



CITY OF HAMILTON
PUBLIC HEALTH SERVICES
Healthy Living Division

TO:	Mayor and Members Board of Health
COMMITTEE DATE:	August 14, 2014
SUBJECT/REPORT NO:	Food Strategy - BOH13001(a) (City Wide) (Outstanding Business List Item)
WARD(S) AFFECTED:	City Wide
PREPARED BY:	Dr. Ninh Tran (905) 546-2424, Ext. 2169 Sandy Skrzypczyk (905) 546-2424, Ext. 3523
SUBMITTED BY: SIGNATURE:	Elizabeth Richardson, MD, MHSc, FRCPC Medical Officer of Health Public Health Services Department

RECOMMENDATION

From Plan for a Food Strategy Information Report (BOH13001) (City Wide)
(Outstanding Business Item)

- (a) That Appendix A attached to Report BOH13001(a) respecting the *Food for All, A Food Charter for Hamilton* be endorsed by the Board of Health;
- (b) That the Board of Health endorse, in principle, the direction for the Interdepartmental Food Strategy Steering Team, to engage with community stakeholders to validate the proposed Food Strategy vision, principles, and goals;
- (c) That Public Health Services, on behalf of the Interdepartmental Food Strategy Steering Team, submit a funding request through the 2015 capital budget in the amount of \$50,000 to complete the community engagement process.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

A comprehensive Food Strategy is a plan that helps set direction of where resources should be allocated and what actions should be taken across all parts of food systems to achieve overarching long-term goals. It incorporates production, processing and

distribution, buying and selling, consumption and food waste management, and is a best practice model that is used globally and nationally.

A city-wide Interdepartmental Food Strategy Steering Team (IFSST) was formed in July 2013 in response to a Motion directing Public Health Services (PHS) to report on how a comprehensive Food Strategy could be developed to prioritize responses to food insecurity in the short-term, while simultaneously building in actions to ensure a sustainable food system for all in the community. Historically, Council received several funding requests for “stand-alone or one-off” food programs and actions that may not be sustainable or supported by evidence based best practices.

To date, the IFSST has:

- Completed an internal departmental environmental scan of current food initiatives that the City allocates resources to.
- Determined that there are many components within the food system that Hamilton is addressing; however, there are also a number of gaps and opportunities to shift what we are currently doing, how we can be innovative, and build on community assets.
- Provided input into the *Food for All, A Food Charter for Hamilton*.
- Drafted the proposed Food Strategy vision, principles and goals, based on a review of innovative best practice approaches across four major Canadian cities, the Hamilton context, and the internal departmental environmental scan.

To complete the Food Strategy, stakeholder consultation is required to get feedback and validation of the proposed vision, principles, goals, and reaffirm the vision and principles in the Food Charter. In addition, input is needed from a broad range of individuals and organizations on how to prioritize existing resources given the City’s immediate needs and capacity and to prioritize actions over the long-term. Community stakeholders’ input and support will ultimately improve the sustainability and effectiveness of Hamilton’s Food Strategy.

Alternatives for Consideration – See Page 9

FINANCIAL – STAFFING – LEGAL IMPLICATIONS (for recommendation(s) only)

Financial: \$50,000 is required to complete the community engagement process, which would include contracting a facilitator to lead the Food Strategy community engagement discussions. PHS, on behalf of the IFSST, will be submitting a request for this funding through the 2015 capital budget process.

Staffing: The IFSST membership includes:

- PHS: 3 representatives, which includes a staff project lead and PHS management support (nutritional value of food, food safety)

- Community Services: 2 representatives (access to food, Neighbourhood Strategy)
- Public Works: 1 representative (community gardens, food waste)
- Planning and Economic Development: 2 representatives (policies to allow urban agriculture, zoning for farmers' markets, local food map and directory, incentives for healthy food in corner stores)

Legal: Not Applicable

HISTORICAL BACKGROUND (Chronology of events)

Council has received several funding requests for “stand-alone or one-off” food programs and actions that may not be sustainable or supported by evidence based best practices. In addition, these funding requests are not always coordinated, aligned and integrated within existing City strategies and community initiatives, which impacts available City resources (monetary and human). A greater understanding was needed regarding how the City addresses food actions and how to prioritize resources directed toward these food actions in a coordinated manner.

On August 13, 2012, the General Issues Committee passed the following motion: That this matter be referred to Public Health Services for a report back on how a Food Strategy could be developed in consultation with the following departments: Community Services, Public Works, and Planning and Economic Development. In February 2013, an Information Report to the Board of Health outlined that a coordinated food strategy should address and prioritize responses to food insecurity in the short-term, while simultaneously building in long-term actions to ensure a sustainable food system for all in the community.

