Supporting Urban Food Cultivation in Ramsey County

RAMSEY COUNTY
Saint Paul – Ramsey County Public Health

TCALT
twin cities community agricultural land trust

ship
statewide health improvement partnership

Report Overview

This brief, linked overview is meant to help you navigate through the report easily. A more detailed Table of Contents begins on page 27.

Foreword

"If the county and city both want to decide to value urban ag and people growing food more, we need to be 3 steps ahead, and decide:
1) this is an activity we want to encourage,
2) then have a clear process for people to walk through to access that land,
3) a process and steps to lay out (water, soil testing)...
It's a matter of putting together the right package of methods and approaches — up to this point, this is something the city has ***allowed*** *to happen, and now it's something we're deciding is a public good we need to* ***make*** *happen!"*
Russ Stark, Chief Resilience Officer, City of St. Paul

"Community garden stuff is really exciting…[There's] a lot of inter-generational knowledge sharing withv community members, especially people who immigrated here recently in the last few years, kids and grandparents. Food practices and foodways and traditions being passed down are really exciting because I think food is really important and is an important part of identities and celebrating different cultures, and when people don't have privilege of owning a house, it means they don't have the opportunities to create containers where those traditions can be passed on, whereas a garden could be that container. Community gardens can help ***not make people assimilate in a harmful way."***
Skyler Hawkins, Market Garden Farm Manager, Urban Roots

"I think there is a clear indication of the racial challenges of urban agriculture — in terms of equity, in terms of social justice, in terms of cultural differences…that includes the kinds of food that they would want to grow."
*"When I was at Frogtown Farm, I organized…****Volunteer Thursday****.*
I would communicate to have people come out…to do some fieldwork and what have you. The people showed up because they had interest, but then that Volunteer Thursday also came with lunch. And, you know, with the interest generated in that way, and the foods that were grown that year, I was able to distribute them to the Community."
Hindolo Pokawa, Ramsey Farmer + Founder and Executive Director,
Sierra Leone Foundation for New Democracy

"With that space [the Gateway Trail garden], you can tell there are folks who really care about it and are still maintaining it, but lack some resources to make it happen. So there has been some really creative fencing, like car bumpers used for fencing and other things; you can tell there are folks that really care about the space that just [struggled to maintain capacity]… as the garden lost its stewardship."

Hayley Ball, Executive Director, Urban Roots

"[There are] endless possibilities if we're willing to say yes: education, food security, partnership for business development, a sharing economy, and addressing the waste system…[it's] all part of the ecosystem… ***We just need to say 'yes'.****"*

Trista MatasCastillo - County Commissioner, Ramsey County District 3

"The CLUES garden [has enabled] resource sharing, idea sharing, food production, and friendships. There's all kinds of stuff happening in that space, that's not limited to strictly food, that builds a sense of community, ownership, and respect for neighbors, land, and presence in the neighborhood — that goes a long way. It's a small space, but it changes the neighborhood and people notice… ***People from the neighborhood hang out in the garden because it's a nice place to be.****"*

Abigail Hindson, Food Access and Engagement Coordinator, Comunidades Latinas Unidas En Servicio (CLUES)

Authors, Acknowledgments, and Dedication

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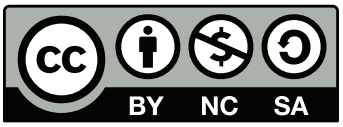
Sebrum Herron, TCALT researcher through the University of Minnesota Center for Urban and Regional Affairs, analysis, writing, and organizing workshops for putting the report into action; and
Z Akhmetova, through an Art of Food in Frogtown and Rondo artists' residency with Public Art Saint Paul.



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TCALT Rivoli Bluff Community Garden Tour 2020 (Courtesy of Kieran Morris)

Guests gather in the Rivoli Bluff Community Garden for a tour and a discussion about water use and conservation.

Christina Jennings, Ariel Kagan, Stu Loury and the Minnesota Farmers Union, Anna Wasescha and the Farm in the City legacy, the Cross-Campus Food Access Coalition and rest of the Metro Food Justice Action teams (especially the emerging group working on urban farmland), Jennifer Nicklay (and the larger crew of researchers working on characterizing and modeling the benefits and risks related to urban agriculture to serve ongoing participatory policy and procedure development like this: Chip Small, Adam Kay, Mary Rogers, Nic Jelinski, Ben Janke, Eric Lonsdorf, Chris Nootenboom, Pam Rice, Hannah Ramer, and the more extended Soil Nexus team), and the Policy working group of the Farmland Access Hub — and, alongside us through all stages of this learning, Franny Clary-Leiferman and Carissa Dillon, along with all Ramsey County staff, urban food cultivators, neighbors, and relatives. Additionally, many people generously shared their experience and insights with us through interviews and surveys. In the text, contributions from specific people are indicated by their names in parentheses. The full list of interviews is provided in section 2.1.3, in the Interview and Survey Respondent Key Quotes table.

These grateful acknowledgments do not imply the specific endorsement of our recommendations by these groups or individuals.

Report design: Sena Ross
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Dedication

As we work to heal the difficult histories wrapped up in the cultures of relating to land and each other to grow food and nourish one another, especially in the context of a history of settler colonialism and racial covenanting of land, we are grateful to the teachers and mentors who have led the way. Among these, we have learned so much from the lifelong efforts of Rev. Charles Sherrod, who passed during the writing of this report and to whom we dedicate this effort.

Sherrod was a founding member of the Student Nonviolent Coordinating Committee (SNCC) and at twenty-five was its first field secretary. Sherrod spent time on a chain gang in South Carolina for SNCC desegregation and made his way to southwest Georgia where he was at the forefront of the Albany Movement. He stayed in Albany working for justice for the rest of his life. Sherrod knew that justice in southwest Georgia, and America, was impossible without justice in farming, food, and land access. After visiting and studying the Moshavim Movement, a collective farm movement in Israel, Sherrod and others created New Communities, an agricultural land trust of more than 5000 acres that provides a baseline moral and practical model for land trusts throughout the United States. “The only solution that one could come to,” said Sherrod, “would be that we have to own land ourselves.” New Communities included cattle, hogs, soybeans, corn, and grapes; provided livelihoods for dozens of families; and allowed smaller scale farms to own land and thrive. New Communities was dispossessed by discrimination in the 1980s. Litigation against the United States Department of Agriculture later resulted in a large settlement for New Communities and a new community farm, Resora at Cypress Pond, once a plantation, was established with the settlement funds and with healing intention to rebuild relationship with this agricultural land (whose pecans are available in Twin Cities co-ops through the Equal Exchange program).

Together, many of us in the Twin Cities have watched and rewatched *Arc of Justice,* the short documentary recounting the civil rights and equitable community development efforts of The New Communities and the Southwest Georgia Project — founded by Charles and Shirley Sherrod — also known as the Albany Movement. In remembering Reverend Sherrod, we name our solidarity and ongoing commitment to keep learning and working along with the continuing efforts toward community engagement and racial equity, particularly in farmland relationships associated with and inspired by his grace, song, and love of the land.

Report Summary and Reading Guide

Although the capital county of our farming state is not often celebrated for its own agriculture, agrarian stewardship traditions are alive and well across Ramsey County. These traditions are central to the histories and cultures of this region, and deserve more recognition and resourcing. This report highlights some of the many ways that residents of Ramsey County contribute to the health, wealth, nutrition, culture, and nourishment of their communities through urban food cultivation. However, we must also highlight some of the many barriers that these efforts face. This report explores how barriers to urban farming can be overcome and looks at possible active support urban farms and gardens need to flourish.

This report is the product of collaboration by many community farmers, gardeners, neighbors, supportive organizations, and agencies with community and land stewardship mandates. The goals of this project would be unachievable without their ongoing time, community infrastructure building, shared learning, and shared vegetables. Starting from Ramsey County's explicitly stated commitment to equity and community engagement, this report provides insight into how devoting resources to urban food cultivation could contribute significantly to meeting these stated values. Urban agriculture is an excellent example of how communities already vigorously engage in a tremendous amount of work to build racial equity and to maintain and nourish the people and places where they live. Straightforward reform of policies that obstruct this work, along with reasonable revision of resourcing strategies, could transform farming efforts; instead of requiring a constant, intensive effort just to maintain access to farm and garden spaces year to year, community farming and gardening could be a valued centerpiece of our urban fabric, meeting their many goals with considerably more impact (Raja 2020, Dreon et al. 2022).

How to read this report:
Ramsey County asked the Twin Cities Community Agricultural Land Trust (TCALT) to create and provide a full scan of the Ramsey County policies and procedures relevant to urban food cultivation, a summary of the scan, and a presentation of results appropriate to share with various interested parties. Consequently, we begin with an overview of how to navigate this document since some readers will be interested in the introductory and concluding parts, and will need to navigate the detailed sections only as relevant to *their* areas of the district, by geography, type of urban food cultivation, and relevant mechanisms for supporting it.

This report is organized into three main parts. Each part starts with a summary in English and Spanish. Accompanying each part are multi-media summaries in webinar format and guides for presenting the webinar. Overviews of each section, along with key quotes from interviews and profiles of community farmers and gardeners, are meant to provide at-a-glance versions of the main stories of this report. Interviewees are quoted with names, to help readers connect key quotes to the full interviews in case they would like to learn more. For those interested in further details, the full text provides a more thorough review of current trends in policies and practices that are supporting or obstructing urban food cultivation. Footnotes and appendices point to further resources on specific topics. Words with accompanying glossary entries are bolded and marked with an asterisk (*) the first time they appear substantively in the report. The asterisk in the next paragraph that accompanies the phrase "urban food cultivation" is an example of a word in the glossary. Glossary definitions are provided in the text where they are mentioned and/or in a complete glossary at the end of the report.

Glossary

Urban food cultivation

The umbrella term "urban food cultivation" includes both urban farms (such as the Urban Roots Rivoli Bluffs site and Frogtown Farm) and urban gardens (such as Rice Street Gardens and Victoria Garden). Much writing on these topics suggest that the similarities between urban farms and urban gardens are more important than their differences. Most of the features of farms and gardens converge. Combining them in our discussion reduces inaccurate binary stereotypes about the food cultivation associated with under-resourced urban areas (particularly in the global south) and over-resourced urban areas (particularly in the global north). Policies and planning strategies aiming to promote thriving, sustainable cities should include provisions for a wide range of food cultivation activities. Concerns about externalized costs of "farming" that are less often associated with "gardening" should be addressed through policies that create incentives for agroecological practices, therefore preventing harmful social and ecological externalities (Varghese and Hansen-Kuhn 2013, Recknagel et al., 2016; WinklerPrins, 2017, HLPE 2019, and especially Place et al. 2022).

Part 1 of the report provides an overview of benefits, challenges, and opportunities related to **urban food cultivation*** in Ramsey County. It details existing and historical support for urban agriculture and suggests how to improve that support by addressing barriers, building cross-sector communication, and supporting community initiatives. This section explores specific benefits, including readily tangible gains in food security and broader well-being. It also looks at the deeper valuable role that urban food cultivation plays in communities. We discuss how these spaces and practices can facilitate equitable cultural learning and sharing, greenspace and ecological health, and community relationships. The report then reviews challenges and obstacles to communities realizing these benefits. This includes discussion of the implications of undervaluing both the food security benefits and the considerable investments that communities persistently make to sustain urban agriculture in contexts often unreasonably hostile to them.

The remainder of Part 1 provides an overview of:

- Our focus on racial equity as a central motive and organizing principle for resourcing urban food cultivation (section 1.2).
- The benefits of urban food cultivation in Ramsey County, including but not limited to, the supply of fresh, healthy food and the knowledge and infrastructure to grow, harvest, prepare, and share it, as well as the many additional benefits provided by greenspaces available for community stewardship (section 1.3).

- The challenges and obstacles to urban food cultivation in Ramsey County, focusing predominantly on land tenure, tax burdens, and uncertainties in policies and procedures that disproportionately dis-engage many of the very people who bring the most agrarian knowledge and expertise to the County (section 1.4).
- The possibilities for improving urban agriculture in Ramsey County by reducing barriers, building cross-sector communication, and supporting community initiatives (section 1.5).

We identify important benefits of urban food cultivation that include:

- Improvements in food security and well being through the generation of a ready supply of fresh, healthy food and support for communities and food justice organizations (section 1.3.1).
- Equitable learning from the creation of opportunities for community and youth engagement, education, and culture sharing (section 1.3.2).
- Contributions to greenspace and ecological health through increases in ecological benefits as part of larger greenspace planning (section 1.3.3).
- Community relationships enabled by the establishment of a collective gathering space where community members can exchange cultural and agroecological knowledge, share experience and perspectives, and build a respectful and healing place that inspires growth and a sense of our interconnectedness (section 1.3.4).

Planting day at Karamu Garden.

(Courtesy of Karl Hakanson)

The report discusses four central categories of barriers:

- Food security benefits and investments are undervalued and hence undermined by inaccessible costs of land, rent, and gardening materials — as well as by tax and tenure mechanisms. Frequent changes in land holding and management regimes often require established food cultivators to start over from scratch, as well as to sink considerable labor into arranging insecure land tenure arrangements. Many high-profile displacements are unnecessary and are not corrected or re-incorporated in subsequent arrangements and uses (or extended vacancy) (section 1.4.1).
- Access to interactive greenspaces and environmental justice is often not equitable: urban planning neglects urban agriculture as a possible integrated land use. This leaves private land, commonly in residential yards, as the best opportunity for growing food. Consequently, many people lack access to greenspaces they can steward (section 1.4.2).
- Policy frameworks that consider agriculture as rural, and consider agriculture and urban land uses to be protected from each other, have contributed to the creation and furtherance of zoning restrictions, the absence of clarity in policies regarding urban agriculture, and a lack of municipal and governmental support (or perceived lack of support) in city codes and other city policies. (section 1.4.3).
- With notable exceptions that provide models for change, underdeveloped resource relationships lead to lack of infrastructure for urban food cultivation (section 1.4.4).

Our goal in centering the racial equity perspective is to remind readers of the deliberate community actions needed to move forward with the recommendations of this report. These actions have been recommended repeatedly, for example, by Emerging Farmers' Working Group and CLUES reports, whose recommendations we reproduce. We call for next steps to include resourcing the community organizers needed to sustain Ramsey County's commitment to equity around urban food cultivation.

Devoting public land to growing food is an excellent first step in helping many growers to achieve their goals. However, to more equitably aid a greater number of growers, the government must expand efforts to provide adequate and appropriate support to facilitate urban agriculture. This approach is more effective than hoping benefits will emerge solely from offering space and relying on rhetoric promoting "self-help," a fallacy that is particularly problematic in terms of equity since not all people have the same ability to access the energy and materials to grow food.

Resources dedicated to responding to the demand to *start* gardens need to be accompanied by supports for *continuing* gardens. Although most gardeners and farmers who spoke with us acknowledged the pressures on public land that might prevent permanent tenure in all cases, almost everyone shared dramatic stories of

seemingly unnecessary displacement. At worst, these were punishing (for example, with parks managers who appeared to resent gender and racial empowerment components of garden programs and therefore disallowed or de-resourced them). At best, they suffered from a lack of communication.

Part 2 of the report goes into detail on the process of building policy memos for each municipality of Ramsey County. This section covers the purpose, methods, and limitations of our review and focuses on specific policies that inhibit and support urban agriculture. It starts with an overview of the methods we used to fulfill the purpose of this study by providing descriptions of how we conducted the policy review process, interviews, and document scans, and ends with an overview of our recommendations. In the text, interviews with specific people are indicated by their names in parentheses. The full list of interviews is provided in section 2.1.3, in the Interview and Survey Respondent Key Quotes table. Accompanying the report, we include profiles of many Ramsey County farmers and gardeners.

We use a short series of case studies from Ramsey County to demonstrate the state of the policies we found and to illustrate the main themes repeatedly illustrated in the district-by-district policy memos. This section also provides some overviews, in table form, showing common themes across the county. The cases suggest scenarios of how improvements recommended in our scan could translate small amounts of infrastructural investment into disproportionate and meaningful returns by supporting community food cultivation in areas where people are working against unnecessarily onerous barriers to do something with considerable public benefit. For these more detailed sections, we provide a guide to navigating the memos (which are in Appendix P), and also point to Appendix O for overview tables of policies by topic, and Appendix R for further resources, recognizing that readers will likely want to jump directly to a particular policy memo or resource.

Students involved in the Growing North Project harvest beans.

(Courtesy of Karl Hakanson)

Part 3 provides recommendations on approaches to address the four main categories of barriers and resource shortfalls. We identify successful strategies for robust, long-term access to urban land for food cultivation, and consider how these strategies help pave the way for achieving community engagement and racial equity in Ramsey County.

Implementing these recommendations will put Ramsey County in a better position to make the most of new resources coming online for urban agriculture. This is particularly true as more agencies at the local, state, and federal level recognize the need to increase resources for urban food cultivation efforts. Implementation involves both rewriting statutes to facilitate cottage food production (small-scale value-added processing) and better integrating land uses to meet both housing and food production needs. In addition to moving away from mid-century models of land use separation and agri-food governance that concentrated food security concerns out of reach of where most people live, contemporary best practices are replacing "food disabling" urban forms with food *enabling* infrastructure (Deh-Tor 2017). This preserves the capacity of urban and near-urban land to support food security, retaining cultural knowledge and the capacity for meaningful contributive justice with real stewardship opportunities for those who wish to play a part in growing food for their communities (Beintema et al. 2009, Barthel et al. 2013, 2015, Timmermann and Félix 2015).

As we discuss in considerable detail, property tax is a high financial burden in Ramsey County because land used for agriculture rarely qualifies for either agricultural land classification or the agricultural tax deferment program. This means that much urban agricultural land — both commercial and non-commercial — risks being taxed at non-agricultural business or residential rates. This contrasts with both the intent of the agricultural taxation programs (to "encourage and preserve farms by mitigating the property tax impact of increasing land values due to non-agricultural economic forces." MN Statute 273.111). Many cities treat urban agriculture, especially in underserved neighborhoods, as a community economic development benefit to be encouraged not only by waiving property taxes but also, in many cases, by providing tax incentives for those who contribute supportive resources.

We conclude the report by reviewing best practices identified in the scan from Ramsey County and elsewhere, with reference to Ramsey's 2040 Comprehensive Plan and the Thrive MSP 2040 vision for regional economic development. This review shows how they offer next steps toward more successful and equitable support for urban food cultivation.

Social and environmental impacts of urban food cultivation systems are shaped, in significant part, by the management practices used. These impacts, in turn, have reciprocal effects on the amount of land allocated for urban cultivation, tenure, ownership, environmental rules, and policy frameworks. Clearer articulation of the

Summary table for supporting urban food cultivation in Ramsey County

Benefits	Challenges	Support Mechanisms and Goals	Action Clusters
1.3.1 Food security and well being	1.4.1 Food security benefits and investments undervalued → inaccessible costs of land, rent, materials	3.2.1 Support urban agriculture as a long-term land use by revising tenure and property tax processes -- main goals: longer-term leases and more inclusion in Green Acres or other tax abatement processes	3.4.1-1 Trust for Public Land, MN Land Trust, Community Land Trusts, etc., to help create and administer mechanisms for access and tenure. Parks, Housing and Redevelopment Authority, Public Housing, MnDOT, DNR, Open Space working group to help identify and provide land.
1.3.2 Equitable cultural learning and sharing	1.4.2 Equitable access to interactive greenspaces and environmental justice	3.2.2 Increase equity in urban agriculture opportunities and cultural institutions support -- main goals: a menu of supports for urban food cultivation currently offered, from plants to volunteers and mentoring to professional development and technical assistance	3.4.1-2 Libraries, schools, park programming. Urban Roots and other youth development and community engagement programs, Extension (including Master Gardeners/Land Connectors), State Horticultural Society and existing greenspace and farm and garden learning organizations.
1.3.3 Greenspace and ecological health	1.4.3 Policy frameworks → zoning restrictions and unclear UA policies	3.2.3 Meaningful, straightforward metrics to enable growing food — main goals: a draft expansion of the MDA urban agriculture grant rubric that could qualify urban food cultivation sites for additional resources (like water)	3.4.1-3 Climate action and adaptation plan and sustainability agencies and stakeholders. Water agencies (watershed districts and regional water services), Board of Water and Soil Resources (BWSR) →
1.3.4 Community relationships	1.4.4 Underdeveloped resource relationships → lack of infrastructure	3.2.4 clear communication and connection between relevant agencies, policies, and procedures -- main goal: catalog of contacts and venues where urban food cultivation support is addressed	3.4.1-4 → BWSR, community leaders and organizations, anchored by the Emerging Farmers' Working Group and the relevant Metro Food Justice Network action teams

outputs desired by various entities in a position to support urban food cultivation could help build the more resilient network of relationships needed to normalize and support food cultivation as a normal urban land use in Ramsey County.

In order to act expediently, given the many resources that already exist — even if they are not yet coordinated or equitably accessible — we suggest clustering agencies with similar service missions, domains, or district or neighborhood focus.

For the four main actions in the table on the previous page, we suggest the following four action clusters.

1. Organizations that regulate land use could support long-term, affordable urban agriculture by revising tenure, land classification, and property tax processes. These organizations may include the Trust for Public Land, Minnesota Land Trust, Parks departments, the Housing and Redevelopment Authority, Public Housing, the Minnesota Department of Transportation, and the Department of Natural Resources. The Open Space Working Group's proposed management strategies and the partnerships involved in maintaining the Gateway garden serve as useful models for the variety of ways agencies can advance specific components of achieving long-term land tenure for urban food cultivation.

2. Libraries, schools, Parks departments, and nonprofit organizations, like Urban Roots and Minnesota State Horticultural Society, are well positioned to increase equity in urban food cultivation opportunities and cultural institutions' support. These entities could also develop programming related to youth development, stewardship relationships and processes, and other relevant topics.

3. Establishing meaningful, straightforward metrics that recognize the numerous positive outcomes of urban agriculture would reduce barriers to obtaining resources for growing food. In particular, agencies focused on water, climate, and sustainability could coordinate to develop shared and easily tracked metrics common to both their goals and the ecological benefits provided by urban agriculture, particularly as concerns about climate change become more prevalent. These metrics would help legitimize urban agriculture and improve access to support for all farmers and gardeners, instead of solely for those who are already well resourced and well connected.

4. As a statewide coordinator, the Board of Water and Soil Resources — with support of other community leaders and organizations, for example, the Emerging Farmers Working Group and relevant Metro Food Justice Network action teams — could further decrease the burden on individual growers and community groups. These organizations could work together to increase connective capacity both among agencies and between agencies and community members, which would strengthen the efficiency and effectiveness of resourcing efforts.

In the process of developing this report, we have reached out to the entities named above and ascertained their interest in helping to achieve the main recommendations of the report. One of the basic problems integrating food cultivation in the urban fabric is that it is not built into the recognized responsibilities of almost any entities charged with land use governance or support. Consequently, although we recognize that new opportunities and ways of organizing may emerge (which could supercede our recommendations), we close the report with the hope that these entities can expand their current capacity to implement the actions identified in the report and work together with relevant governance entities across the Metro to resource and support the realization of the possibilities highlighted in our survey.

Extending from Part 3 into Appendix R, we include an illustrated resource guide with a list of resources we have identified that could be useful for urban farms and gardens, including, for example:

- resources related to community farm and gardening organizing and partnership possibilities;
- resources relating to how to find and secure land, and understand pertinent tax and insurance responsibilities and relevant policies; and
- resources related to programming, services, and maintaining urban food cultivation sites.

See also the other Appendices: Appendix B for the Bibliography, Appendix G for the full Glossary, Appendix O for policy overview tables of all Ramsey County municipalities by urban food cultivation activity, and Appendix P for Policy memos for each Ramsey County municipality.

Resumen del Informe y Guía de Lectura

Aunque el condado de la capital de nuestro estado agrícola no suele ser celebrado por su propia agricultura, las tradiciones de administración agraria están vivas y bien arraigadas en todo el condado de Ramsey. Estas tradiciones son fundamentales para las historias y culturas de esta región, y merecen un mayor reconocimiento y dotación de recursos. Este informe destaca algunas de las muchas formas en que los residentes del condado de Ramsey contribuyen a la salud, la riqueza, la nutrición, la cultura y la alimentación de sus comunidades mediante el cultivo urbano de alimentos. Sin embargo, también debemos destacar algunas de las muchas barreras a las que se enfrentan estos esfuerzos. Este informe explora cómo se pueden superar las barreras a la agricultura urbana y examina el posible apoyo activo que las granjas y huertos urbanos necesitan para florecer.

Este informe es el resultado de la colaboración de muchos agricultores, horticultores, vecinos, organizaciones de apoyo y organismos con mandatos comunitarios y de custodia de las tierras. Los objetivos de este proyecto serían inalcanzables sin su tiempo constante, la creación de infraestructura comunitaria, el aprendizaje compartido y las hortalizas compartidas. Partiendo del compromiso explícitamente declarado del condado de Ramsey a la equidad y la participación comunitaria, este informe ofrece una visión de cómo la asignación de recursos al cultivo urbano de alimentos podría contribuir significativamente a alcanzar estos valores declarados. La agricultura urbana es un excelente ejemplo de cómo las comunidades ya se comprometen enérgicamente en una enorme cantidad de trabajo para construir la equidad racial y para mantener y nutrir a las personas y los lugares donde viven. Una reforma directa de las políticas que obstaculizan este trabajo, junto con una revisión razonable de las estrategias de dotación de recursos, podría transformar los esfuerzos agrícolas; en lugar de requerir un esfuerzo constante e intensivo sólo para mantener el acceso a los espacios agrícolas y de horticultura año tras año, la agricultura y la horticultura comunitarias podrían ser una pieza central valorada de nuestro tejido urbano, cumpliendo sus muchos objetivos con un impacto considerablemente mayor (Raja 2020, Dreon et al. 2022).

Cómo leer este informe:
El condado de Ramsey pidió al fideicomiso de tierras agrícolas comunitarias de las ciudades gemelas (TCALT) que creara y proporcionara una exploración completa de las políticas y procedimientos del condado de Ramsey relevantes para el cultivo urbano de alimentos, un resumen de la exploración y una presentación de los resultados apropiada para compartir con diversas partes interesadas. En con-

secuencia, comenzamos con una visión general de cómo navegar por este documento, ya que algunos lectores estarán interesados en las partes introductorias y de conclusión, y tendrán que navegar por las secciones detalladas que sean relevantes para *sus* áreas del distrito, por la geografía, el tipo de cultivo urbano de alimentos, y los mecanismos pertinentes para apoyarlo.

Este informe está organizado en tres partes principales. Cada parte comienza con un resumen en inglés y español. Acompañan a cada parte resúmenes multimedia en formato webinar y guías para presentar el webinar. Las perspectivas generales de cada sección, junto con las citas clave de las entrevistas y los perfiles de los agricultores y horticultores de la comunidad, están pensados para ofrecer versiones resumidas de las historias principales de este informe. Los nombres de los entrevistados se citan con el fin de ayudar a los lectores a relacionar las citas clave con las entrevistas completas en caso de que deseen obtener más información. Para quienes estén interesados en más detalles, el texto completo ofrece un examen más exhaustivo de las tendencias actuales en las políticas y prácticas que apoyan u obstaculizan el cultivo urbano de alimentos. Las notas a pie de página y los apéndices remiten a recursos adicionales sobre temas específicos. Las palabras que aparecen en el glosario están en negrita y marcadas con un asterisco (*) la primera vez que aparecen en el informe. El asterisco del párrafo siguiente que acompaña a la frase “cultivo urbano de alimentos” es un ejemplo de palabra incluida en el glosario. Las definiciones del glosario figuran en el texto donde se mencionan o en un glosario completo al final del informe.

Glosario

Cultivo urbano de alimentos
El término “cultivo urbano de alimentos” engloba tanto las granjas urbanas (como Urban Roots Rivoli Bluffs y Frogtown Farm) así como los huertos urbanos (como Rice Street Gardens y Victoria Garden). Muchos escritos sobre estos temas sugieren que las similitudes entre las granjas y los huertos urbanos son más importantes que sus diferencias. La mayoría de las características de las granjas y los huertos convergen. Combinarlas en nuestro debate reduce los estereotipos binarios equivocados sobre el cultivo de alimentos asociado a las zonas urbanas con pocos recursos (sobre todo en el sur global) y a las zonas urbanas con demasiados recursos (sobre todo en el norte global). Las políticas y estrategias de planificación destinadas a promover ciudades prósperas y sostenibles deberían incluir disposiciones para una amplia gama de actividades de cultivo de alimentos. Las preocupaciones sobre costos externalizados de la “agricultura” que se asocian con menos frecuencia a la “horticultura” deberían abordarse mediante políticas que creen incentivos para las prácticas agroecológicas, evitando así externalidades sociales y ecológicas perjudiciales (Varghese y Hansen-Kuhn 2013, Recknagel et al., 2016; WinklerPrins, 2017, HLPE 2019, y especialmente Place et al. 2022).

La Parte 1 del informe ofrece una visión general de los beneficios, desafíos y oportunidades relacionados con el **cultivo urbano de alimentos*** en el condado de Ramsey. Detalla el apoyo existente e histórico a la agricultura urbana y sugiere cómo mejorar ese apoyo abordando las barreras, construyendo una comunicación intersectorial y apoyando las iniciativas de la comunidad. Esta sección explora beneficios específicos, incluyendo las ganancias fácilmente tangibles en la seguridad alimentaria y el bienestar más amplio. También se examina el valioso papel que desempeña el cultivo urbano de alimentos en las comunidades. Analizamos cómo estos espacios y prácticas pueden facilitar el aprendizaje y el intercambio cultural equitativo, la salud ecológica y de los espacios verdes y las relaciones comunitarias. A continuación, el informe examina los retos y obstáculos que impiden a

las comunidades hacer realidad estos beneficios. Esto incluye la discusión de las implicaciones de subestimar tanto los beneficios de la seguridad alimentaria como las considerables inversiones que las comunidades hacen persistentemente para sostener la agricultura urbana en contextos a menudo irrazonablemente hostiles a ellos.

El resto de la Parte 1 ofrece una visión general de:

- Nuestro enfoque en la equidad racial como motivo central y principio organizativo para dotar de recursos al cultivo urbano de alimentos (sección 1.2).
- Los beneficios del cultivo urbano de alimentos en el condado de Ramsey, incluidos, entre otros, el suministro de alimentos frescos y sanos y el conocimiento y la infraestructura para cultivarlos, cosecharlos, prepararlos y compartirlos, así como los numerosos beneficios adicionales que proporcionan los espacios verdes disponibles para la administración comunitaria (sección 1.3).
- Los desafíos y obstáculos para el cultivo urbano de alimentos en el condado de Ramsey, centrándose predominantemente en la tenencia de la tierra, las cargas fiscales y las incertidumbres en políticas y procedimientos que desvinculan de manera desproporcionada a muchas de las mismas personas que aportan los mayores conocimientos y experiencia agraria al condado (sección 1.4).
- Las posibilidades de mejorar la agricultura urbana en el condado de Ramsey mediante la reducción de barreras, el establecimiento de una comunicación intersectorial y el apoyo a las iniciativas comunitarias (sección 1.5).

Identificamos importantes beneficios del cultivo urbano de alimentos que incluyen:

- Mejoras en la seguridad alimentaria y el bienestar a través de la generación de un suministro listo de alimentos frescos y saludables y el apoyo a las comunidades y organizaciones de justicia alimentaria (sección 1.3.1).
- Aprendizaje equitativo a partir de la creación de oportunidades para la participación de la comunidad y los jóvenes, la educación y el intercambio cultural (sección 1.3.2).
- Contribuciones al espacio verde y a la salud ecológica mediante el aumento de los beneficios ecológicos como parte de una planificación más amplia de espacios verdes (sección 1.3.3).
- Relaciones comunitarias facilitadas por el establecimiento de un espacio de encuentro colectivo donde los miembros de la comunidad puedan intercambiar conocimientos culturales y agroecológicos, compartir experiencias y perspectivas, y construir un lugar respetuoso y curativo que inspire crecimiento y un sentido de nuestra interconexión (sección 1.3.4).

