” and “Future Implications,” specifically land-use planning and ‘whole-systems’ approaches.
- [Ottawa Forests & Greenspace Advisory Committee](#) which advises City Council on issues related to urban trees and forests

### **Rationale:**

#### **Benefits**

The term “edible landscapes” refers to the use of edible plants (fruits, vegetables, nuts, and herbs) that replace ornamental plants, are planted alongside decorative plants, and/or populate public barren areas. Edible landscapes are typically found along boulevards, in public parks, and at City Hall.

Unlike community gardens, these edible landscapes would be open to the public or specific community groups that have an agreement with the City for the harvest.

The benefits of edible landscapes are numerous and include:

- connecting local citizens to natural food systems;
- education about the plant life cycle and new sources of food, in particular among youth;
- community building and a sense of public/communal land stewardship;
- social and recreational opportunities for local citizens who partake in the growing, harvesting, and

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<sup>181</sup> See the City of Ottawa’s website at [http://www.ottawa.ca/en/env\\_water/tlg/trees/planting/index.html](http://www.ottawa.ca/en/env_water/tlg/trees/planting/index.html) for an index of current programs (accessed May 20, 2012). More detail on the Community Tree Planting Program is also provided in Appendix J1 below.

eating of edible plants;  
access to food sources that are not readily available in grocery stores for all income levels;  
opportunities to grow food without the use of pesticides;  
reductions to the ecological footprint of the food system by providing locally-grown food sources;  
enhancing the aesthetic value of the landscape-enhanced local biodiversity and increased greenspace<sup>182</sup> value-added landscaped areas that create profit-generating or income-supplementing products.

Transforming Ottawa's ornamental public green spaces into edible landscapes through partnerships with local stakeholders demonstrates support for environmental and social stewardship, and represents an investment in a just and sustainable future for Canada's capital. By integrating the recommendations outlined above into municipal policy, the City of Ottawa can create and support simple, practical and achievable initiatives to develop edible landscapes in the City of Ottawa, and ensure their benefits over the long term.

### Gaps

Food production and ecological health are inextricably related; edible landscapes would expand the biodiversity of the City of Ottawa, creating landscapes that are more robust and adaptable to changing conditions, while also enhancing the local food supply.

There are several key documents that influence land-use policy decisions at City Hall, such as *Ottawa 20/20* and *Choosing our Future*. Long-term environmental health and ecological resiliency appear as a core value in a number of places, and local food production is mentioned as a core strategy. However, Ottawa currently lacks a mechanism for enabling edible landscaping. In fact, municipal bylaws<sup>183</sup> stipulate that parts of trees and plants cannot be removed from City of Ottawa parks and facilities. These bylaws would require revision in order to permit access to the products of edible plants in designated areas for the purposes of harvesting produce.

Additional gaps with regard to local food security include a lack of available community gardens to meet the demand<sup>184</sup> and a decline in traditional environmental knowledge necessary to sustain a food-producing garden for an entire season<sup>185</sup>. While edible landscaping itself will not compensate for these gaps, it does help to address some of the concerns through 1) providing an additional local food source for residents and visitors, and 2) educating people about the diversity of food sources and providing local food to those who either don't have the gardening skills or interest to produce their own food.

### Placement

Edible landscaping can be incorporated as part of most landscaped areas but may be most appropriate for areas that are easily accessible for harvesting, and protected from potential contamination.

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<sup>182</sup> See [http://www.sustainablecommunities.ca/Search/PDF/GMEF5085\\_CS\\_e.pdf](http://www.sustainablecommunities.ca/Search/PDF/GMEF5085_CS_e.pdf) for a quantitative analysis, conducted by the City of Ottawa in 2008, of the environmental and economic benefits of forest cover and canopy in cities

<sup>183</sup>The City of Ottawa's "[Municipal bylaw NO: 2004-276: "Parks & Facilities"](#)", Section 9 Asset Protection, subsection 1a and 1b, states that "No person shall, in a park, cut, climb, break, injure, deface, disturb or remove any property including: a. a tree, shrub, bush, flower, plant, grass, wood, soil, sand, rock or gravel". Additionally, [Municipal bylaw NO: 2006-279: "Municipal Trees and Natural Areas Protection"](#), Part II: Trees on Municipal Property, and Part III: Protection of Municipal Natural Areas provides further regulations regarding trees on municipal property that would restrict edible landscaping activities.

<sup>184</sup>There is a greater demand than supply with regard to community gardens in Ottawa. The average wait time for a community garden plot in 2009 was 2 years (Source: 2009 City of Ottawa Community Garden Action Plan).

<sup>185</sup> Johnson, Martha Charleton. (1992). "Lore: Capturing Traditional Environmental Knowledge." Dene Cultural Institute: Yellowknife, NWT and IDRC: Ottawa. Pgs 6-10.

## Liability of Edible Landscapes

The liability issues raised by introducing edible landscapes could be addressed by the already-established processes and procedures in place that address liability concerns on public lands. Similarly, the liability processes in place for the Community Gardens in Ottawa could be expanded to include edible landscapes on public land. Of possible concern is the application of common law nuisance principles to municipalities due to undesired encroaching plants<sup>186</sup>. Also of concern is the risk of injury to volunteers harvesting food. The liability of volunteers falling from ladders or slipping on rotten fruit might be mitigated by having volunteers sign a waiver form. These issues require further examination.

## Appendix J1 - What's currently happening in the national-capital region?

### 1. City of Ottawa and NCC properties/initiatives

Currently, the City of Ottawa has a number of sugar maples, crab apples and other fruit trees scattered around the city on public lands, however these trees were not planted with the explicit intention of community harvesting. While harvesting maple syrup may not be a top priority, it illustrates nonetheless the variety of food-producing species that inhabit the nation's capital. Additionally, there is wild garlic growing in Gatineau Park, however, because the space is managed by the NCC and considered a vulnerable species, the garlic is not open for commercial harvest<sup>187</sup>.

### Tree Planting Programs

The City of Ottawa offers a [Community Tree Planting Grant Program](#) for schoolyard greening, city parks and green space rehabilitation, and for greening on non-city owned (private) property. However, only two tree species, the Turkish Hazelnut and Crabapple tree, are considered 'food producing' amongst the list of available tree species<sup>188</sup>. The full list of tree species that qualify for this program is included as *Appendix K3 – City of Ottawa Forestry Services*.

### Adopt a Park Program

The City of Ottawa offers an "[Adopt a Park](#)" program, which encourages care and maintenance of public spaces by individuals or community groups. Since the program's establishment in 1998, 120 parks have been adopted. However, this program does not allow for citizens to improve parks and green spaces through planning and design. Instead, groups merely maintain the adopted space as it currently exists.

### Green Acres Program

The City of Ottawa's [Green Acres Program](#) offers support to transform idle fields into thriving green woodlands. The program provides landowners with advice and assistance in setting up a proper planting plan for their properties and a source of suitable planting stock. Landowners must be rural property owners in the City of Ottawa, have a minimum of 0.4 hectares (1 acre) of suitable land and must agree to cover the subsidized cost of the tree seedlings, site preparation, planting and tending as well as agreeing to reasonably protect the plantation. The funding is provided to a maximum of a 50% cost shared basis. The City of Ottawa could incorporate an incentive for applicants through this program to plant edible tree species.

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<sup>186</sup>See Guinan V. Ottawa (City): [http://www.blg.com/en/home/publications/Documents/publication\\_1868.pdf](http://www.blg.com/en/home/publications/Documents/publication_1868.pdf)

<sup>187</sup> However, 50 bulbs per person per year are allowed to be harvested for personal use. See <http://www.mddep.gouv.qc.ca/biodiversite/especes/ail/ail.htm>

<sup>188</sup> Ibid.



## 2. Community Initiatives

The [Community Harvest Ontario](#) program in Ottawa, an initiative of the Ottawa Food Bank, connects farmers, volunteers and food banks to provide local, fresh and healthy food to Ottawa residents in need. The program organizes volunteer groups to collect edible food remaining in farmers' fields after the commercial harvest season. This process is known as gleaning. The produce that volunteers pick is then distributed to local food banks. In Ottawa, several local farms have hosted gleaning events yielding thousands of pounds of fruit and vegetables to the Ottawa Food Bank.

Gleaning can also be done in an urban context. Projects such as Toronto's [Not Far From the Tree](#) (see [Appendix K2 for details](#)), Edmonton's [Operation Fruit Rescue](#) and Richmond's [Tree Fruit Sharing Project](#) are examples of urban gleaning where volunteers connect with homeowners and the city to collect surplus fruit. Volunteers mobilize to harvest the bounty and divide it equally between homeowner, volunteers and food banks. Many Ottawa properties support bountiful fruit and nut trees that could be integrated into a city-wide gleaning project.

In 2012, [Hidden Harvest Ottawa](#) (HHO) established itself as a non-profit organization with two main objectives: Harvesting fruits and nuts from public and private trees; and planting new edible trees throughout the city. In the summer of 2012 HHO counted approximately 4,256 trees that had the potential to be harvested. 45 enthusiastic volunteers conducted their first successful gleaning sharing almost 500 pounds of fruits and nuts. Harvests collected from private properties are shared evenly between the volunteers, homeowners and the closest food agencies.

Hidden Harvest has developed a self-funded approach. Selling trees from "local-when-possible" tree producers generated revenue for 2012. All proceeds go back into developing the program. This initiative encourages the community to "Plant for Tomorrow" by purchasing trees as gifts for others, for private properties, or as donations to local community groups. In the next five years HHO plans to provide more tree services and cultivate the largest urban orchard in Eastern Canada.

## Appendix J2 - Evidence/Precedents

Jurisdictions that support edible landscapes at the municipal level include the following:

### Municipalities

- The City of Victoria is currently reviewing and developing its [Urban Forest Master Plan](#), aimed at strategies to invest in and maintain Victoria's 40,000 trees. There was significant public support for food-bearing trees at public consultation sessions. Section 4.3.2 proposes investigating the planting of fruit and nut bearing varieties in public spaces. Additionally, the City of Victoria is reviewing its [Parks Master Plan](#) with an eye on edible landscaping and community gardens on public lands<sup>189</sup>.
- The City of Victoria has 2 community commons with edible landscapes (in addition to its community gardens, school gardens, farmers' markets, rooftop gardens, etc.) as a component of its [Urban Agriculture Resolution](#). The two communities that incorporate edible landscapes are the [Haultain](#) commons and the [Springridge](#) commons.
  - Additionally, the City of Victoria replanted the [gardens at City Hall with food-producing plants](#) first in 2009 and again in 2010 with active participation of the community. These "demonstration gardens" are maintained and harvested by the community group [LifeCycles Project Society](#).
- [Neighbourhood Greenways](#) program in Vancouver, BC encourages citizens to organize and propose 'green' plans for corridors that connect public spaces. The City provides assistance in the design, development and construction of Neighbourhood Greenways, however, the community is expected to take the lead and to maintain the space once completed. Aspects of the Neighbourhood Greenway project include pathways, lighting, public art, and food-producing gardens. Proposals are submitted to the Greenways Branch of the City's Engineering Services.

### Not-for-Profit & Community Organizations:

- [Not Far From the Tree](#) is a volunteer group that harvests urban fruit in Toronto and gives 1/3 to food banks, 1/3 to private homeowners, and 1/3 to volunteer pickers. When it began in 2008 the group harvested 3,000lbs of fruit from 40 trees with the help of 150 volunteers. In 2010, the group harvested over 19,000lbs pounds of fruit from 228 different trees thanks to over 700 volunteers and 8 staff members. In 2010, the harvested produce was shared with over 25 different social service agencies that reached over 8,000 clients.
- Volunteers and researchers from Santropol Roulant, Alternatives, and the Minimum Cost Housing Group of McGill University's School of Architecture developed the guide, [Making the Edible Campus](#), which details their efforts and successes in integrating edible landscaping and container gardening into the built environment at McGill University.

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<sup>189</sup>Transition Victoria Food Group (2011). "[Draft Parks Master Plan \(Food Production\)](#)," Highlights of Key City of Victoria Food-related Activities, accessed online March 2011 at [http://tvfoodwg.conscious-choices.ca/?page\\_id=42](http://tvfoodwg.conscious-choices.ca/?page_id=42)

### **Appendix J3 – City of Ottawa Forestry Services**

City of Ottawa Forestry Services – Recommended Tree Species for the Ottawa Area

Ottawa Forests and Greenspace Advisory Committee – Ottawa Native Trees and Shrubs Database:  
<http://www.ofnc.ca/ofgac/>.

### **Appendix J4 – Edible Landscaping Plants**

Short reference summary of some potential edible plant species that can be used for landscaping purposes – See Appendix A (p. 10) of [City of Vancouver Urban Agriculture Guidelines](#).

## **K. Promoting Healthy Soils: Prevention, Identification and Remediation of Soil Contamination**

### **Vision:**

- A city where soils are healthy and safe for producing food and edible landscaping, and residents have access to information about soil contamination, as well as supports for the identification and remediation of contaminated soils.

### **City of Ottawa Priority Recommendations:**

It is recommended:

- 1) That the City of Ottawa works with Ottawa Public Health and Ottawa District Office of the Ontario Ministry of the Environment to disseminate information on soil contamination for residents interested in gardening. The Community Gardening Network can also play a role in providing this information to residents. This information would include:
  - a. Details on how to have soil tested, types and cost of available tests, and contact information for soil testing laboratories;
  - b. Basic information on how to interpret test results, and contact information for experts that can provide more in-depth analysis on soil test results and what these results mean for producing food;
  - c. The effects of various levels and types of soil contamination on plant and human health<sup>190</sup>;
  - d. The processes involved in the remediation of contaminated soils;
  - e. The circumstances in which food gardens constructed with raised beds are adequate protection from contaminated soil;
  - f. The design and construction of raised beds for food gardens; and
  - g. The procedures concerning the disposal of contaminated soil when contaminant levels are in excess of Ontario Ministry of Environment thresholds<sup>191</sup>.

