Food Security Action Plan













October 2018

Acknowledgements

The development of the Food Security Action Plan and Sustainability Framework (October 2018) would not have been possible without the involvement of the below listed groups and organizations who took the time out of their busy schedules to participate in the two Food Security Summits. Their commitment and dedication is commendable and their direction and feedback related to plan development was invaluable.

The development of the action plan would also not have been possible without a generous grant from the Vancouver Foundation, who continue to demonstrate their commitment to community development; the support of the Community Food Action Committee and the Community Poverty Reduction Committee, and the in-kind and staff support from City of New Westminster.

Food Summit Participants:

- Aunt Leah's Place
- Dan's Legacy
- City of New Westminster
- Elizabeth Fry Society of Greater Vancouver
- Family Services of Greater Vancouver
- Fraserside Community Services Society
- Fraserworks Co-op
- Fraser Health Authority
- Fraser River Food Buying Club – New Westminster Environmental Partners
- Greater Vancouver Food Bank Society
- Holy Trinity Cathedral
- Muslim Food Bank and Community Services
- New Westminster Community Food Action Committee
- New Westminster Community Poverty Reduction Committee
- New Westminster Farmers Market
- Re: Food
- Salvation Army
- School District #40
- St. Barnabas Anglican Church
- Union Gospel Mission

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Executive Summary

In 2017, the City of New Westminster, with a grant from the Vancouver Foundation, commenced work on this Food Security Action Plan and Sustainability Framework (October 2018), which had been identified as an action item within the New Westminster Community Poverty Reduction Strategy (2016).

The action plan was a response to increasing levels of food insecurity and a number of barriers and challenges related to food security efforts in New Westminster, including lack of awareness, limited access and poor coordination. The action plan involved over 30 community, faith, settlement and social service organizations in its development.

The action plan includes 38 actions which are organized according to six key areas. While the City coordinated its development, it will not take a lead role with regard to its implementation, as many of the actions fall outside the City's jurisdiction. As such, it is proposed that a body be established for this purpose and that this body be a sub-committee of and be hosted by an established committee with a mandate and/or interest to address food security in New Westminster.

When implemented, it is hoped that residents who are food insecure will have enhanced access to adequate, culturally-appropriate and nutritious food; that the community will have greater awareness of the issue, including the many misconceptions and stereotypes associated with it; and that organizations with a mandate and/or interest to address food insecurity are working in a more collaborative, deliberate and sustainable manner.



Introduction

There is a direct link between poverty and food insecurity. When a person experiences food insecurity and does not have access to adequate, culturally-appropriate and nutrition food, then 'survival' becomes their primary focus, leaving limited energy or time to realize other goals such as education or employment. Equitable access to food is a fundamental human right. When people are lifted out of poverty, they are able to afford more nutritious food and are empowered to make their own food choices. According to the United Nations Food and Agriculture Organization, food security "exists when all people, at all times, have economic, physical and social access to sufficient, safe and nutritious food which meets their dietary needs and food preferences for an active and healthy life."

In December 2016, Council endorsed New Westminster Community Poverty Reduction Strategy. The strategy provides a vision and specific actions to enhance the quality of life of those people living in poverty, while providing a supportive environment and opportunities to assist them to move out of poverty. It incorporates a five-year action plan based on extensive research and a comprehensive community consultation process, including with those with lived experiences.



The strategy identifies the following barriers and challenges related to food security:

- lack of awareness of food programs in the community;
- limited access to bulk buying and meal preparation programs; and
- limited coordination of food security efforts, including meal programs.

The strategy also outlines several actions related to food security, including:

> *That the Community Poverty Reduction Committee work with the New Westminster Homelessness Coalition Society and the New Westminster Community Food Action Committee to enhance coordination of and access to food security and meal programming, including in emergency situations.*

In August 2017, the City received a $4,800 grant from the Vancouver Foundation's Community Poverty Reduction Fund to hold two Food Summits and to develop a Food Security Action Plan and Sustainability Framework to address barriers, gaps and needs to food security in New Westminster.

The City hosted a Food Security Summit in November 2017 and a follow-up Food Security Summit in June 2018. The goal of the summits included:

- identifying and documenting barriers to accessing adequate, culturally-appropriate and nutritious food in New Westminster;
- engaging food providers and developing a process whereby they could share information about their programs and learn from others;
- facilitating capacity, collaboration and relationship-building among food providers through small group discussions and team building activities; and
- soliciting ideas and suggestions to enhance coordination of and access to food security programs and services.

