

## STAFF REPORT

To: Mayor and City Council Date: January 22, 2013  
From: Lauren Bradley, Finance Director  
Via: Gary Jackson, City Manager  
Subject: Food Policy Action Plan

Summary Statement: The consideration of a resolution authorizing the City Manager to include the Municipal Food Policy Goals and Action Plan into the previously adopted Sustainability Management Plan.

Review: In April 2012 Council directed the Sustainability Advisory Committee on Energy and the Environment (SACEE) to work with community members of the Asheville Buncombe Food Policy Council (ABFPC) to evaluate how food security strategies may be integrated into the city's Sustainability Management Plan. The Sustainability Management Plan (SMP) was adopted in June 2009 as the road map for municipal sustainability.

SACEE went through a due diligence process to research and assess how the municipality could contribute in order to compliment the larger community effort. This process included: national best practice research, presentations from regional experts, regular updates from ABFPC during SACEE meetings, reviewing the ABFPC's strategic plan, and ultimately co-creating the proposed action plan. The proposed municipal goals and action plan are a subset strategically selected for the municipality from the wide range of goals and activities identified by the ABFPC.

Through this resolution the proposed municipal action plan would be incorporated into the Sustainability Management Plan. With approval of this resolution the management process to evaluate, prioritize, and implement sustainability activities will be expanded to include food activities.

This resolution supports the following activities in the Strategic Operating Plan: 1) Consider leasing City-owned parcels to area farms and gardeners; 2) Support diversified job growth and business development.

Pro:

- This resolution contributes to Councils goal to be the southeastern leader in clean energy and environmental sustainability.

Con:

- None

Fiscal Impact: There is no direct fiscal impact. Potential impacts from implementation of this plan will be considered by Council on an individual basis.

Recommendation: City staff recommends City Council adopt a resolution authorizing the City Manager to incorporate the Food Policy Goals and Action Plan into the previously adopted Sustainability Management Plan.

Attachments:

- (1) Resolution
- (2) Food Policy Goals and Action Plan
- (3) Timetable

RESOLUTION NO. \_\_\_\_\_

RESOLUTION ESTABLISHING THE CITY OF ASHEVILLE'S FOOD ACTION PLAN IN SUPPORT OF THE ASHEVILLE BUNCOMBE FOOD POLICY AGENDA

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WHEREAS, the City of Asheville believes that all citizens should have access to healthy, nutritious food and that our community should be able to sustain its nutritional needs year-round with regionally grown, processed and stored healthy food; and

WHEREAS, The Asheville Buncombe Food Policy Council defines healthy food as grown locally through organic and permaculture principles, from seeds, plants, and animals that are not genetically modified and in a manner that builds the fertility of the soil; and

WHEREAS, all communities should be empowered with access to resources and information needed to innovate and implement strategies for food security and resiliency; and

WHEREAS, our regional food economy can thrive and promote social and ecological sustainability, providing for human needs while protecting the diversity and abundance of our bioregion, including our forest land, agricultural land and watershed; and

WHEREAS, The City of Asheville recognizes that intact, biodiverse and healthy forest ecosystems provide abundant food and clean water in perpetuity.

WHEREAS, all citizens should enjoy food sovereignty through access to clean water, air and land, as well as the ability to cultivate, harvest, process, sell, share and trade food in order to thrive and empower their own resilience;

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED BY THE CITY COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF ASHEVILLE THAT:

The City of Asheville approves the attached Food Policy Goals and Action Plan by incorporating it into the previously adopted Sustainability Management Plan.

Read, approved and adopted this 22nd day of January, 2013

\_\_\_\_\_  
City Clerk

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Mayor

Approved as to form:

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City Attorney



# Municipal Food Policy Goals and Action Plan

## City of Asheville Long Term Food Policy Goals

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The City of Asheville commits to participating in the Asheville Buncombe Food Policy Council efforts and supports the following shared goals:

1. Improve the quality of life for those in need by increasing access to food for people who experience food insecurity.
2. Continue growing a robust regional food economy by increasing production and consumption of regional food and food products.
3. Strive to meet all nutritional needs of the community with regionally produced foods.
4. Work to prepare for short-term food emergencies and long-term food security.
5. Collaborate with regional partners to achieve all food policy goals.

