



April 29, 2021

# Urban Foodlands

## City of Kamloops Dialogue



Prepared for:



**Kamloops Report**

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# Acknowledgments

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The Kamloops Food Policy Council, based in Kamloops, BC Canada, is on the traditional, unceded territory of the Secwepemc people who nourished themselves and this land for millennia.

This ancient gathering place, where the North and South Thompson Rivers meet is called T'kemlups in the Secwepemc language, Secwepemctsin. This land is called Secwepemculecw.

While we look to strengthen urban food systems it is important to acknowledge these current food systems historically and continue to displace Indigenous people and their stewardship of this land. This displacement is ongoing, which means the role of the urban food system needs to constantly be reflecting on it's colonial construct and aligning with Indigenous ways of knowing and being.

The Kamloops Food Policy Council was the first independent food policy council in Canada, launched in 1995. We would like to acknowledge our network of members who contributed to our understanding of policies that support urban agriculture and food lands, city staff who have worked hard to create adopted food policy, and the staff members involved in the dialogues and report: Bonnie Klohn and Sandra Frangiadakis.

This project is administered by the Public Health Association of BC and funded by the Real Estate Foundation of British Columbia and with support from Colin Dring, PhD Candidate, Centre for Sustainable Food System, University of British Columbia.

Thank you to all who participated in both dialogues and provided valuable insight into this project.





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# EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

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In May 2020 the Kamloops Food Policy Council (KFPC) held a dialogue on urban agriculture with its network that included City of Kamloops staff, representatives from organizations related to urban agriculture (Master Gardeners, Permaculture Kamloops, Transition Kamloops), urban farmers, food social service agencies, and Indigenous organizations. The purpose of the dialogue was to:

Align the vision for urban growing spaces as it relates to existing food systems visions in our region. To understand what people want to see, do and what support they need.

Increase connectivity among people interested in urban growing

Explore municipal practices and policies that can help realize that vision

Communicate opportunities to get involved in existing urban growing initiatives

Understand how to work together to build capacity for urban growing in the City of Kamloops

The suggestions made by the participants of the dialogue were analyzed based on their affiliation to the seven values articulated by the KFPC. For each of the policy suggestions, context is provided as it relates to the City of Kamloops and whether the policy is has already been adopted, implemented, evaluated and been taken up in the community (or not), and what the policy recommendation is, in terms of moving forward either the adoption or implementation towards this vision. The policies and practices that were suggested by participants are summarized below:

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## POLICIES AND PRACTICES

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### A Resilient Food System

#### *Healthy Land and Water*

- Native Bees and pesticide bylaws
- Rooftop gardens
- Perennial crops
- Disincentivize greenfield development
- Providing resources for urban farms: mulch, dirt, seedlings, transport of waste

### Alleviation of Poverty

#### *Equitable Access to Healthy, Culturally Appropriate Food*

- Eliminate food deserts
- Reduced water bills for growing food





## Local Economic Vitality

### *Support for Regional Food Providers*

- Support for commercial greenhouse operations for food production
- Bylaw to support roadside stands and other ways to share excess produce
- Encouraging farmers markets

## Our Network

### *Celebrating People as Gifts and the Cultivation of Connections*

- Strengthening community connections through urban agriculture programs (mental health, land-based programs)

## Indigenous Food Sovereignty

### *Decolonizing Relations and the Restoration of Ecological Food Systems*

- Indigenous partnerships
- Seasonal agricultural workers rights

## Food Literacy

### *Intergenerational Knowledge Transfer and Sharing Best Practices and Research*

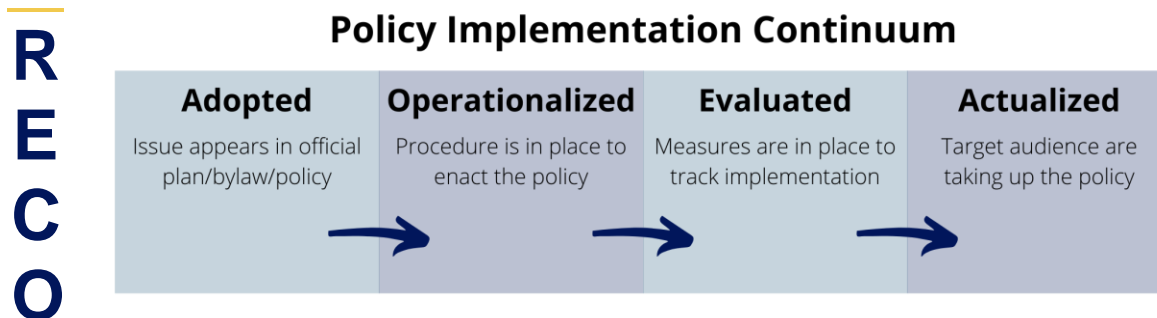
- Education and school food programs for kids
- Mentorship

## Food Commons

### *The Revitalization of Local Food Assets and the Sharing Economy*

- Expanding the number and size of community owned common urban farms
- Urban food amenities
- Coordinating neighbourhood crops

The policy suggestions are sorted based on the policy implementation continuum, to highlight the next steps that can be taken to move the actions closer towards being actualized. The policy implementation continuum is shown in the figure below:





# RECOMMENDATIONS

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Finally, suites of policies that are recommended as a way of moving forward with multiple priorities. The policy suites are:

## Physical Resources and Infrastructure

Focusing on areas that deal with physical resources and infrastructure would provide great leverage for the viability of urban food spaces. These policies could include providing the option of municipal land for farmers markets, mapping locations of public palatable perennial fruit and nut trees, providing municipal land or funding for urban farm management, creating a greenhouse guide for urban farmers, initiating a rain barrel program, and initiating a program for resource (like mulch, compost) drop off at urban farms. Focusing on implementing policies that have an impact on physical resources would provide a direct boost to urban farmers and potential viability of undertaking new urban growing spaces.

