

Vancouver Food Policy Council All Candidates' Questionnaire



The Vancouver Food Policy Council (VFPC) is an advisory group to Vancouver City Council, providing ideas and policy recommendations toward creating a thriving local food system. The primary goal of the VFPC is to examine how our local food system operates and provide ideas and policy recommendations to Vancouver City Council on how it can be improved. VFPC is comprised of passionate people from various sectors of the local food system. Members include farmers, food distributors, nutritionists, processors, waste managers, activists, and academics engaged in the food system. The VFPC functions as a bridge between citizens and civic officials, coming together to work on food policy initiatives that benefit all Vancouverites.

Candidate Name: Diana Day

Office Seeking: Vancouver School Board Trustee

Party Affiliation: Coalition of Progressive Electors (COPE)

Public Website: www.cope.bc.ca/diana follow me on Twitter @dianadaydream #Vote4DayVSB

Facebook: Diana Day for Vancouver School Board COPE Candidate

Please complete the questionnaire and send back to us at info@vancouverfoodpolicycouncil.ca. We'll post your responses on our blog, and on the wall at our All Candidates Forum Oct 15th.

General Questions:

1. Will you endorse the Vancouver Food Strategy and/or the Park Board Local Food Action Plan if you are elected?

I certainly endorse the VFS as I am passionate about supporting the goals of the strategy and believe that food is medicine and everyone ought to have affordable, access to foods and have an opportunity to participate in traditional food systems, gathering, procuring, gardening for all age groups. I believe that this VFS is the one way to create sustainable healthy vibrant local communities.

2. What actions in the VFS and/or LFAP would you focus on first? I agree with many actions in the VFS and would focus on

Goal 1: I support Food Friendly neighborhoods, especially for the most vulnerable community members, having access to healthy foods, having increased access for urban agriculture, supporting food storage in areas such as the DTES and creating healthy options for that are reasonably priced through healthy corner stores.

Goal 2: I am particularly interested in the community gardens engaging with neighbourhoods and local schools, by providing workshops and education programs. I am the **Chair at Vancouver Technical PAC** and support the Garden that we have there and also support the organic growers that sell food on a weekly basis, now at the Italian cultural centre. I think that a lot more schools and neighborhoods could become more actively involved in this movement especially in the co-operative housing in Vancouver and also the Native housing buildings that house many people, rooftop gardening may be an option for some organizations and such, empty lots that could be used to have garden plots.

Goal 3: Supporting VSB school programs to offer healthy food choices with organic choices for students, is something that I would also advocate for **as a School Board Trustee** – recently a petition was created by students at Strathcona Elementary School over the VSB lunch program being served and how they wanted to have more organic healthy lunches. I believe its not enough that we provide lunches for students but that these be affordable, healthy and may come from food that is grown locally or at the school itself. (I am told 2 teachers also signed the petition). I am currently the **Co-Chair of the District Parent Advisory Council** and would also encourage the DPAC to become involved with promoting better VSB programming for students and their families.

Goal 4: As VSB Trustee, I would advocate for an increase in the % of local and sustainable food purchased by the VSB and throughout the City. I would also advocate for the markets, gardens and urban farms to be able produce and/or purchase those needed and necessary foods.

3. What have you already done for food in your community? I work with a community investments program since 2006 and have supported programs with an Indigenous Food Security lense. I have been a big supporter of the Vancouver Native Health Society UBC Garden Program since 2006

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=8RSn9d9pMN8> – which is an excellent program that has been serving many community members, schools and groups in the lower mainland. Can be used as a cross cultural program as well as a food security awareness and cultural teachings. I support my the local Trout Lake Farmers Market as well as the one previously mentioned. I have organized capacity building training for the Aboriginal community through Fresh Choice Kitchen to have Indigenous people trained in Leading Aboriginal Community Kitchens, how to Facilitate Canning Workshops, Food Safe Training, and Knife Skills (learning how to debone meats and poultry) In addition to this training I have worked with several organizations to develop their food security projects that we invest in, and assist in finding other funders.

4. Given the many priorities of a municipal government, how do you feel food can contribute to our city?

As mentioned I believe that Food is Medicine and know that our city has many families who struggle with issues of poverty. I believe that we can support our residents and particularly children who are mainly victims of poverty by ensuring that the City and VSB has policies, programs in place that will help to alleviate the harmful effects of hunger in the schools, by ensuring that there is food available that is healthy and affordable. I also support the COPE Campaign Mayoral Candidate Meena Wong for her pledge to increase minimum wage to \$15.00 per hour for Vancouver, as we know that poverty is a disease that effects many vulnerable community members in Vancouver, especially.

Issues Based Questions:

5. Given the Greenest City Action Plan's goal "to ensure that the majority of residents live within a five-minute walk of a basket of fresh produce" and the Vancouver Food Strategy's goal to "improve access to healthy, affordable, culturally diverse food for all residents", what initiatives would you use to support these goals?