### **Other Recommendations:**

- 2) That the City of Ottawa establish a 3-year soil-testing program, during which time community groups seeking to establish community gardens are able to access free soil testing, and private landowners and homeowners within the city considering food production on their property are able to access subsidized soil testing<sup>192</sup>. The cost of these soil tests can be significantly reduced through bulk pricing or by having a City of Ottawa staff person conduct soil analysis rather than contracting for the service<sup>193</sup>.

<sup>190</sup> Canadian Soil Quality Guidelines for the Protection of Environmental and Human Health available at <http://cegg-rcqe.ccme.ca/download/en/320>. For a list of more extreme impacts of soil contamination see <http://www.livestrong.com/article/159831-health-effects-from-soil-pollution/>. For an example of soil contamination in residential gardens see Mary Finster et al. (2004) "Lead levels of edibles grown in contaminated residential soils: a field survey," *Science of the Total Environment*. 320(2-3): 245-257.

<sup>191</sup> For information concerning Canadian Environmental Quality Guidelines for various chemicals on agricultural and residential lands, see: <http://st-ts.ccme.ca/>

<sup>192</sup> Businesses planning to produce and sell food as a for-profit enterprise would not be eligible for subsidized soil testing through this program.

<sup>193</sup> This could occur in a similar fashion that free well testing is available for rural residents through the Ontario Ministry of Public Health. More information for Ottawa residents is available at: [http://ottawa.ca/residents/water/wells/testing/index\\_en.html](http://ottawa.ca/residents/water/wells/testing/index_en.html). Another example of a similar program is a water testing program for businesses, households, and public institutions in Chelsea, QC that began between 2002 and 2008. This program was very successful and the municipality continues to run this program to date. For more information on the H2O Chelsea program please see Appendix J3.

- 3) That the City of Ottawa and Community Gardening Network work to create an inventory of the levels of contamination on public and private lands as information becomes available through the soil-testing program. This would determine whether land can be used for community gardens, whether raised beds are required on top of contaminated soil, or whether gardening is unsuitable even with the use of raised beds. All results of the soil-testing program (described in recommendation 2) would be included in the inventory, managed by the City of Ottawa. Results of the soil-testing program for publicly owned land should be made public via the City of Ottawa's website. Private landowners and homeowners should be encouraged to volunteer that their soil test results be included in the publicly available information, but this would not be required. Information on soil health/contamination status would be updated if landowners choose to remediate contaminated soil.
- 4) That the City of Ottawa waive the \$196/tonne fee for contaminated soil disposal for sites that will be converted to food production uses following restoration<sup>194</sup>. However, landowners would still be responsible for the transport of this material to the landfill.
- 5) That the City of Ottawa further encourage residents to properly dispose of household hazardous wastes and increase waste diversion from landfills by:
  - a. Implementing at least 2 permanent drop-off locations for household hazardous waste;
  - b. Increasing the number of Household Hazardous Waste Depots offered throughout the year (currently there are 13)<sup>195</sup>;
  - c. Offering an annual residential pick-up of hazardous household waste thereby providing an alternative to waste depots. Currently no household pick-up is available – residents must drop off toxic household waste at designated sites<sup>196</sup>.
- 6) That the City of Ottawa partner with local universities, colleges, or other groups to develop creative strategies for remediating public lands where contaminated soils are present.

### **The Role of Businesses, Community Organizations, and Individuals – *What You Can Do:***

Prevent soil contamination generally by disposing of all household hazardous wastes in the appropriate manner.

Learn more about soil contamination and remediation processes.

If your business or workplace is on soils that may be contaminated, consider having those soils tested, and if needed, remediated.

### **Pertains to:**

- The City of Ottawa's Environmental Remediation department.
- The City of Ottawa's Community Garden Action Plan (2009), addressed to the Community and Protective Services Committee and City Council.
- Ottawa 20/20 section 2.7 "A Healthy and Active City" where "health risks from soil contamination are a possibility, developers will be required to show the site is or can be made

<sup>194</sup>In some cases, known contaminated soils must be disposed of at an appropriate facility (i.e. remediation would have little or no effect due to the depth of the contamination in the soil column or the timescales and effort required would not be feasible for most people). The Trail Waste Facility currently accepts contaminated soils (classified as "non-hazardous waste") such as the result of residential furnace oil spills in backyards at \$196/tonne. See [http://ottawa.ca/en/garbage\\_recycle/landfill/rates/index.html](http://ottawa.ca/en/garbage_recycle/landfill/rates/index.html)

<sup>195</sup> For a complete list of 2012 Household Hazardous Waste depot dates (one day events) and locations see: [http://ottawa.ca/en/garbage\\_recycle/special/hhw/index.html#P27\\_1059](http://ottawa.ca/en/garbage_recycle/special/hhw/index.html#P27_1059)

<sup>196</sup> Personal Communication, City of Ottawa Sewer Use Program (ext. 23326), March 2011

- safe for the proposed use (HSP, OP)<sup>197</sup>.
- Residential sources of soil contamination, which falls under the purview of the municipal government<sup>198</sup>. Residential land may be contaminated as the result of peeling lead paint, proximity to historic industrial site, landfills, frequently travelled roads (lead from older gasoline and petroleum runoff), and/or contact with pressure-treated wood containing chromate copper arsenate (which was phased out in 2003 in Canada)<sup>199</sup>.
  - The Province of Ontario and the Government of Canada insofar as potential food-producing sites have been contaminated by industrial waste, which is regulated by the provincial and federal government, depending on who 'owns' the public land<sup>200</sup>.

## Rationale:

According to the Ottawa Community Garden Action Plan Evaluation, more new community garden space is needed as the intensification of the urban core reduces access to previous garden space. One area where the Community Garden Action Plan could be further developed and enhanced is around the issue of soil contamination, which poses a major barrier to identifying new space for community gardens.

Much of the soil on available land for community gardening, particularly in the urban core, is found to be contaminated with residual heavy metals and therefore unsuitable for gardening. Soil remediation techniques are typically costly and lengthy. To keep up with the growing demand for community gardens, to provide Ottawa residents with greater access to safe garden space, and to address soil quality concerns, Ottawa needs a long-term approach to identify, address and prevent soil contamination.

## Soil Contamination in Ottawa

The reduction of soil decline and erosion is one of the environmental issues addressed in the Ottawa 20/20 Environmental Strategy. In fact, soil health is encompassed in three of the four goals outlined in the Environmental Strategy: A Green City; Development in Harmony with the Environment; and Clean Air, Water, and Earth.

There are whole neighbourhoods in Ottawa that have varying degrees of soil contamination.<sup>201</sup> For example, the Community Gardening Network has faced significant difficulties in identifying a site for a community garden in Hintonburg because the neighbourhood's industrial past has left the soil at

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<sup>197</sup> Ottawa 20/20 "A Healthy and Active City", accessed March 2011 at

[http://www.ottawa.ca/city\\_services/planningzoning/2020/window/wrapup2g\\_en.shtml](http://www.ottawa.ca/city_services/planningzoning/2020/window/wrapup2g_en.shtml)

<sup>198</sup> Note: municipally owned lands fall under the Provincial Environmental Protection Act. The Province of Ontario has an Environmental Registry, maintained by the Ministry of the Environment that provides notice for public consultations. When residential contaminated soils are disposed of at licensed waste facilities, residential property owners are still required to file a Ontario Ministry of the Environment (MOE) Contamination Soil Report.

<sup>199</sup> Source: Cornell University Rockland-Miller, Ari (2011), "Soil Contamination: What Gardeners Need to Know," *Cornell University Garden-Based Learning Blog*, accessed online March 2011 at [Garden-Based Learning](http://blogs.cornell.edu/gblblog/2010/12/01/soil-contamination-what-gardeners-need-to-know/)<http://blogs.cornell.edu/gblblog/2010/12/01/soil-contamination-what-gardeners-need-to-know/>, March 2011.

<sup>200</sup> In Canada, most standards for remediation are set by the provinces individually, but the Canadian Council of Ministers of the Environment provides guidance at a federal level in the form of the *Canadian Environmental Quality Guidelines* and the *Canada-Wide Standard for Petroleum Hydrocarbons in Soil* (taken from "Environmental Remediation," Wikipedia, May 2011).

<sup>201</sup> For example, each year residents of the Vanier neighbourhood receive a notice informing them of heavy metal contamination in the soil. They are advised that according to a Ministry of Environment study, the contamination poses no health risks under normal use of the properties, but that they should not plant root vegetables. CBC News (November 19, 2007). "New tests needed in contaminated Ottawa neighbourhood: experts". Accessed online December 2011 at: <http://www.cbc.ca/news/canada/ottawa/story/2007/11/19/ot-brownfields-071119.html>



many potential gardening sites contaminated.<sup>202</sup> City of Ottawa does not currently maintain a database of City-owned contaminated sites<sup>203</sup>. The City uses a historical land use inventory to identify potential sites of soil contamination based on past land use, including lands contaminated due to residential waste (municipal jurisdiction) and industrial waste (federal jurisdiction). However, this information is only publicly available through a Municipal Freedom of Information & Protection of Privacy (MFIPPA) request, which can be costly and lengthy.

When a community garden site is proposed on private and public lands, the City can identify contamination through the historical land use inventory and this information is communicated by the City to the Community Garden Network (CGN) without a MFIPPA request; however, the extent and type of contamination is not disclosed<sup>204</sup>. When a community garden is proposed on City-owned sites that are not known to be contaminated, soil tests are then conducted through the use of the City contractor [AMEC](#). AMEC collects the sample, sends it to the lab, analyzes the results and then submits a comprehensive report of their analysis to the City and the CGN. The cost for this service usually comes from the Community Garden Development Fund that gets paid back to the City for the use of their contractor<sup>205</sup>.

### Soil Remediation

Remediating contaminated soil is an important part of improving environmental health, but this process is very costly. For example, in 2007, the City gave \$4 million worth of incentives and tax breaks to the developer, Claridge Homes, to clean up toxic contamination left by a former steel bridge building<sup>206</sup>. In the past, the CGN or the individual community garden association have been responsible for covering the costs of soil testing for a potential garden site, but this can cost between \$1500 and \$2000 for a comprehensive test. For household gardens, soil testing is less costly<sup>207</sup>, but the cost for testing pH, soil composition, and for heavy metals and other contaminants may be a barrier for some.

In certain circumstances, when soil on land chosen for a community garden has been found to be contaminated, raised garden beds have been built and filled with non-contaminated soil. However, raised beds are associated with very high costs also; raised beds can cost anywhere between \$100 and \$400 per 8'x4' bed<sup>208</sup>. In addition, some sites are contaminated to the extent that even raised beds may not provide adequate, long-term protection against contamination<sup>209</sup>.

Other solutions for contaminated soil include building up the soil with layers of non-contaminated compost; however this method is lengthy, taking years to achieve a level of soil safe for gardening. Additionally, groups such as The Food Project in eastern Massachusetts have tried using plants to

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<sup>202</sup> O'Neil, Terri, Just Food Community Gardening Network Coordinator, *Personal Communication February 2012*.

<sup>203</sup> Bramley, Sue, Environmental Remediation department, City of Ottawa, *Personal communication April 2011*

<sup>204</sup> O'Neil, Terri, Just Food Community Gardening Network Coordinator, *Personal Communication April 2011*.

<sup>205</sup> Ibid.

<sup>206</sup> New tests needed in contaminated Ottawa neighbourhood: experts. CBC News (November 19, 2007).

<http://www.cbc.ca/news/canada/ottawa/story/2007/11/19/ot-brownfields-071119.html?ref=rss>

<sup>207</sup> Exova Accutest, an Ottawa company that provides soil testing for households, charges \$50 plus tax for pH and soil composition testing, and \$90 plus tax for heavy metal testing.

<sup>208</sup> The City of Ottawa provides a design schematic for raised beds to be used at sites where soil contamination is present. The cost for constructing this type of raised bed in Ottawa has varied due to different in-kind inputs and/or discounts that community gardening groups are able to access. Anecdotally, these beds have cost anywhere between \$200 and \$400 to build. This design is available by contacting Just Food. O'Neil, Terri, Just Food Community Gardening Network Coordinator, *Personal Communication February 2012*.

<sup>209</sup> Re-contamination may be possible due to contaminated soils migrating into the raised bed garden, or deterioration of the materials used to construct the raised bed. The level of contamination which would cause a site to be unsuitable even for raised bed gardening is an issue which requires further research and consultation with soil and contamination experts.

absorb the toxins out of the earth.<sup>210</sup> Mustard greens and sunflowers are best suited for this role; however it takes 7-10 years for plants to detoxify the soils back to safe levels and the plants used for remediating the soil are then toxic and have to be dealt with as hazardous waste. The public must be informed if plants (especially edible plants) on public lands have been used for soil remediation and are therefore considered toxic. While natural micro- and phyto-remediation techniques are important solutions, they do not obviate the need for toxic landfills and short- to medium-term management of contaminated sites.

Alternative remediation strategies (such as micro- and phyto-remediation discussed above) could be undertaken by local universities/colleges with the use of brownfields as test sites. Schools could then make information available at those sites about the remediation process, level of soil contamination, and level of contamination of the plants used to remediate the soils. This would also involve collaboration with the Provincial and Federal Ministries of the Environment, in order to have sites certified as a testing site for remediation.

