

# Towards a Winnipeg Food Policy Council

Background, Research Scan and Local Context

March 2016

This report has been prepared to inform readers about the formation, role and governance structure of food policy councils, and how such issues relate to the City of Winnipeg context. The Urban Planning Division reviewed literature on food policy councils and spoke with people who have direct experience with creating or working with food policy councils. Information in this report will be provided to participants in advance of stakeholder consultation events.

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# 1. Background

## ***1.1 Reason for the Report***

On June 2<sup>nd</sup>, 2015 the Standing Policy Committee on Property and Development concurred with the recommendations of the report titled 'Accommodating the Interests of Winnipeg's Agricultural Community'. The report included a recommendation for the Winnipeg Public Service to "engage key stakeholders to investigate and provide recommendations related to the formation, role and governance structure of a Winnipeg Food Policy Council, with a mandate of providing continued advice on agricultural and food related policy", including:

- providing research and advisory support;
- investigating barriers to production;
- exploring opportunities towards improving food production and food security;
- preparing a report with recommendations about permissible non-invasive agricultural-related uses in Winnipeg; and
- assisting in the creation of an Agricultural and Food Security Strategy

The Urban Planning Division has now reviewed literature on food policy councils and consulted with individuals with direct experience with creating or working with food policy councils. The purpose of this report is to inform stakeholders and City of Winnipeg Councillors about our current understanding of key concepts related to successful food policy council formation, role and governance structure. This report will be provided to participants in advance of stakeholder consultation events.

## ***1.2 Food Systems and Complexity***

A 'food system' can be described as "the path that food travels from field to fork" and includes "growing, harvesting, processing, packaging, transporting, marketing, consuming, and disposing of food" (Angelic Organics 2013). In a report analyzing a Canada-wide scan of municipal and regional food policy councils, authors Rod MacRae and Kendal Donahue describe 'food systems' as:

"Chains of commercial and non-commercial actors – from suppliers to consumers, regulators to advocates for system change – who collectively determine how we grow, process, distribute, acquire, and dispose of food. Food systems thinking reflects an awareness of how actions by one group in the system affects other groups, as well as the environment, the economy, the fabric of society, and the health of the population, and ultimately, consumers" (MacRae & Donahue 2013, p. 4).

Elements of a food system are often considered as an assortment of sectors, such as: production (how food is grown), processing; distribution; consumption; and waste recovery (Harper et al 2009, APA 2011, Burgan & Winne 2012). In addition to these elements, other models cite access, preparation, (City of Calgary), and land acquisition (City of Edmonton 2012) as additional food system elements to consider. Segments of (and issues within) the food system have traditionally been managed independently by government, businesses and organizations, in 'silos'. This increases the risk that specialized and narrow policy solutions related to one 'silo' will aggravate problems in one or more of the other 'silos'. Each sector faces unique set of issues. Dahlberg (1994) describes it as follows:

"At each level there are major issues associated with each portion or sector of the food system: from production issues (farmland preservation, farmers markets, household & community gardens), to processing issues (local vs. external), to distribution issues

(transportation, warehousing) to access issues (inner city grocery stores, co-ops, school breakfasts & lunches, food stamps, the WIC program, etc.), to use issues (food safety and handling, restaurants, street vendors), to food recycling (gleaning, food banks, food pantries and soup kitchens) to waste stream issues (composting, garbage fed to pigs, etc.).”

Interconnections between these various sectors are often unpredictable which makes food systems extremely complex. Unlike complicated issues, which can be solved by logic and expertise, complex entities experience unplanned changes, emergent behaviour, varied expertise, and conflict. Groups working with complex issues must be equipped to adapt to changes, deal with conflicts, and constantly learn new things.

Food systems thinking reflects an awareness of how actions by one group, or sector, in the system affect other groups, as well as the environment, the economy, the fabric of society, the health of the population, and ultimately, consumers. There is a growing movement to recognize the links between the components, or sectors, of our food system and better understand the system as a whole (Fitzgerald & Morgan 2014). A 2010 Federation of Canadian Municipalities (FCM) survey of 115 Canadian municipalities found that 57% view sustainable food systems as a medium to high priority, 60% have food champions in their community, and most have integrated sustainable food systems into planning (FCM 2012).

