

Community Food Security Coalition Recommendations for Food Systems Policy in Seattle



Commissioned by the
Seattle City Council

Submitted by
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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

INTRODUCTION AND BACKGROUND

The writing of this report has taken place within the context of a growing national movement for a more sustainable, equitable and healthy food system. Nowhere has the growth of this movement been more evident than in the rapidly expanding number of municipalities developing food policies. Some cities, such as Toronto, London, New York, Minneapolis, and Portland, Oregon, have developed – or are in the process of developing - comprehensive food system plans. New York City and Baltimore have hired “food czars” to oversee their cities’ food policy efforts. Over 100 states, counties, and cities now have food policy councils - public/private stakeholder bodies that advise the local government on food policy matters. Other jurisdictions have taken on the food system issue in a more piecemeal approach. For example, Chicago, Detroit, and Philadelphia have implemented policies to attract supermarkets to underserved communities. In Kansas City, Memphis, Seattle, Detroit, and Cleveland, local governments have changed zoning regulations and other laws to support urban farming. Cleveland, Santa Monica, California, and Woodbury County, Iowa have all developed policies to encourage procurement of food for city events from local and regional producers.

CONTEXT

This report is presented to the Seattle Department of Neighborhoods by the Community Food Security Coalition. These recommendations for next steps on food systems policy take into account national examples and reflect local knowledge of efforts already underway. Before the city executes an implementation workplan, these recommendations will go through a public process so that the broader group of people working on these issues in Seattle can provide input on their top priorities for food systems and any missing topics in the plan, and share how best to engage and partner with organizations and agencies on steps for implementation.

The City will then take this public input and determine its short-term, medium-term, and long-term implementation strategy.

DEFINITION OF FOOD SYSTEMS

A food system is the set of economic activities that encompasses production, transformation (processing, packaging, labeling), distribution (wholesaling, storage, transportation), access (gardens, retail, institutional food service, emergency food programs), consumption, and waste management related to food. Given its scope, a region’s food system is a prime driver of the health of a region’s economy, land use, environment, communities, and residents. It touches upon every household, every community, and virtually

every city agency. Food is as vital a public need as water, power, transportation, or housing, yet has been largely invisible from municipal policy considerations as such. Instead it has been embedded within the policy and programmatic initiatives of numerous city departments. Making food systems more visible, the city and its partners seek to enhance the ability to make informed policy choices that shape the economic, social, cultural, and environmental fabric of the city and the surrounding region. Similarly, food is at the crossroads between economics, culture, community and health. By addressing food system policy, the city can address many of the existing problems that it is concerned with, and help it to meet its goals. These can include job creation, community building, hunger elimination, and improvement of the local and global environment.

RESEARCH PROCESS

During a 14-month period, the authors worked closely with City of Seattle staff to develop this document. The research process included:

- Review of written reports and policies from within City government and by academics and advocates.
- Review of food policies and reports from other jurisdictions.
- In-person or phone interviews with staff from nine City departments, the Seattle/King County Public Health Department, the Mayor, City Council members and staff, and Seattle advocates.
- Preparation of various drafts with comments submitted by city staff.

Existing Agencies

The authors interviewed and reviewed documents from the following agencies:

- Seattle Department of Neighborhoods (DON)
- Human Services Department (HSD)
- Department of Transportation (SDOT)
- Department of Planning and Development (DPD)
- Office of Emergency Management (OEM)
- Office of Sustainability and the Environment (OSE)
- Seattle Public Utilities (SPU)
- Department of Parks and Recreation (DPR)
- Office of Economic Development (OED)
- Public Health Department of Seattle/King County (PHSKC)

Each of these agencies was found to have substantial involvement with the food system through their policies, programs and regulations. Similarly, substantial opportunities for further coordination with other agencies and with the public to maximize their effectiveness and build synergies was found across the board among all city departments interviewed.

FRAMEWORK FOR ACTION

Seattle's Unique Position

Seattle has been at the forefront of sustainable food systems issues for the past 30 to 40 years. Seattle has enjoyed the leadership of numerous private and public entities, such as the P-Patch Community Gardening Program, Puget Consumers Cooperative, and Pike Place Market, that have institutionalized sustainable foods as a hallmark of the city's identity. These institutions are grounded in the regional bounty that characterizes the Puget Sound: rich soils and mild climates, productive farmers, and an abundance of seafood



Photo: Tammy Morales

throughout the area. Seattle's human capital is equally as important as its natural capital for its leadership role on food systems issues. Seattle residents and businesses are largely invested in smart growth and sustainable development approaches that improve the quality of life in the region while protecting the environment. As a result, city government has often played a leadership role in moving forward key concerns in which food is a major component.

Given this unique wealth, **the City of Seattle needs to act to preserve and protect its local and regional foodshed.** The term "foodshed" is similar to the concept of a "watershed." While a watershed refers to a geographic area through which water flows downhill to supply a lake, ocean or river, a "foodshed" encompasses the physical space through which food flows to supply a particular community. If we consider this term in its broadest aspects, it can also refer to the physical, social and cultural infrastructure that brings food from farm to table. While regional foodshed protection encompasses regional land use management as a means to protect farmland and food production, it also includes a set of strategies that better connect Seattleites with their sources of food.¹

Recommended Principles for Seattle Food Systems Policy

The recommendations contained herein include a series of policy and programmatic changes to the activities of Seattle government

to help it protect and preserve its foodshed--similar in concept to a watershed, and referring to the physical, social, and cultural infrastructure that brings food from farm to table-- as a means for developing a more secure and sustainable food system. These recommendations for foodshed preservation refer to both the way City agencies coordinate with each other as well as with external stakeholders. The recommendations embody three principles:

- **The primacy of community/city partnerships.** Food security is not the domain of any one sector, but requires the collaboration of the private, public, and non-profit realms. The City has an important role to convene, catalyze, coordinate and inspire action by non-public entities.
- **Food policy must be made visible, and a tangible part of what the City does on a daily basis.** By keeping it hidden, the synergies and potential of a coherent and visible food policy remain latent. Conversely, for this Initiative to be successful, the places where city policy and programs interface with the food system must be made visible and coordinated toward a common goal. Food policy must become institutionalized as a basic element of city government, just as transportation, community development, and parks are currently.
- **Real change requires a comprehensive systemic approach.** The actions to be described below reinforce each other and require institutional coordination.

Recommended Priorities and Actions for Seattle Food Systems Policy

See the summary of recommendations (page 37) for strategies that will fulfill these goals.

1. **Enhance Inter-governmental Coordination on Food System Related Matters**
2. **Support Healthy and Sustainable Food Systems through City Policy**
3. **Support Urban Agriculture**
4. **Increase Seattle Residents Knowledge of Local Food Resources**
5. **Further Food-Related Economic Development Opportunities**
6. **Reduce Seattle Residents' Hunger and Increase Food Security**

² In Seattle, this concept of foodshed has particular relevance given the City's history in land ownership and management of the Cedar River watershed.

CONCLUSION

The food system operates at the crossroads of economy, community, and health. It is the Community Food Security Coalition's (CFSC) belief that the City of Seattle would benefit from developing a more coordinated and robust set of programs and policies that acknowledges the importance of this sector to the vibrancy of Seattle's neighborhoods, its residents' well-being, and to the health of the Puget Sound region's environment.

This report recommends a framework and series of actions that CFSC believes will help Seattle become a more economically vibrant, environmentally sustainable, and equitable city through preserving and protecting its foodshed. By proactively developing policies and priorities in this vital arena, the City of Seattle will be better situated to meet its existing goals throughout virtually all departments, as well as to be prepared to take advantage of future opportunities as they arise.

GLOSSARY OF TERMS

CITY OF SEATTLE AGENCIES

DON	Department of Neighborhoods
DPD	Department of Planning and Development
DPR	Department of Parks and Recreation
HSD	Human Services Department
OED	Office of Economic Development
OEM	Office of Emergency Management
OSE	Office of Sustainability and Environment
PHSKC	Public Health Seattle King County
SDOT	Seattle Department of Transportation
SFD	Seattle Fire Department
SPU	Seattle Public Utilities

OTHER AGENCIES

PSRC	Puget Sound Regional Council
USDA	United States Department of Agriculture
WSDA	Washington State Department of Agriculture
WSU	Washington State University

OTHER TERMS

CPPW	Communities Putting Prevention to Work (administered by Center for Disease Control)
EBT	Electronic Benefits Transfer (debit card for food stamps)
FMNP	Farmers Market Nutrition Program (administered by USDA)
FPC	Food Policy Council
IDT	Inter-departmental Team
MOA	Memorandum of Agreement
NGO	Non-Governmental Organization (Non-profit organization)
SES	Socio-economic Status
SNAP	Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (food stamps)
VMT	Vehicle Miles Traveled
WIC	Women, Infants and Children (administered by USDA)

CHAPTER I.

Introduction to Food Systems

REPORT CONTEXT

This report has been undertaken to provide a framework for implementing the goals to foster a secure and sustainable food system, as laid out in the Local Food Action Initiative, passed by Seattle City Council on April 28, 2008. The Community Food Security Coalition was hired by the Seattle Department of Neighborhoods to provide an action plan for these goals. This document provides a series of recommended objectives and strategies that provide both a broad framework for action as well as a set of individual activities that flesh out that framework.

WHAT IS A FOOD SYSTEM

A food system is the set of economic activities that encompasses production, transformation (processing, packaging, labeling), distribution (wholesaling, storage, transportation), access (gardens, retail, institutional food service, emergency food programs), consumption, and waste management related to food. Taken a step further, a sustainable food system exists when production, transformation, distribution, access, consumption, and waste management are integrated and related practices regenerate rather than degrade natural resources, are socially just and accessible, and support the development of local communities and economies.

Given its scope, a region's food system is a prime driver of the health of a region's economy, land use, environment, communities, and residents. It touches upon every household, every community, and virtually every city agency. Food is as vital a public need as water, power, transportation, or housing, yet has been largely invisible from municipal policy considerations as such. Instead it has been embedded within the policy and programmatic initiatives of numerous city departments. Making food systems more visible, the City and its partners seek to enhance the ability to make informed policy choices that shape the economic, social, cultural, and environmental fabric of the city and the surrounding region.

HISTORY OF FOOD SYSTEMS WORK IN SEATTLE

The Pacific Northwest, and particularly Seattle, has been at the forefront of sustainable food systems issues for the past 30 to 40 years. Seattle has enjoyed the leadership of numerous private and public entities that have institutionalized sustainable foods as a hallmark of the city's identity. For example, the P-Patch Community Gardening Program is widely considered one of the nation's most successful community gardening programs in existence. The Puget Consumer Cooperative (PCC) is the nation's largest food coopera-

tive. The Tilth organizations (Seattle Tilth and Tilth Producers of Washington) have made great strides in promoting sustainable agriculture and organic gardening throughout the region. Pike Place Market is world famous, and attracts substantial tourist revenues to downtown.



Because of the long tradition of citizen engagement in the political process, city government has been staffed by forward thinking and progressive individuals. Seattle residents and businesses are largely invested in smart growth. And sustainable development approaches that improve the quality of life in the region while protecting the environment. As a result, city government has often played a leadership role in moving forward key concerns in which food is a major component, such as the Climate Action plan. In recent years, sustainable food systems work was galvanized by the 2002 Community Food Security conference held at the Seattle Center. This event brought together over 500 persons from across the region and the country. It catalyzed new relationships among NGO representatives, which in turn led to the eventual creation of the Acting Food Policy Council, and increased local attention to food system and food security issues. The Acting Food Policy Council was established in 2006 in response to an expressed community need for a comprehensive vision to address food security and farmer viability issues. In April 2008, the Seattle City Council passed a Local Food Action Initiative, recommending a series of steps to reduce hunger and encourage the production and consumption of more locally and organically grown food in Seattle. In November 2008, the voters of Seattle approved a Parks and Open Space Levy that provides \$2 million specifically for the development of P-Patch community gardens. In addition, the Levy sets aside an additional \$15 million of opportunity funds for community groups to apply for, which includes a call for community gardening efforts. The first round of project applications was sought in the first quarter of 2010. The Acting Food Policy Council's work has led to the release of several briefing papers and in partnership with the University of

Washington, The Sound Food Report. The Puget Sound Regional Council has now formed² an official Regional Food Policy Council. The publishing of this document, along with the public input process and a future implementation workplan, will form the next steps in Seattle's food policy.

BENEFITS AND CHALLENGES WITH THE FOOD SYSTEM

Food is a topic that is relatively new to municipal government yet is vital and basic to every city residents' needs. City planners and policymakers have largely ignored food systems as a policy arena because of the perception that food exists in the private sector's sphere of interests or in the federal government's portfolio of rural and agriculture issues. When cities have deliberately engaged in food policy, it has been often tied to hunger relief. Yet, interest in food systems from an urban policymaking perspective has increased dramatically over the past five years. Policymakers and planners have come to recognize that a) the food system is broken in many ways; b) that the fractures in the food system affect urban jurisdictions' core set of interests; and c) that the food system holds the key to address many of urban areas' thorniest problems. Food systems as a policy area offers a new model for the way policy is organized at the municipal level. Instead of being stovepiped in individual departments, it requires an inter-departmental focus. It is not just social, cultural, economic or political, but all of these approaches- and more- intertwined. Food security cannot be solved by government alone, but requires a complex partnership of public, private, and non-profit interests working together. Food is an enormously powerful vehicle for social change, and for uniting diverse ethnicities and generations. The aim of this report is to show in detailed fashion how food can be help the city meet the goals to which it is already committed.

Following is a brief description of the challenges associated with the food system nationally and in Seattle, combined with the promise of a food policy approach.

HEALTH

Individual, family and community food security is fundamental to strong families and healthy communities. Hungry people cannot meet their full potential in learning, working, and enjoying life. Because of the recession, the number of people receiving SNAP (food stamp) benefits has increased 43% from 28 million to 40 million persons from April 2008 to April 2010.²

Seattle Fact:

- Up to 11% of adults in Seattle ran out of food in 2007, and did not have money to buy more.³

Paradoxically, hunger and obesity can co-exist in many individu-

als. The eating patterns that characterize food insecure persons has some correlation to weight increases. Hunger is in many ways the flipside of the same coin as obesity: the product of a food system in which low nutrient, high calorie food is cheaper than high nutrient, low calorie foods. Access to healthy food- as well as price, custom and other factors contributes to low-income and people of color incurring disproportionate rates of diet-related diseases such as diabetes, heart disease, and obesity.

King County Facts

- In 2006, the incidence of obesity in King County was 55% as compared to 61% in Washington State. Washington State had the 28th highest rate of obesity in the US.⁴
- In King County, the prevalence of diabetes is 9.1% for people with incomes under \$15,000 while 3.6% for those with incomes over \$50,000. It is also 10.1% for African Americans and 5.1% for Whites.⁵
- Comparison of health planning districts reveals a prevalence of diabetes in NE Seattle of 3.4%, but 8.0% in SE Seattle.⁶
- In King County, African Americans have a death rate from diabetes 3.3 times higher than whites and 26% higher than the average rate for African Americans in the United States.⁷
- The gap in the diabetes death rate between African Americans and whites increased during the 1990s and remains high.⁸

COST OF DIABETES IN KING COUNTY, 2006⁹	
Direct	\$715,000,000
Indirect	\$310,000,000
Total	\$1,025,000,000

² Food Resource and Action Center. Food Stamp Participation Tables. Retrieved August 17, 2010. <http://frac.org/reports-and-resources/snapfood-stamp-program-participation-data-2009/snapfood-stamp-past-data-2008/>

³ Bjorn, A et. al., (2008, May) Mapping Food Insecurity and Access in Seattle and King County, p.1

⁴ Washington Department of Health. King County Profile of Behavioral Risks, 2006. Retrieved August 18, 2010. http://www.doh.wa.gov/cfh/nutritionpa/facts_and_figures/county_data/2006/King.pdf

⁵ King County Department of Health. Diabetes Prevalence. Retrieved May 15, 2010. <http://www.kingcounty.gov/healthservices/health/data/chi/health/DiabetesPrevalence.aspx>.

