

Portland Food Council

Proposal Summary

February 22, 2016

Mission:

The Portland Food Council works to foster a healthy community by advancing the economic, environmental, and social sustainability of the food systems that support Portland, Maine.

Values:

- Justice and fairness
- Healthy communities.
- Vibrant and healthy farms, gardens, and fisheries.
- Economic, environmental, and social sustainability.
- Thriving economies.
- Open and transparent communication and collaboration.

Purpose:

1. To bring the public together to communicate about, and collaborate and coordinate on, issues affecting the food systems that support Portland.
2. To recommend or facilitate policies and projects that help achieve:
 - a. Socially just and environmentally and economically sustainable practices in all parts of the food systems that support Portland.
 - b. Healthy food access, including greater consumption of fruits and vegetables.
 - c. Thriving food economies, including sustainable food-sector jobs.
 - d. Sourcing of more Maine products in institutions and the private sector, and exporting of more Maine products.
 - e. Productive, sustainable, and resilient farms, gardens, and fisheries.

How it will work:

1. Brings together, engage, inform, and coordinate and collaborate with the Portland community, City government, and the food-business sector on issues affecting the food systems that support Portland.
2. Recommends to the City laws, policies, and practices to improve the economic, environmental, and social sustainability Portland's food system.
3. Identifies projects for organizations or businesses to undertake to improve the economic, environmental, and social sustainability of our food system, or, if feasible, initiates such programs or projects.
4. Through committees and working groups, identifies gaps and opportunities to improve the sustainability of food systems and achieve the goals of the Portland Food Council as determined in the strategic plan.
5. Plans its operations through a strategic plan that sets forth concrete goals and objectives with measurement and evaluation criteria to ensure accountability.

The primary work will happen through working groups and committees. The Portland Food Council (PFC) will craft a three-year strategic plan, at its first or first few meetings, that establishes measurement and evaluation criteria for achieving substantive work to improve our

food system. Based on goals created as part of the strategic plan, the PFC will form working groups that are the primary vehicles for achieving those goals. Standing committees, such as policy and community engagement, will facilitate the ongoing work of the PFC through researching, staying abreast of, and crafting policy and ensuring as broad and diverse a part of the community as possible participates in and informs the work of the PFC.

The PFC will have 15 voting members, a simple majority of whom are chosen by the PFC itself, and 7 of whom are appointed by the Mayor with help from the PFC. Key government officials will be ex officio (non-voting) members. Anyone who comes to a meeting can be an associate member. All members can vote on who becomes voting members at the Annual Meeting. The full PFC will meet 5 times per year. One of those meetings will be the Annual Meeting.

The full PFC serves primarily to keep government and other stakeholders and community members abreast of the work done by the working groups and committees, and to make decisions on work done by those working groups and committees. Decision-making is through a modified consensus process, except for voting on Council Members and officers, in which ALL members can participate and vote by simple majority.

The PFC will send reports and recommendations to City Council, the Mayor, and City departments. Under the Resolution, the City will commit at least one staff person to the PFC for admin and coordination assistance. Based on annual reports, the City will hopefully build in City budget funding for the work of the PFC.

The bylaws lay out clear communications policies and other important matters that would govern the PFC.

Please refer to the Resolution and Bylaws to learn more—and comment on them!