

ACCESS TO LOCAL FOOD

According to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), “The way we design and build our communities can affect our physical and mental health. Healthy community design integrates evidence-based health strategies into community planning, transportation, and land-use decisions.”¹ One element of healthy community design is providing access to healthy food.

Until recently, access to food was not considered a part of local planning and zoning. Recently, the health and planning fields have been working together to demonstrate the importance of access to local foods and the impacts it has on community health. Lake Oswego is fortunate to have access to locally grown produce, fish, meat, and dairy products. During public workshops on the Comprehensive Plan update, the community expressed an interest in maintaining and improving access to local food as well as providing education to the community about the benefits of local food.



Clackamas County

The Clackamas Agricultural Investment Plan (June 2012) is a comprehensive strategy to increase local food production, processing, distribution and consumption in Clackamas County and the region. The plan recommends substituting local food for imported food as a primary economic strategy. Research indicates that the county currently has productive farmland capacity to meet future demand for most regional fruits and vegetables. Under Oregon’s statewide planning program, cities are not expected to plan and zone land for agricultural uses. However, Lake Oswego can take advantage of its proximity to local farms, including its own Luscher Farm.

According to the 2025 Parks Plan, “food production has re-emerged in the urban landscape in the form of community gardens that have popped up in vacant lots, parks, and even rooftops. These gardens, along with farmer’s markets, community-supported agriculture, food co-ops, and seed-savers groups are part of a larger movement to localize food production—an alternative to the global corporate model of our food industry. The local food system connects consumers with growers, supports small farmers, preserves agricultural heritage, and ensures the availability of nutritious organic food.”

1 <http://www.cdc.gov/healthyplaces>

The City currently has one community garden at Luscher Farm, which has over 180 garden plots. Many schools, garden clubs, local merchants, nurseries, civic groups and individuals help make the garden a community gathering place and great source of pride.

Community Supported Agriculture (CSA)

Community Supported Agriculture (CSA) consists of a network of individuals who have pledged to support one or more local farms, with growers and consumers sharing the risks and benefits of food production. Members or “share-holders” of a CSA farm pledge to cover the anticipated costs of the farm operation and farmer’s salary, and in return receive a weekly box of produce through the growing season. Luscher Farm currently hosts one CSA farm.

Lake Oswego Farmers’ Market

The Lake Oswego Farmers’ Market takes place on Saturdays from mid-May through mid-October on the east end of town at Millennium Park. Vendors include farms from the Metro area as well as a few other vendors selling crafts, furniture, food items, etc. The market is part of Lake Oswego’s culture and has proved to be a place to connect with friends and neighbors.

Farm Stands

Farm stands are businesses that sell produce and seasonal items such as flowers, and trees and wreaths during the holidays, typically from an unenclosed space. Farm stands often sell local food but may sell other produce as well, and they may or may not be owned and operated by a local farmer. Farm stands have been an important part of the social life of the Lake Oswego residents. Farm stands may be smaller than farmers’ markets but they can also be more intensive than a farmers’ market if they are a daily use of the site. Potential land use considerations include traffic, parking and aesthetics. In summary, farm stands can contribute to making local food available, and should be addressed in the City’s land use codes.

Local Education Opportunities

The City manages a demonstration garden at Luscher Farm. The garden features a variety of organic food growing demonstrations, from year-round gardening to urban composting techniques. The garden is a teaching tool for the public to learn about organic gardening techniques and serves as a hands-on classroom during workshops. The goal is to educate urban gardeners about the ease and abundance of organic gardening and supply them with the resources needed to put organic techniques into practice. The farm is open daily to the public from dawn until dusk.

Goals And Policies

Goal

Provide the opportunity for residents to access a variety of local food options.

Adopted March 18, 2014

Policies

1. Allow farmers' markets, farm/produce stands* and community gardens where they are compatible with the surrounding uses.
2. Preserve agricultural land as designated in the Luscher Farm Master Plan.
3. Allow gardens as an accessory use in all residential zones where residents may grow and raise their own food.

Recommended Action Measures

- A. Review and update the Community Development Code to remove regulatory barriers to providing local food options within Employment Centers, Town Centers, and Neighborhood Villages.
- B. Review and update the Community Development Code to provide standards for the raising of fowl.
- C. Maintain access to Community Supported Agriculture.

NATURAL HAZARDS*

Background

There are three major drainage basins within the City's Urban Service Boundary: Oswego Lake, the Tualatin River, and the Willamette River. The City has many steep wooded hillsides and streams that drain into these basins. The 2010 City of Lake Oswego Natural Hazards Mitigation Plan (NHMP) identifies six major hazards that potentially affect the City: floods, landslides, severe storms (wind and winter), wildfires, earthquakes, and volcanoes. The 1994 Comprehensive Plan only addressed three: floods, earthquakes, and landslides. The risks associated with natural hazards increase as more lands affected by natural resources are developed. The inevitability of hazard events creates a need to develop strategies, coordinate resources, and increase public awareness to reduce risk and prevent loss of property and life. For example, preserving natural areas along river and stream banks allows those areas to act as flood storage areas, and preserving and managing woodlands on steep slopes may reduce the likelihood of landslides and/or wildfires.



Since the 1994 Comprehensive Plan Update, the City has experienced a number of events related to hazards, including the following: