

# City of Vancouver By-laws, Policies, Guidelines and Decisions related to the Food System

The following document contains summaries of City of Vancouver by-laws, policies, guidelines, and decisions related to various elements of the food system. Several information reports are also referred to. It is intended to provide reference information on existing City policies that may have a bearing on future food policy initiatives. Contents of the inventory are organized by food system sector. The document is not exhaustive, but represents an initial inventory of relevant City policy. For additional information regarding City programs related to food policy, please refer to the City of Vancouver inventory of food-related programs, projects and services: <http://www.city.vancouver.bc.ca/commsvcs/socialplanning/initiatives/foodpolicy/pdf/inventory.pdf>

## Production

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### By-laws

#### Zoning and Development By-law No. 3575

##### RA-1 District Schedule (Limited Agriculture)

The RA-1 zoning designation refers to the agricultural district in Southlands. The zoning district is intended to “maintain and encourage the semi-rural, equestrian and limited agricultural nature” of Southlands. Permitted land uses include greenhouses, stables, riding, golf courses, bed and breakfasts, marinas, parks or playgrounds, nurseries, and one-family dwellings, as well as some other buildings and retail.

URL: <http://www.city.vancouver.bc.ca/commsvcs/by-laws/zoning/ra-1.pdf>

#### Health By-law No. 6580

The Health By-law includes a section regulating the keeping of livestock and other animals within the City. Section 4.1 of the Health By-law, regarding sanitation, states: *No person shall keep or permit to be harboured any horses, donkeys, cattle, swine, sheep or goats, or any live poultry or fowl, including ducks, geese, turkeys, chickens, pheasants or quail, or operate any apiary or otherwise keep bees for any purpose in the City, except that this prohibition shall not apply to a licensed pet shop or kennel, zoological park, research laboratory, veterinary hospital or slaughter house within the*

*meaning of or where otherwise permitted by, the Zoning and Development By-law, unless otherwise stated within this By-law.*

URL: <http://iwww.city.vancouver.bc.ca/bylaws/13376.htm>

Date last amended: July 25, 2000

### **Water Rationing By-law No. 7109**

The water rationing by-law outlines Vancouver's sprinkling and watering restrictions, which are implemented in stages, in accordance with notices received from the Greater Vancouver Water District Commissioner. Stages I through III primarily regulate the timing and duration of sprinkling. However, stage IV water restrictions prohibit the application of water to any trees, shrubs, flowers or vegetables, except with a hand-held container or a hose equipped with a spring loaded shut off device operated with hand pressure. Large gardens forming part of apartments, townhouses or other multi-dwelling premises and commercial buildings where hand watering is impractical are exempt from the hand-watering requirement. As well, nurseries, farms and golf courses are exempt from stage IV water restrictions. However, non-commercial gardens are not explicitly mentioned.

URL: <http://iwww.city.vancouver.bc.ca/by-laws/11787v1.htm>

Date last amended: May 29, 1997

### **Street Tree By-law No. 5985**

The street tree by-law regulates the planting and care of trees on City boulevards. The by-law authorizes the Board of Parks and Recreation as the primary body responsible for care of street trees. Planting of street trees also requires written permission from the City Engineer. Permitted species of trees (e.g. fruit or nut trees) are not referred to.

URL: <http://iwww.city.vancouver.bc.ca/by-laws/10249v1.htm>

Date last amended: September 1, 1992

*Note: At the Vancouver Park Board meeting on Monday, February 9, 2004, a motion was passed requesting staff to explore the possibility of planting fruit trees along streets, community gardens and parks. Options for implementation of this motion are being explored.*

### **Untidy Premises By-law No. 4548**

The Untidy Premises by-law requires owners or occupiers of a parcel of real property to keep the property clear of weeds, trees, bushes or other growths within a reasonable standard of that prevailing in the neighbourhood. Enforcement of this by-law could have potential implications for urban agriculture.