⁶ Ibid

⁷ King County Public Health Department. (2007, April). Public Health Data Watch, Vol. 9, No. 1, Page 1. April 2007.

⁸ King County Public Health Department. (2007, April). Public Health Data Watch, Vol. 9, No. 1, Page 1. April 2007.

⁹ Ibid, p. 3

One important reason why many poor families have poor diets is because they lack access to places such as grocery stores and farmers markets that sell quality, nutritious foods at affordable prices. This is no different in some parts of Seattle.¹⁰ Families in these communities are forced to make difficult choices about their food purchases because of this “grocery gap,” or disparity in access to healthy food, along with income and time constraints that result from poverty. Maps developed from research in Seattle show neighborhoods with high food insecurity and a lack of grocery stores.¹¹ These neighborhoods are primarily downtown and in southern Seattle, in racially and ethnically diverse lower-income neighborhoods. Health care reform advocates are looking to prevention-based approaches, such as encouraging healthy eating and physical activity, as a way to reduce the spiraling costs of health care, especially as related to diet-related diseases, such as obesity and diabetes. Promisingly, research from North Carolina indicates the incidence of lower rates of obesity and overweight in neighborhoods where supermarkets offering healthful foods are present.¹²

COUNTY ¹⁶	NUMBER OF FARMS	TOTAL FARMLAND ACREAGE	TOTAL VALUE OF PRODUCTION
King	1790	49,000	\$127,000,000
Skagit	1215	109,000	\$256,000,000
Snohomish	1670	77,000	\$126,000,000
Total for Region	4675	235,000	\$509,000,000

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

The food system is one the largest sources of employment in the nation from production to waste management. Food production, processing and retailing can provide large numbers of living wage jobs, often as entry-level positions. The food system can provide substantial opportunities for entrepreneurial-based food manufacturing and processing companies.

King County Fact

- The food industry encompasses 5400 firms, 118,000 jobs, 1790 farms in King County and \$3.1 billion of annual payroll.¹³

This is slightly more than 10% of all jobs.¹⁴ (1,122,689) in King County. With regards to agricultural production, King, Snohomish and Skagit counties comprise a significant number of farms, and agricultural production (2007).¹⁵

By way of comparison, this compares quite favorably to other SMSAs except for those in California.¹⁷ As Vicki Sonntag, Ken Meier, and Tammy Morales indicated in their report to Seattle City Council on April 20, 2010, the local food system is an important

economic driver for the state and the region. They noted that “the rising demand for local food points to a growing sector with great potential,” and that “Food-related entrepreneurial activity is up, particularly around community-based distribution and processing.” Shifts in healthier eating patterns would drive up demand for local produce, but additional farmland is needed to meet current demand. King County’s local food economy is rapidly growing.¹⁸

King County Fact

- Direct sales from King County farms has gone up 15% per year from 2002-2007, and King County farmers meet 12% of the county’s vegetable demand of \$122 million annually.¹⁹

At the neighborhood level, supermarkets can bring extensive benefits to the communities in which they locate. Research by The Reinvestment Fund has found that a supermarket opening in a low-income neighborhood boosted nearby home values by \$1,500

(on an average \$50,000 house). “New supermarket(s) can have an economic impact by increasing the number and quality of jobs in the community, increasing overall economic activity in the neigh-

¹⁰ Bjorn, p.1

¹¹ Bjorn, p. 10

¹² Morland, Kimberly (2002). Neighborhood Characteristics Associated with the Location of Food Stores and food service places. American Journal of Preventive Medicine, v.22 Issue 1, pp. 23-29, January 2002

¹³ Sonntag, V & Morales, T. (2010, April). Economic Opportunities for a Regional Food System. Presented to Seattle City Council Committee on Regional Development and Sustainability. April 20, 2010

¹⁴ Bureau of Labor Statistics, County Employment and Wages in Washington, Third Quarter 2009. Retrieved August 18, 2010. www.bls.gov/to9/qcewwa.htm

¹⁵ USDA Agricultural Census, (2007) Retrieved August 18, 2010. <http://www.agcensus.usda.gov>.

¹⁶ Ibid

¹⁷ USDA Agricultural Census, (2007) Retrieved August 18, 2010. <http://www.agcensus.usda.gov>.

¹⁸ Sonntag & Morales

¹⁹ Ibid

²⁰ The Reinvestment Fund. Reinvestment Brief Issue 4 Retrieved August 18, 2010. <http://www.trfund.com/resource/downloads/policypubs/supermarkets.pdf>

borhood and region, and generating additional tax revenues at the both the state and local levels.²⁰ A study of a supermarket in the Philadelphia area shows that total earnings increase by over \$12 million at the county level, creating 660 new jobs, and \$540,000 in total local tax revenue.

METROPOLITAN AREA	NUMBER OF FARMS	TOTAL FARMLAND ACREAGE	TOTAL VALUE OF PRODUCTION
Riverside, CA	3463	514,234	1,012,041,000
San Bernardino, CA	1405	514,234	743,661,000
San Diego, CA	6687	303,889	1,054,182,000
Saint Louis, MO	276	32,292	23,792,000
Minneapolis, MN	582	66,558	\$51,428,000

Similarly, Vicki Been and Ioan Voicu of the New York School of Law published a study entitled *The Effect of Community Gardens on Neighboring Property Values* found... “that community gardens have significant positive effects on surrounding property values in all neighborhoods, and that those effects are substantial in the poorest of host neighborhoods (raising neighboring property values by as much as 9.5 percentage points within five years of the garden’s opening) should help local governments make sounder decisions about whether (and how much) to invest in (or encourage private investment in) community gardens and other green spaces. Such investments have a sizeable payoff for the surrounding community, and ultimately for the city itself, as it realizes additional property tax revenues from the neighborhood. Our findings also will help local governments considering whether to use tax increment financing (TIF) to estimate the potential benefits of investments in urban parks and gardens. Our results show that such gardens can lead to increases in tax revenues of around \$750,000 per garden over a 20-year period. Finally, local governments may use our results to justify the imposition of impact fees to finance the provision of gardens or urban parks, by showing the benefits the developers’ properties will receive as a result of proximity to such spaces.”²¹

ENVIRONMENT

The food system causes enormous environmental impacts, including water and air contamination, habitat loss, soil depletion, pesticide poisonings of consumers, farmworkers, and animals, as well as greenhouse gas emissions. Today’s food system is energy intensive and inefficient, using roughly eight calories of energy to produce one calorie of food. Growing, processing, and delivering the food consumed by a family of four requires more than 930 gallons of gasoline, or about the same amount used to fuel the family’s cars.²²

The food system causes roughly one third of the greenhouse gases responsible for climate change.²³ Yet a number of practices recom-

mended in this report can mitigate the food system’s impact on global warming. These include buying food that has been produced locally with ecological practices and with minimal packaging. It also includes growing your own food, increasing home and institutional composting, and shopping by bike or foot instead of by car.

Waste from the food system clogs up landfills or contaminates the air. To address this issue, Seattle Public Utilities (SPU) has invested in a food recovery program to divert edible food to programs that serve the hungry.

Seattle Fact

- Roughly 25% of Seattle’s waste is food related.²⁴

Overall food recovery equipment investment by SPU has been \$342,554. SPU projects that 27,771 tons will be diverted over 10 years, with an avoided disposal cost of \$1,153,837. This results in a 13% annual return on investment. By way of comparison, expert suggest that companies usually need a 10-14% ROI in order to fund future growth.²⁵ In addition, the value of the diverted food going into the emergency food system is \$65,313,000. Clearly, the City can save money, protect the environment, and help the impoverished by simple solutions such as this.

²¹ Been, V. & Voicu, I. (2007, June) *The Effect of Community Gardens on Neighboring Property Values* in NYU Law and Economics Research Paper No 06-09. Retrieved August 19, 2010 http://papers.ssrn.com/sol3/papers.cfm?abstract_id=889113

²² American Planning Association (2007). *Policy Guide on Community and Regional Food Planning*. p. 3

²³ Lappe, Anna. (2010) *Diet for a Hot Planet* Bloomsbury Press

²⁴ Garrett, Steven et al. (2006, June) *Sound Food Report: A Report Prepared for the City of Seattle*. University of Washington, June 20, 2006 p.7 Retrieved August 18, 2010 at http://faculty.washington.edu/bborn/Sound_Food_Report2.pdf

²⁵ Reference for Business, Retrieved May 15, 2010. www.referenceforbusiness.com/small/Equ-inc/Financial-ratios.html

RESEARCH PROCESS

The research process encompassed the following steps:

- 1) **Review of background materials sent to us from city staff and Acting Food Policy Council members.** We also examined reports and other information from other municipalities, such as Portland, London, Minneapolis, Cleveland, San Francisco, and New York, about food system-related policies to give us a touchstone about possible policy actions the City of Seattle might take.
- 2) **In-person or phone interviews with City staff, Seattle/King County Health Department staff, Seattle Councilman Richard Conlin and staff, P-Patch Trust and members of the Acting Food Policy Council.** We met with representatives of the following city departments/offices: Seattle Department of Transportation, Office of Economic Development, Seattle Department of Neighborhoods, Office of Planning and Management, Department of Planning and Development, Human and Services Division, Office of Sustainability and the Environment, Seattle Public Utilities, and Department of Executive Administration.



Photo: Tammy Morales

- 5) **Report revisions.** Following the Mayoral election in November 2010, this report was revised to reflect the priorities of the new Mayor. A meeting was held with Mayor McGinn and City Council President Conlin in June, 2010 to gain their input. Additional research was completed through review of city documents, conversations with community stakeholders, and new policies from other municipalities.

- 3) **Analysis of data provided with an eye toward developing tangible policy recommendations.** During this phase, we compared the policy approaches of the City of Seattle with our extensive knowledge of policies and recommended actions in other municipalities.
- 4) **Preparation of the report.** The initial draft was presented to Seattle Department of Neighborhoods leadership in May 2009.

CHAPTER II.

Existing City Food System Activity

DEPARTMENT OF NEIGHBORHOODS (DON)

P-Patch Community Gardens Program Description and Partnerships

The DON in conjunction with the non-profit organization, P-Patch Trust, provides support for 73 existing and 10 developing gardens (over 2,100 plots) for residents throughout Seattle. The P-Patch Community Gardening Program is a keystone program of the City's sustainable food systems efforts, and arguably one of the most famous community gardening programs in the US. The P-Patch Program components include:

- *community gardening* – providing individuals access to land to grow food for their families;
- *market gardening* – helping gardeners to grow food which they sell through community supported agriculture (CSA) arrangements, food stands, and other marketing avenues;
- *youth gardening* – teaching gardening skills, and incorporating youth into the fabric of the community as a means of fostering the growth of active and involved citizens; and
- *food bank gardening* – facilitating the donation of over 12 tons of produce per year to the hungry through Seattle food banks.

These programs serve all residents of Seattle with an emphasis on low-income, immigrant populations, and youth. P-Patch has been enormously popular with Seattle residents. The waitlist for garden plots now has over 1,700 individuals. In part to help meet demand, two million dollars of a special parks levy approved by voters has been designated for new P-Patches. This funding will be used for development costs and where appropriate, land purchase, to increase the number of gardens. In early 2009, DON developed a Capital Investment Plan to prioritize and steward these development funds, maximizing leveraged opportunities and partnerships. Socio-economic equity factors are a primary filter in fund prioritization.

P-Patch also plays a connective role between community members and other community-based efforts on promoting alternative methods of urban agriculture through its website and listserv. For example, Urban Garden Share and Urban Land Army are two websites recently launched within the city, and designed to match community members seeking gardening opportunities with resi-

dents offering private yard space. P-Patch is also working with staff in other departments to explore rooftop gardening possibilities in high-density areas, particularly in partnership with low-income and senior housing providers.

DON works with other city departments, such as SDOT, Parks, SPU, SCL, and FFD, to collaborate and leverage on land acquisition, long-term site control through leases or permits, and inter-agency agreements to increase and expand P-Patch gardens on city-owned properties and public right-of-way where feasible. DON recently developed and implemented a Memorandum of Agreement with SDOT regarding permit requirements for P-Patches in SDOT rights-of-way. This MOA allows DON to obtain a 'no-fee' annual Street Use Permit for the long-term maintenance and ownership record of the P-Patch in the right-of-way. SDOT has provided DON with a list of real property that may be feasible sites for new P-Patches.

DON also recently developed a Memorandum of Agreement with Parks that administratively expedites development of Parks properties for community gardens when community members prioritize this use of open space.

2010 DECLARED YEAR OF URBAN AGRICULTURE

The City of Seattle declared 2010 as the Year of Urban Agriculture. In 2010, the City along with community partners advanced a number of initiatives related to urban agriculture including opening a new urban food bank farm, developing additional community gardens through the Parks Levy, and passing new land use codes that support urban agriculture. It has also launched an interactive web portal including a calendar highlighting local events related to urban agriculture and activities, information and resources available, and links to many organizations working toward improving the local food system.

Legislation for land use code changes, passed in September of 2010, includes the addition and clarification of the definitions of key agricultural terms; expanded opportunities for community gardens and urban farms in all zones; allowed rooftop greenhouses dedicated to food production a 15 foot exception to height limits; added farmers' markets to the definition of a "multipurpose retail sales" use; increased the number of domestic fowl allowed on a lot from three to eight; and, allowed existing urban horse farms greater than ten acres to operate as a permitted use in single-family zones.

Neighborhood Matching Fund Program ***Description and Partnerships***

Seattle Department of Neighborhoods provides funds for matching awards to help community building - from major physical improvement projects to outreach efforts among neighbors to organize a neighborhood event or a meeting. Over the years, community groups have successfully applied to the Neighborhood Matching Fund program to develop and improve new and existing P-Patch gardens and others have used the program to promote food system work in their neighborhoods. Some examples include:

- Market on Wheels in South Park and Delridge
- Farmers' market assistance in 10 neighborhoods over the past 16 years
- Phinney Sustainable Fruit Harvest
- Edible garden tours and education
- Pollinator Pathways Project.

Under the Neighborhood Matching Fund Tree Fund, DON has partnered with SDOT to mobilize and support community members to plant street trees. In 2009, in partnership with SDOT and OSE, DON and SDOT piloted a bonus option offered for Seattle residents to plant more street trees by offering an additional free fruit tree to plant in their private yards. Due to the successful pilot project, which more than doubled the tree fund requests, DON will continue the bonus option in 2010. This collaboration promoted the Mayoral City's environmental sustainability goals as well as the Urban Forestry plan goals, by encouraging local food production in Seattle.

PARKS AND RECREATION DEPARTMENT (DPR)

The **Healthy Parks, Healthy You initiative (HPHY)** has helped the City to create a paradigm shift toward making choices that promote health and wellness. DPR has developed activities and enhanced existing programming to encourage and support safe and fun physical activity, use of outdoor spaces for active recreation, and healthy eating habits. While the initiative includes many approaches to promoting health and wellness, one of them is nutrition.