## Food Justice

Another suite of policies that would be strategic to implement together are focused on justice issues such as elimination of food deserts, fostering Indigenous partnerships and food sovereignty initiatives, and advocating for the safe and fair treatment of seasonal agricultural workers. These policies may be best moved along the implementation continuum through an advocacy based organizational partner and education campaigns.

## Environmental Sustainability

It also would be strategic to advance a suite of policies that have impacts on environmental sustainability such as increasing evaluation of native bees habitat and pesticide bylaws, creating a food assessment as part of the process to disincentivize greenfield development, and rooftop garden readiness education.

## Community Connectedness and Programming

Similar mechanisms for the implementation of policies related to community connectedness and programming around food would be at play (providing financial support, or initiating a community based program), so it would make sense to undertake these initiatives together as well. This could include the expansion of mental health and land-based learning urban agriculture programs, encouraging farmer to farmer mentorship, and coordinating mutual aid through neighbourhood based sharing and trading.





# Project Background

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In January of 2020, the Public Health Association of BC received a Real Estate Foundation BC (REFBC) grant to explore urban municipal food policy and practice. The premise of the application was to work with previously or currently REFBC funded food organizations who were undertaking work to strengthen their own municipal urban food policies. Kamloops ([Kamloops Food Policy Council](#)), Vancouver ([Vancouver Urban Farming Society](#)) and Victoria ([Food Eco District](#)) were chosen as case studies because of their current work and geographic location across BC. Specifically, each city was selected because it represents different types of urban settings within the province and there were already existing food networks within each region.

The case studies for each municipality would include an in-person dialogue with urban farmers, community garden leads, food policy councils, and food advocacy non-profit organizations. These dialogues were positioned to provide an in-depth understanding of how people envision the potential role urban agriculture plays in advancing sustainable food systems, the policies that would help them achieve these outcomes and current policies that exist within each municipality.

Starting in February 2020, monthly meetings were held between the three participating organizations to share with each other their previous or current REFBC funded work, discuss the context of urban agriculture in their municipalities, and the structure of the dialogues. In May 2020, a global pandemic was announced and the province implemented an emergency order restricting travel and in-person gatherings. This limited the ability to host in-person dialogues. The proposed format for each dialogue would be held virtually, pivot in the facilitation structure and reduce the number of participants to ensure flow of conversations between dialogue participants. Due to the reduced number, participants were selected to try and cover the broad range of urban agriculture activities that occur in each city. This included community garden coordinators, urban farmers, neighbourhood house representatives, food policy council members, and others.

This project proposes to conduct case studies throughout urban municipalities in Kamloops, Victoria and Vancouver to explore current urban agriculture practices and policies and align them with community visions and outcomes. A provincial report conducted a cross analysis between municipal reports to align efforts across municipalities, and use the information gathered to help inform the development of stronger urban agriculture policies and practices across BC.







## City of Kamloops Background

Kamloops is located in the heart of Secwepemcul'ewc in the interior of BC. Kamloops are a community of approximately 92,000 which services outlying rural areas in the Thompson Nicola Regional District and beyond. Several times in this report we've used the term "Kamloops and area" which encompasses the municipality of Kamloops and broader Secwepemc boundaries. We look at Kamloops and the context of the larger nation it is located within at times because of the land and eco-system based boundaries that Secwepemcul'ecw is determined by. We recognize that food is land and ecosystem based and so it makes sense to define the natural foodshed that was recognized by the Secwepemc when establishing a vision for the whole food system.

Kamloops is in a semi-arid desert with predominant grassland ecosystems and forested areas in the higher elevations. Our dry and hot climate makes the irrigated valley bottom areas where the City is located perfect for seasonal urban agriculture that includes warm weather loving crops like tomatoes and peppers.

The food movement in Kamloops has had several significant champions for food security since (and prior to) the inception of the Kamloops Food Policy Council in 1995. As a result there are well articulated outcomes (referred to as visions in supporting documents) for food security, urban agriculture and regional food sovereignty. In terms of the urban food policy perspective, there are several key milestones:

DATE	MILESTONE
2002	Food security goals and objectives were included in the City of Kamloops Social Plan.
2007	The Kamloops Food Policy Council completed a <a href="#">Best Practices in Urban Agriculture</a> report to the City.
2009	Food security was included as a section in the City of Kamloops <a href="#">Social Plan</a> update.
2013	The <a href="#">Area Agriculture Plan</a> was adopted by the City of Kamloops.
2015	The City of Kamloops created the <a href="#">Food and Urban Agriculture Plan</a> .
2018	The Kamloops Food Policy Council, in partnership with its network members, adopted a <a href="#">strategic plan</a> that outlines the vision, mission and values of its food system work in the region.
2018	The City of Kamloops Official Community Plan is adopted containing a section on food security.
2019	The Kamloops Food Policy Council created a vision statement for each of the seven value areas in the strategic plan as well as a theory of change.
2020	The Kamloops Food Policy Council releases an <a href="#">assessment of the food system</a> using an evaluation rubric based on the vision adopted in 2019.

Each of these documents contains policies, goals and a vision for urban agriculture, built upon the previous work that had been done to articulate the context and direction for food security in our region. The Kamloops Food Policy Council has been a significant partner to the City of Kamloops in the creation of the food security policies that have been adopted by the municipality, and continues to be one of the primary partners for the implementation of these policies.







In 2018 the Kamloops Food Policy Council, with the support of the Real Estate Foundation of BC, initiated a [Community-Based Food Plan Implementation](#) collective action process where local government stakeholders (Indigenous, municipal and regional) were convened to identify areas of shared aspirations within adopted food policy, and to prioritize their implementation in partnership with community organizations. Several key areas were identified by local governments and community partners including:

1. Training initiatives for new entrants to agriculture
2. Food hub/social procurement
3. Processing facilities (e.g., abattoirs and salmon processing)
4. Expanding the land used for growing food

During the course of the collective action initiative the first two priorities had significant progress through the creation of a Farm Hub (training for new entrants and existing farmers) feasibility study, and a Food Hub pilot project and feasibility study. Ongoing advocacy related to abattoirs also continues. The final priority, expanding the land used for growing food is in part expressed in this report in partnership with the Public Health Association of BC, particularly as it relates to urban growing spaces. This report provides a clear pathway to adopting, implementing, evaluating and promoting policies that relate to expanding urban growing spaces will be able to guide the actions of local governments and their partners, like the Kamloops Food Policy Council.

