

PORTLAND - FOOD & UA POLICY TIMELINE

Portland has been acknowledged as a leader at protecting agricultural land since the 1970s when the State of Oregon required the city to develop a comprehensive land use plan and institute limits on urban expansion. However, when it comes to championing agriculture within the boundaries of the city, Portland has arguably been a late bloomer.

Still, despite its late start Portland has affirmed itself as an innovator in food policy and urban agriculture planning over the last decade and since the Food Policy Council was formed in 2002. In that time, Portland has rapidly increased the number of community gardens in the city, hired a Food Policy Manager, conducted North America's first urban agriculture land inventory, grappled seriously with food systems and urban agriculture in numerous plans including the Climate Action Plan, and relaxed its zoning code to encourage more agricultural activity in the city.

1973:

Oregon Senate Bills 100 requires every city in the state to develop a comprehensive land use plan with the intention of regulating urban expansion and protecting agricultural lands.

1975:

Portland's Community Gardens Program is created by City Council ordinance.

1994:

Portland's Bureau of Environmental Services purchase Zenger Farm with the intension of preserving its wetlands. The following year the farm is leased out to be used as an agricultural education site.

2002:

Portland and Multnomah County create a joint Food Policy Council to provide ongoing advice and input to city and county staff on food-related issues.

2004:

Resolution calling for the creation of an urban agricultural inventory of all city-owned land that may be suitable for community gardens and other agricultural uses. Leads to the Diggable City project.

2006:

Portland City Council Resolution 36407 establishes a Peak Oil Task Force mandated to advise on how the city can mitigate the impacts of declining energy on numerous areas including food security. The Peak Oil Task Force releases a report addressing these questions the following year.

2005:

With the support of the City of Portland and Multnomah County, a massive grassroots effort raises \$1.4 million to save Tryon Farm from development and create a non-profit educational farm protected under land covenant.

2005:

The city contributes \$125,000 and partners with Portland State University to help establish the Learning Gardens Laboratory – an on the ground garden education site.

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2005:

The *Diggable City* report – an inventory of city-owned property suitable for urban agriculture – is completed by Urban Planning graduate students from Portland State University.



2007:

Urban Forest Action Plan supports increased planting of food producing trees in appropriate locations.



2008:

The *Vision PDX* document summarizes two years of public consultations that heard 17,000 residents express opinions of the city they would like Portland to be by 2030. Findings show that Portlanders support ensuring access to multiple sources of fresh, local food for people of all incomes, and also the creation of more opportunities for residents to grow their own food in the city.



2009:

Climate Action Plan – The third climate plan adopted by Portland since 1993, but only the first to address matters of the food system as they relate to climate change.



2009:

The Board of County Commissioners for Multnomah County pass a resolution adopting the Food Policy Council's recommendation to create a food action plan.



2009:

City Council passes the *Better Together Garden Resolution* on Earth Day, calling for the creation of an annual vegetable garden at City Hall.



2009:

Portland Fruit & Nut Tree Report by the Portland/Multnomah Food Policy Council calls for the inclusion and promotion of fruit and nut trees as street trees, and also calls for the expansion of community orchards in the city.



2009:

'1000 Gardens Initiative' is undertaken by Portland Parks and Recreation to create 1,000 new community garden plots by 2012. This goal had already been set by the Climate Action Plan, and is one that Parks ultimately achieved successfully.



2010:

Multnomah Food Action Plan – Multnomah County creates a 15 year road map for achieving a 'sustainable food system' by 2025.



2012:

Food Policy Council is disbanded.



2012:

Council approves *The Portland Plan* (Resolution #36918, April 25th). As one of the Plan's 2035 objectives for achieving a "healthy, connected neighborhood", it seeks to ensure that 90% of Portlanders live within a ½ mile of a store or market that sells healthy, affordable food.



2011:

Urban Food Zoning Code Update.



PORTLAND - KEY POLICY DOCUMENTS

2004 – Urban Agriculture Resolution (No. 36272)

This resolution called upon the City of Portland to identify the criteria for suitable sites that have the potential to become community gardens or have other agricultural uses, and to then create an inventory of all City-owned property that fits this criteria.

2007 – Peak Oil Task Force Report

City of Portland’s Peak Oil Task Force report concludes that declining availability of fossil fuels will decrease distance that food can travel from farm to plate. Consequently, the amount and variety of food available in Portland, and the cost of food, will rise and will disproportionately affect low-income households. The report recommends a series of action items that the City could take to mitigate these impacts on Portland’s food security. In summary, the City is encouraged to take a more active roll in the Portland ‘foodshed’ by preserving farmland, encouraging the expansion of local food production, and exploring ways to make more land (both public and private) available for growing food.

2009: Portland Climate Action Plan (BPS)

This is the third climate action plan adopted by Portland since 1993, but only the first to address matters of the food system as they relate to climate change. Two pages of this 52 page plan are devoted to food and agriculture. The climate plan recognizes the substantial contribution of the agriculture industry to greenhouse gas emissions, and calls upon the City to reduce consumption of ‘carbon intensive foods’ (namely, red meat), and increase the consumption of local food by providing infrastructure and educational resources to growers.

2009: Portland Plan Background Report on Food Systems (BPS)

This background report on the Portland Food System, written in preparation for the Portland Plan, describes itself as “the first attempt to characterize a wide range of food issues as part of the City’s comprehensive planning efforts.” The report provides an exhaustive recap of the issues and efforts related to food access and urban agriculture in Portland, while also looking to examples from other cities. It finds that although Portlanders are passionate about food, urban agriculture, and equity of access, demand for these amenities outstrips supply. The report thereby calls for expanded programming and integration of food access into all aspects of urban design.

2010: Multnomah Food Action Plan (Multnomah Co.)

A fifteen year roadmap to achieving a ‘sustainable food system in Multnomah County’ by 2025. The plan identifies four focus areas – Local Food, Healthy Eating, Social Equity, and Economic Vitality – and sets a total of 16 goals in these areas. Goals 1-4 focus on issues related to urban agriculture, such as protecting farmland, increasing urban agriculture production, and supporting small-scale farms. Goals 5-8 emphasize educating people about healthy eating, and making healthy food choices accessible in every neighborhood. Goals 9-12 call on the County to ‘address the cause of hunger, food insecurity, and injustice’ through a variety of actions including strengthening food resources in neighborhoods, and strengthening community involvement processes. Finally, goals 13-16 focus on strengthening the local food economy through such actions as promoting institutional purchasing, and developing regional infrastructure to support producers.

PORTLAND - KEY POLICY DOCUMENTS

2011: Urban Food Zoning Code Update (BPS)

Whereas zoning code typically deals with large-scale agricultural production and distribution, Portland's 2011 *Urban Food Zoning Code Update* is intended to address and facilitate neighborhood scale production and distribution that is more appropriate to the urban environment. Specifically, the code update deals with regulations permitting market gardens, community gardens, farmers markets, and CSAs and buying clubs. Amendments to the code allow market gardens and membership based distribution to be permitted in all zones. The update also places additional regulations on Community Gardens (hours of operation, and use of motorized equipment), and on Farmers Markets (addressing location, frequency, how many "non-farmer" vendors are allowed, etc.). The update does not address animal husbandry or bees.