In August, 2013, the City's Senior Management Team (SMT) approved the Food Strategy Interdepartmental Steering Team's Terms of Reference (see Appendix B). The Food Strategy Interdepartmental Steering Team consists of representatives from PHS, Community and Emergency Services, Public Works, and Planning and Economic Development.

From August, 2013 to June, 2014, the IFSST has:

- Reviewed food strategies from other jurisdictions, including national and international models.
- Developed a comprehensive and integrated food strategy framework, based on best practices (see Appendix C).
- Completed an internal departmental environmental scan to review and analyse what actions the City currently undertakes related to food, and how funds are currently being spent on food related actions and initiatives.

- Consulted and met with relevant stakeholders, including Corporate food related committees.

POLICY IMPLICATIONS AND LEGISLATED REQUIREMENTS

Not Applicable

RELEVANT CONSULTATION

The City's SMT has reviewed and support the recommendations outlined in this report.

The Community Food Security Stakeholders Committee have worked diligently on developing and incorporating community feedback into the *Food for All Hamilton, A Food Charter for Hamilton* since 2011, and are in full support of Board of Health endorsement of the Food Charter. To date, 26 organizations and 110 individuals have signed on as supporters of the Food Charter.

The Agriculture and Rural Affairs Advisory Committee has been informed of the Food Charter and provided feedback that has been incorporated; however, this advisory committee has not endorsed the Food Charter because they do not support the "just" principle regarding a living wage. Concern was expressed that farmers would not be able to afford to pay their farm workers a living wage and still be profitable.

PHS staff met with the Emergency Food Strategic Planning Committee, and the majority of the individual agencies from this Committee have signed on as supporters of the Food Charter. The Committee, as a whole, has not formally endorsed the Food Charter; one member felt that the Charter was outside of the scope of their organization's mandate.

The Food and Shelter Advisory Committee has formally signed on as a supporter of the Food Charter.

Paul Johnson, Director Neighbourhood and Community Initiatives, Community and Emergency Services department has been consulted regarding the community engagement process and his recommendations have formed the basis for what we intend to present and gather input on from various community stakeholders.

ANALYSIS AND RATIONAL FOR RECOMMENDATION

(Include Performance Measurement/Benchmarking Data if applicable)

Analysis of Current Food Actions and Funding by the City of Hamilton

Best practices show that a food strategy needs to be integrated and comprehensive by including actions related to food production, processing and distribution, buying and selling, consumption and food waste. The municipality has a role in leading and supporting all of these components.

The IFSST completed an internal departmental scan to determine where funds are currently spent (see Appendix D). The following discusses the themes found from the environmental scan.

Food Actions by City of Hamilton Departments

Although the City has actions related to all of the components of a comprehensive food strategy (production, process and distribution, etc.), many of these actions tend to be individual stand-alone initiatives, rather than coordinated, aligned, and integrated. Coordination and linkages between City departments and between strategic actions are starting, but not always in a formalized way. Integration of Hamilton's Food Strategy into the City's next Strategic Priorities would strengthen and build upon this coordination and align food related actions so that they are delivered in a more cost-effective and responsible manner.

City Funds Allocated to Food Actions

Annually, the City allocates approximately \$1.6 million toward food related actions. In addition, approximately 8 FTEs of City staff is allocated toward food related actions. Based on a review of best practices and the results of the environmental scan, some of the City's resources are spent on actions that are not effective, sustainable, or truly address the root cause of food insecurity (hunger due to lack of income). For example, approximately \$500,000 of City funds is given toward food banks, yet food banks only supply recipients with the equivalent of three days of food per month.

In addition, the City has a finite amount of funding that would not cover the cost of the potential food actions required to address all the needs in the City. For example, currently 90 elementary schools within Hamilton do not have a student nutrition program to provide healthy breakfast or snacks. For the City to cover the costs for these schools, it would result in \$2.7 million annual funding. Clearly, we need to shift what we are currently doing. Status quo is not working, as well as it could be – there is definite room for improvement.

