



April 29, 2021

Urban Foodlands

Case Studies of Kamloops, Vancouver and Victoria



Prepared for:



Provincial Report

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Acknowledgments

We would like to acknowledge that this project took place across the traditional territories of multiple First Nations in British Columbia. This include the territories of the Tk'emlúpste Secwépemc (Tk'emlúpsemc) people - part of the Secwépemc Nation, Musqueam (xʷməθkʷəy̓əm), Tsleil-watuth (Stó:lō and Səlilwətaʔ/Selilwitulh), and Squamish (Skwxwú7mesh) Nations, and the Ləkʷəŋən (Songhees), Xwsepsum(Esquimalt) people - known as the Esquimalt and Songhees Nations, , where the Cities of Kamloops, Victoria and Vancouver are now located within.

As we look to strengthen urban food systems, it is of vital importance to acknowledge that the functions and purposes of what we have termed as food systems have historically, and continue to, displace Indigenous people's stewardship of food, culture and land. This displacement is ongoing and we call upon all those involved with urban agriculture and urban food systems to act and respond to this ongoing injustice in tandem with any efforts to strengthen community roots.

We would like to extend our thanks to the Real Estate Foundation of BC, for funding this project, and PhD Candidate Colin Dring, for his conceptualization and support in project execution. We would also like to thank our partner organizations for conducting their dialogues and writing reports:

- Food Eco District, Holly Dumbarton
- Kamloops Food Policy Council, Bonnie Klohn
- Vancouver Urban Farming Society, Karen Ageson, Angeli dela Rosa

Thank you to the communities in Kamloops, Vancouver and Victoria; who shared their knowledge and expertise through their participation in the dialogues.

This report could not be completed without the team at the Public Health Association of BC; including Christina Harding, who edited this report, Chelsea Woodhouse, communication and design lead for all reports, and Richard Han, who provided a keen eye and emotional support throughout this project. Finally, a heartfelt thank you is extended to Aaren Topley, for the overall conceptualization and management of this project.





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Project Background

In January 2020, the Public Health Association of BC (PHABC) 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 current and/or previous 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 the three case study municipalities chosen for this project. These locations were chosen due to their strong engagement in food system policy, each regional organization involved in this case study had received or was currently working on a REFBC-funded project on urban food policy and had good working relationships with the city staff members who hold food system portfolios.

The case study for each municipality was to include an in-person dialogue involving 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 urban agriculture's potential role in advancing sustainable food systems and which existent and potential policies could help them achieve these outcomes within their respective municipalities.

Starting in February 2020, monthly meetings were held between the three participating organizations to share their previous or current REFBC funded work, discuss the context of urban agriculture in their municipalities, and brainstorm the structure of their dialogues. On March 11th 2020, the World Health Organization declared the coronavirus a pandemic.. In response, Canada, including the province of British Columbia implemented an emergency order restricting travel and in-person gatherings, thereby limiting the ability to host in-person dialogues. As a result, the proposed format for each dialogue was modified to be held virtually; which required a pivot of the dialogue structure and a reduction of the number of participants to ensure the facilitation of in-depth conversations between participants was still possible. Due to the modified plan, there was increased focus to invite participants specifically involved in the broad range of urban agriculture activities occurring in each city. This included community garden coordinators, urban farmers, neighbourhood house representatives, and food policy council members, among others.



Figure 1 Timeline of Project



Each organization hosted their virtual dialogue and a report was written using similar research methods and report templates. The reports were written based on the following format:

1. **Project Background:** Similar to the background in this report.
2. **Regional Background:** A discussion of the regional context, including background on their REFBC funded grant activity and its relationship to this project.
3. **Methods:** A description of the approaches used to structure each dialogue and to analyze the data needed for each report.
4. **Exploring Different Outcomes or Visions:** The visions or outcomes that arose from their dialogues.
5. **Policy Recommendations:** An outline of the policy recommendations that came from each dialogue.
6. **Analysis:** comparison of the policy recommendations to current city policies of the City. This explored whether the policies had already been implemented or evaluated by the city and acted on by the residents.
7. **Conclusion:** Next steps and municipal recommendations.

Defining Urban Agriculture

Agriculture and food production was vital to the development of distinct cradles of civilization and has supported the densification of communities since time immemorial. Through the sustained growth of large urban centres over the last few centuries, coupled with modernist ideas of the city as being the pinnacle of civilization, agricultural areas increasingly became distinct and separate entities. It wasn't until the First and Second World Wars and the creation and growth of Victory Gardens did cities begin reconceiving the idea of urban food production. After the Second World War, a growing trend of cities actively promoting the reintegration of food production within, and around, the urban landscape began to unfold. This is when the seedling of urban agriculture (UA) took root.

The concept of UA is still in the initial stages of policy and governance in the 21st century; but common themes have helped to set boundaries defining UA. One of the most prominent defining features of UA is a distinct set of food producing practices, policies and components arising within the built environment. This is different than urban foodlands, which is a term used in this report to be more inclusive of nature within an urban setting. This term foodlands was shared by the *Indigenous Working Group on Food Sovereignty*, as a way to broaden the conversations beyond the production paradigm of land and agriculture and promote Indigenous hunting, fishing, farming and gathering areas. When applied to an urban setting, the intent is to break down the boundary between UA and other green spaces with the fundamental realization that green spaces are multidimensional. They can grow food and medicine while simultaneously providing a space for people to connect both internally (to self reflect and heal), and externally (with the land, water and sky). This realization goes beyond people taking from the land and encompasses higher intentions on sharing and giving back.



Mason St. City Farm, Victoria BC

Photo Credit: Mason St. City Farm

The expansion of this definition is one of many juxtaposing concepts one must consider when exploring the purpose of land in an urban setting. Urban undeveloped land is highly valuable for meeting social and environmental outcomes but dense urban centres have limited land availability to cover competing priorities of housing, green space, roads, and other amenities. It is within this constraint that UA becomes uniquely defined as agricultural activities that require innovation and specific types of technology to overcome limited land availability. From this constraint, activities defining UA become explicit and can include, but are not limited to:

Small scale, highly intensive/productive farms that tend to grow low calorie, high sale value produce such as salad greens.

- Technology and innovation that proliferate this type of growing are able to access vacant grass, paved or gravel lots, roof tops, and facilitate indoor growing. Greenhouses and vertical growing operations are often used.
- These activities tend to occur on private and public land (e.g. municipal, school district, provincial government).

Small scale, community growing initiatives that allow people to grow food who generally do not own or have access to personal green space; these include community gardens, boulevard gardens, and public orchards.



- These activities tend to occur on private and public land (e.g. municipal, school district, provincial government).
- Private residential growing often occurs in this small-scale form, normally for the benefit the property owner or renter, however, models of community growing can occur on the privately owned plots of land.

Husbandry often occurs in two forms for UA; raising poultry and beekeeping. Some cities allow rabbits and other animals to be kept for consumption, while most set some type quantity limit for each type of animal.

- These activities mostly occur on private residential land, however, public beekeeping and school yard chickens are becoming more common activities.

The inputs, or resources, that support UA should be considered equally as important as community or individual growing aspirations and often require specific policies in order to enable growing activities in cities. This includes:

Machinery, building materials/structures, and materials for machine maintenance.

- Greenhouses and vertical growing operations; which are highly regulated, are included.

Agricultural inputs that include compost, water, seeds, pesticides and fertilizers.

- Composting and soil health are vital part of many types of growing activities. Leaf mulch, compost, and other organic material can be provided by cities to support UA in neighbourhoods.
- Water is another vital input to UA. Water rates and collection strategies can have a significant impact on the final cost of growing in cities.
- Seedlings are the only input that isn't regulated and or provided by the city. However, in extenuating circumstances some have cities provided seedlings to residents.
- Regulation of pesticides and fertilizers vary in each municipality.

Selling or sharing of food and medicine is an important part of the culture around growing food.

- Cities regularly govern this type of activity; in particular how, where and what type of food product can be sold. These policies are governed and influenced by health authorities on the premise of ensuring public health and safety.

The activities of UA tend to be defined by the culture of a city, and by its residents, elected officials, and municipal staff, all of which intersect at various points. City culture influences activities and policies based on residents' advocacy to their elected officials. Residents who are unable to do specific UA activities or do not want specific UA activities within their city will approach their elected officials, potentially impacting policy development and the type of activities occurring within city limits. Municipal staff also help define these activities and policies; for example, staff who have more knowledge about UA will likely propose more supportive policies or programs for the city to undertake.