El informe analiza cuatro categorías principales de obstáculos:

- Los beneficios y las inversiones en seguridad alimentaria son subestimados y, por lo tanto, socavados por los costos inaccesibles de la tierra, el alquiler y los materiales de horticultura, así como por los mecanismos fiscales y de

tenencia. Los frecuentes cambios en los regímenes de tenencia y gestión de la tierra a menudo obligan a los horticultores establecidos a empezar de cero, así como a dedicar una considerable cantidad de mano de obra para establecer acuerdos inseguros de tenencia de la tierra. Muchos desplazamientos de gran repercusión son innecesarios y no se corrigen ni se reincorporan a los acuerdos y usos posteriores (o desocupación prolongada) (sección 1.4.1).

- El acceso a espacios verdes interactivos y a la justicia medioambiental no suele ser equitativo: la planificación urbana desatiende la agricultura urbana como posible uso integrado del suelo. Por ello, la tierra privada, normalmente en patios residenciales, es la mejor oportunidad para cultivar alimentos. En consecuencia, muchas personas carecen de acceso a espacios verdes que puedan administrar (sección 1.4.2).
- Los marcos políticos que consideran que la agricultura es rural y que la agricultura y los usos urbanos del suelo deben protegerse mutuamente han contribuido a la creación y fomento de restricciones de zonificación, a la ausencia de claridad en las políticas relativas a la agricultura urbana y a la falta de apoyo municipal y gubernamental (o a la percepción de falta de apoyo) en los códigos municipales y en otras políticas de la ciudad. (sección 1.4.3).
- Con notables excepciones que proporcionan modelos para el cambio, las relaciones subdesarrolladas en materia de recursos conducen a la falta de infraestructura para el cultivo urbano de alimentos (sección 1.4.4).

Nuestro objetivo al centrarnos en la perspectiva de equidad racial es recordar a los lectores las acciones comunitarias deliberadas necesarias para avanzar en las recomendaciones de este informe. Estas acciones han sido recomendadas repetidamente, por ejemplo, por los informes del Grupo de Trabajo de Agricultores Emergentes y CLUES, cuyas recomendaciones reproducimos. Pedimos que los próximos pasos incluyan la dotación de recursos a los organizadores comunitarios necesarios para mantener el compromiso del condado de Ramsey con la equidad en torno al cultivo urbano de alimentos.

Dedicar terrenos públicos al cultivo de alimentos es un excelente primer paso para ayudar a muchos horticultores a alcanzar sus objetivos. Sin embargo, para ayudar de forma más equitativa a un mayor número de horticultores, el gobierno debe ampliar sus esfuerzos para proporcionar un apoyo adecuado y apropiado que facilite la agricultura urbana. Este enfoque es más eficaz que esperar que los beneficios surjan únicamente de ofrecer espacio y confiar en la retórica que promueve la “autoayuda”, una falacia que es particularmente problemática en términos de equidad, ya que no todas las personas tienen la misma capacidad para lograr acceso a la energía y los materiales para cultivar alimentos.

Los recursos dedicados a responder a la demanda de *creación* de huertos deben ir acompañados de ayudas para la *continuidad* de los huertos. Aunque la mayoría de los horticultores y agricultores que hablaron con nosotros reconocieron las presiones sobre los terrenos públicos que podrían impedir la tenencia permanente en

todos los casos, casi todos compartieron historias dramáticas de desplazamientos aparentemente innecesarios. En el peor de los casos, éstos fueron punitivos (por ejemplo, con administradores de parques que parecían resentir los componentes de empoderamiento de género y racial de los programas de huertos y, por lo tanto, los desautorizaban o les quitaban recursos). En el mejor de los casos, adolecían de falta de comunicación.

La parte 2 del informe entra en detalle en el proceso de elaboración de memorandos de políticas para cada municipio del condado de Ramsey. Esta sección cubre el propósito, los métodos y las limitaciones de nuestra revisión y se enfoca en las políticas específicas que inhiben y apoyan la agricultura urbana. Comienza con una visión general de los métodos que utilizamos para cumplir con el propósito de este estudio, proporcionando descripciones de cómo llevamos a cabo el proceso de revisión de políticas, entrevistas y análisis de documentos, y termina con una visión general de nuestras recomendaciones. En el texto, las entrevistas con personas concretas se indican con sus nombres entre paréntesis. La lista completa de entrevistas figura en la sección 2.1.3, en la tabla de citas clave de entrevistados y encuestados. Acompañando al informe, incluimos perfiles de muchos agricultores y horticultores del condado de Ramsey.

Utilizamos una breve serie de estudios de casos del condado de Ramsey para demostrar el estado de las políticas que encontramos y para ilustrar los temas principales que aparecen repetidamente en los memorandos de política distrito

Plots at the Indigenous-led growing site Dream of Wild Health, where community youth help steward heirloom crops.

(Courtesy of Kieran Morris, from an Urban Farm and Garden Alliance tour of Dream of Wild Health)

por distrito. Esta sección también proporciona algunas descripciones generales, en forma de tabla, que muestran los temas comunes en todo el condado. Los casos sugieren escenarios de cómo las mejoras recomendadas en nuestro análisis podrían traducir pequeñas cantidades de inversión en infraestructuras, en retornos desproporcionados y significativos mediante el apoyo al cultivo comunitario de alimentos en áreas donde la gente está trabajando contra barreras innecesariamente onerosas para hacer algo con un considerable beneficio público. Para estas secciones más detalladas, proporcionamos una guía para navegar por los memorandos (los cuales se encuentran en el Apéndice P), y también señalamos el Apéndice O para las tablas generales de las políticas por tema, y el Apéndice R para otros recursos, reconociendo que los lectores probablemente querrán saltar directamente a un memorando de política o recurso en particular.

La Parte 3 ofrece recomendaciones sobre enfoques para abordar las cuatro categorías principales de barreras y carencias de recursos. Identificamos estrategias exitosas para pleno acceso y a largo plazo a terrenos urbanos para el cultivo de alimentos, y consideramos cómo estas estrategias ayudan a allanar el camino para lograr el compromiso de la comunidad y la equidad racial en el condado de Ramsey.

La aplicación de estas recomendaciones pondrá al condado de Ramsey en una mejor posición para aprovechar al máximo los nuevos recursos que se pongan en marcha para la agricultura urbana. Esto es particularmente cierto a medida que más agencias a nivel local, estatal y federal reconozcan la necesidad de aumentar los recursos para los esfuerzos de cultivo urbano de alimentos. La puesta en práctica implica tanto reescribir los estatutos para facilitar la producción artesanal de alimentos (procesamiento de valor agregado a pequeña escala) así como integrar mejor los usos del suelo para satisfacer tanto las necesidades de vivienda como las de producción de alimentos. Además de alejarse de los modelos de mediados de siglo de separación del uso del suelo y gobernanza agroalimentaria que concentraban las preocupaciones de seguridad alimentaria lejos de donde vive la mayoría de la gente, las mejores prácticas contemporáneas están sustituyendo las formas urbanas que “inhabilitan la alimentación” con infraestructuras que *posibilitan* la alimentación (Deh-Tor 2017). Esto preserva la capacidad del suelo urbano y casi urbano para apoyar la seguridad alimentaria, conservando el conocimiento cultural y la capacidad de una justicia contributiva significativa con oportunidades reales de administración para aquellos que deseen desempeñar un papel en el cultivo de alimentos para sus comunidades (Beintema et al. 2009, Barthel et al. 2013, 2015, Timmermann y Félix 2015).

Como ya hemos comentado con bastante detalle, el impuesto sobre bienes inmuebles es una carga financiera elevada en el condado de Ramsey porque los terrenos utilizados para la agricultura rara vez reúnen los requisitos para ser clasificados como terrenos agrícolas o para adoptar el programa de aplazamiento del pago de impuestos agrícolas. Esto significa que gran parte de los terrenos agrícolas urbanos —tanto comerciales como no comerciales— corren el riesgo de

Tabla resumen para apoyar el cultivo urbano de alimentos en el condado de Ramsey

Beneficios	Desafíos	Mecanismos de apoyo y objetivos	Grupos de acción
1.3.1 Seguridad alimentaria y bienestar	1.4.1 Beneficios e inversiones en seguridad alimentaria subestimados → costos inaccesibles de tierra, alquiler, materiales	3.2.1 Apoyar la agricultura urbana como uso del suelo a largo plazo mediante la revisión de los procesos de tenencia e impuestos sobre la propiedad -- objetivos principales: arrendamientos a más largo plazo y mayor inclusión en Green Acres u otros procesos de reducción de impuestos.	3.4.1-1 Fideicomiso para tierras públicas, Fideicomiso para tierras de MN, Fideicomisos para tierras comunitarias, etc., para ayudar a crear y administrar mecanismos de acceso y tenencia. Departamento de parques, autoridad de vivienda y reurbanización, vivienda pública, MnDOT, DNR, Grupo de trabajo de espacios abiertos para ayudar a identificar y proporcionar terrenos.
1.3.2 Aprendizaje e intercambio cultural equitativos	1.4.2 Acceso equitativo a espacios verdes interactivos y justicia ambiental	3.2.2 Aumentar la equidad en las oportunidades de agricultura urbana y el apoyo a las instituciones culturales -- objetivos principales: actualmente se ofrece un menú de apoyos para el cultivo urbano de alimentos, ya sea plantas, voluntarios, tutoría, desarrollo profesional y asistencia técnica.	3.4.1-2 Bibliotecas, escuelas, programación de parques. Urban Roots y otros programas de desarrollo juvenil y participación comunitaria, Extensionismo (incluidos los horticultores maestros/conectores de tierras), Sociedad estatal de horticultura y organizaciones existentes de aprendizaje sobre espacios verdes y granjas y huertos.
1.3.3 Espacios verdes y salud ecológica	1.4.3 Marcos políticos → restricciones de zonificación y políticas de AU poco claras	3.2.3 Métricas significativas y sencillas para permitir el cultivo de alimentos -- objetivos principales: un proyecto de ampliación de la rúbrica de subvenciones a la agricultura urbana del departamento de agricultura de Minnesota (MDA) que podría cualificar los lugares de cultivo urbano de alimentos para obtener recursos adicionales (como el agua).	3.4.1-3 Plan de acción y adaptación climática y agencias de sostenibilidad y partes interesadas. Agencias del agua (distritos de cuencas hidrográficas y servicios regionales del agua), Junta de recursos hídricos y de suelo (BWSR) →
1.3.4 Relaciones comunitarias	1.4.4 Relaciones de recursos poco desarrolladas → falta de infraestructuras	3.2.4 comunicación y conexión claras entre agencias, políticas y procedimientos pertinentes -- objetivo principal: catálogo de contactos y lugares donde se aborda el apoyo al cultivo urbano de alimentos	3.4.1-4 → BWSR, líderes comunitarios y organizaciones, anclados por el grupo de trabajo de agricultores emergentes y los equipos de acción pertinentes de la Red Metropolitana de Justicia Alimentaria.

ser gravados con tasas comerciales o residenciales no agrícolas. Esto contrasta tanto con la intención de los programas de impuestos agrícolas (para "fomentar y preservar las explotaciones agrícolas mediante la mitigación del impacto del impuesto a la propiedad en tierras que aumentan de valor debido a fuerzas económicas no agrícolas." Estatuto de MN 273.111). Muchas ciudades consideran la agricultura urbana, especialmente en los barrios desfavorecidos, como un beneficio para el desarrollo económico de la comunidad que debe fomentarse no sólo mediante la exención del impuesto sobre bienes inmuebles, sino también, en muchos casos, ofreciendo incentivos fiscales a quienes aporten recursos de apoyo.

Concluimos el informe revisando las mejores prácticas identificadas en la exploración del condado de Ramsey y de otros lugares, con referencia al Plan Integral 2040 de Ramsey y la visión Thrive MSP 2040 para el desarrollo económico regional. Esta revisión muestra cómo ofrecen los próximos pasos hacia un apoyo más exitoso y equitativo para el cultivo urbano de alimentos.

El impacto social y medioambiental de los sistemas urbanos de cultivo de alimentos depende en gran medida de las prácticas de administración utilizadas. Estos impactos, a su vez, tienen efectos recíprocos en la cantidad de tierra asignada al cultivo urbano, la tenencia, la propiedad, las normas ambientales y los marcos políticos. Una articulación más clara de los resultados deseados por las diversas entidades en condiciones de apoyar el cultivo urbano de alimentos podría ayudar a construir la red de relaciones más resiliente necesaria para normalizar y apoyar el cultivo de alimentos como un uso normal del suelo urbano en el condado de Ramsey.

Para actuar con rapidez, dados los muchos recursos que ya existen —aunque todavía no estén coordinados ni sean accesibles de forma equitativa—, sugerimos agrupar agencias que tengan similares misiones de servicio, ámbitos o enfoques de distrito o vecindario.

Para las cuatro acciones principales en la página anterior, sugerimos los cuatro grupos de acciones siguientes:

1. Las organizaciones que regulan el uso del suelo podrían apoyar una agricultura urbana a un costo accesible y a largo plazo revisando los procesos de tenencia, la clasificación del suelo y los impuestos sobre la propiedad. Estas organizaciones pueden incluir el fideicomiso para tierras públicas, el fideicomiso para tierras de MN, los departamentos de parques, la autoridad de vivienda y reurbanización, la vivienda pública, el departamento de transporte de Minnesota y el departamento de recursos naturales. Las estrategias de gestión propuestas por el grupo de trabajo sobre espacios abiertos y las asociaciones implicadas en el mantenimiento del huerto de Gateway sirven como modelos útiles para las diversas formas en que las agencias pueden avanzar en com-

ponentes específicos para lograr la tenencia de la tierra a largo plazo para el cultivo urbano de alimentos.

2. Las bibliotecas, las escuelas, los departamentos de parques y las organizaciones sin fines de lucro, como Urban Roots y Minnesota State Horticultural Society, están bien posicionadas para aumentar la equidad en las oportunidades de cultivo urbano de alimentos y el apoyo de las instituciones culturales. Estas entidades también podrían desarrollar programas relacionados con el desarrollo de los jóvenes, las relaciones y procesos del manejo de tierras y otros temas relevantes.

3. El establecimiento de métricas significativas y sencillas que reconozcan los numerosos resultados positivos de la agricultura urbana reduciría las barreras a la obtención de recursos para el cultivo de alimentos. En particular, las agencias centradas en el agua, el clima y la sostenibilidad podrían coordinarse para desarrollar métricas compartidas y de fácil seguimiento comunes a sus objetivos y a los beneficios ecológicos proporcionados por la agricultura urbana, especialmente a medida que las preocupaciones sobre el cambio climático se hacen más frecuentes. Estos parámetros ayudarían a legitimar la agricultura urbana y a mejorar el acceso a las ayudas para todos los agricultores y horticultores, y no sólo para aquellos que ya cuentan con buenos recursos y conexiones.

4. Como coordinador a nivel estatal, la Junta de Recursos de Agua y Suelo — con el apoyo de otros líderes y organizaciones comunitarias, por ejemplo, el Grupo de Trabajo de Agricultores Emergentes y los equipos de acción pertinentes de la Red Metropolitana de Justicia Alimentaria— podría reducir aún más la carga sobre los agricultores individuales y los grupos comunitarios. Estas organizaciones podrían trabajar juntas para aumentar la capacidad de conexión tanto entre una agencia con otra, como entre agencias y miembros de la comunidad, lo que reforzaría la eficiencia y la eficacia de los esfuerzos de dotación de recursos.

En el proceso de elaboración de este informe, nos hemos puesto en contacto con las entidades mencionadas más arriba y hemos comprobado su interés en ayudar a hacer realidad las principales recomendaciones del informe. Uno de los problemas básicos de la integración del cultivo de alimentos en el tejido urbano es que no forma parte de las responsabilidades reconocidas de casi ninguna de las entidades encargadas de la gobernanza o el apoyo al uso del suelo. En consecuencia, aunque reconocemos que pueden surgir nuevas oportunidades y formas de organización (las cuales podrían reemplazar nuestras recomendaciones), cerramos el informe con la esperanza de que estas entidades puedan ampliar su capacidad actual para poner en práctica las acciones identificadas en el informe y trabajar conjuntamente con las entidades de gobernanza pertinentes en toda el área metropolitana para dotar de recursos y apoyar la realización de las posibilidades destacadas en nuestra encuesta.

A partir de la Parte 3, en el Apéndice R, incluimos una guía de recursos ilustrada con una lista de recursos que hemos identificado que podrían ser útiles para las granjas y huertos urbanos, entre los que se incluyen, por ejemplo:

- recursos relacionados con la organización de granjas y huertos comunitarios y posibilidades de asociación;
- recursos relacionados con la búsqueda y obtención de terrenos, y comprensión de las responsabilidades de impuestos y seguros pertinentes y las políticas correspondientes; y
- recursos relacionados con la programación, los servicios y el mantenimiento de los cultivos alimentarios urbanos.

Véanse también los demás Apéndices: Apéndice B para la Bibliografía, Apéndice G para el Glosario completo, Apéndice O para los cuadros sinópticos de políticas de todos los municipios del condado de Ramsey por actividad de cultivo urbano de alimentos, y Apéndice P para los memorandos de políticas de cada municipio del condado de Ramsey.

Guests gather for a TCALT tour and conversation about culturally-focused growing at the Community Garden outside of Latinx-focused community organization Comunidades Latinas Unidas En Servicio in Saint Paul.

(Courtesy of Kieran Morris)

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Appendices

What dots can you connect to help support urban food cultivation?

During the conversations that led to this report, many people had insights about existing programs and resources that could already easily be used to support urban food cultivation. Many of these ideas did not require any revision, instead they emerged from an expanded understanding of what it means to engage in the kind of stewardship relationship with land and community needed to grow food in the city. Examples include:

- Capitol Region Watershed District's plan to expand their supported plant list in the Native Landscape Grant program to include edible Indigenous plants, and to encourage collaborative learning with Indigenous communities;
- Ramsey County Housing and Redevelopment Authority identifying many existing programs for environmental stewardship and greenspace maintenance that could include sustainable agroecological practices;
- and the Ramsey County Open Space Working Group adding **community farms*** and **community gardens*** to the concept of "open space," along with trails, parks, and conservation areas.

How can you help continue to make connections that enable everyone who wants to grow food for the community accessing land to do so?

Part 1. Urban food cultivation in Ramsey County: benefits, challenges, and opportunities

Introduction, summary, context for report

Ramsey County, the capital county of Minnesota, is often considered the least agricultural county in the state — it is the only county without a dedicated Agricultural Extension Educator, for example. However, as the Ramsey County Farmer of the Year portraits here show, the culture of farming and gardening is alive in Ramsey County, and it reflects vibrantly what the Minnesota Department of Agriculture (MDA) calls the "Emerging Farmers" of Minnesota. In their 2021 report calling urgently on the state to address the future of farming, the MDA notes centrally that "Barriers to emerging farmers include access to land, the cost of health insurance, discrimination and racism, educational and training opportunities, and profitability of small to mid-size operations" (page 2). **Urban food cultivation*** is already a powerful venue for community engagement and racial **equity*** — both called for in Ramsey County's Comprehensive Plan: "Ramsey County has large disparities by race. This limits the prosperity of the entire population and creates barriers to achieving our countywide goals. Substantial work to integrate racial equity into county operations has begun, but every department will need to embed this lens into their daily work and the countywide budget" (2018).

MDA 2021 defines the category of Emerging Farmers as encompassing "a number of historically underserved communities including women, veterans, persons with disabilities, Native American/Alaska Native, communities of color, young and beginning farmers, LGBTQ+ farmers and more" (page 2).

MDA notes that their recommendations and insights regarding emerging farmers will benefit all farmers in Minnesota, and that thriving food and agricultural systems are important for all Minnesotans. "Established farmers have a significant role to play in advocating for, and providing mentorship to, emerging farmers. Equity and justice in the agricultural system improves the overall sector and can create a more robust and resilient economy for all Minnesotans. Land ownership and agricultural professions are a key pathway to building inter-generational wealth, both within family units and within communities" (MDA, 2021, page 3).

Glossary

Urban food cultivation
The umbrella term "urban food cultivation" is most inclusive of both urban farms (such as the Urban Roots Rivoli Bluffs site and Frogtown Farm) and urban gardens (such as Rice Street Gardens and Victoria Garden). Most reports on the topic suggest that the similarities between farms and gardens are more important than their differences in urban contexts. Policy and planning strategies for thriving, sustainable cities should include provisions for a wide range of food cultivation activities.

Equity
The distribution of power and resources so that all may meet their fundamental needs and fully participate in the life of their community. In the context of urban food cultivation, this means there is space for everyone to learn, participate, and benefit. This also means focused attention for BIPOC communities who have historically been excluded from or violently removed from accessing land, as well as a continuous evaluation process to ensure that standards of accommodating needs and supporting participation are being met.

Glossary

Agriculture
Agriculture means land and associated structures used for the purposes of growing produce, including fruits, vegetables, trees, plants, flowers and other similar crops, and raising animals — like chickens and bees — for food and other products.

Commercial and non-commercial agriculture
Commercial agriculture is the production of livestock or agricultural commodities and the offering of those commodities for sale, for profit; non-commercial agriculture is the production of crops and livestock for the consumption of the farmer and community. Distinguishing features include purpose, number of workers involved or not involved in overall farm decision making, scale of machinery use and farm size, and relationships with other businesses, including for finance.

Minnesota's provisions supporting family farmers as the authorized stewards of farmland, in contrast to investor holdings, provide a useful starting place for addressing concerns about the possibility of displacing residents with extractive horticulture. We see an example of this in Detroit, when Hantz Industries proposed to take over whole blocks to relieve the city of infrastructure costs. Urban food cultivation on this scale would be highly unusual. Proposals made, for example by the Hmong American Farming Association, for expanding the definition of "family farm" beyond the Euro-settler family model embedded in the statute to more inclusively support Hmong, Indigenous, and other extended family models could help better establish smallholder models of shared agricultural space within the County and State of Minnesota.

Farmer portrait: Urban Farm and Garden Alliance

2015 Ramsey County Farm Family of the Year

The Urban Farm and Garden Alliance (UFGA) is a collaboration of eight to ten Community Gardens and a group of Backyard Box Gardeners that promotes reconciliation, healing, peace, social and environmental justice through the cultivation and sharing of food in the Summit-University (Rondo) and Frogtown communities of St. Paul. In 2015, they were named the Ramsey County Family Farm of the year, and their continued efforts to hold space for the Black community legacy of Rondo and for community-led farm and garden technical assistance have been inspiring for everyone who has interacted with them.

From the regular Rondo Reconciliation Lunch Group, facilitated by long-time Urban Farm and Garden Alliance mentors Melvin Giles and Diane Dodge, to the ongoing farmer-to-farmer and community learning projects, often interwoven with community art, the Alliance has exemplified the relationship between everyday practices of growing food in the neighborhoods where people live and sharing cultural transmission that makes those neighborhoods thrive. Key examples of their contributions include: the yearly Greens Celebration, featuring greens preparations offered from across the allied farms and gardens, reviewed by local cultural celebrity judges and also via a people's choice dot survey award in the context of a shared community meal; regular workshops on everything from seed saving to dispute resolution, along with weekly Children's Garden programming in the Peace Sanctuary Garden; action research projects to measure what urban farms and gardens "yield," explicitly using the language of yield to encompass both the vegetative and also social yield of their efforts. These are explicitly framed in terms of peacemaking and reconciliation through gardening (and which draw on the Minnesota Legislative Report Card on Racial Equity framework), as well as measuring various soil amendments being used to improve urban soils (such as the current cardboard mulch experiments). They have also sustained long-term work with the Ramsey County Master Gardener program, which has become known as the "Land Connectors" program through their work reconsidering the implications of control and mastery narratives of land stewardship in communities who have traumatic histories with both agriculture and mastery ideas in practice.

Farmer portrait: Northwoods Organics

2011 Ramsey County Farm Family of the Year

Dave Massey of Northwoods Organics is bringing principles of intergenerational growing and sustainable agriculture to his community, and has been at it for over twenty years. He grew independently for many years on his property in Cass County, but felt a desire to expand. In concert with his father-in-law Harold, also an organic farmer, Massey established a three-acre plot in White Bear lake in the early 1990s. Since then, he has established fifty raised beds and a greenhouse, growing heirloom vegetables and fruit, such as tomatoes, raspberries, blueberries, rhubarb, asparagus, and several varieties of herbs. The farm is certified organic.

More than just selling to local restaurants and markets, and providing for friends and family, Massey uses his garden as a resource for education and demonstration. He maintains an affiliation with the Land Stewardship Project, and gives presentations at conferences, markets, and community events. He is also conscious about the ecological impact his growing process has on the land and vegetation. He starts all his plants for both his Ramsey and Cass County farms at his White Bear Lake location and practices regenerative seed-saving, working with the Decorah, IA-based organization Seed Savers.

Named by the University of Minnesota Farm Family Recognition Program as the 2011 Ramsey County Farm Family of the Year, Northwoods Organics represents many of the values we hope to observe in urban food cultivation. Sharing knowledge and stewardship between generations and with the community, deliberately preserving heirloom crops, and collaborating with the larger sustainability movement—all of these are critical pillars for the growing foundation of urban farming, in Ramsey County and beyond.

Farmer portrait: Seeds of Hope Community Garden

2019 Ramsey County Farm Family of the Year

For over a decade, Seeds of Hope Community Garden, hosted by New Life Presbyterian Church in Roseville, has united a holy trinity of local groups, including immigrant communities, neighborhood residents, and the church itself. Under the leadership of garden coordinator Darby Laing, and fellow organizers Michael Wilson, Ken Kamau, Riz Prakaisim, and Bill Peterson, the space serves as a meeting point for neighbors, and a cornucopia for the neighborhood. The primary section of garden plots for rent supports roughly twenty eight families; however, the work being done in the space doesn't end there.

In partnership with surrounding food shelves, the garden supports several volunteer-led community plots where gardeners cultivate and distribute fresh produce to underserved members of the community. Seeds of Hope also supports a regenerative effort through Como Community Seed Library to facilitate seed saving events. The garden hosts several other community events throughout the growing season and rounds it all out with an end-of-season potluck.

In 2019, Seeds of Hope was recognized as Ramsey County Farm Family of the Year. As a gathering space, a source of healthy food for many residents, and an example of collaboration between different groups within the community, the garden exemplifies the integral benefits that come with hosting growing sites in urban areas. It also showcases the monumental potential of collaboration between inner-city food shelves and community gardens. In an era where nutritional security is so threatened, partnerships such as these could be goalposts on the path towards **food sovereignty*** and healthy communities, and Seeds of Hope is helping to lead the way.

Farmer portrait: R&R Cultivation

2021 Ramsey County Farm Family of the Year

In light of the longstanding difficulties inherent in acquiring and maintaining highly-priced and taxed urban land for growing food, it is often the case that urban farming operations must shift their models to accommodate a lack of traditional growing space. The growers who flourish in these conditions are those who embrace unorthodox production strategies and establish strong community relationships. As the 2021 Ramsey County Farm Family of the Year recipient, R&R Cultivation was founded upon these principles and still embodies them to its core. From humble beginnings in a 4 x 4 box in founder Nick Robinson's basement, to a larger warehouse space that he developed with his business partner and close friend Lance Ramm, to expanding to an even larger location in the past year, R&R aims to make quality gourmet produce available to stores and farmers markets all over the Twin Cities.

One of the factors that lends itself well to R&R's mission is its preferred crop — mushrooms. Not only can they be grown indoors, an important consideration in a state with winters as frigid as those in Minnesota, but they can also convert unused indoor spaces in the city into generators of extremely nutritious fare. On a scale from the basement box that Nick Robinson started growing in, to the almost science fiction-esque systems of air exchangers, humidifiers and LED bands that power R&R's current enterprise, the horizons of mushroom cultivation are extremely wide, and will continue to grow and innovate with the changing climate.

R&R's service doesn't end with fresh mushrooms themselves, either. In addition to selling fresh and dried, powdered mushrooms that are packed with vitamins, minerals, and nutrients, they also have an entire section on their website dedicated to showcasing different recipes to try with their crops — and they are present as mushroom educators at many Twin Cities farmers markets. Pre-COVID, they were also renowned for their educational tours! This type of relationship between growers and consumers models a more substantive connection between our society and what it eats than is often available. R&R Cultivation is not a standard farm setup, and that's exactly what makes it worthy of note. It stands as a testament to how ingenuity, determination, and friendship can use available resources and opportunities to create success in growing, literally by thinking outside the box, and into the warehouse.

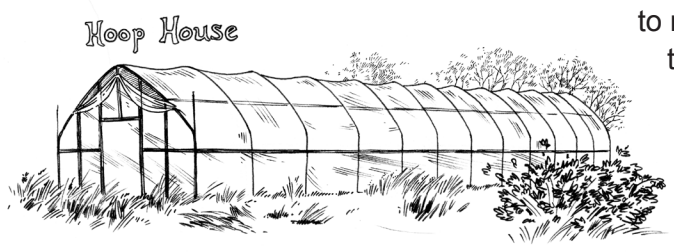
Farmer portrait: Holistic Health Farms

2013 Ramsey County Farm Family of the Year

Tim Page and
Cherry Flowers

At its core, urban food cultivation is a labor of love. There are myriad difficulties inherent in the process of growing within a city environment — material, legal, and environmental. Given these difficulties, most determined growers must anchor themselves with a strong core connection of love — for community, family, land, education, or heritage. Occasionally though, the love is between individuals, and this feeling has just as much power to germinate the seeds of change. Tim Page is a North Minneapolis grower who was working with youth to cultivate a previously unused soil plot, hoping to inspire land stewardship in a stigmatized and underserved neighborhood. Through this work he met and fell in love with his partner Cherry Flowers, and together they founded Holistic Health Farms, recipient of the 2015 Ramsey County Farm Family of the Year Recognition.

Operating out of a market garden on Maryland Avenue and Arundel Street in St. Paul's North End, and farming on certified organic land in North Branch, they have explored many intensive farming methods to optimize their vegetable yield. This effort is fueled by their version of a "high tunnel" (also known as a "**hoop house***"), a greenhouse powered by a vermiculture engine that uses layered organic waste and earthworms to create hyper-rich compost for reuse across their growing sites. This method creates a finished product that doesn't need to cure for as long as manure, or have as pungent an odor. By championing this strategy in addition to many others, Holistic Health is helping to refine methods that could be incredibly beneficial to future urban growers working with limited resources. As they continue to expand and grow their knowledge base, they are also breaking into the arena of aquaponic systems, another potentially sustainable growing method, which adds fish to the cycle of cultivation.



Holistic Health is also sharing the love, offering not only affordable produce to the community, but also education in vegetable gardening, organic methodology, garden design, healthy eating, healthy living, composting, and soil building. Youth and community remain at the core of their mission, as they have worked with Boys Totem Town, Farm on the Bluff, and Frogtown Farm in St. Paul and Emerge Community Development and the Cultural Wellness Center in Minneapolis. By sharing their skills and experience with the community, Tim and Cherry are contributing to a longstanding tradition of passing growing techniques between family and across generations, including the knowledge that will continue through the lives of the youth they impact.

1.1 Historical and ongoing urban food cultivation supports in Ramsey County

Governmental and nongovernmental organizations in Ramsey County have supported urban agriculture in a number of ways. By including clear provisions about urban agriculture in municipal codes and building food cultivation into planning documents like comprehensive plans and climate resiliency plans, municipalities in the county are legitimizing urban agriculture as a land use (Hawkins, Lloyd). Specific departments, for example Saint Paul Housing and Redevelopment Authority (HRA) and Parks and Recreation, are helping residents grow food by making processes to lease land straightforward and consistent — see sample leases in Appendix R (Hawkins). The Saint Paul-Ramsey County Public Health, Statewide Health Improvement Partnership (SHIP), and Ramsey County Food Security Office have assembled resources and maps to facilitate community food cultivation — in addition to commissioning this report (see their website at www.ramseycounty.us/your-government/projects-initiatives/urban-ag-community-gardening/). Expanding access to urban agriculture was identified as a community priority according to a 2022 Needs Assessment, completed by Ramsey County.

Ramsey County provides access to some of its land, and Saint Paul HRA's garden lease program, Parks and Recreation, and Real Estate Division lease land to nonprofits for $1 per month (Hawkins, Horkey, Mitrione).

