

VANCOUVER - FOOD & UA POLICY TIMELINE

Over the past decade, numerous plans that directly relate to the food system have been endorsed in the Vancouver region, including the Action Plan for Creating a Just and Sustainable Food System for the City of Vancouver (2003), The Vancouver Food Charter (2007), and Metro Vancouver's Regional Food System Strategy (2011). Most recently, the Vancouver Food Strategy (2013) has sought to integrate many of these policies under a single comprehensive planning strategy.

Vancouver has also passed numerous plans affirming its commitment to sustainability and Environmentalism in recent decades, and this language can be seen to have influenced the City's approach to food and urban agriculture policy. In 1996, the City adopted the Environmental Policy and Environmental Action Plan, assuring that environmental considerations be accounted for in all City decisions. More recently Vancouver's Greenest City Action Plan 2020 called on Vancouver to become a 'global leader in urban food systems'.

1978:

City Farmer (a non-profit focused on UA issues) is established.

1982:

City Farmer establishes a research garden for public demonstrations of organic food production.

1989:

Vancouver School Board adopts guidelines supporting garden plots on their properties.

1991:

City Farmer partners with the City of Vancouver to open a compost education site.

1995:

Vancouver's First Farmer's Market opens (Trout Lake Market at Trout Lake Community Centre).

1995:

Park Board approves the *Park Board Community Garden Policy*.

2003:

Council approves the *Action Plan for Creating a Just and Sustainable Food System for the City of Vancouver* (proposed by the Food Policy Task Force) that calls for the creation of the Vancouver Food Policy Council – a multi-stakeholder committee to provide ideas and policy recommendations for how to improve the local food system (Dec. 9th). Also calls for the City to hire two full-time food policy staff.

2003:

Council approves a motion calling for the creation of a 'just and sustainable food system' (June 8th) and establishes a *Food Policy Task Force* to help develop an action plan for achieving this.

2002:

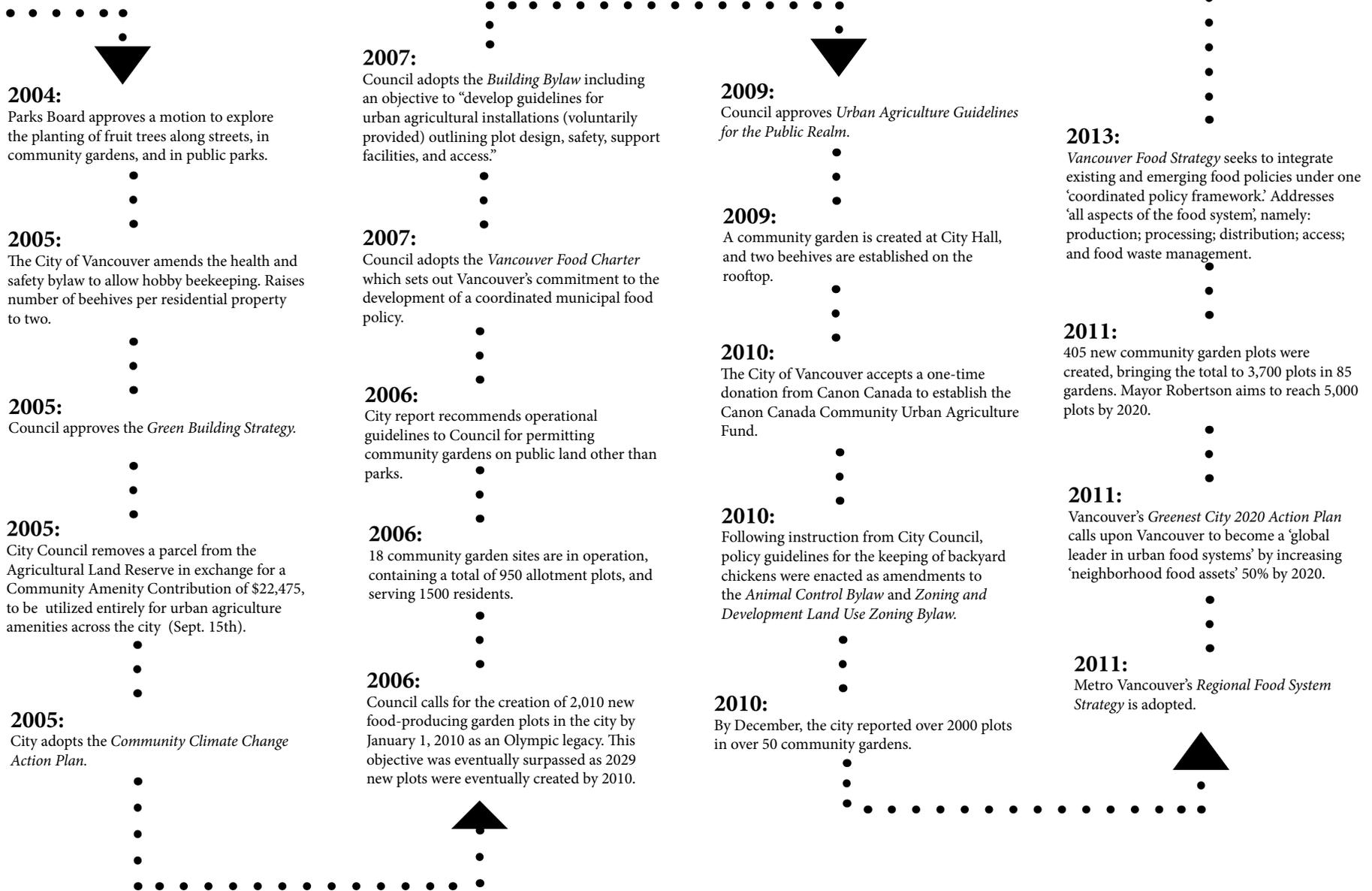
Council adopted a definition and principles for sustainability to guide the City's actions and operations.

