Addressing Food in Your Comprehensive Plan

PSRC 2014 Toolbox Brown Bag Series

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What are the drivers?

**Health**
- High rates of obesity, health disparities
- Demand for healthy, particularly fresh, local foods
- Healthy Eating Active Living (HEAL)
- Limited food access (both physical and economic)

**Environment**
- Sustainability (reducing environmental impact)
- Climate change—regional food self-sufficiency
- Local food production opportunities (aka urban ag)
- Preserving farmland

**Economy**
- Local food-related entrepreneurship (e.g. cottage food industry)
- Food sector growth (e.g. food hubs, food innovation districts)
- Mobile vending
- Self-sufficiency—gardening & livestock (chickens & goats!) at home
What elements?

- Land Use
- Agriculture
- Economic Development
- Natural resources
- Sustainability
- Community Image
- Housing
- Human Services
- Parks, Recreation & Open Space
- Public Health
- Transportation
The steps:

1. Assess community’s food landscape
2. Scan existing policies
3. Amend the plan
4. Implementation
Step 1: Assess the environment
Availability of Healthy vs. Unhealthy Foods

Retail Food Environment Index (RFEI) =

Fast food restaurants + Convenience stores

Supermarkets + Small grocery stores + Fruit/vegetable stands + Farmers markets
## Retail Food Environment Index for CPPW-funded cities

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>City</th>
<th>RFEI</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Burien</td>
<td>2.59</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Federal Way</td>
<td>3.77</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Des Moines</td>
<td>5.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Redmond</td>
<td>5.50</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SeaTac</td>
<td>2.33</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Snoqualmie</td>
<td>4.50</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Trends from the six cities

✔ **Large land bases (75-90%)** not within a feasible walking distance of a supermarket

✔ Each city had **areas with high poverty rates** not within a feasible walking distance of a supermarket

✔ **Higher ratio** of fast food restaurants and convenience stores to other food retailers (supermarkets, produce stands, small grocers, farmers markets)

✔ Some cities have a **high number** of fast food restaurants near schools
How to get started

- Understand available tools
  - USDA Food Environment Atlas
  - USDA Food Desert Locator
  - CDC RFEI (by census tract)

- Identify local data
  - Business license records
  - Public health permits
  - Food stamp/ WIC retailers

- Get community input
  - Walking audits
  - Surveys
  - Focus groups
  - Community food security leaders
Step 2: Scan existing policies

**URBAN AGRICULTURE**

**KEYWORDS:** agriculture/agricultural, urban agriculture, farm/farming, aquaculture, animals (chicken, ducks, turkey, roosters, goats, livestock, bees), greenhouse, hydroponics/aquaponics, irrigation, rain barrels, water storage

**LINKAGES:** home business or sales requirements (cottage laws); small retail development programs, loans, or incentives; outdoor advertisement/billboard regulations; green roofs; pesticide requirements (e.g. near schools and daycares, or sign requirements on lawns following application), pest management practices or regulations
Step 3: Amend the plan

- What’s the framework?
- Who are players in the community’s food system?
- What are the various uses and activities?
- Are there areas underserved areas/neighborhoods? Underserved populations?
- What local departments are or could be involved?
- What are the potential connections to county, state and federal policies and programming?
Policy examples:

- Promote or encourage farmers markets, community gardens, etc.
- Develop public-private partnerships on healthy living initiatives, programming, etc.
- Address regulatory barriers
- Support/encourage “buy local” campaigns
- Encourage food retailers to locate in underserved areas (via zoning and economic incentives)
- Use public lands for urban agriculture uses
- Encourage transit connectivity with community resources such as grocery stores
- Establish institutional procurement standards to purchase healthy and local
Step 4: Implementation

- Create an inter-departmental team
- Revise/adopt regulations
- Develop programs (i.e. community gardens)
- Identify funding sources (CIP, grants, etc.)
- Establish food system metrics

King County’s Healthy Foods Here Retail Program
Resources:

- Regional Food Policy Council resource page – http://www.psrc.org/growth/foodpolicy/resources-topic/
- ChangeLab Solutions – toolkits and model language, www.changelabsolutions.org
- APA's Planning and Community Health Research Center – tools and resources, www.planning.org
- APA's Food Interest Group – networking, www.planning.org
- WA-APA Big Ideas- Sustainable Ag & Healthy Food Systems Working group – networking and more, contact me!
Thank You.

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