DPR liaisons with Public Health Seattle/King County on food, nutrition, and other issues. It collaborates on the development of policies to improve park-based child nutrition programs, in addition to offering Healthy Parks, Healthy You wellness policies, advocacy, and web information to the public. Additionally, and funded in part with the United States Department of Agriculture's Community Food Project program, it will offer garden education programs in Rainier Valley. These garden classes and programs for adults, teens, and children will be offered at Rainier, Rainier Beach and

Van Asselt community centers. Adults will be offered classes that are culturally appropriate for them, utilizing native speakers or language interpreters as needed. DPR will engage teens through Late Night and other youth-based programs to learn about gardening and engage them within their healthy community.

DPR partners with senior service providers and offers four Food and Fitness Programs that provide the opportunity for ethnic elders to congregate and celebrate their culture and language around healthy food. In partnership with HSD's Elder Meal Program, participants receive a healthy lunch, as well as vital social, educational, and fitness programs. The Food and Fitness Programs are offered at Miller Community Center for the Korean community, Garfield Community Center for the Vietnamese community, Southwest Community Center for Samoan community, and Rainier Community Center for the Somali community.

DPR partners with Human Services Division (HSD) Summer Sack Lunch Program, and provides lunches for youth at their Community Learning Centers, through the Families and Education Levy-funded program and at all community center sites that have summer programs. Participants either receive a healthy breakfast and lunch or a healthy lunch and a snack as part of the program. Youth also receive information from staff on the importance of eating a healthy meal that supports the Healthy Parks, Healthy You initiative and changes lives for the better.

DPR also works with the Office of Economic Development (OED) and the Farmer's Market Association and has recently added two farmers' markets on park land- Magnolia and Albert Davis in Lake City. It offers the farmers' markets at a reduced rate than usually allowed to give incentive for markets to open. DPR also supports them by educating and informing the public about the markets.

DPR partners with Seattle Tilth to offer container gardening classes and composting education for condominium and apartment dwellers in the downtown area. This year, it will offer 15 courses at five downtown parks, including Victor Steinbrueck, Freeway, Occidental, Cascade Playground and Belltown Cottage parks.

HUMAN SERVICES DEPARTMENT (HSD)

The PeoplePoint: Bridge to Benefits program connects people to benefits, including food assistance programs, such as school meals, Basic Food (SNAP), Women, Infants and Children (WIC), and food banks. In addition to operating offices around the City, in partnership with non-profits and DON's Neighborhood Service Centers, HSD is developing a key portal where all benefits can be accessed. Outreach for the Basic Food Program (and other programs) has been increased in 2009 with the addition of a staff person to work at food banks and meal programs to enroll individuals.

HSD liaisons with the Public Health Department on food and nutrition and other issues. It also provides staffing assistance to the three city council members that are on the Board of Health (school nutrition is a focus area), examining policies to improve school nutrition (with school wellness polices, recess before lunch, advocacy, web information) and policies in the Healthy Eating and Active Living 10 Point Plan.



Photo: Rebecca Mann

HSD operates the Summer Food Program, sponsoring approximately 100 sites each summer across the City and parts of King County. HSD subcontracts with Seattle Public Schools to prepare food. The school-based program rarely uses regionally-produced food because of the perceived cost. HSD has implemented a food recovery program in which they recommend that over-production be sent to food banks.

Elder Meal Programs including Congregate Meals and home delivered meals are also operated by HSD. The City provides extra funding to serve ethnic groups (starting age 50). Through a grant from Public Health Seattle King County, HSD will be connecting elder meal program providers with local farmers in a Farm to Table project. The goal of Farm to Table is to make local fresh fruits and vegetables more affordable for elder meal programs through cooperative purchasing. The project will also assess the feasibility of expanding Farm to Table models to child care settings.

HSD also works with seniors through the Senior Farmer's Market Program, providing \$40/person for 5,000 seniors (the state adds dollars). HSD also works with subsidized housing projects to install raised beds for gardening to improve the health of seniors, especially those suffering from depression. HSD operates emergency food assistance programs, subcontracting with 16 (out of 27) food pantries run by community organizations to provide food. These pantries receive approximately 25 tons of fresh produce from P-Patch gardens.

HSD also operates meal programs through emergency food assistance (One vendor buys local food and one vendor serves organically grown food). HSD also has contracts with Meals Partnership Coalition and Seattle Food Coalition that support the linkage between P-Patch and Lettuce Link's food bank gardening program with social services programs and food banks.

SEATTLE DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION (SDOT)

Planting Strips

SDOT has revised a Client Assistance Memo regarding planting strip paving and tree planting rules. It recently released new rules for gardening in planting strips which eliminate the permit requirement for planting vegetation in planting strips. Hardscape elements (like pavers or planter boxes) still require a permit to ensure safety and access on public land, but it is now free.

Management of Right-of-Ways

Urban Forestry: SDOT Urban Forestry team is currently working on increasing the City's tree canopy cover as part of the Mayor's Climate Action Plan. Urban Forestry is also working on a Master Plan regarding the management of trees citywide.

P-Patches: SDOT has developed a memorandum of agreement (MOA) with Seattle Dept of Neighborhoods (DON) regarding permit requirements for P-Patches in the right-of-way. This MOA allows DON to obtain a 'no fee' annual Street Use permit for the long-term maintenance and ownership record of the P-Patch in the right-of-way. SDOT has provided DON with a list of real property that may be feasible sites for new P-Patches.

Sidewalk Cafes

SDOT implemented new legislation that allowed for a more streamlined permit process for businesses to enliven streetscapes. The permit process no longer involves DPD, so the review time and permit fee are reduced.

Street Vendors

SDOT is working with the Office of Policy and Management, Center City Inter-departmental Team, and the Public Health – Seattle & King County to revise existing food vending rules and legislation. The goal is to streamline the permitting process, provide more food vending locations, and allow for a more varied list of approved food items.

Farmers' Markets

SDOT has worked with the Office of Economic Development (OED), Parks, and Seattle Fire Department (SFD) on implementation of a 2009 ordinance streamlining the permit process for farm-

ers' markets. This permit process is managed by OED. OED will serve as the main contact to facilitate a 'one-stop' permit process if the market meets the definition as provided in the new joint Director's Rule. As part of this program, SDOT has reduced the permit fees by only requiring one permit per year and not requiring the site inspections.

Bike Program

Seattle's Bicycle Master Plan sets the vision for how bicycling can make the city's transportation system more sustainable. The plan addresses bicyclists' needs to access the roadway system in order to reach all desired destinations. One current way SDOT's planning processes include access to food sources is through bike parking. Recent efforts include installing on-street bicycle racks located either adjacent to, or near, restaurants or grocery stores.

Pedestrian Master Plan

SDOT included grocery stores in its pedestrian demand model, which influences the prioritization of sidewalk and crossing improvements. The plan's equity component—another important piece of the prioritization for improvements—includes socioeconomic and health characteristics including: auto ownership, income, rates of disabilities, levels of obesity, and rates of physical activity.

SEATTLE PUBLIC UTILITIES (SPU)

The food recovery program assists with diverting food from the waste stream through:

- Reduce - Swedish Hospital and Seattle University waste reduction pilot projects
- Reuse – Assisting food banks and meal programs to recover surplus edible food from the grocery and hospitality industries
- Recycle – compost all food and yard waste.

SPU has a new goal of 72% edible food diverted out of waste stream through funding the purchase of food recovery equipment such as refrigerators and refrigeration equipment for trucks.

Resident Education / Natural Yard Care Program

This is a successful city program that provides a series of three classes to four neighborhoods around the city each year. The classes focus on improving soil, composting, reducing water, pesticide and fertilizer use, and making good plant choices. A program addressing food gardening for all residents is in the planning stages. The successful Natural Yard Care Program will integrate food gardening as a part of the program.

Natural Soil Building/Composting Program

SPU works with the non-profit organization Seattle Tilth to educate residents through a garden hot line and a volunteer Master Composter/Soil Builder Program. A goal with this program is to increase volunteers who are persons of color and to more effectively access historically under-served communities. SPU also distributes compost bins to city residents. SPU works with Cedar Grove (a private company) to handle all composting of waste collected from residents.

Green Gardening Program

In this program SPU works with landscapers to reduce pesticide use.

DEPARTMENT OF PLANNING AND DEVELOPMENT (DPD)

Seattle Green Factor

The Seattle Green Factor is a landscaping requirement in Seattle's Land Use Code designed to improve the quantity and quality of planted areas and allow greater design flexibility for developers and designers. The Green Factor includes a bonus for food cultivation as landscaping in new development.

Comprehensive Plan

There are two elements of the Comprehensive Plan, Urban Village and Human Development areas that address food systems:

Urban Village Element

UV53. Direct efforts to expand the open space network according to the following considerations:

2. *Types of open space acquisitions and facility development:*
 - a. *Village open space sites, urban center indoor recreation facilities, village commons sites, and community gardens;*

UV55. Promote inter-agency and intergovernmental cooperation to expand community gardening opportunities, and include P-Patch community gardening among priorities for use of City surplus property

Human Development Element

HD11. Encourage coordinated service delivery for food, housing health care, and other basic necessities of life to promote long-term self-reliance for vulnerable populations.

HD13. Encourage public and private efforts that support food banks, nutrition, and food preparation programs, especially to meet the nutritional needs of infants, children and the elderly, and other vulnerable populations.

Priority Green

Food security and urban agriculture are both elements of the Priority Green Permit program, which assists innovative projects that will serve as visible models of high performance and sustainability. Applicants can opt to provide amenities such as a food bank, meal providers or community kitchen, and/or produce food on site, physically covering an area equivalent to 10% of the site area. Choosing either of these elements will help to qualify a development project for the Priority Green Permit program. To date, there have been two projects that have attempted rooftop gardens to produce food on site, but ultimately neither proved to be financially feasible.

Green Infrastructure

DPD is currently part of an inter-departmental team that is planning the future of the Maple Leaf reservoir lid and adjacent site development. One option under consideration is using the reservoir's lid for alternative uses such as urban agriculture.

Regulations

Seattle's Land Use Code currently provides definitions for "agricultural use," "animal husbandry," "aquaculture," and "horticulture." These uses are permitted in some, but not all zones. According to Section 23.47A.004, horticulture is permitted in commercial zones (in some zones with size restrictions), but not in single-family or multifamily zones. The keeping of small animals, farm animals, domestic fowl and bees is permitted outright in all zones as an accessory use to any principal use permitted outright or to a permitted conditional use (Section 23.42.052).

Recognizing that farmers' markets provide an important community gathering place and an enjoyable outdoor shopping experience, while supplying fresh, locally grown produce, Sections 23.42.004 and 23.76.004 of the Land Use Code were amended to allow farmers' markets, as an intermittent use, in all zones. Intermittent uses can occur no more than two days per week for a period of up to one year.

OFFICE OF SUSTAINABILITY AND ENVIRONMENT (OSE)

Climate Change

OSE is a national and regional leader in promoting climate protection and environmental sustainability goals. Seattle was recently named the #1 "green city" in the country by the Natural Resources Defense Council. OSE understands that transportation, urban canopy, storm water mitigation are related to production of food.

Urban Forestry

OSE is working with Seattle Dept. of Neighborhoods and Seattle Dept. of Transportation to develop incentive programs to increase

fruit and nut trees on residential private property.

OFFICE OF ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT (OED)

Farmers Markets

OED manages the City's relationship with all 14 farmers markets in Seattle. OED's business services team works closely with markets to help them identify potential locations (including city-owned land and street closures) for permanent sites. OED worked with Seattle Dept. of Transportation, Parks, and Fire and led the development of a more predictable and efficient permitting process for farmers markets.

Food Manufacturing and Wholesale

The food manufacturing and wholesale sector are supported by a wide diversity of business functions lead by the seafood and fishing sector. This sub-sector of Seattle's economy employed over 10,500 people in 2007. Wages increased from \$39,600 in 2001 to nearly \$43,000 in 2007 and local revenues are estimated to have increased significantly during this time, from \$1.72 billion in 2001 to over \$3 billion in 2007.

Food manufacturing is a significant source of jobs, especially for underrepresented communities. It has the 8th highest job multiplier effect in Washington State, creating four jobs total in the economy for each job created in the food manufacturing sector. Leading Seattle food manufacturing and wholesale companies include Unified Grocers, Charlie's Produce, Ocean Beauty Seafood, and Uwajimaya.

Energy Efficiency Lending for Independent Grocers and Neighborhood Corner Stores

OED has developed loan programs for commercial energy efficiency improvements at independent grocery stores and small food markets. These markets are initial focus of this loan program because they are key businesses in Seattle neighborhood business districts and the highest users of electricity per square foot of any business sector and can see immediate energy savings from replacement of lighting, HVAC, and refrigeration fixtures.

PUBLIC HEALTH SEATTLE-KING COUNTY (PHSKC)

The overall goals of the Department are to:

- 1) ensure food safety through food permitting of retail establishments
- 2) improve access to healthy foods to improve public health.

PHSKC also implements federally funded programs, including the Supplemental Food Program for Women, Infants, and Children (WIC). It provides nutrition education in schools and implements

wellness policies (state and federal dollars). The PHSKC manages child care health programs, works on Electronic Benefit Transfer (EBT) for food program recipients, and operates the Senior Farmers' Market Nutrition Programs (SFMNP).

CHAPTER III.

Recommendations

INTRODUCTION

This section details the policy action plan recommendations for Seattle based on the Local Food Action Initiative goals. The plan is based on three broad principles:

The primacy of community/city partnerships.

Achieving a secure and sustainable food system requires the collaboration of public, private, and non-profit stakeholders at all geographic levels. City policy and program are an essential step toward attaining this goal, but must be accompanied by action at the non-profit and industry levels. The City has an important role to convene, catalyze, coordinate and inspire action by non-public entities. Likewise, it needs to play a leadership role with regional and state governments.



Food policy must be made visible, and a tangible part of what the City does on a daily basis.

Food policy in Seattle, like every other city in North America, is embedded and hidden within the programs and policies of its multiple departments. Seattle makes food policy on a de facto and unconscious way every day. By keeping it hidden, the synergies and potential of a coherent and visible food policy remain latent. Conversely, for food systems work to be successful, where City policy and programs interface with the food system must be made visible and coordinated toward a common goal. Food policy must become institutionalized as a basic element of city government, just as

transportation, community development, and parks are currently. This institutionalization can occur through changes to land use and transportation plans, as well as through a food system element of the Comprehensive Plan.

Real change requires a comprehensive systemic approach.

These recommendations put forth a set of actions across the spectrum of the food system, and actions that mutually reinforce each other. Many of the actions proposed meet multiple goals, and goals must be accomplished through actions in various food system sectors.

This interconnectedness is seen in the graphic below, which indicates the links between the various Local Food Action Initiative goals as spelled out in this document. For example, it shows how urban agriculture can be an essential economic development tool, improve access to food in underserved communities, protect the environment by reducing food miles and improving soil quality, and create a more resilient food system as part of emergency preparedness. Urban agriculture is also linked to changes in land use planning (many of which are currently proposed as part of the current Year of Urban Agriculture).

Given the complexity of the food system, the linkages between its various components can be complex. It is beyond the scope of a single person or agency to manage these relationships. Food policy councils (FPCs), as multi-stakeholder private-public partnerships have emerged as a useful entity to think through and act on these linkages. In Seattle's case, elected officials have chosen to pursue the creation of a regional FPC through the Puget Sound Regional Council rather than a city-based FPC. Thus, there exists the need for an alternate body to shepherd the set of recommendations encompassed in this report as well as future City action in this arena.