Within Saint Paul, district councils are small-scale, influential organizations that tend to be the most accessible and approachable entity for residents to voice community concerns. Their support has been instrumental in establishing urban agriculture spaces, particularly in districts 3, 5, 11, 12, and 16 (Pfeiffer, Lienesch, Mitrione, Russelle, Savin). In addition to district councils, other nonprofits — like Urban Roots and CLUES (Comunidades Latinas Unidas En Servicio/Latino Communities United in Service) — develop relevant programming and coordinate community gardens, urban farms, and edible landscapes to provide space and resources for growing and gathering food. This involves navigating leases, **insurance***, and water access (Ball, Hawkins, Horkey, McKee, Mitrione, Rippel, Weber).

District councils serve as a vehicle for communication — whether through newsletters, meetings, or spreading information through word of mouth — between government and residents, and between neighbors, helping to augment information and resource sharing (Horkey).

Glossary

Insurance
Premises liability insurance is the most basic form of liability insurance covering risks suffered by visitors to a location covered by such a policy. Such insurance is often required for community farms and gardens to relieve the landholder of liability, and can often be acquired for community food cultivation via district councils or other local non-profit organizations associated with the efforts. Easier access to such insurance would be a useful resource because many urban food producers and landholders have named it as a barrier.

Nonprofits are well suited to partnering with local agencies that can support urban food cultivation through offering repair and maintenance services, sharing free resources like compost, and providing access to land that they hold (Ball, Hawkins). Land for growing food is leased or supplied to nonprofits by statewide departments like the Department of Natural Resources and the Minnesota Department of Transportation, by Ramsey County itself, and by both public and private institutions within the county like churches, senior living facilities, or schools (Hawkins). A large number of gardens are on land leased to nonprofits for only $1 per month by Saint Paul agencies (*Garden Lease Guidelines*, 1996; Hawkins; Horkey; Mitrione). Furthermore, Ramsey County organizations have helped growers obtain funding to support their efforts once they have

Some governmental programs that are currently helpful to urban gardeners and farmers include AGRI urban agriculture grants; the Natural Resources Conservation Service Environmental Quality Incentives Program, which helps fund high tunnels; Ramsey County Recycling and Energy Funds, including BizRecycling Grants; and Ramsey County's free compost (Hawkins). Other potentially useful sources of funding include the Neighborhood STAR Program (Neighborhood Sales Tax Revitalization), St. Paul-Ramsey County Statewide Health Improvement Partnership, and the National Association of Conservation Districts through the Ramsey County Soil and Water Conservation Division (Ball, Hawkins, Mitrione, White Eagle). For more detailed information about these programs, visit Appendix R. Additional assistance has also involved governmental entities supporting farmers' market patrons and consequently, growers, with SNAP-EBT and the Market Bucks program (Ball, Hawkins, Pokawa).

land access by providing assistance with grant writing, funding process navigation, and writing specific projects into grants.

Although a review of the prior century of urban food cultivation in the Twin Cities metropolitan area is beyond the scope of this report, the past two to three decades have seen remarkable activation of community efforts around urban food cultivation in Ramsey County, including the vibrant Farm in the City program (from 1990 to 2008), refugee-focused garden advocacy, and intentional incorporation of urban agriculture in the urban fabric. This has taken many forms, from the high visibility role of urban agriculture in the Lowertown plan and launching of Frogtown Farm in a partnership between the city, state, and community, to the less visible but extensive reworking of policy to integrate urban agriculture into all **zoning*** categories in Saint Paul in 2009 (Urban Agriculture Zoning Study: Draft Text Amendments 2013).

See Hannah Ramer and colleagues' recent work on the earlier role of urban agriculture promotion in city boosterism, and its role in supporting pernicious racial covenanting and segregation in the Twin Cities (Ramer 2022, Walker et al. 2022); as well as Dovetail Partners' *An Introduction to Urban Agriculture – Past, Present, and Future*, which describes the Homegrown Minneapolis initiative and other steps Minneapolis has taken to promote urban agriculture, despite the history of creating greenspace in areas inequitably protected as white.

Such partnerships have been beneficial to both the government and the community. "To be honest, in the major projects we've accomplished, it happens because of partnerships, so those are very critical." (White Eagle)

In the past few years, Ramsey County has substantially increased its efforts to expand urban agriculture. For example, the recently developed "Urban Ag & Community Gardening" section of Ramsey County website provides useful information and resources and describes outreach efforts to expand these resources and publicize them (including garden locations and joining instructions, under "join a community garden"). There have been a variety of initiatives aimed at helping residents pursuing food cultivation, including the pilot SummerLands program, food scrap drop-off spots, and free mulch and compost pickup sites.

More recently, particularly after the COVID-19 pandemic exposed the vulnerability of our prevailing food system (Raja 2020, Anindya and Sekhar 2021), focus has shifted to a more broad, system-wide assessment of **food security*** in Ramsey County. In 2020, the county held a series of community engagement sessions

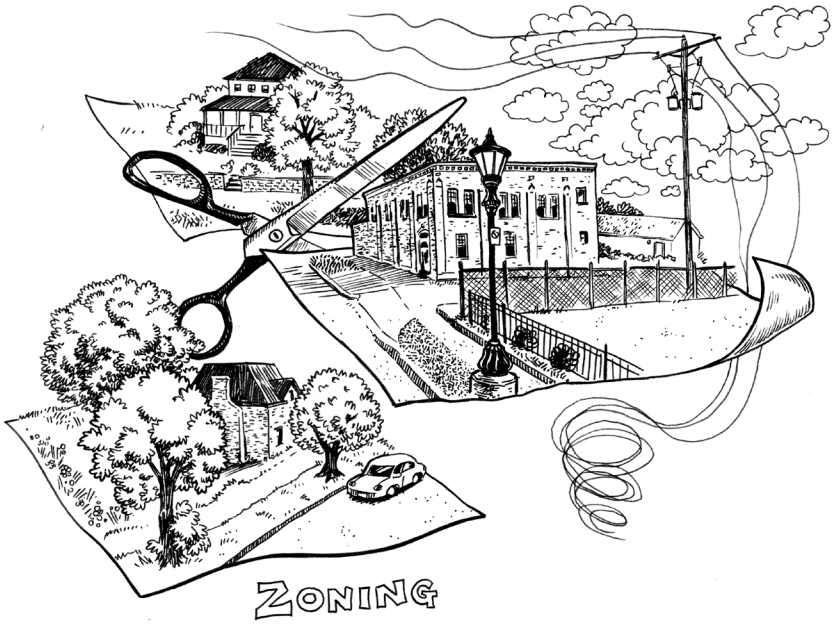
Glossary

Zoning
The control and direction of the use and development of properties, including existing and future land uses and structure restrictions. Zoning regulations are published through municipal code.

Food security
A metric of consistent access to nutritious food for individuals, families, communities, settlements, cities, or nations. Food justice is quite often a function of guaranteeing food security, especially within BIPOC and lower income communities facing legacies of low or negligible food security.

Resilience and Resourcefulness
Resilience is often defined as the ability to withstand and recover from disruption. In food systems, this means continuously supplying sufficient, accessible, acceptable food for all. Planning equitably for resilience, however, requires adequate resourcing of communities, especially those vulnerable to disruption. Disasters are rarely "natural," they are frequently correlated with extraction of resources or systemic under-resourcing.

Land Tenure
The legal system of "holding" access to land, determining who can use land, for how long, and under what conditions. We emphasize land tenure, and not just access, because the formal and informal customs governing access to land for urban food cultivation in Ramsey County favor temporary and insecure land tenure. This has been named as the second greatest challenge to successfully producing food for communities, after accessing land in the first place.



to assess residents' priorities and share progress toward the food system goals prioritized by participants (predominantly representatives of direct service providing organizations). The results of these sessions displayed the **resourcefulness*** and determination of people and organizations in the county in terms of food provision and distribution. However, one component of food security important to the community consistently failed to make progress: urban agriculture, specifically land access for growing food. Part of Ramsey County's strategy for addressing this challenge included the call to assess policies related to urban agriculture in the county, with the goal of minimizing challenges and creating clearer pathways to reaching long-term **land tenure*** for growing food. Because these matters align well with TCALT's mission and values, we were eager to collaborate with the county to achieve these objectives. We are grateful that this process allowed us to produce a report with staff who have been at the forefront of driving urban agriculture forward in Ramsey County, primarily Franny Clary-Leiferman, Statewide Health Improvement Partnership Health Educator, and the county's Interim Food Security Coordinator, Carissa Dillon.

This report on the benefits, challenges, and opportunities for urban food cultivation in Ramsey County has been prepared by TCALT in consultation with Saint Paul-Ramsey County Public Health and a great number of gardeners, farmers, policy makers, and policy implementers and maintainers who shared their time, experience, and aspirations with us. We survey the policies, zoning, ordinances, and comprehensive plans of all districts within the county, and report on a wide range of interviews about how policies and practices are supporting or challenging the production of food in Ramsey County, with a particular focus on the intersection between racial equity and land tenure.

What follows below is a response to Ramsey County's call to "conduct scans on city/municipality policies, zoning, ordinances and comprehensive plans for urban agriculture opportunities" employing "a racial equity lens and focus on equitable food and land access, with a focus on residents/communities of greatest social vulnerability, food insecurity and least access to land," and identifying "opportunities and obstacles that could be reformed to improve opportunities for urban agriculture including longer term land access for urban agriculture per municipality."

In their 2015 report on Urban Agriculture, the Minnesota Department of Agriculture has also called for studies and reports like this that help address the barriers like land access for growing food, and that establish policies to support urban agriculture.

Opening of the report *Urban Agriculture in Minnesota,* pages 2-3:

"In 2015, the Minnesota State Legislature directed the Commissioner of Agriculture to convene interested stakeholders and develop a proposal to effectively and efficiently promote urban agriculture in Minnesota cities." "Urban agriculture encompasses a broad spectrum of activities, from backyard and community gardening to high density production on vacant lots or in urban warehouses. Some models of urban agriculture have also demonstrated innovative ways to extend the short Minnesota growing season and utilize limited space in urban areas. The relationship between urban, peri-urban (urban outskirts — the interface between town and country, the rural-urban transition zone), and rural agriculture is important to note as there are overlapping needs and challenges across these spheres. There are gray areas between those who grow commercially and those who grow for self-provisioning; those who grow on a small scale and those who have growing space both inside and outside of city limits.

A few examples illustrate the wide array of models that fall under the umbrella of urban agriculture:

- A community garden that donates produce to a food shelf every week during the growing season except one week when they sell their produce to raise money to support the garden;
- Urban youth who learn how to grow, harvest, process and market food in an after-school and summer program, building leadership, job and entrepreneurial skills; and
- An indoor aquaculture and hydroponics operation that sells fish and produce to restaurants and grocery stores.

Additional examples illustrate how the definition of urban agriculture can affect growers, depending upon how it is defined:

- A beekeeper who once had his hives in a peri-urban area but has been forced to move his hives because of expanding city limits and changed zoning; and
- Farmers who live in the city but farm where land is more accessible (outside of city limits), and sell to an urban market.

Stakeholders identified the following key findings about urban agriculture in Minnesota through a public feedback process:
Definition (scope) of urban agriculture:

- A wide variety of products and types of agriculture fall under the umbrella of urban agriculture; and
- The size of the urban area should not matter.

Barriers facing urban agriculture:

- Long-term access to land;
- Soil contamination and lack of resources for proper **remediation***;
- Regulatory barriers and inconsistencies; and
- Economic, cultural, political, and environmental barriers along with a lack of access to resources and knowledge create a challenging environment for urban agriculture to succeed.

Glossary

Contamination remediation
Remnant and redevelopment areas of cities can present challenges to food cultivation in the form of residual contamination from prior uses or ongoing contamination from contemporary pollution (from roads, trains, manufacturing, and waste processing). Many stereotypes of urban ecologies as polluted inaccurately underestimate the contamination of rural food sources (from pesticides, manufacturing, and the same atmospheric depositions that fall on cities). Further, areas of higher population density often have considerably more resources dedicated to soil and contamination remediation. For common pollutants such as lead, contamination can be stabilized and remediated through growing plants and increasing soil organic matter.

The MDA suggests that the following could be considered in establishing policy to promote urban agriculture:

1. The subject of urban agriculture spans the missions of a number of state agencies and institutions. For-profit urban agriculture is consistent with the mission of the MDA, while other forms of urban agriculture better fit the missions of other agencies and institutions: gardening and self-provisioning, the University of Minnesota Extension; initiatives to improve health, support community gardens, school based agriculture and food access, the Minnesota Department of Health; initiatives to serve disadvantaged groups or bolster economic development, the Minnesota Department of Human Services or the Department of Employment and Economic Development; and so on.

2. Urban agriculture is a broad term. Each separate law or rule relating to urban agriculture must include its own specific definition of the term in order to avoid confusion and exclusion.

3. Although strong support for urban agriculture exists among many members of the public, support is not universal. More importantly, as with most public policy, unintended adverse consequences can result and any policy to promote urban agriculture needs to be carefully considered and constructed to avoid such consequences.

4. Policy options to promote urban agriculture include:

a. Comprehensive Planning: Encourage local municipalities to include urban agriculture language in comprehensive planning and zoning revisions.

b. Funding: Explore the potential economic impact of urban agriculture. Create incentives for local governments to promote urban agriculture through tax incentives, funding for urban growers and organizations that support urban agriculture, and local food purchasing incentives for large institutions such as state departments, school districts, hospitals, etc.

c. Land Access: Explore opportunities to provide long-term land access by making publicly owned land available for urban agriculture, creating land banks or **land trusts***, and offering funding to remediate contaminated urban land.

d. Regulatory Barriers: Examine and modify existing policies that stand in the way of urban agriculture. Encourage local units of government to evaluate their zoning and planning policies to allow for urban agriculture."

Glossary

Land trust
A private, non-profit conservation organization formed to protect natural resources, such as productive farm and forest land, natural areas, historic structures, and recreational areas. Land trusts purchase and accept donations of conservation easements. They educate the public about the need to conserve land, and some provide land-use and estate planning services to local governments and individual citizens.

1.2 Equity

Glossary

Equity
The distribution of power and resources so that all may meet their fundamental needs and fully participate in the life of their community. In the context of urban food cultivation, this means there is space for everyone to learn, participate, and benefit. This also means focused attention for BIPOC (Black, Indigenous, and People of Color) communities who have historically been excluded from or violently removed from accessing land, as well as a continuous evaluation process to ensure that standards of accommodating needs and supporting participation are being met.

Disparities are driven by unjust differences in the possession of power and wealth, one impactful outcome of which involves gaps in control over land tenure and other resources. As part of ongoing efforts to decrease existing disparities in the region — including those related to urban food cultivation — Ramsey County, its agencies, and its staff have prioritized racial equity as a lens through which to operate, adjust policies, and plan for the future. We outline three ways the county has articulated this priority, then highlight important barriers to achieving racial equity in the domain of urban food cultivation and food security. Our goal in centering this perspective is to remind readers of the deliberate community actions needed to move forward with the recommendations of this report. These actions have been recommended repeatedly, for example by the Emerging Farmers' Working Group and CLUES reports, whose recommendations we reproduce. We call for next steps to include resourcing the community organizers needed to sustain Ramsey County's commitment to equity around urban food cultivation.

Ramsey County Commitment to Equity

Ramsey County's Advancing Racial Equity Policy Statement

"The policy was co-created with community members and Ramsey County staff. This policy is a continuation and alignment of past agency-wide racial equity work.

This policy is to advance racial equity by reducing racial and ethnic-based disparities. The county will do this by being equitable, inclusive, transparent, respectful, and impactful in how we serve and engage with residents, as well as the people who work for Ramsey County. We recognize and acknowledge this requires deconstructing barriers and changing systems, structures, policies, and outcomes.

We will have meaningful and authentic engagement of community and employees to strengthen the administration, development, and implementation of policies, procedures, contracts, budgets, service delivery, and new initiatives. Advancing racial equity ensures all people who need access to the opportunities and services we provide will receive them — not only through county services, but also through contracted goods and services. Racial equity is achieved when race can no longer be used to predict life outcomes, and outcomes for all are improved." (*Advancing Racial Equity Policy*, 2019)

Ramsey County 2040 Comprehensive Plan:

Racial Equity Lens
"Ramsey County has large disparities by race. This limits the prosperity of the entire population and creates barriers to achieving our countywide goals. Substantial work to integrate racial equity into county operations has begun, but every department will need to embed this lens into their daily work and the countywide budget." (Ramsey County, 2018)

Parks and Trails Priorities
One of the priorities of Parks and Trails is to develop relationships with underserved communities. "This involves reaching out to all community members and will take intentional effort and focused resources. These communities are more difficult to reach and therefore take more resources to connect with as compared to the general population. The staff that reflects the community will help make this connection. New and different methods of outreach will be employed to build those relationships so critical to hearing voices not heard before. Use of a racial equity toolkit will help maintain the lens and eliminate disparities. The toolkit will inform all policies, procedures, facilities and planning for every aspect of the department." The Parks & Recreation department describes their racial equity toolkit as applying "a racial equity lens for analysis of programs, policies, procedures, budgeting, capital planning — everything Parks & Recreation does. This is a formal method to listen and learn and respond appropriately. The toolkit will help formalize the process that will eventually become the way of doing business. Everything that is delivered will benefit all people." (Ramsey County, 2018)]

Disparities in Ramsey County Affecting Urban Food Cultivation

> ***"I think there is a clear indication of the racial challenges of urban agriculture — in terms of equity, in terms of social justice, in terms of cultural differences… that includes the kinds of food that they would want to grow, and so forth."*** (Pokawa)

Community gardens are crucial spaces that allow people to socialize, build community, problem solve, acknowledge and respect differences, and share intergenerational and intercultural knowledge, food practices, and foodways (Hawkins). Ramsey County residents repeatedly expressed how people who work together in their garden spaces come from a variety of backgrounds and speak many languages. Katheryn Schneider, a Rice Street Gardens organizer, mentioned that "most of [the] gardeners are recent immigrants. The majority are either Hmong, Nepali, Karen, or Karenni who live in apartments and use their gardens to feed their family."

Since these spaces are so important, and Ramsey County residents who have been marginalized may not otherwise be able to access these benefits as a result of longstanding discriminatory practices, deliberate effort must be made to ensure that these spaces are inclusive and welcoming to everyone, particularly in spaces where equity has not been identified as a priority. Even if equity concerns have not explicitly arisen, that does not indicate the absence of a need for growth in this area, and failing to address equity may be indicative of a dismissal of or indifference to discrimination.

> ***"In my role as membership coordinator, I strive to make the bureaucracy of the garden as welcoming and anti-racist as possible. In my public-facing role, race and racism have not been brought forward as a growth area or problem area for us, but that doesn't mean it isn't there, just that none of our gardeners have brought it up to me."*** (Lienesch)

There are many legitimate reasons — including to avoid attracting attention or to maintain personal safety — that BIPOC growers may not bring up equity issues. Alternatively, equity considerations might not have been broached because the people who seek it are completely excluded from the space. Disparities may emerge in community gardens that do not deliberately prioritize long-term access to the same plot for residents who do not have the ability to cultivate food in other areas — like a yard — instead of providing equal access to random plots, which is currently the approach in some garden spaces.

> ***"We do not explicitly have racial justice as a mission in our garden. Equal access to plots and to enjoyment of the space, absolutely, and strict adherence to the parks department rules that govern our space, but no specific anti-racist programming or values to feed that programming."*** (Lienesch)

City ordinances and planning practices can hinder communal access to space for growing food, further increasing inequities. For example, in spring 2020, Quentin Nguyen, a Southeast Asian immigrant and Ramsey County resident, planned to make use of his front yard to grow food for family and neighbors during the beginning of the COVID-19 pandemic. In response, the City of Falcon Heights adopted an interim ordinance that prohibited front-yard vegetable gardens, actively preventing Quentin from providing basic support to family and friends during an unpredictable and relatively resource-scarce period of time (Peters, 2020). Since then, Falcon Heights has implemented a new ordinance that allows residential gardens in front yards, but only the owner or the resident of a lot is allowed to garden on it (Falcon Heights, 2022). This prevents Falcon Heights neighbors from being able to share collective land to grow food in a municipality — one of many in Ramsey County — where city-provided or public urban agriculture space does not meet

demand (*Community Garden*, 2022). This is one example of many that shows how using land for urban agriculture is particularly difficult for BIPOC growers and low-income communities, whether in a community garden or for starting their own farm.

> ***"When it comes to access to land, and all the reports that came out of Emerging Farmers across Minnesota, there are huge, huge disparities around the kind of support [needed]… Urban agriculture, in terms of investment, is very limited within these urban areas — and who does that affect? The poor, folks of color, the marginalized, who are living in these communities."*** (Pokawa)

Renting a plot for the growing season or purchasing produce from the farmers' market are both activities that depend on monetary capital, leaving people with little disposable income less likely to participate in urban agriculture as either producers or consumers without assistance. Another challenge involves urban food cultivation permitting procedures, which are currently confusing to just about everyone. In fact, the details that follow show the many ways these policies and procedures could be made much clearer for everyone; the length of this report is largely because of the complications we found when we looked closely.

> ***"There doesn't seem to be a very clear, like 'this is how you do this'…step by step, laid out, very easy to follow [guide in] multiple languages…there's none of that for if you wanted to make a community garden."*** (Hindson)

"The systems that [Urban Roots] navigates are not friendly to folks who have really rich farming knowledge who are new American families specifically, or migrant families…it's just not friendly for trying to navigate those systems in the first place, so I think that's one of the biggest challenges" (Ball). "The systems of government — those systems are built solely on white systems, and often require someone who understands those systems and a navigator. So there's a significant gap there" (MatasCastillo). While attempting to work through systems specifically shaped to oppress them, BIPOC community members are also persistently performing additional unacknowledged labor as they mentor young BIPOC growers, support peer BIPOC growers, educate white community members, and push back against racist people and policies. All this extra work is emotionally, mentally, and physically draining for people who already likely have less time, energy, and trust to devote to securing funding or navigating bureaucratic processes. "You really have BIPOC folks who, in terms of institutional challenges, are constantly having to deal with toxic relationships and toxic associations" (Pokawa).

"Some organizations are] really wary of the county doing outreach because [it] always felt like the county was trying to be like, 'Look, we did a listening session of the Latino organization, now we know the Latino community needs!' It felt very one-sided, like look what the community is doing for the county as opposed to… what benefit is there in it for the community by doing this listening session? The county can engage with people with it also feeling like… they are actually going to make the changes… they are proposing." (Hindson)

During planning processes entities often carry out perfunctory community engagement instead of doing it in respectful and appropriate ways that do not burden BIPOC folks. Examples of appropriate community engagement include bundling different government offices' listening needs and bringing them to BIPOC-centered spaces and supplying appropriate resources to staff those spaces for these purposes. In the more perfunctory scenarios, the engagement process usually benefits the listening entity more than the people investing uncompensated time and effort to share their knowledge. To build trust with residents and local organizations, outreach should be done collaboratively in ways that minimize power imbalances and are accountably — not just performatively — taking into account community desires and needs.

The St. Paul HRA has been lauded as an ally to growers based on its efforts in providing affordable land for food cultivation and recognizing social benefits of urban agriculture. The St. Paul HRA states that "it is hoped that the provision of public land for gardening will promote a sense of community and empowerment and create mutual benefit through the shared use of land in the tradition of self-help" (*Garden Lease Guidelines*, 1996). Devoting public land to growing food is an excellent first step in helping many growers to achieve their goals. However, to more equitably aid a greater number of growers, the government must expand efforts to provide adequate and appropriate support to facilitate urban agriculture. This approach is more effective than hoping benefit will emerge from solely offering space and relying on rhetoric promoting "self-help," a fallacy that is particularly problematic in terms of equity since not all people have the same ability to conjure the energy and materials to grow food.

Resources dedicated to responding to the demand to *start* gardens need to be accompanied by supports for *continuing* gardens. Although most gardeners and farmers who spoke with us acknowledged the pressures on public land that might prevent permanent tenure in all cases, almost everyone shared dramatic stories of displacement that seemed unnecessary. At worst, these were punishing (for example, with parks managers who appeared to resent gender and racial empowerment components of garden programs, disallowing or de-resourcing them); at

best, they suffered from a lack of communication. This latter category ranged from the most common complaint — that food cultivation could have continued along with the new needed land uses — to many examples of where better communication of displacement plans could have helped with relocating efforts to sites that witnessed farm and garden displacement and now still remain vacant.

HRA could help address the common perception that government opens the door only as far as absolutely necessary but no further by responding more transparently in allocating the length of tenure arrangements, especially in fundamentally undevelopable sites, which could have straightforwardly-renewable 10- to 30-year land use agreements. Those who apply for such tenure arrangements often have to make a case for the value of their land use; these justifications could help build a better case for the value of urban food cultivation as a use that can be weighed in the calculations of "highest and best use" in more thorough ways than by the usual metric of potential for highest **property*** tax income. Ramsey County's SummerLands program provided another example of how more extended resourcing programs could help urban farmland access initiatives succeed better.

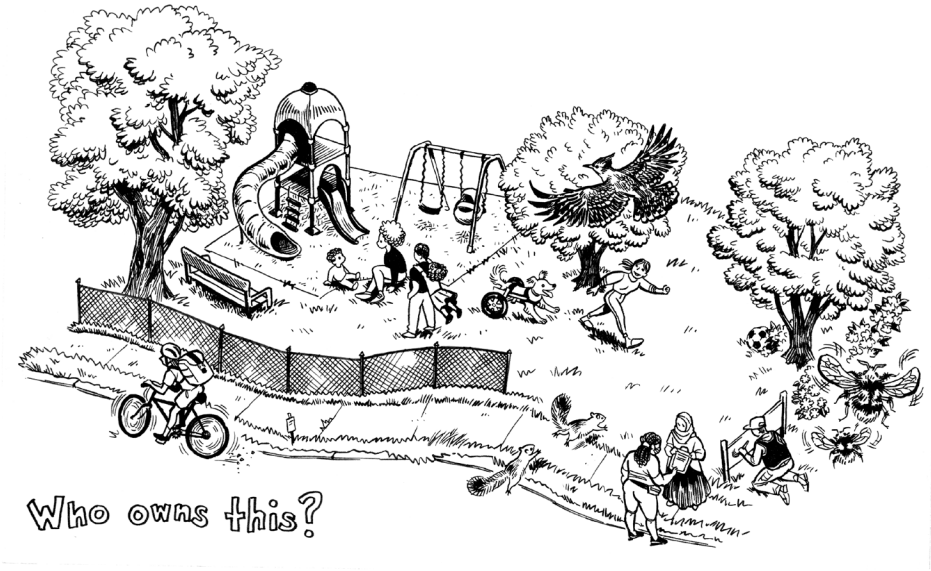
The SummerLands Program, which ran from 2020-2021, gave residents the opportunity to apply for seasonal (May–October) use of tracts of county land for container gardens and other cultural community uses. Unfortunately, the program was recently discontinued because there were very few applicants. The SummerLands program did not allow planting directly in the ground and expected the space to be cleared and returned to its original state at the end of the season. These requirements, in addition to a lack of water access, dissuaded most people from participating in the program because only one season was not worth the labor it would take to set up the growing space.

Glossary

Property

In the context of land, property is a legal mechanism for securing the rights to use land. Property is understood differently depending on context and place. In the United States, property is often described as a "bundle" of rights granted by the authorities to those who hold the rights to use land.

The principle of land as property has origins in treaties between the United States and Indigenous nations. Although Indigenous people successfully negotiated to retain some of the rights they had always had (e.g. hunting, fishing on their land), ultimately colonists unjustly stole millions of acres of Indigenous land through treaties, which transformed the natural world into private property through specific legal processes still in place to uphold "property." This established the foundation for the prevailing system of property and land ownership in the United States. (Case, M. (2018). The Relentless Business of Treaties: How Indigenous Land Became US Property. Amsterdam University Press.)



Residents who may be able to take advantage of short-term, resource-scant programs like SummerLands are likely to be well-resourced white people rather than those who would benefit most from public space to grow food, exacerbating an existing equity gap. While the well-intentioned SummerLands Program's opening of underutilized space to residents is highly encouraged, further supports — like guaranteed long-term land tenure, affordable leases, maintenance assistance, soil remediation, and water access — are necessary to make growing food on public land feasible for residents, specifically BIPOC and immigrant communities.

All of the challenges described in section 1.4 below are furthered and exacerbated by existing institutional barriers to racial equity and community engagement in governance. The MDA Emerging Farmers' report of 2021 has several helpful pointers on considering both the intersections of barriers and how to address them.

"Nothing About Us Without Us" section of the Emerging Farmers Working Group (EFWG) Legislative Report, 2021

(pages 6, 7, 8, and 11, with particular thanks to the Emerging Farmers' Working Group members who worked with us on consider these recommendations in the context of this report):

The recommendations of the Emerging Farmers' Working Group highlight barriers:

- Amend current language for Emerging Farmer Working Group for the ability to also accept private resources. Fund the Emerging Farmers' Working Group with appropriate levels to ensure the groups' success.
- Create budget for translation and bilingual services.
- Fund a dedicated position for community engagement within the MDA.
- Establish a one-stop shop for resources for emerging farmers, which includes training resources, grants and funding opportunities, and other materials. One model is the Starting a Food Business Roadmap, hosted by the MDA and developed in partnership with community organizations and businesses.
- Classify agriculture more broadly for apprenticeship-eligible professions.
- Address health insurance costs and student loan debt for emerging farmers.
- Support equity and inclusivity training in farming communities to strengthen connections between current farmers and emerging farmers.
- Create specific grant opportunities for emerging farmers that assist with establishing a farm business, rather than improving or expanding an existing farm business. Consider higher percentages of cost-sharing, and/or longer loan terms for emerging farmer groups.
- Implement advanced payment options for grant funding for emerging farmers, based on the USDA Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS) Environmental Quality Incentives Program (EQIP). This NRCS program allows for practice payments in advance of implementation of practices for historically underserved producers.

- Provide trainings to farm service providers that help reduce barriers for emerging farmers, including equity and implicit bias training, and alternative models of agriculture (**regenerative***, direct-marketing, perennial etc.).
- Provide funding for farm service providers to translate materials and trainings.
- Dedicate further attention to the history of land ownership and farming in Minnesota.
- University research on the cultural and social history of agriculture in the state would provide context for emerging farmers and the communities in which they live.
- Advance Farm-to-School/Institution initiatives as a market development tool for emerging farmers.
- Articulate a vision for agriculture in Minnesota that encompasses emerging farmers and small/midsize farming businesses.
- Work to reframe the story of farming as an opportunity for underserved communities.
- Market the stories of emerging farmers to show examples of how farming can be practiced.

"In the future, funding should be dedicated for the following initiatives:

- Paying for expertise: There is a growing understanding that advisory groups that rely on the time and lived experiences of underrepresented communities should pay those participants for their time and expertise. Like consulting fees for expert input, these payments reflect the value of the person's insights, and shows that the host organization sees the input from these advisors as having value worth investing in. Engaging a facilitator: … an external facilitator was identified as a need by the internal organizing committee. The facilitator helps with guiding the discussion, identifying key themes, and bringing all voices into the conversation. The facilitator can also assist with setting the agendas, developing a governance structure, and responding to feedback from stakeholders.
- Staffing: The EFWG does not currently exist in any MDA employee position descriptions. The lead staff for the first year of the group was able to contribute on an ad hoc basis but going forward there will likely be a need for a more formal staff role, or multiple staff roles. Currently the primary responsibility for the working group sits with the Assistant Commissioner. A dedicated program staff should be assigned for logistics, outreach and communication, and analysis and developing a workplan based on the recommendations of the working group. Multiple staff could be assigned responsibilities…"

These staffing recommendations parallel the constant refrain we heard that urban food cultivation does not currently fall inside the staff positions of anyone in municipal or county government. We discuss this further below, and the Gardening Matters materials in Appendix R help provide an overview of the organizing supports needing staffing.

CLUES Community Voices: Access to Healthy Food and Green Spaces Policy Recommendations (2002)

Community Voices is part of our Advocacy and Community Building program at CLUES. Using a cohort model, the program engages community members on specific issues such as housing, education, food/land access and more to learn about their lived experiences within local, state, and national systems and bring their stories and recommendations for change to decision-makers who may not have had another opportunity to hear from Latinx community members. Community Voices: Access to Healthy Food and Green Spaces focused on bringing the voices of Ramsey County Latinx community garden members to the decision-making table. During six (6) weeks together, the action cohort members worked to transform individual and collective experiences into systemic change solutions to the challenges that exist within the Latinx gardener community.