## **Appendix K1 – Background: Soil Contamination**

Soil contamination is caused by the presence of human-made chemicals that alter the natural environment. This type of contamination typically arises from the rupture of underground storage tanks, application of pesticides, percolation of contaminated surface water to subsurface strata, oil and fuel dumping, leaching of wastes from landfills or direct discharge of industrial wastes to the soil<sup>211</sup>. The most common chemicals involved are petroleum hydrocarbons, solvents, pesticides, lead and other heavy metals.

Historically, soil contamination studies focussed on rural agricultural and forest areas. However, there is much stronger interest in urban and suburban soils because of the growing public concern about the environment and human health: the percentage of the world's population living in cities is increasing dramatically and, consequently, soil/human interactions are becoming more important. Urban horticulture is providing a significant share of the food supply to large populations in developing and developed countries. With growing interest in urban food production across industrial and highly urbanized countries, it is imperative to implement proven practices in urban and peri-urban agriculture to improve nutrition and health<sup>212</sup> as well as to address the many environmental issues related to the wide range of land uses in urban areas<sup>213</sup>.

## **Appendix K2 - Soil Contamination Prevention & Remediation Precedence**

### City of Ottawa Initiatives

The City of Ottawa currently offers Household Hazardous Waste depots, where residents can drop off hazardous waste (up to 100 litres) at specific locations on given dates. See [http://ottawa.ca/en/garbage\\_recycle/special/hhw/index.html](http://ottawa.ca/en/garbage_recycle/special/hhw/index.html) for details.

The City also offers an online 'Waste Explorer' search function where residents can enter a type of household waste and find information on how to safely dispose of it (eg. recycling, garbage, hazardous waste depot or other retail partner): [http://ottawa.ca/en/garbage\\_recycle/special/index.html](http://ottawa.ca/en/garbage_recycle/special/index.html) For larger industrial contaminated sites (ie. Brownfields), the City of Ottawa Brownfields Community

<sup>210</sup> "Soil Testing and Remediation," The Food Project, accessed online March 2011 at <http://thefoodproject.org/soil-testing-and-remediation>

<sup>211</sup> Definition of "Soil Contamination" taken from Wikipedia.org March 2011.

<sup>212</sup> Canadian International Development Agency, 1998..

<sup>213</sup> De kimpe, Christian, and Morel. (2000). "Urban Soil Management: A Growing Concern." *Soil Science*, 165(1): 31-40.

Improvement Plan (CIP) is a comprehensive framework for promoting brownfield development within the Ottawa Brownfields Redevelopment Community Improvement Project Area. This area is defined as the City's urban area boundary and designated villages. The Brownfields Redevelopment CIP places the highest priority for brownfield redevelopment in the Central Area, Mixed Use Centres, along main streets and within 600 metres of existing or planned rapid transit stations. This area is known as the priority area. See

[http://ottawa.ca/en/city\\_hall/planningprojectsreports/planning/brownfields/](http://ottawa.ca/en/city_hall/planningprojectsreports/planning/brownfields/) for details.

The Ottawa Brownfields Redevelopment CIP contains a comprehensive framework of incentive programs, including incentives for environmental assessment, remediation and risk management costs.

### Other Jurisdictions

The City of Toronto offers residents a [Toxics Taxi program](#), where residents can arrange a free pick-up of their household hazardous waste (minimum of 10 litres and maximum 50 litres). A similar program in Ottawa would benefit residents with limited access to transportation and encourage the safe disposal of hazardous waste.

An organization in Eastern Massachusetts called [The Food Project](#)<sup>214</sup> does soil testing for gardeners and records findings in a central database. If necessary the organization will work with the gardener on soil remediation possibilities such as raised beds or advise a garden layout that uses less toxic areas of the land.

The Ontario Ministry of Agriculture, Food, and Rural Affairs [lists](#) soil testing facilities<sup>215</sup> in Ontario that are accredited to perform tests for pH, buffer pH, P, K, Mg and Nitrate-N, however soil testing is the responsibility of the individual land owner. Some of these soil testing facilities are also able to provide testing for heavy metals.

### Prevention of Soil Contamination

In order to avoid future expenses linked to soil remediation, the prevention of soil contamination is important to consider. The City of Ottawa offers household hazardous waste depots on specified dates throughout the year at selected drop-off points<sup>216</sup>, as a way to encourage proper hazardous waste disposal, and prevent future soil contamination. Offering more frequent, as well as permanent depots would be beneficial in order to reduce the amount of hazardous waste that ends up in landfills leading to soil contamination.

As of this year, Ontario is implementing a new regulation that will enable the industry-funded Stewardship Ontario to recover the "full costs" of running a municipal special or hazardous waste program to ensure that cities "are not burdened with extra costs for diverting (hazardous household) wastes from the environment"<sup>217</sup>. However, funding arrangements for the program by Stewardship Ontario and the municipal government remain to be negotiated.

Much of the municipal soil contamination in urban areas around the world that exists now is due to

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<sup>214</sup> The Food Project employs over 100 young people and 25 full-time staff and engages nearly 2,000 volunteers annually. It has offices in Lincoln, Lynn and Boston, MA. It grows over 250,000 pounds of chemical-pesticide-free food each season for charitable donation, subsidized sale at farmers' markets, and youth-driven food enterprises. [www.thefoodproject.org](http://www.thefoodproject.org)

<sup>215</sup> Ottawa's accredited soil testing lab is Exova Accutest Laboratory located at 8-146 Colonnade rd., K2E 7Y1 and can be reached at 613-727-5692 x 317 (tel), or [lorna.wilson@exova.com](mailto:lorna.wilson@exova.com) (E-mail)

<sup>216</sup> The City is offering 13 Household Hazardous Waste Depots in 2012. For a complete list of the dates and locations of these one-day depots see: [http://ottawa.ca/en/garbage\\_recycle/special/hhw/index.html#P27\\_1059](http://ottawa.ca/en/garbage_recycle/special/hhw/index.html#P27_1059)

<sup>217</sup> Cockburn, Neco. *The Ottawa Citizen*. 14 February, 2012. Available at:

<http://www.ottawacitizen.com/health/Province+moves+help+settle+funding+dispute+over+hazardous+household/6147008/story.html>

activities that occurred previously on the identified land, including contamination due to mills, tanneries, and rail yards<sup>218</sup>. The most common sources of soil contamination include solvents, pesticides, heavy metals, and petroleum by-products<sup>219</sup>. These substances become a problem when they are disposed of in landfills, or in sites that are later redeveloped for other purposes rather than through following proper hazardous waste disposal techniques<sup>220</sup>.

### Monitoring Waste Depot Effectiveness

Given that soil contamination from hazardous household and industrial waste is an ongoing obstacle to safe, successful gardening and a danger to human, plant, and animal health, it is important to assess the current efficacy of waste depots and identify opportunities to ensure the proper disposal of soil contaminants. Recent debates over responsibilities for diverting hazardous household wastes from the environment between the City and industry-funded Stewardship Ottawa highlight the tension that surrounds the funding of costly waste-disposal programs<sup>221</sup>. Since waste diversion funding is both limited and contentious, waste removal programs must be effective and efficient. One way in which the City could measure the effectiveness of the waste depots, would be to compare the amount of residential waste currently collected to the amount of waste collected after the increase of drop-off depots. Thus, monitoring such programs allows wasteful practices to be identified and adjusted. Space for gardening edible plants is in increasing demand in Ottawa and while there are many apparently suitable sites to grow food available, they are often contaminated by hazardous waste. Contaminated soils make for contaminated plants that are unsafe to consume. Identifying contaminated soils and taking appropriate remediation initiatives to render the soil safe for growing food are therefore essential to the development of Ottawa's urban agricultural potential. However, remediation remains a reactionary process and so it is also important to promote and improve the accessibility of proper waste disposal to prevent soil contamination altogether.

## **Appendix K3: H2O Chelsea – Example of a municipal-led testing program that yielded results<sup>222</sup>**

### ***Why did this project emerge?***

The City of Chelsea is faced with the unique challenge of being built on the Great Canadian Shield, making municipal sewer systems nearly impossible. The municipality relies entirely on wells. The H2O Chelsea program was developed in 2003 as a precautionary measure, using a monitoring program developed by professors and graduate students from the University of Ottawa. The initial idea stemmed from Action Chelsea for the Respect of the Environment (ACRE), a local NGO, which sought to engage the local community in water issues.

This project was undertaken in order to inform municipal planning and management and because of citizens' concern on quality and quantity of water available. The goal of the project was to gain a better understanding of water resources as well as to identify areas of concern in the municipality:

#### ***Goals:***

1) Provide municipal decision-makers with current information on the state of ground and surface-water quality and quantity that they can use to inform their decision making

<sup>218</sup> "Guide to Understanding and Recognizing Pollution Issues: Soil Pollution Causes" from Environmental Pollution Centers, accessed February 2012 at <http://www.environmentalpollutioncenters.org/soil/causes/>

<sup>219</sup> Ibid.

<sup>220</sup> Ibid.

<sup>221</sup> For more information concerning Ottawa's waste disposal funding see:

<http://www.ottawacitizen.com/health/Province+moves+help+settle+funding+dispute+over+hazardous+household/6147008/story.html>

<sup>222</sup> Devlin, John. "Community Engagement for Adaptive Management in Environmental Assessment Follow-up: Final Report". March 2009. A case study of the H2O Chelsea program appears on pages 73-79. Accessed online February 2012 at: <http://www.ceaa.gc.ca/7F3C6AF0-docs/CEFAMIEAFU-eng.pdf>

- 2) Generate a spatially explicit baseline water quality/quantity electronic database that can be used for scientific research on the impacts of human activities on Chelsea's water resources, and that also can be integrated with existing monitoring networks at provincial and federal levels
- 3) Provide residents, public institutions, and businesses with the opportunity to participate in water monitoring and stewardship in their own community

### ***How does it work?***

H2O Chelsea uses a three-tiered approach to monitor surface and groundwater quantity and quality, and partakes in the three community based monitoring programs (well water, lake water, stream water). In these programs, H2O Chelsea acts as a facilitator between the community and laboratories. Volunteers were trained to obtain water samples once a month with required equipment and samples were submitted for testing.

### ***How long did the project run?***

The project started in 2002 and concluded 2008. Thanks to the success of the project, the Municipality of Chelsea took on the project as its own and has run it ever since.

### ***What was the cost?***

The H2O Chelsea project received \$397,000 in funding over its 6 years of operation in addition to in-kind donations on the part of ACRE, the University of Ottawa and countless volunteer hours. Funding came from:

- \$150,000 from the Fonds d'action québécois pour le développement durable (2004–2005)
- \$40,000 from the North American Fund for Environmental Cooperation (2003–2004)
- \$100,000 from the Municipality of Chelsea (\$20,000 a year from 2003 to 2007)
- \$70,000 from the CLD des Collines de l'Outaouais (2006–2007)
- \$25,000 from the Walter and Duncan Gordon Foundation (2006)
- \$12,000 from Environment Canada's Ecological Monitoring and Assessment Network (2006)

### ***What were some of the results?***

85% of residences participated in the survey and a better understanding of water resources in the area was gained. Better understanding of the environmental and human impacts on the water table in the area. The program's results are regularly used in municipal decision making. The project started in 2002 and concluded 2008. In many cases when contamination was found in public spaces, rivers, and lakes, action was taken by the municipal government to address the contamination. Thanks to the success of the project, the Municipality of Chelsea took on the project as its own and has run it ever since.

### ***Who did the water testing?***

Water testing was done by University of Ottawa graduate students in collaboration with the Department of Environment. A team of 40 volunteers were responsible for collecting samples, while the students conducted testing and reported the results.

### ***What was the uptake?***

Households, businesses and public institutions were all encouraged to partake in the program.

### ***What kind of reporting was provided to the community?***

The residents of Chelsea receive the results and other relevant information about water quality and quantity through information kits sent to every household and business, a program for water conservation in schools, and information available on the program's and municipality's websites. The group also provides information stands at local events, publishes updates in municipal and local

newspapers, makes public presentations, including at annual general meetings (open to the public), Municipal Council meetings, and Lake Association meetings.



## L. Hens in Urban Areas

### Vision:

- A city where the keeping of hens is permitted in urban areas in the City of Ottawa. This would include amendments to the existing municipal bylaw to remove chickens from the category of livestock and provide regulations for keeping backyard hens.

### Policy Details:

It is recommended that:

The City of Ottawa amend municipal BY-LAW NO. 2003 – 77 (Respecting Animal Care and Control) so that hens are not classified as livestock and are therefore permitted in urban areas (i.e. backyards). This by-law amendment should meet the following three criteria and adhere to the recommended provisions<sup>223</sup>:

- a. protection of public health and welfare;
- b. humane treatment of hens; and
- c. reasonable access to hen keeping for Ottawa residents.

HENS	RECOMMENDED PROVISIONS FOR OTTAWA URBAN AREAS
<b>Allowable zones</b>	Single and multi-family residential zones (R1-5 and RM) <sup>224</sup>
<b>Siting restrictions for hen enclosures</b>	1 m from property line 3 m from windows and doors of dwellings Reduced exterior side yard setback on corner lots May not be located in front yards Must be located at grade level
<b>Size restrictions for hen enclosures</b>	Maximum area 9.2m <sup>2</sup> (100 ft <sup>2</sup> ) Maximum height 2m
<b>Number and type of chickens allowed</b>	Maximum 6-8 hens <i>per lot</i> Minimum 2 per lot (no single chickens) All chickens at least 4 months old No roosters
<b>Housing requirements</b>	Minimum 0.37m <sup>2</sup> (4 ft <sup>2</sup> ) coop space and 0.92m <sup>2</sup> (10ft <sup>2</sup> ) enclosed run space per hen (see note above) Entire coop structure must be roofed; run area should be covered with netting to prevent mingling with wild birds ≥15cm perch for each hen and one nest box Hens must remain enclosed within coop or run at all times
<b>Basic care</b>	Hens must be provided food, water, shelter, adequate light and ventilation, veterinary care, and opportunities to scratch, dust-bathe,

<sup>223</sup> These recommendations for Ottawa are premised on urban hen policies and regulations in other Canadian cities, as referred to elsewhere in this document. They have been revised to suit the Ottawa context.