1996:

City adopts the *Environment Policy and Environmental Action Plan*. Commits the City to ensuring environmental considerations are integrated into all City of Vancouver decisions respecting planning, growth, service delivery, finance, and operations.



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VANCOUVER - KEY POLICY DOCUMENTS

1995 – Park Board Community Garden Policy

Vancouver Parks Board outlines the circumstances under which it will cooperate with non-profit groups to establish community gardens on public land operated by Parks (updated in 2005).

2002 – Definition of a Sustainable Vancouver

Adopted by Council April 2002 – “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.”

2003 – Action Plan for Creating a Just and Sustainable Food System for the City of Vancouver

Calls on the city to: establish a Food Policy Council; conduct a food system assessment; assess the feasibility of rooftop gardens; and, create more community gardens, farmer’s markets, and facilities for food processing and distribution for low-income residents. Also calls for the city to hire two full-time staff people to work on food-related issues.

2006 – Guidelines for Community Gardens on Lands Other than Parks

Establishes guidelines for broadening Vancouver’s community gardens beyond Parks lands.

2007 – Vancouver Food Charter

Reaffirms Vancouver’s commitment to a just and sustainable food systems, and establishes five principles to guide the coordination of Vancouver’s Food System: (1) Community Economic Development; (2) Ecological Health; (3) Social Justice; (4) Collaboration and Participation; and (5) Celebration.

2009 – “Urban Agriculture Guidelines for the Private Realm”

Recognizing an increase in re-zoning and development applications that voluntarily include urban agriculture provisions, the city set out a series of guidelines for the establishment of gardens on private lands such as multi-unit apartment complexes, restaurants, schools, and community centers. Includes design considerations such as the size of plots, siting, access, and garden infrastructure.

VANCOUVER - KEY POLICY DOCUMENTS

2011: Metro Vancouver's Regional Food System Strategy

This plan is intended to comprehensively address the food system of the greater region of Metro Vancouver, including commercial urban food production (urban farming). While the plan covers a wide-range of aspects of that larger food system, the first of five goals laid out by this plan is to “Increase Capacity to Produce Food Close to Home”. Five specific strategies are offered to achieve this goal, including increasing agricultural production in urban areas, and investing in the new generation of farmers.

2011: Greenest City Action Plan

This plan, which aims for Vancouver to become the “Greenest City” in the world by 2020, sets ten goals toward achieving that objective. The tenth of these goals is for Vancouver to “become a global leader in urban food systems.” The plan sets a target for the city to increase ‘neighborhood food assets’ 50% by 2020. The plan estimates that in 2011, Vancouver had 3,340 ‘food assets’, including 3,260 community garden plots. The plan aims to increase the number of assets to 5,158 by 2020, including 5,000 community garden plots.

2013 – Vancouver Food Strategy

The impetus for the *Vancouver Food Strategy (VFS)* is to ‘integrate existing and emerging food policies under one coordinated policy framework’. The food strategy begins with the vision and principles of a just and sustainable food system as laid out in the Vancouver Food Charter. It proceeds to address ‘all aspects of the food system’, namely: production; processing; distribution; access; and food waste management. Urban agriculture is treated as an aspect of production. The *VFS* identifies 5 components of urban agriculture, and then sets specific goals for each: community gardening (including fruit trees); urban farming; hobby beekeeping; backyard hens; and edible landscaping. Goals include: increasing community gardens by 1/3; creating urban farming land use zoning and business licensing; enabling farm gate sales of eggs, honey, and produce; increasing the planting of fruit producing trees on parks lands as well as encouraging community stewardship of those trees.