Latinx Community Members of Saint Paul have created the following list of policy recommendations:

Gardening Resources & Education

- Public gardening resources available in multiple languages. Currently the "Gardening Policies" section of the City of St. Paul website is only available in English. If you want to submit a proposal for a community garden the proposal form is in English and there is no language line support. Website here: https://www.stpaul.gov/departments/parks-and-recreation/natural-resources/blooming-saint-paul/gardening-policy
- Gardening workshops/trainings and educational materials available in multiple languages that include Spanish. Many of the Latinx gardeners have expressed interest in learning more about gardening techniques and recommended methods by the city but workshops, trainings and educational materials are not available in Spanish. Workshops and trainings would be online or at community centers, nature centers, partner community organizations, schools, and other gathering facilities and advertised through community networks/organizers. Educational materials would be widely available on county/city websites and advertised through community partners.
- Minnesota Department of Natural Resources to include Spanish language materials in their website's education section. When gardeners do research on topics such as invasive species, they are not able to access any literature, trainings, presentations, and other learning resources in Spanish. Currently the DNR has a variety of courses about Invasive Terrestrial Plants in their Forestry Section, and none are available in other languages. Here is the section: https://www.dnr.state.mn.us/invasives/terrestrialplants/index.html

- Nature Centers in Ramsey County to offer “Exploremos Juntos”, an initiative that would invite Latinx families and their children to enjoy the outdoors by participating in nature-related activities. During these events, adults and youth would have the chance to experience the outdoor activities like canoeing, hiking on trails, biking, camping and more.

Green Space Access & Protection

- Dedicate public land and lots throughout the City of St. Paul/Ramsey County for community members to establish community gardens with long-term or permanent access- no future development. The designated public lands should be close to bus lines, light rail, and main roads, and in highly populated areas where there are few green spaces and lots of multi-unit/rental housing. In addition, there should be options for winter growing/seed starting via community greenhouses and educational resources/materials for growing food indoors (grow light kits, sprouts, etc.). This should include locked areas so that gardeners feel safe when going to care for their crops.
- Gardeners want to participate in the creation and implementation of policies and regulations concerning pesticide use within the City of St. Paul. There is very little public information about safety concerns from pesticides.
- Include gardening in public school curriculum. Parents want their children to learn about the benefits of growing their own food and practical experience doing it. In addition, they would like schools to dedicate land where students and parents can grow food together in their agricultural tradition.
- The Latinx gardening community is asking for the City of Saint Paul to consider supporting CLUES with a permanent plot of land. Currently the land where CLUES Jardín de Armonía en Acción is located is rented for a limited time. Gardeners and CLUES staff would like to find a more sustainable solution to continue to provide this safe space for the Latinx gardener community in St. Paul.

Guests gather for a TCALT tour and conversation about culturally-focused growing at the Community Garden outside of Latinx focused community organization Communidades Latinas Unidas En Servicio in Saint Paul.
(Courtesy of Kieran Morris)

Food Access & SNAP Outreach

- “Juntos Saludables!” (Healthy together!) is an action campaign the city should take into consideration. As the rate of childhood obesity in Latinx communities rises, the community asks for a strategy that would reach Latinx parents and be accessible to their kids. The “Juntos Saludables!” campaign would cover topics like healthy eating, cooking at home, physical activities, and overall well-being. This campaign would take place in public spaces like schools, non-profit organizations like CLUES, and other public gathering places where Latinx members would be present.
- SNAP outreach to be included in the workplace and at other physical spaces where Latinx adults gather. Right now, it is hard for Latinx individuals to learn about SNAP or even address questions or concerns given these services are only offered during the day while they are working. The Latinx community has expressed the need for knowing more about these resources and stated that having SNAP outreach workers come to their factories, hospitals and other places of work would be very helpful to spread the word. If a person wanted to apply for SNAP, they could go during their break and fill out an application as well as to ask questions to the SNAP representative. Right now, they are not able to do that, and it is very difficult to access the few SNAP support navigators in the community.
- Saint Paul Public schools’ lunches should include fresh vegetables and fruits. Currently parents have expressed students receiving highly processed foods and canned foods as well as little to no healthy fats, grains, and other nutritious food items in their daily school lunches.
- Senior (55+) Healthy Food Discount to launch during 2022. This discount would help seniors purchase more healthy food when grocery shopping. During the pandemic many seniors expressed not having enough healthy foods at home due to the rise of food prices and not having access to reliable income. The city would work with co-ops, local grocery stores and nationwide grocery chains to provide this benefit to our elder community.
- Start a “Cosechar y Vender” (Plant, Grow and Sale!) program where gardeners can plant their own food and trade with or sell to other participants in the program. This would also support local produce vendors who are needing financial resources and tools to be able to compete with bigger companies that cover most of the supply here in the Twin Cities.

1.3 Benefits of Urban Agriculture in Ramsey County

1.3.1 Food security and well being	Ready supply of fresh, healthy food and support for communities and food justice organizations
1.3.2 Equitable cultural learning and sharing	Opportunities for community and youth engagement, education, and culture sharing
1.3.3 Greenspace and ecological health	Ready supply of fresh, healthy food and support for communities and food justice organizations
1.3.4 Community relationships	Creation of a collective gathering + green space for residents, where community members can exchange cultural and agroecological knowledge as well as share experience and perspectives in a respectful and healing space that inspires growth and an increased sense of our interconnectedness

1.3.1 Food security and well being

Urban food cultivation opportunities are important for Ramsey County residents' well-being. Beyond the more appreciated benefits of the food provided by gardening, many garden coordinators receive regular testimonials "from people who have talked about how important being able to garden has been to them" (Eagles). One gardener at St. Anthony Park Community Garden who emigrated to Minnesota "had gone from being the provider for his family to being here [St. Paul] and not having anything to do. He got a plot — and he was there every day. For two years, essentially every day. And the people we talked to said it totally changed his mental health, got him out of the depression of being [in Minnesota]" (Eagles). Through work with Urban Roots, Skyler Hawkins has observed many benefits of urban agriculture. "[Urban agriculture is] great for mental health. A lot of these [people] that we work with haven't really had the opportunity to be in community gardens… [which are] letting young people have positive experiences outside and to make connections between them and their food, giving kids a lens on the food system they're a part of." Among many others who mentioned this, Michael Russelle of St. Anthony Park Community Council sees urban agriculture as an opportunity to support people who are unhoused. "For houseless folks, if provided land, [it] could also include land where people could garden, there's an ownership aspect helpful for mental health."

1.3.2 Equitable cultural learning and sharing

"Community garden stuff is really exciting…[there's] a lot of intergenerational knowledge sharing with community members, especially people who immigrated here recently in the last few years, kids and grandparents. Food practices and foodways and traditions being passed down are really exciting because I think food is really important and is an important part of identities and celebrating different cultures, and when people don't have privilege of owning a house, it means they don't have the opportunities to create containers where those traditions can be passed on, whereas a garden could be that container. Community gardens can help not make people assimilate in a harmful way" (Hawkins). Similarly, Abigail Hindson's work with CLUES has led her to believe that "creating spaces [community gardens] for people to talk to each other about their experiences with racism and inequities, that matters. Having a place to share knowledge and pass down cultural wisdom, that matters too."

TCALT Victoria Garden tour

Urban farms and gardens provide the crucial opportunity for residents to interact with greenspaces with agency and self-determination, learning and sharing cultural practices of environmental stewardship, horticultural practice, and traditions related to food and place.

1.3.3 Greenspace and ecological health

Land management practices for urban food cultivation confer many conservation benefits and ecosystem services, including: building soil organic matter, and hence stormwater retention and flooding reductions, carbon sequestration, and soil remediation, as well as habitat for pollinators and urban biodiversity conservation, and mitigation of urban heat island effects. Local research teams have repeatedly documented these ecosystem services on urban farms and gardens comparing food cultivation to turfgrass (Frank et al. 2017, Nicklay 2023, see also Barthel et al. 2013, Camps-Calvet et al. 2016). And, as we discuss more in Part 3, on the topic of providing resources for urban food cultivation, these public benefits that come from urban agriculture practices could help serve as a basis for providing much more comprehensive support.

1.3.4 Community relationships

“The goal of the Growing Resilience on the West Side (GROW) project is to connect within our neighborhoods — and with other urban ag efforts (like Northside Fresh, Homegrown, EastSide Table, Art of Food in Frogtown and Rondo) — to share efforts, also materials, education. With the collaboration, the goal is to enhance the different programming efforts that are already in place — like the assets that Youth Farm has for the Free Farmers Market; it’s to grow each individual program or organization to find a way to get this food to the people that need it, through programs that are urban gardening. So if there’s any means to coordinate fresh food getting to people!” Metro Food Justice Network Ple-num

“The CLUES garden [has enabled] resource sharing, idea sharing, food production, and friendships. There’s all kinds of stuff happening in that space that’s not limited to strictly food that builds a sense of community, ownership, and respect for neighbors, land, and presence in the neighborhood. That goes a long way. It’s a small space, but it changes the neighborhood and people notice...people from the neighborhood hang out in the garden because it’s a nice place to be.” (Hindson)

Finally, we list these benefits recognized by the Minnesota Department of Agriculture in their rubric for evaluating applicants to their urban agriculture grants program, developed over four years of community engagement led by the Council for Minnesotans of African Heritage, Project Sweetie Pie, and Representative Karen Clark (with many supporting organizations). These specific ways urban food cultivation can be recognized for contributing to youth agriculture education, community development, positive environmental impact, and environmental justice — especially for BIPOC communities — form a useful framework for discussing resourcing.

Rubric for the Minnesota Department of Agriculture Urban Agriculture Grant

Project Evaluation Profile

AGRI Urban Agriculture Evaluation Criteria	Maximum Score
Advances urban youth agricultural education or urban agriculture community development.	20
Project Design • Demonstrates the capacity to successfully implement and sustain the project • Includes objectives that are clear and concise • Plan for project evaluation is realistic and will inform future programming	15
Community Engagement • Demonstrates community engagement in and support for the project • Demonstrates new or continued community partnerships • Includes strong letter(s) of support	15
Environmental Impact • Demonstrates a commitment to positive environmental impact such as: o Promotion of organic and sustainable agriculture o Promotion of clean water, healthy soils, carbon sequestration, and pollinator habitat o Reduction of waste or more efficient use of energy, water, nutrients, or other inputs	5
Economic Justice • Demonstrates a commitment to economic justice, such as through: o Creation of living-wage jobs o Provision of entrepreneurial education and skills training o Protection of land tenure o Expansion of urban lands for agricultural use o Reducing or eliminating health disparities related to food access	5
Racial and Ethnic Equity • Project is located in or meaningfully serves underserved communities • Demonstrates organization’s experience working with or plans to work with underserved communities • Describes how grant funded activities will benefit underserved communities	20
Work Plan • Work plan is thorough and realistic • A detailed description of each step of the grant project including estimated dates is provided • All required deliverables will be started after notification of the award and completed by **March 31, 2026**	10
Budget • Budget table and budget narrative are consistent • Budget narrative clearly details all project costs • Budget is cost effective and appropriate amounts are backed by quotes or other sources	10
Total Points Possible	**100**

1.4 Challenges/obstacles to urban agriculture in Ramsey County

Urban food cultivation is not legible to and is largely unconsidered by municipal, county, and state regulators. Spaces of urban food cultivation manifest not only decisions made on site, but also in the neighborhood, district/ward councils, parks, cities, soil and water conservation districts, county boards, metropolitan regional councils, states, nations, and treaties. Since most of these domains of government do not recognize the need for their support of urban agriculture, there has not been a coordinated effort for such support.

As a result, there are a wide variety of barriers that anyone attempting to start a community garden or to farm commercially in Ramsey County may encounter, like those arising from food security benefits and investments being undervalued; a lack of equitable access to interactive greenspaces and environmental justice; restrictive policy frameworks; and underdeveloped resource relationships. We provide a brief overview of the central four categories of barriers then discuss them in more detail.

- Food security benefits and investments are undervalued and hence undermined by inaccessible costs of land, rent, and gardening materials — as well as by tax and tenure mechanisms. Frequent changes in land holding and management regimes often require established food cultivators to start over from scratch, as well as to sink considerable labor into arranging insecure land tenure arrangements. Many high-profile displacements (for example the Oxford Dayton garden notable for its perennial fruit trees and the vibrant Farm in the City site at Lexington and I-94) were unnecessary, but not corrected or re-incorporated in the subsequent land use (or extended vacancy) (section 1.4.1).
- Access to interactive greenspaces and environmental justice is often not equitable: urban planning neglects urban agriculture as an integrated land use, often leaving the best opportunity for growing food on private land, commonly in residential yards. Consequently, many people lack access to greenspaces they can steward (section 1.4.2).
- Policy frameworks that consider agriculture as rural, and consider agriculture and urban land uses to be protected from each other have contributed to the creation and furtherance of zoning restrictions and to the absence of clarity in policies regarding urban agriculture, as well as to a lack of municipal and governmental support (or perceived lack of support), including a lack of supporting policy within city code (section 1.4.3).
- With notable exceptions that provide models for change, underdeveloped resource relationships lead to lack of infrastructure for urban food cultivation (section 1.4.4).

1.4.1 Undervalued food security benefits and investments

Site Management and Labor

Garden governance and maintenance requires labor. Growers who do not own their site must establish a clear agreement with the landholder about management tasks during specific times of the year to avoid maintenance responsibility conflicts (Pokawa). In addition, it can be difficult to recruit the help needed to organize members and steward garden spaces because it often requires uncompensated labor, which a lot of people cannot provide. “I think the physical participation, for me, is quite limited, and that is a huge barrier to urban agriculture. That volunteer aspect either for one reason or the other, I see that as a barrier in terms of maybe people don’t have time, people have other priorities” (Pokawa). “Setting up rules, setting up community norms, paperwork, liabilities, that’s a lot of structure — I got paid to set that up, all that infrastructure. If you’re a community member, that’s all on you” (Hindson).

If utilizing city land, gardeners may be responsible for mowing grass around gardens or on the boulevard during the growing season, defined as April 1st to October 31st (Horkey).

Several gardeners and garden mentors (Bunmi Odumuye, Kirsten Saylor, Patricia Ohmans, and Lindsay Rebhan, notably) explained an underappreciated challenge of getting people engaged in a site when it isn’t yet recognized community agriculture — people are meeting this challenge by finding provisional agriculturalists (such as Youth Farm and Urban Roots) who help to establish agriculture on a site in ways open to handing over stewardship to community when the site is recognized as welcoming participation and adequately resourced to be worth the effort to grow food. This dynamic, which often takes multiple years to first establish a site enough to make legible to a community and then to establish community participation and shared governance of the site stewardship mechanics, highlights another niche needing support and resourcing: start-up urban agricultural services. Currently, educational and youth development entities are often stepping in, but without much support for this work, this adds to their labor and site management burden in unsustainable ways.

Raised garden beds at Victoria Garden in the Rondo/Frogtown neighborhood. These were constructed in 2022 as part of a collaboration between the University of Minnesota Chapter of Engineers without Borders and Urban Farm and Garden Alliance. (Courtesy of Kieran Morris)

Funding

Initially obtaining start-up funds for equipment, infrastructure, and space, then maintaining sufficient funding for all components of agricultural operations is another major challenge to urban agriculture (Hawkins). Seeking and applying for funding is a continuous process more suited to organizations than individuals and it requires investment of immense time and resources without a guaranteed reward. Hindolo Pokawa, a Ramsey County farmer and member of the Emerging Farmers' Working Group, feels that "funding is in itself a whole category of always funding, funding, funding — you've got to keep advocating and see who is approved and this and that… so you have that as a fundamental barrier." He expressed further frustration with funding applications:

> ***"[Government departments] want to know… why is it that communities… are not applying for some of these funds. We just came down hammering at them like, "This doesn't make any sense! You want to know why our folks are not participating in any of these things when you have to fill out a six page form to apply, and this, and that." We've got to find ways for access that does not go around and round and round to apply for funding for X Y and Z."*** (Pokawa)

Once funds are obtained, managing them is another matter, which often requires "setting up a bank account to manage dues, costs for events, tools, and stuff like that. Figuring out how to do all those things [is a barrier]" (Hindson). Many people do not have experience with community financial processes, leaving them struggling while trying to learn best practices as they go.

For commercial farmers, finding and getting into farmers' markets is difficult, then once there, "pricing is hard…what is competitive? [You have to] know what to charge for produce to make sure you're not losing money" while also not undermining existing community food security and **food sovereignty*** initiatives (Hawkins). Furthermore, selling to grocery stores requires investing in infrastructure to wash produce, handle produce post-harvest, and obtain food safety certifications (Hawkins).

Glossary

Food sovereignty

Food sovereignty is the ability and/or capacity of an individual, group or community to cultivate, acquire, distribute and consume food that encompasses health, nutrition, heritage, tradition, and environmental and economic sustainability, rather than a commerce-based model that favors maximum profit and neglects the aforementioned attributes.

As we discuss in considerably more detail in the Part 3 section on property tax recommendations, property tax is a high financial burden in Ramsey County because it is challenging for land used for agriculture to qualify for either agricultural land classification or the agricultural tax deferment program, meaning that much urban agricultural land — both commercial and non-commercial — risks being taxed at non-agricultural commercial or residential rates. This contrasts with both the intent of the agricultural taxation programs (meant to "encourage and preserve farms by mitigating the property tax impact of increasing land values due to nonagricultural economic forces," MN Statute 273.111), and also with practice of many other cities, who treat urban agriculture, especially in underserved neighborhoods, as a community economic development benefit to be encouraged not only by waiving property taxes but also, in many cases, by providing tax incentives for those contributing supportive resources.

While there are methods for reducing taxes, these require navigating bureaucratic processes, like the tax exemption statute. To potentially exempt a garden from property taxes, a request must be submitted every three years to the current tax assessor who may deem it as serving a charitable purpose (Minn. Stat. section 272.02, subd. 7). St. Anthony Park Community Garden takes advantage of this tax exemption, but does not feel secure because the exemption depends on the views of the current tax assessor, who is likely to change over time. "If for some reason the current assessor decides that this is not a charitable use, we'd be back where we were" (Eagles). There is concern that someday the garden may be required to pay the full tax amount again, which they could not afford (it would raise the yearly costs of the garden plots from $30 to well over $150), forcing the St. Anthony Park Community Council to sell the land on which their community garden sits (Eagles). More long-term, secure options to tax abatement are usually expensive alternatives, like putting an **easement*** on the land to lower its value, a process which requires high upfront cost and effort.

Glossary

Easement

An easement can be used to protect land. It is a voluntary agreement between a landholder and an entity to establish and protect specific land uses, allowing certain values to be preserved in the long term.

Land Access

Consistent access to the same land for multiple growing seasons is vital not only for increasing soil health, improving produce quality, building community, and establishing effective management systems, but also for securing and employing funding support.

> ***"...you can't just do it for a year, if you're going to make a commitment, you really have to make it five to ten years at least, because that's when it becomes viable, in terms of the work you do in terms of preparing the land and preparing the soil and building the community."*** (Mitrione)
>
> ***"[The Ramsey County Summer Lands Pilot Project] did not meet our needs as it required any land used in the project to be returned to its original state at the end of that particular summer. We had grant funding to construct raised beds and install fencing, so we needed a longer term agreement."*** (Weber)

For Urban Roots, a local nonprofit organization, being able to use STAR funds to install water infrastructure at one of their sites would require obtaining a long-term lease with St. Paul HRA, which "has been really challenging. A lot of improvements that would make urban agriculture successful aren't in the realm of possibility without a long-term lease" (Hawkins). Finding vacant available land itself is difficult as a result of the complicated process to learn what apparently vacant land in the county could actually be used, and under what terms. This makes it easier for people who have connections or greater resources to gain access to land. Several groups who had started gardens mentioned how time and effort intensive it had been to navigate the political gatekeeping required to get recognized by government entities as a legitimate land seeker, usually requiring endorsement of politically powerful groups in a district.

> ***"[There was] land that was being used for growing food and then all of the sudden, the city said, we need to develop this land… And they will come take the land away."*** (Pokawa)

If growers are able to find land to use for food cultivation, most agreements are short-term leases, which has been a prevalent mechanism for urban food land access in Ramsey County, and across the metro area.

> ***"There's language and rentals for short-term use, but… permanent land access or longer-term, I think that's still… a huge gap."*** (MatasCastillo)

Even if leases are for a few years or more, it is unclear whether that ensures secure access because in most agreements between government entities and nonprofits or neighborhood groups, the land holder can take away or develop the land at any time. Leases with St. Paul HRA can be terminated "for any reason at any time, provided that thirty (30) days written notice is given" (*Garden Lease Guidelines*, 1996). Similarly, the Como Community Council garden "is on MnDOT land, and [their] contract includes a clause that they could cancel the lease if the land is needed for a project" (McKee). This leaves growers in a tenuous situation, preventing a sense of security and potentially resulting in avoidable last-minute changes in land tenure, and loss of labor and time investment.

1.4.2 Equitable access to interactive greenspaces and environmental justice

Urban food cultivation is treated in current regional planning as a special interest; in the regional parks plan, for example, community gardens are classed with rose gardens. However, the underlying assumption that those residents interested in stewarding greenspaces can do so by purchasing homes with greenspace ignores homeowners without access to private greenspace and the climbing percentage of Ramsey County renters — 40% — which was much higher than the state average — 28% — in recent years according to American Community Survey 5-Year Estimates (2020).

1.4.3 Policy frameworks: Urban agriculture not legible in rural-oriented agricultural protection and risk management

Community agriculture is not recognized as public infrastructure, plus the challenge of "attractive nuisance"

While some areas of Ramsey County encourage urban food cultivation as a way to transform vacant lots into assets, a common default concern about allowing urban agricultural use of vacant public lands has to do with the category of "attractive nuisance." Most gardens see their land stewardship as a very positive alternative to vacancy. However, one of the most common barriers to starting gardens on vacant land are concerns at various levels of government about the risks of urban sites that will not be consistently peopled by farmers or gardeners, especially in the context of bureaucracies whose property management systems are designed for government buildings filled with employees and with security staff.

At the same time, most provisions for agricultural preservation and encouragement are focused on areas with abundant land and normalized agriculture, incentivizing mechanized commodity agriculture, growing row crops on large parcels of land. Hence, such agricultural protection policies often treat agriculture as a *pre*-urban land use, which is extinguished once urban development occurs. Related policies rarely see ongoing urban food cultivation as a normal part of urban infrastructure. Urban agriculturalists consequently struggle for legitimacy *doubly* under these frameworks, both seen as not really "agricultural" (since agricultural, in this light, is equated with "rural") and also potentially creating under-monitored situations of "attractive nuisance," by inserting perceived-to-be-rural (or under-intensive) land uses in urban neighborhoods.

Gem Lake has a garden overlay district that encourages people to grow food instead of leaving lots vacant. Justifications for the overlay district emphasize agricultural land classification as a method for decreasing tax burdens to enable land retention, as well as local food production as a means of improving public health. These justifications coincide with assertions of this report, however in practice, the overlay district's provisions frame agriculture as a large scale and interim land use – requirements include a minimum of 10 acres and tenure of one year – meant to be replaced by land use (development) that more closely matches Gem Lake's comprehensive plan (Gem Lake, 2022).

Public provision of land for growing food may make breaks in the social safety net more visible, especially around perceived risks of interaction with unhoused residents of the County. Such concerns have been addressed by many of the community farms and community gardens we surveyed. Merriam Station Community Garden, for example, provides an online guide to gardeners on the topic, building literacy around social services available, clearly encouraging gardeners toward interactions less likely to provoke policing or displacement (see pages 3-4 in their gardeners handbook: https://www.merriamstation.org/_files/ugd/37c659_4df2caa3a3a442f9ac02ffa64451bdbd.pdf). Many farmers and gardeners emphasized the importance of supporting places for unhoused people to participate in the community, and many cited several ways in which they did participate. Several interviews prominently featured brainstorming about more ways that city parks, community farms and gardens, and other public spaces could include showers, kitchens, and other infrastructure that could build up support for those least well served by current systems of housing and community support.

City Code and Provisions

For greater detail about city code, visit the policy review and memos in Part 2.

Challenges vary depending on where urban agriculture sites are located based

on the municipality's ordinances, particularly its zoning code. Restrictive city code has left gardeners struggling to effectively utilize **accessory structures*** like hoop houses or greenhouses in Maplewood (Schneider), which are also considered temporary — allowed for up to 180 days out of the year — in St. Paul (St. Paul, 2022). Temporary structures require storage space and labor to disassemble and reassemble every year, limiting extension of the growing season (Russelle). Water access systems present a similar issue, either by requiring use of a hydrant or labor-intensive water transport if water hookups are not available on site (Hawkins), or because city water turn on and off dates prevent access to water at the times of year that would allow plausible season extension. Nuisance abatement ordinances also tend to limit urban agriculture activities, such as one requiring closed containers for all compost in St. Paul (Russelle). While some standards are necessary to maintain public health, the processes for meeting these standards could be made easier to navigate.

A garden in the Payne-Phalen neighborhood found that even though they had cleared the land and brought in fresh soil, they could not finalize their lease with St. Paul HRA until they had results from a new soil test (Horkey).

With all of these barriers in mind, experienced growers, like Hayley Ball from Urban Roots, recommend that folks thinking about starting a garden or farm first call the St. Paul Department of Safety and Inspections, or the planning/zoning/community development office in their municipality "to make sure about zoning [and] permits for activities…having everything above board is what you want so that [the growing space] can continue over time" (Ball). We hope this report can make rule and resource navigation more straightforward for these offices and those who need to call them.

Glossary

Accessory structure
In most municipalities, accessory structures are defined as detached structures secondary to primary structures. This implies that the existence of accessory structures is dependent on the presence of a primary structure, however some urban food cultivation sites do not have a primary structure. This presents difficulties with utilizing storage sheds, greenhouses, hoop houses (also sometimes called "membrane structures, for the plastic spread over the frames), and other structures relevant to urban agriculture because it is unclear 1) whether they are allowed without a primary structure on the lot, and 2) which building and zoning code standards they need to meet.

Greenhouse
A structure enclosed and used for the cultivation or protection of tender plants. In municipal zoning code, greenhouses are considered an accessory structure. A hoop house is a more temporary and easily transported structure that serves a similar purpose.

1.4.4 Underdeveloped resource relationships

Unclear Processes, Unavailable Information, and Inaccessible Networks/Relationships

There is very little public knowledge about processes for accessing land in Ramsey County. Many people, even those who have worked with city or county government, do not understand the functions of various offices and departments. Speaking with government representatives has confirmed that since urban agriculture is not one specific person's job or explicitly included as a part of a department's domain, many staff do not consider urban agriculture to be their responsibility.

> ***"City, county…. that's really confusing to me — as someone who has worked with both for the past two and a half years! So I can't imagine being a community member who doesn't speak English or is new to this country. Who is the county, who's the city, who do I talk to?"*** (Hindson)

Some interviewees managed to find a staff person who has helped them, however not through equitably accessible channels like finding the correct office or contact information on local government websites (Hawkins, Mitrione). Whether urban agriculture is in one or multiple departments' purview or not, it is likely that finding the right contact will be difficult for an aspiring urban agriculture practitioner, and could be made easier.

> ***"If the desire is there to make [urban agriculture] ONE person's job, a LOT of outreach would need to happen to the public to let them know there is one person to talk to, but I imagine an equal or greater amount of outreach would need to be done to neighborhood councils,*** **food justice*** ***orgs, green space advocates, and most importantly city departments who might get asked about how to start something. ALLLLL of those groups and people would need to know which way to point someone!"*** (Lienesch)

Experienced and engaged farmer Hindolo Pokawa expressed that he did not know how to direct people to vacant land, and Claire Lienesch, membership coordinator at Tatum Park Community Garden, said "I don't know if there is one path to getting something started, and that is both helpful and a hindrance… having a clearer path to this sort of action might be helpful (imagine one person who has this job across the whole county!), but then people would have to find a way TO that person" (Lienesch).

When the nonprofit organization Every Meal started an urban agriculture project, they had trouble finding the right contacts and were "passed around to many people within the county. It seemed no one was quite the right fit and didn't know what to do with our request for [urban agriculture] land use" (Weber).

Glossary

Food justice
Operationalized efforts to guarantee safe, healthy, nutrient-dense food to all members of society, regardless of racial, religious, national, political, sexual, ethnic, economic or gender-based factors.

Additionally, navigating bureaucratic processes and systems is particularly difficult and often requires guidance provided through previously established relationships with governmental actors, whose networks are inaccessible to a large number of people (Ball). Understanding city ordinances, zoning regulations, and permitting processes is crucial when engaging in urban agriculture, but this is more achievable for people with privilege (Ball). There are many community members "who may not have had any interaction [with government staff] previously, as it's not part of their job…[so] that might not be accessible to them" (Ball). This is an even greater challenge for people whose first language is not English.

> ***"[There would be] fewer [barriers] if they speak English and know how to navigate county and city systems."*** (Hindson)

When people do eventually figure out how to work through these procedures to obtain access to land or other resources, the government office involved and the resident(s) involved often do not have a way to document the process they went through, who was involved, and other useful information in ways that are accessible to others.

> ***"The only fee seems to be the quarterly water bill, that arrangement pre-dates my involvement."*** (McKee)
>
> ***"I do not know how the conversations between the neighborhood council, the city, and the neighbors got started… I wasn't there for those conversations and I don't have any factual evidence besides this lease that speaks to those conversations!"*** (Lienesch)
>
> ***"I ended up in charge of the gardens when the previous executive director left. The first couple of years I was learning a lot…it was just, these are the people that we know are gardening and you know, let them know that they need to talk to me and that I'm figuring things out."*** (Horkey)

Since there is high turnover between government staff and particularly among volunteer garden organizers, after transitions occur, people who inherit garden coordinating responsibilities are frequently left with only a lease or other agreement from which to glean process information, a situation that often requires them to duplicate previous work of figuring out how to make the site function.

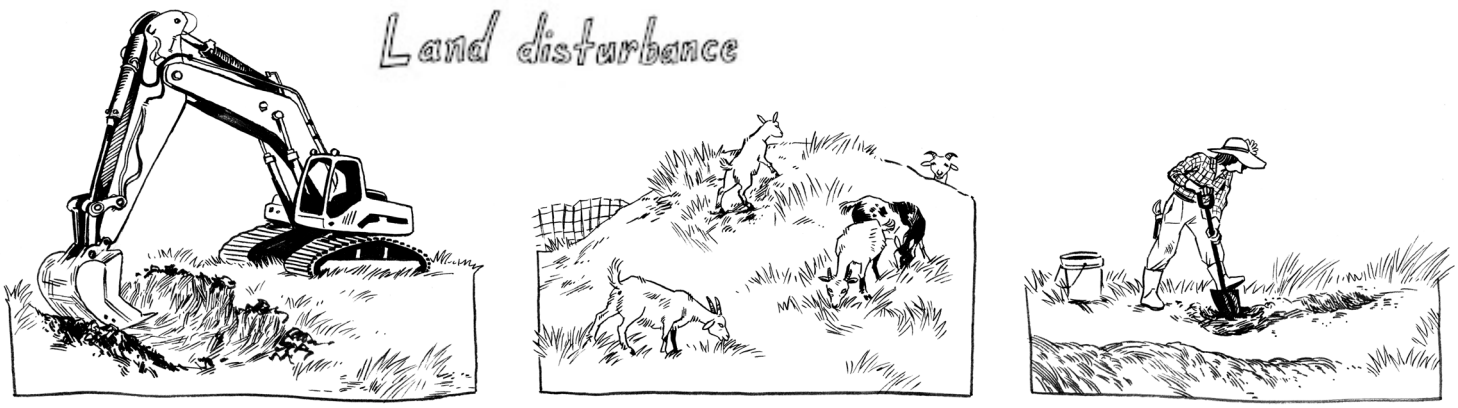
1.5 Improving urban agriculture in Ramsey County

Policy governance levers available to improve support for urban food cultivation in the county include: county-level policies and procedures better guiding taxation, tenure, water, pollution control and nutrient management, land use (for example, including more supportive rules about wood stacks that would not prohibit mushroom farming, long grass, and weeds — often defined as **rank growth***, which is prohibited — as well as clarity about accessory structures and **land disturbance***), and vehicular rules, such as those that may govern where growers are allowed to park delivery trucks near their residences. Part 3 discusses our recommendations, with particular emphasis on what is possible at the County level, and some additional discussion of city, state, Metropolitan Council, and other agency and community possibilities that can help support and complement these efforts.