Actions to Move Forward

To fully address all of the food issues facing our community, the City needs to implement the following three actions to move forward:

- 1) The City of Hamilton should ensure that food related actions are coordinated and integrated into a food systems framework

A food systems framework provides an effective evidence-based structure to guide municipal food policies and programs, across the spectrum from farm to table to compost and back again. A food systems framework will provide the guidelines/criteria to:

- Shift City food resources and actions away from individual stand-alone initiatives to a coordinated evidence based food strategy.
- Ensure City strategies align and support each other rather than work in silos.
- Position us amongst municipal leaders who consider food as integral to building a prosperous and resilient city.
- Increase the effectiveness of how resources (monetary and human) are utilized because it considers all the individual and institutional actions that impact Hamilton's health, environment, and economy.

Other international and Canadian municipal food strategies are implementing more innovative actions at the individual, community and institutional levels. Our financial and staff resources need to shift toward innovative actions that foster capacity building, develop skills and resilience, use individual and community assets, and leverage City dollars to keep economic benefits within the City.

- 2) The City of Hamilton should shift how it funds food-related actions away from stand-alone charity programs and services toward policies and initiatives that help build capacity and resilience. For example, food centres provide access to healthy food in a dignified and respectful manner, offer food skills programs to develop healthy eating behaviours through hands-on gardening and cooking, and opportunities to reduce social isolation by increasing social connections. This recommendation to move toward capacity building initiatives is in agreement with the strategic directions outlined in the “*No One Goes Hungry*” report commissioned by the Emergency Food Strategic Planning Committee.

Endorsement in principle of the proposed vision, principles and goals will help set the direction of where existing municipal funding should be spent over the next 10 years in a more sustainable and cost effective approach based on best practices and alignment with other City actions. For example, addressing the food insecurity issue for single Ontario Works clients and expanding student nutrition programs could alone cost over 11 million dollars annually. This is in addition to all of the other food needs facing our community.

Vision

A City with a sustainable food system where all people at all times have economic and physical access to enough safe, nutritious food to meet their dietary needs and food preferences.

Principles – Healthy, Sustainable, and Just

- A Healthy food system enables the overall health and well-being of all Hamiltonians
- A Sustainable food system preserves and protects rural and urban agriculture
- A Just food system ensures all residents can access healthy food, and supports a living wage

Food Strategy Goals aligned with the Food System Framework

The IFSST has drafted goals that align and address all of the food system components (food production, processing and distribution, buying and selling, consumption, and food waste). These evidence based goals will ensure that Hamilton has the infrastructure required to support our farming industry, improve access to healthy food, improve food skills and employability, and reduce food waste in landfills (see Appendix E).

Food Charter

Given the *Food for All, A Food Charter for Hamilton* developed by the Community Food Security Stakeholder Committee has provided the basis for the vision of the Food Strategy, it should also be endorsed. The Food Charter has been vetted through City departments, the Agriculture and Rural Affairs Advisory Committee, and the Food and Shelter Committee for comments and fine-tuning, which have been incorporated into the final version.

- 3) The City of Hamilton should work with the community and other stakeholders

Community Engagement: Setting Community Objectives & Actions

Community engagement will lead to a comprehensive made-in-Hamilton food strategy based on the endorsement in principle of the proposed vision, principles and goals. It is important to engage the community and other stakeholders for several reasons:

- As the Food Strategy is meant to address the food-related issues of our community, we need to ensure that our actions fit with what Hamiltonians need, and builds on their assets.
- The City of Hamilton has limited resources and is unlikely to be able to contribute additional resources in the near future. Existing resources need to be prioritized. Determining priorities for funding requires community input and support.
- The food-related needs of our community far outweigh the resources the City of Hamilton can realistically provide. The City of Hamilton alone cannot address the food-related needs of Hamiltonians. Other stakeholders need to be involved in this process so that we can align our resources and actions together to more efficiently and effectively address these needs.

The main purpose for community engagement is to consult stakeholders for feedback and validation of the proposed vision, principles, goals, and to reaffirm the vision and principles in the Food Charter. Input will be sought from a broad range of individuals and organizations on how to prioritize existing resources given the City's immediate needs and capacity and to prioritize actions over the long-term should current resources change.

Once the proposed vision, principles and goals are reaffirmed by stakeholders, objectives and actions will be developed. The actions will be based on:

- The best available evidence, given that other cities' food strategies are forging new ground and working to transform existing social, political and economic structures that have been in place for many years. We need to be open-minded to be courageous and innovative.
- The Hamilton context, including our assets, needs and capacity will be an essential consideration of whether actions are feasible and realistic.
- Consideration will be given to a strong alignment with the City's Strategic Plan and other City strategies (e.g. housing, transit, Vision 2050).

