

Food security is defined as having reliable access to a sufficient quantity of affordable and nutritious food. Ensuring food security for the City of Ottawa and the region is not limited to point-of-sale; it also includes supporting production and the whole supply chain. Supporting the farm to table concept ties the urban and rural areas of Ottawa together.

Access to Food

The New Official Plan contains policies that support food security. The 15-Minute neighbourhood concept is a foundational building block that creates places that support healthy living. This includes access to local services such as grocery stores. While the New Official Plan cannot mandate types of retail businesses, policies such as those supporting intensification and higher densities are in places that help make the development of grocery stores more viable. Small scale food and grocery will also be encouraged in non-traditional industrial mixed areas to increase access to food where people work and support residents. For Skyscrapers, policies recognize food sales as an important service. Food trucks and other mobile amenities are also supported with policies allowing for parts of the street to be allocated to them at various times and locations.

Food is not limited to a grocery store or market. Food is a central element to gathering and community. The New Official Plan recognizes bars and restaurants as essential to the vibrancy of the city and supports them in areas like Mainstreets. For the Rideau Canal area, which is considered a Special District, policies support outdoor vending and food experiences.

Urban Food Production

New Official Plan policies support access to food by allowing rooftop gardens, community gardens, farmer markets, greenhouses and food produce production, processing and storage. Additionally, the High-Performance Development Standards that advance the use of innovative sustainable design practices in site planning and building design include outdoor amenities design features that can enable access to healthy food sources.

Rural Food Production and Distribution

The New Official Plan supports Ottawa's local agriculture sector in many ways, as the process of creating, supplying and receiving food is important. The New Official Plan contains policies that protect farmland, support diversification of farming operations to increase the local supply of goods, and encourages small-scale craft manufacturing of food, beverages and goods. Policies are also in place to facilitate farm vehicle movement through appropriate road and street design in certain contexts.