This entity appears to be the Interdepartmental Team (IDT), which has re-formed after being disbanded in 2009. The IDT is a point of coordination for City policy efforts, and as such has inherent limitations with regards to its role with community stakeholders. The IDT's charge should be expanded however. It needs to be more than just a venue for periodic meetings of representatives of city agencies. Instead, it should be responsible for shepherding agreed upon recommendations, provide a forum for discussion of challenges and solutions to City policies and programs, as well as provide regular progress reports based on evaluations of the food systems policy achievements to the Mayor and City Council. Missing from the typical IDT role is the community connection described in the first principle. Typically, a food policy council- as including representation from both public and private sectors would fulfill this function.

To be successful, the IDT requires competent and dedicated staffing. A highly qualified staff to facilitate and staff the IDT will be invaluable. This staff person should also have in their job description to provide leadership to the Washington State and Puget Sound Regional Food Policy Councils. The complexities of the issues laid out in this report as well as their importance to the City's core functions cannot be done justice without adequate (both in terms of FTE and staff capacity) staffing. In addition, the City should hire a competent community organizer (perhaps at .5 FTE) to assist the IDT staff with outreach to the community. Given their community outreach function, IDT staff should be housed in Seattle Department of Neighborhoods, which has a long trajectory of positive relationships with neighborhood groups across Seattle. Finally, given the budget crisis the City finds itself in, DON should look to federal grants (Hunger Free Communities for example) and private funders (Bullitt, Allen, Gates Foundations e.g.) to make up for any city funding shortages.

Last, it is important to highlight one other primary recommendation. Years ago, visionaries in Seattle government purchased over 90,000 acres of land to protect the city's water source in the Cedar River watershed. Similarly, the City should consider the feasibility of creating a Seattle Food System Authority. This body could be municipal or regional in nature. It could have multiple roles with the goal of protecting Seattle's foodshed, including protecting farmland that feeds Seattle's inhabitants. Another role would be to fund the re-creation of the needed infrastructure for the local/regional food system, such as slaughterhouses, canneries, packing sheds, brokerage and distribution services, and school kitchens. This Authority would fully assert the public sector's role in protecting a local/regional food system. It would most likely require a special form of financing, such as a bond, property tax levy, or sales tax revenue, such as a soda or junk food tax.

RECOMMENDATIONS

1. Enhance Inter-governmental Coordination on Food System Related Matters

1. Establish a vital and on-going IDT with adequate staffing for inter-agency coordination, strategizing on next steps, and annual reporting to the Mayor, Council and the public.
2. Create and implement an assessment methodology to ensure that city departments are making progress on food system goals.
3. Partner with Seattle Public Schools to implement farm to school programs and school gardens
4. Dedicate high-level staffing to regional and state food policy councils
5. Provide leadership through the Puget Sound Regional Food Policy Council
6. Establish research partnerships with WSU, University of

Washington and community colleges on food systems related issues

7. Partner with state and regional officials as well as private stakeholders groups to develop a strategic plan to build sufficient local and regional food reserves for emergencies
8. Hold educational meetings for city staff on food system-related topics, both internal and externally related.

2. Support Healthy and Sustainable Food Systems through City Policy

9. Integrate a food systems analysis in all major land use decisions such as zoning, transportation planning, city's Climate Action Plan, the Comprehensive Plan, and other policy changes.
10. Reduce edible food in the waste stream and to increase composting of non-edible food and yard waste as essential inputs for organic food production.
11. Reduce edible food in the waste stream through collaborations with hospitality and grocery industries.
12. Remove zoning and other policy barriers to urban food production.
13. Reduce food-related packaging through regulations, product bans, and incentives.
14. Establish and implement preferences and targets for local and regional food at city facilities and programs.
15. Restrict unhealthy foods from city owned facilities such as parks and buildings.
16. Encourage the private sector to replace unhealthy food in their cafeterias and vending machines with healthier options.

3. Support Urban Agriculture

17. Carry out a P-Patch Strategic Plan to determine needs and goals of the system.
18. Fully fund P-Patch program and develop partnerships with community groups to meet resident demand for community gardening space
19. Expand urban agriculture opportunities, including community and home gardens
20. Convene an Urban Agriculture Summit

4. Increase Seattle Residents Knowledge of Local Food Resources

21. Hold an annual gathering of public, private and non-profit stakeholders in the food system to coordinate on strategies and gather community input into City policy and programs.
22. Partner with Seattle Tilth on its master preserver certification course and with community colleges on cooking education
23. Establish communication mechanisms such as a single

web portal for food system related activities

5. Further Food-Related Economic Development Opportunities

24. Develop and implement urban agriculture business
25. Implement business incubator and technical assistance programs for small food production, processing, distribution and retailing enterprises, especially for those focused on sustainably-produced, locally or regionally grown, or culturally-specific foods.
26. Conduct an assessment of the local food system workforce needs and develop programs and partnerships to meet those needs.
27. Attract more full service supermarkets through incentives
28. Implement an industrial retention policy for the food processing sector
29. Develop new and strengthen existing programs to incentivize patronage of farmers markets

6. Reduce Seattle Residents' Hunger and Increase Food Security

30. Support flexible low-cost, non-”bricks and mortar” forms of increasing food access
31. Incorporate outreach on Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) into City programs and partner with other public and private entities
32. Incent grocery stores, farmers markets, food carts and other mobile vendors to locate in underserved communities.
33. Set healthy food goals for all emergency food providers that receive City funding or in-kind support
34. Conduct both initial and on-going analysis and research on food access-related matters
35. Conduct an analysis of the city's food needs during natural and man-made disasters and the region's food production capacity

LOCAL FOOD ACTION INITIATIVE GOALS AND RECOMMENDED ACTIONS

In this section are the goals as stated in the Local Food Action Initiative, a summary of existing city programs and policies related to these goals, recommended objectives to meet these goals, and a set of activities to accomplish the objectives. Each activity also includes a set of indicators by which progress can be measured. In some cases when their subject matter was similar enough, two goals were combined into a single one. The intention of this section is to provide both a suggested road map by which the City, in CFSC's opinion, can move forward to accomplish a more just and sustainable food system, as well as recommended specific action steps.

CONNECTING DISPARATE SECTORS

Local Food Initiative Goal

Goal a) Strengthen community and regional food systems by linking food production, processing, distribution, consumption, and waste management to facilitate, to the extent possible, reliance on our region's food resources.

Current Status of City Programs

- After having disbanded the Interdepartmental Team (IDT) in 2009, the City has reconstituted the Food Systems IDT in 2010 with new representatives from every department. This entity provides coordination among the different functions of city government related to food systems.
- The Puget Sound Regional Council has formed its Regional Food Policy Council, and the state of Washington is in the process of setting up its food policy council.

Connection Objectives

- Food systems are a visible and tangible part of the City of Seattle's programs and policies.
- Private and non-profit sector stakeholders are fully engaged with city government on local food system goals.
- The management of the Seattle's foodshed is determined to be of vital interest to city government, and appropriate measures are taken to protect it.

Recommended Strategies

1. Create and implement an assessment methodology to ensure that City departments are making progress on food system goals.

The IDT should publish an annual report (including a report card) which details progress on local food policy goals. This report should be grounded on benchmarks that were previously determined by individual departments with the approval of the Mayor's Office. This report should be disseminated to the public via the City's food system portal website (to be created), and to the media. The IDT should also present its annual report and recommendations for the subsequent year's plan to City Council and to the Mayor. This report will not only bring a level of accountability to this process, but also will re-emphasize the linkages between the diverse elements of food programming within City government. By publicizing this annual report, it will begin to make food systems more tangible and visible in the eyes of Seattle citizens and policymakers.

Indicators:

- Number of print and electronic media outlets that run an article or segment on the food report card
- Changes to each year's food system planning suggested and implemented as a result of this evaluation process

2. *Hold an annual gathering of public, private and non-profit stakeholders in the food system to coordinate on strategies and gather community input into City policy and programs.*

Essential to the success of this initiative is open communication and support of the private and non-profit food interests. An annual meeting – or perhaps smaller sectoral gatherings- would provide an opportunity for City staff to communicate their goals, as well as gain buy-in and feedback from attendees. Attendee feedback should be used to shape the implementation of existing goals and the creation of new goals.

Indicators:

- Number of gatherings held
- Number of attendees and from which sectors of the food system
- Implementation of attendee feedback in shaping future actions
- Usefulness of the gatherings as measured by attendee surveys

3. *Establish communication mechanisms such as a single web portal for food system related activities*

Effective communication between the City and the public is essential for underscoring the importance of this initiative as well as for engaging community participation. The Year of Urban Agriculture website has been a great starting place for a more comprehensive web portal. This portal should contain at a minimum: IDT, Puget Sound and WA Food Policy Council meeting minutes and reports; information on resources on food-related activities; progress reports on the local food action initiative; links to community groups; lists of farmers markets, P-Patches and other community food projects; links to state and national resources, agencies and organizations; calendar of events, and requests for comments on impending policy changes.

Indicators:

- Creation of a comprehensive City food systems web portal
- Number of hits on this site and individual pages
- Number of people rating this site good or excellent as determined by an on-line pop-up survey

4. *Explore the legality of declaring food to be a public utility and the creation of a Seattle Foodshed Authority.*

Other basic necessities, such as water, power and transportation have been deemed as public utilities, regulated by municipal or state government. Food production and distribution has been largely relegated to the free market, which has failed to protect the environment and health of many citizens. An alternative to the free market is to establish food systems as being in the public domain. This would enable the City (or potentially in partnership with King County or the Puget Sound region) to play a more substantive role in the food security of its residents.

Seattle owns 90,000 acres of land in the Cedar River watershed to protect its water supply. If food were considered to be a public utility on the par as water, the City could take measures to protect the regional foodshed, including holding farmland for lease back to farmers, and playing a role in transfer of development rights.

This issue is extraordinarily complex, surely controversial, and potentially quite expensive. However, it would set Seattle apart as the only city in the nation that takes such an active role in its own food security, and would provide numerous other benefits to Seattle and to the region. The City should have a study done to examine the feasibility of such a move.

Indicators:

- Completion of a feasibility study of creating a Seattle Foodshed Authority and of considering food to be a public utility.

ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION***Local Food Initiative Goal***

Goal b) Assess and mitigate the negative environmental and ecological effects relating to food system activities and goal c): Support food system activities that encourage the use of local and renewable energy resources and minimize energy use and waste including: Reducing food in our waste stream; Discouraging or restricting excessive and environmentally inappropriate food packaging at all levels of the food system (production, wholesale, retail and consumer), and Reducing the embedded and distributed climate impacts of Seattle's food system.

Current Status of City Programs

Many of the ecological and environmental effects of the food system are regulated at the state or federal levels. Seattle does not have jurisdiction over many of the environmental impacts of the food system, such as water or pesticide usage of produce grown in California's Central Valley. It does mitigate the environmental effects of the food system in the following areas:

- The City diverts waste from the landfill through food and yard waste composting and recovering edible food for use by the charitable food sector.
- The various practices the City undertakes to promote gardening within City limits, such as the P-Patch program, changes to codes around planting strips, apiculture and poultry regulations, and Green Factor's incentives for food production in new developments all promote positive ecological benefits. All of these practices and policies help to reduce food miles (and greenhouse gases and pollution caused by transportation).
- The City encourages a reduction in Vehicle Miles Traveled (VMT) for grocery shopping through encouraging land use patterns that incorporate food retail outlets within walking and biking distance (the 20 minute neighborhood).
- The Green Gardening Program assists gardeners to reduce pesticide usage.
- Seattle helps to reduce food miles through facilitating the consumption of locally grown and produced foods. The City's support of farmers markets is an action it undertakes in this area.
- Office of Economic Development (OED) has developed loan programs for commercial energy efficiency improvements at independent grocery stores and small food markets. These markets are an initial focus of this loan program because they are key businesses in Seattle neighborhood business districts and the highest users of electricity per square foot of any business sector and can see immediate energy savings from replacement of lighting, HVAC and refrigeration fixtures.

Environmental Protection Objectives

- The environmental and climate-related effects of Seattle's food system are fully comprehended, with a particular emphasis on those potentially affected by City policy levers.
- Food and food-related packaging in waste stream is reduced by 25% in 2015; 50% in 2020.
- Vehicle miles traveled for food shopping is reduced by 20% in 2020.
- Climate-related impacts of food production, processing, transportation, and consumption in Seattle is reduced by 25% by 2020.



Photo: Tammy Morales

Recommended Strategies

1. Analyze the food system's primary impacts on climate change and pollution with respect to those policies and programs under the control of the City of Seattle. Integrate these areas into the City's environmental action agenda.

Further research is needed to understand which City policies and programs, if modified, could have the greatest impact on reducing pollution and greenhouse gases. There will be inevitable trade-offs and political costs to such changes. A fuller analysis based on scientific data and perhaps a modeling approach is appropriate. OSE should use a lifecycle analysis to understand the emissions of food choices before they reach the City.

OSE should also undertake an assessment of the environmental impacts of food processing, manufacturing, retailing, and distribution with city limits. The goal of this research project would be to identify ways that the City could incentivize or regulate the food industry to reduce its ecological footprint.

Indicators:

- Completion of a comprehensive science-based report
- Inclusion of primary findings of the report into the City's environmental action agenda

2. Reduce edible food in the waste stream and to increase composting of non-edible food and yard waste as essential inputs for organic food production

On average, Americans generate 184 pounds of food waste per person every year.²⁶ Roughly 25% of Seattle's municipal waste stream

²⁶ WasteAge. (2004, March). Food Waste. Retrieved August 18, 2010 at http://wasteage.com/mag/waste_food_waste_2/.

is food-related. Food waste can decompose into methane in landfills, or when disposed of through kitchen sinks pollute waterways. The City should expand its efforts to reduce food waste in the waste stream through SPU's diversion of edible food to the charitable food sector, food waste composting- at home and as part of the regular trash pick-ups, resident composting education campaigns, and consideration of on-farm composting for production of organic fertilizers.

Indicators:

- Amount of food waste diverted to charitable purposes
- Number of households composting at home
- Number of households participating in food waste composting program
- Weight and volume recovered in food waste composting program
- Weight and volume of finished compost from yard and food waste distributed to end users
- Weight and volume of food sent to landfills

3. Reduce food-related packaging through regulations, product bans, and incentives.

SPU and OSE should conduct an analysis of the waste stream, or review existing literature on this topic, to determine which food packaging materials make up the greatest weight and volume. OSE and SPU should implement a city-wide education campaign with recommendations for legislation targeted at consumers, retailers, manufacturers, and restaurants. These regulations and incentives should target:

- Incentivizing bulk purchases when possible with reusable containers. Just as many municipalities provide low or no-cost composting containers, the City should provide free or low cost bulk bins for consumer use;
- Banning or taxing plastic bags;
- Incentivizing food composting at restaurants through reduced waste disposal fees and through coordination with PHSKC on health requirements;
- Requiring retail outlets to accept returned food packaging and to bear the costs of disposal, but to get monetary incentives for recycling;
- Setting standards for food-related packaging, and then requiring food manufacturers to reduce their packaging for products

sold in Seattle, or to face excessive packaging taxes;

- Holding competitions among consumers and restaurants for food-related waste reduction;
- Requiring that all take out packaging and ancillary items are biodegradable and/or bear end-user fees
- Implementing a bottle and cans deposit for drinks sold in Seattle, and lobbying state government to implement a state-wide measure

Indicators:

- Number of bulk containers distributed
- Number of households participating in bulk container distribution
- Number of restaurants participating in food composting
- Weight of food composted through restaurants
- Number of plastic bags distributed in the City as compared to previous to the ban or taxing
- Weight of food packaging landfilled through grocery stores and weight of food packaging recycled through grocery stores
- Weight and volume of food packaging averted from Seattle by regulations
- Weight and volume of food packaging averted from landfills by biodegradable-related regulations
- Number of bottles and cans returned for deposit

4. Continue and expand support for local food production and consumption.

As mentioned in other sections, the City should expand its efforts to increase the production of local and when possible organic foods. This can be accomplished through various measures to promote community and home gardens, as well as local and regional farming through supporting institutional procurement and direct marketing opportunities. These efforts can potentially reduce air pollution and greenhouse gas production by reducing the distance food travels from farm to table.