The outcome of this work is this Food Security Action Plan and Sustainability Framework (October 2018), which seeks to address barriers, gaps and needs within the community; raise community awareness about food security, and identify a sustainability framework to move the actions forward, including establishing a coordinating body and identifying donor and sponsorship opportunities.

Key Terminology

Food Security

Food security is not limited to a single definition; however, it can be broadly defined as the condition "when all people, at all times, have physical, social and economic access to sufficient, safe and nutritious food that meets their dietary needs and food preferences for an active and healthy life" (FAO, 2001).

Food security aims to improve access to adequate, culturally-appropriate and nutritious food, especially for persons who are the most vulnerable to food insecurity. It also aims to enhance the availability of food that is produced in a safe and sustainable manner.

Since addressing food security is complex, it is important to have collaboration and commitment across different sectors. This ensures that access to and the availability of adequate, culturally-appropriate and nutritious food is supported by policy and programming.

Food Sovereignty

Similar to the term food security, there are variations in how food sovereignty is defined. Typically, it is described as the right of people to adequate, culturally-appropriate and nutritious food produced through ecologically sound and sustainable methods. It involves people having the right to dictate their own food and production systems, allowing them to take control of the food system.



While the city is activity working towards food sovereignty, achieving it is not the objective of this plan. This plan, tackling food security in the city, represents one piece of the puzzle and will form a stepping stone toward future food sovereignty objectives.

Current Situation

Poverty

As noted in the Introduction, there is a direct link between poverty and food insecurity. Based on the 2016 Census, there were 10,885 people or 15.6% of the population living in poverty[1] in New Westminster. Of this number, 1,790 or 16.4% were children and youth (0-17) and 1,900 or 17.5% were seniors (65+). Some people are especially vulnerable to poverty, including: aboriginal peoples, lone parent families, persons with disabilities, recent immigrants and refugees, seniors with fixed incomes, and single income households.



Food Insecurity

Based on the 2013/2014 My Health My Community Survey, 10.2% of adults (18+) were sometimes or often food insecure in New Westminster, which is higher than the Metro Vancouver average (7.2%). Based on the 2016 Census, that food insecurity rate would indicate that about 6,000 adults were sometimes or often food insecure in New Westminster.

Children and youth require adequate and nutritious amounts of food in order to thrive. Statistics on child and youth food insecurity were not available for New Westminster. However, there were about 33,000 children and youth (0-17) in British Columbia who received food from a food bank in 2016, or 32.2% of the about 103,000 people who received food from a food bank in 2016. According to the Food Banks Canada report Hunger Counts (2016), there has been a 32.5% increase in food bank usage in British Columbia between 2008 and 2016. As many people may not have a food bank in their area or have a food bank open at hours when they can attend, the number of people, including children and youth, using a food bank is an underestimate of food insecurity.

As evidence of food insecurity in New Westminster, the following provides a snapshot of the individuals and families who received assistance from a local food bank:

- 429 members were served by the Greater Vancouver Food Bank in New Westminster during an average week in 2017, with an average of 3,432 pounds of food distributed per week (a total of 130,407 pounds of food per year); and,
- 50,183 meals (breakfasts and lunches) were served by the Union Gospel Mission in New Westminster in 2017.

[1] Based on the low-income measure after-tax.

Cultural and Health Considerations

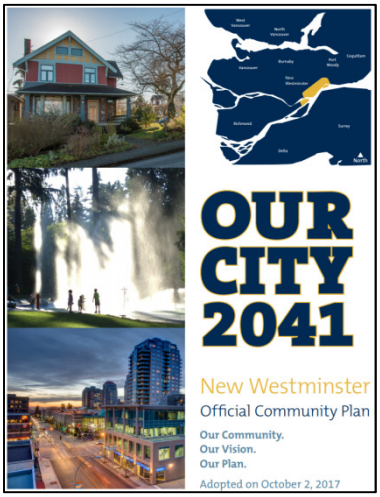
Food security is not just about having access to an adequate amount of food. It is also about having access to culturally-appropriate and nutritious food. Based on the 2016 Census, 34.3% of the population was comprised of immigrants in New Westminster, with 14.4% of immigrants having less than five years of Canadian residency. Between 2011 and 2016, the top three source countries for immigrants were: the Philippines (23.3%), China and Hong Kong (13.1%) and India (9.1%). Regarding healthy and nutritious food, this has become increasingly important. Based on the 2013/14 My Health My Community Survey, significant percentages of adults (18+) reported diabetes (11%) and high blood pressure (19%) in New Westminster. Additionally, only 24% of adults (18+) ate the recommended five-plus servings of fruits and vegetables on a daily basis in New Westminster.