It is possible to address the complexity of food issues by acting with a common ‘food system vision’ or set of goals in mind. This involves careful analysis of food system sector relationships and food systems thinking. Food systems thinking and food policy councils are relatively new concepts. Many municipalities in Canada have recognized the advantage to a systems approach and have established food policy councils and/or created food policy strategies.

### ***1.3 What is a Food Policy Council?***

A ‘food policy council’ is an umbrella organization composed of diverse food system stakeholders working with the political process to shape the local food system by looking at the whole system. Food policy councils discuss food issues, foster coordination between food system sectors, evaluate and influence policy, and support programs and services that address local needs (Harper et al 2009). Different interests are brought together as the group discusses system issues, researches, and analyzes or proposes policy changes and / or programming related to the food system.

There are currently over 200 food policy councils throughout Canada and the United States (John Hopkins University Bloomberg School of Public Health 2015). Of that, at least 19 are embedded in government at the municipal level. In Canada, food policy councils from three cities – Toronto, Edmonton and Vancouver – have been established by municipal government.

Food policy council members bring knowledge and expertise from many different sectors of the food system, and include farmers, small business owners, food bank representatives, restaurateurs, grocers, community kitchen operators, networking organization representatives, health representatives, academics, etc. Sector representation on a food policy council depends on the local context and varies from one council to another. Most food policy councils have between 10 and 30 members, meet monthly, and have multiple sub-committees that work on specialized tasks.

## **1.4 What Does a Food Policy Council Do?**

Food policy councils improve the local food system by creating programs, partnerships, and proposing policy (Burgan & Winne 2012). They gather information about the local food environment, build relationships with and between stakeholders, create an opportunity to study and discuss the food system as a whole, and develop strategies to better address community food security (Harper et al 2009, Burgan and Winne 2012). By including a broad representation of members across food system sectors, food policy councils can provide a unique and effective lens for food systems thinking, networking, education, and policy advice.

It should be understood that food policy councils established by a government “do not make policy – they advise policy makers and government agencies that have policy making power” (Burgan and Winne 2012). The role of such food policy councils includes research, oversight, advising and advocating for specific policies. (Harper et al 2009). Food policy councils established by municipal governments are typically tasked with providing recommendations on food systems related issues.

One of the advantages of having a food policy council is that, due to their cross-sectoral nature and food systems lens, they “can help identify areas that governments have not been able to address, and either propose changes in government policy or identify an opportunity for a non-governmental organization, project or business to initiate new programs” (Harper et al, 2009). They also have the advantage of being able to identify the implications a policy or initiative may have on other sectors of the food system, that a municipality may not immediately be aware of (ex. Health and/or nutrition).

Common topics that food policy councils frequently work on include procurement, land use and zoning, and food safety / public health (Burgan and Winne 2012). City-embedded food policy councils across North America appear to have similar roles, which include:

- Providing advice and research;
- networking;
- working towards food policy changes; and
- building awareness on food related issues (Denver 2015).

Food policy councils can help leverage resources and coordinate across their sectors and networks. Often, they work with planning departments on city initiatives (MacRae & Donahue 2013). Common activities include “public awareness campaigns, education programs, research, community food assessments, advising on policy, improving coordination between existing food policies or programs, publicizing community food resources, and hosting public forums on food system topics” (Mendes 2011, p. 2). For more specific examples, please refer to the table in Appendix A, “Food Policy Work Across Canada”.

What food policy councils do can depend on the scale, structure, and mandate of each food policy council, along with local issues and needs. The Toronto Food Policy Council has supported the City with the development of a food strategy and multiple plans, worked with coalitions of stakeholders on food projects, and influenced legislation regarding rooftop gardens and local food procurement (Deloitte 2013). The state-wide Connecticut Food Policy Council has published reports evaluating the food system, hosted a conference on farm-land preservation, and has assisted with significant improvements in state assistance programs and farmers’ markets (Freedgood & Royce 2012).