I would hope that the City would initiative some start up funding possibly through the neighborhood grants program or another source to ensure that markets/gardens are scattered throughout the City, in all areas, North, South, East and West as there are many diverse community members in each area and their needs may be unique to their cultural group. Establishing community grassroots leaders in each neighborhood is also a necessity to help target and motivate people. Partnering with established Schools, Neighborhood House, Community Organization, and Centres would also be an avenue to do some workshops training and education. I think it is also important to have a media campaign as well.

6. Given Metro Vancouver's upcoming 2015 organics ban, what initiatives would you support to get us to zero food waste? I haven't given this issue much thought, to be honest. I would like to ask community input and advice from others who have more of an awareness, on this important issue. I think maybe one obvious might be portions

7. Given that Vancouver has a rich urban agriculture community (e.g. community gardens, urban farming, beekeeping, backyard chickens) what is our biggest missed opportunity to this point?

I would say, Rooftop Gardening for some of the social housing and also the cooperative housing complexes. Maybe encouraging community organizations with green space or outdoor Vertical gardening spaces to welcome community to partner with them to offer more food to be grown. I see many homeowners growing beautiful flower gardens, and maybe we ought to shift some minds to planting edible trees, and bushes. I think that any new plants the City of Vancouver purchases for the parks and community spaces ought to plant edible bushes and fruit bearing trees for all people to enjoy – especially those vulnerable people struggling with poverty. I would also encourage all schools to purchase Apple Trees and plant berry bushes as our community needs to have easy access to food.

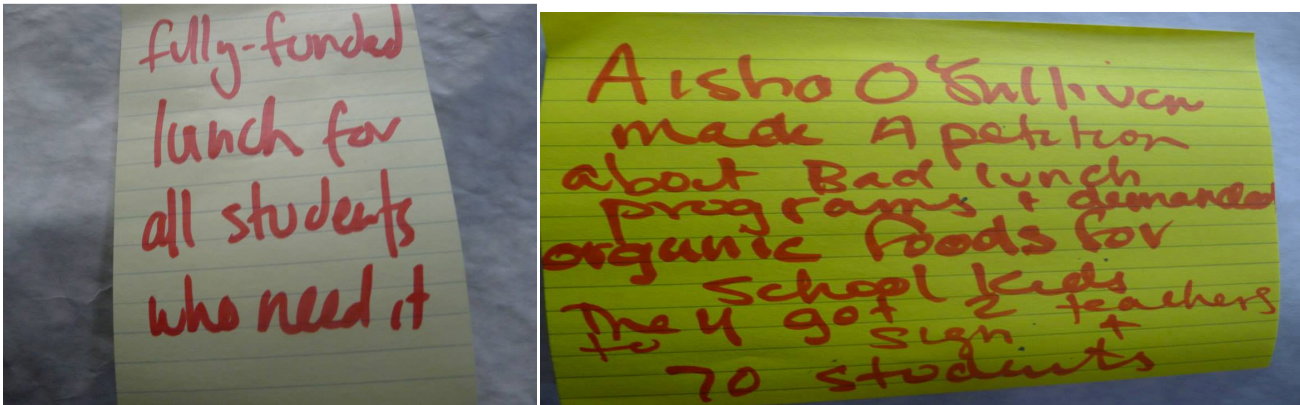
8. How would you as a municipal politician work with other levels of government on issues that may be considered outside of Vancouver's jurisdiction e.g. ALR, raising welfare rates, GMOs, migrant farm labour, others?

I would attend meeting, learn about the issues and support individuals who are working for change, that's how I became involved in this campaign by attending an information session on migrant farm labour and learning

about the issues they face, which is extremely unfair working conditions. I also am aware of raising the welfare rates and have spoke alongside Dr. Gary Bloch when he was talking about Poverty as a Disease and what things he is doing as a physician to ensure people are accessing money that they are entitled too. Raising Welfare rates have always been a concern of mine as well as supporting a Living Wage – which in Vancouver is now \$20.10 per hour. I think that supporting the Vancouver Needs a Raise Campaign of COPE Mayoral Candidate Meena Wong is a good step as well.

9. What role do you think local governments play in supporting healthy and sustainable food in schools?

I think that local governments could play a greater role in supporting healthy and sustainable food in schools.



These are just two engagement comments regarding food security in schools that we received at our Meet the Indigenous COPE Candidates meeting on October 11, 2014

10. The Vancouver Food Strategy and Talk Food To Us program engaged thousands of residents in the development of the strategy. What kind of engagement process would you utilize in food policy work?

I am the Leader of Aboriginal Community Engagement/Development in my workplace. I would love to host an Open Space Forum to inform the food policy work that lies ahead to have real community involvement and engagement from all cultural groups in many languages in one room. I think this would be informative and very educational to learn from one another's rich cultural heritage. I also believe strongly in building capacity and creating leaders in each area and cultural groups is important and to include all age groups in the engagement process –from beginning to end.

Nia:Wen

Diana Day,

VSB Trustee Candidate