Policy Context and Existing Food Related Initiatives

Metro Vancouver Regional Food System Action Plan (2016)

The Regional Food System Strategy (RFSS) was adopted by Metro Vancouver in 2011, with a vision to create "a sustainable, resilient and healthy food system that will contribute to the wellbeing of all residents and the economic prosperity of the region while conserving our ecological legacy." This was followed by the development of the Regional Food System Action Plan in 2016, which includes a list of 160 planned actions by local governments, including 45 actions planned by the City of New Westminster. The plan highlights emerging issues that have become more pertinent since the RFSS was adopted and that require local government attention, including food emergency planning; linking poverty, food insecurity and health issues; and building local government capacity to work with civil society groups.

Official Community Plan – OUR CITY 2041 (2017)



The Official Community Plan (OCP) provides direction to realize the city's opportunities and manage its assets and issues to ensure that it remains one of the most livable communities in Metro Vancouver. The OCP includes community and individual wellbeing goals, policies and actions related to food. Relevant policies include:

- Policy 1.1: Facilitate a more equitable and livable city in which all residents can meet their basic needs.
- Policy 1.6: Facilitate opportunities for growing food and participating in food culture.

The Downtown Community Plan (2010) and the Queensborough Community Plan (2014) also include policies to facilitate local food growing opportunities and improve access to fresh food.

Food Charter – Food for Every Body (2014)

A Food Charter, Food for Every Body, was developed by the New Westminster Community Food Action Committee in 2014. This document helps guide policy makers, community groups and residents in areas that relate to food. The charter, which was developed through public engagement, takes a step beyond addressing food insecurity, to focus on the concept of food sovereignty.

Community Poverty Reduction Strategy (2016)



The Community Poverty Reduction Strategy, endorsed by Council in 2016, is the culmination of several years of work on behalf of the Community Poverty Reduction Committee. The strategy provides a vision for moving forward and specific actions to enhance the quality of life of families, while providing a supportive environment and opportunities to help families move out of poverty. The document, which also incorporates a five-year action plan, is based on extensive research and a comprehensive community consultation process, including with those living with low incomes and in poverty.

The strategy identifies the following barriers and challenges related to food security:

- lack of awareness of food programs in the community;
- limited access to bulk buying and meal preparation programs; and
- limited coordination of food security efforts, including meal programs.

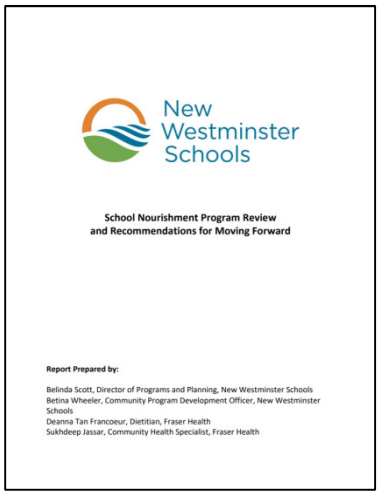
Environmental Strategy and Action Plan (2018)

The Environmental Strategy and Action Plan (ESAP), endorsed by Council in 2018, sets a direction for the City to move forward in the areas of environmental protection, enhancement, stewardship and resilience.

Two of the 14 goals, both in the Water, Waste and Materials category, relate to the environmental impacts of food, including:

- *Goal #8: Minimize waste generation and maximize waste diversion from the landfill.* This goal focuses on minimizing the impacts of food waste and increasing green waste or composting strategies.
- *Goal #11: Improve the sustainability of the local food system.* This goal encourages the consumption of local and sustainable food, and the creation of a corporate sustainable food procurement policy.

