
MEMORANDUM

Date: February 11, 2025
To: Planning Commission
From: Dana Bowers, Associate Planner



Addressing Food Insecurity and Access to Food

The City Council approved the developing a Food System Plan as part of the 2024 and the 2025 Long Range Planning Work Programs. Rebeca Potasnik was brought on as a consultant to assist with the development of the Plan. The intent of the Plan is to review the current food landscape in Tumwater and describe key challenges, developments, current collaborations, and opportunities.

Methodology

The City Council directed that the work on the Plan focus on the following priorities:

- Providing healthy food for all members of the community;
- Reducing food waste; and
- Supporting local food production and processing

The Plan also needs to follow guiding principles which align with the City of Tumwater Vision and Values, which include:

- **Equity.** A food system should support food security with an emphasis on those community members that experience the greatest inequities.
- **Sustainability.** A balance between environmental health, economic profitability, and social equity creates a resilient food system that meets current food needs without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs.
- **Stability.** All community members should have reliable access to sufficient, safe, appropriate, and nutritious food, even in the face of unexpected challenges.
- **Resiliency.** The food system should maintain its functionality and continue to provide food security and nutrition under various adverse conditions.

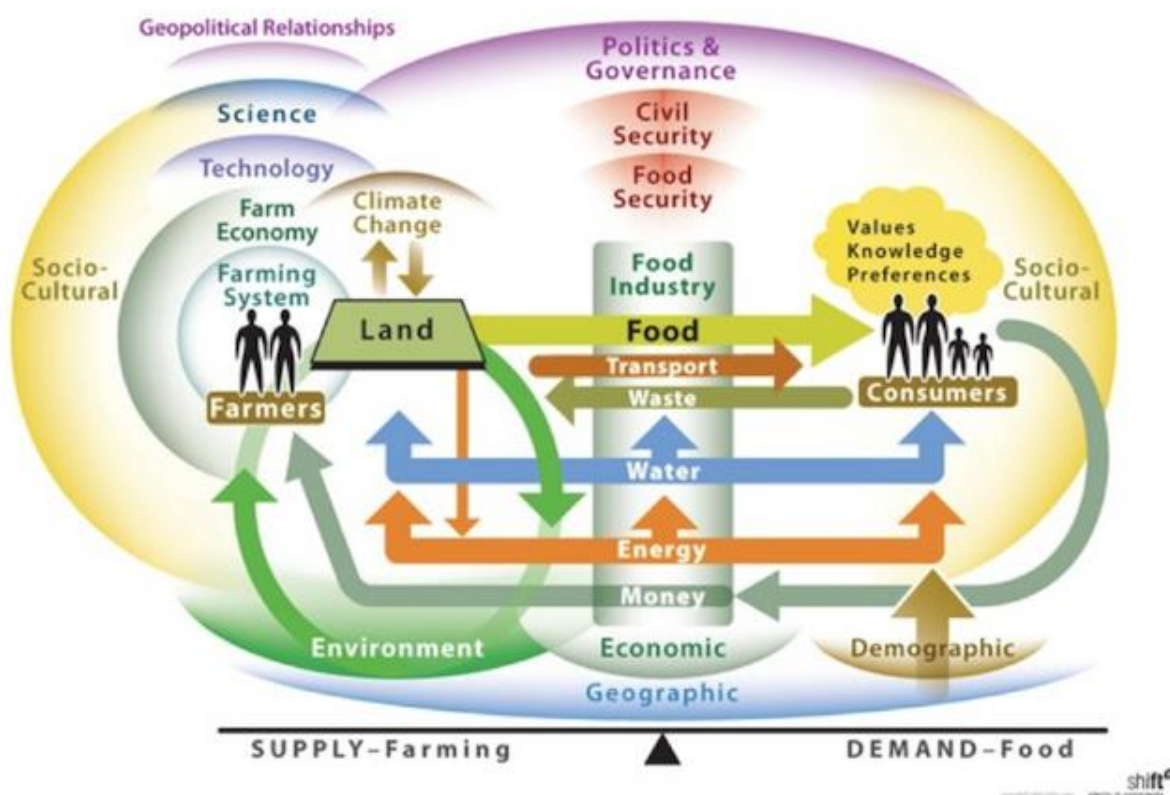
- **Efficacy.** The audience for the plan is the City of Tumwater, therefore, the objectives and actions in this plan will be the areas where this level of government can have the most impact.

Project Update

Since August 2024, the consultant has been crafting a key contributor list, balancing input between each of the sectors associated with the food system: food processing and production, hunger relief, nutrition, food waste reduction and rescue, policies, and regulations. The consultant also focused on local contacts while keeping in mind that the food system relies on regional partnerships as well.

The figure below illustrates the complex nature of food systems and how interconnected they can be. Many of the contacts in our local food system represent multiple parts of the system, acting as a producer, a transporter, and participant in governance.

Food System Map – Basic Elements



Any subject matter experts identified by the Planning Commission and City Council will be added to the key contributor list. The consultant also noted that broad public engagement is outside the scope of this project. A list of subject matter experts contacted and planned for contact is included in the consultant memorandum (Attachment B).

The consultant’s contract has been extended to December 2025 to address work needed to address subject matter experts providing new contacts which were added to the list. To keep a balance of subject matter experts the contractor made extensive matrices to track the connections between each part of the food system.

Work to review existing plans and literature is also underway. The recommendations and actions will be weighed against the project priorities and guiding principles for inclusion in the Food System Plan strategies. A list is provided in the consultant memorandum (Attachment B).

Timeline

The term of the project is until December 2025. Since the Comprehensive Plan periodic update is due in December, completing work on the Food Service Plan and incorporating its recommendations into the Comprehensive Plan before adoption would be ideal. The timeline below provides the project schedule, which will conclude work on the Plan by July 2025.

Deliverables	Expected Completion
Community Food Assessment	March – April 2025
Food System Plan’s Goals and Objectives	April – May 2025
Food System Plan Strategies	May – June 2025
Food System Plan Complete	June – July 2025