Benefits of Urban Agriculture

In terms of social benefits stemming from UA, Horst, et al. 2017 found six broad categories from their review of North American literature, these include:

1. Increased food access and food security
2. Health improvement
3. Income generation
4. Skill building
5. Community development
6. Connections to broader efforts to address root causes of social inequities

When one considers food production, food security is often thought of as the largest benefit; but because of limited land availability and the densification of cities, UA has different benefit indicators. In the 2012 article, *Making Local Planning Work for Urban Agriculture in the North American Context: A View from the Ground*, Thibert stated “UA may not have the capability of transforming the produce supply chain fundamentally or solving the problem of healthy food access, but it may have the potential to change the relationship of people to food and to place” (p. 351).



Shady Acre Farm, Richmond, BC
Photo Credit: Claire Livia Lassam

The exposure of city residents to growing activities increases their understanding of where food comes from and appreciation of it. Education has been cited as one of the strongest benefits of UA, particularly when looking at densely populated cities surrounded by urban sprawl. Residents within these cities may have spent their entire lives without seeing a farm or how food is grown. By putting UA within city limits, residents are able to make a connection between the food they eat, the land it comes from, and the effort taken to grow it.

However, it is important to note that the benefits and burdens of UA are not equally distributed and echo others in advancing caution in those who consider UA an appropriate strategy that would benefit everyone. Rather, one should think of UA as one part of a set of scaled interventions needed in order to build resilient food systems that meet specific social outcomes, including food insecurity. When considering the potential of UA in improving health outcomes, those outcomes are found to be strongly tied to socioeconomic and environmental contexts.

Environmental benefits arising from UA are identified by Goldstein et al (2016) and include:

1. Waste assimilation - the reintegration of food scraps and yard trimmings as compost,
2. Potential reduction in ‘food miles’,
3. Potential for food distribution efficiency,



4. Reduced urban heat island effect,
5. Increased biodiversity,
6. Reduced storm water runoff, and
7. Potential for improved soil quality and air quality.

The authors also caution that UA environmental benefits are dependent on the type of UA activity (e.g., soil-bound, greenhouse, or vertical farming) and the degree of energy and the materials required to maintain climatic conditions. Some environmental benefits that are claimed by UA proponents have yet to be substantiated and are based on the assumption of broader landscape shifts (e.g., shifting agricultural lands back into forest or wetlands).

Governance of Urban Agriculture

As previously mentioned, UA policy and governance intersects with the culture of a city, political will and municipal staff. Understanding the municipal structure and its jurisdictions in relation to UA will help provide perspective into their complexities and insight into this project. Municipalities across British Columbia (BC) have a shared community charter that provides:

- (a) a legal framework for the powers, duties and functions that are necessary to fulfill their purposes,
- (b) the authority and discretion to address existing and future community needs, and
- (c) the flexibility to determine public interest and to respond to the different needs and changing circumstances of their communities.

The City of Vancouver has its own specific community charter containing both similarities and differences to the shared BC Municipalities community charter. Both community charters recognize that provincial or federal policy or law supersedes any bylaw or act within any community charter or individual municipality.



TOPSOIL, Victoria, BC
Photo credit: Chris Hildreth



Section 551 of the Local Government Act provides authority to the BC Minister of Agriculture to establish agricultural standards to guide local government in the development of various bylaws affecting lands within the Agricultural Land Reserve (ALR), as governed by the Agricultural Land Commission Act. However, this Act only regulates ALR land and does not apply to lands conducting agriculture activities outside of the ALR or to other secondary uses municipalities permit (e.g., agricultural uses in land zoned primarily residential). Cities tend to set their own bylaws within the limits of their community charter for those agricultural lands as it is quite challenging and politically controversial to include urban lands into the ALR.

This results in a regulatory and policy landscape that differs widely across BC. Each municipality has its own policies and practices on how it chooses to govern urban food production (or not). In BC, the support for UA across municipalities is varied with some municipalities having supportive UA policies with clear implementation strategies, while others have limiting UA policies and fail to implement existing policies. This leaves an inequity between cities that will be explored further in the following section.

Project Premise and Assumptions

A major driver of this project was the existence of a broad spectrum of local government intervention in urban food systems. This resulted in a complex and divergent set of policies and practices being employed by municipalities to, or not to, address key issues facing their constituents and denizens (e.g., food insecurity, ecological goods and services, animal welfare, social justice, land dispossession). A variety of reasons, including financial and physical resources, municipal land base, political leadership, champions among local government staff, community-driven collective action, non-profit sector vibrancy, and a growing interest in local food among urban populations, have led some municipalities to create stronger, more supportive food system policies and practices than others. This underlying inequity across localities helped identify the aim for this project: to identify if there were any cross-cutting structures (policies, practices, outcomes, themes) that could be adopted across the province. This project led with the assumption that some type of standardized, provincially-adopted policy, practice or outcomes framework could be developed from the results of this project and could be embedded in community charters to create positive equitable impact across municipal policies and practices.

Key indicators of these inequities across municipalities arose via different types of structural support for food programming. For example, each municipality has its own policy, practices and governance of community gardens, which has influenced the development of a community garden. Specifically reflecting on how municipalities support the management of community gardens. Some municipalities:

1. fund a non-profit to manage all of their community gardens,
2. provide a small grant to individual neighbourhoods (such a through neighbourhood houses) to manage a community garden, or
3. provide in-kind staff support but are unable to provide funding to garden coordinators.

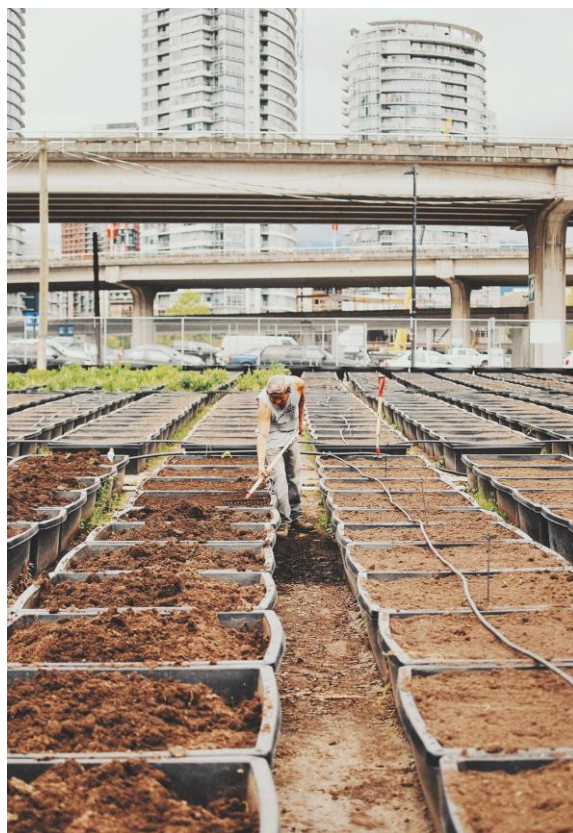


This left a strong variance in the outcomes of community engagement in these gardens across municipalities based on the funding structure for managing a garden and, therefore, the support a garden received.

Another example of municipal inequities is from the design structure and work of food policy councils. Municipalities have structured their food policy councils differently (Bassarab, Santo and Palmer 2018). This structuring includes the influence they have over policy and practice change, food policy council members' participation styles (Ostenso, 2018), whether funding is being provided by the municipality, and the level of citizen engagement. This difference in structure type and participation impacts the types of policies recommended (or not) within and across municipalities.

A final example of one of the strongest inequities that this report will explore is which UA activities are or are not allowed across the municipalities. The policies and practices used by municipalities to support UA (or not) are complex and municipal specific. They cover a broad range of policies across different city departments; from business licensing and zoning to parks and everything in between. While some municipalities have a vision or suite of policies to support UA and allow for policy adoption across departments, many municipalities do not. This has resulted in two types of siloing; the first is within the policies themselves and departments they sit in and the second is between municipalities and their permitted growing activities.

Although these food system policies allow for some type of growing within an urban setting, because they are siloed, they are not generally integrated into formal programs. Rather, they remained as separate policies representing aspirations, rarely implemented with adequate funding or evaluation processes in place. The report assumed these food system policies and practices were largely city driven and when they were community-driven, they tended to be siloed into existing city planning and execution policy and practice structures. Food system organizations reflected that local government could do more to support societal outcomes, even just by acknowledging the growth in food and agricultural policy councils across the province. This assumption was supported in the meetings and is presented as one of the premises that influenced the structure of each municipal dialogue. These dialogues provided space for community members to create their own visions or outcomes for what they wanted to see related to growing food in urban settings.