5. Reduce vehicle miles traveled for grocery shopping through fostering land use patterns that encourage alternate forms of transportation, as well as through encouraging walking, biking, and use of mass transit.

Personal automobile use for grocery shopping comprises a significant percentage of non-commuting vehicle miles used, and be-

cause of the high rates of pollution generated by short trips, an outsized contributor to air pollution and greenhouse gases. City planners should continue their efforts to create pedestrian and bicycle-friendly neighborhoods, and to encourage full service grocery stores to locate throughout Seattle. SDOT should consider making available at low or no-cost bicycle accessories to allow residents to bring their groceries home (and probably reduce the amount of other errands as well). Similarly, the City could consider subsidizing shopper shuttles that take customers home from supermarkets as a means of reducing personal vehicle usage. An analysis of the pollution and greenhouse gas emissions should precede the implementation of this program to ensure that it does provide actual cost-effective benefits.

Indicators:

- Number of bicycle carrying accessories distributed
- Number of VMT averted through distribution of bicycle carrying accessories
- Number of persons taking shopper shuttles
- Number of VMT averted through shopper shuttles



Photo: Tammy Morales

NUTRITION EDUCATION AND COMMUNITY KITCHEN

Local Food Initiative Goal

Goal d) Stimulate demand for healthy foods, especially in low-income communities, through collaboration with community-based organizations and institutions and Goal e) Disseminating of food preparation and preservation knowledge through educational and community kitchen programs

Current Status of City Programs

- Human Services Division participates in the Seattle Nutrition

Action Consortium, which operates the Eat Better Feel Better campaign in local schools among others. This program also works with PHSKC and receives SNAP-Education federal funding.

- Community Kitchens Northwest operates 15 kitchens in the City of Seattle with the support of Parks and Recreation Department, many of which serve lower income residents. These kitchens teach cooking skills, and prepare meals for sale for take-home and for on-site consumption. Some area senior centers also operate community kitchens.

Nutrition Education and Community Kitchen Objectives

- Five new collaborations with community groups and other non-municipal entities are created and implemented with the purpose of increasing demand for healthy food in low income communities
- The number of persons receiving education about food preservation and preparation is increased by 300% through educational and culinary programs by 2015.
- Ninety percent of major institutions and corporations in Seattle promote and serve healthy and local foods

Recommended Strategies

1. Expand urban agriculture opportunities, including community and home gardens

Growing your own food is a very successful form of experiential nutrition education, that can shape taste preferences, eating habits and increase demand for healthy foods. See goal 3a for more information on activities and indicators.

2. Partner with Seattle Public Schools to implement farm to school programs

Farm to school programs have been shown to increase student consumption of fruits and vegetables. The IDT should identify ways in which City resources can be used to support farm to school projects in Seattle schools. WSU’s Food Sense program, which provides garden-enhanced nutrition education, elder meal programs, and child care providers may be appropriate partners in a Farm to Table project.

3. Partner with Seattle Public Schools to develop community gardens on school property

Creating school gardens expands access to information and learning about healthy foods. The city should expand its partnership

with the Puget Sound School Garden Collaborative and Seattle Public Schools to reach more schools and to increase the number of school gardens.

Indicators:

- Number of new school gardens created because of P-Patch efforts
- Number of school children in new gardens reached because of P-Patch efforts
- Amount of food produced in new gardens because of P-Patch efforts
- Plan for use of city resources to support farm to school programs
- Number of meal sites and/or childcare providers using fresh local produce

4. Develop new and strengthen existing programs to incentivize patronage of farmers markets by low income community members.

OED, PHSKC, and HSD should ensure that all farmers markets in the City accept all federal food programs, including SNAP and FMNP. They should support the operation of EBT programs in these markets by offsetting the cost of the programs with in-kind and cash. PHSKC and OED should also partner with markets on efforts to raise private donations for incentive programs at farmers markets, e.g. double SNAP benefits. HSD, PHSKC and OED should also with WA Department of Health to raise SNAP-Education funds to integrate nutrition education and cooking demonstrations at farmers markets, but especially in low-income neighborhoods.

Farmers markets, like gardens, can be very effective experiential nutrition education tools. The City should also explore the possibility of partnering with nutrition associations, such as the American Dietetics Association or Society for Nutrition Education to bring volunteer nutritionists to the market to talk to shoppers about food safety, food handling, healthy eating, and tips on saving money, similar to the Stellar Farmers Markets Initiative in NYC.²⁷

Indicators:

- Number of farmers markets that accept SNAP and FMNP
- Amount of city support for operating EBT programs
- Number of programs at farmers markets that teach cooking
- Number of people participating in these programs and their assessment of the utility of the classes

- Dollar value of incentive programs at farmers markets and the number of people participating in them
- Number of people with whom nutritionists provide guidance
- Self-reported changes in dietary habits and repeat patronage of the farmers markets by above mentioned participants

5. Partner with Seattle Tilth on its master preserver certification course and with community colleges on cooking education

Seattle Tilth operates a Master Food Preserver Certification course. The City can increase the number of people who take this course through a collaboration with Seattle Tilth, which could include use of city facilities, promotion to city residents through utility bills, transit ads, and links to other city programs. Seattle Central and Seattle Community Colleges both offer culinary education programs. DON, Parks and Rec., and HSD should collaborate with these colleges to involve their culinary students in demonstration programs and other community-based training events and interventions.

Indicators:

- Number of people who take master preserver class
- Number of people reached through cooking demonstrations at community events
- Number of culinary students involved in community-based demonstrations/classes

6. Encourage the private sector to replace unhealthy food in their cafeterias and vending machines with healthier options

Through the bully pulpit and any necessary economic incentives, City departments should encourage other major institutions in Seattle (e.g. hospitals, colleges, universities, corporations, museums) to follow its lead in sourcing local and regional food, eliminating junk food from vending machines, and maintaining nutrition standards for foods served. The Mayor's Office should issue a challenge to these entities to do so, and make efforts to provide any technical support as needed. The Mayor's Office should issue an annual press release to acknowledge those entities that have "done the right thing."

Indicators:

- Number of entities that have changed their practices to serve healthier food
- Number of people served at these entities

²⁷ New York City Department of Mental Health and Hygiene. Physical Activity and Nutrition. Retrieved August 18, 2010. www.nyc.gov/html/doh/html/cdp/cdp_pan_health_bucks.shtml

GROW HEALTHY FOOD

Local Food Initiative Goal

Goal e) Increase access for all of Seattle's residents to healthy and local foods through: Increasing the opportunities for Seattle residents to purchase and grow healthy food in the city

Current Status of City Programs

General Overview

Seattle has a very rich background and community interest in urban agriculture. The Mayor and City Council recognized this in their February Proclamation declaring 2010 the Year of Urban Agriculture. Seattle's P-Patch Program is regarded as one of the nation's premiere community gardening programs, especially for its community building focus. The market gardening program it operates in conjunction with P-Patch Trust is an innovative effort to meet the needs and interests of the immigrant community.

Urban agriculture refers to the set of activities related to the production, processing and distributing of food within cities (or at times defined as within metropolitan areas). It includes food grown for household consumption, such as through home gardens and community garden plots. It can also include a wide range of food production for sale including aquaculture operations, rooftop gardens, urban farms and market gardens, greenhouse operations, and animal husbandry (such as honey, chickens and eggs). Finally, urban agriculture encompasses the set of necessary inputs, including tools, fertilizers, energy, agricultural chemicals, labor, packaging, and processing facilities, and the retail outlets needed to distribute them. In its totality, urban agriculture can make up a very substantial economic sector.

The rise in interest in local agriculture and food safety, as well as the tough times engendered by the recent recession has spurred resident interest in gardening. Currently the demand for community gardening plots outstrips demand; there are more persons on the waitlist for a P-Patch space than there are actual plots. While the P-Patch program can access \$2 million in park levy funds to start new gardens, it does not have adequate funds to operate and maintain those gardens. To meet current demand would require extensive capital costs as well as substantial programmatic budget increases. Similarly, the success of the Market Garden programs has revealed the opportunity for program expansion and continued outreach to the immigrant community in particular. This program has shown the potential for urban agriculture as an economic development tool. At the broader community level, a plethora of gardening/ urban farming organizations and companies have sprung up, indicating the "growth" potential for this new green industry. While connected through various networks and coalitions, most of these entities are not formally linked to City government.

The infrastructure of the City's policies and programs lags behind community demand in urban agriculture. The recently proposed land use and enacted planting strip changes move the City in the right direction, but more is needed to coordinate the substantial resources within the public sector as well as to provide incentives for expanded urban food production.

Specific City Activities

The City of Seattle currently interfaces with urban agriculture through the following programs and policies:

- The Mayor and City Council proclaimed 2010 as the Year of Urban Agriculture. This public education campaign included a dedicated website for urban agricultural resources, proposed zoning code changes to support urban farming, and more.
- The Department of Neighborhoods operates the P-Patch Program. P-Patch oversees 73 community gardens spanning 23 acres, and serving 2056 plots. Currently the wait list for plots has 2069 households.
- The Department of Neighborhoods operates the Market Garden Program. In 2009, Seattle Market Gardens provided produce for approximately 79 households over 22 weeks. It had two community supported agriculture (CSA) gardens located and farmed by residents in Southeast and Southwest Seattle. Seattle Market Gardens is a collaboration between P-Patch and P-Patch Trust.
- Department of Parks and Recreation will be offering garden education programs in Rainier Valley. These garden classes and programs for adults, teens, and children will be offered at Rainier, Rainier Beach and Van Asselt community centers. They will be engaging teens through Late Night and other youth-based programs to learn about gardening and engage them within their healthy community.
- Department of Parks and Recreation offers container gardening and composting classes (in collaboration with Seattle Tilth) for apartment and condominium dwellers in the downtown area. In 2009, they offered 15 classes at parks.
- Human Services Department works with subsidized housing projects to install raised beds for gardening to improve the health of seniors, especially those suffering from depression.
- The Department of Neighborhoods' Matching Fund Tree Fund supports communities to plant trees, which include fruit and nut-bearing varieties. Neighborhood groups can receive up to 10-40 trees including one fruit tree.

- On former City park land, community groups are planning the Rainier Beach Urban Farm at the former Atlantic City Nursery site.

Urban Agriculture Objectives

The City should incorporate the following goals, as it seeks to be the city most supportive of urban agriculture in the US:

- 2015 new P-Patch plots are created by the year 2015.
- The Comprehensive Plan, zoning code, and other policy tools support urban agriculture in Seattle.
- City agencies coordinate to support urban agriculture initiatives, making effective use of City resources for this purpose.
- Non-profit, private sector, and other public sector (e.g. WSDA, WSU) organizations involved in urban agriculture are linked with the Department of Neighborhoods, as the established city liaison on urban agriculture) in a structured manner.
- Urban agriculture is developed as a vibrant new business sector, especially to catalyze job training and business development for socially disadvantaged communities



Recommended Strategies

1. Fully fund P-Patch program to meet resident demand for community gardening space

The City should provide adequate funding to P-Patch to double the number of new garden plots by 2015, with corresponding increases in staffing.

In addition, P-Patch will need a substantial influx of capital for land acquisition and hard costs associated with starting enough new gar-

dens to meet demand. DON in conjunction with P-Patch Trust should create innovative funding mechanisms to raise this capital, including grant funding, the creation of an endowment, and business partnerships and sponsorships.

Indicators:

- Amount of funding in annual budget for P-Patch
- Number of P-Patch plots available and in acquisition or preparation process
- Amount of funding raised from private sources
- Established process for raising funds from private sources
- Number of new plots created
- Number of new households gardening

2. Develop partnerships with City agencies and community groups to increase the amount of urban agriculture and community garden space

Funding is not the only obstacle nor pathway to increasing the number of community gardens in Seattle. City agencies and non-profit groups need to coordinate to take advantage of this unique opportunity to build community gardening in the City. Some of the steps needed are also transferable for the expansion of urban agriculture in the City overall.

DPD with DON's help should conduct an inventory of public lands to determine which ones might be suitable for community gardening and farming. City land such as rights of way, SPU-owned land such as lidded reservoirs, alleys, public utilities, underutilized school sites, roof tops of city buildings are all possible farm and garden sites. Other city agencies have programs and resources that can be better coordinated to DON to foster additional opportunities for farming and gardening projects. This coordination has numerous benefits including gaining the buy-in from other agencies and constituencies for gardening programs; developing programs with multiple benefits; and making better use of limited city resources.

- DON should work with DPR to develop gardens at community centers
- HSD should connect individuals to gardening programs through PeoplePoint.
- OSE and DON should encourage planting of edible fruit and nut trees throughout the City.
- The City ReLeaf Program should be include fruit and nut trees as options.

- P-Patch and P-Patch Trust should raise funds to develop a train the trainer program to create a cadre of community garden organizers, using the P-Patch model. These trainers would facilitate the rapid expansion of community gardening throughout Seattle without being dependent on City funds.
- P-Patch should develop partnerships with other City agencies and community groups to support the creation of new gardens, as a means of reducing staffing and capital costs (although a train the trainers program will be needed to develop the human resources needed to implement this effort).

Photo: Tammy Morales



Indicators:

- Number of new community gardens and garden plots created
- Number of new fruit and nut trees planted
- Number of new community gardens or garden plots created at community centers
- Number of persons whose capacity to start community gardens has been augmented
- Inventory of lands completed
- Number of urban food production sites developed on inventoried lands
- Involvement and commitment of other agencies besides DON to urban food production

3. Remove zoning and other policy barriers to urban food production

The Department of Planning and Development in conjunction with Dept. of Neighborhoods and urban agriculture-oriented community groups has taken a great first step in suggesting zoning and

other changes to remove barriers to urban agriculture. DPD should undertake a complete analysis to identify barriers and incentives to urban food production. It should then recommend to Council language that incorporates urban agriculture into the Comprehensive Plan as well as any code changes that would remove barriers to or provide incentives for urban food production.

DPD should also improve usage of Priority Green with outreach and incentives for project related community gardens and/or food production.

Indicators:

- Completion of urban agriculture policy inventory
- Inclusion of language supporting urban agriculture in Comprehensive Plan
- Zoning code or other land use mechanisms passed by Council to incentivize urban agriculture
- Number of Project Green-related facilities with community gardens or other food production

4. Convene an Urban Agriculture Summit

Department of Neighborhoods with the support of Office of the Mayor should convene an Urban Agriculture Summit as a capstone to its Year of Urban Agriculture campaign for public agency staff and community groups working on urban food production. The purpose of this event should be to educate attendees about the work being done across the spectrum, to explore future networking options between City and community agencies, and to consider the possibility of creating a joint Seattle urban agriculture strategic plan.