URL: <http://iwww.city.vancouver.bc.ca/by-laws/11805.htm>

**Date last amended:** February 25, 2003

### **Parks Control By-law**

The Parks Control by-law outlines the activities that are permitted in City parks. Food sales of any kind are prohibited except with permission of the Board of Parks and Recreation. No specific references to other food-related activities, or to community gardens, are made.

**URL:** <http://www.city.vancouver.bc.ca/by-laws/19508.htm>

**Date last amended:** April 28, 2003

## **Policies, Guidelines and Decisions**

### **Community Services, Land Use and Development Policies and Guidelines: Agricultural Land Reserve Policies**

These policy statements outline the City's position regarding removal of land from the Agricultural Land Reserve (ALR), specifically in Southlands. The policy calls for agricultural suitability to be the main criterion for land use decisions regarding the ALR, and states that the Agricultural Land Commission should only exempt land from the ALR if it has marginal or questionable potential for agricultural use.

**URL:** <http://www.city.vancouver.bc.ca/commsvcs/guidelines/A003.pdf>

**Date adopted:** 1979; Re-affirmed: 1988

### **Park Board Community Gardens Policy**

This policy outlines the Park Board's support for community gardens and describes the conditions that apply to park land that is converted to community gardens. The policy also outlines procedures to be followed when establishing a new community garden. A community garden is defined as a *community environmental education program operated by a non-profit society*.

**URL:** <http://www.city.vancouver.bc.ca/parks/info/policy/comgardn.htm>

**Date adopted:** 1996

### **Regional Context Statement, Official Development Plan**

The regional context statement outlines how City plans and policies contribute to implementing the GVRD Livable Region Strategic Plan. Of direct relevance to the food system are the Green Zone policies in the Livable Region Strategic Plan, which include protecting farmland and promoting the viability of agriculture as part of the region's economic base. The statement also supports the maintenance of Southlands as part of the Agricultural Land Reserve.

**Author:** Director of City Plans, in consultation with the General Manager of Engineering Services, General Manager of Parks & Recreation, Manager of Housing Centre and Director of Legal Services

**URL:** <http://www.city.vancouver.bc.ca/commsvcs/bylaws/odp/rcs.pdf>

**Date adopted:** September 14, 1999

## **Engineering Department Green Streets Program**

### **Planting, Maintenance, and Safety Guidelines for Street Gardens**

These guidelines provide suggestions to citizens caring for gardens on street boulevards and in traffic circles regarding choice of plants, weeding and watering, etc. The guidelines do not prohibit cultivation of food plants, but do include height restrictions. However, the list of recommended plants provided for street gardens includes primarily ornamental plants.

**URL:** <http://www.city.vancouver.bc.ca/greenstreets/guidelines.htm>, and [greenstreets@city.vancouver.bc.ca](mailto:greenstreets@city.vancouver.bc.ca)

### **Broadway and Commercial Drive Amenity Proposal (My Own Back Yard Project)**

This proposal includes plans for a community garden on E. 11<sup>th</sup> and 12<sup>th</sup>, east of Commercial Drive, to be operated by the My Own Back Yard community group. Funding (\$93 000) to develop the garden was approved by the City Standing Committee on Services and Budgets on July 24, 2004.

**Report author:** Susan Anderson **Phone No.:** 871-7473

**Report:** <http://www.city.vancouver.bc.ca/ctyclerk/cclerk/20040624/cs5.htm>

**Committee Minutes:**

<http://www.city.vancouver.bc.ca/ctyclerk/cclerk/20040624/csmin.htm>

**Date approved:** July 24, 2004

### **Decisions arising from the Special Council Meeting on Choices and Directions for the Planning of Southeast False Creek**

At this meeting, Council confirmed as a priority the policy requiring significant urban agriculture in the SEFC development.

**URL:** <http://www.city.vancouver.bc.ca/ctyclerk/cclerk/20040726/scdec.htm>

**Date approved:** July 26, 2004

## Information Reports

### **Southeast False Creek Urban Agriculture Strategy**

The Urban Agriculture Strategy was one of four studies required by the Policy Statement for Southeast False Creek. The report presents a series of options for food production, processing, and distribution in Southeast False Creek, as well as recommendations for implementing these options.

