

Appendix A

Ontario Food Security Strategy Consultation

Wednesday, May 17th, 2017

Theme 1: Empowered communities with custom-made solutions.

Food insecurity rates have risen in Peterborough to the highest among Ontario health units. This community has committed to food programs and activities for over 25 years to support people but it is still not enough. Although programs can impact food literacy, healthy eating and social inclusion, they are not able to effectively address income which is the root cause of poverty.

1. a. What is working in Peterborough to impact food security?

- Many supportive individuals in community developing, volunteering and helping to address food insecurity and poverty.
- One Roof Community Centre (community food programs-free meals)
- Social Networks

b. What makes it challenging to impact food security in Peterborough and County/First Nations?

- Unemployment/precarious contract work
- Aging population/student population
- Local food programs/markets not accessible to everyone
- No support for food sovereignty
- No support for First Nation treaty rights – hunting/fishing/wild rice harvesting
- Little support for sustainable food production and sale
- Lack of integration between organizations dealing with food insecurity so people know and can have one-stop shopping (what's available from all organizations)
- Need updated information and coordination between programs

c. What more do we need to do?

- address low income/low wages/minimum wages, etc. to ensure liveable wages are paid
- rethink food system (i.e. expensive grocery stores vs. local food production)
- more research on the costs of food insecurity in Peterborough

d. What can municipal, provincial and federal government do to support empowered communities?

- A universal program is not the solution. Every community has diverse and unique need and resources → attend to community based needs
- Policies about getting food to people (e.g. chicken by-law)

- Policies that generally improve the quality of life (access to education, employment, health care, housing) that give households options and choices
- **Livable wages → minimum wages and social assistance needs to increase**
- **Greater supports for family caregivers → of both children and older persons**
- **Secure housing for everyone**

Theme 2: Integrated food initiatives that use knowledge to drive collective impact.

The Peterborough Food Action Network (PFAN) is one example of a group where people work together to build community food security. PFAN frames its work according to the food security continuum and uses specific targets to drive collective impact. The food security continuum makes it clear that focusing our resources and attention on emergency needs, a dominant strategy for the past 30 years, is not the answer. Meaningful and sustainable change requires collective action and a strong commitment to addressing the root causes of food insecurity (i.e. income)

2. a. What food partnerships are you aware of or involved in within Peterborough (County/City/First Nation)?

- Peterborough Food Action Network
- Food for Kids (Peterborough & County universal Student Nutrition Programs)
- Community gardens
- Food literacy programs for priority populations (i.e. Come Cook With Us, Collective Kitchens)
- Nourish
- Storing food, cooking programs, collective kitchens – Public Health
- Curve Lake – Black Duck Wild Rice → By The Bushel (supplies wild rice (traditional foods) to residents)
- Programs that increase access to locally grown food (i.e. Peterborough Gleans that links local farmers and people living in lower-income neighbourhoods)
- JustFood Box program that increases access to vegetables and fruit and includes a subsidy to increase access

b. What is the nature of the partnership? Does it address system change? If so, how? Does it focus on the root causes of poverty/food insecurity? If so, how?

- Focus on food access – healthy food, growing food, cooking
- Some system change – policy change is more challenging to rally around the Food Charter

- The education addresses system change. Some of the programs have helped to increase our knowledge of healthy foods and how to cook it and preserve it. Advocating necessary to create permanent change.

c. What have you learned about working together?

- The programs build inclusion
- Improving data
- United resources are used effectively
- What is healthy
- What can you grow
- Asset of Peterborough is working together
- Collaboration critical
- Action together can happen but need trust, time, resources (people), funding, shared vision
- Important to know our neighbours to build community – to understand
- Rural areas have unique challenge – more spread out and harder to see/help

d. What more do we need to do?

- **How much of this issue can be improved by either education or money**
 - Focus on local food programs – with funding to make possible and sustainable
 - Changing our focus from food industry/grocery store
 - Staff funding/donations
 - Resources
 - Government support
 - Address poverty with real action to improve incomes and access to healthy food
 - Educate people about how prevalent food insecurity is, especially since it's not visible (hidden)
 - Update our hub diagrams
 - Visibility
 - Maybe more education on food in the schools
 - Volunteer work → translate into paid work
- **Policy on backyard chickens allowing people to raise their own chickens and have food available**
 - **We are helping to solve some of the problems**
 - **Not really sustainable**
 - **Promote basic income as a viable response to food security/poverty**

Theme 3: Food Security is about more than food.