In 2021 a new Agriculture Committee is being established by the City of Kamloops that aims to oversee the implementation of policies in the Area Agriculture Plan and the Food and Agriculture Plan. The Kamloops Food Policy Council is a member of this committee, and will be able to share the findings of this report at its launch. This report will be used as a tool to help create a clear path towards expanding urban growing spaces.



**Butler Urban Farm, Kamloops, BC**

*Photo Credit: Kamloops Food Policy Council*



# Methods

The Kamloops Food Policy Council held a virtual dialogue with its network that included City of Kamloops staff, representatives from organizations related to urban agriculture (Master Gardeners, Permaculture Kamloops, Transition Kamloops), urban farmers, food social service agencies, and Indigenous organizations. The dialogue was held Wednesday, May 13th 2020 from 5:30 to 7:30 pm over Zoom. There were 29 participants in the meeting, including several representatives from PHABC, UBC, Food Eco-District (FED) in Victoria and the Vancouver Urban Farming Society (VUFS).

## **KAMLOOPS URBAN FOODLANDS DIALOGUE AGENDA**

**WEDNESDAY, MAY 13TH, 2021**

### **1. OPENING**

"What are the ways that urban agriculture nourishes you and the community?"

### **2. PRESENTATIONS FROM PARTNERS INCLUDING:**

- Aaren Topley, Public Health Association of BC
- Ben Chobator, City of Kamloops
- Sandra Frangiadakis, Kamloops Food Policy Council

### **3. THREE CONSECUTIVE BREAKOUT GROUPS**

Participants were asked:

- Urban agriculture can contribute to community resilience by...
- An urban agriculture challenge I have encountered or observed is...
- A question that is emerging for me is...

### **4. THE CREATION OF A GROUP WHITEBOARD (APPENDIX A)**

- Capture the information from the breakout group discussions
- Categories of needs that required support or policy changes
- Something of abundance to share with the group
- Ideas for future possibilities

### **5. CLOSING**

The purpose of the dialogue was to:

1. Align the vision for urban growing spaces as it relates to existing food systems visions in our region. To understand what people want to see, do and what support they need.
2. Increase connectivity among people interested in urban growing
3. Explore municipal practices and policies that can help realize that vision
4. Communicate opportunities to get involved in existing urban growing initiatives
5. Understand how to work together to build capacity for urban growing in the City of





Kamloops





# Visions and Urban Foodlands

The following vision for the food system (including urban agriculture) was created as part of the 2018 Kamloops Food Policy Council strategic planning initiative, and the 2019 evaluation rubrics and food system assessment project. It represents the collective aspirations of the Kamloops Food Policy Council network, which includes the City of Kamloops, and other local governments.

The values are loosely based on the seven pillars of food sovereignty that were developed at a forum for food sovereignty that was held at Nyéléni, Mali in 2007 (the seventh pillar was added by members of Food Secure Canada's Indigenous Circle, during the People's Food Policy Process in 2008-2011)<sup>1</sup>. Many of these visions overlap with each other, or provide support or somewhat of a precursor to other parts of the vision. The connection between the policies is important to consider and is examined in further detail in the Analysis section.

## A Resilient Food System

### *Healthy Land and Water*

The food system in Kamloops and area is resilient and adaptive in the face of potential climate and economic upsets, and functions in a way that promotes biodiversity and soil health. Food grown through agriculture or collected through traditional harvesting methods protects land, water, animals and humans now and in future generations. Pesticide/herbicide use is reduced and eventually eliminated, and no contaminants or toxic materials are applied to the land. The scale of food production and harvesting does not overly tax the land. There is an integrated waste management system. The cost of food properly reflects the true value of inputs like human labour and water, while recognizing the environmental impacts of growing and transporting food. The KFPC and its network works regionally, provincially and beyond as required to promote conditions needed for a resilient food system, advocating for policy change, incubating programs, working with farmers and building partnerships.

***“Learning about urban agriculture 8 years ago was the way that I became involved in the quest for a resilient community.”***

## Alleviation of Poverty

### *Equitable Access to Healthy, Culturally Appropriate Food*

The food system in Kamloops and area is inclusive of all voices and meets the diversity of needs found in our community. All people living in Kamloops have access to healthy, culturally appropriate food. Many people are growing their own food, and a variety of fresh, healthy and

<sup>1</sup> <https://foodsecurecanada.org/who-we-are/what-food-sovereignty>





local food is available to buy or trade. Where gaps exist in household level food security, including amongst individuals experiencing homelessness, there are enough regular meals provided throughout Kamloops to address that need. Food security is supported through collective urban farms and reducing food waste by gleaning from places where it is abundant. Members of the food system are advocates and facilitators of change, addressing barriers to food accessibility (i.e., living wage, costs for housing, transportation, dependence on processed food and agribusiness, dependence on other regions/countries).

***“[I am] interested in all kinds of ways to help Kamloops become a more resilient and sustainable community. Food security is a very important component of that”***

## Local Economic Vitality

### *Support for Regional Food Providers*

The food system prioritizes solidarity and sovereignty over competition and profit, and ensures a good livelihood for producers with safe and equitable labour conditions for all. For example, business models like worker-owned cooperatives are favoured over profit-driven corporations. Food and agriculture sectors are key economic drivers in Kamloops and region. There is good demand for food grown in the region from residents, chefs and institutions. Food producers, processors and distributors have the capacity to scale their operations to meet increasing demand and incubator farms and shared kitchens reduce barriers for new entrants. The necessary infrastructure (i.e. dry and cold storage, commercial kitchens, abattoirs etc.) is in place to support the food system along the value chain, and there are multiple venues where local food can be purchased year-round. Regulations support safe, healthy food but do not create unnecessary barriers for local food providers to enter the food system or innovate with their products.