Much of the work conducted by a food policy council is done through sub-committees / task forces addressing specific tasks and/or goals, stemming from the strategic plan or from direction received from

City Council (or committee thereof). Sub-committees may also take on controversial issues and bring a recommendation to the broader food policy council or City Council (Burgan & Winne 2012).

The activities of a food policy council are rarely confined to just that of 'Policy'. For this reason some municipalities, like Edmonton, have opted to refer to their council as a 'food council', as opposed to a 'food policy council'.

Food policy councils connected to local governments are often assigned tasks based on current needs (Borron 2003). The City of Winnipeg March 2015 report "Accommodating the Interests of Winnipeg's Agricultural Community" outlined several desired roles for a Winnipeg Food Policy Council. These roles include:

- continued agricultural and food related policy advice;
- supporting the development plan;
- creating opportunities to produce and access food;
- developing recommendations for urban agriculture; and
- assisting in the creation of an Agricultural and Food Policy Strategy (City of Winnipeg 2015).

## 2 Scan of Food Policy Council Research

### 2.1 Introduction

Information in the sections that follow are based on information from articles on food policy councils throughout North America, food policy council ‘how-to’ guides, interviews with key leaders in Canada, and a review of recent media coverage on food-related issues.

### 2.2 Membership

Food policy councils generally have between 10 and 30 members, with 15 being an optimal size (Wilder Research 2010, Burgan & Winne 2012). Existing local-level food policy councils use one of several methods for member selection, including self-selection, appointment by government, invitation by the host organization, application and review, or some combination of the above (Harper et al 2009, Salemi et al 2011, Fitzgerald & Morgan 2014). Members of government-connected food policy councils are generally appointed by the governing body that created them (Burgan & Winne 2012). A food policy council may even include members appointed by virtue of their position on a municipal council or with the civil service.

Members generally serve between one and three years and are usually eligible for consideration again (MacRae & Donahue 2013). Having alternating term limits allows for some continuation of knowledge between old and new members (Salemi et al 2011).

Each member of the food policy council can potentially be seen as a consulting expert with a wealth of knowledge and experience that they are offering on a volunteer basis. When selecting members for a food policy council, it is beneficial to consider including members that offer a diversity of skills and sector representation, influence, and links to other people and organizations within the food system (MacRae & Donahue 2013).

Effective members tend to work well with others, be willing to learn and share knowledge, and seek ways to improve local systems for all people (Burgan & Winne 2012). A diverse membership from across all food sectors, with new members coming in over time, allows for greater representation of, and discussion on, issues.

Composition of the food policy council differs between groups. The Vancouver Food Policy Council includes three representatives from each of five food system areas (Vancouver 2015), while the Toronto Food Policy Council focuses more on geographic representation, along with a few broad qualifications applying to all members (Toronto 2015). The Edmonton Food Council seeks up to fifteen members that represent one of ten groups, and have several additional skills and attributes (Edmonton 2015).

Food policy councils generally have one or more chairs and a vice-chair. These members develop agendas, lead meetings, represent the food policy council to the community and government agencies, and ensure it follows its policies and mission (Burgan & Winne 2012). It is helpful to outline the role and term limit of the chair in the council by-laws.

## **2.3 Supports**

### **Personnel**

As with any council, board or committee, there is likely to be a large amount of administrative work related to scheduling meetings, preparing agendas, recording and writing minutes, prioritizing tasks and coordinating with the City. In addition, the activities of a food policy councils often include conducting or coordinating research, facilitating workshops, writing administrative reports, advising on policy development and municipal procedures, and reporting on progress.

It is common for members of food policy councils to be volunteers. To ensure day-to-day functions are tended to, food policy councils sometimes rely on a part-time or full-time staff person (Burgan & Winne 2012). Dedicated staff can be critical to ensuring administrative functions are properly carried out (Fitzgerald & Morgan 2014). Harper et al (2009) suggest that a lack of staff support can cause councils to dissolve.

In addition to a dedicated staff person, some jurisdictions allocate specific responsibilities to existing government employees' duties (Burgan & Winne 2012). The literature suggests that skillset of an experienced City Planner is well suited to support the work of a food policy council. For example, the American Planning Association (2011) identifies planners as particularly useful to food policy councils because of their familiarity with the policy process, systems thinking approach, and understanding of the built, social, and natural environments. Planners also create visioning documents, form land use plans, and often link different city departments and functions by bringing people together to address planning issues.

### **Other supports**

Food policy councils that report to a government body are generally funded by the governing body that created them. Almost all of the 40 food policy councils in the United States interviewed by Harper et al (2009), identified limited staff time and lack of funding as obstacles to their success. Food policy councils not closely connected to government commonly face significant financial constraints and generally rely on private foundations or individual donations (MacRae & Donahue 2013). This may lead to increased competition for limited funding with other community organizations, many of which should be working in cooperation with the food policy council.

Reliable and continued financing ensures longevity, the ability to create long-term solutions to food-related issues, and the ability to continue operations without disruption. Providing staff and other supports (e.g. meeting places or office space) helps coordinate members' expertise, creating high payoffs for a small investment.

### **Operations**

In addition to a Strategy as well as Action/Implementation plans that guide their work, effective food policy councils have developed Terms of Reference documents. These documents outline the decision-making process, group composition and other processes ensuring the organization runs well.

Food policy councils may be required by law to maintain transparency and reporting on work activities through producing annual reports, publishing public agendas before meetings, and posting minutes (Burgan & Winne 2012). When partnering with a municipal government, records can be made available through the government website (Burgan & Winne 2012). Deloitte (2013) recommends keeping organized agendas and minutes, maintaining consistent meeting schedules, and keeping track of assigned tasks. Government supports (e.g. City Clerks) can ensure this happens. Official connections to



the Municipality can also ensure that Council-designated priorities are included on food policy council meeting agendas.

## ***2.4 Relationship to the Municipality***

Food policy council literature identifies and discusses various categories of food policy councils based on the relationship, or lack thereof, with a local government. The focus of this report is to familiarize stakeholders and Councillors of food policy councils as they may relate to supporting food system policy and initiatives directed by the City of Winnipeg. The discussion that follows will therefore exclude discussion related to food policy councils established to lobby governments for policy action. Having said this, research suggests that accountability to, and financial support from, some level of government strongly benefits the effectiveness of a food policy council. Food policy councils tend to be most effective and have greater longevity when they have strong ties to government (MacRae & Donahue 2013).

A strong tie to a government is often assisted by having members appointed from municipal council, and may involve civil service staff in various capacities ranging from council chair to advisor. A 2012 census on food policy councils in Canada and the US, conducted by the Community Food Security Coalition, found that 9 out of 59 (15%) Canadian food policy councils who responded had structural links or accountability to government (Winne & Donahue 2013). The census revealed that “in all cases, the quality of government ties, such as participation from elected officials and public servants in food policy council work, the ability to engage with government processes, and access to funding, was strongly correlated with the ability of food policy councils to improve their local / regional food system” (Winne & Donahue 2013).

The Deloitte ‘Best Practices in Local Food Guide’ (2013) notes that municipal endorsements and structural links “can increase the legitimacy of the council and help it navigate through the complex rules and regulations of various government departments”. Municipal government support may be achieved through a supporting council resolution, representation on the council, and by providing funding, meeting places, or other support (Harper et al 2009).

## ***2.5 Planning for Success***

Gathering diverse stakeholders together to work towards a common goal may be an intimidating task, as each member has a unique agenda and mandate. A number of key elements have helped other municipalities create well-functioning food policy councils with diverse member interests:

1. **Get to know community food needs.** Most food policy councils develop and maintain some sort of food system assessment to identify and evaluate the existing conditions and needs of the local food system. The assessment may reveal how the various food sectors are connected and how food issues relate to community goals, values, and current issues, such as access to affordable nutritious food (Burgan and Winne 2012).