The proposed actions will be prioritized based on available resources, importance and time (short, mid and long-term). Clear parameters will be outlined to stakeholders – what is within the realm of municipal jurisdiction and what community partners, businesses and citizens can do.

Food Strategy Advisory Committee

Currently, there are several City committees that impact how Hamilton allocates resources toward food actions and initiatives. Three separate advisory committees with food related mandates currently report to Council:

- The Community Food Security Stakeholder Committee reports to the Board of Health,
- The Food and Shelter Advisory Committee reports to Community and Emergency Services, and
- The Agriculture and Rural Affairs Advisory Committee reports to Planning and Economic Development.

The Food Strategy will benefit from an advisory committee with representation from all of the stakeholders within the food system sitting at the same table to oversee the community process to finalize the objectives, actions, timelines and responsibility. In addition, indicators to monitor and evaluate the Food Strategy will need to be developed and stakeholder commitment is critical to ensure evaluation occurs.

ALTERNATIVES FOR CONSIDERATION

(Include Financial, Staffing, Legal and Policy Implications and Pros and Cons for each alternative)

Option 1: Not support a coordinated and comprehensive food strategy that is based on a food systems framework. This option would result in actions at the individual, community, and institutional levels that are not sustainable, effective, or the best use of limited City resources.

Financial: The specific impact is unknown. However, an increased financial impact is anticipated due to decisions for funding food actions that are not coordinated. This will result in inefficient use of resources by supporting projects that are not financially sustainable and increase the risk of resource duplication. In addition, the negative health consequences on the community's most vulnerable would have increased financial costs, as outlined in the report. Following this approach would not be consistent with the City's strategic vision and goals, or the values of excellence, accountability, and cost-consciousness.

Staffing: Anticipate increased staffing requirements due to possible duplication of resources and increased staffing to plan, implement and evaluate uncoordinated food actions. Details unknown at this time; however, impacts would be similar to the financial impacts noted above. In addition, the negative consequences on the community's health may lead to increased staffing related to other community supports for those with poor health.

Legal: No legal implications

Policy: The specific policy implications are unknown; however, requests from community stakeholders regarding food actions may require the review of existing policies, or the creation of new policies.

Option 2: Not support community engagement (i.e. Stage Two of the Food Strategy Planning process). This option would result in a food strategy that restricts community stakeholders' input and support, which impacts the effectiveness of the Food Strategy.

Financial: No immediate financial implications; however, continued funding of food actions without ensuring community stakeholders' support may lead to less efficient use of resources and is not consistent with the City's values of accountability, excellence or cost-consciousness.

Staffing: Staffing may not be allocated to food actions that are supported by best practice evidence and community need. In addition, not engaging the community will limit the opportunity to engage valuable community stakeholders to contribute their assets and resources to a collaborative food strategy.

Legal: No legal implications

Policy Implications: No policy implications

ALIGNMENT TO THE 2012 – 2015 STRATEGIC PLAN

Strategic Priority #1

A Prosperous & Healthy Community

WE enhance our image, economy and well-being by demonstrating that Hamilton is a great place to live, work, play and learn.

Strategic Objective

- 1.1 Continue to grow the non-residential tax base.
- 1.2 Continue to prioritize capital infrastructure projects to support managed growth and optimize community benefit.
- 1.5 Support the development and implementation of neighbourhood and City wide strategies that will improve the health and well-being of residents.
- 1.6 Enhance Overall Sustainability (financial, economic, social and environmental).

Strategic Priority #2

Valued & Sustainable Services

WE deliver high quality services that meet citizen needs and expectations, in a cost effective and responsible manner.

Strategic Objective

- 2.2 Improve the City's approach to engaging and informing citizens and stakeholders.

Strategic Priority #3

Leadership & Governance

WE work together to ensure we are a government that is respectful towards each other and that the community has confidence and trust in.

Strategic Objective

- 3.1 Engage in a range of inter-governmental relations (IGR) work that will advance partnerships and projects that benefit the City of Hamilton.

APPENDICES AND SCHEDULES ATTACHED

Appendix A to Report BOH13001(a) – Food for All – A Food Charter for Hamilton

Appendix B to Report BOH13001(a) – Food Strategy Inter-departmental Steering Team – Terms of Reference

Appendix C to Report BOH13001(a) – Food Systems Framework

Appendix D to Report BOH13001(a) – Environmental Scan of Food Actions by City of Hamilton Departments – December 2013, updated July 2014

Appendix E to Report BOH13001(a) – Proposed Food Strategy Goals