***“I believe that urban agriculture creates jobs and provides food quality and security”***

## Our Network

### *Celebrating People as Gifts and the Cultivation of Connections*

The Kamloops Food Policy Council acts as a hub and a leader, inspiring people throughout the region to work together toward a common vision. The council is inclusive, with few or no barriers to participation, and proactively reaches out to under-represented groups, listening to their needs when setting priorities. Members of the network, and the food system more generally, are aware of one another and work to collaborate with each other, reduce redundancies and address gaps. The network is a way to connect with food, fun and friendship, as well as being a venue for making effective changes in the community.

***“urban agriculture benefits myself and the community by providing nutritious food and opportunities for collaborating and just being together!!”***





## Indigenous Food Sovereignty

### *Decolonizing Relations and the Restoration of Ecological Food Systems*

Food is recognized as a sacred gift that cannot be commodified. Food is produced in a sustainable, balanced way that reflects and respects the interconnectedness of food, people, and nature. Traditional practices and cultural harvesting strategies are a living reality, with widespread participation and guaranteed access to culturally-adapted foods. Access to traditional land is ensured, by returning it or creating Indigenous protected areas that do not restrict traditional land uses. Policies are put in place that ensure the integrity and health of Indigenous food systems for future generations. These policies are developed using a cross cultural approach that emphasizes Indigenous self-determination, respects Indigenous legal orders and works with natural systems/laws. Non-indigenous members work to minimize their impacts on unceded lands, educate themselves about colonization and its impacts, and seek points of complementarity with an Indigenous-led decolonization movement.

***“[we need] better communication and connection related to growing food at Tk’emlups and partnering with the city”***

## Food Literacy

### *Intergenerational Knowledge Transfer and Sharing Best Practices and Research*

People in Kamloops and area have appreciation, knowledge and skills for growing, preserving, and cooking food. Community members feel encouraged to choose healthy foods that are culturally, regionally and seasonally appropriate. Regular sharing of knowledge and practices takes place between and within different generations and different members of society (gardeners, farmers, researchers, organizations, etc.). Local area schools, including post-secondary institutions, are involved in research and education around food. Common spaces such as community gardens and tool libraries are supported so that community members have places to spend time, share and learn from each other.

***“ [it is required that we] share wisdom, knowledge and people-caring for those you garden with”***

## Food Commons

### *The Revitalization of Local Food Assets and the Sharing Economy*

People in Kamloops are regularly growing, cooking and eating together and sharing the food they have grown or prepared. Kamloops has many venues and processes in place to support the sharing economy (i.e. common gardens, shared kitchens, a platform for bartering, etc.). This encourages more local food, more variety and more equal distribution of resources while







reducing food waste. These activities promote a feeling of abundance and remind us to care for our community and for each other. An interconnected and caring community helps meet people's needs and complements programming to address household food insecurity. People recognize the importance of sharing as an alternative to the current economic system and are empowered to advocate for a more inclusive and respectful system.

*“[we need] community-owned agricultural land to educate the community and learn skills for growing food;integrating urban agriculture into urban planning.”*

## Policy Recommendations

This section draws alignment between each vision and policies that would help achieve these visions. Further context and analysis has been provided for each of the policies and practices that were suggested during the dialogue. The policy and practice suggestions are organized by value and vision area, as they are in the list above. For each of the policy suggestions, context is provided as it relates to the City of Kamloops and whether the policy is has already been adopted, implemented, evaluated and been taken up in the community (or not), and what the policy recommendation is, in terms of moving forward either the adoption or implementation towards this vision.

The policies and practices that were suggested by participants of the dialogue pertained to all seven of the values areas and visions for the food system. These suggestions are summarized below:

VISION	IDEA
A Resilient Food System: healthy land and water	Native Bees and pesticide bylaws
	Rooftop gardens
	Perennial crops
	Disincentivize greenfield development
	Providing resources for urban farms: mulch, dirt, seedlings, transport of waste
Alleviation of Poverty: equitable access to healthy, culturally appropriate food	Eliminate food deserts
	Reduced water bills for growing food
Local Economic Vitality: support for regional food providers	Support for commercial greenhouse operations for food production
	Bylaw to support roadside stands and other ways to share excess produce
	Encouraging farmers markets
Our Network: celebrating people as gifts and the cultivation of connections	Strengthening community connections through urban agriculture programs (mental health, land-based programs)





Indigenous Food Sovereignty: decolonizing relations and the restoration of ecological food systems	Indigenous partnerships
	Seasonal agricultural workers rights
Food Literacy: intergenerational knowledge transfer and sharing best practices and research	Education and school food programs for kids
	Mentorship
Food Commons: the revitalization of local food assets and the sharing economy	Expanding the number and size of community owned common urban farms
	Urban food amenities
	Coordinating neighbourhood crops



# A Resilient Food System

## *Healthy Land and Water*

### **Native Bees and Pesticide Bylaws**

Native bees and honey bees' ability to pollinate our food crops are critical to a resilient food system. It is well documented that neonicotinoids and other pesticides and herbicides significantly impact the health of bee populations<sup>2</sup>. The City of Kamloops (the City) was the first city in BC to become a [Bee-City](#) in 2017, and had passed bylaws that prohibit the use of cosmetic pesticides in 2015. There was significant debate about the cosmetic pesticide bylaw in 2015, and just over half of the Councillors were in favor of putting in place the policy to reduce pesticides. There are few controls in place to ensure that pesticides and herbicides are not being sprayed cosmetically, and these products are still widely available in stores. Honey bees also become a permitted use in single family dwelling zones in conjunction with the [Food and Urban Agriculture Plan](#) in 2015.