<sup>224</sup> It is recommended that hen-keeping be allowed in all residential zones, including multi-family, and that all of those zones be subject to the same requirements. Thus, a multi-family development could have 6-8 hens *per lot*, not 6-8 hens *per unit*.

	and roost. Keepers of hens must reside on the lot containing the hen enclosure, in order to ensure that hens receive appropriate care and supervision.
<b>Pest control</b>	Enclosures must be: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ Kept in good repair and sanitary condition</li> <li>➤ Constructed to prevent access by other animals</li> </ul> Feed dish and water dish must be kept in coop at night Feed storage should be in proper rodent-proof containers
<b>Sanitation</b>	Manure /waste must be removed & composted or disposed of safely from coop in timely manner Similar to pet dogs, chicken waste/poop can be disposed of via the Green Bins Slaughtering of backyard hens is only to be done by a certified abattoir If not to be consumed for meat, proper end-of-life disposal must be adhered to including veterinary care if required and burial of carcass
<b>Other regulations</b>	No sales of eggs, manure, or other products allowed If chicken meat is to be consumed by owners then chickens must be slaughtered at a certified abattoir

**Pertains to:**

This policy pertains to the existing municipal bylaw: Respecting Animal Care and Control [BY-LAW NO. 2003 – 77](#) and the [Ontario Bees Act R.R.O. 1990, REGULATION 57 General](#)

**The Role of Businesses, Community Organizations, and Individuals – What You Can Do:**

Learn more about the benefits of urban hen-keeping.

Join the efforts of community groups promoting and educating about hens and hen-keeping in urban areas.

**Rationale:**



Backyard hens provide many benefits, including improving local food security and contributing to a just and sustainable food system. Not only does hen-keeping promote food security, but it also provides valuable educational opportunities for young people to learn about the source of their food. Enthusiasm for urban chickens has grown throughout North America in the past few years, as increased attention is paid to issues of sustainability, food security, and consumption of locally grown food. Many North American cities have already enacted or updated by-laws to allow the keeping of urban chickens. Some Canadian cities that permit the keeping of urban hens include:

- Niagara Falls, ON
- Brampton, ON
- Guelph, ON (1 acre lot required)
- Victoria, B.C.
- Vancouver, B.C.
- Surrey, B.C. (1 acre lot required)
- Kingston, Ontario
- Quinte West, Ontario

While some city by-laws simply do not prohibit hens, others have set aside regulations specifying and/or promoting hens, for example:

City of Kingston, Ontario - Regulations for Backyard Hens, June 14, 2011

City of Quinte West, Ontario -By-law #11-93, June 13, 2011

City of Niagara Falls, Ontario -By-law # 2002-129, July 15, 2002

City of Guelph, Ontario -By-law #(1985)-11952, October 21, 1985

A summary of by-laws in select North American cities is provided as Appendix L5.

Although prohibited, some backyard hens are already kept within the City of Ottawa without problems.

Similar to growing vegetable gardens, urban chickens would enable Ottawa residents to better respond to potential emergency situations. If the City ever required an emergency food supply, residents who kept chickens would have a ready source of protein to feed their families. This would thus reduce the strain on food supplies during an emergency.

Given that other North American cities have embraced urban hen-keeping, current literature and resources already exist to help bridge the knowledge gap in introducing the concept to the City of Ottawa. A list of online resources is provided in *Appendix L7*.

Lastly, allowing City of Ottawa residents to keep hens would address the shortcomings of the current City of Ottawa Animal Care & Control bylaw, which allows for the keeping of similar animals such as pigeons. According to Section 79 of the bylaw, City of Ottawa residents can currently keep as many as 70 pigeons within urban limits<sup>225</sup>.

The recommendations here outline how the City can enjoy the benefits of urban hens, while protecting public health and safety and ensuring humane treatment of the hens. Current perceived barriers, both practical and ideological can be addressed with proper guidelines and education in order to provide adequate support for potential hen-keepers, and to dispel myths regarding hens in urban areas. In total, the recommendations provide a system of regulation that will allow Ottawa residents to safely and humanely enjoy the rewards that backyard hens provide.

## **Appendix L1 - Quick Facts on Hens<sup>226</sup>**

Hens are social creatures that provide companionship to both other hens and humans alike. They can live 14 years or more.

Egg laying begins at 6 months of age. Domesticated hens have been bred to lay one egg a day till they reach 18 months of age, when the figure diminishes. Purebred chickens or heritage breeds tend to lay eggs for a longer period.

Hens can act as natural lawn mower and pest control, as hens spend waking hours grazing. Hens' waste products provide valuable, high-nitrogen fertilizer for gardening.

<sup>225</sup> City of Ottawa. Respecting Animal Care and Control By-law No. 2003- 77.  
[http://www.ottawa.ca/en/licence\\_permit/bylaw/a\\_z/acc/index.html](http://www.ottawa.ca/en/licence_permit/bylaw/a_z/acc/index.html).

<sup>226</sup> District of Saanich, BC. [www.saanich.ca/living/community/chickens/docs/HenBasics.pdf](http://www.saanich.ca/living/community/chickens/docs/HenBasics.pdf)

## Appendix L2: Evidence / Precedent - HENS:

<b>Concern</b>	
Noise	<p>Laying hens produce a variety of vocalizations, none of which are very loud. Perhaps the loudest noise is an approximately five-minute period of clucking that occurs when a hen lays an egg. In an investigation conducted by staff from the City of Pleasanton, California, noise readings of a “squawking” chicken registered at 63 dbA at two feet away, and would not register at nine feet away<sup>227</sup>.</p> <p>For comparison, the average human conversation registers at about 60 decibels<sup>228</sup> and a barking dog can be as loud as 100 dbA<sup>229</sup>. The occasional squawk by a hen would be no more of a noise nuisance than lawn mowers, children playing, or any other neighbourhood sound.</p> <p>The City of Ottawa Noise By-law NO. 2004-253 protects the “public interest to reduce the noise level in the City of Ottawa so as to preserve, protect, and promote public health, safety, welfare, and peace and quiet of inhabitants of the city.” This bylaw makes no mention of noise from domestic animals.</p> <p>The City of Ottawa Animal Care &amp; Control By-law NO 2003 – 77 merely states that no animal shall be kept that disturbs, or is likely to disturb, the peace of persons within the vicinity or neighbourhood.</p> <p>Given that noise from hens is relatively quiet and intermittent, it is unlikely to be a significant nuisance under the proposed guidelines, which provide setbacks and other management measures to ensure some separation between hen enclosures and neighbouring properties. Given this separation, it is unlikely that a hen’s sounds will be above tolerable levels on neighbouring properties.</p> <p>The recommendation that hens be kept in their coops from sunset to sunrise, which is primarily to protect hens from predators, will reduce potential noise impacts at night.</p> <p>Unlike hens, a crowing rooster can reach decibel levels of 85-90 dbA. For this reason, it is recommended that roosters be prohibited under the proposed by-law amendment. In this regard, it is also recommended that no chickens under the age of four months be allowed, as determining gender (and thus avoiding unexpected roosters) can be more difficult in young chickens.</p>

<sup>227</sup> City of Pleasanton. Planning Commission Staff Report, October 26, 2005, Item 6f. Retrieved January 14, 2010 from <http://www.ci.pleasanton.ca.us/pdf/pcsr-6f-prz30-ord.pdf>.

<sup>228</sup> National Agricultural Safety Database. Hearing Protection for Farmers. Retrieved January 14, 2010 from <http://nasdonline.org/document/1144/d000933/hearing-protection-for-farmers.html>.

<sup>229</sup> Coppola, Crista L., Enns, R. Mark, Grandin, Temple. “Noise in the Animal Shelter Environment: Building Design and the Effects of Daily Noise Exposure,” *Journal of Applied Animal Welfare Science*, 9(1), 1-7

Smell	<p>Similar to dogs &amp; cats, unpleasant odours from accumulation of manure and/or food scraps can result if chicken enclosures are infrequently cleaned.</p> <p>Although chickens produce only a few tablespoons of manure per day, accumulation of manure can produce ammonia, which is both harmful for chickens and unpleasant for others. It is recommended to remove manure and food scraps at least weekly, and preferably daily. Chicken manure can be easily composted via the City of Ottawa Green Bin program or in backyard composters. Unlike the excrement produced by cats and dogs, composted chicken manure is an excellent fertilizer.</p> <p>Proper disposal of chicken waste would follow sections 38 &amp; 39 of the City of Ottawa Animal Care &amp; Control By-law NO 2003 – 77, which state that:</p> <p><i>38 Every owner of a dog shall dispose of any feces removed pursuant to Section 37 on his or her premises.</i></p> <p><i>39 Every owner of a dog shall remove from his or her premises, in a timely manner, feces left by such dog, so as not to disturb the enjoyment, comfort, convenience of any person in the vicinity of the premises.</i></p>
Disease – General	<p>Unlike the feces of dogs and cats, which easily transports parasites, hen droppings do not contain pathogens, can be easily composted, and provide a rich source of organic fertilizer for backyard gardens.</p>
Disease - Avian Influenza A (H5N1)	<p>Chickens, like other birds, are susceptible to forms of Type A influenza that are collectively known as “avian influenza” (AI). The AI virus is widespread, particularly among wild birds, but most forms produce relatively mild or no symptoms. AI can mutate, after circulation in a concentrated poultry population, into highly pathogenic forms (HPAI) that produce severe symptoms but this is less common. AI is not an airborne disease, but is transmitted from infected to healthy birds via direct contact with birds and their droppings, feathers, and body fluids.</p> <p>Unlike rural farm birds which might co-mingle with migratory birds or drink from a shared pond, backyard urban hens are contained in a coop and watered inside this coop limiting their exposure to AI.</p> <p>The likelihood of AI can be further reduced by ensuring that only small numbers of hens are kept per household and that slaughtering is not done on the property. AI is more likely and spreads quickly when hens are kept in high concentration areas without regular access to sunlight. Lastly, all hen owners would be subject to the biosecurity procedures recommended by the Canadian Food Inspection Agency (CFIA).</p> <p><b>Words from the experts:</b>      “As a veterinarian and epidemiologist specializing in disease people get from animals (zoonoses) through food, water, and various other means, (insects, environment, direct contact), I know of no evidence linking human illness with keeping small, urban flocks.”      – Dr. D. Waltner-Toews, University of Guelph</p> <p>The British Columbia Centre for Disease Control (BCCDC) conducted a literature review on the risk of infectious disease from backyard hens and found that:  <i>“Overall, the risk of pathogen transmission associated with backyard chicken keeping appears to be mild and does not present a greater threat to population health compared to other animals allowed by similar bylaws (reptiles, dogs, etc). Public adherence to proper hygiene will significantly mitigate the risk of any disease acquisition including pathogens commonly found in chickens. “</i></p> <p><i>*See Appendix L3 for a more detailed analysis of Avian Influenza and backyard hens.</i></p>

	<p><i>*See Appendix L6 for the full letter from Dr. Waltner-Toewes, University of Guelph</i></p>
<p>Disease – Salmonella</p>	<p>Salmonella is another health concern associated with poultry and eggs.</p> <p>Salmonella lives in the intestines of infected chickens, and can be shed in large numbers in the droppings.</p> <p>Humans who handle the birds or clean their enclosures can then be exposed to the bacteria, which can cause severe gastrointestinal illness if ingested.</p> <p>The guidelines recommended to reduce the risks of avian influenza will also help minimize the risk of Salmonella exposure in owners of backyard flocks.</p> <p>This risk is further reduced by the recommended prohibition of hens less than four months old, as chicks shed much more Salmonella than older birds.</p> <p>Transmission of the bacteria will further be limited by the recommended prohibition on commercial sale of eggs or other hen products.</p>
<p>Predators</p>	<p>Similar to other unprotected food sources such as bird seed, cat food or open trash, hens and hen feed can attract unwanted animals. These include rodents seeking food scraps, and larger animals, such as raccoons, foxes, skunks, and coyotes.</p> <p>For this reason, it is vital that hen enclosures be secure from other animals and that hens be kept in coops from sunset to sunrise.</p> <p>In order to discourage rodents and predators who may be attracted by food scraps and potential prey, by-law language is recommended that requires hen enclosures to be constructed and maintained to prevent rodents from being harboured underneath, within, or within the walls of the coop and the run, and to prevent access to the enclosure by any other bird or animal.</p> <p>Additionally, storage of hen food in proper raccoon and rat-proof containers is recommended, as is the case with storage of other animal feed that is kept outdoors currently.</p> <p>It is important to note that the predators of hens are the same as those of the wild rabbits, squirrels, chipmunks, small birds, and other local wild prey animals already present in our community; hens themselves do not attract additional predators to the area.</p>