Sole Food Street Farm, Vancouver, BC
Photo credit: Matt Schroeter



Methods

This project proposed conducting case studies throughout urban municipalities to explore current UA practices and policies and subsequently align them with community visions and outcomes. This report was set with the goal of aligning efforts across municipalities and using the information gathered to help inform the development of stronger coordination of UA policies and practices across BC.

Three case study municipalities were chosen for this project; the cities of Kamloops, Victoria and Vancouver. These locations were chosen due to their strong engagement in food system policy, each regional organization involved in this case study had received or was currently working on a REFBC-funded project on urban food policy and had good working relationships with the city staff members who hold food system portfolios.

The section below provides a background on each municipality, the regional organizations involved, their current or past REFBC project, and their dialogue structure.

City of Kamloops and the Kamloops Food Policy Council Background

Kamloops is located in the heart of Secwepemcul'ewcin the interior of BC. Kamloops is a community of approximately 92,000 and servicing outlying rural areas in the Thompson Nicola Regional District and beyond. Kamloops is a semi-arid desert with predominant grassland ecosystems and forested areas in higher elevations. The dry and hot climate makes the irrigated valley bottom areas where the City is located perfect for seasonal UA including warm weather crops such as 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, UA 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 Best Practices in Urban Agriculture report to the City.
2009	Food security was included as a section in the City of Kamloops Social Plan update.
2013	The Area Agriculture Plan was adopted by the City of Kamloops.
2015	The City of Kamloops created the Food and Urban Agriculture Plan .
2018	The Kamloops Food Policy Council, in partnership with its network members, adopted a strategic plan 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 assessment of the food system using an evaluation rubric based on the vision adopted in 2019.



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



Butler Urban Farm, Kamloops, BC
Photo Credit: Kamloops Food Policy Council

In 2018, the Kamloops Food Policy Council, with the support of the Real Estate Foundation of BC, initiated a [Community-Based Food Plan Implementation](#). This collective action process included local government stakeholders (Indigenous, municipal and regional) convening 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 feasibility study, and a Food Hub pilot project and feasibility study. Advocacy related to abattoirs is ongoing. The final priority, expanding the land used for growing food, is in part expressed in this report in partnership with the PHABC, particularly as it relates to urban growing spaces. This report provides a clear pathway regarding the adoption, implementation, evaluation and promotion of policies that relate to expanding urban growing spaces and will be used to guide the actions of local governments and their partners, including the Kamloops Food Policy Council.

In 2021, a new Agriculture Committee is being established by the City of Kamloops aiming 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 intends to share the findings of this report at its launch. This report will be used as a tool to help create a clear path toward the expansion of urban growing spaces.

City of Victoria and the Food Eco District

Located on the southernmost tip of Vancouver Island, the City of Victoria is the provincial capital of British Columbia, Canada. It is situated in the Capital Regional District (CRD), which includes 13 municipalities across 3 electoral districts and a population of 383,360. The CRD is made up of urban, semi-urban and rural land, and includes the Gulf Islands. The City of Victoria is an urban municipality with a population of 85,792.

Over the past 150 years, the region's relationship with foodlands has changed dramatically. Cared for over thousands of years by the Lək̓ʷəŋən (Songhees), Xwsepsum (Esquimalt), Sc'ianew (Beecher Bay), T'Sou-ke, Pacheedaht, MÁLEXEL (Malahat), Pune'laxutth' (Penelekut), and W̱SÁNEĆ (W̱JOŁŁP (Tsartlip), BOKÉĆEN (Pauquachin), S̱ÁUTW (Tsawout), and W̱SIKEM (Tseycum) Nations, these lands were abounded in food and medicine for the communities across this region. From the late-1800's to mid-1900's, an influx of settlers arrived, colonizing the land and expanding their European-based agricultural model across the region (Vancouver Island Community Research Alliance, 2011). Over the past 50 years the region has seen a significant decline in local food production and increased reliance on foreign imports, roughly 85% of the region's food products come from outside sources (Vancouver Island Economic Alliance, 2018).

Victoria's Official Community Plan (OCP) was updated in 2017 following a community consultation process to include a section dedicated to food systems. From this consultation, a food policy council and advisory body to City of Victoria called the Urban Food Table (UFT) was developed. The council provides "...advice on the development of policies and programs that support urban food production and pollinators. The [UFT] also offers opportunities to share knowledge, create community connections, and align efforts to implement food system objectives in Greater Victoria" (Urban Food Table, n.d.). Alongside the inclusion of food systems in the OCP and the establishment of UFT, the city also hired a Food Systems Coordinator. The coordinator developed a series of policy documents entitled 'Growing in the City,' which can be found below.



THE CITY OF VICTORIA POLICIES & GROWING IN THE CITY RESOURCES
Victoria's Official Community Plan for Food Systems
Growing Food and Gardening in Mixed-Use, Multi-Unit Residential Developments
Building a Rooftop Greenhouse
Boulevard Gardening
Community Gardens and Orchards
City Bylaws for Food-Bearing, Pollinator, and Native Plant Landscape Design Guidelines
Urban Food Tree Stewardship Pilot Program
Keeping Bees and Hens
Growing Food to Sell: Small-Scale Commercial Urban Food Production Handbook Urban Food Production Fact Sheet Building and Operating a Food Stand

Food Eco District Urban Agriculture Society (FED), a Victoria-based non-profit focusing on urban food and sustainability, received a grant from the REFBC to conduct a project titled *Street to Sky* which inventoried the top growing sites for UA in downtown Victoria and its surrounding areas. FED conducted interviews with landowners and developers of the sites, as well as other interested parties including real estate agents and urban farmers; both who are established in the community and/or looking for land to grow. Through the information discovered in these interviews, FED is currently developing two guides to relay best practices to these groups on how to include UA in the City of Victoria and how to structure processes to run as smoothly as possible and with full collaboration and cooperation of their teams. These guides will be ready for distribution March 2021 and will be followed by a workshop to help teach farmers who are interested in growing within the City the necessary skills to become established in an urban environment.

PHABC was a consultant in the earlier stages of *Street to Sky* and ensured the project design and regional implementation fed into the existing provincial frameworks for coordination and advocacy.



The Urban Learning Farm, Victoria, BC
Photo Credit: Food Eco District



City of Vancouver and Vancouver Urban Farming Society

The City of Vancouver is located on the territories of the *thexʷməθkwəy̓əm* (Musqueam), *Skwxwú7mesh* (Squamish), and *Selílwitulh* (Tsleil-Waututh) Nations. It is within the Lower Mainland region of British Columbia and has a population of 631,486 based on 2016 Census data. The city is regulated under a provincial statute, the Vancouver Charter, which supersedes the Vancouver Incorporation Act and grants the City different powers than other communities have under the Local Government Act (City of Vancouver, n.d - a).

Vancouver has been ranked as one of the most livable cities in the world, but also grapples with extreme unaffordability resulting in high housing/land prices disconnected from local incomes (CBC News, 2018; RBC Economic Research, 2010). There are numerous groups in the city that are involved in advocating for justice and sustainability across the food system. Strong community organization efforts in the 1990's pushed the City towards a more concerted approach to municipal urban food policy, notably resulting in the adoption of a Food Action Plan in 2003 and the creation of the Vancouver Food Policy Council (VUFS) in 2004 (Mendes, 2003).



Farm Mixer Urban Farm, Vancouver, BC
Photo Credit: Vancouver Urban Farming Society



The City has enacted numerous individual food policies since 2003,¹ shifting later to a more coordinated food policy approach with the adoption of the [Greenest City Action Plan](#) (GCAP) in 2011 and the [Vancouver Food Strategy](#) in 2013 (City of Vancouver, n.d.-b). GCAP's goals included becoming a world leader in urban food systems by 2020, with a specific target of increasing city-wide and neighbourhood food assets by a minimum of 50% over 2010 levels. The Vancouver Food Strategy sought to integrate individual policies into a more coordinated food systems approach (KPU Institute for Sustainable Food Systems, n.d.). Relevant food policies and documents are:

CITY OF VANCOUVER FOOD POLICIES
Urban honey beekeeping guidelines
Backyard hens guidelines
Urban agriculture design guidelines for the private realm
Farmers markets guidelines
Community food markets and community kitchens bulletin
Street food vending bulletin
Parks Board's urban agriculture policy for parks
Accessible community garden guidelines
Sustainable food system grants
Funding for soil for new community gardens
Urban farming (growing food to sell) guidelines
Zoning and Development By-law
Rezoning policy for large sustainable developments - requires developments greater than 8000 m ² to include a minimum of 3 food assets. Areas in the Southlands neighbourhood that are in the ALR are subject to ALR policies and the Southlands Plan (City of Vancouver, 2013).

