

OPC Recommendations RE: Urban Agriculture

Background: The Planning Commission passed these recommended goals and policies on February 25, 2013. The topic sponsor was Commissioner Leveen. The OPC Minutes are included at the end of this document. There was no written rationale from the topic sponsor; however Commissioner Leveen did make it known that when crafting his proposal, he did review goals and strategic direction developed by Sustainable South Sound's local food systems program to better understand regional and local food system needs.

Environment Chapter:

PE4.3: Restore and protect the health of Puget Sound as a local food source.

PE9.7: Reduce energy use and the environmental impact of our food system by encouraging local food production.

Land Use & Urban Design Chapter:

GL25: Local Thurston County food production is encouraged and supported to increase self-sufficiency, reduce environmental impact, promote health, the humane treatment of animals, and to support our local economy.

PL25.1: The City will actively partner with community organizations to provide education and information about the importance of local food systems.

PL25.2: The City will encourage home gardens as an alternative to maintaining grass/lawn and other landscaping that is either non-productive for local food systems or not supportive of native ecology.

PL25.3: The City will collaborate with community partners to ensure that everyone within Olympia is within biking/walking distance of a place to grow food.

PL25.4: The City will encourage for-profit gardening/farming in the community.

PL25.5: The City will support local food production with its own purchasing power.

PL25.6: The City will allow rooftop food production and consider incentives for providing food-producing greenhouses atop buildings.

PL25.7: The City recognizes the value of Open Space and other green spaces as areas of potential food production.

PL25.8: The City will partner with community organizations to measure and set goals for increasing local food production, and develop strategies to accomplish these goals.

PL25.9: The City will work with other local governments throughout the region to encourage the protection of existing agricultural lands and the development and promotion of a vibrant local food economy.

PL25.10: Partner with community organizations to provide education to citizens raising animals for food in the City to ensure protection from predators, and to provide sanitary conditions and humane treatment for these animals.

PL25.11: Educate and encourage citizens to purchase from local farms and small producers as an alternative to factory farms that engage in inhumane treatment of animals

PL22.3: Encourage the use of appropriate food-producing trees to increase local food self-sufficiency.

Public Health, Arts, Parks & Recreation Chapter:

PR9.1: Provide opportunities that promote a mentally and physically active lifestyle and healthy food choices, including participation in local food production.

From February 25, 2013 OPC Minutes:

Commission Discussion:

- Commissioner Horn proposed adding language to encourage humane treatment of animals in Goal 22. He proposed two additional policies, PL22.10 and PL22.11.
- Vice Chair Bardin said that PL19.3 should include a balance with native plants.
- Regarding PL22.6, Vice Chair Bardin and Commissioner Ingman expressed concern about allowing height bonuses that may obstruct views. Commissioner Leveen said he was willing to remove reference to height bonuses.
- Commissioner Tousley raised concerns about the implications for development regulations if fruit trees are promoted.
- Commissioner Richards doesn't like the phrasing, "mentally and physically active" in PR 9.1.
- Commissioner Richards also doesn't like use of "discourage" in PL 22.2, and would prefer "as an alternative to grass lawns..."
- Commissioner Richards wondered what "minimize its support" means in PL 22.5.
- Regarding new PL22.1, Chair Parker said reference should be to Thurston County, not just the City in the policy, "In its promotion of local food production the City will interpret local food production to include all food production within Thurston County". Commissioner Leveen accepted Commissioner Ingman's suggestion of adding "Thurston County" after local in GL22.

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- Commissioner Horn said, for GL22, urban agriculture is included in local food production and so doesn't need to be stated as well.
- There was a discussion of replacing "county" with "region" in GL 22.9, and adding, "offer educational opportunities for promotion and encourage development of a vibrant local food economy." Staff will reword to remove redundancy.

Commissioner Leveen moved, seconded by Commissioner Ingman, to adopt language as amended. There was unanimous approval.