<p>Burden on humane society</p>	<p>Only 0.01% (or 1 in 10,000) of residents are likely to keep backyard chickens if the bylaw is amended, according to research conducted by Urban Agriculture Kingston.</p> <p>See Appendix L5 for a detailed breakdown of the complaints related to chickens that cities have been burdened with. The average number of annual hen complaints is 6. By comparison, the City of Ottawa received 13,762 animal-related bylaw complaints (the majority dealing with dogs and cats) in 2010<sup>230</sup>.</p> <p>The City of Ottawa may wish to provide the Humane Society with funds to build a hen coop and vet access, especially during a transition period in order to assist the Humane Society with its concerns of chicken neglect. Similar gestures have been made in Kingston, where the municipal government gave the Kingston Humane Society a lump-sum of \$20,000 in order to cover the costs of any urban hen-related adjustments needed to their operating procedures.</p> <p>Community organizations, such as the Canadian Liberated Urban Chicken Klub (CLUCK), may also be used as a resource for end-of-life services related to urban hens.</p>
<p>Hen cruelty</p>	<p>Unlike puppies and kittens, hens are not bought on an impulse because they look cute. Hens require the construction/purchase of coop, placement of a run, and special feed. Unlike other animals kept in the city, hens cannot be bought on a whim at a local pet store. Purchasing hens requires planning. The planning and the high cost (\$200-\$500 for the coop alone) of set up leads people to embark on hen ownership in a responsible and educated way.</p> <p>Bylaws in cities that allow hens include regulations around the basic necessities for hens and consequences, usually in the format of fines, for noncompliance.</p> <p>The humane treatment of farm animals is commonly defined by the “five freedoms,” as developed by the Farm Animal Welfare Council, an advisory body to the UK government. These include:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Freedom from thirst, hunger and malnutrition - by ready access to fresh water and a diet to maintain full health and vigour.</li> <li>2. Freedom from discomfort - by providing a suitable environment including shelter and a comfortable resting area.</li> <li>3. Freedom from pain, injury and disease - by prevention or rapid diagnosis and treatment.</li> <li>4. Freedom to express normal behaviour - by providing sufficient space, proper facilities and company of the animals own kind.</li> <li>5. Freedom from fear and distress - by ensuring conditions that avoid mental suffering.</li> </ol> <p>To enjoy the Five Freedoms, hens need shelter, food, water, adequate space, environmental conditions (such as adequate ventilation and light) conducive to good health, and the opportunity to socialize and engage in fundamental behaviours, which for them include scratching (foraging by scraping the ground with their claws), roosting (resting on a stick or branch), and dust bathing (thrashing around in the dirt to clean feathers and remove parasites).</p>

### Appendix L3 - Avian Influenza

Chickens, like other birds, are susceptible to forms of Type A influenza that are collectively known as “avian influenza” (AI). The AI virus is widespread, particularly among wild birds, but most forms

<sup>230</sup> Personal communication, City of Ottawa Bylaw Services, *Personal communication April 2011*

produce relatively mild or no symptoms. AI can mutate, after circulation in a concentrated poultry population, into highly pathogenic forms (HPAI) that produce severe symptoms but this is less common<sup>231</sup>. AI is not an airborne disease, but is transmitted from infected to healthy birds via direct contact with birds and their droppings, feathers, and body fluids<sup>232</sup>.

AI has spread to humans in rare instances. Transmission from birds to human remains difficult, usually involving prolonged and close contact, and human-to-human transmission has been suspected in only a handful of cases<sup>233</sup>. The greatest risk of infection for humans appears to be through the handling and slaughtering of live infected poultry. Public health concerns centre on the potential for the virus to mutate or combine with other influenza viruses to produce a form that could easily spread from person to person.

A high pathogenic H5N1 subtype of AI has caused virulent disease among birds in parts of Asia, Africa, and Europe, and rare but serious disease in humans. An outbreak of high pathogenic H7N3 AI occurred among poultry in the Fraser Valley in 2004, resulting in the deaths of 17 million birds (through disease and culling) but only two mild cases of flu among humans. Health authorities in Canada consider the risk of H5N1 reaching North America, or other HPAI subtypes spreading among backyard hens, to be extremely limited, particularly if biosecurity measures, such as those recommended by the CFIA, are followed.

The British Columbia Centre for Disease Control (BCCDC) conducted a literature review on the risks of infectious disease from backyard hens and found that:

*Overall, the risk of pathogen transmission associated with backyard chicken keeping appears to be mild and does not present a greater threat to population health compared to other animals allowed by similar bylaws (reptiles, dogs, etc). Public adherence to proper hygiene will significantly mitigate the risk of any disease acquisition including pathogens commonly found in chickens.*

Vancouver Coastal Health has worked with staff on developing the recommended guidelines and considers them to be protective of public health.

Dr. Victoria Bowes, a board-certified Poultry Veterinarian in the Fraser Valley and an authority on the Fraser Valley outbreak, considers the risk of HPAI among backyard hens to be minimal, stating that:

*As long as Asian HPAI-H5N1 remains foreign to Canada AND the birds don't move out of the backyard once they are placed, then the avian influenza disease risks are extremely low (almost negligible).*

Similarly, Interior Health recently released a document entitled “Backyard Chickens in the Urban Environment,” which is intended as a guide for municipalities considering the health implications of backyard chicken keeping. The document states:

*The risk of avian influenza development is not appreciably increased by backyard hens. Urban hen keepers should be encouraged to follow the advice of CFIA: Bird Health Basics - How to Prevent and Detect Disease in Backyard Flocks and Pet Birds. The staff recommendation requires hen keepers to follow the CFIA biosecurity standards, and includes the standards as a required reading on the on-*

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<sup>231</sup> World Health Organization (WHO). Avian Influenza Fact Sheet. Retrieved January 14, 2010, from

[http://www.who.int/mediacentre/factsheets/avian\\_influenza/en/](http://www.who.int/mediacentre/factsheets/avian_influenza/en/)

<sup>232</sup> Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO). Questions and Answers – The Facts of Bird Flu. Retrieved January 14, 2010 from <http://www.fao.org/avianflu/en/qanda.html>

<sup>233</sup> World Health Organization (WHO). H5N1 Avian Influenza: Timeline of Major Events. Retrieved January 14, 2010 from [http://www.who.int/csr/disease/avian\\_influenza/Timeline\\_10\\_01\\_04.pdf](http://www.who.int/csr/disease/avian_influenza/Timeline_10_01_04.pdf)

*line registry. These measures are intended to limit introduction of diseases from other domestic poultry and cross-contamination between humans and hens. Staff further recommends that owners be required to provide veterinary care for hens sufficient to maintain them in good health.*

A number of other recommendations also will serve to minimize any potential for AI in backyard hens. Limiting the number of hens to four per lot (including multi-family lots) will ensure that the densities required for LPAI to develop into HPAI are not found in the city, especially given the expected low percentage of residents who will keep hens. The potential for spread of any form of AI is further reduced by the recommended requirement that hens be kept continuously enclosed in a roofed, secure structure. Under these conditions, introduction of any viruses from wild birds or other backyard hens would be extremely limited.

A third recommendation that will reduce risks in the unlikely event of an outbreak, or in the event that HPAI is found among North American wild bird populations, is the requirement for all hen keepers to enrol in an on-line registry, and to update their registration in a timely manner. The registry database will allow health officials to pinpoint the locations of backyard hens should a health emergency arise.

Other recommendations that will limit the potential for the spread of disease include a prohibition on backyard slaughtering, which will reduce exposure to blood and other body fluids from diseased birds; a prohibition on sale of hen products, which will limit transfer of disease; and requirements to keep enclosures sanitary and free from accumulated manure and waste.

#### **Appendix L4 – Anticipation of Complaints Study, Kingston (April 2010)<sup>234</sup>**

<b>City</b>	<b>Population</b>	<b># of Complaints per year</b>	<b>Complaints per 100,000</b>	<b>Projected Yearly Hen-Related Complaints in Kingston (2006 Population: 117,297)</b>
Niagara Falls, ON	82,181	2	2	3
Guelph, ON	114,943	"just a few"		
Brampton, ON	433,806	6	1	2
Victoria	300,000	12	4	5
Surrey, BC	400,000	"very few"		
Saanich, BC	108,000	15	14	16
New Westminster, BC	58,549	4.5	8	9
Rossland, BC	3,278	0	0	0

<sup>234</sup> Urban Agriculture Kingston. "Kingston Backyard Hens: An Eggcellent Idea Whose Time Has Come". April, 2010. Accessed online March 2012 from: <http://uakingston.webs.com/backyardhens.htm>.

Esquimalt, BC	16,840	0		
Burnaby, BC	216,336	12	6	7
<b>Average Complaints per 100,000 population: 5</b>				
<b>Average Estimated Complaints in Kingston: 6</b>				

### Appendix L5 – Comparative Overview of Select Urban Chicken Bylaws

Municipality and Bylaw(s)	Bylaw Details	Lot Requirements	Number of Chickens Allowed	Refuse/Other	Local Contact
<b>Brampton, ON</b> <b>Pop. 433,806 (2006)</b> Bylaws 261-93 and 78-2009: <a href="http://brampton.ca/en/City-Hall/Bylaws/Documents/animal-control.pdf">http://brampton.ca/en/City-Hall/Bylaws/Documents/animal-control.pdf</a>	See Section 11	“A building structure, coop, pen or run” No specification for size 8m from other building, 2m from property boundary	2 maximum Roosters prohibited	Buried or in airtight containers until removed Feed must be kept in rodent-proof containers Chickens may not roam at large	<a href="http://www.brampton.ca">www.brampton.ca</a> City Clerk’s Office (905) 874-2101 Bylaw Enforcement Office (905) 458-3424 Animal Services - Tamara (905) 458-5200 x203 Brampton Animal Shelter (905) 458-5800
<b>Guelph, ON</b> <b>Pop. 114,943 (2006)</b> Bylaw (1985)-11952: <a href="http://www.guelph.ca/uploads/PDF/Bylaws/exotic_animals.pdf">http://www.guelph.ca/uploads/PDF/Bylaws/exotic_animals.pdf</a>	“No person shall keep ducks, geese, poultry or pigeons within the city limits unless kept in pens, with floors kept free from standing water, and regularly cleaned and disinfected, and that such pens be a distance of at least 50’ from any school, church or dwelling not incl. the	At least 50 feet from any school, church or dwelling house of others	Unspecified	“Kept in pens, with floors kept free from standing water” Regularly cleaned and disinfected	<a href="http://www.guelph.ca">www.guelph.ca</a> City Clerk’s Office (519) 837-5603 Bylaw Enforcement Office (519) 836-7275 Guelph Humane Society (519) 824-3091

	owner's dwelling."				
<p><b>Kingston, ON</b>  <b>Pop. 117,207</b>  <b>(2006)</b>  Proposed bylaw regulation (June 18, 2011: 18-month pilot)  <a href="http://www.cityofkingston.ca/cityhall/bylaws/backyardhens.asp">http://www.cityofkingston.ca/cityhall/bylaws/backyardhens.asp</a></p>	<p>"Kingston residents are now permitted to keep up to six hens in their backyards provided they abide by the regulations outlined below. These regulations for keeping egg-laying hens will be in place during an 18-month pilot period (beginning June 8, 2011)."</p>	<p>Section 4.14: "The regulation set out in section 4.13 does not apply to an agricultural property [or] to a property of five (5) or more acres." Hen coops and runs must be at least 1.2m from the rear or side lot line, 15m from any school, 7.5m from a church or business, and 3m from all windows and doors for abutting properties and they are not permitted in front or side yards.</p>	<p>6 maximum, Roosters prohibited</p>	<p>Hen coops and runs must be clean and free of obnoxious odours substances and vermin. Stored manure shall be kept in an enclosed structure and no more than three cubic feet shall be stored at any one time. Manure must be disposed of in accordance with Municipal bylaws — no waste the consistency of "swill" (sloppy liquid mixture) is to be collected. This means that hen waste would have to be solid, and it would need to be bagged.</p>	<p><a href="http://www.cityofkingston.ca">www.cityofkingston.ca</a>  City Clerk's Office  (613) 546-0000  Bylaw Enforcement Office  (613) 546-0000  Urban Agriculture  Kingston</p>
<p><b>Niagara Falls</b>  <b>Pop. 82184</b>  <b>(2006)</b>  <a href="http://www.niagarafalls.ca/pdf/by-laws/Animal_control.pdf">www.niagarafalls.ca/pdf/by-laws/Animal_control.pdf</a></p>	<p>All chicken coops shall be located only in the rear yard and must fully enclose the chickens and prevent them from escaping.</p>	<p>All lots housing chickens must have: a frontage of at least 40 feet; and, detached dwellings on them; a depth of at least 100 feet. The chicken coop shall be located at least 25 feet from the rear lot line of the</p>	<p>Maximum 10</p>	<p>All dead chickens must be disposed of immediately and in any event, within 24 hours. There must be hygienic storage of and prompt removal of chicken feces. The chicken's food supply must be protected against vermin.</p>	