Food assessments may identify the current state of urban agricultural production and waste. An assessment may also point out where the current system falls short in allowing people to access food, and outline opportunities like existing assets, food production potential, procurement, food retail issues, and ways to address food poverty (Burgan & Winne 2012). It is not uncommon for a municipality to spend three to four years getting to know their local food system (Harper et al 2009).

2. **Develop a common vision.** When a common vision is developed, work can be linked to many different reports and initiatives. Food policy has a greater chance of being implemented when it is attached to other agencies and units, and when collaboration can assist with the complex execution of many organizations' mandates (MacRae & Donahue 2013). Every member/stakeholder can see and demonstrate how their individual work connects with the group's broad vision.

A broad vision can be established through the food systems assessment process or through other engagement opportunities. Data gathered can help articulate the vision, which can be achieved by working in many different, yet coordinated, ways.

3. **Make a plan and take action.** After food needs are identified and a common vision articulated, it is time to create a strategy and action plan. Recommendations and priorities from food system assessments can be used to inform a strategic or action plan (Burgan and Winne 2012, Deloitte 2013). For food policy councils connected to local governments, this strategic plan would concentrate on actions falling under municipal jurisdiction, which can be addressed through municipal actions or by collaborating with local partners.

Burgan & Winne (2012) recommend that all food policy councils have a strategic plan, which may help members "clarify their thinking about the group's overall purpose, the results it hopes to achieve, and how to achieve them." A strategic plan should adopt a holistic approach to improving the food system rather than a single issue approach, as councils can lose momentum after launching a major project (Deloitte 2013). Most food policy councils also develop terms of reference documents, to describe the group's purpose and structure.

Edmonton's food policy council has adopted an overarching Food and Urban Agriculture **Strategy, Fresh**, as well as an **Implementation Plan**. The Strategy includes goals, strategic directions and recommendations that will guide the City's food policy for the future. The Implementation Plan acts as a starting point to implement the strategy over the short-to-long term by outlining the time frame, suggested key steps and possible partners for each of the Strategy's recommendations.

4. **Measure Outcomes and Evaluate.** It is vital to know the extent to which a group's common vision is being achieved. Evaluation takes time, but it is necessary to identify successful processes for social change, ways in which the group's work can improve, and food system and other municipal/regional impacts. When working with complex entities involving multiple sectors and actors, it is helpful to employ more than one evaluative approach, as different actors will want to know different things. For example, funders may want to know whether a funding investment can be quantitatively justified, while others want insight on how to adjust a program to make it more effective (Cabaj, 2014). Measuring success involves identifying indicators and reporting progress over a logical timeframe.

## ***2.6 Formation - How do food policy councils begin?***

There is no single 'food policy council' model that will work for all cities. To be successful and relevant, every group must be created in consideration of the local context and needs of the community (Burgan & Winne 2012).

Several recommendations for forming food policy councils include:

- Engage members across different sectors of the food system and from different socio-economic backgrounds and draw from a diverse, but organized base

- Establish priorities and agree on some kind of strategic plan from the outset
- Establish clear structures for decision-making, communication and evaluation from the beginning
- Examine structural trade-offs between being within or independent of government, how the council is funded, and what issues the council chooses to prioritize
- Include elements of self-education (for members) and the public
- Diversify political and internal leadership support
  - Harper et al (2009) and MacRae & Donahue (2013)

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## **3 Local Context**

### **3.1 OurWinnipeg**

*OurWinnipeg*, Winnipeg's Development Plan, recognizes that local food production and connections to our food are increasingly seen as part of a vital and healthy neighbourhood (*OurWinnipeg*, Section 03-2). The Plan directs the City to respond to food needs as identified by communities by working through community partnerships.

The enabling strategies are:

- Collaborate on local food opportunities that are part of community development initiatives
- Include food in planning for neighbourhood revitalization strategies
- Within the City's mandate, pursue opportunities to support local food production
- Develop planning tools to manage the sustainability of existing community gardens and to enable the creation of new permanent or temporary gardens, and
- Maintain an inventory of city properties suitable for food production (*OurWinnipeg* p 82).