URL: <http://homepage.mac.com/cityfarmer/SEFCUrbanAgStudyFINAL.pdf>

Date completed: November, 2002

### **Update on Southeast False Creek Official Development Plan (ODP) Planning Process**

This report summarizes the work to date on the Southeast False Creek (SEFC) Official Development Plan (ODP). Staff recommendations related to urban agriculture at SEFC include: community gardens (approx 1 acre) to be included in the park; agricultural landscaping; a farmers market; soil remediation; space for gardening (podium rooftops, balconies), and; a commercial greenhouse demonstration project.

Report Authors: K. Hiebert/I. Smith Phone No: 604.871.6066/604.873.7846

URL: <http://iwww.city.vancouver.bc.ca/ctyclerk/cclerk/20040311/pe3.htm>

## **Distribution (and Marketing)**

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### **By-laws**

#### **License By-law No. 4450**

The license by-law outlines licensing requirements for business operators in Vancouver, as well as specific terms of operation for a number of businesses. All businesses operating in the City of Vancouver require a license. Of relevance to food policy are references to farmers' markets, caterers, restaurants and food service outlets included in the by-law. The definition of a farmers' market given is: *an open-air market, without permanent structures, operated by a non-profit society, and limited to the selling of fresh fruits and vegetables and prepared foods and crafts.* License fees for farmers markets are listed at \$10.00.

URL: <http://iwww.city.vancouver.bc.ca/bylaws/12353.htm>

Date last amended: April 20, 2004

### **Street Vending Bylaw No. 4781**

This by-law outlines the regulations for mobile food vending units. A mobile food vending unit is described as: *a mobile motorized or pedal powered vehicle, bicycle, or other unit used for the sale of non-alcoholic drinks and prepared pre-packaged foods including items such as sandwiches, potato chips, and chocolate bars, and frozen novelty products including items such as ice cream bars, popsicles, yogurt bars, and similar products.* Applications for mobile food units are to be directed toward the General Manager of Engineering Services.

**URL:** <http://iwww.city.vancouver.bc.ca/bylaws/11637.htm>

**Date last amended:** January 15, 2004

### **Health Bylaw No. 6580**

The health by-law outlines regulations regarding the sourcing, preparation, handling, storage and sale of food. Specific regulations regarding the sale of meat and dairy products are also included.

**URL:** <http://iwww.city.vancouver.bc.ca/bylaws/13376.htm>

**Date last amended:** July 25, 2000

### **Amendment to Zoning and Development By-law (No. 3575): West End Farmers' Market - RM-5A Text Amendment**

This report recommends that the Zoning and Development bylaw be amended to add and define farmers' markets, to limit development permits for farmers' markets to one year, and permit farmers' markets as a conditional-approval use in the RM-5A District. This amendment pertains specifically to the West End Farmers Market, due to its location in the Lord Roberts School Parking lot. The amendment allows conditional approval of farmers markets by the Development Permit Board with consideration of: submissions from advisory groups, property owners or tenants; compatibility with nearby sites; parking; traffic; noise; hours of operation; size of the facility, and; pedestrian amenity. The report also includes: statistics from the operation of the East Vancouver Farmer's Market Society; a history of Council decisions pertaining to Farmers Markets; community opinions; comments from the Chief Licensing Inspector and Parking Engineer; and, zoning tools available for markets.

**Author:** D.Thomsett **Phone No.:** 873-7796

**Report:** <http://iwww.city.vancouver.bc.ca/ctyclerk/cclerk/20030910/ph1.htm>

**Public hearing minutes:**

<http://iwww.city.vancouver.bc.ca/ctyclerk/cclerk/20030910/phmin.htm>

**Date of amendment:** September 10, 2003

## **Policies, Guidelines and Decisions**

### **Park Board Decision: Trout Lake Farmers' Market**

This report preceded the initial Park Board decision to permit the East Vancouver Farmers' Market to operate in the Trout Lake parking lot in 1997. The report describes the history of the East Vancouver Farmers' Market Society and addresses issues of concern regarding markets.

