

# 14. Food Systems



Image: DIALOG

## 14.1 Overview

Food is an integral part of our culture, our health, and our vitality. Municipal governments have an opportunity to increase the sustainability and the quality of life of their communities by supporting vibrant and robust food systems, which include production, processing, sales and distribution, and nutrient cycling. This OCP takes a systems-based approach to food, and considers all of these elements.

Colwood currently supports several community food and gardening initiatives, including support for the establishment of a community garden on City Hall property at 3300 Wishart Road. The Westshore Teaching Garden at Colwood School seeks to teach sustainable gardening practices to community members of all ages year-round. The City also created the Painter Trail Food Forest in 2016, connecting Wishart to Royal Bay, which includes many food producing plants.

At the same time, there are opportunities to improve access to food, as physical proximity to fresh foods is linked to health outcomes. In Colwood, only 13% of residents live within a 10-minute walk of a grocery store.

## 14.2 Objectives and Policies

### Objective: 14.2.1

To strengthen all elements of the local food system in order to increase access to local, nutritious, safe, and culturally appropriate food.

#### IMPLEMENTATION

- **ACTION:** The City should incorporate policy directions relating to food production, farmer's markets, and food celebrations in the new Parks Master Plan.
- **TIMING:** Before 2023



Long-term temporary community garden on a vacant lot that activates an otherwise unused property.

#### POLICY 14.2.1.1 FOOD PRODUCTION

Encourage food production in both public and private realms by:

- a. Permitting community gardens in all commercial residential, and public zones;
- b. Encouraging and establishing additional non-commercial community and demonstration gardens where feasible in parks, rights of way, vacant lots, and private developments;
- c. Encouraging the distribution of community gardens and other food production spaces across the City, prioritizing areas of higher residential density, in order to maximize the number of residents who live within walking distance of one;
- d. Consider allowing neighbourhood residents and/or organizations to manage pocket parks as community gardens.
- e. Encouraging the provision of private allotment gardens in new residential and mixed-use developments;
- f. Encouraging and establishing informal edible landscaping, with fruit and seed-bearing species, in both public and private lands;
- g. Supporting the establishment of bee hives in both public and private lands; and
- h. Exploring the viability of animal husbandry in residential areas.

#### POLICY 14.2.1.2 AGRICULTURAL LAND RESERVE

Continue support for protection of Agricultural Land Reserve (ALR) lands within Colwood including Colwood Creek Park, Royal Colwood Golf Course, and ALR areas near the Lagoon, so as not to preclude the possibility of agricultural uses in the future.

#### POLICY 14.2.1.3 TRADITIONAL USES

Work with local First Nations to identify areas of traditional food use and harvesting.

## IMPLEMENTATION

- **ACTION:** The City should develop a Food Systems Strategy to implement food system policies in this OCP, in addition to including relevant policies and strategies in the new Parks Master Plan.
- **TIMING:** 2023 or later



Food fairs and markets increase access to healthy local food, and can also help reinforce local culture and sense of place

### POLICY 14.2.1.4 FOOD PROCESSING

Support the establishment of community processing facilities such as community kitchens, as well as private sector processing facilities such as micro-breweries, distilleries, abattoirs, and other value-added commercial food processors.

### POLICY 14.2.1.5 FOOD SALES AND ACCESS

Support access and celebration of food by:

- a. Encouraging the establishment of additional grocery stores by strategically managing growth consistent with Sections 6 (Growth Management) and 7 (Land Use), creating sufficient density for economically viable grocers such that all residents live within a 10-minute walk of a grocer;
- b. Developing a bylaw to regulate roadside vendors and farm-stands for backyard gardens, to increase local food access for residents.
- c. Encouraging the establishment of restaurants and other food stores, and neighbourhood pubs, in all neighbourhoods;
- d. Supporting the establishment of a farmer's market, ideally in a location accessible by transit;
- e. Supporting the establishment of food fairs and other celebrations of local food;
- f. Working with partners to develop and establish a regionally-based local food branding strategy.

### POLICY 14.2.1.6 NUTRIENT RECOVERY

Work with the Capital Regional District to support the appropriate disposal, recovery, and re-use of organic material, and consistent with Sections 10 (Climate Change) and 12 (Built and Natural Infrastructure).