Glossary

Rank plant growth / rank vegetation
Overgrown, uncontrolled vegetation, shrubs, trees, vines that are conducive to the accumulation of refuse, debris or the harborage of vermin. Rank plant growth is often associated with weeds. In some cities, like St. Paul, the definition of weeds does not include crops.

Land disturbance
Activities associated with significant physical alteration of land, creating risk of erosion and sedimentation. In most cities, food cultivation practices (i.e. tilling, planting, and harvesting) are often excluded from the definition of land disturbance, as the ordinance is meant to regulate larger-scale construction activities.



Part 2. Ramsey County Food Cultivation Policy Scan

Part 2 Summary

Part 2 of this report begins with a discussion of our policy review methods. We share feedback gathered through surveys about stakeholders' experiences with urban agriculture policy in Ramsey County. Next we identify key stakeholders in the implementation processes and state apparent limitations of our policy review and common obstacles in the process. We highlight case studies that demonstrate successful implementation and actionable items, and finally, we name target areas that are ready for further urban agriculture infrastructure.

2.1 Overview of purpose, methods, and findings

2.1.1 Purpose

TCALT's work to facilitate long-term access to land for growing food in the Twin Cities metropolitan region has included evaluating the effects of policies governing land use and other dynamics related to urban agriculture. We are interested in the impacts they have on communities engaged in urban food cultivation, those who want to engage in urban food cultivation, and how support for urban food cultivation is extended to Ramsey County residents in equitable ways.

The requests made by Ramsey County in its Urban Agriculture Ordinance contract align with the goals of the community that TCALT has been engaging over the past decade. A policy review is a crucial component of determining ways our community — and particularly our policies and governmental procedures — can more proactively support urban agriculture in the county. Since ordinances vary between municipalities and manifest differently in St. Paul districts, we sought to learn about the policy and urban agriculture landscape in as many of these places as possible, mainly through two methods:

- a policy review process of scanning city code and planning documents,
- and through conducting interviews with representatives of all districts (live or via electronic survey).

2.1.2 Methods

To characterize the existence of and potential for urban agriculture throughout Ramsey County in spring 2022, we split the area into 35 districts. We worked at this scale because residents' ability to use land is primarily regulated by city ordinances and zoning codes governed at the district level. Districts included 18 municipalities, along with St. Paul, which was further divided into its 17 district councils. The district list was the basis for a policy review focused on provisions that impact urban agriculture, the findings of which are documented and communicated in policy memos for each municipality (Appendix P). To gain the perspective of those actively working in district and county offices, we collaborated with Ramsey County staff involved in food security, public health, and open space management to build a list of contacts who seemed most likely to have knowledge about land use in each district, as well as contacts likely to understand broader county planning processes. With a focus on equity, as described above, we also

Map of Ramsey County showing districts (note that some municipalities have only a small portion within the county)

Data sources: City of St. Paul, MN; Minnesota Geospatial Commons

drew upon our networks to find growers throughout the county whose experiences provide important insight about the implications of how policies are interpreted and observed. We connected with these people through email to set up interviews, either by walking them through a set of questions (listed below) or enabling them to consider the same questions by electronic survey. The policy review, in conjunction with interview and survey results, enable a holistic and equity-focused evaluation of urban agriculture in Ramsey County.

Brief summary of Ramsey County data from the Census of Agriculture

Relevant Agricultural Census Overview, 2017 USDA Census of Agriculture, U.S. Summary and State Data

The USDA Census of Agriculture aims to capture data about "farms." Farms are defined as "any place from which $1000 or more of agricultural products were produced and sold or normally would have been sold, during the census year."

To execute the census, USDA sends out a form to a National Agricultural Statistics Service "Census Mail List" of agricultural operations. Historically, the agriculture Census has done poorly at identifying anyone without a large operation or anyone who is not a white man. There is a translation of the form for Spanish, and USDA is working to put more effort into outreach, but equity in this domain is still a work in progress. In a recent survey of Minnesota small farms, only 37% of respondents indicated that they had been included in the 2017 Agricultural Census, suggesting the not inconsiderable undercount problem.

The Census gathers data on farms, producers, and principal producers. A producer is a person who is involved in making decisions for the farm operation. This may be an owner, but can also be someone else, like a tenant. There can be up to four producers per farm. Principal producers are producers who reported to the Census that they are principal operators. Each farm has at least one principal producer, and there can be more than one per farm.

Summary

This short summary compares Ramsey County, Minnesota, and national 2017 data. Growers in Ramsey County were primarily white, but thve county has a much higher proportion of Asian, and slightly higher proportion of Black, producers compared to Minnesota and the U.S. The proportion of Hispanic and Latino growers was also higher in Ramsey County than at either the state or national levels. Compared to the state or national levels, a higher percentage of producers in Ramsey County rented (rather than owned) and had short-term land tenure, as well as worked on smaller-scale farms. Furthermore, the proportion of Ramsey County farms that grow vegetables for fresh marketing was much higher than at either the state or national level, and Ramsey County was losing farms at a higher rate between 2012 and 2017 than Minnesota and the U.S. While this may partially have been a result of development pressure in growing urban and peri-urban areas, lack of appropriate supports for the type of farms and producers in the county was a contributing factor.

Most federal and state support for farms and producers tends to be configured to support large-scale farming that is likely to be conducted by white men in rural areas. In Minnesota, for example, federal programs provide substantial support for corn and soybean farmers, and very little for urban farmers. Similarly, as stated below, the Green Acres relief program in Minnesota requires 10 contiguous farming

acres. With very few exceptions, that means that 75% of Ramsey County producers are disqualified on acreage grounds (while in Minnesota generally only 8% of all farms are less than ten acres in size). Notably, in Ramsey County this rule especially limits BIPOC producers, who require and deserve support suitable for their specific needs.

For greater detail about the 2017 Census of Agriculture and its relevance to Ramsey County farms and producers, please see the tables and accompanying text below.

Baseline Numbers for 2017

Based on the 2017 Census, there were 55 farms in Ramsey County. Running those farms were 107 producers. Of these, 81 were principal producers. They farmed on 645 total acres. (Minnesota County Data, Table 45, at 706). This is likely an undercount. In general, we should regard census data critically because the census tends to undercount BIPOC and Hispanic farmers. Ramsey County data, as the numbers show below, appear to undercount Black, Asian, and Hispanic farmers.

In Minnesota, there are 68,822 farms and 113,415 producers counted (Minnesota State Data, Table 45, at 672). In the United States, there are 2,042,220 farms and 3,447,028 producers counted (Minnesota State Data, Table 45, at 667).

Producer Characteristics	**Ramsey County (RC)**		**Minnesota (MN)**		**United States (US)**	
Race (% of producers)	Producer	Principal	Producer	Principal	Producer	Principal
American Indian/Alaska Native	0.00	0.00	0.16	0.14	1.69	1.69
Asian	18.69	19.75	0.35	0.32	0.64	0.62
Black or African American	1.87	2.47	0.03	0.03	1.32	1.40
Native Hawaiian/Pacific Islander	0.00	0.00	0.02	0.02	0.09	0.08
White	79.44	77.78	97.72	99.21	94.12	95.40
More than one race	0.00	0.00	0.26	0.28	0.78	0.80
Race sources: Minnesota County Data, Table 49, at 744; Table 50, at 745; Table 51 & Table 52, at 746; Table 53 at 747; Table 54, at 748; United States State Data, Table 49 at 703; Table 50 at 704; Table 51 at 705; Table 52, at 706; Table 53 at 707; Table 54, at 708						
Ethnicity (% of producers)	Producer	Principal	Producer	Principal	Producer	Principal
% Hispanic or Latino	2.80	1.23	0.57	0.59	0.03	3.30
% Not Hispanic or Latino	97.20	98.77	99.43	99.41	99.97	96.70
Ethnicity sources: Minnesota County Data, Table 48, at 743; United States State Data, Table 48, at 702						

Race and Ethnicity

Nearly 80% of producers and principal producers in Ramsey County reported as white, around 19% as Asian, and 2% as Black or African American. In Minnesota, producers were 98% white, and only 0.35% and 0.30% reported being Asian or Black or African American respectively. Similarly, in the U.S., producers are 94% white, 0.64% Asian, and 1% Black or African American. In Ramsey County, Black farmers, and Asian farmers in particular, make up a much larger proportion of total producers than they do for Minnesota or the U.S.

Producers reporting their ethnicity as Not Hispanic or Latino accounted for almost all of the producers. However, in Ramsey County Hispanic or Latino producers made up a notably greater proportion of counted producers at around 3%, compared to 0.57% for Minnesota and 0.03% for the U.S.

Land Tenure	RC	MN	US		RC	MN	US
Tenure Length (% producers reporting years on present farm)				**Tenure (% of farms reporting as renters/not owners)**			
< 2 years	17.76	4.14	5.83	Tenants	32.73	7.44	6.86
3-4 years	14.02	5.90	7.78	**Tenure Length (average years producer on farm)**			
5-9 years	25.23	11.52	14.36	Average years on present farm	12.30	24.90	21.30
10 years or more	42.99	76.98	70.65	*Tenure sources: Minnesota County Data, Table 45, at 696, 706; United States State Data, Table 45, at 667, 672*			

Land Tenure

Ramsey County had a significantly higher percentage of producers who are tenants compared to the state and national scales. Close to 33% of Ramsey County producers farmed on land they do not own, whereas only 8% did in Minnesota and 7% in the U.S.

The percentage of Ramsey County producers who had been on their present farm at the time of the 2017 census for less than two years was 17% — approximately three times higher than in Minnesota as a whole (4%) and the U.S. (6%). Ramsey County producers also comprise the highest percentage for the 3-4 year and 5-9 year tenure length categories, while the vast majority of producers in Minnesota (77%) and the U.S. (71%) had been on their farm for 10 years or more. The tendency of Ramsey County producers to have shorter-term tenure is reflected in average years producers have been on their present farm — 12 years for Ramsey County, 25 years for Minnesota, and 21 years for the U.S.

Farm Size

Ramsey County farms were often smaller than U.S., and importantly, Minnesota farms when it comes to acreage. More than 75% of Ramsey County farms were less than 10 acres. Only 13% of U.S. farms and 8% of Minnesota farms were this size. Minnesota's Green Acres tax relief program requires ten acres of land for

Farm Size	RC	MN	US
Farm Size (% of farms)			
1-9 acres	76.36	7.61	13.38
10-49 acres	20.00	21.24	28.55
50-179 acres	1.82	28.27	27.65
180-499 acres	1.82	23.14	15.43
500-999 acres	0.00	10.41	6.53
1000 acres +	0.00	9.34	8.46
Sources: Minnesota County Data, Table 1, at 232, 242; United States State Data, Table 1, at 253			

Products	RC	MN	US
Vegetable Production for fresh market (% of farms)			
Veg. harvested for fresh market	67.27	2.37	3.35
Products sources: Minnesota County Data, Table 29, at 567; United States State Data, Table 29, at 533			

Farm Retention	RC	MN	US
Change in number of farms (% change)			
Farms	-43.30	-7.67	-3.18
Farm retention sources: Minnesota County Data, Table 2, at 255, 265; United States State Data, Table 2, at 275			

eligibility, and it is significantly harder to qualify with fewer than ten acres. This means that more than three quarters of Ramsey County farmers that were recognized as farms by the USDA Census of Agriculture could not qualify or would face an increased difficulty to qualify for Green Acres and other similar programs.

Fresh Vegetable Production

Growing vegetables, potatoes, or melons for market was much more common in Ramsey County than it was at the state or national level. The majority of farms — 67% — harvested vegetables for fresh market in Ramsey County. In Minnesota and the U.S., a mere 2% and 3% of farms took part in this type of work.

Farm Retention

Farmers in general are struggling. Based on the 2017 Agriculture Census, however, it appears that Ramsey County was losing farmers at a much faster rate than Minnesota and the U.S. generally. The U.S. lost the fewest farms between the 2012 and 2017 census, going from 2,109,303 to 2,042,220, a 3% reduction. The number of farms in Minnesota decreased in this time period from 74,542 farms to 68,822, a difference of 8%. In contrast, Ramsey County's farms declined from 97 to 55, a change of 43%. For crop farms, which includes almost all Ramsey County farms, the majority of these losses were the smallest farmers in terms of acreage. Numbers for crop farms with fewer than ten acres dropped more than half, from 89 to 39 (Minnesota County Data, Table 9, at 396).

Extrapolating from Hennepin Data

Adding to our summary of the Agricultural Census Data, we are able to pull a few relevant analyses from the 2019 Minneapolis Food Action Plan (details and context at https://www2.minneapolismn.gov/government/programs-initiatives/homegrown-minneapolis/minneapolis-food-action-plan/). First, as noted elsewhere, it is important to highlight the centrality of the equity lens in understanding the extent and placement of urban food cultivation sites, with the "greater concentration of household gardens in higher income areas, while a great frequency of community gardens in lower income areas" — a legacy of racial covenanting and other means

of restricting greenspace access and environmental justice for marginalized communities (see the Mapping Prejudice project for more context [https://mapping-prejudice.umn.edu/], and for expansion of the project into Ramsey County, see https://www.ramseycounty.us/content/mapping-racial-covenants-ramsey-county-results-so-far).

Although Ramsey County does not exactly match the patterns found in Hennepin, the availability of finer resolution data from the work of the Minneapolis Food Action Plan provides a helpful set of spatial data to work with, especially as we think about the negligible impact of changing tax assessments for urban agricultural land relative to the significant impact it could have on urban food security. Minneapolis as a whole has 25 acres of household gardens and 67 acres of **community farms*** and **community gardens*** (compared to 54,284 acres in agriculture in all of Hennepin County, which is much more rural than Ramsey).

In terms of spatial access, 33% of Minneapolis households are within 1/4 mile of a garden, and 64% are within 1/2 mile of a garden. This means progress could be made for 36% of urban fabric further from urban food cultivation sites (proportions and distance both get much higher as we get away from the urban core). Minneapolis's 2019 goal was to decrease the population without access to urban agriculture by 50% and to double the amount of land in urban agriculture and consequent production by 2024. Trends in Saint Paul appear to follow.

Glossary

Community farm
Farms within settlements or cities that are locally owned and operated, and democratically controlled by the growers based in them.

Community garden
A community garden is a cooperatively cultivated space, typically located in an urban or suburban landscape.

2017 Census of Agriculture, Appendix A, Census of Agriculture Methodology. Data are from the 2017 Census, which is the most recent on record. The 2022 Census data will be released in 2024.
Methods: https://www.nass.usda.gov/Publications/AgCensus/2017/Full_Report/Volume_1,_Chapter_1_State_Level/Minnesota/mnappxa.pdf
Metadata: https://www.nass.usda.gov/Publications/AgCensus/2017/Full_Report/Volume_1,_Chapter_1_State_Level/Minnesota/mnappxb.pdf

For the analysis below the following data are used. For state and national data this Report relies on 2017 Census of Agriculture, Volume 1, Chapter 2, State Level Data, at https://www.nass.usda.gov/Publications/AgCensus/2017/Full_Report/Volume_1,_Chapter_2_US_State_Level/

For Minnesota data broken down by county this Report uses 2017 Census of Agriculture, Volume 1, Chapter 2 County Level Data, Minnesota, at https://www.nass.usda.gov/Publications/AgCensus/2017/Full_Report/Volume_1,_Chapter_2_County_Level/Minnesota/
County and state data discussed below come from this part of the census.

For Ramsey County, a shorter summary, 2017 Census of Agriculture County Profile, Ramsey County Minnesota, is also used. It is here: https://www.nass.usda.gov/Publications/AgCensus/2017/Online_Resources/County_Profiles/Minnesota/cp27123.pdf.

Policy Review Process

The objective of our policy review was:

- to identify all city policies that facilitate or impede urban agriculture,
- summarize results in a memo for each municipality,
- and synthesize findings to assess how policy currently impacts and may better support urban agriculture in Ramsey County.

To meet this objective, we utilized a review process — described in greater detail in the following paragraphs — that involved creating a data-recording template, identifying search terms, establishing search inclusion and exclusion protocols, and performing the search in municipal code databases, websites, and comprehensive plans (Cox, 2014). Through the process we illustrate below, we coded the data, found topics of interest, and determined specific challenges and opportunities for every municipality. The completion of these steps allowed us to make general recommendations to municipalities about how they can more actively support urban agriculture in the region.

We first created a spreadsheet to serve as a data-recording template where we collected relevant policy information, including policy name, identification, subject, and summary, as well as the level of urban agriculture facilitation provided. This classification originated from sentiments expressed in interviews. After multiple growers stated that various regulations felt inhibitive or prohibitive to their growing activities (Russelle, Schneider), and a St. Paul official asserted that the government should create clear processes to proactively encourage food cultivation (Stark), we developed a four-level scale to describe each policy's relationship to urban agriculture. Policies were sorted into the class that most closely matched their likely actual impact on feasibility of growing food, recognizing that these categories represent a continuous, rather than discrete, axis, and with the intention of inviting districts to consider possibilities for more proactive support of urban agriculture through this analysis: 1. Proactively supportive (policy creates infrastructure for urban agriculture expansion and multifunctional benefits), 2. Sufficiently supportive (policy sufficiently supports urban agriculture), 3. Inhibitive (policy allows some urban agriculture activity, but could be adjusted to be more supportive), or 4. Prohibitive (policy prohibits an activity associated with urban agriculture). Where applicable, we also noted how the policy might impact equity or affect specific types of urban agriculture, land, or land ownership.

To find policies relevant to our review, we generated a list of search terms based on a preliminary review of code and previous urban agriculture policy studies (Halvey, 2021; Meenar, 2017). Before beginning the search, we established inclusion and exclusion protocols to ensure consistency in recorded policies between researchers, municipalities, and data sources. For example, when reviewing municipalities that utilize Municode or American Legal Publishing services — companies that codify and house municipal ordinances — if possible we duplicated

search terms, logic, and syntax. We reviewed all returned results and retained only those likely to affect urban agriculture, whether directly or indirectly. For other districts, municipal websites, and comprehensive plans, we used the "find" tool to scan ordinance and code documents for the search terms. If a search term was found, we evaluated the relevance of the policy in which it was included. All relevant policies were recorded in a separate spreadsheet for each district.

Policy Review Search Terms	
General	"agriculture," "garden," "farm"
Urban agriculture infrastructure	"accessory," "greenhouse," "hoop," "high tunnel," "fence," "setback," "parking," "traffic"
Food cultivation and sales	"soil," "lead," "compost," "fertilizer," "water access," "mushrooms," "perennial," "aquaponics," "hydroponics," "food products," "market," "food sale"
Keeping livestock or bees	"animal," "livestock," "chicken," "poultry," "pig," "sheep," "goat," "hoof," "ruminant," "apiary," "bees," "pollinator"
Regulation of urban agriculture (public vegetation, land, zoning, development)	"molest," "vegetation," "right-of-way*," "property tax," "deed restriction," "easement," "nuisance," "weed," "pest," "invasive," "conditional use," "planned unit development," "incentive," "amenity"

The collected data were coded based on policy subject, allowing us to determine common themes for exploration in memos and policy tables. With the compilation of policy in memos, we evaluated how municipalities are supporting or inhibiting urban agriculture. Guided by identified challenges and opportunities, we generated recommendations for municipalities to support urban agriculture more effectively.

Interviews and surveys

We created a list of questions to learn about urban agriculture, related code, and equity in each district. There were a total of 14 questions, which were split into four sections. The first section had contact information questions, while the second section, "Urban Agriculture in Your Community," asked about urban agriculture projects and practitioners, and whether the respondent's district supported these efforts informally or through formally implemented processes. We also inquired about barriers preventing food cultivation and how they may be dismantled. The third section, "Equity Impacts," prompted respondents to think about how urban agriculture in their district sustainably promotes (or could) promote racial equity and address disparities. The following question requested information about resources that would be — or have been — helpful to the respondent's organization when supporting equitable access to land. Finally, the fourth section, "Moving Forward," gave participants the option of providing further information or comments that were not covered by the other questions and to share whether they would be interested in receiving further information about urban food cultivation advocacy and progress in the Twin Cities region.

2.1.2 Survey graphic

Urban Agriculture in Your Community

We would like to learn about your community's experience with and approach to urban agriculture.

What sites (if any) would you consider urban agriculture in your community? (For example, community gardens or urban farms - in parks, on school or church land, or on private or other public land?) Can you describe who's involved and what kind of community interest there has been in accessing land to grow or gather food in your district?

Have any organizations (government, nonprofit, etc.) in your district ever supplied land for urban food production or partnered with community to support access to urban land for food cultivation? If so, who was involved and how did this work?
This does not require the entire site to be dedicated to farms or gardens, but may include small orchards, raised bed gardens, etc., on sites with additional uses. We are particularly interested in publicly owned green spaces allowing small-scale agricultural production, but are also interested in other land that community might be allowed to access for growing food. We are ALSO interested in how your district has been handling any other facilitation of community farming or gardening, including in handling zoning variances or redevelopment plans.

We are interested in finding successful examples of people growing food on urban land (any urban land, including but not limited to public land) and the structures that support managing this land. Could you include sample language and/or provisions or policies used by organizations in your district that allow for or encourage urban food cultivation?
(e.g., land use designations, zoning or tax relief strategies, agricultural enterprise zones, community garden application processes, etc.)

How are the provisions and policies from the previous question recorded and implemented in municipal processes?
For example, are they written into the municipal code, procedures used by committees or parks, etc.?

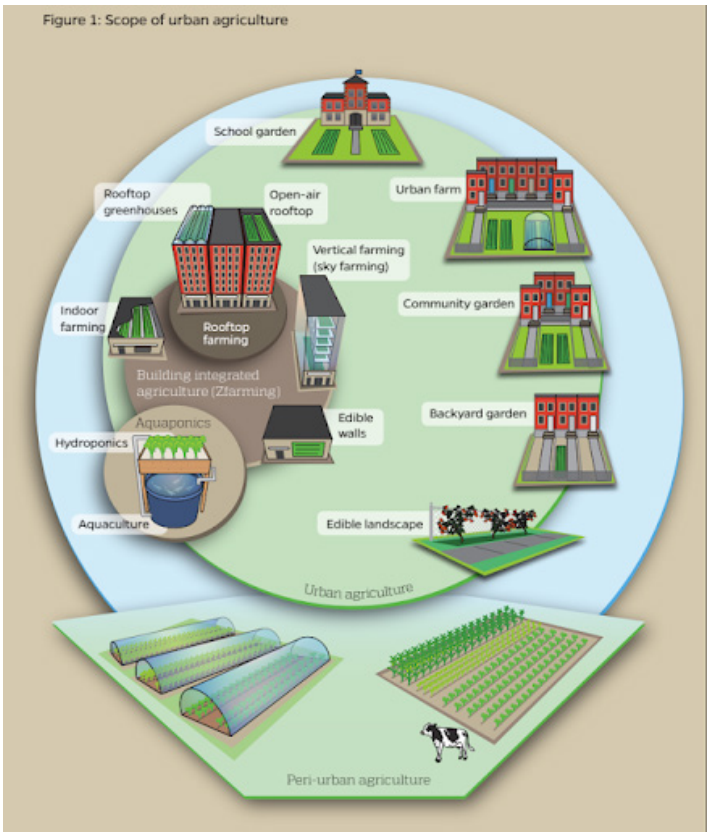
In your district are there organizations with staff whose job includes supporting people seeking land access for food production?
(For example, with the kinds of mechanisms listed previously.) We would be grateful if you could share contact information for people involved in these processes.

If somebody wanted to start a community garden or to farm commercially, can you anticipate what barriers they might encounter? If it would not be automatically allowed, what would make it possible for them to access land where food can be cultivated and/or put up a hoop house, greenhouse, or other related accessory structures?

Equity Impacts

We are interested in the equity impacts of current and proposed policies related to urban agriculture.

How do (or will) urban agriculture projects and related policies in your district promote racial equity, address disparities, and support under-resourced communities in a sustainable manner? (For example, providing affordable and reliable land access, communication through a variety of media and languages, space that meets food needs and serves as a gathering place, management that does not adhere solely to white systems or ideals.)



What ideas, information, or resources would be—or have been—helpful to you/your organization when supporting or improving equitable access to land for food cultivation? TCALT has found the Racial Equity Impact Assessment to be a useful tool: https://www.raceforward.org/sites/default/files/RacialJusticeImpactAssessment_v5.pdf

Moving Forward

Thank you very much for completing the survey, we are grateful for your knowledge and time. We look forward to working together to facilitate urban agriculture in the Twin Cities metropolitan area!
If you'd like, please share any additional comments, thoughts, or questions about the survey or urban agriculture generally.
Would your organization be interested in receiving more information about organizations working in the Twin Cities to facilitate urban food cultivation? Please let us know who the appropriate contact is for sharing this information.

Image from Johns Hopkins report, "Vacant Lots to Vibrant Plots" - Santo et al. 2016 https://clf.jhsph.edu/sites/default/files/2019-01/vacant-lots-to-vibrant-plots.pdf

Early in our process, we reached out to a number of county government offices as well as urban agriculture practitioners to solicit feedback about these questions, and refined accordingly. All interviews were conducted by 1-3 members of TCALT's policy team and were recorded with the consent of the interviewee. Question answers were documented in both the recording and written notes, which we reviewed and referenced during report development.

In addition, we worked with St. Paul-Ramsey County Public Health to administer a written survey of our questions. A member of their team sent an initial message to our district contact list explaining the motivation behind the survey, and we followed up with an email from county staff that introduced TCALT and included both a digital google form and a link to a summary policy table that contained code impacting urban agriculture for all municipalities. Contacts were asked to review their municipality's code for accuracy and were given the option to complete the survey online or to contact us to schedule a video or phone call to discuss the questions.

Finally, after soliciting interview or survey responses for several months, we circulated a simplified survey:

> *We've been asked to review how policies are supporting urban agriculture — or making it harder — in Ramsey County, and we'd like to include the perspectives of everyone who has something to say about this.*
>
> *If you have something to say, please let us know (post it here [when included on social media], or send it to tcalt@tcalt.org — or send us a note saying you'd like to chat with us, and we can supply translation as needed), so that we can support the County in supporting urban agriculture better in their efforts for food security.*

Limitations

There are several limitations that may have impacted the accuracy of our policy review. First, our selection of search terms may not have captured all of the relevant policies. (The housing of county data on urban agriculture in the Department of Safety and Inspections, for example, provides an illustration of the vocabulary challenges involved.) Second, for municipalities that did not have easily navigated or searchable city ordinance databases, we could not replicate the search protocol, which may result in some inconsistencies between policy memos. Third, not all accessible city code was current. While we attempted to search city websites to find any new code, we may have included repealed policy or omitted recently adopted policy.

Limitations of our interview and survey efforts include a low survey response rate that restricts our knowledge of mechanisms that may impact urban agriculture outside official city code and programs. Furthermore, our focus on and low literacy about policy resulted in us representing more governmental perspectives than those of the growers who are most impacted by these provisions, leaving us

with a bureaucratic-oriented approach to combating barriers. Finally, although we visited the field days and growing activities of many specific cultural groups (and have included resources and perspectives shared at those farms and gardens), the majority of people who spoke with us in dedicated interview time were white, which has reduced the comprehensiveness of our identifying mechanisms or concerns specific to BIPOC communities. Resources to support interviewee time, and commitment to act on their recommendations were two suggestions often shared in seeking to address this limitation (see, for example, the method used by the CLUES community process cited above).

2.1.3 Response highlights (including interview and survey list and key quotes)

Respondents to our survey included staff from local organizations that are involved in urban food cultivation in Ramsey County, representatives from Saint Paul district councils, Ramsey County municipality personnel, actors from a variety of Ramsey County departments, and people who are part of efforts or organizations that span the metropolitan area and beyond. We learned a lot from speaking with community members and we are grateful for their engagement. Information and quotes from interviews and surveys are integrated throughout and shaped much of the report. Here we have included a table with key quotes that display a range of perspectives and important themes that emerged from our conversations.

Interview and Survey Respondent Key Quotes		
Name	**Organization**	**Quote**
Organizations Involved in Food Cultivation		
Hayley Ball	Urban Roots	The systems that we navigate are not friendly to folks who have really rich farming knowledge who are new american families specifically, or migrant families…it's just not friendly for trying to navigate those systems in the first place, so I think that's one of the biggest challenges.
Skyler Hawkins	Urban Roots	[There's] a lot of intergenerational knowledge sharing with community members, especially people who immigrated here recently in the last few years, kids and grandparents. Food practices and foodways and traditions being passed down are really exciting.
Hindolo Pokawa	Ramsey Farmer / Emerging Farmers Working Group	I think there is a clear indication of the racial challenges of urban agriculture – in terms of equity, in terms of social justice, in terms of cultural differences…that includes the kinds of food that they would want to grow.
Kirsten Saylor	Saint Paul Public Schools (and independent contractor)	I miss the leadership of Gardening Matters that could talk with the many and very diverse stakeholders who each come with their own agenda, worldview and biases – from planners, to landowners, to neighbors, to growers, to public health, etc. The ability to "translate" and foster constructive conversations is helpful.
Katheryn Schneider	Rice Street Gardens	Most of our gardeners are recent immigrants. The majority are either Hmong, Nepali, Karen or Karenni who live in apartments and use their gardens to feed their family.
Christine Weber	Every Meal	The initial thought was to participate in a Ramsey County SummerLands Pilot Project. However, that did not meet our needs as it required any land used in the project to be returned to its original state at the end of that particular summer. We had grant funding to construct raised beds and install fencing, so we needed a longer term agreement.
Abigail Hindson	CLUES (Comunidades Latinas Unidas En Servicio)	Land is power because land is money and money is power...having land is such a big sense of security; anytime you are able to give people the option of having land, especially a community that hasn't had land before, they're going to do really amazing things on it.

Interview and Survey Respondent Key Quotes		
Name	**Organization**	**Quote**
Saint Paul Districts		
Robin Horkey	District 5 (Payne-Phalen)	A group had cleared off the topsoil…put down a barrier, put fresh organic soil, redid the bedding for the individual plots, then the coordinator found out that a new soil test had never been done when the property was replotted, so the city (St. Paul HRA) would not finalize the lease until the soil test was done and they had the test results.
Regina Rippel	District 5 (Payne-Phalen)	The D5 pays for insurance and city water on this plot. I volunteer my service for upkeep. Every season the plots are available and can be used free of charge by people who request them.Those people come from various backgrounds.
Shevek McKee	District 10 (Como): Como Community Council	Como Park also has several trees that produce edible "snacks", we have a Tree Trek tour that includes these "snack trees", but those aren't widely considered urban agriculture.
Steve Mitrione	District 11 (Hamline Midway): Midway Green Spirit Community Garden	If you're going to do something, you can't just do it for a year, if you're going to make a commitment, you really have to make it five to ten years at least, because that's when it becomes viable, in terms of the work you do in terms of preparing the land and preparing the soil and building the community.
Claire Lienesch	District 11 (Hamline Midway): Tatum Park Community Garden	I am a white woman and there is no training or resources for me in this role to work on my own implicit biases, nor is there a requirement to do so, so I pull exclusively on my own anti-racist work and training to achieve this; I have wondered if some anti-bias training should be required for gardens like ours that use city land. *personal opinion as a gardener, not as an elected representative of Tatum Park Community Garden
Sherman Eagles	District 12 (Saint Anthony Park Community Council): Saint Anthony Park Community Garden	If for some reason the current assessor decides that this is not a charitable use, we'd be back where we were. At this point, we could someday get hit by the tax again, which we couldn't afford – it would force the Community Council to sell the land again, because they have no income other than what the gardeners pay.
Michael Russelle	District 12 (Saint Anthony Park Community Council): Saint Anthony Park Community Garden	What we really want to do is build community…build community by providing land for people to garden. If that can be a goal of the county and of the city, in allowing people to use land, whether it's a community gardens setup or a much smaller piece of land and some neighbor uses it and it's in the front yard, that would be really good.
Laura Savin	District 16 (Summit Hill Association): Summit Hill Community Garden	We have an organic community garden…founded about 8 years ago…with the Summit Hill Association. We have 50 garden plots including some shared plots from which the majority of the produce is donated to the Hallie Q Brown food shelf. We typically have a majority of returning gardeners. Each gardener is expected to volunteer 4 hours during the summer on communal projects such as weeding common spaces. We always have a waiting list.
Ramsey County Municipalities		
Bryan Lloyd	CIty of Roseville	City of Roseville and churches within the city operate community gardens, which are permitted by right if they do not exceed 10,000 square feet.
Evan Monson	White Bear Township	Certain structures that are typically deemed 'accessory structures' cannot be built without a principal structure (house) on a lot, so if it is on a non-park lot then a zoning ordinance amendment could alleviate issues.
Russ Stark	City of Saint Paul	[Expanding urban food cultivation is] a matter of putting together the right package of methods and approaches…[for example, like] city electric car share – up to this point, this is something the city has ALLOWED to happen, and now it's something we're deciding is a public good we need to MAKE happen.