		lot on which the chicken coop is located. The chicken coop shall be located at least 15 feet from any side lot line of the lot on which the chicken coop is located.			
<b>Quinte West, ON</b> <b>Pop. 42,697 (2006)</b> Bylaw 11-93 <a href="http://www.quintewest.ca/en/documents/bylaws.aspx">http://www.quintewest.ca/en/documents/bylaws.aspx</a>	See General Provisions Section	Restricted to properties that are zoned to permit a single family dwelling 1 acre minimum	Unspecified	Unspecified	
<b>Saanich, BC</b> <b>Pop. 108,265 (2006)</b> Bylaw 8556: <a href="http://www.saanich.ca/municipal/clarks/bylaws/pdfs/animals8556.pdf">http://www.saanich.ca/municipal/clarks/bylaws/pdfs/animals8556.pdf</a>	See Sections 4, 38, 39 and 40	12,000 sq. ft. lot minimum Research/consultations are currently underway aimed at allowing hens on lots smaller than 12,000 sq. ft.	10 maximum, for lots 12,000 to 20,000 sq. ft.; 30 maximum, for lots 20,001 to 43,056 sq. ft.; unlimited number, for lots over 43,056 sq. ft.	Roosters prohibited in residential areas; in rural areas, up to 5 roosters for lots up to 43,056 sq. ft.; unlimited for larger lots	<a href="http://www.saanich.ca">www.saanich.ca</a> Clerk's Office (250) 475-5494 x3507 Strategic Planning Unit (250) 475-5494 x3401 Animal Control Officer Sue Ryan, x4360
<b>Surrey, BC</b> <b>Pop. 394,976 (2006)</b> Zoning Bylaw 12000: <a href="http://www.surrey.ca/NR/rdonlyres/A31F972A-C365-4A4A-AF8F-FB0384128E77/0/Zoning.pdf">http://www.surrey.ca/NR/rdonlyres/A31F972A-C365-4A4A-AF8F-FB0384128E77/0/Zoning.pdf</a>	See General Provisions Section	1 acre minimum	12 chickens maximum per acre of land Roosters prohibited	No slaughter; chickens can be kept for egg production only	<a href="http://www.surrey.ca">www.surrey.ca</a> City Clerk's Office (604) 591-4132 Bylaw Enforcement and Licensing Department (604) 591-4370 Surrey SPCA (604) 597-5655
<b>Vancouver, BC</b> <b>Pop. 578,041 (2006)</b> Bylaw 9150  <a href="http://vancouver.ca/blStorage/10065.PDF">http://vancouver.ca/blStorage/10065.PDF</a>	See Section 7.15 and 7.16 Hens must be registered	Min. 0.37 m2 of coop floor area per hen, and at least 0.92 m2 of roofed outdoor enclosure;	Unspecified	Remove all other manure not used for composting or fertilizing; follow biosecurity procedures recommended	<a href="http://www.vancouver.ca">www.vancouver.ca</a> City Clerk's Office (604) 873-7000 Bylaw Enforcement Office (604)

		floor of any combination of vegetated or bare earth in each outdoor enclosure; in each coop, at least one perch, for each hen, that is at least 15 cm long, and one nest box.		by the Canadian Food Inspection Agency; keep hens for personal use only, and not sell eggs, manure, meat, or other products derived from hens; not slaughter, or attempt to euthanize, a hen on the property; not dispose of a hen except by delivering it to the Poundkeeper, or to a farm, abattoir, veterinarian, mobile slaughter unit, or other facility that has the ability to dispose of hens lawfully	Vancouver SPCA (604) 879-7721
<b>Victoria, BC</b> <b>Pop. 78,057</b> <b>(2006)</b>  Bylaw 92-189 <a href="http://www.victoria.ca/common/pdfs/bylaw_92-189.pdf">http://www.victoria.ca/common/pdfs/bylaw_92-189.pdf</a>	Farm animals disallowed, however, hens are not directly referred to in Animal Control Bylaw.	Unspecified	Unspecified. Roosters prohibited, unless for 3-6 month breeding period.	Eggs for personal consumption only, cannot be sold.	<a href="http://www.victoria.ca">www.victoria.ca</a> City Manager's Office (250) 361-0202 Planning Department Victoria Animal Control (250) 414-0233 <a href="http://vacs.ca">vacs.ca</a> Victoria SPCA (250) 388-7722
<b>Gatineau, QC</b> <b>Pop. 242,124</b> <b>(2006)</b> Bylaw 183-2005: <a href="http://www.ville.gatineau.qc.ca/services/enligne/doc-web/masson/documents/pdf/183-">http://www.ville.gatineau.qc.ca/services/enligne/doc-web/masson/documents/pdf/183-</a>	See Chapter 6: "Animal agricole"	2 acres minimum, with enclosed yard	Unspecified		<a href="http://www.ville.gatineau.qc.ca">www.ville.gatineau.qc.ca</a> CAO's Office (819) 595-2002 Bylaw Enforcement Office 1-866-299-2002 SPCA de l'Outaouais



2005.pdf					(819) 243-2004
<b>Chicago, USA</b> <b>Pop. 2,853,114</b> <b>(2009)</b> (Ch 7-12)	“keep restraint” “sanitary shelter” (under “Cruelty to animals”)	Unspecified	Dead animals can be buried if less than 150lbs.		
<b>New York City, USA</b> <b>Pop. 8,363,710</b> <b>(2008)</b> (Title 24, Article 161)	“In coops and runaways” Coops shall be kept clean and “maintained so as not to become a nuisance”	Unspecified Roosters prohibited Permit required for keeping poultry for sale	No “escape of offensive odors” No slaughter		
<b>Seattle, USA</b> <b>Pop. 602,000</b> <b>(2009)</b> (Title 23, Subtitle III, Div.2, Ch 42-052)	Standard lot size (5000 sq. ft.), 1 extra chicken per 1000 sq. ft. “sanitary condition” (under “offenses relating to cruelty”	3 maximum (but more allowed on larger lots)	Feces must not be accumulated more than 24 hours. (under “offenses relating to safety and sanitation”) No slaughter		

## Appendix L6 Letter from Dr. David Walter-Toews, de-linking human illness and urban chickens

Department of Population Medicine

Ontario Veterinary College  
University of Guelph, Guelph, Ontario N1G 2W1

March 30, 2009

To whom it may concern:

As a veterinarian and an epidemiologist specializing in diseases people get from animals (zoonoses) through food, water, and various other means (insects, environment, direct contact), I know of no evidence linking human illness with keeping small urban flocks. In many parts of the world, urban agriculture provides a substantial portion of the food supply, and this is likely to increase in the future as more and more people move into cities and fossil fuel supplies dwindle.

It seems to me that many of the fears associated with having poultry in the city are based on antiquated notions of "going back" to the poverty and subsistence farming of 100 years ago. We now know a lot more about ecology and the careful managing of urban flocks, the positive impacts of proper composting of manure and dead animals, and have both vaccines and management tools

available that were not, perhaps, widely known at that time. There are of course known risks associated with large, intensively reared flocks, in which bacterial shedding and the spread of infection are facilitated.

My great frustration in teaching food safety has been that so few consumers have any realistic notion of where their food comes from or what benefits and risks are associated with different ways of rearing and distributing food. Hence they are vulnerable to a variety of charlatans selling "antibacterial soaps" and promoting sterile households. My hope would be that the rearing of poultry on a small scale within city limits would begin the process of redressing this profound ignorance. I would hope that these urban "farms" could serve as places for education and sharing of information.

The small risks involved are far outweighed by the social and ecological benefits. In fact, if we do not make room for these urban entrepreneurs, we risk losing a set of very important food-rearing skills that will enable us to better navigate the economic, climatic and environmental instability our society will face in the coming decades. Cities like New York and Vancouver have recognized this; when Waterloo approves this, we will be in good company.

As a resident of downtown Kitchener I would be pleased to see more small scale agriculture within the city limits, including poultry. I look forward to my city following in Waterloo's footsteps.

-Dr. David Waltner-Toews, Professor.

## M. Bees in Urban Areas

### Vision:

- A city where the keeping of bees is permitted in urban areas, and where urban apiculture (beekeeping) is actively encouraged.

### Policy Details:

It is recommended that:

The City of Ottawa recognizes the value of urban beekeeping and bee habitats by:

Promoting community groups educating the public about urban apiculture;  
Establishing beehives at one of more City of Ottawa facilities chosen in collaboration with beekeepers for their suitability to this purpose;  
Collaborating with the Community Gardening Network to educate the public about the value of pollinator gardens and to encourage pollinator gardens

### The Role of Businesses, Community Organizations, and Individuals – What You Can Do:

Learn more about the important role that bees play and the factors can sustain bee populations and those that make them vulnerable.  
Incorporate plant species that support the bee population in existing and new gardens.



### Rationale:

Bees are essential contributors to biodiversity in our ecosystems and are necessary to plant reproduction; in fact, insect pollination directly benefits more than three quarters of the worlds' crop yields<sup>235</sup>. Bees in particular provide integral ecosystem services as pollinators, with the domesticated European Honeybee (*Apis mellifera*) regarded as a prized pollinator due to its efficiency, behaviour, and population size<sup>236</sup>. Urban gardeners and farmers alike thus rely on honeybees for the majority of crop and flower pollination.

Canada has experienced an abnormal volume of colony deaths in recent years, which may be related

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<sup>235</sup> Klein, A, Vaissiere, B.E, Cane, J.H., Steffan-Dewenter, I., Cunningham, S.A., Kremen, C., and Tscharntke, T. "Importance of pollinators in changing landscapes for world crops". *Proceeds of the Royal Society of Biological Sciences*. 2007 Feb 7; 274 (1608): 303-313. <http://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/articles/PMC1702377/>.

<sup>236</sup> Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations. "The Importance of Bees in Nature". <ftp://ftp.fao.org/docrep/fao/012/i0842e/i0842e04.pdf>

to Colony Collapse Disorder (CCD), where bee “colonies rapidly and unexpectedly die”<sup>237</sup>. According to Saskatchewan Agriculture and Food, although “symptoms of CCD as described from the U.S. have not been diagnosed by professional apiculturists in Canada (...), experts remain extremely concerned about the state of honey bee health in Canada and are monitoring the situation with great care”<sup>238</sup>.

However, urban apiaries appear not to have been affected by CCD to the same extent as rural apiaries<sup>239</sup>. According to the Toronto Beekeepers Co-operative, “...*we have not been materially affected by the world's most significant current challenge to honeybee populations, that of Colony Collapse Disorder. Urban bees, not yet a part of the global crisis, provide a stable source of bees for the future. Keeping the knowledge of beekeeping alive is important to the future of the human species, for without healthy bees to cross pollinate plants we would have no food*”<sup>240</sup>. Urban beekeeping helps to offset threats to the local food system caused by CCD.

Studies have found that honeybees are healthier and produce more honey in urban settings, where fewer pesticides are sprayed and greater floral diversity exists<sup>241</sup>. As such, there is a growing movement across North America to consciously include apiaries within city boundaries. For example, the City of Vancouver hosts two beehives on the roof of City Hall and, in 2010, the Canadian Opera Company [installed two new hives on the roof](#) of its Four Seasons Centre for the Performing Arts in Toronto. Other instances have been noted in Paris, London, New York and Washington D.C. (the White House).

In 2009 the Ontario Bees Act was amended and regulations that limited *urban* beekeeping were written *out* of the new Act. The most recent version of the [Ontario Bees Act](#) no longer regulates the distance that hives must be kept from a property line – previously 30m - thus allowing for more urban apiaries. In major cities around the world, urban beehives are installed in order to strengthen the local ecology. There are currently no public/publically-supported apiculture projects in Ottawa.

Through good management practices, hobby beekeeping is a safe and suitable activity for residential areas and have many ecological, social, and economic benefits. For these reasons, municipal and provincial laws should not restrict the livelihood of hobby beekeeping. Instead, the City of Ottawa should encourage urban apiculture by supporting community groups that promote urban beekeeping and by adopting urban apiculture at City Hall.

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<sup>237</sup> Perrnal, S.F. “CPPA Statement on Colony Collapse Disorder”. *Saskatchewan Agriculture and Food*. Sept. 2007. <http://www.agriculture.gov.sk.ca/Default.aspx?DN=9c0fcb14-37d6-4d96-955a-9bb18a56f972>

<sup>238</sup> Ibid.

<sup>239</sup> Toronto Beekeepers Co-operative (n.d.) “A Short History of the Toronto Beekeepers Co-op.”, accessed online April 2011 at [http://www.torontobees.ca/index.php?option=com\\_content&view=article&id=1&Itemid=2](http://www.torontobees.ca/index.php?option=com_content&view=article&id=1&Itemid=2)

<sup>240</sup> Ibid.

<sup>241</sup> University of Worcester. “Honey bees find richer diversity of pollen in urban areas”. 17 Aug. 2010.

<http://www.worcester.ac.uk/discover/honey-bees-find-richer-diversity-of-pollen-in-urban-areas.html>.

Union Nationale de L'Apiculture Francaise. “L’abeille sentinelle de l’environnement”. Dec. 2005. <[www.unaf-apiculture.info](http://www.unaf-apiculture.info)>. p.8.

## Appendix M1 - Evidence / Precedent - HONEYBEES:

### Toronto

Starting with the municipally-supported organization [FoodShare](#), founded by then Toronto mayor Art Eggleton, experiments with urban hives were carried out at Foodshare's location at the convergence of the Don Valley Parkway and Gardiner Expressway in 2000. Toronto apiculture has since expanded to include a 40-member co-operative called the [Toronto Beekeeper's Co-operative](#), multiple community partners including [Evergreen Brickworks](#), Toronto Botanical Garden, and [Fairmont Royal York Hotel](#) (which has at least six hives, according to its website updated in 2010<sup>242</sup>), and the long-term goal of establishing a permanent "Honeybee Learning Centre." The promotion of ecological education around bee culture and urban ecology is critical to an informed and supportive public.

### Vancouver

As a component of its overall support for greater urban agricultural practices, the City of Vancouver amended the Health bylaw to allow for urban beekeeping whereby urban beekeeping "is considered to be part of a broader Urban Agriculture strategy under...[Vancouver's] food policy mandate<sup>243</sup>. The City of Vancouver [guidelines](#) include key recommendations, such as limiting the number of beehives per residential property to 2 and ensuring a 6 foot high fence or hedge surrounds the property to protect neighbours from 'swarming'. A tall fence forces the honeybees to fly up higher as soon as they depart the hive, thus minimizing the interaction between bees and pedestrians. Beekeepers must also register the apiary location in Vancouver with the BC Ministry of Agriculture and Lands<sup>244</sup>. The policy guidelines for urban bees in Vancouver has been included as Appendix L3.

In the spring of 2010 the City of Vancouver installed two beehives on the roof of City Hall. Bees are being tended to by a professional beekeeper. Beekeeping is one of the many things that the City is doing to demonstrate their commitment to developing a resilient local food practice.

### International

Around the world major cities are recognizing the value of urban beekeeping and acting accordingly. In New York City, Chicago, Paris, and London policies regarding urban apiaries have been amended to allow for more urban beehives.