Indicators:

- Number of attendees at the Summit
- Percentage of conference attendees who reported that the event met their expectations.
- Percentage of conference attendees who reported that they learned about other groups' activities
- Establishment of formalized communication mechanisms between City and community groups. If so, number of people participating and from what sectors.
- Outcomes of increased communication, e.g. new projects
- Completion of a strategic plan

5. Develop and implement urban agriculture business strategy

The Office of Economic Development should conduct a business plan for advancing urban agriculture as an economic development opportunity. This plan should determine the potential market, financing needs, input needs, land inventory, distribution needs, physical infrastructure needs, sales mechanisms, capacity building needs for urban farmers – as well as the educational opportunities for cultivating a new crop of urban farmers, within the immigrant community and beyond. It should examine the innovations taking place in other municipalities within the US, such as Detroit, and outside the country such as Havana. This analysis should incorporate a triple bottom line approach. One element of doing so is to consider the potential for job creation and business development especially from an equity perspective, i.e. ways to engage underserved communities in this area as a “green jobs” strategy. Also, this business plan should take into account cost savings to the City and County in social and human services, public health, policing, environmental remediation, maintenance, as well as an increased property tax base. The City should then implement this business plan as appropriate.

Indicators:

- Creation of a comprehensive urban agriculture sector business plan
- Number of new jobs created in urban agriculture sector
- Increase in revenue of urban agriculture products sold
- Increase in property tax base in areas near urban agriculture projects

PURCHASE HEALTHY FOOD: FARMERS MARKETS

Local Food Initiative Goal

Goal e): “Increase access for all of Seattle’s residents to healthy and local foods through: Increasing the opportunities for Seattle residents to purchase and grow healthy food in the city.”

Current Status of City Programs

General Overview

Seattle’s farmers markets have never been more popular. Business is booming at existing markets, and many neighborhoods are clamoring for the creation of new markets. Yet the land tenure of some existing markets has been jeopardized because they have been located on private land slated for development. Community concern for the permanence of these neighborhood institutions has driven the City to find avenues for reducing the bureaucratic maze that new markets must face.

Specific City Activities

- The Office of Economic Development OED manages the City’s relationship with all 14 farmers markets in Seattle. OED’s business services team works closely with markets to help them identify potential locations (including city owned land and street closures) for permanent sites. OED worked with SDOT, Parks, and Fire and led the development of a more predictable and efficient permitting process for farmers markets.
- Parks and Recreation works with OED and the Farmers Market Association, and have recently added two Farmers Markets on parks: Magnolia and Albert Davis in Lake City. They offer the farmers markets at a reduced rate than usually allowed to give incentive for markets to open, and also support them by educating and informing the public about the markets.
- Seattle Department of Transportation (SDOT) has worked with OED, Parks, and Seattle Fire Department (SFD) on implementation of a 2009 ordinance streamlining the permit process for farmers markets. OED will serve as the main contact to facilitate a ‘one-stop’ permit process if the market meets the definition as provided in the new joint Director’s Rule.

As part of this program, SDOT now only requires one permit per year and does not require site inspections. Ordinance 123090 was approved by City Council and the Mayor in September 2009 that established the Farmers’ Market program.

Farmers Markets Objectives

- Farmers markets are guaranteed long term tenure.
- New farmers markets or farmstands in low income communities are created part of a broad food access strategy

Recommended Strategies

1. Incorporate farmers markets into the Comprehensive Plan

As referred to under goal f, DPD should develop (and recommend to City Council for passage) a food systems element of the Comprehensive Plan that includes farmers markets as a best use of City and private land on a re-occurring periodic basis.

Indicators:

- Existence of food system element that supports farmers markets as a best use of land in the Comprehensive Plan
- 2. Establish long term farmers market locations by using city land and or creating joint use agreements with schools*

The City can ensure that farmers market locations have a degree of permanency by encouraging them to be sited on city-owned land, and by creating joint use agreements with Seattle Schools. These markets may be located on City streets (in conjunction with SDOT), in parks (with the support of Parks and Rec.), or other City-owned land. OED, as the main conduit to farmers markets, should manage this process in conjunction with farmers market organizations, taking into account market tradition and site needs.

Indicators:

- Land tenure status of farmers markets in Seattle
- Ownership status (public/private) of land that farmers markets sit on
- Number of farmers markets that change location for year to year or go out of business because of land tenure problems

3. Evaluate and improve one stop permitting process

OED should evaluate its new permitting process and new regulations for farmers markets through interviews or surveys of market managers and/or organizers. The results of the survey should be used to improve the regulations.

Indicators:

- Market managers satisfaction with regulatory approach

4. Provide incentives, ease regulations and partner with community groups to develop farmers' markets in low-income communities

In response to the request of community groups for farmers markets in low-income neighborhoods, OED should engage DON and PHSKC to develop a comprehensive strategy to attract and retain farmers markets or farmstands. This may include easing the permitting process, subsidizing the market through business incentives or CDBG funds, and ensuring that federal nutrition assistance program benefits, such as WIC, Farmers Market Nutrition Program and SNAP are taken at the market. In some cases, PHSKC or other partners may need to subsidize the operation of electronic benefit transfer (EBT) systems at the markets, and find private funding for incentive programs (such as double coupons) at the market.

Indicators:

- Number of farmers markets in food deserts and in low SES communities
- Annual Sales at farmers markets in food deserts and in low SES communities

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

Local Food Initiative Goal

Goal e) Supporting new opportunities for distribution of locally and regionally produced food

Existing City Role

The Office of Economic Development offers a wide range of services to the local business community that benefit food system related enterprises. This includes support for business districts, financing through a variety of mechanisms, technical assistance, and workforce development in conjunction with the Seattle King County Workforce Development Council. It also has developed specific programs and gathered information on food-related businesses. These include:

- An analysis of the Seattle maritime cluster, which includes the fishing industry.²⁸
- An analysis of food related businesses in the Basic Industries Economic Impact Analysis²⁹
- Loan programs for energy efficiency improvements in grocery stores³⁰
- An initiative to support healthy corner stores³¹
- Regulation and support for farmers markets

Food-Related Economic Development Objectives

- Seattle has the nation's leading cluster of local food system businesses- including input manufacturers and distributors, food producers, processors, retailers, and distributors- as measured by jobs and economic output.

Recommended Strategies

1. *Conduct an assessment of the local food system workforce needs and develop programs and partnerships to meet those needs.*

²⁸ Sommers, Paul and Wenzl Andrew. (2009, May) Seattle's Maritime Cluster. Retrieved August 18, 2010 (http://www.seattle.gov/EconomicDevelopment/pdf_files/Seattle%20Maritime%20Study%20-%202009.pdf)

²⁹ City of Seattle Office of Economic Development. (2009, July) Basic Industries. Economic Impact Analysis. Retrieved August 18, 2010 [http://www.seattle.gov/EconomicDevelopment/pdf_files/CAI%20BasicIndustries%202009%200803%20Fin al.pdf](http://www.seattle.gov/EconomicDevelopment/pdf_files/CAI%20BasicIndustries%202009%200803%20Final.pdf)

³⁰ City of Seattle Office of Economic Development. Retrieved August 18, 2010. http://www.cityofseattle.net/economicdevelopment/business_incentives.htm

³¹ Personal Communication, Erin MacDougall Seattle King County Public Health Department, May 15, 2010

A robust local food economy can employ thousands of new workers, many of which may need training. OED should partner with Seattle King County Workforce Council and community colleges, such as Seattle Central, which has started a new urban agriculture program, to develop the vocational programs needed. OED may need to recruit and train new farmers to increase food production in the area. It should look toward at-risk youth, immigrant communities, agriculture schools in land grant universities, and existing sustainable agriculture apprenticeship programs for these new farmers. The City should consider working with WSU to re-orient their agricultural programs to support local food production based education.

OED should also consider partnerships with youth gardening programs to find program graduates that would like to continue farming. OED may also need to support programs that connect beginning farmers with farmland to ensure that the local food supply meets demand. Funding for these programs can come from USDA Beginning Farmer, Risk Management Community Outreach Partnership, job training, and violence prevention programs.

Indicators:

- The number of new jobs created in food system related fields
- The average pay of these jobs
- The number of new farmers in Seattle, King County and the Puget Sound region and the increase in production of food for local consumption
- The number of persons – and how many are immigrants, youth, or come from disadvantaged backgrounds – passing through food-related workforce development training
- Funding expended on food related workforce development efforts

2. Implement business incubator and technical assistance programs for small food production, processing, distribution and retailing enterprises, especially for those focused on sustainably-produced, locally or regionally grown, or culturally-specific foods.

OED should develop programs to incentivize the development of – and support the success of – small food-related businesses. This may entail partnering with other entities to start kitchen incubator programs for caterers and small food processors, or helping to start marketing cooperatives for local food producers. OED may also providing micro-credit, loans and loan guarantees for new businesses, or provide technical assistance as needed. These efforts should be integrated into other OED and non-OED food-related initiatives, including farmers markets (as places to sell their products), green carts and market gardening (as possible recipients of assistance),

local food procurement (as vendors to the City). Federal funding for these efforts can be found through USDA Healthy Urban Food Enterprise Development grants; Rural Development; Community Facilities grants; Small Business Administration grants; the pending Fresh Food Financing Initiative.

Indicators:

- The number of new food-related businesses, the number of jobs created, and the dollar value of sales fostered through these efforts
- The number of immigrants, women, and socially disadvantaged persons supported to become business owners through these efforts

3. Implement an industrial retention policy for the food processing sector

OED should explore creating an industrial retention policy to support existing and new food processing businesses. This policy would create financial incentives and streamline regulations to allow these businesses to flourish.



ACCESS TO HEALTHY FOOD

Local Food Initiative Goal

Goal e): “Increase access for all of Seattle’s residents to healthy and local foods through: Addressing disparities in access to healthy foods in inadequately served populations and neighborhoods.”

Existing City Role

- The Office of Economic Development (OED) manages a healthy corner store incentive program under a partnership with Public Health Seattle King County. OED will leverage

additional funds to support credit enhancement incentive funds (including grants, interest buy-downs, partial equity, and rebates). \$1.1 million of CPPW funds will be dedicated to providing business incentives to increase the amount of healthy food available through retail outlets in under-served communities. Participating businesses will have access to a menu of services, including merchandising and inventory management consultations; assistance in finding low-cost suppliers; financial incentives including grants, rebates, and access to lending partners; and participation in promotion and marketing campaigns designed to increase demand for healthy foods.

Food Access Objectives

- All Seattle residents have access to healthy, affordable, and culturally appropriate food within .5 miles of their residence.
- The leakage of dollars for grocery purchases from low income Seattle communities is reduced by 50% by 2020.
- The number of living wage jobs in the food retail sector in low income communities is increased on an annual basis.

Recommended Strategies

1. Conduct both initial and on-going analysis and research on food access-related matters

- Using existing definitions from USDA and other sources, the Department of Planning and Development (DPD) should a) create a standardized city definition of “food desert” or similar such term that denotes a geographic area where access to healthy food is inadequate; b) create regular food gap analysis reports similar to open space gap analysis reports, on a periodic basis to reflect changes in the retail environment; and c) on a regular basis, determine the food balance scores of City neighborhoods, to indicate the ratio of fast food restaurants as compared to full service grocery stores. All of these reports can be used as planning tools to determine where action to increase food access, or to restrict formula fast food chain restaurants is most needed.
- DPD and OED in conjunction with the non-profit community and researchers should conduct regular grocery pricing surveys using standardized accepted methodology, and communicate this information to the public through non-profit partners.

Indicators:

- Creation of a standardized food desert definition and map of areas within the City fitting those characteristics
- Regular food gap analysis reports published

- Regular food balance scores for all city neighborhoods published
- Regular grocery price surveys published

2. Attract more full service supermarkets through incentives

- Once DPD has determined the extent of food deserts in the City, it and OED should partner on providing incentives for grocery stores to locate - or expand the amount of fresh produce - in targeted neighborhoods. These incentives may be zoning-related such as allowing additional floor area in mixed residential and commercial buildings, banning restrictive land use covenants on existing parcels that used to be supermarkets; and the reduction of parking requirements in food deserts and a higher than average percentage of residents in the trade area don't have vehicles. They may be tax-related such as real estate tax reductions and business and occupation tax exemptions. The incentives could also take the form of allowing for reclaiming of vacant properties by streamlining land acquisition process, and helping to actively scout sites. Seattle Housing Authority should give preference to development proposals for low-income housing which include grocery stores as part of retail component. Finally, OED could create a “one stop shop” for developers to gain all required permits, and to streamline environmental review process according to ability of the City.
- City Council and the Mayor's Office should ask the Governor and state legislature to explore the creation of a Washington State program similar to Pennsylvania's Fresh Food Initiative, to provide financing for healthy food retail in underserved communities across the state. The City's Lobbyist in Washington DC should also be directed to support the President's request for a national fresh food financing program in the Appropriations process.

Indicators:

- Number of new full service grocery stores and their square footage established as a result of new incentives
- Dollar value of incentives provided
- Number of full service grocery stores included with SHA sites
- Number of inquiries fielded by one-stop permitting process
- Creation of a Washington State Fresh Food Financing Initiative, dollars allocated to it, and the number of food retail establishments it helps to set up in Seattle

3. Support flexible low-cost, non-“bricks and mortar” forms of increasing food access

- As discussed under the urban agriculture section, the City should increase its commitment to community gardening and other forms of urban agriculture, especially in low income communities, where food access may be problematic.
- The Office of Economic Development (OED) should work with Public Health Seattle – King County to establish guidelines and incentives for the operation of food carts that serve healthy food, especially in food deserts, and near schools and parks.
- The Office of Economic Development (OED) should also explore incentivizing other forms of mobile vending, such as grocery trucks, in food desert communities.
- The Office of Economic Development (OED) should explore mechanisms for facilitating the siting of farmers markets in food deserts, including through partnerships with foundations and non-profit organizations to subsidize the markets' operations. This may include double coupons for SNAP recipients, eliminating permitting and stall fees, or anchoring the markets in institutional settings, such as hospital parking lots. OED should also consider business development and marketing assistance for socially disadvantaged farmers as well as prioritize startup funding through the Nonprofit Business Group for these markets.
- The City should partner with farmers markets operating in low income communities to promote and operate programs to accept SNAP (food stamps) benefits. Many farmers markets do not have the capacity to staff programs that transfer EBT cards to market cash, and point of sale terminals can be costly (\$1000). The City should explore ways to promote these markets through its existing communication mechanisms, as well as identify volunteers or funding to support markets in this endeavor.

Indicators:

- Number of new food carts established that serve healthy food
- Number of mobile vending operations that serve healthy food
- Number of new farmers markets operating in food deserts
- Sustainability of above-mentioned farmers markets as determined by their longevity and sales trends
- Number of farmers markets that accept SNAP
- Dollar value of SNAP redeemed at farmers markets as attributable to city education campaigns and other incentives.

FOOD RECOVERY AND FOOD BANKING

Local Food Initiative Goal

Goal e) of the Local Food Initiative states: Increase access for all of Seattle's residents to healthy and local foods through: supporting increased recovery of surplus edible food from businesses and institutions for distribution to food banks and meal programs, and increasing the amount of fresh fruits, vegetables, dairy and meats in the food support system, including food banks and meal programs.

Current Status of City Programs

- Seattle Public Utilities operates the Food Recovery Program, diverting food from the waste stream through waste reduction pilot projects, and assisting food banks and meal programs to recover surplus edible food from the grocery and hospitality industries.
- The Human Services Department (HSD) operates emergency food assistance programs, subcontracting with 16 (out of 27) food banks run by NGOs to provide food. They receive approximately 25 tons of fresh produce from P-Patch gardens.
- HSD operates meal programs through emergency food assistance.
- HSD has contracts with Meals Partnership Coalition and Seattle Food Coalition that support the linkage between P-Patch and Lettuce Link's food bank gardening program with social services programs and food banks.