Interview and Survey Respondent Key Quotes		
Name	**Organization**	**Quote**
	Ramsey County	
Connie Bernardy	Active Living Ramsey Communities	[Another] driver is the parks department [and] how they use the land that they have. They restore for prairies, that would be interesting for foraging areas – wouldn't that be cool?
Martha Faust	Ramsey County Community & Economic Development	The kinds of sites that community and economic development is involved in vary from small remnant lots to larger land use conversions. We mostly look at jobs and housing, but also consider other uses that provide social benefits and meet the county's environmental and health goals. We now use an equitable development framework to evaluate redevelopment concepts in light of those social benefits.
Geoff Maas	Ramsey County GIS	The county can play a role in working with cities, nonprofits, and faith-based groups to be a gathering point of data, [including] working with assessors and the tax forfeit office to help find land available or land that has potential for agriculture. The county COULD serve the community with maps, as long as others take care of data.
Trista Matas-Castillo	Ramsey County Board of Commissioners	But the systems of government…are built solely on white systems, and often require someone who understands those systems and a navigator. So there's a significant gap.
Ann White Eagle	Ramsey County Parks and Recreation Soil and Water Conservation Division	To be honest, in the major projects we've accomplished, it happens because of partnerships, so those are very critical.
	Twin Cities Metropolitan Region	
Michael Chaney	Project Sweetie Pie	What we're all doing is operationalizing the Green Movement, if we think about federal and global scale – we're operationalizing the UN sustainable development goals – they're talking about institutions, businesses, large and small – and when I talk about building the food movement, it's following the protocols and parameters that have already been established by the UN. How can we make it part of our ethos that growing food and community is part of the food systems we all participate in?
Jennifer Tacheny	Sisters of Saint Joseph of Carondelet, Celeste's Dream Project	Our model is similar, at the Sisters of St. Joseph of Carondelet (CSJ) St. Kate's/CSJ Food Access Hub, to the "take what you need and work when you can" model – we're building this local resource, so come take what you need and help build a better resource – so it's a circular cooperative model, it helps remove the stigma, and people enter at different points, and we're all entering out of our own needs and interests, and building community around nutrition and personal wellness.
GillEtte Anderson	G.R.O.W.	If there is a way to build up the numbers, so that the voices can be heard, so that the resources can be had, so that there is a system that we're able to connect – and we don't each have to build the whole system / reinvent the wheel.
Jessica Oh	Minnesota Department of Transportation	A good place to start if interested in purchasing MnDOT right of way for an urban food project is to contact the MnDOT's Office of Land Management at LandSales.MN.DOT@state.mn.us. If a government agency is leading a garden project as a public project- they should reach out to MnDOT before nonprofit or neighborhood partners. Another alternative to purchasing right of way is often land use agreements, leasing, permits and licenses. For most government entities, these are considered temporary and short term uses of public lands but urban food cultivation may or may not be an allowable use based on many factors.

2.2 Ramsey County policy memos and case studies

2.2.1 Policy overviews

For an overview of policies related to urban agriculture in *all* Ramsey County municipalities organized by urban food cultivation activity, explore the Ramsey County policy overview tables (Appendix O). Each table represents a different urban agriculture policy category, and each row represents a municipality in Ramsey County.

2.2.2 Individual district policy memos

For a more in-depth understanding of urban agriculture activities and policy in a specific municipality, look at individual policy memos (Appendix P). These provide a summary of:

1. known activities related to urban agriculture in the municipality — like community gardens, farmers' markets, and compost collection sites,

2. where urban agriculture is permitted to occur based on zoning code, and

3. city programs or future plans that incorporate urban agriculture.

For more detailed information, there is a background section that contains two tables, one that displays the municipality's policies related to urban agriculture activities, and one that describes the zoning districts in which urban agriculture is allowed. Any background information helpful for context is included below the tables. Once policy conditions are established, there are two sections, one that lists challenges, and one that lists opportunities related to urban agriculture in the municipality. Finally, there is an "Attachments" section where people who would like to learn more can find links to the resources that we consulted, like city code and community garden and farmers' market websites.

"Urban Agriculture Policy Table" category descriptions - each contains policy related to:	
Compost	Collection of organic material to be decomposed and reused to help fertilize soil
Water Access	Accessing water for agriculture: 1) during water conservation periods, 2) from hydrants, and 3) considering timing of water supply
Fowl/Livestock	Keeping of fowl like chickens, ducks, turkeys; keeping of livestock
Bees	Keeping of bees
Sale of Products	Sale of products grown or produced by seller
Land Disturbance	Alteration of land surface, including (or not including) gardening, tilling, etc.
Fences	Barriers enclosing a yard or garden
Equipment Storage	Storing equipment or tools in an enclosed structure or screened area
Right-of-way	Growing plants in a right-of-way (for example, a boulevard)
Vegetation Regulation	How the city expects people to interact with public vegetation
UA as Nuisance	How urban agriculture activities may be (unfairly) considered a public nuisance affecting health or peace and safety

Glossary

Right-of-way
Land — sometimes privately-owned — that non-landholders can access infrastructure on or travel through (e.g. sidewalks and utility corridors). In most municipalities, residents are permitted to grow plants in publicly accessible rights-of-way like boulevards.

The table below provides a very general overview of the tendencies in the policies we reviewed. We have arranged them in this format to make it easiest for municipal entities to see where there may be room for improvement in their relevant policies (recognizing that conditions vary across municipalities). If there are not pressing reasons for the more restrictive policies — or if policies currently prohibiting or inhibiting urban food cultivation could be modified to work around the pressures that motivated the policies in the first place — this would help move more districts toward supporting urban agriculture (see also Varghese and Hansen-Kuhn 2013, Place et al. 2022).

Table: Policy Options for Supporting Urban Agriculture (see category description table above)

Policy target	**Prohibitive: policy prohibits an activity associated with urban agriculture, policy addressing activity does not exist**	**Inhibitive: policy allows some urban agriculture activity, but could be adjusted to be more supportive**	**Sufficiently supportive: policy sufficiently supports urban agriculture**	**Proactively supportive: policy creates infrastructure for urban agriculture expansion and multifunctional benefits**
Compost	Does not allow any composting.	Requires strict enclosure and setback standards that may reduce the amount of compost, limiting available soil fertility source.	Allows open composting with attention to best practices but without inhibitive standards.	Incentivizes diversion of compostable materials to provide high-quality soil amendments and provides support and technical assistance for testing compost quality.
Water Access	Does not allow residents to access stop boxes, hydrants, or other water hookups without offering alternative sources of water for growing food. During water shortages, water use for food cultivation is prohibited as a result of being grouped with use for lawn watering.	Makes procedures to access water hookups (i.e. to hydrants) costly or time consuming, and provides limited support for utilizing water utilities and infrastructure.	Provides support for obtaining water hookup permits, and facilitates use of existing water utilities and infrastructure. During water shortages, watering for food cultivation is exempt from water use restrictions.	Subsidizes water when used for agriculture projects with community benefits and supports water testing when needed. Incentivizes water conservation, soil water holding capacity building (building soil organic matter), and water quality improvements (i.e. phosphorus uptake).
Fowl/ Livestock	Does not allow keeping fowl or livestock.	Requires following arduous licensing / permitting procedures or unclear processes to keep fowl or livestock.	Has licensing / permitting processes and standards for keeping fowl and livestock that are affordable and achievable.	Provides support for obtaining licenses / permits, meeting standards, and accessing relevant resources, enabling the safe and considerate keeping of fowl or livestock.

Table: Policy Options for Supporting Urban Agriculture (see category description table above)				
Policy target	**Prohibitive: policy prohibits an activity associated with urban agriculture, policy addressing activity does not exist**	**Inhibitive: policy allows some urban agriculture activity, but could be adjusted to be more supportive**	**Sufficiently supportive: policy sufficiently supports urban agriculture**	**Proactively supportive: policy creates infrastructure for urban agriculture expansion and multifunctional benefits**
Bees	Does not allow keeping bees.	Requires following arduous licensing / permitting / certification procedures or unclear processes to keep bees.	Has licensing / permitting / certification processes and standards for keeping bees that are affordable and achievable.	Provides support for obtaining licenses / permits / certifications, meeting standards, and accessing relevant resources, enabling the safe and considerate keeping of fowl or livestock.
Sale of Products	Does not allow produce or product sales at any time of the year.	Makes sales of produce or products occur only a few times per year by owners of the parcel or people who grew products on that specific parcel.	Allows regular sales of produce on parcels by all involved growers no matter ownership status or where the products were grown.	Supports roadside stands (in compliance with cottage rules) and offers clear guidance for compliance with traffic ordinances.
Land Disturbance	Does not allow tilling, planting, or harvesting.	Requires people tilling, planting, or harvesting to obtain land disturbance licenses and permits.	Allows tilling, planting, and harvesting for food cultivation without obtaining land disturbance licenses and permits.	Incentivizes agroecological methods for restoring soil quality in urban areas and supports access to soil remediation programs (e.g. via EPA).
Fences	Does not allow fences of certain types and heights that may be used for urban food cultivation.	Enforces maximum material and height regulations, limiting grower protection of plants. Requires arduous processes for meeting fence standards.	Outlines how fences can be appropriate for food cultivation while also meeting safety / visibility regulations.	Proactively evaluates fence and involves inspectors at the outset to ensure fence is meeting both food cultivator needs and city code. Supports navigating permitting and building processes.
Equipment Storage	Does not allow outdoor equipment storage by considering it a nuisance or does not allow enclosures where equipment can be stored.	Requires equipment to be stored in enclosed spaces (for example, sheds that must meet accessory structure standards).	Allows equipment to be stored outdoors. Standards for accessory structures for storing equipment are amenable to urban food cultivation (for example, allowing accessory structures on lots without a primary structure).	Provides support for alternative equipment storage and access strategies (for example, tool libraries). Supports construction and use of accessory structures like sheds and greenhouses.

Table: Policy Options for Supporting Urban Agriculture (see category description table above)				
Policy target	**Prohibitive: policy prohibits an activity associated with urban agriculture, policy addressing activity does not exist**	**Inhibitive: policy allows some urban agriculture activity, but could be adjusted to be more supportive**	**Sufficiently supportive: policy sufficiently supports urban agriculture**	**Proactively supportive: policy creates infrastructure for urban agriculture expansion and multifunctional benefits**
Right-of-way	Does not allow any plantings in any right-of-way.	Establishes a short list of plants or trees (of specific type and height) that may be planted and maintained in approved rights-of-way.	Allows a broad variety of plants and trees to be planted and maintained in most rights-of-way.	Supports proactive negotiation of right-of-way arrangements, for example, on public utility land, and with supports from relevant programs (such as curb cut and native planting programs).
Vegetation Regulation	Does not allow residents to interact with public vegetation, justified by the intent to protect public property from damage.	Limits interactions with vegetation in public spaces to specific areas and to planting / harvesting only plants maintained by specific food cultivators themselves, or in specific zones.	Allows meaningful interactions with public vegetation (such as fruit trees, medicinal plants, and forage crops) in all spaces, including appropriate harvesting by all residents.	Incentivizes agroecological methods for maintaining and restoring ecological integrity and biodiversity conservation/habitat; supports public education regarding appropriate stewardship and rehabilitation of sites affected by toxins.
UA as Nuisance	Does not allow many harmless activities related to urban food cultivation, justified by the intent to maintain public health or peace.	Limits urban food cultivation through standards meant to regulate other activities that may be considered a nuisance (for example, regulations about rank growth).	Evaluates urban food cultivation activities more loosely in relation to nuisance standards.	Values urban food cultivation's community benefits and therefore, related activities done considerately are exempt from nuisance regulations.

"Urban Agriculture Zoning Table" category descriptions - each contains zoning code related to:	
Farming/Gardening	Growing produce, including fruits, vegetables, trees, plants, flowers and other similar crops
Accessory Structures	Structures incidental to agricultural activities like storage sheds, greenhouses, and hoop houses
Sale of Products	Sale of products grown or produced by seller
Fowl/Livestock	Keeping of fowl, livestock, or bees
Compost	Collection of organic material to be decomposed and reused to help fertilize soil

2.2.3 Key municipal policy considerations highlighted

Recommendations specific to each municipality can be explored in policy memos. The following section provides general recommendations that apply to all districts in Ramsey County. We focus on the municipal scale to begin because that is a governance level legible both to residents and policy maintainers. Below, we then consider broader recommendations, at the county level (such as taxes and land provision, with state-level implications), and at the scale of the watershed.

A few municipalities in Ramsey County have made concerted efforts to enable food cultivation activities by changing ordinances and zoning code, establishing local markets, and devoting resources to programming. For example, adding relevant concepts and corresponding definitions to ordinances, including agriculture or gardening as a land use in zoning code, accommodating produce sales, and creating city-operated community gardens on public land have contributed to the formation of meaningful food-related endeavors. Such acts have primed these districts to further build relationships and systems to expand urban agriculture frameworks that also could be implemented elsewhere. This may help decrease confusion stemming from vast differences that currently exist in the facilitation of urban agriculture between municipalities that are close in character or proximity.

In contrast, the majority of districts in Ramsey County lack provisions in their code necessary to support an increasing interest in utilizing urban land for growing food. The absence or ambiguity of standards relevant to food production makes it difficult for residents to invest in projects because they are unable to determine the types of activities and structures that are permitted in various locations. Exacerbating the challenges of this omission is a long-standing impression that agriculture only occurs outside the city, which has resulted in measures that inhibit or prohibit activities related to agriculture in urban and peri-urban areas. These mechanisms tend to be regulations about public nuisances (for example, compost, keeping of animals, and vegetation growth), produce sales, water access, and infrastructure construction.

A number of municipalities have adjusted formerly restrictive ordinances to be more permissive, partly because they recognize that a parcel with urban agriculture is preferable to a vacant one. These municipalities commonly view food production as an interim or special interest land use rather than a valuable, long-term part of the landscape. Additionally, inadequate maintenance support for existing urban farms and gardens often results in short-lived projects that struggle with unpredictable property taxes or access to resources. This treatment prevents individuals and communities from augmenting the positive impacts of urban agriculture, since some benefits are contingent on long-term processes and investment in the land, neither of which are likely to occur with insecure land tenure.

Leveraging code supportive of urban agriculture often requires having access to, and in some cases, owning private land, presenting an equity issue. In Ramsey

County, white people disproportionately own land and control land tenure. The legacies of historical discriminatory policies, including redlining and racial covenants, continue to marginalize BIPOC and refugee communities, perpetuating disparities in the ability to secure collective access to land for food cultivation. Some municipalities have worked to decrease this gap by starting community gardens with rentable plots at city parks, schools, and other public places. Despite this, in most municipalities the demand for space to grow food usually exceeds available plots.

For future expansion of urban agriculture in Ramsey County, based on comprehensive plans, some municipalities intend to integrate food cultivation into their city, while others do not acknowledge the potential of urban agriculture to enhance their neighborhoods. In either case, there are realistic and actionable steps to promoting the development of a strong and supportive urban agriculture network in the region. Such a network would generate many social and environmental benefits that align with district council, city, county, regional, and state goals.

2.2.4 Case studies illustrating policy considerations

We highlight four gardens whose experiences illustrate issues with policies or procedures that were often discussed as barriers in our process of assembling this report:

- Rice Street Gardens is one of several sites in Maplewood that are currently slated for redevelopment and that are of considerable interest to the urban food cultivation community, not least because of the unusual combination of good land for growing and good transit (bus) options for elders and others with limited mobility. Once the site of many greenhouses (that were themselves lobbied for by the community group Afro Eco), Rice Street Gardens has over the past few years turned into a very active hub for gardeners, including many South Asian and Southeast Asian families and elders, for whom the combination of larger plots than usually available in proximity to transit has attracted urban food cultivators to the site (currently owned by St. Paul Regional Water Services). Although St. Paul Regional Water Services has been fortunately amenable to working with the gardeners to find a long-term land use for the site that includes gardening — along with the foraging that also occurs in the wetland and adjacent parts of the site — prospective developers for this site (as well as some of the other significant sites proposed for redevelopment, such as the sites adjacent to the Ponds at Battle Creek) have shown very little literacy around working with urban food cultivation as an integrated land use in redevelopment plans. In the public engagement process initiating the Battle Creek redevelopment process, the designers facilitating the process eventually were able to conceptualize urban food cultivation possibilities as some of what they were helping the community to consider (for example as plots, raised beds, and integrated edible landscaping in the form of fruit trees, shrubs, and annual and perennial landscaping plants that have edible parts). However, this took considerable education and coaching, and points out an area where

increased literacy and policy incentives (such as the inclusion of community gardening as a recognized amenity in the Minneapolis planned unit development code) could have significant impact.

- The St. Anthony Park Community Council's navigating of taxation of the community garden it owns over the past ten years illustrate some of the uncertainties and challenges presented by taxes, even to land owned by the most local unit of government in Saint Paul! Taxes for community gardens are not automatically abated; garden use is considered to be a form of personal gain, albeit one that tax assessors have allowed, in several cases where taxes have been challenged, to be abated if enough of the garden is dedicated to gardening for donation. The tax situation on this site, like many, is complicated further by the inclusion of a large shed rented to a neighboring business (whose financial support helped to acquire and maintain the site along the railroad west of Raymond Ave., the majority of which is used for the garden and adjacent orchard and small prairie open space). However, agricultural taxation processes that allocate sections of properties as under agricultural use are common in Minnesota, and could easily be applied here, taxing only the part of the property used for business. Recognizing other public benefits of gardens to communities beyond a donation arrangement negotiated by lawyers on behalf of the community council (supplying garden space to renters, programming, stewardship, etc.) would also help make garden provision more available and equitable.

- The Gateway garden provides an example of where small but important pieces of infrastructure can help continue to catalyze the effort of a garden community. Having lost coordinators, the garden was in danger of losing access to their land without leadership capacity, especially because the local District 5 Council did not have the capacity to manage more than the two small gardens they help facilitate. Urban Roots has taken on extra work in the past year to step in, renegotiate conditions to maintain land access (including a year of communication with the DNR, who own the site), and help engage gardeners in rebuilding a governance structure. This has made it possible for the community to continue to build on the soil care, physical infrastructure (fences, water, accessory materials and structures) they have built up over more than a decade, rather than losing the garden. Additional capacity to assist community farms and gardens when they need it would help move toward the goal of providing land for growing food for the community for all who want to.

- The CLUES (Comunidades Latinas Unidas En Servicio) garden, Jardín de Armonía en Acción, illustrates perhaps the most common challenge. Started with temporary grant funds on currently unused land (sports fields behind a neighboring church school that is not operating as a school at the moment), the CLUES garden has become a vibrant hub of community gardening and peer education and mutual support around environmental justice and more. However, the rental fees to access the neighboring land are not sustainable without ongoing grant funding — and demand for the garden has grown considerably, meaning there is a growing waiting list of families and individuals seeking to participate. The space could accommodate a much larger garden if a way could be found to resource the land access.

2.2.5 Target areas ready for further urban food cultivation infrastructure

Based on the work of the Open Space Working Group and our interviews, it would appear that there is a great deal of momentum, desire for more urban food cultivation land access, and community infrastructure in the Payne Phalen / East Side and West Side neighborhoods (for example, through the Gateway Garden, and the new GROW garden). Further, several sites in Maplewood would make sense for further integration of food cultivation sites in the urban fabric, particularly as part of currently planned redevelopment sites (as described above), and also as part of the city's Climate Action and Adaptation Plan, which features community farms and gardens in its second action area (2040 Comprehensive Plan, 2019, pages 163-166).

Part 3. Policy Recommendations and Considerations

Part 3 Summary: Best practices and potential outcomes

Part 3 of this report provides an overview of well-received, functional approaches to supporting urban agriculture that are used by counties and municipalities with relevant experience. We share a summary of best practices and potential outcomes along with specific policy suggestions, and the policy background explanations to support these. Our aim is to support agencies and organizations in Ramsey County to build the needed infrastructure and relationships to carry out and sustain the modest recommendations consistently prioritized across many different perspectives contributing to this report. We provide these recommendations for increasing urban agriculture in Ramsey County based on feedback from residents—and in the context of possibilities for expanding existing supportive structures and provision of land and resources. Finally, we include some guidance for scenarios of gathering the most likely entities for taking action on this report in workshops for planning and implementation, and provide some recommendations for how these workshops and actions can use the accompanying series of illustrated guides to resources and ways to access land. Our hope is that these activities will develop, refine, and maintain clearer pathways to expanding and maintaining urban land for food cultivation.

As we are able to implement these recommendations, it will put Ramsey County in a better position to make the most of new resources coming online for urban agriculture. This is particularly true as more agencies at the local, state, and federal level recognize the need to better resource urban food cultivation efforts. This involves both rewriting statutes to facilitate urban cottage food production (including small-scale value-added processing), as well as to better integrate land uses to meet both housing and food production needs. In addition to moving away from mid-century models of land use separation and agri-food governance that concentrated food security concerns out of reach of where most people live, contemporary best practices are replacing “food disabling” urban form with food enabling infrastructure (Deh-Tor 2017), preserving the capacity of urban and near-urban land to support food security, and retaining the cultural knowledge and capacity for meaningful contributive justice with real stewardship outcomes from those who wish to play a part in growing food for their communities (Beintema et al. 2009, Barthel et al. 2013, 2015, Timmermann and Félix 2015).

The EPA Local Foods, Local Places Action Plan cited below, as developed in Ramsey County by the Asian Economic Development Association is a good example of this shift, as the resources that were at one time dedicated to “sprawl prevention” are remobilized to revitalizing disinvested urban food infrastructure by providing federal technical assistance to neighborhood community actions.

The next Farm Bill looks poised to move further in the direction called for in the PolicyLink report *Growing Urban Agriculture: Equitable strategies and policies for improving access to healthy food and revitalizing communities*, including their central policy considerations (Hagey et al. 2012 pages 35-39):

- "Help identify and provide land and facilities for farming.
- Provide financial support for start-up or operating costs through grants on a variety of issues and low-interest loans, available at the local, state, or federal levels.
- USDA programs can help support urban agriculture and community gardens.
- The Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) could support urban agriculture through its revitalization and poverty reduction programs.
- The Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) can ensure that nongovernmental entities can apply for EPA Brownfields Program assessment grants for urban agriculture projects.
- Other federal agencies, including the Department of Health and Human Services and the Treasury, may be able to play a role in supporting urban agriculture in the future as well.
- Include urban agriculture-friendly policies in general plans and adopt urban agriculture-friendly zoning policies.
- Pass resolutions, initiatives, and legislation supporting urban agriculture and community gardens.
- Local governments could designate a "point" person to help local urban gardeners and farmers navigate these city permits and comply with city policies
- Increase funding for programs that provide urban farmers and community gardeners with training and technical assistance."

Under this heading in their report, Hagey and colleagues point explicitly to the Twin Cities: "The City of Minneapolis adopted a resolution that will expand the consumption, production, and distribution of local, sustainably produced, and healthy foods. The resolutions came from a series of convenings coordinated by the mayor that included several city departments and community representatives. This group [Homegrown Minneapolis] focused on advancing community gardens, small-enterprise urban agriculture, farmers' markets, and the commercial use of locally grown food.

Together with all those we have been in conversation with over the last year of assembling this report (table in section 2.1.3), we hope that this report can serve as a resource for the meaningful work ahead, needed to achieve the goal of securing land access for growing food for the community for all who want it. Some action items will be easier to achieve than others, but we try to provide clear guidelines, literacy, and vocabulary to support ongoing work toward goals.

Planners who understand the role that community food cultivation can play in cities agree that intentional inclusion of community farms and gardens provides benefits that far outweigh the costs. In the sections of this last part of the report, we:

- provide an overview of practices and characteristics of cities that support long-term urban agriculture (3.1);
- outline accessible mechanisms used in these cases that could be adopted in Ramsey County (3.2);
- show how supporting urban agriculture can help meet Ramsey County's existing goals of food security, racial equity, and community engagement (making reference to existing frameworks and how urban food cultivation can play a more active role) (3.3);
- and, finally (3.4), list resources and land mechanisms collected in our review that help address the main goals we have identified, particularly those related to land tenure, tax burdens, and uncertainties in policies and procedures that disproportionately dis-engage many of the very people who bring the most **agrarian*** knowledge and expertise to the County.

Glossary

Agrarian
Relating to the cultivation of land for food, or to the parts of society and cultures concerned with agriculture.

Common characteristics of cities with widespread, long-term urban agriculture

- Value food security benefits and investments
  - high visibility of urban agriculture spaces and networks
  - persistent advocacy for urban food cultivation and support for site development and stewardship
  - investment in urban agriculture through allocation of federal, state, and/or local funding
- Emphasize racial equity and community engagement to decrease disparities
  - equitable relationships between local government, organizations, and growers
  - local government partnerships with nongovernmental organizations in the region
- a crucial primary partner organization is a **land trust***, which demonstrates "that the institutional infrastructure of the community gardening system is at its core dedicated to fostering permanent ownership and community stewardship" (Vitiello, 2022). Land trusts enable affordability and "development without displacement," which are crucial for avoiding harm caused by green gentrification (Dudley Street Neighborhood Initiative, 2022)

- Create supportive policy frameworks that are regularly updated with community input
    - local government adjusts provisions to support urban agriculture, creates navigable processes, and incorporates urban agriculture into planning processes (for example, comprehensive plans with regular updates)
- Develop supportive relationships between resource/knowledge holders and growers
    - local government operates — or has designated staff members heavily involved in — urban agriculture initiatives

Accessible mechanisms to better support urban food cultivation in Ramsey County

Benefits	Challenges	Support Mechanisms
1.3.1 Food security and well being	1.4.1 Food security benefits and investments undervalued → inaccessible costs of land, rent, materials	3.1 Support urban agriculture as a long-term land use by revising tenure, land classification, and property tax processes
1.3.2 Equitable cultural learning and sharing	1.4.2 Equitable access to interactive greenspaces and environmental justice	3.2 Increase equity in urban agriculture opportunities and cultural institutions' support
1.3.3 Greenspace and ecological health	1.4.3 Policy frameworks → zoning restrictions and unclear UA policies	3.3 Meaningful, straight-forward metrics to enable growing food
1.3.4 Community relationships	1.4.4 Underdeveloped resource relationships → lack of infrastructure	3.4 Clear communication and connection between relevant agencies, poli-cies, and procedures

More detailed recommendation overview:

3.1 Support urban agriculture as a long-term land use by revising tenure, land classification, and property tax processes	• Recognize urban agriculture as an important, long-term land use that belongs in the city (not as an interim or special interest/hobby use) • Encourage–through incentives like Planned Unit Development amenity codes in Minneapolis–or require, when appropriate, developers to dedicate a portion of land use to urban food cultivation in their projects, similar to land use dedication for parks or open space • Require agencies to keep and update a public inventory of their land/surplus land that is located in one accessible location • Build mechanism for more stable and longer tenure • Implement county-level real estate tax rules (and assessment instructions) so as to minimize penalty for urban farms • Advocate for changes at Minnesota Department of Revenue and in state statute to eliminate real estate tax penalty for urban farms
3.2 Increase equity in urban agriculture opportunities and cultural institutions support	• Build policies that create supportive roles for schools, libraries, recreation centers, etc. in urban food cultivation activities • Support the transition of privately-owned lots to collectively-held food cultivation spaces • Create (or expand) ample and low-cost (city-, county-, and state-supported) opportunities for people to participate in urban agriculture on public land. In particular, develop inclusive spaces that are safely accessible through a variety of transportation modes in areas with a high percentage of households that live in buildings without access to space to grow food (apartments, condos) or lower income communities • When allocating space in public urban farms or gardens, prioritize people who do not have a yard before assigning plots to people who can access other land to grow food • Acquire land to lease to residents for food cultivation. Leases should be affordable, long-term leases with continuous transparency about future plans for land • Encourage and incentivize businesses or institutions with water access to donate water to nearby growing sites • Fund low-cost and inclusive programming related to urban food cultivation through city and county departments (Parks and Recreation, Public Health)

3.3 Meaningful, straightforward metrics to enable growing food	• Building on Department of Agriculture criteria for benefits of urban agriculture worthy of public support, identify what public benefits need to be demonstrated to recruit resources. Along with making straightforward processes (like a uniform lease form for district councils), how can land-owning entities like MnDOT and DNR, or resource holders like watershed districts, routinely allocate resources? • Make zoning code clearer in terms of addressing urban food cultivation • Help urban agriculture parcels decrease stormwater drainage and sewer system fees by assessing runoff/stormwater retention and exempting them from sewer charges (making sure growers are aware) • Allow structures (sheds, greenhouses, etc.) that are often described as accessory structures to exist on lots without a primary structure or to be considered the primary structure • Revise provisions that inhibit urban agriculture to decrease barriers to growing food
3.4 Encourage clear communication and connection between relevant agencies, policies, and procedures	• Communicate with neighboring districts to learn from their experience and share processes to lessen workload on individual actors • Build straightforward processes for land access or land holding • Broaden “recreating and conservation” (defining open space) to “recreation, conservation and other open space activities” (or “open space amenity uses); add “food cultivation” to lists currently reading “park, recreational and/or natural areas”

3.1 Support urban agriculture as a long-term land use

> ***"[There are] endless possibilities if we're willing to say yes: education, food security, partnership for business development, a sharing economy, and addressing the waste system… [it's] all part of the ecosystem… we just need to say 'yes' and then we can figure it out."*** (MatasCastillo)

Overview: Recognize urban agriculture as a legitimate and long-term urban land use

Instead of passively allowing urban agriculture to occur, local government can proactively encourage food cultivation, which yields many social and environmental benefits. To start, city and county offices must recognize urban agriculture as a valuable land use (Mitrione, Stark).

> ***"[Currently] the county as a whole makes community prove [urban agriculture] would be a worthy use of space. It's okay to have spaces that don't have economic value in the way that the county thinks of it."*** (Hindson)

In this overview, we provide an introduction to the direction of our recommendations, then provide a more specific policy brief on changes that could be made to specific practices of agricultural land classification and taxation that could help normalize urban agriculture in administrative processes and reduce considerable frustration at structural barriers. These taxation recommendations would be relevant for the majority of Ramsey County's land base, which is privately held.

We also have recommendations for publicly held land. There are many public land holdings in Ramsey County suitable for supporting food production designated for community food security. Although the County may not be the main landholder, they could ease access to State and other agency land by supporting clear administrative processes for access. Governmental entities have stated that supplying land for urban agriculture leads to concerns about land access (e.g. potential future needs for the space, interference with utility infrastructure), statutory regulations (e.g. introducing private or commercial uses on public land), and liability issues (e.g. grower safety, soil contamination*) (Oh). These are all readily manageable concerns, so instead of allowing these concerns to prevent urban food cultivation, agencies should work with county- and city-level government offices and constituents interested in urban food cultivation to comply with governmental regulations to increase community agricultural use of public land. Land-holding public agencies could clearly share which tracts suitable for growing food are

available and for how long (for example, via the county Open Space Working Group efforts). Acknowledgment of the widespread benefits that all types of urban agriculture provide should dispel any doubt about the appropriateness of devoting public land to food cultivation, especially given the rising rates of food insecurity, disruption of food supply chains, and potential for agroecological practices to contribute to urban climate action plan and adaptation goals (Barthel et al. 2013, Barthel et al. 2015, Silva and Pfeiffer 2016, Rosan 2020, Schell et al. 2020). County administrators (in partnership with relevant city offices and District Councils) could partner with growing groups to request zoning variances, share liability insurance*, facilitate soil testing and remediation, and ensure access to water, usable compost, mulch, or soil. If a lack of open land is a concern, the county could work with Met Council and municipalities to support urban agriculture by protecting existing sites through mechanisms like park designation, zoning overlay districts, long-term agreements, or easements.

