

# Durham Food Policy Council

## TERMS OF REFERENCE

Current version approved by Durham Food Policy Council on September 7, 2010.  
Next revision date: April 2011.

### BACKGROUND

The Durham Food Policy Council (DFPC) was established as a community-based group on March 23, 2010. This group was formed out of the core membership of the former Durham Food Charter Working Group of the Durham Lives! Coalition and informed by community consultation conducted by this group.<sup>1</sup>

The Durham Region Food Charter (DRFC) was developed by the Durham Lives! Durham Food Charter Working Group and released on May 28, 2009. The DRFC was endorsed by the Region of Durham as a community document on November 25, 2009.

### VISION

To promote a “food secure Durham Region [that] is financially sound, environmentally responsible and socially just, contributing to the future and well being of our region and residents.”<sup>2</sup>

### VALUES

The work of the DFPC is directed by the Durham Region Food Charter. The Durham Region Food Charter is a community-based document that reflects the communities’ shared values and principles about community food security upon which food-related policies and actions can be based.

The Durham Region Food Charter contains four major pillars in working towards a just and sustainable food system in Durham Region:

- *Essential Foundations to Build Upon:* A just and sustainable local food system will be resilient when supported by comprehensive and integrated mechanisms. These will incorporate physical elements with sound economic, environmental, social and political policies to ensure a secure food supply.
- *Sustaining Local Agriculture:* Cultivation of a sustainable local agriculture will enhance Durham Region’s urban and rural economic development, create employment, secure a regional food supply, encourage a culture of environmental stewardship and conserve resources.

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<sup>1</sup> Durham Lives Food Charter Working Group Report, May 14, 2009

<sup>2</sup> The Durham Region Food Charter, May 28, 2009

- *Community Partnership:* A just and sustainable food system will be supported by a regional community where residents are connected participants working in partnership with each other and with all levels of government. It acknowledges the importance of its interconnection with other food systems.
- *Health and Well Being:* A just and sustainable food system will be equitable and respect human dignity. It is a system in which all residents will have access to safe, nutritious, affordable, culturally appropriate food.

## GOALS AND OBJECTIVES

- 1) To **foster dialogue and partnership development** between community groups, social and health agencies, agriculture, businesses, and municipal departments/government in the research, design, promotion, implementation, and evaluation of innovative ideas in promoting community food security in Durham Region.
- 2) To **link with other food system initiatives** in the Greater Toronto Area, Ontario, Canada and internationally to create allies, synergies and support.
- 3) To **offer advice and support** to the community and municipal / regional / provincial / federal governments in the development of innovative, inclusive and comprehensive food security policies and programs that are consistent with the principles of the Durham Region Food Charter.
- 4) To **advocate for policies and programs** that are innovative, inclusive and comprehensive food security and address Municipal-wide commitments to food security, such as the Growing Durham Regional Official Plan (2009).

## MEMBERSHIP

The DFPC membership consists of three groups:

- Core Members
- Consultants
- Community Members

### *Core Members*

Core members are individuals who are active members of the DFPC. The DFPC core membership may have up to 20 members. Core members may, but are not expected to, formally represent or speak for their organization. However, members are selected on their ability to speak to the issues, not necessarily for the organization they represent.

The DFPC will seek a core membership that is representative of the diverse key interests and sectors in the Durham Region food system. These key sectors may include (but not limited to):

### Food Production

- Farmers
- Urban growers / community gardens

### Food Processing and Distribution

- Food packaging
- Retailers, Farmers Markets
- Chefs, Restaurants

### Food Accessibility and Justice

- Emergency food providers
- Public health / Community health
- Social service providers

### Waste-management

#### Consumers

- Youth
- Low-income consumers

#### System-wide

- Environmental / Food justice advocates
- Academics/researchers
- Educators/teachers
- Land use planners
- Government representatives  
(municipal/regional/provincial/federal)

Core members must endorse the Vision, Values, and Goals and Objectives of the DFPC and have skills or expertise in at least one area of the food system.