Nourishment Program Review (2017)


New Westminster Schools

School Nourishment Program Review and Recommendations for Moving Forward

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In 2017, the New Westminster School Board endorsed a motion directing staff to develop a District-wide plan "to address food security and healthy eating, that will make available food programs to all of our schools so that no child is hungry and every child eats healthy." This was followed by a comprehensive review of the District's food programming that included site visits; interviews with school-based administrators; surveys of staff and families; focus groups with students; case study research; and a review of local food insecurity data,

The review exposed gaps in food programming and a need to develop a more equitable way to provide food in schools. A discrepancy between local food insecurity data and what was being observed in the schools was also identified, which brought to the forefront issues, such as stigma, that may be preventing students in need from accessing food. In

addition, families across the District expressed an interest in a paid meal program that could also include additional fees to support subsidies for students in need. As a result of the review, the School Board requested staff to move forward on the development of a District-wide, cost-shared, universal Healthy School Nourishment Program model that would also connect to food literacy education and advocacy.

Healthier Community Partnership (2011)

The Healthier Community Partnership, established in 2011, is a health promotion initiative to encourage the community to eat well, to be active and to live tobacco-free. Formed as a partnership between the City, Fraser Health and School District #40, it looks at the preventable risk factors of chronic disease – i.e., adequate nutrition, physical activity, tobacco reduction and healthy built environments. The main focus is on education, programming and policy recommendations to ensure lasting behavioural change and better health for all.

Parks and Recreation Programming

The City's Parks and Recreation Department, in partnership with community associations, provides various amenities and programming, including community gardens and community kitchens in New Westminster.

Consultation – Process and Findings

Food Security Summit 1.0 – November 2017

The first Food Security Summit was held on November 25, 2017 and included about 30 participants from various organizations involved along the food security spectrum in New Westminster. The intent of the summit was to bring together a collection of organizations to engage more deeply on issues of food security and to identify gaps and needs in the city's existing food network.



City staff and representatives of Fraser Health provided presentations on best practices, challenges and successes in food security in New Westminster. Through team-building activities and small group discussions involving participants, a draft set of gaps in food programming was developed. Of note, it was found that there are times during the week when food programming is more readily available (e.g., weekdays and daytime hours) and times when it extremely difficult to access (e.g., weekends, statutory holidays, evening hours and in emergency situations). There are also certain populations that have more difficulty accessing and using food programs, including new immigrants and refugees given the lack of culturally-appropriate food, the working poor given limited evening and weekend hours, and those living in more remote areas of the city (e.g., Queensborough). Based on the results, a calendar was created and refined in order to enhance access and better target interventions.

Case study research related to best practices was also shared. Case studies included the Grandview Woodlands Food Connection (Vancouver), the Kamloops Food Action Plan and Community Food Action Initiative, and the North Okanagan Food Security Assessment and Food Action Plan. These case studies,

plus others raised by participants, were used to stimulate discussion and idea generation, with particular reference to New Westminster.



Based on all the information collected, City staff generated the below listing of barriers, gaps and needs and developed a framework and draft actions which were shared at the second Food Security Summit.

Identified Barriers, Gaps and Needs

- increasing diversity and limited access to culturally-appropriate food;
- inability of the working poor to access programs due to daytime operating hours;
- inability to access food due to transportation or mobility related issues;
- inadequate attention to the root causes of poverty and food insecurity;
- inequitable supply of and access to food programs by neighbourhood;
- lack of and limited access to community kitchen facilities;
- lack of concern for the dignity of those using programs, many of whom must prove they are in need or stand in line-ups;
- lack of after-hours and emergency food services;
- lack of empowerment by those accessing programs, including related to food choices and preferences;
- lack of funding for food security, including by the senior levels of government;
- lack of information about food security programs, including in different languages;
- limited access to healthy and nutritious food;
- limited opportunities for businesses and residents to be part of the solution; and
- no coordinating body responsible for food security efforts.

Food Security Summit 2.0 – May 2018

The second Food Security Summit was held on June 9, 2018 and included about 20 participants from various organizations involved along the food security spectrum in New Westminster. Building upon, but differing from, the first summit, this one presented a framework and set of draft actions.

The summit was organized into two main feedback roundtables where active discussion and critical analysis of the framework and draft actions was encouraged. The results of this feedback were used to further refine and augment the draft actions.

In general, participants felt that the draft actions were reflective of the ideas and suggestions made at the first summit and that their implementation would make a significant difference in the lives of those who are food insecure. They also felt that they would enhance access and choice, while also building awareness of this issue in the larger community, including among decision-makers and residents.