In recent years, VUFS has been active in advocating for more supportive and less restrictive guidelines for urban farming in Vancouver. In 2017, VUFS commissioned a report that flagged the numerous limitations and costs imposed by the City of Vancouver's Urban Farming Guidelines resulting in the diminishment of urban farms' economic viability (MacKinnon, 2017). A forthcoming REFBC-funded report (scheduled to be released in early 2021) will put forward policy recommendations to improve the Urban Farm Guidelines within the current review process conducted by the City.

The City of Vancouver dialogues built on VUFS policy advocacy work by seeking to understand what outcomes people hope to see from UA more broadly (not just limited to commercial urban farming), what policies could support those outcomes, and what barriers exist in reaching them. The partnership with PHABC gave VUFS an opportunity to connect with provincial food system advocacy efforts.



Community Visions and Outcomes

As part of their dialogues, non-profit organizations in Kamloops, Victoria and Vancouver each led a process to come up with their own visions or outcomes for Urban Foodland access. That is, an explicit link between Urban Agriculture activities and forms and the social, economic or environmental outcomes/goals. A comparison of these visions and outcomes were conducted Figure 2, which displays each city and the visions and outcomes their community expressed, as shown on Table 1.

Table 1: Outcomes and Visions for Kamloops, Victoria and Vancouver

KAMLOOPS	VICTORIA	VANCOUVER
A Resilient Food System: healthy land and water	Land Use	Health Benefits
Alleviation of Poverty: equitable access to healthy, culturally appropriate food	Advocacy	Community Connectedness
Local Economic Vitality: support for regional food providers	Community Education	Equity and Access
Our Network: celebrating people as gifts and the cultivation of connections	Environmental Stewardship	Decolonization
Indigenous Food Sovereignty: decolonizing relations and the restoration of ecological food systems	Policies for Equity	Education and Skill Building
Food Literacy: intergenerational knowledge transfer and sharing best practices and research		Environmental Stewardship
Food Commons: the revitalization of local food assets and the sharing economy		Food Self-Reliance



Figure 1: Vision and Outcomes Concept Map

Comparing the three municipalities and their outcomes/visions, six outcome themes were identified: Equity, Economy, Environment, Health, Education, & Community Building. These outcome themes are highly integrated and have multiple areas of overlap (Figure 2). Economy has the most overlap of the visions and outcomes and has the highest intersection with all other outcome themes. Education and Environment has the second most overlap in outcomes and visions, this is followed by Equity. Finally, Health had the least amount of overlap.

The section below discusses each outcome theme, comparing their similarities and differences based on how each region presented them within their report.



Economy

The Economy theme was strongly linked to many different outcomes and visions within each municipality's report. Two framings of economy were explored within the reports; 1) economy as a part of vocation for farmers and building farm and food businesses, and 2) a community-based economy where members were contributing to their community through engagement and food access. Community-based economy was strongly connected to the Education theme; however there was also a link to vocational training as part of creating a strong urban farming sector. The Economy theme was also connected in the Equity theme via a strong link to community-based economic outcomes.

Victoria participants spoke of moving away from capitalism into more sustainable economies. Participants discussed school farms and how non-profits could support city dwellers in growing food. The report suggested that “this would bring on a greater opportunity to inspire a deeper understanding of what role growing food plays in urban dwellers' lives and stimulate new ideas about how to innovate through the creation of jobs and economic opportunity.”

Kamloops had several of their visions linked to the Economy theme. There was a specific link to local economic vitality where “prioritizing solidarity and sovereignty over competition and profit, and ensures a good livelihood for producers with safe and equitable labor conditions for all.”

Vancouver dialogue participants spoke to the need of a living wage for urban farmers. Participants suggested exploring the inclusion of urban farmers into employability programs that provide employment and training to individuals who are unemployed or facing barriers to unemployment. This presented an interesting intersection between Equity and Economy themes.

Education

Education is a key theme throughout all reports. Each report specifically presented the need for Education to build skills, train the next generation of farmers, and provide knowledge exchange opportunities as an outcome or vision. The framing around Education is closely tied to the Economy, where all the reports presented Education specifically for the purpose of vocational training. Schools gardens/farms were another area where each report expressed the importance of gardening/farming curriculum as a key aspect of Education.

Victoria had a separate category for Education titled Community Education. Their report also put Skills Development & Vocational Training into their Advocacy outcome as a subtheme. Within this subtheme it was expressed that advocacy was required for the City of Victoria to support more vocational training and skill development opportunities. Education also would lead to further advocacy, as more people would be interested in food growing.



Kamloops had a vision of food literacy around intergenerational knowledge transfer and sharing of best practices and research. Their report stated that food literacy education has the potential to create strong communities through bringing people together to collaboratively share and learn. This connected intergenerational knowledge sharing as being a key component of food literacy Education.

Vancouver had an outcome of Education and Skill Building and spoke to Education as a way of strengthening culture. The Dialogues' participants recognized the value of intergenerational and intercultural learning that can happen in gardens and food programs. Food growing is also an opportunity to better understand one's own food culture. Participants in the dialogues spoke to the link between Education and the Economy when discussing how urban dwellers should have the opportunity to start a small farm business to test out whether it is a viable livelihood.

Environmental Stewardship

Environmental Stewardship was an outcome in both Vancouver and Victoria's dialogues. Kamloops included Environmental Stewardship components in their resilient food system within their healthy land and water vision. Both Victoria and Kamloops discussed soil health within their respective visions or outcomes.

Victoria had a specific outcome for the Environment. Soil Health was the primary subject of the discussion within one of the Victoria dialogues. One of the organizations involved in the dialogues was a regional expert on soil and spoke to "moving away from capitalism and colonialism and toward climate resiliency and land healing".

Kamloops discussed the inter-relationship between humans, animals, and the planet. Their vision of a resilient food system for healthy land and water included strong themes of Indigenous ways of knowing and being. "Food grown through agriculture or collected through traditional harvesting methods protects land, water, animals and humans now and in future generations". Pesticide use was discussed in this vision as well as growing through regenerative practices.

Vancouver had a specific outcome of Environmental Stewardship. Advocacy and engagement were strong themes within this outcome. Participants felt that "there was a recognition that urban foodlands, when designed and stewarded with purpose, can have a positive impact in providing ecological benefits even in cities'."

Equity

Vancouver and Victoria explicitly discussed and had Equity as an outcome. Kamloops indirectly discussed Equity in the framing of poverty alleviation for equitable access to healthy, culturally appropriate food. Both Victoria and Kamloops discussed Equity as part of food access. For all



reports, equity was linked to accessing the economy for livelihood, specifically for urban farming jobs.

Victoria had food access and affordability, and inclusion as sub-outcomes within Equity. This outcome included food access, increasing minimum wage and poverty alleviation. There were also discussions around the need for marginalized or under-represented communities to be centered in urban foodlands policy discussion. One participant specifically talked about conducting a needs assessment with under-represented communities to figure out what type of policies and practice could support urban foodlands equity in Victoria.

Kamloops embedded aspects of equity into their alleviation of poverty for equitable access to healthy, culturally appropriate food vision. While Equity wasn't directly mentioned, Kamloops positioned Equity as part of food security by discussing poverty alleviation, and living wage. Equity was also subtly interwoven through positioning and language including food sovereignty and community collective support.

Vancouver had a specific outcome of Equity. Theirs was the only report to discuss agency and racism as important aspects of urban foodlands access. Participants discussed programs in the city that were trying to create equitable access to growing spaces for communities.

Community Building

Community Building has a strong link to Education. Victoria, Kamloops and Vancouver explored how education brings communities together to share knowledge and skills. Vancouver and Victoria both had participants that talked about how the pandemic connected them with their communities through conversations and actions around growing food.

Victoria linked Community Building with Community Education and Advocacy. Advocacy was framed as a way to bring people together via community mobilization activities.

Kamloops discussed how the Kamloops Food Policy's network can be seen as a way of bringing people together to share food, fun and friendship and felt that these aspects have been and will continue to be effective at building community.

Vancouver expressed that cooking, growing and eating together helps to build community. Participants spoke about their experiences in a local food program as a way of getting to know their neighbour. There were discussions on how programs such as community garden can reduce social isolation. One participant said "[A local food program] brought people together, and it turned into so much more. People started talking to each other. Somebody found housing through someone they met over food. Other people found work. [It's about] interconnections and finding community."



Health

Only Vancouver had an explicit Health outcome, however Victoria and Kamloops both talked about the social and health benefits of urban foodlands. In Vancouver and Victoria, participants talked about the benefits they and their community have received from being outside and connecting to the land during this pandemic.

