



Food Policy in the District's Comprehensive Plan: An Overview

What is the District's Comp Plan?

The District's Comprehensive Plan (Comp Plan) is a 20-year framework that guides future growth and development in Washington, DC. Managed by the DC Office of Planning (OP), the Comp Plan touches on a wide range of topics that impact how we all experience the city including land use, economic development, housing, environmental protection, and more. It influences how the District uses its land and public space to advance Washington, DC's values like equity and inclusive prosperity, and it helps create the places we live, work, play, and eat.

OP began an effort in 2016 to amend the existing Comp Plan – originally adopted in 2006 and amended in 2011 – to ensure it reflects the current needs and priorities of the District's residents. Over the past three years, residents and community organizations have proposed new policies, actions, or language to help update the plan. OP reviewed and incorporated feedback into a draft version that was released in October 2019 for public review. You can learn about all the changes to the Comp Plan by visiting the Plan DC website (<https://plandc.dc.gov/>) or reading the summaries of the 24 different chapters (<https://plandc.dc.gov/publication/element-summaries>).

How does the updated Comp Plan support the District's food policy priorities?

There have been many advancements in the District's approach to food policy since the Comp Plan's last update in 2011. The District has established a DC Food Policy Council and Food Policy Director, developed citywide food policy goals in Sustainable DC and Sustainable DC 2.0, and implemented important policies to improve school meals, support urban farms, and increase healthy food access. Mayor Bowser has invested in innovative healthy food programs like Produce Plus, Produce Rx, Healthy Corners, and Joyful Food Markets and has committed to advancing food policy at the national and the international level through her leadership at the U.S. Conference of Mayors and the Milan Urban Food Policy Pact.

The updated Comp Plan reflects the District's commitment to creating a more equitable, healthy, and sustainable food system in Washington, DC. The DC Food Policy Director, housed within OP, created this overview and a **Comp Plan Food Policy Tracker** (<https://dcfoodpolicy.org/policy/legislation/>) to highlight the major food policy changes in the Comp Plan and reinforce the importance of food policy in the District's planning processes.

The following objectives highlight the changes in the Comp Plan related to advancing the District's food system goals:

- Ensure healthy food access for all residents, especially those in currently underserved areas, with policies such as leveraging existing District-owned facilities for teaching kitchens, prep kitchens, and cafeterias.
- Address health disparities and inequities in life expectancy through increased healthy food access and more vibrant food retail environments, with policies such as ensuring

planning for new housing development is accompanied by programs that improve neighborhood services and conditions.

- Support urban agriculture and local food production through urban farms, community gardens, and school gardens, with policies such as leveraging existing school facilities for green roofs, rooftop gardens, and on-site gardens.
- Create centralized kitchen facilities and coordinate food networks to better leverage the economic and employment potential of the local food system.
- Preserve areas designated for manufacturing and distributing food and beverage products such as shared commercial kitchen spaces for small food businesses.
- Decrease the amount of food that goes to waste, with policies such as supporting policies and programs that encourage food donation, composting, and/or anaerobic digestion.
- Support small local food businesses and spur food workforce development opportunities, with policies such as increasing small business capacity building, creating business incentives, and supporting employee-owned and controlled businesses through funding, technical assistance, and legal support.
- Support food workforce development opportunities within the food economy, with policies such as supporting adult education and career and technical training, expanding youth education and training services, and promoting the attraction and retention of living wage jobs in the District.
- Support the food economy – including healthy food retail, restaurants, and farmers markets – in shaping retail corridors, bolstering mixed used developments, and fostering social cohesion.

Want a deeper dive on food policy in the Comp Plan?

If you are interested in reviewing the specific changes proposed in the Comp Plan related to food policy, check out the **Comp Plan Food Policy Tracker** on our website (<https://dcfoodpolicy.org/policy/legislation/>). The Comp Plan Food Policy Tracker tracks all of the policies, actions, and narrative related to food policies in the Comp Plan by the topics of the FPC working groups. You can filter the tracker by Comp Plan chapter, food policy topic, and type of change proposed such as a new policy or an updated action.

If you would like to be more engaged in the Comp Plan public review process, check out the Comp Plan website (<https://plandc.dc.gov/>). We strongly encourage you to work with your ANC to provide any comments or feedback; visit the ANC website (<https://anc.dc.gov/>) to learn how to connect with your ANC. Send your feedback to your ANC by **December 20th** for incorporation into their resolution. You can also send your comments through the Plan DC email (plandc@dc.gov) by **December 20th** – all comments received from the public through the email will be compiled and included in the legislative package that will be sent to the DC Council in spring 2020.