- New York removed honeybees from the city's Health Code register of venomous insects and other prohibited animals following a unanimous vote by the board of health in 2010 and a citywide campaign<sup>245</sup>.
- Chicago is a leader in sustainable urban planning, with the roofs of both City Hall and the Chicago Cultural Centre acting housing its own bee hives<sup>246</sup>. City-supported urban apiaries harvest honey for both community programming such as educational workshops for schoolchildren, an employment program for high-needs groups, and fundraising for the arts, as well as for sales at

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<sup>242</sup> Fairmont Hotels & Resorts. "Fairmont Bees Back for Spring". 7 April, 2010. Accessed online February 2012 at: [www.fairmonth.com/en\\_fa/articles/recentnews/bees2010.htm](http://www.fairmonth.com/en_fa/articles/recentnews/bees2010.htm)

<sup>243</sup> City of Vancouver. "Policy Report: Social Development". 5 July, 2005. Accessed online February 2012 at <http://Vancouver.ca/ctyclerk/cclerk/20050721/documents/pe3.pdf>

<sup>244</sup> City of Vancouver, (2011). "Food Policy – Hobby Beekeeping (Urban Apiculture) in Vancouver," *Community Services Social Planning*, accessed online April 2011 at <http://vancouver.ca/commsvcs/socialplanning/initiatives/foodpolicy/projects/beekeeping.htm>

<sup>245</sup> A New York, NY non-profit organization provides information about the New York campaign to permit honeybees, and the resulting change to the Health Code. Accessed online February 2012 at: <http://www.justfood.org/food-justice/food-justice-archive>.

<sup>246</sup> Personal communication, Fred Davis, Four Seasons Centre for the Performing Arts Bees, Toronto, April 2011

the farmers market<sup>247 248</sup>.

- London's community group, [Capital Bee](#), has taken on the campaign for a more bee-friendly city as a component to the overall [Capital Growth](#) campaign, which aims to add 2,012 new food growing spaces to London by the year 2012. Capital Bee enjoys support from the Mayor of London and is funded by [London Food](#).
- Paris has over 300 recorded beehives that are situated around the city including the roof of the Opera Garnier<sup>249</sup>. The success of urban beekeeping is directly linked to the reduced levels of pesticides found in cities<sup>250</sup>; in an interview with the New York Times, the beekeeper for the Paris Opera House notes that colony decline in the country can be as high as 50% whereas urban hives typically experience a 0-5% colony decline<sup>251</sup>.

## Appendix M2: Quick facts on Honeybees

- Honeybees are social insects with a marked division of labour between the various castes of bees in a colony. A colony of honeybees includes a queen, drones and workers<sup>252</sup>.
- Honeybees are vegetarians. They gather nectar to produce honey and pollen for raising their brood<sup>253</sup>.
- While they are gathering nectar from plants, pollen grains are also transported on their bodies, leading to pollination of other plants<sup>254</sup>.
- The presence of honeybees in the city can increase harvests for backyard, street, rooftop and community gardens<sup>255</sup>.
- It is estimated that the pollination services provided by honeybees are often 60 to 100 times more valuable than the market price of honey<sup>256</sup>.
- Honeybees only sting when they or their nest is threatened. Wasps on the other hand, are carnivores and may sting as they hunt for food<sup>257</sup>.
- Bees generally do not visit picnics, barbecues and garbage cans. Yellow Jacket wasps and hornets are scavengers attracted to any area where food remnants can be found during the summer season<sup>258</sup>.

<sup>247</sup> City of Chicago. "Green Roofs". 2010. Accessed online February 2012 at:

[http://explorechicago.org/city/en/about\\_the\\_city/green\\_chicago/Green\\_Roofs\\_.htm](http://explorechicago.org/city/en/about_the_city/green_chicago/Green_Roofs_.htm).

<sup>248</sup> North Lawndale Employment Network. "Sweet beginnings: An Urban Honey Transitional Jobs Program for the Formerly Incarcerated". Nov. 2011. Accessed online February 2012 at: [www.nlen.org/programs/index.php](http://www.nlen.org/programs/index.php)

<sup>249</sup> Mairie de Paris. 'Les Abeilles Parisiennes'. 11 Nov. 2011. Accessed online February 2012 at : [www.paris.fr/loisirs/paris-au-vert/nature-et-biodiversite-les-abeilles-parisiennes/rub\\_9233\\_stand\\_68263\\_port\\_22522](http://www.paris.fr/loisirs/paris-au-vert/nature-et-biodiversite-les-abeilles-parisiennes/rub_9233_stand_68263_port_22522).

<sup>250</sup> Union Nationale de L'Apiculture Francaise. "L'abeille sentinelle de l'environnement". Dec. 2005. Accessed online February 2012 at: [www.unaf-apiculture.info](http://www.unaf-apiculture.info) p.8

<sup>251</sup> New York Times. (n.d.). "French Bees find a Haven in Paris," *New York Times*, accessed online April 2011 at

<http://www.nytimes.com/2008/10/01/health/01iht-parisbees.16613547.html>

<sup>252</sup> National Geographic. (2012) "Honeybees". Accessed online March 2012 at:

<http://animals.nationalgeographic.com/animals/bugs/honeybee/>

<sup>253</sup> Ibid.

<sup>254</sup> Canadian Agriculture Museum. (2012) "The Importance of Bees: Pollination". Accessed online March 2012 at:

<http://www.agriculture.technomuses.ca/english/bees/pollination/default.php>

<sup>255</sup> Hofer, Maria. (n.d.) "Create a Buzz in your Garden: Bring in the Bees". Accessed online March 2012 from:

<http://www.hgtv.com/landscaping/create-a-buzz-in-your-garden-bring-in-the-bees/index.html>

<sup>256</sup> City of Vancouver. (2009) "Food Policy – Hobby Beekeeping (Urban Apiculture) in Vancouver". Accessed online March 2012 at:

<http://vancouver.ca/commsvcs/socialplanning/initiatives/foodpolicy/projects/beekeeping.htm>

<sup>257</sup> United States Department of Agriculture. (2009). "Honey Bee Research: Why do Bees Sting?". Accessed online March 2012 from:

<http://www.ars.usda.gov/Research/docs.htm?docid=11067&page=8>

<sup>258</sup> Pollination Canada (n.d.) "Pollinator Profile: Yellow Jacket Wasp". Accessed online March 2012 from:

<http://www.seeds.ca/proj/poll/index.php?n=Yellow+Jacket+Profile>

## Appendix M3 – City of Vancouver Hobby Beekeeping Guidelines

The report to Vancouver City Council on Hobby Beekeeping (Urban Apiculture) can be reviewed here:

<http://www.city.vancouver.bc.ca/ctyclerk/cclerk/20050721/documents/pe3.pdf>

City of Vancouver February 2006 Hobby Beekeeping Page 2

City of Vancouver Planning - By-Law Administration Bulletins<sup>259</sup>

### HOBBY BEEKEEPING

*Authority - Director of Planning*

*Effective February 27, 2006*

In July 2005, the Director of Planning issued guidelines outlining good management practices for hobby beekeeping in residential areas of Vancouver.

Urban hobby beekeeping provides increased biodiversity and pollination for plants in backyard, community and public gardens. Cities in Europe and North America (including several municipalities in the Greater Vancouver Regional District) also support hobby beekeeping of honeybees within city limits. Through good management practices, hobby beekeeping is a safe and suitable activity for residential areas.

Beekeepers in Vancouver must register with the BC Ministry of Agriculture and Lands (see next page for contact information). The following municipal guidelines complement provincial standards and promote good management practices for beekeeping in residential areas.

1. It shall be the duty of every person on whose property bees are kept to adhere to good management practices and maintain bees in a condition that will reasonably prevent swarming and aggressive behaviour.
2. It shall be the responsibility of the person on whose property the bees are kept to provide adequate water for the bees to prevent bees from seeking water in neighbouring swimming pools, birdbaths, ponds or other community bodies of water.
3. Hobby Beekeeping is to be limited to:
  - (a) One and Two-Family Dwelling Districts (RS- and RT-); or
  - (b) Agricultural Districts (RA-1) on sites containing a one- or two-family dwelling; or
  - (c) A site containing a community garden; or
  - (d) A site where beekeeping will form part of an educational program.
4. A maximum of two (2) beehives per lot in One- and Two-Family Dwelling Districts (RS- and RT-) on a parcel of land less than 10,000 square feet.
5. A maximum of four (4) beehives per lot on a parcel of land with an area over 10,000 square feet.
6. Beehives are restricted to rear yards.
7. In order to ensure the appropriate height of honeybee flight path:
  - (a) A beehive will be situated 8 feet or more above ground level; or

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<sup>259</sup> City of Vancouver. "Hobby Beekeeping" 2005. Accessed online February 2012 at

<http://vancouver.ca/commsvcs/BYLAWS/bulletin/H005.pdf>



- (b) The beehive entrance will be directed away from the neighbouring property and situated behind a solid fence or hedge that is 6 feet in height running parallel to the property line; or
- (c) A beehive will be located a minimum of 25 feet away from the neighbouring property line.

## A Forum for Addressing Food Policy in Ottawa

### *N. A Food Policy Council for Ottawa*

#### **Vision:**

- A city with an ongoing and participatory process to create food policy for Ottawa that ensures collaboration among policy-makers and the public in identifying, prioritizing, researching, advocating for, and overseeing the implementation of food policies in Ottawa.

#### **Recommendation:**

This proposal recommends the establishment of an Ottawa Food Policy Council that would be charged with facilitating a coordinated approach to food policy issues in Ottawa, involving the participation of decision-makers and stakeholders from the broader Ottawa community.

The Terms of Reference that would guide the structure, membership and function of the Ottawa Food Policy Council (OFPC) will be determined by the Steering Committee of Food For All.

Proposed features of the Ottawa Food Policy Council include:

The OFPC will be housed within the community, and feature active and formal participation from diverse membership, including the City of Ottawa Councilors (representing urban and rural communities), connections to school boards, community organizations, the National Capital Commission, farmers, University researchers, food-related business owners, health experts, anti-poverty advocates, and others.

The OFPC will be mandated to research, develop and implement food-related policies in Ottawa; to monitor and analyze the food-security landscape in Ottawa; and to serve as a point of connection between Ottawa residents, concerned groups, and decision-makers in Ottawa. Working towards the implementation of the Food Action Plan will be a starting point for the Ottawa Food Policy Council.

#### **The Role of Businesses, Community Organizations, and Individuals – *What You Can Do:***

Learn more about food policy issues affecting your neighbourhood and your city, and stay involved.

Consider participating in the Ottawa Food Policy Council or a working group.

#### **Rationale:**

Food is a multidimensional issue. At the municipal level, the development and delivery of many policies and services directly and indirectly impact the production, distribution and consumption of food. These include zoning and by-laws, economic development, community programming and services, city and rural planning, poverty reduction, and social, cultural, economic and environmental sustainability. While food production was once considered an exclusively 'rural' issue and consumption considered a mostly 'urban' issue, those lines have been blurred with the rapid loss of farmland, increased rural-to-urban migration rates, and viable urban agricultural systems. Food security requires the involvement of the civil society sector - which includes non-profit community groups, environmental organizations, small and medium-sized food enterprises, municipal agencies,

health units, commodity organizations, and educational institutions - as well as multiple levels of government.

The realities in Ottawa:

From April 2009 to March 2010, 43,000 people in Ottawa visited a Food Bank every month, and 37% of these were children<sup>260</sup>.

Ottawa's School Breakfast program serves food to approximately 11,000 children in 146 schools every day<sup>261</sup>.

Ottawa has 14 lower income neighbourhoods with limited access to grocery stores. Five of these are rural neighbourhoods which are over 10km away from a grocery store<sup>262</sup>.

Interest and access to community gardening is developing rapidly; there are now 34 community gardens in Ottawa, and more are added each year.

Though many local farmers are engaged in growing for local consumption, barriers exist to getting local agricultural products into public institutions and the retail and restaurant sector. Agricultural lands, particularly those situated in or near suburban areas, are under pressure due to development. Many have already been lost as suburban neighbourhoods expand.

Despite a breadth of food-related activities and programming for food security in Ottawa and some municipal support for such activities, there is neither a comprehensive food security policy nor a framework for assessment of coordinated community interventions at the municipal level. The climate in Ottawa favours multi-stakeholder action on food policy and a clear need for this work has been identified. There exists the requisite expertise and capacity, and the community has the excitement and interest to participate actively in food policy issues.

Establishing a permanent, multi-stakeholder Food Policy Council in Ottawa will allow for timely, coordinated, and whole-system policy responses to food issues that relate to a broad spectrum of City of Ottawa and NCC operations, including: the Planning Committee; Finance and Economic Development Committee; Transportation Committee and Transit Commission; Community and Protective Services Committee; Agriculture and Rural Affairs Committee; and the Environment Committee. Corporate policy, organizational policy, and school board policy are also included within the scope of a Food Policy Council.

The Ottawa Food Policy Council would work to engage all members of the community in addressing food related issues of concern. The OFPC would reach out to the community to identify critical issues, perform research and analysis of policies, and work with the City and others to consider policy options that would address the issues raised. It would build relationships to help the City strengthen the food system. The OFPC would play a role in monitoring and evaluating policies, and act as a consulting body to the City and other major organizations and institutions such as the four school boards and relevant businesses. As previously noted, the OFPC would strive for broad participation from the community and to work in a partnership capacity with government.

In Ottawa, a food policy council would build upon local expertise, identified needs, and the increasing capacity and enthusiasm of community members, organizations, businesses, and others to develop a coordinated approach to food issues.