Victoria participants spoke of the joy of getting to eat food they have grown.

Kamloops framed Health as part of poverty alleviation and expressed that all people living in Kamloops should have access to healthy, culturally appropriate food.

Vancouver dialogues' participants spoke about the physical, mental, social, and spiritual Health benefits of growing foodland connecting with neighbours.

Additional Themes

There was a broader theme of racialized, cultural, and Indigenous food systems at play within each dialogue but notably, there was an absence of discussion around how UA meets cultural and racialized communities' food needs. Vancouver participants raised questions on how to reduce barriers to foodland spaces and programs for people who are socially and economically marginalized. One participant said "The idea [for the urban farming project] was to give people access to food growing. But probably if someone's already having a tough time accessing food, and they don't want to go to a food bank, they probably don't have the time to go and farm either." This comment unpacked the complex intersection between equity, poverty, and an individual's ability to participate when dealing with multi-oppressions.

Both Vancouver's and Victoria's report discussed the need of providing under-represented groups honoraria for their time and contribution in the community engagement process. Vancouver discussed the idea of an internal city process to hire under-represented groups and conduct regular anti-oppression and anti-racism training with city staff. Victoria discussed holding a regular needs-assessment with under-represented communities to ensure policy and practices were more equitable. Equity frameworks are one tool a city could use to interrupt city policies and processes that are shown to further marginalize and exclude communities. The Racial Equity Alliance has a Racial Equity Toolkit (2015) for operationalizing equity that can be utilized by municipalities to start an understanding of how to create equity frameworks.

Indigenous food systems were also another theme present in the dialogues. Vancouver and Kamloops had specific outcomes or visions for Indigenous food sovereignty and decolonization. As discussed in the Methods section under City of Kamloops and the Kamloops Food Policy Council Background; Kamloops developed its Visions over several years (as part of their REFBC funding) and therefore was able to engage with many different Indigenous leaders and knowledge keepers within their community. Settlers also have a role to play in ensuring decolonization themes are included in food work. In Victoria and Vancouver, Indigenous stewardship of the land



was discussed. Vancouver created a specific section on decolonizing food systems while Victoria focused more on inclusion of diverse and under-represented voices at decision-making tables.

These reports only scratched the surface on how UA can meet cultural and racialized communities' food needs; however, the list below provides a number of program examples and other reports that dive deeper into the intersection of UA and racialized communities:

ADDITIONAL RESOURCES
Alberta Association of Immigrant Serving Agencies (AAISA) - Anti Racism Toolkit
Community Futures Development Corporation of Central Interior First Nations - Indigenous Agriculture Situation Assessment
Disparity Despite Diversity: Social Injustice in New York City's Urban Agriculture System
The Intersection of Planning, Urban Agriculture, and Food Justice: A Review of the Literature
Resources from Soul Fire Farm: Food Sovereignty Action Steps and Equity Guidelines for Donors and Foundations

Comparing Policy Recommendations

Kamloops, Vancouver, and Victoria dialogues generated a suit of policy recommendations through their discussions. Participants in the dialogues recommended policies and each report aligned their outcomes with the different policies recommended. In each report, additional policies were added if dialogue participants alluded to one or if an outcome did not have an identified policy recommendation attached to it.

For this report, the first stage of the analysis compiled the policies that aligned with the six themes identified in the vision and outcome map (Figure 2). These were Economy, Education, Community Building, Equity, Environment, and Health. Policies were removed if they did not align with the specific themes or outcomes, or were modified to be less municipal specific. Policies for each outcome were organized into 20 categories based on different types of actions within municipal jurisdiction. The policy categories were:

- Farm Support
- Non-Profit Support
- Farm Stands
- Pollinator and Perennials
- Retail and Food Access
- Farmers Markets
- Living Wage
- Working with Schools
- Water
- Greenhouses
- Supporting Indigenous Food Systems
- Community Food Production
- New and Existing Developments
- Rooftop and Urban Orchard
- Internal City Policies and Practice
- Composting and Resource Material
- Assessment, Mapping, Monitoring and Evaluation



Two categories did not fit into municipal jurisdictions: Food Funders, and Farm Workers Rights. An analysis was conducted on the alignment between the policy recommendations in the Victoria, Vancouver and Kamloops' reports. This was conceptualized in Table 2, demonstrating the similarities between the reports' policy recommendations.

Table 2: Similarities and differences between recommended policies of Victoria, Vancouver and Kamloops

CATEGORIES	MUNICIPAL POLICY ALIGNMENT (2 OR MORE)	DISCUSSION OF POLICY AND AREAS OF ALIGNMENT
Working with Schools	3/3	Each municipal report presented policies to support municipalities' to work with schools. Kamloops' policies supported school education and Indigenous school gardens
		Victoria presented policies that would replicate school farm models and farm field trips for students.
		Vancouver presented policies to support a universal school meal program, local food procurement and school farms or public farms that had institutional procurement contracts with schools.
Non-Profit Support	3/3	Each municipal report presented a different policy that would require municipalities to provide annual funding to non-profits that are working on food education, farmer vocational training and providing food to community programs, including schools.
Farm Support	3/3	Each municipal report presented policies that would support farmer viability.
		Victoria and Vancouver discussed very specific policies around business licensing, farm structures permit exemptions, funding support and equity.
		Kamloops presented some city inputs that could support farmers such as reduced costs of water rates. Most of Kamloops policies were framed to community farms rather than farm businesses.
		Vancouver and Victoria presented policies that aim to increase food storage and distribution, including through food hub models, and both pointed to the involvement of partners. Victoria talked about regional district partners, whereas Vancouver discussed provincial investment in storage and distribution infrastructure.
Community Food Production	3/3	Each municipal report presented policies to establish community-led or include strong community beliefs in UA and foodlands on municipally-owned land.



New and Existing Developments	3/3	Each municipal report presented different policies to encourage building developers to provide food assets as part of their new or existing developments. Density bonuses and amenity contributions were discussed in each municipality's report.
		It is interesting to note that one participant Victoria and another in Vancouver both suggested a concept around a tenants' right to grow food. This a concept is not present in literature specific to BC and therefore should be considered for further exploration.
Greenhouses	3/3	Each municipal report presented policies that explicitly discussed the need to relax greenhouse construction design permit requirements. This was the most coherent alignment between municipalities.
Retail and Food Access	2/3	Kamloops presented a policy to increase opportunities for small-scale retail food businesses that offer fresh produce in areas that are in close proximity to neighbourhood centres.
		Victoria presented a policy to develop municipal targets to increase the number of affordable grocery stores in their region.
Equity	2/3	Victoria and Vancouver discussed community engagement and the need to have diverse voices at decision-making tables.
Supporting Indigenous Food Systems	2/3	Vancouver and Kamloops discussed decolonization and working with Indigenous communities. Kamloops focused on decolonizing what is considered a municipal food asset to include fishing spots, traditional food harvesting locations, and infrastructure for Indigenous traditional foods.
		Vancouver also spoke to broaden the definition of food to include Indigenous and non-Western worldviews. Additionally, Vancouver policies spoke to funding Indigenous-led organizations and returning land to Indigenous stewardship and self-governance.
Compost	2/3	Victoria and Kamloops presented policies that would support regional composting of kitchen and yard waste to soil amendments. Kamloops wanted to see the expansion of the City's composting program in order to provide compost to the community and farmers.
		Victoria wanted a regional compost treatment facility that could provide compost to back to the community. Vancouver already has a regional composting facility, where compost is made available to establish new community gardens and not-for-profit farms; but not on an on-going basis nor for farm businesses.
Farm Stands	2/3	Both Vancouver and Kamloops presented policies that would allow farm stand sales, Victoria already has that policy in place.



As indicated in the table 2, there were high degrees of policy overlap between 11 of the 20 Categories. Many of the policies recommended in Victoria and Vancouver were new policies or policies that require amendments; indicating that municipalities are still working to perfect their UA policies. This illustrates the iterative process of policy making and the value of a transparent and community-involved review process for policy making and evaluation. The dialogues in Victoria, Vancouver, and Kamloops uncovered that UA practitioners and advocates have gaps in policy awareness. During the dialogues, some policy suggestions were framed as brand new to the participants' when in actuality the specific policy already existed. For example, in Vancouver a number of participants were unaware of the rezoning happening for large and sustainable developments. For Kamloops, many policies that were suggested by dialogue participants were already adopted by the City but had not been fully implemented at that time.