### **What is the policy recommendation?**

- 🍏 Adoption of bylaws that prohibit the sales of pesticides and herbicides within the City boundary
- 🍏 Continue education on preserving natural nesting sites for native bees

Further research is needed to determine if a process recommendation could be implemented; there has been some discussion about the City landscaping department purchasing plants that are already sprayed with neonicotinoids. Although the pesticide bylaw was passed several years ago, more extensive education would be needed to convince the City Council to decrease public access to herbicide and pesticide products.

### **Rooftop Gardens**

The scarcity of urban land within a city often creates a dichotomy between growing space and built environment in urban settings, which can be a point of contention between food system actors and the development community. However, rooftop gardens are a way for cities to be able to have dense development that can facilitate active transportation and avoid urban sprawl while still creating space for growing food. In Kamloops, the population density is 1387 people per square kilometer, which in places like Vancouver, the population density is 5492 people per square kilometer. In the City, there is a requirement for multifamily developments to have 1/3 of the property preserved for amenity space.

### **What is the policy recommendation?**

Policy recommendations could include:

- 🍏 Encouragement of rooftop gardens through the design process and educational materials that help developers to understand the requirements to create a rooftop garden space

<sup>2</sup> See for example van der Sluijs et al. (2013) <https://www.sciencedirect.com/science/article/pii/S1877343513000493>



A rooftop garden readiness requirement for new developments that have a flat gradient roof could be put in place, but given the available ground level space in Kamloops, it may not be needed. In addition, there was a motion by City Council to pass a solar ready bylaw for new developments. This motion was turned down as a result of advocacy from the Home Builders Association. If a motion for rooftop gardens was put forward by City Council, it would require strong community advocacy to be adapted. In addition there are underutilized ground level spaces even in the more densely developed areas in the downtown and north shore core areas of Kamloops that likely would be suitable for urban agriculture. These spaces include empty lots that owners are willing to have developed into gardens, as well as City park space set aside for public produce.

## Perennial Crops

The use of perennial crops, including fruit and nut trees has been widely popularized by permaculture approaches to growing food (Permaculture Research Institute, 2012). The concept of permanent agriculture aligns with species of vegetables that will regenerate year after year without needing to be planted. The potential for perennial crops in urban agriculture lies both in the promotion of this approach to gardening and urban farming, as well as municipal decisions about public gardens and park trees.

### What is the policy recommendation?

The policy recommendations could include:

- 🍏 Municipal fruit and nut tree orchards in community parks and green spaces
- 🍏 Initiating programs to promote perennial crops in urban gardens

One of the issues that has come up around planting edible perennials (particularly fruit trees) is the care, harvesting and clean up of the fruit. The 2016 City of Kamloops Urban Forest Management Strategy (UFMS) and the 2010 Sustainability Kamloops Plan reference the goal of promoting food security through edible plants in landscapes, including fruit trees (City of Kamloops, 2016; City of Kamloops, 2010) however it is also noted in the UFMS that edible trees are messy, can attract bears and pests and litter hard surfaces. Nonetheless, recommendation #16 of the UFMS is to “Consider the planting of fruit and nut trees on City land (parks or roads) where residents request them, and where residents or stewardship groups are willing to help care for the trees and harvest the fruit” (City of Kamloops, 2016, p. 43). There is also a recommendation to encourage the planting of fruit and nut trees on private property in the city.

A vegetation map is available on the city website that shows the location of trees on municipal land (City of Kamloops, no date). It is possible that the search settings of the vegetation map could include a filter for edible trees and perennial crops. Likely with more accessible public knowledge of where the perennial crops and trees are, the better used they will be by citizens.

## Disincentivize Greenfield Development

Kamloops is surrounded by undeveloped greenspace that provides recreational opportunities,





habitat for wildlife, and foodlands for Indigenous communities. Kamloops is also a city that has a significant amount of urban sprawl (Wallace, 2019). As populations grow subdivisions and roads can eat up prime valley bottom agricultural and food lands. The Kamloops OCP encourages “the development of compact urban form and walkable neighbourhoods with convenient access to transit and daily needs” (City of Kamloops, 2018, p. D-3).

### What is the policy recommendation?

Policy recommendations could include:

- 🍏 Creating an assessment for food growing potential as part of decision making about greenfield development

The City of Kamloops OCP already contains many policies that aim to promote, protect and enhance local agriculture, including discouraging subdivision of land within the ALR, restriction of further residential development in outlying areas, and considering biodiversity, passive recreation on ALR lands. It is possible the City and the TNRD may wish to develop further food based assessments as part of their decision making process for new development.

### Providing Resources for Urban Farms: mulch, dirt, seedlings, transport of waste

It was noted that for urban farmers, it would greatly enhance productivity and viability of operations to have support from the municipality with resources such as mulch, dirt, seedlings and waste removal. The City of Kamloops Parks Department will drop off these resources at public sites such as community gardens and other educational spaces, however, expanding this to urban farmers would help to reduce vehicle usage, and potentially help parks operations run effectively by dropping tree chips, leaves and other types of mulch closer to the source rather than trucking it out to the composting facilities outside of the City.

### What is the policy recommendation?

Policy recommendations could include:

- 🍏 Expanding the public compost and mulch drop off to urban farming locations

There would need to be a specific program set up to facilitate this, which has applicant criteria such as having an urban farm related business license to avoid favoritism.

## Alleviation of Poverty

*Equitable Access to Healthy, Culturally Appropriate Food*

### Eliminate Food Deserts

Food deserts are defined as, “geographic areas where residents’ access to affordable, healthy food options (especially fresh fruits and vegetables) is restricted or nonexistent due to the absence of grocery stores within convenient traveling distance” (Food Empowerment Project, 2020). One of the key issues impacting food security identified by the Changing the Face of





Poverty coalition in Kamloops is transportation, therefore the accessibility of food outlets is very important in the City.

### What is the policy recommendation?

Policy recommendations could include:

- 🍏 Review and update the zoning regulations to increase opportunities for small-scale retail food businesses that offer fresh produce in areas that are in close proximity to neighbourhood centres
- 🍏 Creating a suite of development policies (density bonusing, development permit areas) that allow and encourage developers to create food assets as amenities

There is solid support for this policy as a result of the FUAP, as well as continued discussions with the City about incorporating food assets as amenities for new development. The City is in the process of developing a food asset map which will provide guidance on food deserts that need addressing.

