**ALEXANDRA NEIGHBOURHOOD HOUSE**

**FOOD POLICY AND PRACTICES**

*Adopted March 1, 2017*

***Goal***

As an agency which provides programs and activities for children, seniors, and others; and as a partner in the Good Food Organizations (Canada), Alexandra Neighbourhood House seeks to take a leadership role in modelling healthy food choices. This includes examining what both we and our caterers offer, in order that we can enhance local, organic, and nutritional options (LONO) in a way that acknowledges the financial realities with which we contend. We further seek to take a leadership role in cultivating an environment of civic advocacy and activism in support of improved local food security.

***Spheres of Activity***

1. *Ongoing activities*: integrating LONO into existing food-delivery programs, such as child care or the Celebrating Community Lunch.
2. *Targeted activities*: Devising food-specific programs whose primary purpose is to promote and teach the importance of LONO for healthy lives and communities.
3. *Advocac*y: Cultivating civic engagement with a view to having an impact on government-level polices related to enhancing LONO for all Surrey residents.

***Principles***

1. An understanding that food brings us together and can act as vehicle for community-building.
2. A recognition that all members of our community have a Right to Food based on the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, while also acknowledging that we as a community enjoy various levels of access to food.
3. A commitment to sharing fresh, non-expired, healthy, organic, and locally-sourced food whenever possible.
4. A commitment to sharing food that is nutrient-dense, low in refined sugar and sodium, and not overly-processed.
5. A commitment to working toward increased access to food for those who are nutritionally vulnerable.
6. A commitment to providing opportunities for increased food literacy and community capacity-building for our neighbours.
7. A commitment to sharing foods that reflect the diversity of our community, city, country and world.
8. An awareness of the impact that our food choices have on the environment.
9. A commitment to the reduction of our organizational ecological footprint by minimizing packaging and ongoing composting.
10. Support for the development of urban farms and healthy food cooperatives.

***Recommended Practices***

1. Prioritize local, organic, and nutritional options (LONO), using produce grown onsite or at our community gardens, as feasible.
2. If providing treats, ensure that they have at least one LONO attribute.
3. For potlucks, call on participants to adhere to LONO as closely as possible.
4. Include vegetarian and vegan options, as reasonable and/or necessary.
5. Instruct vendors and contractors to incorporate LONO as much as possible; or engage contractors who have that capacity.
6. When there is only one option available, ensure it meets at least one LONO attribute.
7. As feasible, list components, ingredients, and/or nutritional profile of the food served.
8. Aspire to develop programming which focuses on, or incorporates principles of healthy eating.
9. Support civic advocacy promoting LONO-friendly policies and legislation.
10. Support the attainment of Food Safe certification for employees seeking, assuming food preparation and service is a part of their operational requirements.
11. Assure that food-serving activities, for which patrons are charged a fee, have a low/no barrier option for those who are financially challenged.
12. Reduce food waste by choosing options which can be re-used at a later date, and/or which are compostable.
13. Reduce packaging waste by choosing options with reduced or no packaging.
14. Ensure that community gardens include food sharing boxes, food bank-dedicated boxes, and engagement and education promoting LONO.
15. Ensure maximal use of the compost box and green waste bins onsite.
16. Provide funding sufficient to ensure that we can begin to fulfill our food philosophy and recommended practices.
17. Conduct ongoing assessment/inventory of existing practices to ensure they are either complying with, or aspiring to comply with, these recommended practices.