The Gateway Garden is an example of a working relationship between a state agency (DNR) and gardeners that needed additional support to mediate:

Ramsey County's Gateway Trail is a winding, picturesque pathway that begins

Gateway Garden: A Vision of New Commons

in Saint Paul and travels across several more cities throughout Ramsey County, progressing from lush urban wilderness to downtown sprawl. It is a prime artery for walkers and cyclists, and a venue for getting out and enjoying green space accessible to a large swathe of the county's population. At the corner of Arlington, between Mississippi and Westminster, the Gateway Garden, or Ambrosia Garden as it has been alternately named, is nestled between the trail and the highway barriers. Originally consisting of eight plots, surrounded by a fence created out of recycled materials, this urban farm was generated by a coalition of neighbors, and situated on a piece of land owned by the DNR (MN Department of Natural Resources). When the expansion of the highway in the mid 2010s, taking over part of the space, and the chaos of the COVID Pandemic had negative effects on organized gardening there, a new partnership between state, nonprofit organizations, and community members has renewed growing efforts.

When visiting this site, the feeling of community connectedness as a driving force is tangible. Its entry is an impressive wooden arch, embossed with dozens of tiles of colorful artwork done by local youth, framing a sign that sports the sigil of a tree, surrounded by translations of the word "welcome," in sixteen languages. It is a place that begs for gatherings of people. At one point, events and performances were held here, and it received accolades and visits from city and government officials. As time passed, the capacity of the original organizers waned, and aspects of the space fell into disrepair. The parking area was even blocked by concrete slabs on account of folks dumping trash there. However, rather than letting the space deteriorate further or developing it into monoculture landscaping, the DNR was willing to rebuild the stewardship of the garden with the guidance of Urban

Roots, a youth-centered, community organization with a focus on curating urban farms in concert with their surrounding communities.

The building of this association was not merely a handoff either, as the agency remains in the wings to support Urban Roots as they mentor into being a new community stewardship plan for the space. This symbiosis covers the cost of new fencing in exchange for Urban Roots doing the organizing on the build. Additionally, workers from the DNR have removed buckthorn at the site, chipped fallen wood, and cleaned up and removed garbage. All of these services would be extremely difficult and/or costly for a community organization or group of neighbors to achieve on their own. The concrete slabs are on track to be taken out as well, making the garden considerably more accessible. Overall, the relationships between the DNR and both iterations of growers in the space represent long strides in the right direction for interaction between government entities and urban growers. Providing land to farmers, and supporting the stewardship of it by bridging the stopgap to larger scale resources and organizational support is a critical investment that leads to long term sustainability and community cohesion.

While impressive progress has been made in the garden's restoration, it is an ongoing process, and there are multiple goals still on the horizon. The addition of a seating area, the planting of native perennials, and the implementation of some kind of new irrigation system are all docketed tasks, as is a cleanup of the rows and expansion of the fencing. However, as Urban Roots continues its stewardship efforts, bringing in their groups of youth and reaching out to the surrounding neighbors -- those who may have been involved before or those who are just beginning their journey as growers — the garden's specifics will continue to fall into place as a collective of hearts and minds works together to shape it. The Gateway Garden is proof that the support of a public landholder behind the vision of a community can truly achieve great things.

The community garden on the Gateway Trail in Saint Paul, sometimes called the Ambrosia Garden, now being mentored by community organization Urban Roots.
(Courtesy of Kieran Morris)

Encourage greater dedication of urban land to food cultivation

> ***"Dedication by the city or by certain neighborhoods… [to] really chunk out land space, land use, for urban agriculture, intentionally… can the city actually do zoning and say… we are going to dedicate spaces for urban agriculture in ways that are meaningful?"*** (Pokawa)

Hindolo Pokawa, local farmer and member of the Minnesota Department of Agriculture's Emerging Farmers' Working Group, suggested increasing the amount of land used for food cultivation by expanding existing community gardens, as well as utilizing vacant lots, boulevards, private yards, and rooftops. Although some governmental entities have established procedures for leasing land to nonprofit organizations or gardening groups, many others do not allow food cultivation on their land or have a lengthy process that is difficult to navigate. Making use of underutilized spaces for growing food requires the city and county to deliberately make land available. The Rivoli Bluffs site, stewarded by Urban Roots, exists partially because it is under a flight path, which restricts development; however, the slow process of getting approvals ensuring access to the site for time periods long enough to warrant infrastructure investment could have been helped by city and county prioritizing urban food cultivation on such underutilized land. Concerns about agricultural land uses conflicting with the need for land for housing and ecosystem function can be addressed with frameworks that prioritize **urban agroecological*** production practices, integrating healthy growing practices that do not pose health risks into the urban fabric. And processes for better integrating housing and food provision would be win-win, from redevelopment projects and public housing to single-family and multi-family housing contexts.

The Rivoli success story of the Urban Roots farm on land held by the St. Paul HRA is built on long-term organizing of the community to advocate for food cultivation uses of the site, including by Afro Eco over fifteen years ago.

Glossary

Urban agroecology
Agroecology is the approach to agricultural ecosystems interested in mimicking natural processes as much as possible in the land stewardship relationships involved in growing food (as well as fiber and other products of agriculture). Urban agroecologies are wonderful places to rebuild metabolic and learning relationships between the communities dependent on ecosystems for food and life and ecological processes.

At the municipal level, adjusting or amending existing ordinances to incorporate greater urban agriculture land into the city may be a method of increasing land access for growing food. For example, similar to existing parkland dedication requirements, requiring a certain amount of land for food cultivation in new developments, or — as the City of Minneapolis does — incentivizing urban agriculture as part of planned unit development (Russelle; Minneapolis, 2022).

Policy Memo: Recommendations regarding property taxes

Since urban agriculture provides social and environmental benefits that align with long-term equity and sustainability goals, entities should support both existing and new urban food cultivation by advocating for the codification of property tax abatement or exemption processes for land with urban agriculture. We provide below a detailed policy brief supporting an update of the application of Green Acres rules and the classification of agricultural land in Minnesota to better include urban urban food cultivation.

Beyond these specific recommendations that would need to be adopted at the state level, as well as at the county level where it is implemented, we also recommend adopting property tax exemption or abatement for urban agriculture land uses that provide open space for public access and other public benefits. Most other cities exempt urban agriculture from property taxes using justifications of "public charity" or "economic development," given the many public benefits of urban food cultivation detailed in section 1.

Providence, Rhode Island, provides a relevant example here, because their program of exempting urban vegetable farms from taxation to promote economic participation of urban farmers has supported many farmers markets supplied by produce from within and around the city, with a large proportion of Hmong farmers participating.

Baltimore, Maryland provides another example, among many, where urban food production, along with associated housing, is offered reduced taxation to support the valuable contributions of urban agriculture.

Other mechanisms for reducing tax burden while also incentivizing community support can be found in Florida's community contribution tax credit, which provides tax credits for businesses that contribute to projects designed to provide job development opportunities for low-income persons, or in Missouri's contribution tax incentive program. For these and other examples, see Chumbler et al. 2015.

Chapter One: Introduction to Real Estate Taxation Issues for Ramsey County Farmers

A substantial barrier to urban agriculture in Ramsey County is real estate tax levied by the county for government taxes on all land not designated as in public or charitable use. Economic margins for all agriculture are quite small. This is certainly true for urban agriculture in particular, and our experience working with urban farmers in the Twin Cities suggests that it is also the case for those farming in Ramsey County. Land access is usually cited as the number one difficulty faced by those of modest means attempting to farm. This problem is even more acute for those hoping to farm in urban areas. As anyone familiar with agriculture in the Twin Cities knows, reliable access to land is the most difficult aspect of farming in Ramsey County. Farmland access narratives tend to focus primarily on land acquisition. But maintaining access via appropriate alignment of income with expenses is a less visible but crucial component of keeping farmland accessible, and the disproportionality and unpredictability of taxation have thwarted successful maintenance of land for food production in the metro region. These factors, in turn, discourage prospective farmers.

For property exempt from real estate taxes, see Minn. Stat. section 272.02.

Finances of urban farmers are not well documented, especially in comparison to rural farms. For an academic survey of hundreds of urban farms in the United State, see Carolyn Dimitri et al, Urban Agriculture: Connecting Producers and Consumers, 118(3) British Food Journal 603 (2016).

In Ramsey County the problem of land access is made far worse by the current method of real estate taxation. Two aspects of the real estate property tax system create this penalty that affects Ramsey County farmers far more often than Minnesota farms generally: the way that land is classified as agricultural for the purpose of levying taxes and the rules allowing farms to participate in the tax deferment program meant to tax land at appropriate rates for agricultural use.

I. Classification

Minnesota state law provides for a real estate classification that serves as the basic framework for real estate taxation across Minnesota. Land classified as agricultural is generally taxed at a lower rate than land classified for other uses, such as commercial. In Ramsey County land that is solely agricultural often fails to receive the applicable real estate tax classification of “2a agricultural” land.

There are many good reasons for the differences in taxation based on classification. Farmland, for example, creates a limited burden on the county and state for services provided for farmland compared to, for example, commercial property. More generally, the public tends to support farming as a use of land. The system of taxation of farmland only works, however, when the classifications are sensible and applied fairly.

Our review of current practices suggests that the 2a agricultural classification is underused in Ramsey County.

More specifically, the rules for classification exclude from 2a agricultural classification smaller plots that by any reasonable definition should be considered agricultural. The problem is twofold. First, state law requirements for 2a agricultural land unreasonably favor larger farms. A change in the classification system should be made in the state legislature and should be supported by Ramsey County. Sec-

ond, in order to be classified as agricultural with less than ten acres of farmland (the vast majority of Ramsey County farms have fewer than ten acres), the narrow exceptions to the general ten-acre rule are not well known and are underused. Ramsey County, and other entities, should explicitly acknowledge these exceptions, describe them to the public, and promote their use. These two themes are discussed in more detail below.

This Policy Brief looks at the possibility for a reduced property tax burden for Ramsey County farmers under the current law and also examines the ways that current rules could be changed so as to facilitate farming.

II. Green Acres

The Minnesota tax-deferment and relief program known as Green Acres, which aims to preserve agricultural land and farms by ensuring that the farmlands are taxed based on their use as agricultural land, and not on their speculative and development value, is largely not available to Ramsey County farms. Because Green Acres fails to reach most Ramsey County farms, these farms face substantially greater tax obligations for those farms. The purpose of Green Acres, to protect farms from taxes based on the non-farming value of real estate, is therefore thwarted in Ramsey County.

After explaining how these real estate tax penalties work, the following sections describe changes that could be made to remove much of the tax penalty on Ramsey County farms. After this explanation, we suggest that the property tax system treat farms in Ramsey County as it does farms in the majority of the state. This may raise concerns for some people that such changes in the system will allow non-farms to claim agricultural property tax status. Although there is a strong case to be made on food security and food sovereignty grounds that private gardens that produce food for a household should be given preferred property tax status, we are not making that suggestion in this analysis of the tax code. All of the discussion in the remainder of this policy brief on taxes below concerns commercial farms–farms that grow to sell. Current property tax rules make many Ramsey County farming opportunities, which almost always involve fewer than ten acres, almost impossible as viable economic operations.

III. Sources Consulted

National and comparative studies of urban agriculture contain much useful information that tends to support the conclusions found here regarding Ramsey County. For the workings of real estate taxation for Ramsey County, this review focuses on a handful of sources. First, it looks at relevant Minnesota state statutes, court decisions that have interpreted those statutes, and secondary legal materials that analyze Minnesota law. Second, it looks at Minnesota Department of Revenue materials. These include the Minnesota Department of Revenue's Minnesota Property Tax Administrator's Manual, which instructs county assessors. That Manual has several relevant Modules noted in the prior footnote. Third, this analysis incorporates information from the United States Department of Agriculture Census and other secondary materials.

Guides for assessors are: Minnesota Department of Revenue, Minnesota Property Tax Administrator's Manual, Module 1, General Property Tax Law; Module 2, Valuation, Module 3, Classification (February 2022), and are referred to in this report at the Minnesota Tax Administrator's Manual. Reports include Minnesota Department of Revenue, Property Tax Division, 2022 Property Values and Assessment Practices Report, Assessment Year 2021 (March 1, 2022). This is referred to as the 2022 Values and Assessment Report. Useful analysis of Minnesota law, including the law of taxation, can be found in Dunnell Digest: An Encyclopedia of Minnesota Law.

Chapter Two: Real Estate Classification and Ramsey County Farming

I. Introduction: Real Estate Classification and Ramsey County Farming

In general, the taxation of Minnesota land is largely based on two factors: the value of the land and the classification of the property. This section looks at classification. Property is classified by the tax assessor based on a January 2 assessment of how the property was used in the previous year. Common classifications are for homesteads, apartments, commercial and industrial, and so forth. Taxes vary substantially based on this classification. What are known as classification rates are set by state law. The result of the classification system is that commercial properties pay a higher rate than residential homesteads or agricultural properties. More specifically, commercial and industrial property, as well as non-homestead residential property, is taxed at a higher rate than agricultural property. The Minnesota Department of Revenue lists the following rates:

2022 Property Tax Values and Assessment Practices Report, Appendix C. For a summary of all rates, see Minnesota House Research, Property Tax 101: Property Tax Variation by Property Type (July 2022).

Residential homestead property (class 1a) has a class rate of 1.00 percent for the first 500,000 dollars in value. After that it has a class rate of 1.25 percent.

Commercial and industrial property (class 3a) has a rate of 1.50 percent for the first 150,000 dollars in value and goes up to 2.00 percent based on its total value.

Agricultural land that is not homesteaded (class 2a) has a rate of 1.00 percent.

Consequently, a parcel with a fair market value of at least 150,000 dollars would have significantly higher taxes if it is classed as 3a commercial than it would if it were classed 1a agricultural.

II. 2a Agricultural Classification

As noted above, to the extent Ramsey County farmland does not qualify as class 2a agricultural land, it faces a substantial penalty in the assessment of real estate taxes. In addition, as noted below, 2a classification is integral to participation in the Green Acres program. The following sections describe the rules for qualifying as 2a classification and the difficulties this presents for Ramsey County farmers, and possible remedies.

III. Criteria for 2a Agricultural Classification

In order to qualify for 2a agricultural classification, a number of requirements must be met. The statutory authority for these requirements are at Minn. Stat. section 273.13, subd. 23(b).

A. Agricultural Land and Buildings

Class 2a agricultural land consists of parcels of property that are agricultural land or buildings. Agricultural land and buildings have an official definition.

(1) Used for Agricultural Purpose

Agricultural land, for the purpose of real estate classification, must be used for an agricultural purpose.

(2) Agricultural Purpose Defined

Agricultural purpose includes what one would normally think of as farming. According to Minn. Stat. section 273.13, subd. 23(e)(2), agriculture means the raising, cultivation, drying, or storage of agricultural products for sale or the storage of machinery or equipment used in the support of agricultural production by the same farm entity.

See also, Module 2, at 85

(3) Agricultural Products Defined

Agricultural products, in turn, are defined in Minn. Stat. section 273.13, subd. 23(i) and include poultry and poultry products, horticultural and nursery stock, fruits of all kinds, vegetables, forage, grains, bees and apiary products, and aquaculture products.

(4) Agricultural Products and Sales

As noted above, state statute sets out a meaning for agricultural products. The statute, at Minn. Stat. 273.13, subd. 23(i), says:

> the term "agricultural products" as used in this subsection includes production for sale of: . . . [livestock, dairy, and so forth].

Minnesota Revenue Department guidance repeatedly says that production for sale is required for 2a Agricultural classification. It directs assessors to look at IRS tax forms, to look at how produce was sold, and inquire in other specific ways about the sales. These instructions seem to favor large commercial operations at the expenses of farms that produce for sale but are smaller operations. The statute does not appear to call for distinctions based on the scale of operations.

The Minnesota Department of Revenue, Administrator's Manual, Module 2 at 84-86, Module 3, at 18. Arguably, the statute could be read to suggest that agricultural products include, but are not limited to, production for sale. The section might therefore be read to include production for distribution that is not a sale and might, for example, be produced for donation.

The general interpretation of state statute is that because agricultural land must be used to produce agricultural products, and it appears that agricultural products must be for sale, the farming that occurs on 2a agricultural land likely must produce products that are for sale.

Even if sale is required, it is worth noting that a farm could produce food that is bought from the farmer and then donated—that production would be for a sale. Notably, it is exactly this kind of production and sales model that is being encouraged at a federal level, for example, with programs such as the USDA Local Food Purchase Assistance cooperative agreement program. Further, if the production was bartered for another good, then this counts as a sale, given that in Minnesota, barter is generally considered a form of sale or purchase. Given that a significant portion of Ramsey County farm production is intended to feed the surrounding community, fair treatment of those producers requires a careful and broad understanding of agricultural sales.

In Minnesota, sales and purchases includes "any transfer of title of possession, or both, of tangible personal property, whether absolutely or conditionally, for a consideration in money or by exchange or barter." Minn. Stat. 297A.61, subd. 3(b).

(5) Preceding Year is What Counts

In order to be agricultural land, the property must have been used in the preceding year for agricultural purposes. Classification takes place effective on January 2. So, for a classification that takes place on January 2, 2023, the land would need to have been used for agricultural purposes in 2022.

B. In General, Ten Contiguous Acres – And Exceptions
A general rule sets a ten-acre minimum of contiguous acres for 2a agricultural classification. Important, though complicated and likely under-used exceptions to the ten-acre requirement also apply.

Ten-Acre Requirement
In general, according to Minn. Stat. section 273.13, subd. 23(e), agricultural land must be "contiguous acreage of ten acres or more" that was used the year before for agricultural purposes. There are important exceptions to the ten-acre requirement that are discussed below.

Exceptions to the Ten-Acre Requirement
Land that is not ten contiguous acres can be 2a agricultural land in certain situations that are found in Minn. Stat. stat. 273.13, subd. 23(f)(1). They include cases in which (1) the land is exclusively used for farming; (2) cases in which there is an intensive use for farming; and (3) intensive livestock or poultry.

1. Exclusive Use – Exception to Ten Acre Requirement (without Residence)
According to Minn. Stat. stat. 273.13, subd. 23(f)(1), land may be designated as 2a agricultural when the parcel is less than ten acres if the land is used exclusively to raise or cultivate agricultural products. Several aspects of this exception are important.

First, the farm must produce agricultural products. As noted above, it appears that to meet the definition of agricultural products, the production must be for sale.

Second, there is no minimum acreage requirement. An acre, or even smaller plot, if it meets the other requirements discussed here, could be classified as 2a property.

Third, while the rules for 2a agricultural land under the exclusive use exception say that agriculture must be the exclusive use of the property, there is no requirement regarding the intensity of that use. Assessors should not, therefore, consider the intensity of the production on the farm when considering whether there is exclusive use.

Fourth, there is no requirement that there be a residence on the property. In fact, finally, although it does not appear to be required by statute, Minnesota Department of Revenue instructs assessors to define exclusive use to mean "the entire parcel, border-to border-is used for agricultural purposes." The Department of Revenue guidance is confusing regarding structures on the property. The guidance is clear in saying that the property must be used exclusively for agriculture. It is also clear that non-agricultural structures are not allowed. No cabins, houses, or "other use" of the parcel is allowed. The question is whether agricultural structures are allowed. Part of the guidance suggests that structures are allowed if they are agricultural structures. Another part of the instruction on the same page seems to suggest that even agricultural structures are not allowed. Separate lots that are otherwise vacant would seem to be candidates for this exception.

The Minnesota Department of Revenue, Administrator's Manual, Module 3, at 21.

Farmers, potential farmers, and possibly assessors in Ramsey County seem unaware of this possible 2a agriculture classification rule.

2. Intensive Use – Exception to Ten Acre Requirement (with Residence)

Land that is less than eleven acres can be agricultural land. According to Minn. Stat. section 273.13, subd. 23(f)(2). At least three things must be true about this land.

(a.) Less Than Eleven Acres

The land must be less than eleven acres. Since the concern here is the extent to which the exception to the ten-acre requirement applies, in those situations the less-than-eleven-acre rule would always be met.

(b.) Residence Required

In order to be agricultural land under this particular exception to the ten-acre requirement, the land must include a residence. In addition, the acreage must be contiguous. It appears that the residential structure must exist, but it does not appear to need to be used as a residence at the time. Many properties of this type will already have a homestead classification, so the property taxes will not be especially high.

The value for farmers of the agricultural classification in these cases is that it is needed to qualify for Green Acres. The statute is written in such a way that it applies to the parcel except for the one acre on which the residence is situated, so the parcel would need to be larger than an acre to use this exception. This part of the statute would likely need to be updated for application in urban areas; the USDA NRCS move toward the possibility of accounting for agricultural space in square feet rather than acres for this reason may provide a useful precedent here.

(c.) Intensive Farming

In order to qualify for this exemption to the ten-acre requirement, the land must be used intensively. The statute, at Minn. Stat. section 273.13, subd. 23(f)(2), lists three things that can count for intensive use: (1) intensive market farming; (2) nurseries; and (3) equipment and machinery storage. No other uses qualify under this exception.

(1) Intensive Market Farming

Land used for intensive market farming can qualify as agricultural land under state statute. Intensive market farming is defined. The definition has several parts.

First, to be intensive market farming there must be cultivation of one or more fruits or vegetables or other agricultural products. Agricultural products are defined broadly.

Second, the production must be sold at local markets. Local markets are not defined. Almost certainly the type of direct marketing often used by small-scale Ramsey County farmers would qualify. This should include, for example, sale at a farmers market, a road-side stand, through a CSA, to a local institution or business such as a restaurant or school or grocery, or to a food hub that markets the production. The sales must be by the farmer or an organization that the farmer works with.

(2) Nursery

A nursery can qualify as intensive use for this purpose. Only the specific parts of the land used to produce nursery stock can be considered agricultural land.

(3) Machine and Equipment Storage

Machinery and equipment storage can qualify for the exception to the ten-acre requirement that includes a residence if machinery or equipment storage are activities used to support agricultural activities on other parcels of property operated by the same farming entity.

(d.) Intensive Livestock or Poultry

According to Minn. Stat. 273.13, subd. 23(e)(2), land does not need to be ten acres if the land is contiguous acreage used for an intensive livestock or poultry confinement operation, however land used for pasturing or grazing does not qualify under this clause. Backyard poultry, even if the eggs or birds are sold, does not qualify. This is relevant for very few Ramsey County farms.

IV. Land Used for Both Agriculture and Other Uses

If land is used for agricultural purposes and also used for commercial and industrial purposes, including sales, processing, or warehousing processed goods, and office facilities, the county assessor can divide the uses. According to Minn. Stat. 273, subd. (j), grading and sorting and packing raw agricultural products is an agricultural purpose. A greenhouse or other building that is primarily used for production, but also used for retail sales, can be agricultural land.

V. Leased Land

According to Minn. Stat. 273, subd. G, agricultural land classification does not depend on whether the land is farmed by the owner or rented.

VI. Real Estate Classification: Who Decides

County Assessors determine the classification for real estate taxes in Minnesota. These decisions can be appealed at the local and county level and be challenged in court.

Minnesota Department of Revenue, Administrator's Manual, Module 2, at 88. For a brief explanation, see Minnesota Department of Revenue, Appealing Property Value Classification (2023).

Chapter Three: Green Acres, the Minnesota Agricultural Property Tax Law

I. Introduction

Real estate taxes based on the market value of a farm's land would make farming financially impossible for many Minnesota farmers. Nationally, and in Minnesota, a great deal of agriculture takes place in the economic shadow of metropolitan areas' housing markets. Therefore, even when the economy is slow, farmland, if sold on the open market to the highest bidder, would sell for prices greatly exceeding what it would sell for if the land were solely valued for its farm production.

The Minnesota state legislature, beginning in the 1960s, sought to remedy the problem of farmers being driven out of agriculture by real estate taxes and farm conversion with what has become known as the Green Acres program. Green Acres, which substantially reduces the tax burden for agricultural real estate, has been a successful program in many regions of Minnesota. It does not, however, work well for urban Ramsey County farming. The following sections describe why Green Acres does not help very many Ramsey County farmers, how Ramsey County could ease some of the resulting difficulty, how public information efforts

might help to ease problems, and what legislative changes could help at the state level.

The Green Acres program, technically the Minnesota Agricultural Property Tax Law, has a specific purpose that is even more relevant for urban farming than it is for rural farming. The purpose, according to the statute itself, is to "encourage and preserve farms by mitigating the property tax impact of increasing land values due to nonagricultural economic forces."

The Green Acres program provides significant relief for taxation of farmland. For much land in Ramsey County, a farmer with access to Green Acres land would owe an order of magnitude less property tax than what the same land would incur if it were zoned commercial. When land is in Green Acres, the county assessor will make two calculations. First, the assessor will estimate the market value of the land. This would normally be based on actual sales of comparable properties. Second, a value is based on the agricultural market value of the land. This is in part determined by Department of Revenue calculations conducted every year. Taxes are based on the lower of the two. If the agricultural value of the land is lower, taxes are paid on that value. Any difference between the two numbers is deferred and can ultimately be not assessed. Some special assessments on the property may also be deferred. Tax deferral means that a taxpayer can delay paying the tax until a future point in time; in the Green Acres statute, this is a three-year rolling deferment that means that the higher tax rate does not need to be paid as long as the land remains in agriculture and is not sold, and if the land ceases to be used for agriculture, the higher taxes would need to be paid for the previous three years deferred. It is notable that there is a huge difference between the commercial or other typical use value of land and that used for agriculture. Ramsey County Green Acres land is currently valued for tax purposes at seven thousand dollars per acre. This results in a tax burden far below almost any acre of land currently farmed in Ramsey County that is not in the Green Acres program.

For example, a vacant one-acre lot in Ramsey County that is classified as a commercial property can easily have an estimated market value of more than one hundred thousand dollars, and would owe a very substantial property tax bill. Based on the 2022 Property and Assessment Report, Appendix C, for taxes due in 2022, the same acre, if farmed and in the Green Acres program, would have an estimated value of seven thousand dollars.

II. Green Acres Statute

The Minnesota Agricultural Property Tax Law created what is commonly known as the Green Acres program, and can be found at Minn. Stat. section 273.111. It was first enacted in 1967.

A. Purpose of Green Acres

The purpose of the Green Acres program, as the state legislature explained in 1967, was based on the interest of the state to "encourage and preserve farms by mitigating the property tax impact of increasing land values due to nonagricultural forces." Two aspects of this purpose, which remains the basis of the state statute, are notable.

First, the goal of Green Acres is both to encourage and preserve farms. The purpose is not simply to protect existing farms. It is also explicitly intended to encourage farms and farming.

Second, the purpose of the statute is to protect a broad array of farms. Both urban and rural farms face narrow margins and impossibly large tax assessments if the real estate property tax is not mitigated. The statute should be seen as intended to help both rural and urban farmers.

B. How to Interpret the Green Acres Statute

State statutes create the basic framework for government policy. The details of a program created by the legislature are almost always left to the governmental bodies that carry out the statute. Policy makers and lawyers sometimes disagree among themselves about how a statute should be understood. In the case of Green Acres, the legislature has set a powerful guide for interpreting the statute. The statute section, at Minn. Stat. section 273.111, subd. 12, is called "Statutory construction," and says that the Green Acres statute "shall be broadly construed to achieve its purpose." The construction of a statute means the interpretation of it. Statutory construction will affect the interpretation of anything complex or ambiguous in a statute. A broad interpretation of the statute means that the intent of the statute should play an important role in its implementation, even to the point of brushing aside minor objections and technicalities, and giving to the law a meaning which is not necessarily included in a literal application of the words in the law.

Minnesota courts have noted that when the legislature created the Green Acres program it was "extremely careful and specific in stating the purpose and desired effect of the statute." The Court observed that it was "an unusual but extremely clear statement by the legislature directing the courts and administrative agencies to give full effect to this purpose." Dale Props. v. County of Hennepin. Other courts have described Green Acres in a similar way.

Dale Props v. County of Hennepin, 2002 Minn. Tax LEXIS, 2002 WL 31895514 (Fourth Jud. District, Dec. 20, 2002), See, as well, the Minnesota Supreme Court in Reiss Greenhouses, Inc v. County of Hennepin, 290 N.W. 2d 785, 788-89 (Minn. 1980) and SRIB IV v. City of Hennepin, 886 N.W.2d 821 (2016).

In sum, the statute legislation has said that when the states and counties and others carry out Green Acres, they should make every effort allowed under the law to encourage and preserve farms by mitigating the impact of property taxes that result from the non-farming value of the land.

III. How Land Qualifies for Green Acres

According to Minn. Stat. section 271.111, subd. 3(a), in order for land to be in Green Acres, several things must be true about the land.

The statute is at times ambiguous and complicated, so we here try to spell it out to make the required components clearer. In general, the land must meet all of four requirements: (1) qualify for 2a Agricultural classification; (2) consist of at least ten acres or be a nursery or greenhouse; (3) be primarily devoted to agricultural use; and (4) qualify under one of a number of confusing standards that relate to homestead and other ownership requirements. It is important to note that all four must be met.

The sections below look at these requirements.

A. Agricultural Classification

In order to qualify for Green Acres, the land must have an 2a Agricultural classification. The requirements for this classification are discussed in detail above.

Even if the land meets all other Green Acres rules, if the land is not classified as 2a Agricultural it will not qualify for Green Acres.

B. Ten Acres—Or Greenhouse or Nursery

In general, most parcels that qualify for Green Acres are at least ten contiguous acres. They may also be nurseries or have greenhouses. As Minnesota statute puts it, Green Acres property must "be at least ten acres in size or a nursery or greenhouse." As a result, there are three ways the parcel can meet this requirement.

1. Ten Acres

Land can meet this requirement if it is ten acres or more. If the property is to qualify based on ten acres, the acreage must be contiguous.

2. Greenhouse

Farmland may qualify for Green Acres if it has a greenhouse. Greenhouse appears not to have a definition in a Minnesota statute that applies for this purpose. Minnesota Department of Revenue guidance for county officials also does not include a definition. An everyday dictionary definition is "a structure enclosed (as by glass or plastic) and used for cultivation or protection of tender plants."

The statute, as well as Department of Revenue materials, do not require a certain size or style or construction material for the greenhouse. Similarly, no Minnesota Court decision seems to address this question directly.

The statute, though awkwardly worded, does not seem to require that every inch of the property be covered by the greenhouse.

Greenhouses, in the form of hoop houses, high tunnels, and other structures are increasingly common in agriculture, especially urban agriculture. United States Department of Agriculture (USDA) programming, for example, provides cost share assistance for farmers adding such structures.

See High Tunnel Initiative, Environmental Quality Incentives Program (EQIP), United States Department of Agriculture, Natural Resources Conservation Service, at https://www.nrcs.usda.gov/programs-initiatives/eqip-high-tunnel-initiative.

3. Nursery

A parcel of land may qualify for Green Acres if it is a nursery. State statutes define nursery. It is a place where "nursery stock" is "grown, propagated, collected, or distributed." Nursery stock, in turn, is defined as a plant "intended for planting or propagation, including trees, shrubs, vines, perennials, biennial, grants, cuttings, and buds that may be sold for propagation."

Minn. Stat. sections 18H.02, subd.17, 273.111; Minnesota Department of Revenue, Administrator's Manual, Module 2, at 91.

Nursery stock does not include, however, field and forage crops, seeds of grasses, cereal grains, vegetable crops, and flowers. It does not include vegetable plants, bulbs or tubers, and does not include cut flowers, unless items or other portions are intended for propagation. It also does not include annual plants or Christmas trees.