Core members are invited to participate for a term of three (3) years. Missing three (3) meetings a year without prior discussion with the staff coordinator will deem equivalent to a resignation. The DFPC will appoint new core members during the year as required.

#### *Consultants*

Consultants are individuals who are involved with the DFPC to advise and offer direction to the decisions and activities made by the DFPC, in cases where expertise is not represented on the core membership.

#### *Community Members*

Community members include all individuals living in Durham Region. Everyone has a stake in fostering a secure local food system. Community members will be encouraged to participate through ongoing dialogue and activities that contribute in the development of regional food system solutions.

### DECISION MAKING and QUORUM

Decisions affecting the direction of DFPC will be made by Core Members and made on the basis of majority of votes cast (one vote per Core Member).

- In order to make decisions quorum of the membership must be present. This is at least 50% of the Core Members.
- Motions may be put forward by Core Members and must be seconded by another Core Member.
- Discussion will follow the movement of a motion and all members present (including Core, Consulting, and Community) may participate in this process.
- A motion to amend or accept may pass on majority vote of the present Core

Members provided that quorum is reached.

- Core members must be present at the relevant meeting in order to cast a vote.
- Members who cannot attend a meeting may contribute to discussion on any motion or topic in advance of meetings in writing to the Chair.
- The Chair is an active member of the committee; therefore can move motions.  
The Chair will only vote in cases requiring a tie-breaking vote.

The Durham Region Food Charter is a community document designed to reflect the current values and vision for a safe and secure food system in Durham Region. A decision making pathway will be used to make changes to the Durham Region Food Charter.<sup>3</sup>

## ACTIVITIES

The DFPC will develop a detailed work plan to include short-term (1 year) and long-term goals (5 year) and activities. DFPC's work plan will be updated on a yearly basis.

Activities of focus may include:

*networking/education*: building new partnerships and enhancing networking between existing food system stakeholders

*coordinate/analyze*: identifying and prioritizing food system needs and support creation and implementation of initiatives

*policy and programs*: identifying policy and program changes which support the goals and principles of the Durham Region Food Charter and advocate for their implementation

*evaluation*: establishing benchmarks and targets for achievement of mission/goals/identified activities

*funding*: utilizing community resources to support mission/goals/identified activities

The DFPC may form working groups or ad hoc committees to undertake specific tasks that require in-depth work on behalf of the Council. At least one core member must participate on a working group or an ad hoc committee. If appropriate, non-voting members of the DFPC (i.e. consultants and community members) may be encouraged to participate.

## CHAIR

The Community Development Council Durham (CDCD) will take on the initial role of chair. A co-chair will be elected by the group. Decisions regarding the role, term and election of co-chairs will be made by the core members within the first year.

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<sup>3</sup> Decision Making Pathway To Evaluation If Issue Raised Will Warrant A Change To the Durham Region Food Charter, Durham Lives! Food Charter Working Group, September 4, 2008

The duties of the Chair include:

- Proposing meeting agendas
- Inviting guests
- Chairing meetings and facilitate dialogue
- Act as a spokespeople as appropriate

### MEETING SCHEDULE and FREQUENCY

The DFPC shall meet a minimum of five times each year, at dates and locations agreed upon by the Core Membership.

All meetings and meeting minutes are open to the public.

### RESOURCES/STAFFING

The Friends of the Greenbelt Foundation has provided the Community Development Council Durham (CDCD) with funds to support the development of the DFPC from January 2010 to January 2011. Coordination support offered by the Community Development Council will be reviewed on a yearly basis, and dependent on funding.

The CDCD will appoint a staff coordinator to work directly with the DFPC. Project funds will be managed by the CDCD. DFPC core members will be consulted on budgetary decisions as appropriate.

### TERMS OF REFERENCE REVIEW

The Terms of Reference will be reviewed and updated for relevancy and accuracy on a yearly basis.