
Subject: FOOD SECURITY MORE IMPORTANT THAN EVER?--2025OCP

From: April Ottesen **Redacted**
Sent: Thursday, March 20, 2025 2:39 PM
To: cityclerk <cityclerk@princegeorge.ca>
Subject: Fw: FOOD SECURITY MORE IMPORTANT THAN EVER?--2025OCP

You don't often get email from **Redacted**

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From: April Ottese **Redacted**
Sent: Wednesday, 25 12:36 PM
To: mayorandcouncil@princegeorge.ca <mayorandcouncil@princegeorge.ca>
Cc: ocp <ocp@princegeorge.ca>
Subject: FOOD SECURITY MORE IMPORTANT THAN EVER?--2025OCP

While the Official Community Plan is not a proscriptive tool, it does provide our community with a device to set intentions for our overall community health. Compared with the inclusion of many policies relating to the importance of supporting local food initiatives in the OCP of 2012, there is little to no recognition of the importance of a robust local food system in the OCP2025.

The 2012 OCP surely reflects the importance and benefits of a local food system for Prince George in these important policies and comments related to food and food security:

Policy 6.4.11 Integrated land use approaches should be implemented wherever possible to improve opportunities for biodiversity, ecosystem connectivity, recreation, agriculture, and local food production.

p. 72 Food Security:

Food and agriculture play an important role in a sustainable community by improving the environment, the economy, the health of our population and our community's well being. Access to quality, local food is increasing in demand throughout much of North America due to the high cost of food, limited availability and a growing awareness in sustainable agriculture. The increasing costs associated with the production and shipping of food can result in limitations for community access to quality food. The production and supply of local food can help provide food security but requires support to establish systems for community food production at all levels.

Policy 7.3.5 Support increased consumer access to local and healthy food through local food institutions and retail markets throughout the community.

Policy 7.3.7 Support agricultural and food systems planning to improve the current state of food systems and to encourage local food self-reliance.

Policy 8.1.8 The City does not support farmland subdivisions in the ALR or agriculturally valuable lands that produce any parcels smaller than 15 ha parcels.

Policy 8.1.9 The City may identify agriculturally valuable lands outside the ALR and encourage their inclusion into the ALR.

*Policy 8.3.21 The City should undertake a review of the zoning bylaw **to ensure that farmers markets, community gardens, etc., are permitted use of both public and private realms and that design guidelines support food production.***

Policy 8.3.117 The City should support ALR designations within the City's boundaries. Changes to the designation should be supported only if land is shown by a qualified professional to have limited agricultural suitability and where land use changes work to support food and agriculture systems (e.g., farmland dedications of equal or greater value for community trust and/or upgrades to farming or farmland infrastructure).

Policy 11.3.2 The City should consider acquiring land to support sustainable food systems.

*Policy 13.2.31 The City should undertake a review of the zoning bylaw **to ensure that farmers markets, community gardens etc., are a permitted use of both public and private realms and that design guidelines support food production.***

Policy 13.2.32 The City should include a comprehensive definition of farmers markets in the zoning bylaw.

*Policy 13.4.20 To adapt to climate change, projected precipitation and temperature changes should be considered when creating agricultural plans and agricultural land allocations. **The City should undertake further study to consider the potential for increased agricultural capacity in the future.***

*Policy 13.5.14 **The City should adopt a community generated food charter that sets out a vision for food and agriculture in Prince George.***

"While a number of our surveys were anonymous, we estimate over 2,000 unique individuals were actively engaged in the myPG Sustainability Plan process through surveys or stakeholder meetings from beginning to end. This included representation from 97 organizations within the public, private and non-profit sectors of Prince George."

Much time and energy went into articulating a document that would best serve our community in rebuilding our local food system. Have we accomplished any of the goals and aspirations of the OCP2012, or was it all for nothing?

Mayor and Council, we are not more food secure in 2025 than we were in 2011 when the 2012OCP was being developed, we are less food secure. Approximately 20% of us do not have enough to eat. Wouldn't these policies included here be more important than ever? I would argue that the current state of the world demands urgency in planning for more local food self reliance and not less.

There is great wisdom in rebuilding our local food system, of aiming for food sovereignty, where local eaters have more control of their food supply. That, however, will require changes in policy at all levels of government, and this is where you can all make your voices count. Please vote for a sustainable community and all the benefits that prioritizing a viable local food system can bring, and restore some of these important policies to the OCP2025.

I thank you for your time.

Your truly,

April Ottesen
Instructor
Sustainable Food Production