### City of Asheville Food Policy Action Plan

1. Utilize the Unified Development Ordinance (UDO) as a tool to support food policy goals by amending the UDO as needed to remove barriers to local food production and distribution. For example, but not limited to, priorities such as community gardens, urban agriculture, and use of mobile markets in residentially zoned districts under certain circumstances such as farmers markets.
2. Optimize permitting and regulatory services for farmers markets.
3. Prioritize partnering to find a long term permanent location for the Asheville City Market.
4. Pursue establishing local food purchasing policies for the City of Asheville through clarity on existing state legislation as well as state enabling legislation where needed.
5. Seek partnerships to incorporate regional food and beverage options into the U.S. Cellular Center concessions, as well as city-run events.
6. Create a public private partnership for implementing a citywide curbside composting program that complements trash and recycling services. A successful partnership would improve regional economic development and provide compost regionally to support healthy ecological soil systems.
7. Include use of edible landscaping as a priority for public property such as parks, greenways and/or right of ways. In support of this, foster relationships with strong community partners who wish to access edible landscaping and/or use underutilized public land for food production.

8. Encourage partnerships for food production that supports organic and permaculture principles by identifying arable underutilized city-owned land for lease or sale. Pursue methods to make information about such land available to the public.
9. Update the city recommended plant list for developers to include edible plants and remove exotic and invasive species.
10. Include safe and convenient pedestrian, bicycle, and transit connections between residential neighborhoods and community gardens, emergency food providers/food pantries, grocery stores and farmers markets as a priority when evaluating transportation projects.
11. Include achieving food policy goals as a priority when allocating Community Development Block Grants.
12. Support Asheville Buncombe Food Policy Council efforts to set baselines and metrics for achieving food policy goals. Play an active role in providing access to existing city data when needed.
13. Encourage food distribution by engaging underserved communities who live in food deserts. Support community efforts by co-designing incentives that establish neighborhood based markets that provide healthy food.
14. Incorporate food policy goals into education programs for city staff and the general public.

### **Already In Progress or Ongoing**

- Update the city *recommended plant list for developers* to include edible plants and remove exotic and invasive species.
- *Utilize the Unified Development Ordinance (UDO) as a tool to support food policy goals* by amending the UDO as needed to remove barriers to local food production and distribution. For example, but not limited to, priorities such as community gardens, urban agriculture, and use of mobile markets in residentially zoned districts under certain circumstances such as farmers markets.
- *Optimize permitting and regulatory services for farmers markets.*
- Include use of *edible landscaping as a priority for public property* such as parks, greenways and/or right of ways. In support of this, foster relationships with strong community partners who wish to access edible landscaping and/or use underutilized public land for food production.
- Support Asheville Buncombe Food Policy Council efforts to set baselines and metrics for achieving food policy goals. *Play an active role in providing access to existing city data when needed.*

### **Short Term (Implementation in 2013)**

- Incorporate food policy goals into *education programs* for city staff and the general public.
- Encourage partnerships for food production that supports organic and permaculture principles by *identifying arable underutilized city-owned land* for lease or sale. Pursue methods to make information about such land available to the public.

### **Mid Term**

- Prioritize *partnering to find a long term permanent location for the Asheville City Market.*
- *Create a public private partnership for implementing a citywide curbside composting program* that complements trash and recycling services. A successful partnership would improve regional economic development and provide compost regionally to support healthy ecological soil systems.
- Include achieving food policy goals as a priority when *allocating Community Development Block Grants.*
- Pursue establishing *local food purchasing policies* for the City of Asheville through clarity on existing state legislation as well as state enabling legislation where needed

### **Long Term**

- Encourage food distribution by engaging underserved communities who live in food deserts. Support community efforts by *co-designing incentives* that establish neighborhood based markets that provide healthy food.
- Include safe and convenient pedestrian, bicycle, and transit connections between residential neighborhoods and community gardens, food banks, grocery stores and farmers markets as a *priority when evaluating*

*transportation projects.*

- Seek partnerships to incorporate regional food and beverage options into the U.S. Cellular Center concessions, as well as city-run events.