Case Studies

There are many examples of collaborative and sustainable food security plans across British Columbia. The case studies below were prepared for the Food Security Summit held in November 2017 with the purpose of stimulating discussion and idea generation.

Grandview Woodlands Food Connection, Vancouver

Organization: Two non-profit societies: Britannia Community Services Centre and Grandview Woodlands Food Connection, with the latter being one of Vancouver's 11 Neighbourhood Food Networks.

Geographic Area: Grandview Woodland neighbourhood, Vancouver

Plan Year: 2009

Key Actions:



- building a food network (with 475 members as of 2009);
- building a resource database (with 147 groups in the neighbourhood and city as of 2009);
- community potlucks (eight potlucks with 141 community members in 2009);
- many community gardens (for certain groups, Kiwassa Youth Garden for Youth and Grandview Terrace Garden for persons with mental health issues);
- food workshops (including food preserving workshops);
- festivals (e.g., Stone Soup Festival – 2,000 attendees in 2016);
- Off the Grill – youth food preparation and meal serving program (724 meals served in 2016);
- Summer Garden Internship for Youth;
- Britannia Potato Farm (grown by Britannia Elementary School Grade Threes); and
- environmental awareness actions such as Wild Salmon Caravan, etc.

Sustainability Elements:

- Social - part of Good Food Organizations, First Nations Programs;
- Environmental - urban agriculture programs, sustainable fishing (e.g., Wild Salmon Caravan); and
- Financial - strong funding from grant organizations and the City of Vancouver.

Collaborative Practices: The Community Food Network Model

Working with 33 groups, varying from non-profit housing (e.g., Haley Place Women's Housing), Provincial government and Crown Corporations (e.g., BC Housing), municipal government (e.g., City of Vancouver), libraries (Britannia Library), various non-profits (e.g., Environmental Youth Alliance), local Health Authority (Vancouver Coastal Health Authority) and School District (e.g. Britannia Secondary).

Kamloops Food Action Plan and Community Food Action Initiative

Organization: Interior Health Authority, City of Kamloops and Kamloops Food Policy Council

Geographic Area: City of Kamloops and Thompson Nicola Regional District

Plan Year: 2006

Key Actions:

- data collection (conduct an inventory of emergency food services in Kamloops);

- fundraising for food programs (Taste of Kamloops - fund emergency food programs);
- awareness (use food survey data to raise awareness of hunger problem);
- coordination (bring emergency food providers together to determine future needs);
- local food use (involve businesses in promoting local food);
- education (increase student awareness of local opportunities, community gardens);
- planning (density bonusing for projects including urban agriculture);
- gleaning (Gleaning Abundance Program – boxes of free fruit);
- horticulture programs (e.g., Gardengate for persons with mental health issues);
- connecting farms with restaurants (through Farm2Chefs);
- community gardens (nine community gardens with over 300 community gardeners);
- Farm to School BC (at eight schools); and
- community kitchens (54 community kitchen events).

Sustainability Elements:

- Social and Economic – social enterprise opportunities, local agriculture tourism; and
- Financial – funding from United Way, City of Kamloops, Urban Systems and BC Lottery Corp.

Collaborative Practices:

Collaboration of community members, First Nations groups, City Council, non-profits, business community, and farmers. Many groups continue to participate on the Kamloops Food Policy Council, including post-secondary (Thompson Rivers University), municipal government (City of Kamloops) and various non-profits (e.g., Interior Community Services).

North Okanagan Food Security Assessment and Food Action Plan

Organization: North Okanagan Food Action Coalition, hosted by First Nations Friendship Centre

Geographic Area: North Okanagan Regional District (Vernon, Lumby and Enderby)

Plan Year: 2007

Key Actions:

- consumer awareness actions (Eat Local Campaign and restaurants serving local menu items);
- inclusion of food security into Affordable Housing Strategy;
- sustaining existing food programs and sustaining the Food Security Coalition; and
- Food Action Society of the North Okanagan (FASNO) was formed through this plan to be a host agency for food security programs.



FASNO supports programs such as:

- cooking programs for elementary school-aged children (Cook it, Try it, Like it!);
- community gardens;
- discounted local produce (Good Food Box Program);
- community kitchen volunteer programs; and
- gleaning (Harvest Share Program – collection and use of surplus food crops from local donors).

