

2018 CMP City of Bloomington: Food and Agriculture

Introduction

Objectives: 03 | Environment

9. Nurture a resilient, environmentally responsible community by judiciously using our scarce resources, enhancing our natural assets, protecting our historic resources, and *supporting a vital local food system.*

Community Profile

According to the IBRC, the total employment for 2016 was only 4%, higher than in 2000, with much of the *growth attributable to accommodation, food services, and public administration.*

Section One: Policy Objectives

Chapter 1: Community Services and Economics

Goal 1.4

Policy 1.4.2: Continue and expand the city's commitment to *public land use for the production and distribution of local food.*

Goal 1.7

Expand the city's public garden programs to create more plots for individuals to garden, with a focus on food production.

Assess the feasibility of *adding fruit and nut trees to city parks and other public places to grow more local food*

Assess the potential for complementary use of City, MCCSC, and non-profit facilities including libraries, playing fields, pools, gymnasiums, recreation facilities, community meeting spaces, education, health care, culture, *local food production*, and computer resources.

Chapter 2: Culture and Identity

Goals and Policies

9. Nurture a resilient, environmentally responsible community by judiciously using our scarce resources, enhancing our natural assets, protecting our historic resources, and *supporting a vital local food system.*

Chapter 3: Environment

Overview

This chapter is organized around some of the threats and opportunities to the natural environment and associated ecological services regarding breathable air, *drinkable water*, energy consumption, *food production*, waste mitigation, and a stable climate.

This chapter highlights key components of the environment and sets goals for creating an environmentally sustainable community in the categories of energy, the built environment, water, urban ecology, waste, air quality, *and food and agriculture.*

Water

Commercial and industrial processes have a range of needs for water. Heating and cooling, cleaning, and manufacturing all require water. And, of course, *clean water is necessary to support the plants and animals in our ecosystems and food systems.*

Food and Agriculture

The City of Bloomington Common Council endorsed the Bloomington Food Charter in 2015 as “helping to guide community decisions and programs that affect the local food system.” *The Food Charter recognizes that food security is a basic human right; that collaborations among local government, businesses, and community groups should take place to support a sustainable, well-functioning local food system; that urban agriculture should be supported, including farming, community gardens, rooftop and home gardens, orchards, and edible landscaping; and that local food processing and marketing should be facilitated and not hindered by local regulations.*

Residents have consistently demonstrated an interest in the economic, social, and health issues connected to local food access. These concerns have found expression through the Bloomington Food Policy Council and relate to the three E’s of sustainability: *environmental impact, equity of access to food, and economic impact of local food production and processing.* Taken together, they establish a *holistic way of thinking about our food or local food systems.* *Urban agriculture reexamines the*

traditional mindset of agriculture uses and activities within rural settings. It assesses the cultivation, processing, and distribution of food within an urban context.

Food and agriculture offer a key opportunity to work locally and regionally to develop a more sustainable and resilient local economy that supports health, the natural world, as well as improved quality of life for residents. The City of Bloomington supports and recognizes that residents desire opportunities to produce, process, sell, purchase, and consume local foods of their choosing. The City itself has embraced these goals through adoption of the Bloomington Food Charter.

Goals and Policies

The policies in this chapter most closely respond to the adopted 2013 Vision Statement objective to: 9. Nurture a resilient, environmentally responsible community by judiciously using our scarce resources, enhancing our natural assets, protecting our historic resources, and *supporting a vital local food system.*

3.8 Food and Agriculture

Policy 3.8.1: *Work to provide residents with access to safe, nutritious, and affordable food, including through a sustainable, resilient local food sector.*

Policy 3.8.2: *Support diverse, native-plant conservation and restoration efforts, to foster the plant pollinating network of animals, which greatly influences crop production.*

Programs

Food and Agriculture

Assess “Bloomington’s Food System: A First Look” and partner with the *Bloomington Food Policy Council*, other community organizations, residents, businesses, schools, and government agencies to implement the goals of the Bloomington Food Charter.

Encourage community gardens throughout the City.

Modify regulations for protective fence heights surrounding urban agriculture to allow for best practices and flexibility in dealing with white-tailed deer and other nuisance animals.

Assess the creation of an agricultural zoning district and/ or permitted urban agriculture uses within other existing zoning districts.

Increase the use of native pollinator-attracting plants through the UDO.

Enhance education about pollinators as a *necessity for growing food*, and encourage the use of pollinator attracting native plants on private property.

Encourage neighborhood associations and homeowners associations to be more tolerant of vegetative alternatives to lawns, clotheslines, and other environmentally beneficial practices.

Outcomes and Indicators

Outcome: A local food culture has been promoted and protected.

Number of restaurants and businesses serving and/or producing local food products

Number of home gardens and community gardens

Economic value of local food economy

Local regulatory framework facilitates local food production and distribution

Food desert inventory

Chapter 4: Downtown

Overview

Developing and enhancing policies that ensure the long term success of Downtown can enrich Bloomington as a whole. Nationally, Main Street trends show a surge in small business startups, a wide-range of social media applications used to engage and build loyal customer bases, and a prominent role of food within the downtown marketplace. Movements ranging from offering high-quality snacks in hotel lobbies to *opening locally sourced, “farm to fork” restaurants* are making significant contributions to the life and vitalities of downtowns.

Section Two: Land Use

Chapter 7: Land Use

Parks/Open Space: Background and Intent

The Parks/Open Space district includes neighborhood and community parks, natural areas, multi-use trails, golf courses, and other recreational amenities. Parks/Open Space areas should provide opportunities for both active and passive recreation, as well as opportunities to *produce local food through community gardening and the planting of fruit trees*.

Focus Areas and Strategies: West Fork Clear Creek

Land Use Development Approvals

In order to assure integrated site design, this Focus Area should be developed under a master development plan. Until a master development plan is approved, land development activity is not encouraged. However, in the interim, locations should utilize the underlying Land Use Designations within this chapter and apply the Transformation development theme for approvals. Emphasis should be on architectural and site design characteristics, connectivity, and sustainability, and *should make allowance for local food production*.

Appendices

Chapter 1

Programs: Municipal Services

Expand the city's public garden programs to create more plots for individuals to garden, with a focus on food production.

Assess the feasibility of *adding fruit and nut trees to city parks* and other public places to grow more local food.

Local Government Partnerships

Assess the potential for complementary use of City, MCCSC, and non-profit facilities including libraries, playing fields, pools, gymnasiums, recreational facilities, community meeting spaces, education, health care, culture, *local food production*, and computer resources.

Chapter 3

Programs: Food and Agriculture

Assess "Bloomington's Food System: A First Look" and partner with the Bloomington Food Policy Council, other community organizations, residents, businesses, schools, and government agencies to implement the goals of the Bloomington Food Charter.

Encourage community gardens and green roofs throughout the City.

Modify regulations for protective fence heights surrounding urban agriculture to allow for best practices and flexibility in dealing with white-tailed deer and other nuisance animals.

Assess the creation of an agricultural zoning district and/or permitted urban agriculture uses within other existing zoning districts.

Increase the use of native pollinator-attracting plants through the UDO.

Enhance education about pollinators as a necessity for growing food, and encourage the use of pollinator-attracting native plants on private property.

Encourage neighborhood associations and homeowners associations to be more tolerant of vegetative alternatives to lawns, clotheslines, and other environmentally beneficial practices.