Other *OurWinnipeg* policy directions directly or indirectly related to the local food system involve the need for intergovernmental cooperation, collaboration with economic and community economic development agencies, and a commitment to sustainable long-term planning (*OurWinnipeg* pp 50-51). Food issues also intersect with policy directions about sustainability (*OurWinnipeg* p 65), inclusion and opportunity (*OurWinnipeg* pp 75-77).

### **3.2 Local Initiatives**

The City of Winnipeg directly responds to a variety of food related issues, including economic development opportunities, zoning for food-related businesses, food permits, management of food waste (Food Matters Manitoba 2015), and community gardens and agricultural land. Policy directions outlined in *OurWinnipeg* and the corresponding direction strategies, as well as priorities established by community groups through research and consultation events provide a basis from which the City's food policy work can grow. Current work suggests the Winnipeg community has both the energy and expertise needed to create and operate an effective food policy council.

The City has been active in supporting community gardening by creating a Community Garden Policy "intended to foster a positive climate for community gardening" and a set of implementation strategies (2008 Community / Allotment Garden Report). The demand for allotment gardens has been growing significantly over the last few years, from 161 plots with 87% occupancy in 2012, to 208 plots with 98% occupancy in 2014. During this same time, Winnipeg has also had a growing number of community groups working to establish more community orchards within the City.

Increased interest in community and allotment gardens indicates growth in Manitoba's local food movement. The Province of Manitoba reports that more Manitobans are buying local food and the Province offers resources to support local agriculture. The City of Winnipeg has also experienced an increase in the number of farmers' markets, organized through Business Improvement Zone (BIZ) associations and other organizations.

The growing demand for locally produced goods may create additional economic opportunities for new and prospective producers. A 2006 report on agriculture in Manitoba found that "for every dollar of net income produced by primary agriculture in Manitoba, between \$1.70 and 1.90 is generated in the overall Manitoba economy" (Honey & Oleson 2006). This economic trend is reflected nationally as well. A 2009 survey by Farmers' Markets Canada found that 55% of surveyed farmers reported that participation in a farmers' market has led to the creation of between 1 and 5 jobs (FMC 2009).

Growth in the local food movement is also reflected through community mobilization efforts. Over the past few years, initiatives and groups like The Canadian CED Network and Food Matters Manitoba (FMM) have been

working with citizens, organizations and government to influence policy, network, and gather community input. To date, FMM has completed four Community Food Assessments, which will inform future programming and policy development efforts.

FMM also hosted a visioning session in March 2015 ('The Future of Food'). At this forum, over 80 Winnipeg food experts gathered to envision ways in which food policy and initiatives can contribute to a more livable city. The report from this event outlines community-identified priorities including;

- Increased support for urban agriculture;
- food education in schools;
- increased access to fresh food all year;
- ways to celebrate diverse food cultures and traditions; and
- the creation of a food waste strategy.

In recent years, public attention has been drawn to several issues related to the food system, including access to groceries in the inner-city (Skerritt 2013, Baxter 2015, VanRaes 2015), excess food waste (Owen 2015), urban agriculture (Cash 2015, VanRaes 2015), food bank usage (CBC 2015). Locally, issues such as composting and urban beekeeping have recently garnered media attention.

In addition, the Province of Manitoba has recently released a report entitled 'Advancing the Small Scale, Local Food Sector in Manitoba: a path forward', which identifies and outlines recommendations to encourage new and existing entrepreneurs and producers. The report's recommendations provide ample opportunities for joint City-community and municipal-provincial efforts.

### ***3.3 City of Winnipeg Charter Authority***

*The City of Winnipeg Charter (the Charter)* states that City Council, Executive Policy Committee, and Standing Policy Committees all have authority to establish subcommittees to help carry out their work (62(2), 63(3)). If a subcommittee of the Executive Policy Committee is established, the Mayor must appoint its members and chairperson (62(2)). If a subcommittee of a Standing Policy Committee is established, members and a chairperson must be appointed by the Mayor or a designate (if **Council** establishes the subcommittee) or by the standing committee (if the **standing committee** establishes the subcommittee) (63(4)).