### Reduced Water Bills for Growing Food

The City of Kamloops switched from a flat rate charged to residences to a water meter system in 2013. Since then, households pay for their water usage. In order to facilitate growing food in a manner that does not cost extra, it has been suggested that water charges could be reduced for those growing food. It would be very onerous for the City to determine which households are growing food and which ones are not, however, potentially licensed urban agriculture businesses could qualify for a reduced water rate.

### What is the policy recommendation?

Policy recommendations could include:

- 🍏 Providing a lower rate on water for licensed urban agriculture businesses
- 🍏 Provide rebates on rain barrels (implementation)

The policy option on water rates may be difficult to implement or enforce. The rate for water already includes a fixed capital portion as well as a variable charge for usage that increases in the summer months and is consistent across residential zoning types (City of Kamloops Waterworks Bylaw, 2013). The commercial water rate is slightly lower, so potential exists to move agriculture businesses occurring in residential areas to a commercial water rate.

The City has already offered for several years in a row, bulk purchased and discounted compost bins. A similar initiative could be undertaken for rain barrels. Action 5.1.2 in the FUAP recommends distributing rain barrels through a coupon mechanism that provides a discount on the purchase (City of Kamloops, 2015, p. 38).





# Local Economic Vitality

## *Support for Regional Food Providers*

### **Support for Commercial Greenhouse Operations for Food Production**

Currently in the City of Kamloops, a building permit is required for residential and commercial greenhouses. There are zoning bylaw requirements for size, setbacks and lot coverage, as well as an inspection required for footing, foundation, and framing (City of Kamloops, 1996). The procedure for greenhouses was put in place in the 1990s. It presents several barriers to creating greenhouse space for the production of food.

#### **What is the policy recommendation?**

Policy recommendations could include:

- 🍏 Reviewing the greenhouse procedure and relaxing the requirements for a building permit and inspection on greenhouses that are of a scale to support a small urban agriculture operation

The FUAP recommends to review “zoning regulations for building height and lot coverage to ensure that regulations adequately balance the desirability of greenhouses and garden sheds (both on rooftops and at grade) for food production” (City of Kamloops, 2015, p. 27). Implementation of this action item would be likely very realistic in the short term.

### **Bylaw to Support Roadside Stands and Other Ways to Share Excess Produce**

Reducing restrictions to farm sales helps to pave the way for urban agriculture businesses to launch and be sustained. Roadside stands are one way of directly selling to consumers with no middle man, and could be permitted within the urban area of Kamloops. The Kamloops Area Agriculture Plan (AAP) action number 14 recommends to “develop and implement zoning regulations for food trucks and roadside stands” (City of Kamloops, 2017, p.41).

#### **What is the policy recommendation?**

Policy recommendations could include:

- 🍏 Permitting roadside stands as an ancillary use for zones that can be used for urban agriculture

The FUAP also supports the development of roadside stands in relation to creating food accessibility in places where there are few food retail outlets. The implementation of this policy would likely be fairly realistic given its inclusion in both of the City's main agriculture and food planning documents.

### **Encouraging Farmers Markets**

The Kamloops Regional Farmers Market has been running for over 40 years in our downtown core, and is a vibrant and successful outdoor weekly market during the summer season. There have been many attempts to start new farmer's markets in Kamloops: on the North Shore, in Barnhartvale/Dallas, and throughout the winter in various in-door locations throughout the city.





Recently in 2020, the Kweeltken Farmer and Artisan Market ran in August and September at the Tk'emlups pow wow arbour and focused on Indigenous growers and artisans.

### What is the policy recommendation?

Policy recommendations could include:

- 🍏 Cross promote the Kweeltken Farmer and Artisan Market in the City to continue building relationships with Tk'emlupste Secwepemc and Community Futures Central Interior First Nations
- 🍏 Make municipal land and in-door spaces available to host farmers markets for free
- 🍏 Enhance support for the current Kamloops Regional Farmers Market through the use of municipal land and buildings for storage and office space

The FUAP strategy 3.3 is to “promote farmers’ markets and business models that provide fresh foods and support local producers” (City of Kamloops, 2015, p. 31), which includes actions such as partnering with agencies to explore a year-round market opportunity and location, and working with community partners to establish an online sales system.

## Our Network

*Celebrating People as Gifts and the Cultivation of Connections*

### Strengthening Community Connections Through Urban Agriculture Programs (mental health, land-based programs)

A meta-analysis on research on the role of urban agriculture in developing social capital found that the claims of bonding and bridging, and linking together community members are substantiated (Christensen, 2017). Many programs in Kamloops aim to build community cohesion and mental wellbeing through urban agriculture activities, notably, the Kamloops Food Policy Council Gleaning Abundance Program and Butler Urban Farm, Gardengate urban farm mental health program, and the Mount Paul Community Food Centre community kitchens and gardening programs.

### What is the policy recommendation?

Policy recommendations could include:

- 🍏 Supporting non-profits that are implementing community development and cohesion programs through Urban Agriculture through service agreements or other municipal grants that are based on the successful implementation of community-based programs.

The Kamloops Food Policy Council has sought the support of the City through grants or service agreements to implement programs that aid in achieving the goals defined in the FUAP and AAP. We feel there is potential for a supportive relationship to exist, but desire a more transparent model for accessing these funds.





# Indigenous food sovereignty

## *Decolonizing Relations and the Restoration of Ecological Food Systems*

### Indigenous Partnerships

The Secwepemc people have stewarded the land where Kamloops is located since time immemorial. Throughout the historic and ongoing colonization of this land, agriculture has been used as a tool for oppression and removal of Indigenous people from traditional food sources. While there are efforts being made to bridge and repair cross cultural relationships, the ongoing natural resources extraction and production paradigm model of agriculture continues to erode Indigenous food systems.