POLICY ADOPTION ANALYSIS	
Actualized	
Kamloops	Strengthening community connections through urban agriculture programs (mental health, land-based programs). Encouraging farmers markets. Education and school food programs for kids.
Victoria	A small number applying to create community gardens on municipal land.
Vancouver	Expand and continue to support local grassroots initiatives that foster food system change through grants. (Greenest City Neighbourhood Small Grants). Adopt policies around diversity, equity, and inclusion in hiring for paid positions at all levels and for advisory/steering committees. Adopt a living wage policy at the municipal level - City of Vancouver since 2019. Expand the Vancouver Park Board's Fieldhouse Activation Program.
Evaluated Policies But Not Actualized	
Kamloops	Encouraging more public and private perennial crops. Eliminating food deserts. Encouraging food assets as amenities in development.
Victoria	Targets for number of community gardens installed set.
Vancouver	Provincial level: Invest in infrastructure to support commercial small scale food growers and entrepreneurs.
Operationalized Policies (but not evaluated or actualized)	
Kamloops	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.
Victoria	Allowing community food production to occur in municipal parks.
Vancouver	Prioritize and resource foodland models that represent intentional community engagement and shared garden stewardship ("our garden" vs "my garden"), e.g. Riley Park Community Garden - City of Vancouver Parks Board Urban Agriculture Policy.



Adopted Policies (but not implemented, evaluated or actualized)	
Kamloops	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).
Vancouver	Mandatory training programs for public servants (e.g. city and parks staff, school boards, police) around non-violent communication, anti-racism, decolonization, allyship, intersectional anti-oppression - City of Vancouver pilot program in 2019.

Revision to Current Policies	
Victoria	More reasonable greenhouse construction guidelines.
Vancouver	City of Vancouver: Greenest City Action Plan: a) Expand policy definitions of food, foodlands, and foodways to recognize and value Indigenous and non-Western worldviews and cultures. b) Change the Greenest City Action Plan metric of food assets to include total acreage in foodlands.

Existing Policies (but change suggested)	
Victoria	Develop an easily-replicable model that urban growers would be allowed to construct without having to consult an engineer.
	Allow for larger structures.
	Re-classify the types of permissions and permits required for simple structures.
	Create a distinct classification for urban agriculture businesses.
	Reduce or remove the mill rate.
	Require agricultural use of vacant lots waiting to be developed.
	Create additional funding for established community organizations focused on providing free or inexpensive education on urban food-related topics.
	Provide multi-year funding agreements (3-year minimum).
	Priority funding through existing grant streams for organizations who developed as a result of COVID-19 or effectively pivoted their educational programming on urban agriculture.
	Create regional, industrial treatment facility.
	Prioritize the dissemination of compost to local urban farming organizations
	Distribute free soil from this site bi-annually for urban food growers (similarly to the City's mulch program)
	Policy to ensure the site also produces compost tea that it can sell or provide for our growing communities
	Conduct bi-annual needs assessment with a greater focus on marginalized communities (First Nations, immigrants and refugees, people with physical and mental impairments):
	Work with community organizations who have already built trust within these demographics
	Provide honorariums for these groups to help carry out this work
	Create an evaluation plan to measure targets set from these needs assessments
	School District: Replicate the school farm at Victoria High School and provide educational opportunities on food literacy and skills for youth.



Existing Policies (but change suggested)	
Vancouver	City of Vancouver: Existing grants for Indigenous led initiatives: a) Support, fund, and amplify the work of Indigenous led food organizations. Increase level of funding and support.
	City of Vancouver: Park Board Urban Agriculture Policy a) For public green space projects like parks, use community engagement methods that involve, collaborate, or empower residents, especially members of marginalized groups who face barriers to participating in public consultation processes like surveys and open houses. Support participation by paying people for their time and contribution.
	City of Vancouver: Rezoning Policy for Sustainable Large Developments a) Encourage developers to incorporate the design expertise of community food programmers/urban agriculture practitioners throughout the development process. b) Have all developments, not just those larger than 10 acres, commit resources to ongoing maintenance and animation of food assets. c) Incorporate an Occupant/Public Education and Outreach section to the food assets section (specifically for community gardens, edible landscaping, and on-site composting), similar to what is indicated in the Zero Waste section of the policy. d) Revise the urban farm design guidelines to include infrastructure for indoor/climate-controlled seed starting (e.g. indoor seed room, greenhouse for raising seedlings) and public-facing food distribution (e.g. food stand).
	City of Vancouver: Density bonuses a) Incentivize permanent or long-term foodlands spaces as community benefits through existing development contribution tools (e.g. density bonuses).
	City of Vancouver: Urban Farming Guidelines.
	Change the business license requirement for commercial urban farms to remove the need for a business license for each urban farm site.
	Change development process to reduce costs for commercial urban farms.
	Allow urban farming in all zones as a Permitted Use, and eliminate the Development Permit requirement for Class B and large Class A urban farms.
	Allow other urban farming products besides fruits and vegetables.
	Allow non-disruptive urban farming activities outside 8 am - 9 pm.
	Expand on-site sales and allow farm stands.
	Vancouver Coastal Health: Community Food Action Initiative a) Provide/increase operational funding for groups running programs/services that demonstrate tangible community benefits.
	Provincial education budget a) Provide adequate school funding to remove fundraising burden from schools and families and ensure that all children can take part in food literacy programs.

Policies That Have Not Been Adopted	
Kamloops	Rooftop garden readiness or encouragement.
Victoria	Mandate for a tenant's right to grow.
Vancouver	Return land to Indigenous stewardship and self-governance.



New Policy (or Plan) Recommendation	
Kamloops	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
Victoria	Partner with CRD and other local organizations to create more food storage and distribution infrastructure.
	Add a density bonus for long-term (minimum 5 years) urban agriculture sites.
	Decrease developer's amenity fee.
	Create innovation hubs on City-owned land:
	Lease the spaces and hold a contest for new ideas and technologies pushing the boundaries of growing food in a city. The winners are provided with startup funding and access to a longer term lease.
	Partner with a tech company who can help to fund the initial capital investments.
	Provide annual report focusing on storytelling of the ancillary and social benefits of food.
	Develop metrics for the social and health benefits of growing food.
	Develop municipal targets to increase the number of affordable grocery stores in our region.
	Create a granting stream that brings foods grown by under-represented groups to the forefront of our city on municipal lands.
Vancouver	School District: Organize field trips for schools to Vic High School farm.
	Adjust municipal budgets to allocate funds away from traditional policing and towards affordable housing, education, community health, and other social supports.
	Pilot a guaranteed basic income policy at the provincial/federal level (provincial study underway).
	Provide provincial and municipal funding for a universal healthy school food program (2019 federal budget promise).
	Fund urban farmer jobs to grow food for institutional procurement or school food programs.
	For funders (e.g. municipal/provincial governments, health authorities), ensure that funding levels are sufficient to enable living wage for recipients.
	Hire and engage professional food growers in the design of foodland spaces early on in the design process. This could be a recommendation for private developments, and integrated into the design process for public foodlands.
	Set aside municipal land for long term foodland use, for example through a municipal or regional foodlands trust that could be co-managed with non-profit organizations. Land can be existing municipally owned land, or additional land acquired for the trust. Food grown could be used for institutional procurement or school food programs.
	Incentivize urban farming through tax reform.
	Create building bylaws appropriate for urban farm structures.
	Create or fund leadership programs related to food systems and social change (e.g. Next Up environmental and social justice youth leadership program, Ashoka Changemakers).



Once placed into categories and subcategories, policies were further aligned to the six outcome themes of Economy, Education, Community Building, Equity, Environment, and Health. The tables in Appendix A provide the full list of policy recommendations that arose from all three municipal dialogue processes and have been organized into their respective category and subcategory areas for ease of exploration. We acknowledge that these lists are not exhaustive and that additional context analyses would be required by municipalities aiming to adopt these policies. For a further discussion of limitations, please see the section below.

Recommendations and Limitations

This report highlighted six outcome themes (Economy, Education, Community Building, Equity, Environment, and Health) that municipalities could use to explore food system policy. More research should be conducted to turn these themes into outcomes with an exhaustive list of policies that municipalities could adopt to achieve each outcome. Municipalities need greater opportunities for knowledge sharing of policies supporting urban foodlands and practices to achieve outcomes. An evaluation framework that can be shared amongst municipalities should be one of the first areas of knowledge exchange. A shared evaluation framework would save individual municipal staff time and allow for a greater understanding of how and where provincial support could fit into each outcome. If created together, strong outcomes with indicators and policy recommendations aimed at achieving these outcomes could be presented in a package and alongside the evaluation framework for monitoring each outcome.