According to *the Charter*, votes are by majority (72(1)), but Council may by By-law prescribe certain aspects that require more than majority, like 2/3 vote (73(1)).

### ***3.4 City of Winnipeg Committees***

The City of Winnipeg has established committees, agencies, and boards set up to provide advice to City Council, committees of Council and the civil service on various issues. Some committees have additional mandates like policy development and implementation (Historic Buildings & Resources Committee) or site management (Assiniboine Park Conservancy). Other bodies like the Winnipeg Arts Council and the General Council of Winnipeg Community Centres have a broader administrative and governance role in operations under their jurisdictions.

Some committees have direct links with a specific department or Standing Policy Committee. For example, the Urban Design Advisory Committee is under the jurisdiction of the Standing Policy Committee on Property and Development, Heritage and Downtown Development. Other committees, however, have cross-cutting mandates that connect with the work of many different departments and divisions. Examples include the Access Advisory Committee, the Citizen Equity Committee and the Winnipeg Committee for Safety.

## 4 Summary

The previous pages have provided an overview of issues and themes related to the formation, role and governance structure of food policy councils.

It is recognized that food systems include many interacting segments, which creates complexity. The various segments of the food system are typically managed independently from one another, creating challenges to developing effective food related policies and initiatives. Governments throughout North America have been forming and working with 'food policy councils' to overcome these challenges and better understand the local food system. Membership on a food policy council is often a reflection of the various local food sectors.

The effectiveness of a food policy council often depends on a strong well-defined relationship with the local government. A municipality can improve the effectiveness and success of a food policy council by providing staff support, participation from elected officials and funding. Properly structured support and reporting mechanisms allow for a food policy council to more effectively provide advice to policy makers and municipal governments.

The activities, initiatives and policy recommendations of a food policy council are often informed by a food system assessment, which identifies and evaluates the local food systems conditions and needs. Food policy councils will often develop a vision, action plan, and/or strategy based on the food system assessment.

Community groups have already hosted forums and even undertaken food assessment exercises for various areas of the City. The growing list of local food system related issues and initiatives suggest the need for the creation of a Winnipeg Food Policy Council. Additional rationale and support for a Winnipeg Food Policy Council can be found in Winnipeg's Development Plan By-law, *OurWinnipeg*. *The City of Winnipeg Charter* provides the necessary framework for the creation of a Winnipeg Food Policy Council. It is anticipated that a Winnipeg Food Policy Council will operate similar to one or more of the existing committees.

In Winnipeg, the proposed stakeholder consultations are the first step towards formation of a local food policy council. It is expected that consultation with stakeholders will help fill in knowledge gaps; for example, stakeholders will be able to identify which food sectors are most relevant to the Winnipeg context. In addition, Council direction, combined with consultation recommendations and information from existing community food assessments and previous events (e.g. the Future of Food Forum organized by Food Matters Manitoba in 2014) could potentially inform the group's initial work.

## References

**The contents of this report were informed by the documents listed in this section. Specific references made to individual sources throughout this document are included in this list.**

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# Appendix A

**Food Policy Work across Canada** (MacRae and Donahue, 2013; adapted from Hatfield 2012)

Area	Examples
Access and Equity	Community engagement in decision-making Healthy food access and food retail initiatives Food desert mapping Senior food assistance programs Access to culturally appropriate food
Economic Development	Small business marketing assistance/financing Food hubs Food employment training programs Food trucks Farmers' markets
Environmental Sustainability	Sustainable food sourcing Environmental footprint Climate change planning
Food Education	Food skills and food literacy programs Healthy cooking demonstrations School gardens
Local and Regional Food	Farm-to-table programs Institutional purchasing programs Legislation
Mobile Vending	Enabling mobile food carts Licensing fee reductions
Nutrition and Public Health	Electronic Benefit transfer (EBT) at farmers' markets Menu labeling Healthy eating programs Early childhood nutrition programs
Policy Advocacy	Provincial and federal advocacy Municipal food Charters
Urban Agriculture	Zoning By-law revisions Community garden programs Greenhouses
Waste Management	Food composting programs Curbside food waste collection Provincial waste hauler rules