Sustainability Elements:

- Social - discounted local produces;

- Environmental - food gleaning; and
- Financial - discounted local produce.

Collaborative Practices:

The plan identifies potential partners for actions. For example, the Eat Local Campaign includes community foundations, faith-based organizations, food producers and restaurants, the media, municipal governments (e.g., City of Vernon) and non-profit societies.

Framework

The Food Security Action Plan employs the following framework, which utilizes the Food Security Continuum and includes the following stages:

Stage 1 – Short-Term Approaches:

These approaches focus on providing support to those that are the most food insecure and meeting immediate needs by providing temporary relief to hunger. Examples include food banks and meal programming.

Stage 2 – Capacity Building Approaches:

These approaches encourage greater involvement from those who are food insecure and enhance networks and partnerships. Initiatives include community gardens, farmers markets, food box programs, food hubs and community kitchens to improve people's ability to grow and prepare their own food.

Stage 3 – System Redesign Approaches:

These approaches tend to be broader and rely on long-term commitment from various stakeholders. Examples include community land use-related food policies; transportation and mobility planning that connects people to food sources; education and employment; and economic development that creates meaningful local employment and living wages.



The Food Security Continuum generally moves from short-term relief toward longer term change at the policy and systems level. However, the above stages do not necessarily need to take place in a linear fashion but can occur simultaneously. Together, the approaches are intended to facilitate a more food secure, empowered and informed community.

Action Plan

The following actions are based on the ideas and suggestions of participants who attended the Food Security Summits held on November 25, 2017 and June 9, 2018. In some cases, the ideas and suggestions have been consolidated or augmented.

Organization and Planning	Stage
1. That a body be established for the specific purpose of implementing the Food Security Action Plan and Sustainability Framework (October 2018).	3
2. That this body be a sub-committee of and be hosted by an established committee with a mandate and/or interest to address food security. This committee could be the Community Food Action Committee, the Community Poverty Reduction Committee or the Homelessness Coalition Society.	3
3. That this body meet a minimum of four times per year and on an as needed basis and that it include representation from the City, Fraser Health, the School District, food security programs, the business community, interested stakeholders and people with lived experiences.	3
4. That this body develop an annual action plan and that it work towards preparing a needs assessment and hosting a summit every three years.	3

Awareness and Education	Stage
5. That World Food Day, which is celebrated each year on October 16, be recognized by a delegation to City Council and the School Board, and that related activities and events occur in the community.	2
6. That the Welfare Food Challenge, which is held in November and in which participants try to eat on the welfare rate for a week, be actively promoted in the community.	2
7. That a website page be created and regularly updated to host information about food security programs, promising practices and related information.	1/2
8. That a fact sheet be developed which highlights food insecurity in New Westminster, documents efforts to address it, and recognizes those that are making a difference.	1/2
9. That a food security program listing be developed and regularly updated on the New Westminster Community Service Asset Map.	1/2
10. That information be provided to families of school-age children about nutritional supports available in schools.	1
11. That information related to food security programs and resources be available in the most commonly-spoken non-English languages in New Westminster.	1/2
12. That information sessions related to food security programming be held with settlement organizations. Based on a 2014 survey of 224 immigrants in New Westminster, less than 40% were aware of the three largest food security programs.	1/2
13. That cooking classes and food skills workshops be promoted in the community to teach individuals how to make culturally-appropriate, healthy and nutritious food.	2
14. That experiential tours be organized of food security programs and that these tours be targeted at community, corporate and public entity leaders.	2/3

Empowerment	Stage
15. That bulk buying and community kitchen programs be supported as a way of empowering people to maximize their limited food dollars and prepare culturally-appropriate, healthy and nutritious meals.	2
16. That food security programs be paired with budgeting, life skills and related services to address the multiple barriers that may be contributing to food insecurity.	1/2/3
17. That food literacy be increased in the community so that individuals have the ability to access, choose and prepare foods that meet their needs and preferences.	2