### What is the policy recommendation?

Policy recommendations could include:

- 🍏 Decolonizing what is considered a food asset within the municipality to include fishing spots, traditional food harvesting locations, and infrastructure for Indigenous traditional foods (like hunted game hanging facilities, shared kitchen space for canning etc)
- 🍏 Promote the Kweeletken Farmer and Artisan Market

There are many initiatives that aim to decolonize relations and food systems, however, much progress and learning is needed to continue to unpack white privilege and supremacy in our dominant culture. The Kamloops Food Policy Council is hosting a four part series of network meetings focused on race in the food system and will continue to move towards Indigenous Food Sovereignty.

### Seasonal Agricultural Workers Rights

Canada's food system is dependent on temporary foreign workers to provide labour for our food system. Among other issues, these workers are often housed in poor conditions and because their visas are tied to one employer, it makes recourse for working conditions or pay very difficult (Lay, 2020). Many COVID outbreaks have occurred among this population as a result.

### What is the policy recommendation?

Policy recommendations could include:

- 🍏 Advocating to the federal government for increased pathways to full immigration status for workers
- 🍏 Advocating for farmers to provide adequate housing and working conditions to protect from COVID-19

Much awareness has been raised about the links between race and the food system and the impact that anti-BIPOC racism can have on food security, and other human rights (FoodShare, 2019). Although these issues are complex, working with other actors in the food movement to become more educated about how colonialism is perpetuated in the food system and to enact policy change on a larger scale can make our urban food systems more ethical and secure.





# Food Literacy

## *Intergenerational Knowledge Transfer and Sharing Best Practices and Research*

### Education and School Food Programs for Kids

Kamloops was one of the founding Farm to School BC Regional Hubs, and as a result has a relatively long history of supporting teachers and students in hands-on learning related to the food system. There are also many classrooms in our school district that participate in the Fruit and Vegetables in the Classroom Program, and we have one location that has received a Farm to Cafeteria grant and creates a healthy salad bar for students. Some of the major achievements in the Kamloops region related to school food and education are:

- The development of a food sustainability curriculum and for middle school grades 7, 8 and 9.
- The development of the Skeetchestn Food Forest, an Indigenous led perennial school garden that contains fruits, nuts as well as medicinal and ceremonial plants.

### What is the policy recommendation?

Policy recommendations could include:

- 🍏 Supporting SD 73 in expanding the number of schools that offer the food sustainability curriculum
- 🍏 Supporting Indigenous schools in operationalizing school food and medicine gardens.

There are many partners that are engaged in this work, including Q'wemtsin Health Society, SD73, Farm to School BC, and the Kamloops Food Policy Council. The community support and collective action that has occurred already have set a solid foundation to build on.

### Mentorship

Learning to farm is a lifelong process with many intricacies and challenges. Mentorship, particularly informal mentorship has been attributed by beginning farmers as critically important to their success (FarmON Alliance, 2009). Those practicing urban agriculture and market gardening share many of the same challenges.

### What is the policy recommendation?

Policy recommendations could include:

- 🍏 Supporting programs that link new farmers to existing farmers, such as an urban agriculture branch of Young Agrarians (implementation)

The FUAP recognizes that mentorship is important and contains an action item to “explore partnerships to facilitate mentorship opportunities for local residents interested in acquiring a more in-depth level of knowledge and skill in urban agriculture.” The existing support for mentorship programs in the FUAP indicate that this policy would be realistic to implement in the short to medium term.





# Food Commons

## *The Revitalization of Local Food Assets and the Sharing Economy*

### **Expanding the Number and Size of Community Owned Common Urban Farms**

Closely tied to the goal of decolonizing the food system, moving away from an private property paradigm can help to shift thinking about food as a commodity as opposed to a right, or even a gift. The Butler Urban Farm, operated by the Kamloops Food Policy Council starting in 2020 is the first common farm in the city. Anyone at all is welcome to take produce from the farm. Volunteers are welcomed anytime and harvest is done twice a week. Any food not taken by volunteers or members of the public is donated to meal programs or the Food Bank. The success of the program rested on the farm managers skill in activating a network of volunteers and community investment in the project.

#### **What is the policy recommendation?**

Policy recommendations could include:

- 🍏 Support the expansion of common farms financially in terms of coordination and also by offering municipal land for a farm location

The City is supportive of the Butler Urban Farm project and is a key partner in a second common farm, at a property that is located slightly outside the downtown core. This second farm is envisioned to be a farm education hub and will be located on City owned land.

### **Urban Food Amenities**

When new development occurs, developers are required to make contributions to the required infrastructure to help the community to continue to grow through Development Cost Charges, as well as through regulations that occur as a result of a Development Permit Area or a Multifamily Permit. These regulations dictate a minimum amount of greenspace, park space, as well as other amenities that building require. It is possible for municipalities to encourage the inclusion of food assets in these regulations such as community gardens, fruit trees, pollinator corridors, as well as community kitchen space and/or space for markets.

#### **What is the policy recommendation?**

Policy recommendations could include:

- 🍏 Creating a density bonusing regulation that requires developers to add food amenities to their developments in exchange for the ability to build more units
- 🍏 Development permit area guidelines requiring developers to add food related amenities to new development, particularly ones in identified food deserts
- 🍏 Development cost charges that help create food assets in parks

The Kamloops Food Policy Council has been proposing food assets as amenities to the City of Kamloops for several years, and it is included as a policy in the Official Community Plan, however it has yet to be implemented in the Zoning Bylaw and development procedure updates.





## Coordinating Neighbourhood Crops

Revitalizing mutual aid networks by coordinating specialized growing among neighbours and trading at the harvest is a grassroots approach to increasing urban agriculture outcomes. In Kamloops, there are programs that connect neighbours through neighborhood associations, and interest groups. Young Agrarians recently launched an urban version of the land matching program that used to occur solely in rural areas. However, there is no formal mechanism for people to make trades with neighbours in the city yet.

