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Shelburne endorses Food Charter and Action Plan

By Peter Richardson

Shelburne has moved to endorse the Headwaters Food Charter and Action Plan.

Earlier this month, Janet Horner, the Chairperson of the HFFA, Lisa Needham delegated to Council to explain the initiative.

HFFA is a part of the umbrella organization, Headwaters Communities in Action, and their goal with the Food Charter is to create a healthy, sustainable food system by means of a set of values, principles and priorities when it comes to food and farming.

It is a guide to help planning, policy and programme development that can encourage a sustainable and healthy food system.

There are many communities in Ontario that have Food Charters, including large urban centres such as Toronto and Hamilton, to places such as Thunder Bay, Parry Sound and Simcoe County.

All of the Charters focus on six major areas: Environmental Sustainability, Food Access and Equity, Health and Wellbeing, Economic Vitality, Culture and Celebration and Agricultural Sustainability

The Charter can support municipalities through numerous initiatives such as helping to build strong partnerships as a way to strengthen the food sector, workforce and using local foods to promote local tourism and grow local food businesses.

In addition, a Charter can be used to champion local events, such as fall fairs, that promote agricultural heritage and locally grown foods.

A noteworthy example of supporting tourism, while promoting a culture and its food heritage, is the annual Taste of the Danforth in Toronto which highlights the Greek cultural heritage of the area.

Council voted unanimously to endorse the programme.