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<sup>260</sup> Ottawa Food Bank (2010). "Annual Report 2010", accessible online at <http://ottawafoodbank.ca/wp-content/uploads/2011/01/Ottawa-Food-Bank-Annual-Report-2010.pdf>

<sup>261</sup> See Ottawa School Breakfast Program, <http://education.ocri.ca/education/school-breakfast-program/>

<sup>262</sup> Ottawa Neighbourhood Study, 2011. The Ottawa Neighbourhood Study defines limited access to grocery stores as either no grocery store in the neighbourhood, or a distance of over a kilometre to the nearest grocery store.

## Appendix N1: The Role of Municipal Government in Food Issues

Municipalities have a role to play in food systems because of their intimate involvement in issues of sustainability (also referred to as 'quality of life') on the one hand and anti-hunger politics on the other<sup>263</sup>. Food policy involves a variety of municipal issues including environmental protection, public health, nutrition, anti-poverty, community capacity building, and economic development, which highlights the need for *governance capacity* in addressing food from a systems perspective. Therefore, "*analysis of city governance must foster attentiveness not only to governmental arrangements themselves, but equally to wider re-imaginings of cities that new social and environmental mandates such as food policy apply.*"<sup>264</sup> Food Policy Councils have a range of relationships with municipal governments, from being a branch of the City to being a not-for-profit organization. Even in municipalities where the City does not initiate the creation of such a body, community-driven food policy councils have played successful roles in cultivating food security at a municipal level<sup>265</sup>. A healthy food system contributes to the health of the citizens and the local economy.

Municipalities are engaged in food issues in multiple ways. They may:

- Engage with agricultural operations from food production to consumption;
- Set regulations for waste disposal. This is particularly important in livestock farming to prevent the pollution of waterways;
- Make information on food pricing and scarcity available to the public;
- Administer food programs;
- Facilitate growers' access to spaces designated for farmers markets;
- Oversee local food businesses; and
- Analyze how food issues affect housing, transportation, etc..<sup>266</sup>

However, despite the important role they play, municipalities have been slow to take on an active role in redeveloping local food<sup>267</sup> infrastructure, which has typically been left to NGOs and the private sector<sup>268</sup>. Some municipalities, however, are beginning to adopt food policies that work to improve local food infrastructure and address food systems planning in a move towards greater food security.

In 1982 in Knoxville, Tennessee, the first Food Policy Council (FPC) was founded as a response to two studies<sup>269</sup>. The first, conducted by faculty and students at the University of Tennessee, highlighted the idea of giving food planning the same weight as other issues in City planning. The second report was by Knoxville-Knox County Community Action Committee, and highlighted issues of food access in the inner city. Their research brought the food system to the attention of the city and led Mayor Randy Tyree to suggest the creation of a Food Policy Council.

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<sup>263</sup> Mendes, Wendy. (2008). "Implementing Social and Environmental Policies in Cities: The Case of Food Policy in Vancouver, Canada." *International Journal of Urban and Regional Research*, 32(4): 942-967.

<sup>264</sup> Ibid.

<sup>265</sup> Alethea Harper, Annie Shattuck, Eric Holt-Gimenez, Alison Alkon and Frances Lambrick. "Food Policy Councils: Lessons Learned." *Food First: Institute For Food and Development*, 2009:24

<sup>266</sup> Kameshwari Pothikuchi and Jerome L. Kaufman. "Placing the Food System on the Urban Agenda: The Role of Municipal Institutions in Food System Planning." *Agriculture and Human Values*. 16: (1999): 219

<sup>267</sup> Just Food defines Ottawa's local food region as including the City of Ottawa, and the Counties of: Prescott-Russell,; Stormont, Dundas & Glengarry; Leeds & Grenville; Lanark; Renfrew; Frontenac; and the Outaouais. Other terms used in reference to local food include '*the 100-mile diet*,' (eating within 100 miles of where the food was grown), '*food miles*' (to refer to how far food travels between farmer and eater), and '*foodsheds*' (taken from the concept of watersheds in terms of ecological health and sustainability).

<sup>268</sup> Tran, Jason, Liaison Officer, Ontario Agricultural College, *Personal communication April 2011*.

<sup>269</sup> Alethea Harper, Annie Shattuck, Eric Holt-Gimenez, Alison Alkon and Frances Lambrick. "Food Policy Councils: Lessons Learned." *Food First: Institute For Food and Development*, 2009:17

A Food Policy Council can play a critical role in terms of raising awareness in the community and liaising with the municipality, ensuring that food issues are given priority. Tennessee's FPC was able to improve the food served in school cafeterias, and ensured that every grocery store in the municipality was accessible<sup>270</sup>. The decades of work of some of the oldest FPCs provide examples of success and failures for new FPCs to learn from. There is a rising number of FPCs across North America, showing an increase in awareness of food issues by municipalities and their citizens. The successful work of other FPCs are a way for other cities and communities to learn more about healthy environments, food access, consumer health, and policies which will address these pressing issues.

### Food Policy in Ottawa

The City of Ottawa already plays an integral role in addressing food issues in Ottawa, including running the Byward and Parkdale Farmers' Markets, supporting the development of community gardens, and providing funding to community food programs and services. For example, the City of Ottawa invested \$869,083 in 2010 for food programs and services through their Community Funding envelope alone. This figure does not include City money spent on food at childcare facilities, long-term care facilities, shelters, and through other funding programs.

However, when twenty-eight nutrition and food programs were reviewed across Ottawa, fifteen of these organizations (54%) reported that they relied on short-term grants and private donations to carry out their work<sup>271</sup>. A coherent and consistent policy approach to food and food security for all residents would help to address funding sustainability, as well as enhancing and building upon the work that is already taking place.

Over the past several years community groups and organizations, farmers, businesses, individuals, schools, and community leaders have worked to develop and implement innovative food and farming programs, projects, and services in the Ottawa region. The collective knowledge and expertise regarding food and farming issues has grown substantially. Projects from labelling local food to creating food policy to training young farmers in organic farming are increasingly popular in the Ottawa area. The capacity of the community to participate in food policy and research has grown through food literacy and educational initiatives. Perhaps most importantly, there is a new level of interest and excitement amongst Ottawa residents to participate in food and farming activities and events – including food policy. Below are two examples of initiatives that have been engaging community residents in food policy:

#### Food for All (Just Food)

- A three-year project to create a food Action Plan for the Ottawa region and to build capacity of Ottawa residents to engage in the development of food policy proposals. Part of the Food for All project is a community food assessment module, Where's the Food?, which engages community members in assessing the level of food security (or insecurity) within a given neighbourhood.

#### People's Food Policy Project

- A project working to create a national dialogue on food issues and engage the public in the development of policies that broadly address the food system at a federal level.

## **Appendix N2: Food Policy Councils elsewhere in Canada**

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<sup>270</sup> Ibid.

<sup>271</sup> Courtney, K (2010) "Furthering Food Security in Ottawa," Accessed online March 7, 2011 at [http://foodforall/documents/Ottawa\\_-\\_Furthering\\_Food\\_Security\\_in\\_Ottawa.pdf](http://foodforall/documents/Ottawa_-_Furthering_Food_Security_in_Ottawa.pdf)

There are a growing number of food policy councils in Canadian municipalities. Associated governance models are generally broad coalitions with varying degrees of municipal support and representation. The Toronto and Vancouver Food Policy Councils are unique in that they are *embedded* within the municipal structure, rather than operating as a separate entity or as an arms-length body of a city council.

### Vancouver Food Policy Council

In 2003, Vancouver City Council passed a motion to create 'a just and sustainable food system'<sup>272</sup>. A Food Policy Task Force was assembled in order to recognize and build upon the community's experience and expertise. The goal of the Task Force was to enhance the coordination of current food programs identified in the [Food Action Plan](#), as well as to integrate food issues into existing policy frameworks and programs.

A key event in the embedding of Food Policy *within* the City of Vancouver was the adoption of the Food Action Plan (including recommendations around staffing and budgeting), which signalled an official acknowledgment of the importance of food issues to the community. Without this acknowledgement from the City, it is thought that advancements of the food policy agenda would have been more limited.<sup>273</sup>

The Vancouver Food Policy Council was not created to become a service provider; instead its role is to act as a facilitator and a coordinating body in order to bring community members together in ways that have little-to-no cost. Additionally, it made sense to house a food council at the municipal level since no other level of government could be identified as a natural 'home', and since the City of Vancouver already contributed to programs and services related to food (ie. community gardens, farmers' markets, community development, etc.).

Additionally, the Vancouver Food Policy Council is unique in its support (approval, funding, resources, etc.) of two assigned staff positions as per the Food Action Plan's recommendations. The first is a full-time Food Policy Coordinator and the second was a temporary two-year Food System's Planner. These staff positions are important in order to embed food issues within the institution, and in reducing resistance to the integration of food policies into regulatory and legal frameworks. Although there was tension around the reporting structure of the new food-focused staff members, the lateral lines of communication and flexible teams that have been created and disassembled for different tasks has established a strong network of interdependent allies both within and outside of the Food Policy Council<sup>274 275</sup>. Additionally, this staffing model has been successful largely due to the valuing of 'experiential community knowledge' rather than relying exclusively on codified 'expert' knowledge.<sup>276</sup>

### Toronto Food Policy Council<sup>277</sup>

Similar to Vancouver, the Toronto Food Policy Council (TFPC) is *embedded* into the local

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<sup>272</sup> City of Vancouver. Policy Report, November 20, 2003". Accessed online March 2012 from:

<http://vancouver.ca/ctyclerk/cclerk/20031209/rr1.htm>

<sup>273</sup> Mendes, Wendy. (2008). "Implementing Social and Environmental Policies in Cities: The Case of Food Policy in Vancouver, Canada." *International Journal of Urban and Regional Research*, 32(4): 942-967.

<sup>274</sup> Ibid. page 957

<sup>275</sup> For further information on how policy making systems can be built on themes of integrated responsibilities and activities, emphasis on macro-policy, and trans-disciplinary policy development and the proximity of policy-makers to diverse groups seeking resolutions to food issues, see: MacRae, Rod. (1999) "Not just what, but how: Creating agricultural sustainability and food security by changing Canada's agricultural policy making process". *Agriculture and Human Values* 16(2): 187-202.

<sup>276</sup> Ibid. page 960.

<sup>277</sup> City of Toronto. Toronto Food Policy Council. Website accessed online March 2012 from: <http://www.toronto.ca/health/tfpc/index.htm>

government, but as a sub-committee of the Toronto Board of Health rather than a part of the social planning committee, as is the case in Vancouver. The TFPC was created by the City of Toronto in 1991 to act as an advisory council on food issues to the municipal government as a whole. The direct involvement of Councillors on the TFPC and the provision of City staff for working group projects make the TFPC accountable to the municipal government. The Councillor on the TFPC who represents the Toronto Board of Health (TBH) must submit an annual report to the TBH as well as speak on its behalf on the TFPC. This relationship allows for the TFPC to have access to expertise and decision-makers but also ensures it does gravitate away from the goals and priorities of the City of Toronto. Membership of the TFPC is comprised of City councillors alongside volunteer representatives from consumer, business, farm, labour, multicultural, anti-hunger advocacy, faith, and community development groups.<sup>278</sup> Any paid staff members of the TFPC report directly to Toronto Public Health, although staffing and budget resources for the TFPC are modest.

The TFPC has no authority to pass laws. Instead, its function is to raise the awareness of food-related issues on the municipal agenda in order to advance local food security and food policy development. Advocacy work is conducted at the municipal, provincial and federal level and involves hunger action, health, agricultural land reserve and urban planning, economic development, waste recovery, community gardens, capacity building and community education<sup>279</sup>.

#### Other Canadian Food Policy Councils

According to Canadian food policy researcher Rebecca Schiff, there are a number of councils, coalitions, committees and networks at the municipal and regional level across North America that focus on food issues in their community<sup>280</sup>. Schiff explains that increasingly, one of the solutions to food issues faced by communities has been the creation of a Food Policy Council to raise awareness within the community, cooperate with all sectors of society and work to change food policies at the local level<sup>281</sup>. These organizations may be embedded in local governments (as is the case with Vancouver and Toronto), operate as a non-profit, or exist as a hybrid between community and government organizations. Further examples of Food Policy Councils in operation in Canada include:

[Vancouver Food Policy Council](#)

[Kamloops Food Policy Council](#)

Quesnel Food Policy Council

[Calgary Food Policy Council](#)

[Winnipeg Food Policy Council](#)

[Toronto Food Policy Council & Toronto Youth Food Policy Council](#)

[Waterloo Region Food Systems Roundtable](#)

Rainy River Valley Food Policy Council

Halton Food Council

Food-related coalitions and networks that address food policy as a part of their overall work include the following Canadian examples:

[North Thompson Valley Food Coalition](#)

South Okanagan & Similkameen *Food Coalition*

[Haliburton Highlands Local Food Coalition](#)

[Just Food Edmonton](#)

[Grand Prairie Food Security Network](#)

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<sup>278</sup> Ibid. "How We Work"

<sup>279</sup> Ibid. "Toronto Food Policy Council Terms of Reference"

<sup>280</sup> Rebecca Schiff. "Food Policy Councils: An Examination of Organizational Structure, Process and Contribution to Alternative Food Movements." Institute for Sustainability and Technology Policy. Murdoch University, Western Australia. February 2009: 8-9

<sup>281</sup> Ibid.



[Saskatoon Food Coalition](#)

Prince Albert Food Coalition

[Kaslo Food Security Project](#)

[Shuswap Food Action](#)

[\*Thunder Bay Food Action Network\*](#)

[Food Security Research Network](#)

[Just Food Ottawa](#)

[Sudbury Food Connections Network](#)

Guelph Wellington Food Round Table Policy working group