Production and Supply	Stage
18. That balcony planters and related supplies be provided to apartment dwellers at no or low cost as a way of growing fruits and vegetables. To this end, revisit the 'Biggest Little Garden' initiative for learnings and approach potential funders.	2
19. That community gardens be encouraged on public and private lands and that plots be allocated to charitable and non-profit organizations for use by their clients.	2
20. That community gardens and garden plots be considered when negotiating community amenity contributions with developers.	2/3
21. That efforts be made to support the existing "Plant a Row, Grow a Row" program which encourages home owners to grow food for donation.	1/2
22. That innovative food recovery programs be encouraged, with the support of Fraser Health, whereby "unwanted" food products are collected, prepared and distributed.	1
23. That an inventory be conducted of kitchen facilities that could be used or retrofitted for community and food programming purposes.	2
24. That efforts be made to diversify available food to address the needs of an increasingly multicultural population in New Westminster. This could include targeting donation drives at established immigrant communities and encouraging the involvement of ethnic, faith-based and settlement organizations such as the Muslim Food Bank.	1
25. That efforts be made to support the development of a gleaning program, whereby those in need would gather (or glean) fruits and vegetables that would otherwise be left to rot.	1/2

Distribution and Equity	Stage
26. That food security program operating days and hours be charted on an annual basis and publicly posted to identify gaps and needs. This information would be of assistance to organizations considering new programs or expanding existing ones.	1/2
27. That food security programs consider the needs of the working poor by providing hours after 6:00 p.m. and on weekends and statutory holidays.	1
28. That efforts be made to support the development of programming to provide food to children during non-school days (e.g., weekends and statutory holidays).	1
29. That efforts be made to enhance access to food after-hours and in emergency situations. To this end, hold discussions with the BC Ministry of Social Development and Poverty Reduction.	1
30. That the dignity of food security users be enhanced, including eliminating line-ups, providing choice and reducing requirements related to providing proof of eligibility.	1
31. That all food program providers be encouraged to use the Vancouver Coastal Health Food Standards which address access, inclusion and quality.	1/2

Regulation	Stage
32. That a review of municipal bylaws and provincial regulations be conducted to reduce barriers to establishing and operating food or meal programs.	3
33. That a step-by-step guide to establishing a food or meal program be prepared and that the publication be forwarded to community, faith-based, settlement and social service organizations.	1
34. That 'Food Safe' courses be offered at low or no cost to staff at food or meal programs as a means of enhancing food quality and safety.	1/2

Sponsorship	Stage
35. That the Chamber of Commerce be encouraged to add a new Platinum Award which would recognize the most "Benevolent Company or Organization" in terms of meeting the needs of vulnerable populations, including those that are food insecure.	3

36. That the Chamber of Commerce and other business associations be requested to host or sponsor a program whereby local eateries make a small donation coupon available to their customers in support of food security programs, possibly leading up to and on World Food Day.	1/3
37. That a brochure be developed as to ways that individual residents can make a difference in addressing food insecurity – e.g., make a donation of food or money, volunteer at a food security program or write a letter to their Member of Parliament. Food insecurity is such a large and complex issue that many people do not know how to tackle it and what they can do make a difference as an individual.	1/3
38. That a case for support be developed detailing sponsorship opportunities for food security programs and that it be forwarded to corporations such as Kruger Products and public entities such as Douglas College and the Justice Institute of BC.	1/3

Implementation



A coordinating body will be established for the purpose of implementation. This body will prepare an annual action plan based on the 38 actions as contained in the plan and coordinate and report on their implementation. In some cases, the membership will be augmented or a working group will be established to focus on a specific action. The selected actions will also facilitate collaboration between member organizations; build momentum, commitment and a sense of ownership; forge stronger relations with other community and government bodies; and result in tangible benefits to people experiencing food insecurity. A key consideration will be to raise community awareness regarding food insecurity and its impacts as a means of building support for the action plan and its implementation and to reduce the stigma associated with food insecurity.

Monitoring and Evaluation

One of the identified actions is to work towards the preparation of a needs assessment and host a Food Security Summit every three years. This work will be particularly important in determining if the situation is improving, deteriorating or staying the same, while providing evidence as to the effectiveness of interventions.

Based on the needs assessment and summit findings, the coordinating body will prepare an update report every three years to Council and other interested public and non-profit bodies. This report will summarize key indicators related to food security, and an update on the progress in implementing the action plan. Regarding the latter, it will identify the number of actions implemented in a given year and the status of action implementation – i.e., fully, partially or not at all. If partially or not at all, it will state the reason(s) (e.g., inability to involve key community partners, lack of resources, etc.). Based on the report, the action plan will evolve to address new issues or respond to unforeseen circumstances.

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