**Author:** Recreation Division Board of Parks and Recreation

**URL:** <http://www.city.vancouver.bc.ca/parks/board/1997/970310/farmkt.pdf>

**Date approved:** March 10, 1997

### **Park Board Decision: Riley Park Farmers Market**

This report requests that the Park Board approve the first request of Your Local Farmers Market Society to operate a farmers market at Riley Park parking lot at Nat Bailey Stadium in 2002.

**Author:** Diane Murphy, District Recreation Manager, Queen Elizabeth District

**Phone No.:** 257-8690

**URL:** <http://www.city.vancouver.bc.ca/parks/board/2002/020624/farmers.pdf>

**Date approved:** June 24, 2002

### **Director of Environmental Health Recommendations: Permitted Food Sales at Farmers' Markets**

This policy report was completed in response to a request from the East Vancouver Farmers' Market for permission to include the sale of pre-packaged fresh meats and cheese products, from approved, government-inspected sources. Permission was granted by the Standing Committee on Planning and Environment on March 25, 1999, and the Director of Environmental Health was requested to amend the Health Board's Farmers' Market Guidelines accordingly.

**Report:** <http://www.city.vancouver.bc.ca/ctyclerk/cclerk/990325/pe1.htm>

**Date of decision:** March 25, 1999

### **Southeast False Creek Policy Statement**

The SEFC Policy statement includes planning principles to guide future development of Southeast False Creek, including recommendation to develop an urban agriculture strategy for the site.

**URL:** <http://www.city.vancouver.bc.ca/commsvcs/planning/sefcpolicy.htm>

**Date adopted:** October, 1999

### **City Plan: Directions for Vancouver**

CityPlan is a city-wide plan that provides a framework for making decisions regarding City funding, programs and actions over the next twenty years. CityPlan offers direction on a variety of topics, including transportation, arts, housing, and community services. One specific direction included in CityPlan that is related to food policy is the goal of providing shops and services, including grocery stores, for neighbourhood residents.

**URL:** <http://iwww.city.vancouver.bc.ca/commsvcs/planning/cityplan/dfvf.htm>

**Date adopted:** June 6, 1995

## **Information Reports**

### **Information Report: Supermarkets in Vancouver**

This report describes the changes in food supermarkets and food retailing in Vancouver between 1980 and 1998, and the incidence of restrictive covenants on former supermarket sites. Covenants are put in place by supermarket chains that are closing stores to restrict the floor space that can be dedicated to food sales for off-site consumption, thereby limiting competition that might affect nearby supermarkets also owned by the chain. The report concludes that covenants restricting food sales placed on former supermarket properties (by Safeway, etc.) are preventing diversification of food retailing businesses (which is contrary to CityPlan and the Community Visions processes in Dunbar and Kensington-Cedar Cottage neighbourhoods). However, no legal resources are available to the City to remove these covenants. Notable changes in food retailing in Vancouver during the study period include a "thinning out" of supermarkets, a loss of supermarkets in 3 neighbourhoods, as well as an overall increase in large/mega stores and a decrease in small and medium stores.

**Authors:** P. French; C. Buckham **Phone No.:** 873-7041/873-7256

**URL:** <http://iwww.city.vancouver.bc.ca/ctyclerk/cclerk/981117/P1.HTM>

**Date submitted:** November 03, 1998

## Access

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### **Policies, Guidelines and Decisions**

#### **Award of Food Service Contract for the Evelyne Saller Centre**

This report includes a proposal to award a five year food service contract for Evelyne Saller Centre to Aramark Canada Ltd. (funding for centre comes from Provincial Ministry of Human Resources). A number of criteria for selecting the contractor are listed, including: the ability to provide cost effective, wholesome, nutritious, and varied menus; as well as plans to support Downtown Eastside vendors; involvement in the community, etc.