The fact that each municipality has set aside their own budget for urban foodlands practices created inequities; where some municipalities have adopted and implemented many supportive policies and others have not. It is recommended that there be provincial funding and staffing support made available for municipalities to support urban agriculture and that these should be linked to specific outcomes that both municipalities, regions, and the province want to achieve. Urban agriculture is not currently part of any specific ministry purview; if urban agriculture became a portfolio in the Ministry of Agriculture, Food and Fisheries or Municipal Affairs it would allow for further alignment and continuity. In addition, this would allow for increased exploration of and funding for collaborative projects between municipalities to co-design of urban foodlands, bylaw and zoning standards, planning practices, resource sharing, and this alignment could serve to meet regional outcomes.

An equity lens would need to be applied to any of the policies that are recommended; specifically an equity framework for municipalities to use when reviewing urban foodlands policies and practices in their own jurisdictions.

Finally, this project as a whole allowed for in-depth sharing between three organizations that support Urban Agriculture. The ability to share knowledge has allowed each organization to strengthen their outcomes and visions for Urban Agriculture, along with policies to proliferate Urban Agriculture. It is recommended that further funding be provided to ensure cross-collaboration is continued and broadened provincially.



Recommendations

- Create a shared urban foodlands evaluation framework for municipalities.
- Create a shared equity framework that can be applied to assess urban foodlands initiatives in municipalities.
- Create robust outcomes-based policy recommendations that municipalities could adopt in a suit.
- Create an urban agriculture portfolio at the provincial level to help with the equitable development of urban agriculture.
- Create a network of municipal staff, community members, and researchers working on urban foodlands to share knowledge and achieve these recommendations.
- Fund further opportunities for cross collaboration between urban agriculture organizations, regions, and municipalities.

Limitations

This project is limited in its scope as it reports out on case studies of three municipalities. Further exploration is required to understand the role urban agriculture plays in rural and northern municipalities along with the role of regional government in urban agricultural support.

Conclusion

This project conducted case studies throughout urban municipalities in Kamloops, Victoria and Vancouver, exploring current urban agriculture practices and policies and aligning them with community visions and outcomes. Through the course of the project, stronger alignment among Kamloops, Victoria, and Vancouver was achieved and the information gathered has presented several outcome-themed urban agriculture policy suits that could easily be adopted by municipalities. This report presented several recommendations that the Public Health Association of BC is interested in exploring with partners over the coming years.



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Appendix A

Economy

Economy Outcome Theme		
Policy Category	Sub-Category	Policy Recommendation Example
Farmer Support	Funding	Multi-year (3-year minimum) funding terms with greater financial support for organizations who have established impactful/effective educational and vocational programs for emerging urban farmers.
	Regulations and Zoning	Change the business license requirement for commercial urban farms to remove the need for a business license for each urban farm site.
		Reduce development and building permit costs for commercial urban farms.
		Incentivize urban farming through tax reform (see Metro Vancouver report on tax reform for examples).
		Allow urban farming in all zones as a Permitted Use, and eliminate the Development Permit requirement for Class B and large Class A urban farms.**
		Allow other urban farming products besides fruits and vegetables.**
		Allow non-disruptive urban farming activities outside 8 am - 9 pm.**
		Expand on-site sales and allow farm stands.** Create a distinct classification for urban agriculture businesses.
	Engagement in City Planning Processes	Hire and engage professional food growers in the design of foodland spaces early on in the design process. This could be a recommendation for private developments, and integrated into the design process for public foodlands.
		Engage urban farmers in all policy and regulation design processes.
	Farming & Food System Infrastructure	Invest in infrastructure to support commercial small scale food growers and entrepreneurs, such as commissaries, cold storage, food hubs, and other food processing and aggregation facilities. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Revise the urban farm design guidelines to include infrastructure for indoor/climate-controlled seed starting (e.g. indoor seed room, greenhouse for raising seedlings) and public-facing food distribution (e.g. food stand). Alternatively investing in the creation of multiple greenhouses to be used for similar purposes.
		Partner with regional district and other local organizations to create more food storage and distribution infrastructure.
	Farming Technologies and innovation	Possibility of the City to lease two or more sites in Victoria to use as innovation hubs. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Lease the spaces for a minimum of three or more years and hold a contest for new ideas and technologies pushing the boundaries of growing



		<p>food in a city. The winners are provided with startup funding and access to a longer-term lease.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Partner with a tech company who can help to fund the initial capital investment for both the innovation hub and winning business ideas.
		<p>Either leasing urban land or providing municipally owned land and investing in shipping containers for rent to individuals or organizations working on more innovative farming techniques such as vertical farming, hydroponics, aeroponics and more.</p>
New and Existing Developments	Vacant and underutilized spaces	Require agricultural use of vacant lots, waiting to be developed.
		Encouragement of rooftop gardens through the design process and educational materials that help developers to understand the requirements to create a rooftop garden space.
	Amenity contributions, density bonuses, fees and requirements	<p>Policies that incentivize developers and urban landowners to include long-term (5-year minimum) agricultural sites on their developments:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Reducing or removing the mill rate (not applicable in all jurisdictions). Adding a density bonus for long-term food amenities sites with meaningful targets that increase community food production.
		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.
		Creating a policy with food assets requirements that is presented as a checklist that developers must consider.
		Have all large developments, not just those larger than 10 acres, commit resources to ongoing maintenance and animation of food assets.
		Encourage developers to incorporate the design expertise of community food programmers/urban agriculture practitioners throughout the development process.
		Have all developments commit resources to ongoing maintenance and animation of food assets.
Water	Providing a lower rate on water for licensed urban agriculture businesses.	
	Provide rebates on rain barrels.	
Greenhouses	<p>Relax the requirements for a building permit and inspection on greenhouses that are of a scale to support a small urban agriculture operation.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Develop an easily replicable model that urban growers would be allowed to construct without having to consult an engineer. Allow for larger structures. Re-classify the types of permissions and permits required for simple structures. 	
	Create building bylaws appropriate for urban farm structures.**	
Farm stands	Allow farm stands in all zones.	



Farmers Markets	Make municipal land and in-door spaces available to host farmers markets for free.
	Enhance support for the current for farmers market through the use of municipal land and buildings for storage and office space.
Composting and Resource Material	Provide resources for urban farms: mulch, dirt, seedlings, transport of waste.
	Expanding the public compost and mulch drop off to urban farming locations. Regional, industrial treatment facility: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Prioritize the dissemination of compost to local urban farming organizations that provide food directly to our communities. • Possibility of distributing free soil from the treatment facility bi-annually for urban food growers similarly to the City's mulch program. • Policy to ensure the facility produces compost tea that it can sell or provide for our growing communities.
Retail and Food Access	Increase opportunities for small-scale retail food businesses that offer fresh produce in areas that are in close proximity to neighbourhood centres.
	Develop municipal targets to increase the number of affordable grocery stores in our region.
Living Wage	Fund urban farmer jobs at a living wage to grow food for institutional procurement or school food programs.
Assessment, Mapping, Monitoring and Evaluation	Create a needs assessment that is carried out twice a year, with a greater focus on marginalized communities (First Nations, immigrants and refugees, people experiencing disabilities): <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Work with community organizations who have already built trust within these demographics. • Provide honorariums for these groups to help carry out this work. • Create an evaluation plan to measure targets set from these needs assessments. • Develop metrics on food assets to include total acreage in foodlands, not just the number of distinct food assets.
Community Access to Growing as part of Informal Food Economy	Support the expansion of common farms (community owned farms) financially in terms of coordination and also by offering municipal land for a farm location.
	Coordinating neighbourhood crops.
	Support programs that connect neighbours and revitalize mutual aid.
	Create a policy to allow community food production to occur in each municipal park.
	Create a granting stream that brings foods grown by under-represented groups to the forefront of our city on municipal lands.
	For public green space projects like parks (including those that have urban agriculture elements), use community engagement methods that involve, collaborate, or empower residents, especially members of marginalized groups who face barriers to participating in public consultation processes like surveys and open houses: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Support participation by paying people for their time and contribution.
	Prioritize and resource foodland models that represent intentional community engagement and shared garden stewardship ("our garden" vs "my garden").
	Allocate space in any new city park for community engaged garden models.
	Provide/increase operational funding for groups running programs/services that demonstrate tangible community benefits.