Food Recovery and Food Banking Objectives

- Eighty percent of edible food is diverted from the waste stream by 2020
- A minimum of 15% of all food served in emergency food assistance programs comes from local and regional sources by 2015, and a minimum of 25% by 2020.
- All foods distributed by food banks or other emergency food providers is certified as healthy food by 2015.

Recommended Strategies To Implement the Goal

1. Reduce edible food in the waste stream through collaborations with hospitality and grocery industries

SPU diverts edible food from the waste stream through assisting food banks and meal programs to recover food from grocery and hospitality industries. Through new refrigerated trucks and refrigeration equipment for existing trucks, as well as expanded education campaigns, SPU and its non-profit partners can increase the

amount of edible food they collect.

Indicators:

- Weight and volume of edible food diverted to charitable purposes
- Number of partners participating in this program

2. See Strategy # 1 under Procurement section



3. Set standards for all emergency food providers that receive City funding or in-kind support to only distribute food that meet healthy food guidelines

Food banks have been widely criticized for accepting donations – and re-distributing – unhealthy food products. The City along with PHSKC should provide a nudge to efforts to improve food bank nutrition in Seattle by setting nutrition standards for all emergency food providers that receive City or County funds. These standards should be for all foods distributed by the entity, and should be gradually introduced (e.g. 50% by 2012; 75% by 2015; and 100% by 2017). The standards should be based on Institute of Medicine guidelines for school meals, and may include such guidelines as:

- Not more than 30% calories from fat (excluding nuts and seeds);
- Not more than 10% of calories from saturated fat;
- No trans fats (hydrogenated and partially hydrogenated oils);
- No more than 30% total weight from sugar and caloric sweeteners (excluding fruits and vegetables that have not been processed with added sweeteners).

Indicators:

- Volume and weight of healthy and unhealthy foods distributed by emergency food providers with which the City has a contractual relationship

HUMAN SERVICES

Local Food Initiative Goal

This issue is addressed in *Goal e*) of the Local Food Initiative: Support food system activities that encourage the use of local and renewable energy resources and minimize energy use and waste including: Addressing the needs of vulnerable populations, such as children, people living with disabilities and seniors to accessing adequate, healthy food.

Existing City Role

- The Department of Parks and Recreation (DPR) partners with senior service providers and offers four Food and Fitness Programs that provide the opportunity for ethnic elders to congregate and celebrate their culture and language around healthy food. Participants received a healthy lunch, as well as vital social, educational and fitness programs.
- DPR partners with Human Services Department's (HSD) Summer Sack Lunch Program, and provides lunches for youth at our Community Learning Centers, through the Families and Education Levy-funded program and at all community center sites that have summer programs. Participants either receive a healthy breakfast and lunch or a healthy lunch and a snack as part of the program.
- The PeoplePoint: Bridge to Benefits program connects people to benefits – food assistance is one aspect of the program, which includes school meals, Basic Food (food stamps) WIC and, food banks.
- HSD liaisons with the Public Health Department, on food and nutrition and other issues.
- HSD operates the Summer Food Program, sponsoring approximately 100 sites each summer across the City and parts of King County. HSD subcontracts with Seattle Public Schools to prepare food.
- Elder Meal Programs including Congregate Meals and home delivered meals are also operated by HSD.
- HSD also works with seniors through the Senior Farmers Market Program, providing \$40/person for 5,000 seniors (the State adds funds as well).

- HSD will be connecting elder meal program providers with local farmers in a Farm to Table project.

Human Services & Food Objectives

- Seattle has the highest rate of participation in the SNAP program of any major US city by 2015
- Seattle has the lowest food insecurity rates of any major US city by 2015
- A minimum of 15% of all food served in City programs comes from local and regional sources by 2015, and a minimum of 25% by 2020.

Recommended Strategies

1. Incorporate outreach on SNAP into City programs and partner with other public and private entities

In collaboration with WA Dept of Health and USDA, Human Services Department and OED should develop and implement a comprehensive and innovative campaign to increase Seattle residents' participation in the SNAP program. The SNAP program can be an important economic boon for Seattle food retail, as well as reduce food insecurity. This campaign should include transit providers, utility companies, grocery stores, health care settings, parks, schools, churches, and any other venues where SNAP-eligible populations congregate. This effort should make use of federal SNAP outreach funds, private funds, and City economic development funds to run this campaign, which should combine a social marketing approach with a more labor-intensive community organizing approach. Innovative and visible efforts should be included as a way of reducing the social stigma associated with SNAP benefits.

Indicators:

2. Develop a comprehensive strategy to reduce poverty in Seattle through establishing a living wage in Seattle (and King County) and supporting affordable housing.

Research has demonstrated that food insecurity is highest among families with children. Food insecurity and hunger are largely outcomes of poverty. HSD and OED should develop a comprehensive strategy to reduce poverty in Seattle for passage by Council and the Mayor. This strategy should include job creation targeted at vulnerable communities, establishing a living wage in the City (and ideally in King County as well), and efforts to increase the amount of affordable housing.

3. See Procurement Strategy # 1

As with other City-based food procurement, Seattle should establish targets for the composition of Elder and student meals with

regards to local, regional and sustainably-produced. HSD will need to inventory existing food programs to determine the source of existing meals, and set appropriate targets by 2012, 2015 and 2020. These targets will need to be aligned with federal nutritional standards for federally-funded programs (such as Summer Food). Because these programs often have very low reimbursement rates for food purchase, HSD should reach out to DON, food banks, and statewide agricultural producers to incorporate products from local farms and gardens that are gleaned or sold at low cost.

Indicators:

- Passage of Local/Regional Food Purchasing Policy
- Dollar value and poundage of locally and regionally produced food purchased by City agencies on an annual basis
- Identification and implementation of tracking tools
- Definition of "local" and "regional" food codified by City government

FOOD, LAND USE, AND TRANSPORTATION PLANNING

Local Food Initiative Goal

Goal f) Integrate food system policies and planning into City land use, transportation and urban activities.

Current Status of City Programs

General Overview

Seattle is one of the few cities with urban agriculture in its Comprehensive Plan, yet in general food systems are not included in the Plan. This omission, typical of cities across the country, has meant a lost opportunity for codifying and institutionalizing food system planning. Similarly, regional planning for food security has been weak in the Puget Sound area, resulting in a loss of valuable farmland. Finally at the neighborhood level, while Seattle has been very forward looking in terms of pedestrian and bicycle planning, there has been little attention given to food access in multi-modal transit planning.

Specific City Programs

Seattle's land use planning and transportation policies intersect with the food system in the following areas:

- The Comprehensive Plan includes language under the urban village element (UV53, 57) that establishes goals for community gardens within certain neighborhoods; and under the Human Development Element (HD11, 13) that encourages efforts to support the charitable food system.

- Priority Green permit program includes food security and urban agriculture as eligible elements.
- Seattle’s Land Use Code provides definitions for “agricultural use,” “animal husbandry” and “horticulture.” Recently enacted code changes include allowing community gardens as permitted uses in all zones, with restriction in industrial zones; allowing urban farms in certain zones; allowing rooftop greenhouses a 15 foot height exception if they produce food in certain zones; adding farmers markets to definition of multi-purpose uses; and increasing the number of chickens in urban residential lots from three to eight (no roosters allowed).
- Seattle Dept. of Transportation regulates usage of planting strips, sidewalk cafes, street vendors, and general right of way.
- The Office of Economic Development is the main point of contact for farmers markets to access permits.
- Seattle Dept of Transportation also staffs the City’s Bicycle Master Plan and Pedestrian Master Plan. The incorporation of grocery shopping into these plans affects city expenditures on street-level infrastructure.

Land Use and Transportation Planning Objectives

- Food systems considerations are integrated into all City and Regional land use and transportation planning on a regular basis

Recommended Strategies

1. Insert food into Land Use Planning Processes

Currently, the food system is not included in the City’s Comprehensive Plan except under urban village and human services elements. City Council should update the Plan to include at a minimum the integration of food system uses into the Land Use Element, or more ideally a separate element. The benefit of a separate Food Systems Element is that it would more fully encompass the range of food-related activities in which the City engages, including but beyond land use. It also would convey the importance of food systems to Seattle’s economy, culture, and social fabric. Finally, food systems should also be integrated into neighborhood plan updates. All of these changes should be completed with significant public input.

Indicators:

- Existence of food system element (or food in the Land Use Element) in the Comprehensive Plan
- Inclusion of food system components in Neighborhood Plan Updates

2. Provide leadership through the Puget Sound Regional Food Policy Council

The City should play a lead role in shaping the direction for this new body. This FPC can be instrumental in supporting a regional food system for the Greater Seattle area, especially as it has under its jurisdiction numerous farms that provide food for Seattle residents. In part, the City can provide leadership through communicating the importance of this effort to other municipalities under the PSRC’s jurisdiction, and by dedicating capable and enthusiastic staffing to this effort.

Indicators:

- Amount of time City staff dedicate to the Puget Sound FPC
- Seniority level of staff dedicated to Puget Sound FPC
- Creation of a plan to protect regional farmland and food self-sufficiency

3. Codify Food Systems into Transportation Planning

SDOT should incorporate food systems into its Transportation Strategic Plan update, and include the goal of shifting transportation (walking, biking, and riding transit) toward local food access (e.g. plan bicycle and pedestrian facilities to improve access to grocery stores). SDOT should also work with King County Metro Transit to ensure transit planning supports food access. In addition, SDOT should connect its Bicycle and Pedestrian Master Plans with healthy food retail as a means of encouraging food shopping on foot or by bike.

Indicators:

- Inclusion of food access into transportation strategic plan
- Inclusion of food access into transit system planning
- Inclusion of food access into bike and pedestrian master plans

4. Build the capacity of DPD and SDOT staff to effectively integrate food systems into their work

Land use and transportation planners are not typically trained in food systems. The City should invest in professional development to train targeted staff in these issues through attending conferences, classes at University of Washington, and networking with colleagues. In addition, funding permitting, DPD in particular should hire a food systems planner on staff (Vancouver, BC has such staffing already).

PARTNERSHIPS

Local Food Initiative Goal

Goal g) Develop and enhance partnerships within the City, as well as regionally, to research and promote local solutions to food issues.

Current Status of City Programs

- City Council and the Mayor passed a measure declaring 2010 the Year of Urban Agriculture



Partnership Objectives

- The City of Seattle plays a leadership role in the development and operation of the new regional and state food policy councils.
- The City of Seattle has productive relationships with higher educational institutions in the region and state on food systems-related research.
- The City of Seattle has an effective mechanism for communicating with the general public and food systems-related groups about City related activities.

Recommended Strategies

1. *Dedicate high-level staffing to regional and state food policy councils*

As the largest city in the region and the state, Seattle will benefit from – and has an obligation to – ensure that both the new Puget Sound and Washington state food policy councils are effective policy advisory bodies. The City should dedicate a high level staff person at (ideally the same person who is working with the IDT) to represent the City's interests on these councils, and to provide supplemental staffing to the Councils. Resolution 31202, adopted on April 26, 2010 encourages such cooperation and consultation.

Indicators:

- Amount of time City of Seattle staff dedicates to the regional and state food policy councils
- Self-reported effectiveness in assisting in the successful implementation of these councils

2. *Establish research partnerships with WSU, University of Washington and community colleges on food systems-related issues*

As the food system remains a new field, little research has been done on its numerous aspects in Seattle. There remain significant gaps in our knowledge about the way food is produced, distributed and processed in Seattle, and the related impacts on the environment, cultures, health, and communities in general. To complement the City's limited research capacity, its various agencies should establish agreements with their counterparts at public and private colleges and universities to undertake research projects of mutual value. These research projects should be driven by the needs of City government to make effective policy, be based on community participation, and have little or no financial impact for the City. Some potential research projects include evaluations of existing or proposed programs, health impact assessments, community food assessments, GIS mapping, economic analysis, and resident and program user surveys and interviews.

Indicators:

- Number of research projects done in collaboration between universities and Seattle government
- Self-reported effectiveness of these research projects for policy and program decision-making

3. *Establish communication mechanisms such as a single web portal for food system related activities*

Effective communication between the City and the public is essential for underscoring the importance of this initiative as well as for engaging community participation. The Year of Urban Agriculture website has been a great starting place for a more comprehensive web portal. This portal should contain at a minimum: IDT, Puget Sound and WA Food Policy Council meeting minutes and reports; information on resources on food-related activities; progress reports on the local food action initiative; links to community groups; lists of farmers markets, P-Patches and other community food projects; links to state and national resources, agencies and organizations; calendar of events, and requests for comments on impending policy changes.

Indicators:

- Creation of a comprehensive City food systems web portal

- Number of hits on this site and individual pages
- Number of people rating this site good or excellent as determined by an on-line pop-up survey

INTER-DEPARTMENTAL FOCUS

Local Food Initiative Goal

Goal b) Establish a strong interdepartmental focus among City departments on programs and policies affecting food system sustainability and security.

Current Status of City Programs

- After having disbanded the Interdepartmental Team (IDT) in 2009, the City has reconstituted the Food Systems IDT in 2010 with new representatives from every department.

Interdepartmental Objectives

- The impacts of policy and programmatic decisions on the food system are made transparent.
- Communication and collaboration among City departments occurs on a regular basis, and is encouraged by budgeting and evaluation processes.
- City employees, beyond those on the IDT, are knowledgeable about food system-related policies and programs in the City.



Photo: Tammy Morales

Recommended Strategies

1. Integrate a food systems analysis in all major land use decisions and other policy changes by 2012 so that the community and policymakers are fully informed of the impact of their choices

Similar to environmental impact reporting, the City should incorporate a brief but thorough food system analysis into all major land

use decisions and policy changes. This analysis would be completed by the agency whose purview the policy change is under, but would be reviewed by the Food Systems IDT for completeness. The analysis should incorporate the following impacts at a minimum: farmland, health, food access, environment/climate, and vulnerable populations. A standardized process will need to be developed by DPD or OSE. It would also be made available to the public through the City's website.

Indicator:

- Number of policy changes and land use decisions that integrate food system analysis
- 2. Continue a vital and on-going IDT with adequate staffing.*

An on-going food systems IDT comprised of representatives from every major city department is an absolutely essential element of ensuring a strong interdepartmental focus on food issues. These representatives must have the full backing of the leadership of their departments as well as from the Mayor's Office and City Council. The IDT should be vested with the authority to oversee the implementation of the recommendations from this report as well as other coordinating activities.

Indicators:

- Number of times IDT meets per year
 - Role and power assigned to the IDT
 - Self-reported effectiveness of the IDT
- 3. Hold educational meetings for City staff on food system-related topics, both internal and externally related.*

Understanding how City policies and programs impact the food system, as well as the nature of Seattle's food system should be more than just the responsibility of the IDT members. Departments should hold periodic educational events, such as brown bag lunch seminars, to inform their staff about specific topics related to the food system and the City's role in that issue. Similarly, all city department heads should meet annually to discuss food system-related policies, programs, and trends.

Indicators:

- Number of City staff that attend educational meetings
- Number of City staff attending these meetings that rate them as educational or valuable

FOOD PROCUREMENT

Local Food Initiative Goal

Goal: i. Support procurement policies that favor local and regional food sourcing.

Current Status of City Programs

The City of Seattle is not a large purchaser of food. It does purchase food for its elder programs, Head Start, vending machines at city parks, recreational facilities, and other sites, and for correctional facilities. City departments and agencies also purchase food on an ad hoc basis for events and other special occasions. There is no compiled data on the amount of food purchased by the City.