**Author:** Ray Stensrud **Phone No.:** 873-7437

**URL:** <http://iwww.city.vancouver.bc.ca/ctyclerk/cclerk/020910/a8.htm>

**Date of decision:** September 10, 2002

## Waste and Recycling

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### **By-laws**

#### **Solid Waste and Recycling Bylaw No. 8417**

This by-law outlines the City of Vancouver's responsibilities and limits for waste, yard waste and recycling collection.

**URL:** <http://iwww.city.vancouver.bc.ca/bylaws/11421.htm>

**Date last amended:** December 9, 2003

## Food Systems

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#### **Action Plan for Creating a Just and Sustainable Food System for the City of Vancouver**

Approval of this action plan established an official mandate within the City of Vancouver to work towards creating a just and sustainable food system. The action plan included: formation of a Food Policy Council, creation of two staff positions to support the work of the Council, and an interim work plan. Items in the interim work plan included conducting a community food system assessment and a feasibility study for rooftop gardens, facilitating the creation of community gardens and farmers

markets, and facilitating the creation of a coordinated food processing and distribution facility for low income citizens.

**Author:** Wendy Mendes **Phone No.:** 871-6236

**Report URL:** <http://www.city.vancouver.bc.ca/ctyclerk/cclerk/20031209/rr1.htm>

**Date report approved:** December 11, 2003

**Date budget approved:** March 9, 2004

**Meeting Minutes:**

<http://iwww.city.vancouver.bc.ca/ctyclerk/cclerk/20040311/csbWEBmins.htm>

## **General Sustainability**

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### **Policies, Guidelines and Decisions**

#### **Policy Report: Creating a Sustainable City**

In April 2002, the City adopted a formal position, definition and principles on sustainability, which include:

*A sustainable Vancouver is a community that meets the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs.*

*It is a place where people live, work and prosper in a vibrant community of communities. In such a community, sustainability is achieved through community participation and the reconciliation of short and long term economic, social and ecological well-being.*

*Sustainability is a direction rather than a destination. A sustainable city is one that protects and enhances the immediate and long-term well being of a city and its citizens, while providing the highest quality of life possible.*

*Sustainability requires integrated decision-making that takes into account economic, ecological, and social impacts as a whole.*

**Author:** A. McAfee **Phone No.:** 873-7451

**Report:** <http://iwww.city.vancouver.bc.ca/ctyclerk/cclerk/020423/rr3.htm>

**Sustainability website:** <http://iwww.city.vancouver.bc.ca/sustainability/>

**Date adopted:** Council: April 23, 2002

## Information Reports

### **Report submitted to Council: The Cool Vancouver Task Force's Draft Community Climate Change Action Plan for the City of Vancouver**

This report was submitted by the Sustainability Support Group in consultation with the Cool Vancouver Task Force. Included in Appendix A, the Draft Community Climate Change Action Plan, is information regarding actions that individuals can take to reduce greenhouse gas emissions, including purchasing locally grown food, composting, and growing fruit and vegetables. The previous Discussion Paper on Greenhouse Gas Reduction Planning for the City of Vancouver by the Cool Vancouver Task Force (2003) also includes more explicit policy recommendations regarding food and agriculture (section 10.5).

**Authors:** M. Holland; S. Pander **Phone No.:** 871-6677/616-2461

**URL:**

<http://iwww.city.vancouver.bc.ca/sustainability/coolvancouver/pdf/DraftCommClimateChangeAP.pdf>

**Date completed:** 2004

**Previous discussion paper:**

[http://iwww.city.vancouver.bc.ca/sustainability/coolvancouver/pdf/cvtf\\_discussionpaper.pdf](http://iwww.city.vancouver.bc.ca/sustainability/coolvancouver/pdf/cvtf_discussionpaper.pdf)

**Date completed:** June, 2003