### What is the policy recommendation?

Policy recommendations could include:

- 🍏 Support programs that connect neighbours and revitalize mutual aid

This type of initiative is generally supported by the City, however the impetus would need to come from grassroots organizing such as the neighbourhood association tables. There is funding available for associations to hold events and activities, which could be used to stimulate this type of trade and barter.

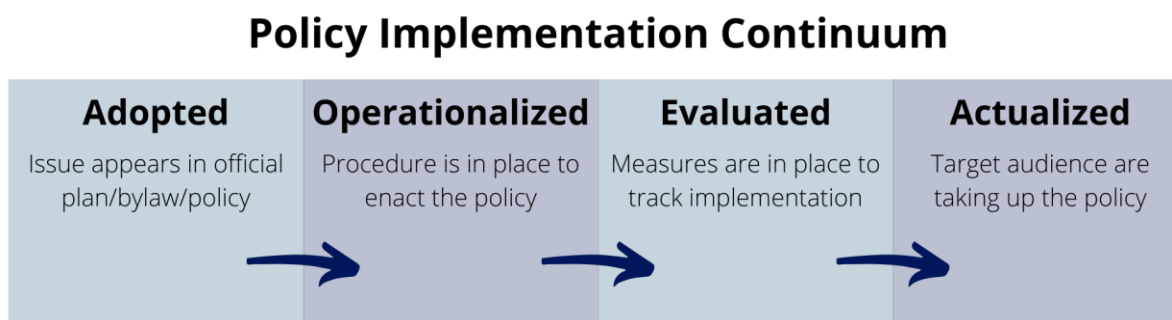






# Analysis

The policies and practice suggestions that were brought forward by the participants of the dialogue were analyzed according to the level of implementation. There is a continuum of implementation that the policies fit into, according to the following figure:



*Figure 1. Policy Implementation Continuum*

Starting in reverse order, the policies are organized below by level of implementation:

## Actualized Policies

- Encouraging farmers markets
- Strengthening community connections through urban agriculture programs (mental health, land-based programs)
- Education and school food programs for kids

## Evaluated Policies (but not actualized)

- Encouraging more public and private perennial crops
- Eliminating food deserts
- Encouraging food assets as amenities in development

## Operationalized Policies (but not evaluated or actualized)

- Native Bees and pesticide bylaws
- Expanding the number and size of community owned common urban farms
- Disincentivize greenfield development through an evaluation of food production capacity

## Adopted Policies (but not implemented, evaluated or actualized)

- Support for commercial greenhouse operations for food production
- Bylaw to support roadside stands and other ways to share excess produce
- Encourage farmer to farmer mentorship
- Reduced water bills for growing food (through rain barrel program)



## Policies that have not been Adopted:

- Rooftop garden readiness or encouragement
- Providing resources for urban farms: mulch, dirt, seedlings, transport of waste
- Fostering Indigenous partnerships through food
- Ensuring the safe and fair treatment of seasonal agricultural workers
- Coordination of mutual aid through neighbourhood based sharing and trading

The policy recommendation section provides examples of recommendations that can move each of the above policies towards the continuum for more fulsome implementation. Arguably the “lowest hanging fruit” will lie in expanding the actualization, evaluation and implementation of policies that have already been adopted. Taking action in these three categories will allow the efforts that are being made to expand urban food growing space to have an immediate on-the-ground impact.

## Policy Suites

There are several key suites of policies that would be strategic to implement concurrently. It is suggested that a fulsome evaluation of impact and “market” for taking up these various urban agriculture policies. Furthermore, there is a potential to align these policies and acitized them along with other City plans or processes (for example, the environmental sustainability policies could be forward as a result of a climate action plan or initiative). These suggested suites of policies are outlined in categories here:

### Physical Resources and Infrastructure

Focusing on areas that deal with physical resources and infrastructure would provide great leverage for the viability of urban food spaces. These policies could include providing the option of municipal land for farmers markets, mapping locations of public palatable perennial fruit and nut trees, providing municipal land or funding for urban farm management, creating a greenhouse guide for urban farmers, initiating a rain barrel program, and initiating a program for resource (like mulch, compost) drop off at urban farms. Focusing on implementing policies that have an impact on physical resources would provide a direct boost to urban farmers and potential viability of undertaking new urban growing spaces.

### Food Justice

Another suite of policies that would be strategic to implement together are focused on justice issues such as elimination of food deserts, fostering Indigenous partnerships and food sovereignty initiatives, and advocating for the safe and fair treatment of seasonal agricultural workers. These policies may be best moved along the implementation continuum through an advocacy based organizational partner and education campaigns.

### Environmental Sustainability

It also would be strategic to advance a suite of policies that have impacts on environmental sustainability such as increasing evaluation of native bees habitat and pesticide bylaws, creating





a food assessment as part of the process to disincentivize greenfield development, and rooftop garden readiness education.

### Community Connectedness and Programming

Similar mechanisms for the implementation of policies related to community connectedness and programming around food would be at play (providing financial support, or initiating a community based program), so it would make sense to undertake these initiatives together as well. This could include the expansion of mental health and land-based learning urban agriculture programs, encouraging farmer to farmer mentorship, and coordinating mutual aid through neighbourhood based sharing and trading.

## Conclusion

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The policy suggestions of the participants at the urban agriculture dialogue provided a snapshot in time of the most pressing policy related issues for urban agriculture in Kamloops. While many of the policies that were suggested have already been adopted into food and agriculture plans, the adopted policies are located at various stages on the policy implementation continuum. There are several recommended actions that can be taken to move the policies towards a greater level of actualization, and to make a bigger impact on the accessibility and viability of food growing within the City.

As mentioned in the introduction, there is an opportunity with the newly established City of Kamloops Agriculture Committee to examine the policies that have been identified as priorities and move them towards a greater degree of implementation. The suites of policies that are suggested above are non-exhaustive and a living outline of what might be strategic to move forward with given the current context and environment of urban growing spaces.





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# Appendix A

## Whiteboard Discussion Ideas