We know that food insecurity is caused by inadequate income. For the past 30 years, there has been a belief that food banks have been one key answer to food insecurity. However, as the PROOF graph showed, food banks are unable to address food security or even food insecurity because of limited supply and too much demand.

3. a. What should food security work focus on?

- **We should have enough for everyone! Basic Income – Minimum Wage:**
 1. Housing affordability and supply
 2. Utilities
 3. Health support
 4. Education
- Focus on social determinants of health (i.e. 1, 2, 3, 4) with a focus on “at risk” groups
- Community development and more emphasis of direct democracy/supporting – inclusion
- Job creation
- No “one size fits all” approach
- Local solutions to complex problems
- Empower communities – support members, build capacity
- Information and success sharing
- Empower people to take control of their food choices i.e. food box program
- Better collaboration between all levels of government
- Addressing poverty
- Educating affluent community members about food insecurity

b. What role must government (municipal, provincial, federal) play to eliminate food insecurity?

- Funding – long term
- Basic Income
- We have the people and creativity for programs but need funding!!!!
- When new projects look for funding in community, it impacts other fundraising goals/programs (i.e. United Way sees changes in their fundraising campaign by year. This impacts the ability to support programs/projects with necessary funding.)
- Ensure adequate funding is available to do the work
- Federal and Provincial governments are responsible for income/wealth redistribution as inequality continues to grow
- Income/housing/utilities – Provincial
- Infrastructure, functional support/emergency funding of programs delivered by community group – Municipal

c. Who else needs to play a role or be involved?

- Citizen engagement at all levels; citizens – small business – large corporations
- Citizens volunteering
- Civil society – citizen engagement
- All community members – broader community
- Government
- Rural voices, First Nations – a provincial strategy needs to address all populations/groups/citizens
- Can't have "one size fits all" approach

Theme 4: Driving Innovation.

Peterborough has been innovative for over 25 years in developing partnerships and programs to support people around food in our community. Yet household food insecurity rates in Peterborough are among the highest in Ontario. It is critical that people's well-being comes first and that the economy focusses on well-being at the household level. As Valerie Tarasuk's healthcare cost research has shown, poverty is expensive and costs our community dearly.

4 a. What innovative programs have you been involved with?

- Gleaning (something unusual that Peterborough does)
- One Roof Community Centre (municipal financial support)
- Seasoned Spoon (has capacity building component)
- Nourish (immediate needs capacity building and systems change)
- PFAN (place where people can come together from different organizations)
- YWCA JustFood Boxes

b. What role must government (municipal, provincial, federal) play to support innovation?

- **Municipal** → water for community gardens, provide more community garden space and resources (maybe at schools)
- Making it easier for producers to sell in the city
- Providing people with disabilities and on O.W. chances to train at food programs
- support cooking workshops
- mobile phone food program apps and making free (fresh) food opportunities known
- what are the costs of food insecurity at a Peterborough level?
- Support local producers to provide lower cost food; making rooftop gardens easier (allowing and subsidizing) (**Municipal, Provincial**)
- **Province** → breakfast programs
- Housing co-operative food programs
- Coupon program for vulnerable groups to purchase from farmers market

- Mobile markets – more broad opportunities to show the seriousness of food insecurity and promote discussion and learning about it
- Get different levels of government to work together and build on existing successful models
- **Federal** → policies that don't make it cheaper to import food (be more protectionist) arbitrated
- Revisit international trade agreements

c. How can more innovation address food insecurity (i.e. Basic Income Pilot, Bill 6, awards for food secure employers/workplaces, municipalities)?

- More affordable housing that is central to accessing food
 - Employment opportunities to increase income through models like O.W Culinary Program
 - Working together: affordable housing, employment, education, transportation and food prices
 - Educational programs to say where programs are and how they can participate and make it easier to participate
- **Municipal role in supporting community gardens, pop-up markets, etc. and providing the necessary resources for them**
 - **employment programs that provide skills (like O.W. Culinary Program model) that helps people in need**
 - **integrated thinking – food access/affordable living/employment/education/healthcare**
 - **cooperative – housing, cooking combined models**