

*June 24, 2009*

---

## New Bylaw Encourages Urban Food Gardens in the City of Parksville

**PARKSVILLE, BC:** The Council of the City of Parksville at a special Council meeting on June 22, passed an amendment to the zoning bylaw to permit urban food gardens in the City of Parksville. This is a progressive move by the City of Parksville to encourage growth in the number of urban gardens in the City.

The definition of "urban food garden" means the use of land on a limited scale (up to 20% of the parcel area) for the growing, harvesting and wholesaling of fruits, vegetables and edible plants. This bylaw amendment is in response to a growing desire in the community at an individual level to participate in local food production. With this bylaw, the Council of the City of Parksville is actively demonstrating the importance of locally grown food and is a means for Council to enable and support local food production in the City of Parksville.

Mayor Ed Mayne said that, "This bylaw recognizes the importance of food and the contribution of urban food gardens to the local production of food. We hope this new bylaw will encourage entrepreneurialism and help move our community towards food self-sufficiency."

Awareness about food security is rising and with the globalization of the food system and the capacity to obtain food, the City saw benefits to changes in how urban food gardens can be used in the City. The City supports local food production through a variety of initiatives including urban and community gardens and the protection of agriculture lands within the City.

Urban food garden use is intended to encourage awareness of the importance of locally grown food and to facilitate community participation in its production. Urban food gardens allow the use of non-agricultural lands, such as residential yards and vacant lots for the growing and harvesting of fruits and vegetables that may be exchanged or sold for profit. Under previous regulations, residents were allowed to have a fruit and vegetable garden for their own consumption but did not permit or encourage the redistribution of the harvest.

-30-

**For further information:**

Blaine Russell, Manager of Current Planning

Phone 250 954-4673