Appendix B

Education

EDUCATION OUTCOME THEME	
Category	Policy Recommendation
Community Food Production	Create a policy to allow community food production to occur in each municipal park.
	Municipal landscaping provision edible landscaping providing free food for all.
	Expand the Vancouver Park Board's Fieldhouse Activation Program where former caretakers' suites in parks are made available for community engagement activities by local groups (including environmental and food related initiatives).
Working with Schools	Support the number of schools that offer the food sustainability curriculum.
	Support Indigenous schools to operationalize school food and medicine gardens.
	Replicate to school farm models and provide educational opportunities on food literacy and skills for youth.
	Organize field trips for schools without a school farm to ensure a greater number of children have access to these teachings.
	Fund urban farmer jobs at a living wage to grow food for institutional procurement or school food programs.
	Set aside municipal land for long term foodland use, for example through a municipal or regional foodlands trust that could be co-managed with non-profit organizations. Land can be existing municipally owned land, or additional land acquired for the trust. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Food grown could be used for institutional procurement or school food programs.
Non-Profit Support	Supporting programs that link new farmers to existing farmers, such as an urban agriculture branch of Young Agrarians.
	Multi-year (3-year minimum) funding terms with greater financial support for community organizations who have established impactful/effective food educational and vocational programs.
	Priority funding through existing grant streams for organizations who developed as a result of the pandemic or were able to effectively pivot their educational programming to provide high quality videos, classes, webinars or workshops on beginner food growing.
	Create a granting stream that brings foods grown by under-represented groups to the forefront of our city on municipal lands.
	Celebrate effective community food projects.
	Create or fund leadership programs related to food systems and social change (e.g. Next Up environmental and social justice youth leadership program, Ashoka Changemakers).
Assessment, Mapping, Monitoring and Evaluation	Provide a report each year focusing on storytelling of the ancillary and social benefits of food. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Share the experience of individuals and families have from participating in these services to demonstrate the impact it has had and share this report widely



Appendix C

Environmental Stewardship

ENVIRONMENT OUTCOME THEME	
Category	Policy Recommendations
Pollinator and Perennials	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.
	Initiating programs to promote perennial crops in urban gardens.
Rooftop	Encouragement of rooftop gardens through the design process and educational materials that help developers to understand the requirements to create a rooftop garden space.
Urban Orchard	Municipal fruit and nut tree orchards in community parks and green spaces.
Composting other growing resources	Expanding the public compost and mulch drop off to urban farming locations.
	Create a regional, industrial treatment facility: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Prioritize the dissemination of compost to local urban farming organizations that provide food directly to our communities. • Possibility of distributing free soil from the treatment facility bi-annually for urban food growers similarly to the City's mulch program. • Policy to ensure the facility produces compost tea that it can sell or provide for our growing communities.
Indigenous Food Sovereignty	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).
	Expand policy definitions of food, foodlands, and foodways to recognize and value Indigenous and non-Western worldviews and cultures.
	Support, fund, and amplify the work of Indigenous led food organizations.
	Return land to Indigenous led stewardship and self-governance.
Farmers Market	Promote Farmer and Artisan Market.



Appendix D

Equity

EQUITY OUTCOME THEME	
Category	Policy Recommendation
Farmer Support	Fund urban farmer jobs at a living wage to grow food for institutional procurement or school food programs.
Retail and Food Access	<p>Reduce food deserts by reviewing and updating 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.</p> <p>Develop municipal targets to increase the number of affordable grocery stores in our region.</p>
Community Food Production and Engagement	<p>A mandate for a tenants right to grow food:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Protect against damage to a landlord's property. Change current policies that allow landlords to restrict tenant access and capability to create their own urban gardens without a good reason. <p>Create a granting stream that brings foods grown by under-represented groups to the forefront of our city on municipal lands.</p> <p>Create a granting stream that brings foods grown by under-represented groups to the forefront of our city on municipal lands.</p> <p>For public green space projects like parks (including those that have urban agriculture elements), use community engagement methods that involve, collaborate, or empower residents, especially members of marginalized groups who face barriers to participating in public consultation processes like surveys and open houses.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Support participation by paying people for their time and contribution. <p>Prioritize and resource foodland models that represent intentional community engagement and shared garden stewardship ("our garden" vs "my garden").</p> <p>Allocate space in any new city park for community engaged garden models.</p>
Supporting Indigenous Food Systems	<p>Expand policy definitions of food, foodlands, and foodways to recognize and value Indigenous and non-Western worldviews and cultures.</p> <p>Support, fund, and amplify the work of Indigenous led food organizations.</p> <p>Return land to Indigenous led stewardship and self-governance.</p> <p>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).</p>
Assessment, Mapping and Evaluation	<p>Create a needs assessment that is carried out twice a year, with a greater focus on marginalized communities (First Nations, immigrants and refugees, people experiencing disabilities):</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Work with community organizations who have already built trust within these demographics. Provide honorariums for these groups to help carry out this work. Create an evaluation plan to measure targets set from these needs assessments.



Internal City Policies and Practice	Adopt policies around diversity, equity, and inclusion in hiring for paid positions at all levels (including executive/leadership roles) and for advisory/steering committees.
	Adopt a living wage policy at the municipal level.
	Adjust municipal budgets to allocate funds away from traditional policing and towards affordable housing, education, community health, and other social supports.
	Mandatory training programs for public servants (e.g. city and parks staff, school boards, police) around non-violent communication, anti-racism, decolonization, allyship, intersectional anti-oppression.
Food Funders	Ensure that funding levels are sufficient to enable living wage for recipients.
Farm Workers Rights	Advocate 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.



Appendix E

Community Building

COMMUNITY BUILDING OUTCOME THEME	
Category	Policy Recommendation
New and Existing Developments	Creating a policy with food assets requirements that is presented as a checklist that developers must consider (include community gardens and spaces where people can connect around food).
	Require community growing use of vacant lots, waiting to be developed.
Non-Profit Support	Multi-year (3-year minimum) funding terms with greater financial support for community organizations who have established impactful/effective food educational and vocational programs.
	Priority funding through existing grant streams for organizations who developed as a result of the pandemic or were able to effectively pivot their educational programming to provide high quality videos, classes, webinars or workshops on beginner food growing.
	Create a granting stream that brings foods grown by under-represented groups to the forefront of our city on municipal lands.
	Celebrate effective community food projects.
	Create or fund leadership programs related to food systems and social change (e.g. Next Up environmental and social justice youth leadership program, Ashoka Changemakers)
Working with Schools	Support the number of schools that offer the food sustainability curriculum.
	Support Indigenous schools to operationalize school food and medicine gardens.
	Replicate to school farm models and provide educational opportunities on food literacy and skills for youth.
	Organize field trips for schools without a school farm to ensure a greater number of children have access to these teachings.
Assessment, Mapping, Monitoring and Evaluation	Provide a report each year focusing on storytelling of the ancillary and social benefits of food. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Share the experience of individuals and families have from participating in these services to demonstrate the impact it has had and share this report widely.
	Develop metrics for social and health benefits on growing food to track progress on achieving identified outcomes.
	Create a needs assessment that is carried out twice a year, with a greater focus on marginalized communities (First Nations, immigrants and refugees, people experiencing disabilities): <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Work with community organizations who have already built trust within these demographics. Provide honorariums for these groups to help carry out this work. Create an evaluation plan to measure targets set from these needs assessments.
	For public green space projects like parks (including those that have urban agriculture elements), use community engagement methods that involve, collaborate, or empower residents, especially members of marginalized groups who face barriers to participating in public consultation processes like surveys and open houses.



	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Support participation by paying people for their time and contribution.
Community Food Production	Create a policy to allow community food production to occur in each municipal park.
	A mandate for a tenant's right to grow food. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Protect against damage to a landlord's property. • Change current policies that allow landlords to restrict tenant access and capability to create their own urban gardens without a good reason.
	Support programs that connect neighbours and revitalize mutual aid.
	Prioritize and resource foodland models that represent intentional community engagement and shared garden stewardship ("our garden" vs "my garden"). Allocate space in any new city park for community engaged garden models.
	Expand the Vancouver Park Board's Fieldhouse Activation Program where former caretakers' suites in parks are made available for community engagement activities by local groups (including environmental and food related initiatives).



Appendix F

Health

HEALTH OUTCOME THEME	
Category	Policy Recommendation
Retail and Food Access	Reduce food deserts by reviewing and updating 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.
	Develop municipal targets to increase the number of affordable grocery stores in our region.
Assessment, Mapping and Evaluation	Set aside municipal land for long term foodland use, for example through a municipal or regional foodlands trust that could be co-managed with non-profit organizations. Land can be existing municipally owned land, or additional land acquired for the trust. <ul style="list-style-type: none">Food grown could be used for institutional procurement or school food programs.
	Develop metrics for social and health benefits on growing food to track progress on achieving identified outcomes.
Working With Schools	Replicate school farm models and providing educational opportunities on food literacy and skills for youth.
	Organize field trips for schools without a school farm to ensure a greater number of children have access to these teachings.