Food Procurement Objectives

- A minimum of 15% of all food procured by the City should come from local and regional sources by 2015, and a minimum of 25% by 2020.
- Only healthy foods are sold through vending machines in city-owned facilities

Recommended Strategies

1. Establish and implement preferences and targets for local and regional food at city facilities and programs.

Given the disparate nature of food purchasing by the City, the IDT should first inventory its existing food purchases, in the context of regulations and contracts that shape these purchases.

Working with regional and local farming groups, the IDT should identify possible local and regionally-produced substitutes for existing food purchases, and work with City Council and the Mayor's Office to pass a Local/Regional Food Purchasing Policy that codifies targets for local and regional food procurement by 2015 and 2020. This policy should include mechanisms for implementing these targets, such as bid discounts or preferential scoring. This report suggests baseline targets of 15% and 25%, but more ambitious targets may be possible.

As part of that legislation, the City will need to define for itself "local" and "regional." This report suggests that "local" be considered all areas West of the Cascades in the state of Washington, and "regional" to include WA, OR, and parts of Idaho and British Columbia within a 500 mile radius of Seattle.

With regards to implementing this policy, ideally the City should hire a qualified staffperson to take a leadership role in this process. This person would draft guidelines for local food procure-

ment; manage relationships with food producers and caterers; and coordinate with farm to cafeteria efforts at local schools, colleges and hospitals, and with WSU Extension's small farm programs. If that is not financially possible, individuals responsible for procurement within their agencies should coordinate efforts with existing resources, such as Washington's state farm to school program director (currently Tricia Kovacs at WSDA); and existing coalitions and initiatives such as EcoTrust's Food Hub and the Cascade Harvest Coalition.

Finally, the IDT should develop and obtain the implementation of tracking and evaluation tools to assess the City's progress. The Real Food calculator is one tool being piloted on college campuses that may be useful for the City.

Indicators

- Passage of Local/Regional Food Purchasing Policy
- Dollar value and poundage of locally and regionally produced food purchased by City agencies on an annual basis
- Identification and implementation of tracking tools
- Definition of "local" and "regional" food codified by City government

2. Restrict unhealthy foods from city owned facilities

Similar to the above-mentioned strategy, the IDT should inventory sales through its vending machines to determine which products are healthful and which ones are not, as well as potential barriers for replacing these items with healthier food.

The IDT should recommend regulations to Council and the Mayor's Office for passage to stipulate that only healthy foods be sold through vending machines at city-owned facilities. (The Bay Area Nutrition and Physical Activity Collaborative has numerous resources on its website to guide the IDT through this process.³²)

The City may need to renegotiate contracts with vending machine service companies to replace existing machines with ones that are more suitable for the sale of healthy foods, or to simply replace unhealthy products with healthier alternatives.

Indicators

- Inventory of existing vending machine sales with regards to healthy and unhealthy foods and companies that service these machines

³² Bay Area Nutrition and Physical Activity Collaborative Retrieved August 18, 2010. http://www.banpac.org/healthy_vending_machine_toolkit.htm

- Passage of regulations that govern the type of food to be sold on City property through vending machines
- Implementation of regulations within stipulated timeframe, i.e. do all of the foods sold meet healthy food guidelines

EMERGENCY PREPAREDNESS

Local Food Initiative Goal

Goal j) Enhance emergency preparedness related to food access and distribution including working toward the goal of establishing regional capacity for feeding the population for 2-3 months in an emergency.

Current Status of City Programs

The Office of Emergency Management issued Seattle's Disaster Readiness and Response Plan incorporates feeding of the population after a disaster under Emergency Support Function (ESF).

Six: Mass care, Housing and Human Services. ESF-6 is under the jurisdiction of the Human Services Division. ESF-6 contemplates opening city shelters and providing for meals, as well as trying to provide food and water to residents who can stay at their own homes. The Plan assumes that residents have three days of food stocks from which they can draw: "In the event grocery stores are unable to return to operating conditions within 72 hours, affected communities may need access to water and food and commodities, which they will prepare themselves." It also describes how the City will access food to feed the population: "The City of Seattle does not maintain food stocks or meals on an everyday basis for mass meals. Instead, ESF-6 has identified both public and private sources of food stuffs and other supplies that can be converted from normal use to support an ongoing mass care operation during times of emergency."³³ This plan does not include a regional food self-reliance component: "The lone exception is ESF-11, Agriculture and Natural Resources, which has limited relevance to a major urban center with zoning restrictions for agriculture and livestock."³⁴

Food-related Emergency Preparedness Objectives

- Seattle emergency planners fully understand the City's food needs and capacities, as well as the ability for regional food self-reliance during disasters.
- Seattle's Disaster Readiness and Response Plan includes completed plans for expanding regional and municipal food self-reliance.
- By the year 2030, the Puget Sound region has in place the capacity for food production and distribution of sufficient food for the region's residents for three months in case of disaster

Recommended Strategies

1. Conduct an analysis of the city's food needs during natural and man-made disasters and the region's food production capacity

OEM should undertake a comprehensive analysis of the food production (farming, fishing, ranching, and processing) and distribution capacity of Seattle and the larger Puget Sound region in the context of its residents needs during a major natural or man-made disaster. This analysis should also examine the policy and marketplace mechanisms for increasing this food production and distribution into Seattle. It should fill in any gaps from the April 2010 Eco-Praxis report, Data Compilation Background Report: Economic Opportunities Preliminary Analysis, Local Food Action Initiative, City of Seattle.

Indicator:

- Completion of analysis of city food needs and regional food production capacity

2. Partner with state and regional officials as well as private stakeholders groups to develop a strategic plan to build sufficient local and regional food reserves for emergencies

Based on the above-mentioned analysis, OEM should convene a wide array of public and private stakeholders including homeland security, agriculture interests, food banking, food policy council, and other emergency planners at the country, regional, state, and city levels to develop a strategic plan for boosting the region's food self-reliance. This plan should strive to develop the infrastructure for producing and distributing sufficient food for the region's population for two to three months. It should be noted that the implementation of this plan would allow the City to meet other goals related to supporting the regional food system and regional/local food procurement.

Indicators:

- Completion of a strategic food self-reliance plan
- Approval of the plan by City Council and the Mayor
- Implementation of benchmarks in the Plan

³³ City of Seattle Office of Emergency Management. Seattle Disaster Readiness and Response Plan, Volume II Retrieved August 18, 2010. (http://www.cityofseattle.net/emergency/library/SDRRP_VolumeTwo_linked.pdf)

³⁴ City of Seattle Office of Emergency Management. Seattle Disaster Readiness and Response Plan, Volume I Retrieved August 18, 2010. http://www.cityofseattle.net/emergency/library/SDRRP_VolumeOne_linked.pdf

Local Food Action Initiative Goals

These goals were used as a framework for creating strategies for Seattle Food System Policy.

- Strengthen community and regional food systems by linking food production, processing, distribution, consumption, and waste management to facilitate, to the extent possible, reliance on our region's food resources.
- Assess and mitigate the negative environmental and ecological effects relating to food system activities and goal c): Support food system activities that encourage the use of local and renewable energy resources and minimize energy use and waste including: Reducing food in our waste stream; Discouraging or restricting excessive and environmentally inappropriate food packaging at all levels of the food system (production, whole sale, retail and consumer), and Reducing the embedded and distributed climate impacts of Seattle's food system.
- Stimulate demand for healthy foods, especially in low-income communities, through collaboration with community-based organizations and institutions and Goal: Disseminating of food preparation and preservation knowledge through educational and community kitchen programs
- Increase access for all of Seattle's residents to healthy and local foods through: Increasing the opportunities for Seattle residents to purchase and grow healthy food in the city
- Support new opportunities for distribution of locally and regionally produced food
- Increase access for all of Seattle's residents to healthy and local foods through: Addressing disparities in access to healthy foods in inadequately served populations and neighborhoods.
- Increase access for all of Seattle's residents to healthy and local foods through: supporting increased recovery of surplus edible food from businesses and institutions for distribution to food banks and meal programs, and increasing the amount of fresh fruits, vegetables, dairy and meats in the food support system, including food banks and meal programs.
- Support food system activities that encourage the use of local and renewable energy resources and minimize energy use and waste including: Addressing the needs of vulnerable populations, such as children, people living with disabilities and seniors to accessing adequate, healthy food.
- Integrate food system policies and planning into City land use, transportation and urban activities.
- Develop and enhance partnerships within the City, as well as regionally, to research and promote local solutions to food issues.
- Establish a strong interdepartmental focus among City departments on programs and policies affecting food system sustainability and security.
- Support procurement policies that favor local and regional food sourcing.
- Enhance emergency preparedness related to food access and distribution including working toward the goal of establishing regional capacity for feeding the population for 2-3 months in an emergency.

SOURCES CONSULTED

MUNICIPAL RESOURCES

City of Cleveland, Ordinance Number 1660-A-09. http://caselaw.lp.findlaw.com/clevelandcodes/cco_part3_336.html
 Purchasing Policies Resolution http://www.greencitybluelake.org/images/food/food_contracts.pdf
 Preference for Local Producers, http://www.gcbl.org/system/files/cle_localfood_ord.pdf
 Food Charter http://www.greencitybluelake.org/images/food/food_charter.pdf

City of Minneapolis, (2009) Resolution 2009R-283, Recognizing the Importance of Healthy, Sustainably Produced and Locally Grown Foods and Creating the Homegrown Minneapolis Implementation Task Force, <http://www.ci.minneapolis.mn.us/council/2009-meetings/20090626/Docs/Homegrown-Resl.pdf>

City of New York

NYC Dept of Mental Health and Hygiene Healthy Bodegas Initiative http://www.nyc.gov/html/doh/html/cdp/cdp_pan_hbi.shtml
 NYC Dept of Mental Health and Hygiene, Stellar Farmers Market Initiative
http://www.nyc.gov/html/doh/html/cdp/cdp_pan_health_bucks.shtml#farmersmarket
 NYC Dept of Mental Health and Hygiene, Green Cart Program
http://www.nyc.gov/html/doh/html/cdp/cdp_pan_green_carts.shtml
 NYC Dept of City Planning. Press Release on Increasing and Retaining Grocery Stores in NYC
<http://www.nyc.gov/html/dcp/html/about/pr051609.shtml>
 Manhattan Boprough President's Food Charter Pledge, <http://www.nyc.gov/html/dcp/html/about/pr051609.shtml>

Stringer, Scott. (2009, February) Food In the Public Interest: How New York City's Food Policy Holds the Key to Hunger, Health, Jobs and the Environment. <http://www.mbpo.org/uploads/FoodInThePublicInterest.pdf>

City of San Francisco (2009, July) Executive Directive 09-03. Healthy and Sustainable Food for San Francisco.
http://www.sfgov3.org/ftp/uploadedfiles/sffood/policy_reports/MayorNewsomExecutiveDirectiveonHealthySustainableFood.pdf

City of Santa Monica Sustainable Food Report (2010)

City of Seattle

P-Patch 2009 Capital Investment Plan

SDOT, Gardening in Planting Strips, CAM 2305, May 09, 2009; <http://www.seattle.gov/transportation/cams/CAM2305.pdf>.

City of Toronto (2010, May). Cultivating Food Connections: Toward a Healthy and Sustainable Food System in Toronto.
<http://wx.toronto.ca/inter/health/food.nsf>

OTHER RESOURCES

Community Food Security Coalition

Food Policy Councils www.foodpolicycouncil.net
 Healthy Corner Store Network, <http://healthycornerstores.org/>

National Policy and Legal Analysis Research Network to Prevent Childhood Obesity

Establishing Land Use Protections at Farmers Markets, www.nplan.org

Establishing Land Use Protections for Community Gardens

<http://nplanonline.org/products/establishing-land-use-protections-community-gardens>

Healthy Mobile Vending Policies

<http://nplanonline.org/products/healthy-mobile-vending-policies-win-win-vendors-and-childhood-obesity-prevention-advocates>

Strategic Alliance to Prevent Childhood Obesity

ENACT Policy Database, <http://eatbettermovemore.org/sa/policies/>

Seattle Acting Food Policy Council, Mapping Food Insecurity and Access in Seattle and King County, May, 2008.

RESEARCH CONTACTS

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SUMMARY OF RECOMMENDATIONS

1. ENHANCE INTER-GOVERNMENTAL COORDINATION ON FOOD SYSTEM RELATED MATTERS

1	Establish a vital and on-going IDT with adequate staffing for inter-agency coordination, strategizing on next steps, and annual reporting to the Mayor, Council and the public.
2	Create and implement an assessment methodology to ensure that city departments are making progress on food system goals.
3	Partner with Seattle Public Schools to implement farm to school programs and school gardens
4	Dedicate high-level staffing to regional and state food policy councils
5	Provide leadership through the Puget Sound Regional Food Policy Council
6	Establish research partnerships with WSU, University of Washington and community colleges on food systems related issues
7	Partner with state and regional officials as well as private stakeholders groups to develop a strategic plan to build sufficient local and regional food reserves for emergencies
8	Hold educational meetings for city staff on food system-related topics, both internal and externally related.

2. SUPPORT HEALTHY AND SUSTAINABLE FOOD SYSTEMS THROUGH CITY POLICY

9	Integrate a food systems analysis in all major land use decisions such as zoning, transportation planning, city's Climate Action Plan, the Comprehensive Plan, and other policy changes
10	Reduce edible food in the waste stream and to increase composting of non-edible food and yard waste as essential inputs for organic food production
11	Reduce edible food in the waste stream through collaborations with hospitality and grocery industries
12	Remove zoning and other policy barriers to urban food production
13	Reduce food-related packaging through regulations, product bans, and incentives.
14	Establish and implement preferences and targets for local and regional food at city facilities and programs.
15	Restrict unhealthy foods from city owned facilities such as parks and buildings
16	Encourage the private sector to replace unhealthy food in their cafeterias and vending machines with healthier options

3. SUPPORT URBAN AGRICULTURE

17	Carry out a P-Patch Strategic Plan to determine needs and goals of the system.
18	Fully fund P-Patch program and develop partnerships with community groups to meet resident demand for community gardening space
19	Expand urban agriculture opportunities, including community and home gardens
20	Convene an Urban Agriculture Summit

4. INCREASE SEATTLE RESIDENTS KNOWLEDGE OF LOCAL FOOD RESOURCES

21	Hold an annual gathering of public, private and non-profit stakeholders in the food system to coordinate on strategies and gather community input into City policy and programs.
22	Partner with Seattle Tilth on its master preserver certification course and with community colleges on cooking education
23	Establish communication mechanisms such as a single web portal for food system related activities

5. FURTHER FOOD-RELATED ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT OPPORTUNITIES

24	Develop and implement urban agriculture business
25	Implement business incubator and technical assistance programs for small food production, processing, distribution and retailing enterprises, especially for those focused on sustainably-produced, locally or regionally grown, or culturally-specific foods.
26	Conduct an assessment of the local food system workforce needs and develop programs and partnerships to meet those needs.
27	Attract more full service supermarkets through incentives
28	Implement an industrial retention policy for the food processing sector
29	Develop new and strengthen existing programs to incentivize patronage of farmers markets

6. REDUCE SEATTLE RESIDENTS' HUNGER AND INCREASE FOOD SECURITY

30	Support flexible low-cost, non-"bricks and mortar" forms of increasing food access
31	Incorporate outreach on Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) into City programs and partner with other public and private entities
32	Incent grocery stores, farmers markets, food carts and other mobile vendors to locate in underserved communities.
33	Set healthy food goals for all emergency food providers that receive City funding or in-kind support
34	Conduct both initial and on-going analysis and research on food access-related matters
35	Conduct an analysis of the city's food needs during natural and man-made disasters and the region's food production capacity