As with the definition of a greenhouse, for nurseries, the statute, as well as Department of Revenue materials, do not require a certain size or style of construction material for the nurseries. Similarly, no Minnesota Court decision seems to address this question directly.

Also as with greenhouses, the statute, though awkwardly worded, does not seem to require that every inch of the property be covered by the nursery.

C. Primarily Devoted to Agriculture Use

In order to qualify for Green Acres, according to Minn. Stat. section 273.111, subd. 3, property must "primarily" be devoted to agricultural use.

The statute does not define "primarily." Certainly, however, primarily devoted should not be taken to mean exclusively devoted.

"Agricultural use" also is not defined in the statute for this purpose. Notably, agricultural use does not appear to be used in the real estate classification system. Agricultural purpose is used.

The term agricultural use is defined for the purpose of another statute, however, although the definition is limited to that other statute. See Minn. Stat. sections 17.80 to 17.84.

The term "primarily devoted to agriculture" was previously used for a different purpose—classification of 2a agricultural land—and Minnesota courts addressed the question of the meaning of primarily devoted to agriculture. One court, when applying the term analyzed it in this way:

> The "primary use" test . . . implies an examination of the specific nature of the property and the use or multiple uses to which that property has been put, together with a subjective balancing of the relative issues . . .

Barron v. Hennepin, 488 N.W.2d 293 (Minn. 1992).

The Revenue Department suggests that assessors make the decision "based on objective factors that are always considered before the decision is finalized." The Department continues by saying assessors "should put the most weight on physical criteria." Further, the Department lists a number of criteria that the assessor "may consider, along with other criteria that may be appropriate in the assessor's county."

Minnesota Department of Revenue, Administrator's Manual, Module 2, at 97.

Several of these factors are in regard to physical aspects of the farm. Some of these suggested seem to make sense, for example: (1) the number of acres used agriculturally compared to the total acres; (2) the number of acres used for the residence compared to the agricultural acres; (3) visible indication of farming activity; (4) physical structures, such as equipment and storage used to support farming.

Other factors suggested by the Revenue Department that concern the farm itself include some that seem to penalize urban farms, for example: (1) the presence of livestock structures; (2) the number and type of animals. Other factors almost seemed designed to exclude urban farms entirely, for example: (1) surrounding uses of land, such as farming vs. development; (2) historical uses; (3) whether the local real estate market is "highly susceptible to real estate speculation; and current market trends for property.

The Revenue Department also suggests that county assessors look at valuation factors. Some of these seem to flatly contradict the purpose of Green Acres. For example, in order to decide if the land is "primarily devoted to agriculture," the Department suggests conditions under which farms should not be eligible for Green Acres. For example, Green Acres is not appropriate when: (1) the value of the property as a residence is high compared to its agricultural value; (2) agricultural value is small compared to the overall value of the property; or (3) the agricultural value is low compared to the use of the land as a commercial property.

Although the Revenue Department acknowledges that farm income is not a part of the statutory requirements for deciding if land is used primarily for agriculture, it suggests that assessors may want to include income as a criteria for allowing the farm to be in Green Acres. These proposed factors also seem irrelevant to the stated purpose of Green Acres. These include things that may not be especially appropriate for an urban farm. They include: (1) the income from 2a land per total acres (2) income from Schedule F (the IRS for for taxes); (3) income from rented acres, including the actual rent compared to market rents in the area; (4) owner knowledge of farm markets; (5) owner income compared to owner total income and compared to other income; (6) income compared to value of the homestead. These factors seem designed to weed out smaller urban farmers in a way that does not match the purpose of the statute. They are also counter to the direction that government programs at other scales (such as at the Federal level) are moving away from administrative practices such as requiring histories of filed Schedule Fs, given how much these reduce equitable access to programs designed to support maintenance of far,s, especially those contributing to community food security.

The Revenue Department also recommends that county assessors look at the "farming" intent of the owner. The Department acknowledges that the occupation of the owner—which nowhere appears in the statute as a factor to be weighed—should not be the primary factor when deciding if the land is primarily devoted to agriculture. It suggests, however, that the assessor may find the information useful and suggests that the assessor consider the following factors: (1) the owner's stated occupation on tax returns and (2) the owner's knowledge of farming activity. Especially in light of the lack of requirements for parallel literacy on the part of assessors, it is hard to understand how such factors should have an appropriate role for determining eligibility for Green Acres. Further, from what we have heard from many farmers (urban, peri-urban, and rural), it is in these assessment of what counts as legitimate farming that the application of the statute strays furthest from equitable application, with many examples of assessors not recognizing diverse cultural practices of farming as deserving agricultural classification. Examples range from not recognizing culturally specific food crops to reproducing (often agro-ecologically outdated) stereotypes of what kind of agriculture should be conducted on certain types of land, and consequently denying classification to horticulture and vegetable farms that had previously been under row crop or livestock land uses.

Although the Revenue Department has specific suggested factors to use when deciding if land is primarily agricultural, the Department does acknowledge that the determinations are based on "situational circumstances." The county should have

flexibility in making decisions that align with their markets and land uses. Further, the Department suggests that counties work with neighboring counties to create a consistent standard. It should be possible, therefore, for Ramsey and other more urban counties to create a much more inclusive analysis of what constitutes "primarily devoted to agriculture."

Finally, determinations on primary agricultural use are appealable.

D. Homestead, Possession, Nursery or Greenhouse

State statute makes another set of requirements for Green Acres involving ownership and possession of the property; these are confusing, limiting, and seem little connected to the purpose of the statute. Depending on the interpretation of this requirement, found at Minn. Stat. section 273.111, subd. 3, many Ramsey County farmers would be excluded by it. Note that the requirements discussed in this section are similar to section E below, but the two sets of requirements are actually independent and based on different statutory language.

This requirement can be met in any one of four ways.

1. Nursery or Greenhouse

A nursery or greenhouse meets this requirement for participation in Green Ares. Confusing statutory language, found at Minn. Stat. section 273.11, subd. 3(a), says the following:

> [R]eal estate shall be entitled to [Green Acres] if it is . . . . either [several other things], or . . . (4) is in the possession of a nursery or greenhouse or an entity owned by a proprietor, partnership, or corporation which also owns the nursery or greenhouse operation on the parcel or parcels . . . .

This language suggests that requirements for Green Acres can be met in one of several ways.

a. Greenhouse

When creating this part of the Green Acres statute, the legislature likely meant that if an individual or entity owns the property, and the property includes a greenhouse, the property is eligible.

There is no definition of greenhouse and no requirement that the greenhouse be of a certain size or cover a certain portion of the farm.

The Minnesota Department of Revenue guidance does not provide an interpretation of the meaning of the greenhouse or nursery aspects of the statute. It is also not clear how county officials have understood it.

b. Nursery

When creating this part of the Green Acres statute, the legislature likely meant that if an individual or entity owns the property, and the property includes a nursery, the property is eligible. For nurseries, the statute appears to restrict the acreage eligible for Green Acres to acres used to produce nursery stock.

2. Connected to Family Homestead

This requirement can be met if the property is a homestead. It must be the homestead of: (1) the owner; (2) the owner's surviving spouse, parent, or sibling. The requirement can also be met if the real estate is farmed with other real estate that contains the homestead property.

3. Seven-Year Family Possession

The requirement can be met if the property has been in possession of the person applying for Green Acres, that person's spouse, parent, or sibling, or any combination of those people. The possession must have lasted at least seven years before the Green Acres application.

The requirement can also be met if the land is farmed "with" the real estate described just above for seven years. This requirement can be met if the property is a homestead. It must be the homestead of: (1) the owner; (2) the owner's surviving spouse, parent, or sibling. The requirement can also be met if the real estate is farmed with other real estate that contains the homestead property. To meet the Green Acres requirement, however, the land must also be within a distance of four townships, or cities, from the qualifying real estate.

4. Homestead of Individual – With an Entity

The land can meet this requirement if it is the homestead of an individual person who is part of certain types of entities.

These entities are: (1) a family farm entity regulated under Minn. Stat. 500.24; (2) an entity, not regulated under section 500.24, in which a majority of the members, partners, or shareholder are related and at least one of the members, partners, or shareholder either resides on the land or actively operates the land; and (3) corporations that derive 80 percent of their gross revenue from the wholesale or retail sale of horticultural or nursery stock.

E. Ownership: Individual or Family Farm

Green Acres property must be owned by either an individual or by certain entities. The statutory authority for this restriction, found at Minn. Stat. section 273.111, subd. 3(b), largely tracks the Minnesota Corporate Farming Law, found at Minn. Stat. section 500.24. Note again that although these requirements are similar to those in section D above, the two are actually independent, and could each be grounds for denial of inclusion in the Green Acres program.

The following are eligible owners.

1. Individual

An individual person can own property that qualifies for Green Acres.

2. Family Farm Entities

Land owned by family farm entities are eligible for Green Acres. These are described at Minn. Stat. section 500.24. They include corporations, trusts, and other entities.

3. Entity and Active Operation or residence

Land owned by an entity that is not a family farm entity under Minn. Stat. section 500.24 can be eligible for Green Acres. The majority of members, partners, and shareholders must be related. At least one of these member, partners, or shareholders must reside on the land or operate the farmland.

4. Corporations and Horticulture or Nursery

Land owned by corporations can be eligible for Green Acres. At least 80 percent of the gross receipts for the corporation must come from the wholesale or retail sale of horticultural or nursery stock.

Chapter Four: Policy Options

I. Introduction: Policy Options Regarding Taxation for Urban Agriculture

Policy changes could reduce the real estate tax penalty for Ramsey County farmers. There are three main actors in creating and interpreting the policies that control taxation for Ramsey County farmers.

First, at the county level, possible changes to interpretation of statutory mandates can be reviewed. While the county must stay within state law when assessing property taxes, there is considerable flexibility within the statute. This is especially true for the Green Acres program since the state statute calls for the Green Acres statutory authority to be broadly construed. Further, the county can make an educational effort to help residents understand the best way to minimize real estate taxes on farms.

Second, at the state administrative level, the Minnesota Department of Revenue approves appointments of assessors and has the power to remove them. It also provides voluminous interpretation of state statutes and could direct county assessors to interpret state statutes in ways that are less likely to penalize urban farmers. As with the county implementation of statutes, The Revenue Department should be especially flexible with the Green Acres program since the statute calls for the Green Acres statutory authority to be broadly construed.

Third, some aspects of the tax penalty on urban farmers are the result of state statutes. This requires action by the state legislature. Before reviewing specific changes, this chapter looks at how other states have approached real estate taxation of urban farms.

Finally, it is important to note that there are interactive aspects of the real estate tax barriers for urban farmers. For example, an effort to change Green Acres that does not look also at the rule for 2a agriculture classification will not help a great deal because Green Acres requires the farm to have a 2a classification. Similarly, for example, as long as the intensive use exception to the ten acre requirement for 2a agriculture classification includes the requirement that the land include a residence, many farms will be tripped up by this sole requirement even if other changes are made in the rules.

II. Policies Around the Country

Minnesota is not alone in facing the question of how best to create real estate tax policies that are fair and equitable for farmers. In general, most states have real estate tax rules that aim to tax farmland at something closer to its farm value than its speculative open market value. Academic writing summarizes these various approaches. States often value land for tax purposes based on "use-value" rather than market value. As in Minnesota, these policies often stumble when it comes to the taxation of urban farmland. In many states urban agricultural properties have difficulty qualifying for an agricultural use assessment. Some states, however, have adopted real estate tax assessment that tends not to penalize urban farmers. Several states have enacted specific property tax provisions that lessen their tax burden. States have sometimes taxed based on agricultural use value, have created credits to lower taxes on urban farms, and created outright tax exemptions for those farms. Of crucial importance, these states acknowledge that productive farms can be on very small acreages. In California, Urban Agriculture Incentives Zones are taxed on the basis of average farmland values in the state, and allow participation for property encompassing one-tenth of an acre. Maryland's agricultural property tax credit applies to parcels of at least one-eighth of an acre.

For surveys on state tax policies and how they affect urban agriculture, see Martha Harrell Chumbler, The Tax Implications of Urban Agriculture: Liabilities and Incentives, in Martha H. Chumbler et al, (eds), Urban Agriculture: Policy, Law, Strategy, and Implementation, (2015), and John E. Anderson et al, Property Taxes for Agriculture: use-Value Assessment and Urbanization across the United States (2015). For the California Urban Agricultural Incentive Zone Act, see California Government Code, sections 51040-51042 (2022). For Maryland's, tax policies on urban farm land see, Maryland Tax Property Code section 9-253 (2022). General surveys of treatment of agriculture for real estate taxes include John E. Anderson, Estimating Agricultural Use Value for Property Tax Purposes: How Do State Programs Assess Use Value? (2011); Russell Kashian, State Farmland Preferential Assessment: A Comparative Study, 34 Journal of Regional Analysis and Policy 1 (2004); Donald B. Peterson et at, Agricultural Law 351-356 (1995).

III. Ramsey County

Because Ramsey County implements real estate tax classification and Green Acres on the ground, it is responsible for interpreting state statute in numerous ways.

A. County Classification and Assessment

Four immediate policy chances by the County could be adopted and still be consistent with state law. The County could continue to follow state law and do the following.

First, for 2a agricultural classification, the County could make sure that farming operations that sell goods are determined to produce agricultural products even if the operation is not large. It could also accept as evidence of sales information that incorporates direct marketing and other creative means for selling.

Second, for 2a agricultural classification, the County could ensure that farms smaller than ten acres are considered for exclusive use or intensive use exceptions to the ten-acre requirement.

Third, for Green Acres purposes, a greenhouse and nursery should be defined broadly.

Fourth, for Green Acres purposes, a liberal interpretation should be applied to the question of whether the land is primarily devoted to agricultural use.

B. Public Information

Ramsey County could immediately launch a campaign that explains the flexibility that is possible in classification and in the Green Acres program. For example, the county could make it widely known that ten acres is not a minimum for 2a classification and Green Acres. It could make clear that the definition of a greenhouse and nursery are flexible.

C. Legislative Effort
Ramsey County could support changes at the Minnesota Department of Revenue and at the state legislature that reduce the penalty on urban agriculture.

IV. Minnesota Department of Revenue
The Minnesota Department of Revenue approves the appointment of county assessors and has the power to remove them. It also writes extensive handbooks that guide county assessors. As noted above, some of these interpretations seem to penalize smaller farming operations.

The Department of Revenue could take the following steps.

First, the Department could make sure that flexibility in 2a agriculture assessments are uniformly adopted in the training and certification of county assessors.

Second, the Department could revise its Modules that provide detailed information for assessors. These Modules should adopt guidance that provides maximum possibility for urban farmers to qualify for 2a agriculture assessments and for Green Acres.

Third, the Department should brief the state legislature on ways that urban farms could more readily gain 2a classification and Green Acres status. The Department's technical expertise could help the legislature as it searches for a real estate tax policy that does not penalize urban farmers.

V. State Legislature
Many of the difficulties faced by Ramsey County farmers are based on state statute. As noted in this Report, a number of requirements for 2a agriculture classification and for Green Acres make it extremely difficult for commercial urban farmers to avoid a crushing tax penalty.

The legislature could revise 2a classification law and Green Acres to abandon the ten-acre rule altogether. If the goal of the state and county is to promote urban farming, a ten-acre requirement does not make rational sense. There are numerous other barriers to both 2a agriculture classification and to Green Acres that could be changed by the legislature. Why, for example, should it matter whether an urban farm is connected to a family homestead, or is in the seven-year possession of the same family? Provisions such as these, that have no relation to the goal of a fair real estate tax policy for urban farmers, should be removed.

3.2 Increase equity in urban agriculture opportunities and cultural institutions' support

3.2.1 Build policies that create supportive roles for neighborhood allies and cultural assets

The Active Living Ramsey Communities and Open Space working groups have both expressed interest in continuing to workshop how to build equitable infrastructure for urban food cultivation. Further, when Chicago-based NeighborSpace — a public **community land trust*** focused on community-stewarded greenspace in Chicago — visited Ramsey County prior to COVID for a professional development workshop with ~60 members of the public bureaucracy, there was considerable interest in their model. Interest was expressed by many County leaders (including those with public greenspace mandates, such as Saint Paul Parks and Regional Parks representatives) in exploring a parallel structure here, and also in how to encourage development of the kind of straightforward partnership agreement they use, which requires only a group of more than two community members plus an anchor institution (a library, corner store, or other entity regularly peopled to keep an eye on the site) to start an urban agriculture project. Such models should be actively workshopped for adoption here.

3.2.2 Encourage and incentivize sharing of water access

Many parcels that otherwise may be suitable for urban food cultivation may lack access to water. Since constructing water infrastructure and transporting water far distances is more costly than most beginning cultivators can afford, nearby businesses that already have this infrastructure should donate water or develop a cost-sharing agreement with these sites. This may be incentivized by the government providing a discount on water bills or some other kind of benefit for the donating institution.

An example of a water-sharing arrangement involves McCarron's Pub and Grill, which allows Rice Street Gardens to use their well water.

3.2.3 Support the transition of land to collectively-held or BIPOC-held food cultivation spaces

Walker and colleagues (2022) note that the

> "coupling of urban nature and racial inequality was intentionally produced by the [Metro Twin Cities]' real estate industry and local government. Drawing on Mapping Prejudice's first complete metro-wide map of racial covenants—clauses in property deeds barring sale to anyone not considered white—we pair quantitative spatial analysis with archival research on turn-of-the century greening campaigns and local real estate practices. We use … illustrative examples of the ways in which developers worked with civil society organizations and local government agencies to secure public investments in green amenities, including gardens and public parks, while blanketing their developments with racial covenants. To boost property values, developers paired 'greenness' and legal guarantees of whiteness, engineering idealized nature while excluding racialized groups."

As a consequence of land in the Twin Cities metropolitan area being overwhelmingly white-owned (and disproportionately in relation to greenspace, Walker et al. 2022), land in particular can be valuable to BIPOC communities beyond its financial value. When communities have long-term control over their own land, it provides safe places for them to live, build relationships, develop institutions, establish businesses, and grow food. Additionally, it introduces potential for transforming relationships with land rooted in settler colonialism and capitalism to ones guided by equity, interconnectedness, and community governance.

"Land is power because land is money and money is power... having land is such a big sense of security; any time you are able to give people the option of having land, especially community that hasn't had land before, they're going to do really amazing things on it." (Hindson)

Transitioning privately- or publicly-owned land to collectively-held neighborhood assets — or for leased land, affordable, long-term leases with transparency about future plans — would support long term land-tenure. So would developing provisions that more fully support **commons*** and other collective efforts. Long term land-tenure, in turn, builds community wealth and provides space for healing. These are crucial components of ameliorating historical and ongoing injustice and trauma experienced by BIPOC and immigrant groups. Permanent land access for BIPOC communities would help heighten social and environmental health and wealth, increase stability, shift power, and mitigate negative impacts of structural racism, contributing to a more equitable Ramsey County.

Glossary

Commons
Resources, rules, and/or practices that are shared, maintained, and reproduced by a community.

Some governmental actors expressed concern over site maintenance when allowing external groups to access public land, however there is considerable evidence that people who engage in urban agriculture persistently devote immense time and resources into land stewardship. It is common for growers to voluntarily maintain their sites with limited resources and without compensation from land holders. Stewardship often involves site management by steadfast and dedicated volunteers, making these operations self-sufficient (Hawkins, Rippel). If not completely autonomous, urban agriculture practitioners likely cover land maintenance responsibilities for at least for the growing season, and often for a greater proportion of the year (Horkey).

When Urban Roots began coordinating the Gateway Trail site, Hayley Ball noticed that "there are folks who really care about it and were still maintaining that, but lack some resources to make it happen, so there has been some really creative fencing, like car bumpers…you can tell there are folks that really care about the space" (Ball).

> ***"It's not even a maintenance issue—they're already spending money on these sites! So that was part of the deal: we'll mow, and pick up trash and keep it neat and clean. We manage everything."*** (Mitrione)

Not all people have the luxury of devoting time and energy into activities without payment. Although some growing groups may not be able to supply this labor without remuneration, they still should be given access to urban food land. The benefits of allowing food cultivation would outweigh institutional costs of compensating growers for their labor or providing maintenance and repair support for spaces utilized by under-resourced communities. Implementing these supportive measures would increase the ability and willingness of residents to engage in urban agriculture, ultimately resulting in significant payoff for all groups involved.

Compensation for farm and garden labor ideally would be money, but alternatively could involve prepared meals, produce, water or permit cost abatement, etc.

Hindolo Pokawa's previous work at Frogtown Farm demonstrates this well. "Every Thursday, while I was there I would communicate to have people come out and be able to spend from nine to 11, Whatever time you can spend, to be able to do some fieldwork. The people showed up because they had interest, but then that volunteer Thursday also came with lunch. And the interest was being generated in that way…the food that was grown that year, I was able to distribute…to the Community, and X, Y, and Z."

3.2.4 Create or expand urban agriculture opportunities on public land

> ***"What we really want to do is build community… by providing land for people to garden. If that can be a goal of the county and of the city, in allowing people to use land, whether it's a community gardens setup or a much smaller piece of land and some neighbor uses it and it's in the front yard, that would be really good."*** (Russelle)

Cities and the County should consider demographic information, transit routes, and physical characteristics of the land and built environment in spatial analyses when determining where to devote space to growing food. The focus must be on providing welcoming, inclusive, and safe green space for marginalized communities. In particular, cities should develop inclusive spaces safely accessible through a variety of transportation modes in areas with a high percentage of households without access to space to grow food.

"There is no training or resources in my role [community garden membership coordinator] to work on my own implicit biases, nor is there a requirement to do so, so I pull exclusively on my own anti-racist work and training. I have wondered if some anti-bias training should be required for gardens…that use city land" (Lienesch).

County and city agencies providing land should also have equity and conflict resolution resources, trainings, or workshops for community leaders and groups, along with some guidance and communication from the city about supporting unhoused neighbors in a just way (Lienesch). Developing these resources would start to build systemic support for under-resourced communities and contribute to growers having the knowledge and tools to operate in an equitable manner without burdening BIPOC members.

Seattle's P-Patch Anti-Racism Resources is one approach to enacting these changes, and the P-Patch site also has a useful toolkit for gardeners with growing guides, handbooks, conflict resolution procedures, and other helpful tools that could be emulated in the context of Ramsey County (Toolkit for Gardeners, n.d.).

Additional ways local entities could support under-resourced farmers and gardeners includes prioritizing renters or other people without access to other growing space when allocating plots, assigning growers to the same plot every season, and not charging for plot access.

The Payne-Phalen District Council covers costs for their garden sites' leases and water access, allowing residents to grow herbs and vegetables at little to no cost (Horkey).

3.2.5 Fund low-cost and inclusive urban food cultivation programming through city or county departments

> ***"[There are] so many things that go into creating a garden. If you know where to look and you speak English, you can probably figure it out, otherwise [that information is] pretty inaccessible."*** (Hindson)

To fill a gap in programming, local agencies should offer courses, "resources, and programming [in multiple languages and formats] around growing…access to **greenhouses*** for starting plants, soil amendments, and soil testing" (Hindson). Educational materials development could be achieved through contracts with local organizations, greater community engagement, and leveraging existing resources. Similarly, there should be informational events in languages other than English, or at least events with interpreters to enable broader audience participation.

CLUES has created a useful Spanish-language vegetable growing guide — compiled by Abigail Hindson and featuring artwork by two Latina artists and CLUES community gardeners, Jennifer Peña and Lynda Acosta — that shares information about starting and maintaining a garden, with a focus on growing produce in Minnesota (Comunidades Latinas Unidas en Servicio, 2022). Access this guide in Appendix R.

Farmers' markets can create more equitable systems by continuing to accept SNAP and EBT. Advocating for the continued funding of the state Market Bucks program can help people purchase more food at farmers' markets, benefiting both residents and local growers (Hawkins, Ball). Furthermore, emerging farmers and gardeners in Ramsey County should be supported with locally-specific resources about accessing market stalls, food safety regulations, pricing, and other food sales considerations.

3.3 Establish meaningful, straightforward instructions and metrics to enable growing food

Valuation of Benefits to Community from Urban Agriculture; financial and technical assistance

> ***"If the county and city both want to decide to value urban ag and people growing food more, we need to be three steps ahead, and decide:***
> ***1) this is an activity we want to encourage,***
> ***2) then have a clear process for people to walk through to access that land,***
> ***3) process and steps to lay out (water, soil testing)...***
> ***It's a matter of putting together the right package of methods and approaches — up to this point, this is something the city has allowed to happen, and now it's something we're deciding is a public good we need to make happen."*** (Stark)

3.3.1 Identify what public benefits need to be demonstrated to recruit resources

Social and environmental impacts of urban food cultivation systems are shaped, in significant part, by the management practices used; in turn, these impacts have reciprocal effects on the amount of land allocated for urban cultivation, tenure, ownership, environmental rules, and policy frameworks. Clearer articulation of the outputs desired by various entities in a position to support urban food cultivation could help build the more resilient network of relationships needed to normalize and support food cultivation as a normal urban land use in Ramsey County. Along with making straightforward processes (like a uniform lease form for district councils), how can landowning entities like the Minnesota Department of Transportation, or resource holders like watershed districts, routinely allocate resources? (See 3.5 Consideration for Next Steps and Appendix R for more materials supporting answering this question.)

We have elsewhere mentioned the rubric used by the MN Department of Agriculture for grants to urban agriculture as a potential anchor for developing better metrics of public benefits (including agricultural knowledge sharing, ecological integrity, and economic justice outcomes). We emphasize this because one of the most common barriers repeated across our survey was the mismatch between the negative perception that urban agriculture on public land is a privatization of public goods for private gain, and the common reality of collaborative effort yielding many community benefits. It would streamline access to land and resources considerably to recognize more benefits than pounds of produce donated (/area dedicated to donation). These are currently the most common metric for public benefit, and their shortfalls have been discussed extensively (not least because of the way they have tended to encourage an idea of urban agriculture as an implausibly financially self-sufficient model of environmental remediation, youth workforce development, and food security provision that could plausibly be paid for via produce sales, see Daftary-Steel et al. 2015).

3.3.2 Provide clearer access to information and processes to access resources

The structure of state, county, and municipal government is opaque to many residents interacting with these systems. Since urban agriculture is not currently in any office's purview, the government should establish which departments will collaborate to enable resident access to urban food cultivation resources. Once determined, responsibilities of departments, roles of staff, and contact information should be clearly communicated on county or city websites and phone services. This higher visibility of government staff may make farmers and gardeners who lack connections to inaccessible bureaucratic networks more likely to contact offices to receive information or assistance that guides them through resource obtaining processes.

Funding processes are complicated, daunting, and frequently favor organizations or individuals with educational or professional connections to government offices. Relationships with governmental officials have been critical in establishing long-term urban food cultivation spaces. Both Hayley Ball and Skyler Hawkins from Urban Roots stated that having city councilor support has been helpful in starting the challenging process of obtaining a long-term lease — in this case, defined as seven years. The long-term lease acquisition is ongoing, and if ultimately successful, would enable the possibility of using STAR funding (see Appendix R for information about STAR funding) for site infrastructure.

This demonstrates that the position of governmental actors affords them exclusive knowledge and power, while nonprofit staff tend to have greater access to these actors than individual growers do. Consequently, both governmental and nonprofit staff must support urban farmers and gardeners by listening, advocating, building partnerships, encouraging collective action, and leveraging their ability to advance projects and change systemic processes. This may involve city or county staff either connecting — or serving as a conduit between — growers and resource-providing entities.

It's important to share your vision and goals with elected officials, and to engage them as supporters. Steve Mitrione, who instigated development of the Midway Green Spirit Community Garden, shared that "having a politician interested in the project is also helpful — Russ Stark would run interference when we were running into obstacles." Claire Lienesch suspects that establishing the garden was "easier because one of the neighbors instrumental in starting [it]... was either on staff of, director of, or active in our neighborhood council. Without this inside access, I don't know if the transformation from empty lot to community garden would have happened."

"People don't talk about building relationships with those behind those policies whether city, state, county...having those relationships are the reasons we've been able to push what we've needed through [like water access]" (Ball).

For example, "if government-owned land is of interest for a project, a local unit of government can aid community groups or nonprofits in navigating land use agreements or purchase of land (a municipality might coordinate with a grower group on a MnDOT lease agreement negotiation, enabling a somewhat less arduous process for accessing the land" (Oh).

3.3.3 Make zoning code amenable to urban food cultivation

Municipalities, with the support of the County and Met Council, must make regulations and procedures related to growing food on urban land more clear and efficient, for example, those relevant to zoning, permits, licenses, and land tenure (Hindson). Because the majority of mechanisms for practicing urban agriculture are inaccessible and underdeveloped, residents and government officials recognize process refinement and policy creation as a need.

Once clarified, policies relevant to urban agriculture should be grouped and accessible so residents are aware of applicable regulations, as well as potentially advantageous code. Existing code meant to regulate other activities, but that inadvertently hinder urban agriculture, should include stipulations that relax regulations for small-scale activities related to urban food cultivation.

For example, urban agriculture parcels may qualify for decreased stormwater drainage and sewer system fees by getting an assessment of runoff/stormwater retention, potentially resulting in a sewer charge exemption.

Finally, building code that restricts shed and greenhouse, hoop house, or high tunnel use, and subsequently season extension, should be adjusted. Instead of considering these structures as accessory or incidental to a primary structure — necessitating the existence of a house or other building on the site — they should be deemed the primary structure, or redefined as an independent, automatically permitted structure.

Many municipalities have code that considers vegetation above a certain height a public nuisance. This likely is not targeted at crops and should clarify which plants are restricted. Additionally, allowing land where food is grown to be functional rather than an energy-intensive, highly maintained landscape may help prevent increases in property values and green gentrification.

3.3.4 Improve connection between agencies, policies, and procedures

Many land, city, and county administrators responded to this report (and also the Open Space Working Group report) with hopes for an ongoing process of adaptive co-management: make some changes, see how they go, refine, repeat. They emphasized that the process of finding strategies that work in different parts of the county and with different cultural communities will likely take some trial and error, and that this is an important enough revision of status quo land use management that neither the urban food cultivation nor open space efforts can be successful with a one-time review and revision. Further, the context of iterative Comprehensive Plans provides the opportunity to build the best practices reviewed here and developed further in the next few years into the framework of the Metropolitan Council as the regional planning authority, with county and municipal plans aligned in locally appropriate ways.

By far, the hardest part of this report — and the hardest task reported by all surveyed — was finding land, city, and county administrators who saw urban food cultivation related to their mandate. Building the opportunity for a much wider range of public staff who see the tie-ins to their job, and who have had a chance to work with other agency and community organization staff and urban farmers and gardeners to achieve the promise of integrated urban agriculture should be a high priority. A great practice domain for this goal will be engaging as many people as possible in the next steps for identifying plausible expansions of urban food cultivation infrastructure — this will also help a broad range of stakeholders better understand how urban farms and gardens can help move toward many goals of community resiliency, engagement, and racial equity, food security, and climate change adaptation. It could also help accelerate the process of reducing the many contradictions and disconnects identified in the policy analysis, and in improving functional alignment between agencies and in policies and procedures.

3.4 Build and document straightforward processes for land provision

Government actors have stated that open land is primarily devoted to jobs and housing; however, future dedication may include uses that provide other social, environmental, and health benefits (Faust). There may be potential to incorporate community concerns — like space for urban agriculture — into the county's redevelopment framework, particularly through the county's Open Space work group (Faust). The Open Space working group has been developing a clearer process for facilitating equitable access to public land, and is considering starting an annual review of open space land and current uses. Once these procedures are established, the Open Space work group could serve as a model for other entities, and share procedures and templates with other agencies, helping develop a more standardized process — and potentially a common application — for accessing public land.

A primary barrier to obtaining urban food land is finding information about available land and its owner(s). County GIS staff could serve as a gathering spot for up-to-date spatial data from other county entities, municipalities, nonprofit organizations, and other landholders to track agricultural and potentially agricultural land (Maas). This publicly accessible inventory, ideally expressed through both a map and a table, would expedite currently lengthy processes that occur when a parcel's ownership and potential uses are unclear, which is a common situation (MatasCastillo, Mitrione, Weber). Not only would this make it easier for food cultivators to identify suitable land, but also would prevent duplication of work among regional organizations.

This process could be facilitated by cities introducing a land inventory into their code, like the city of Philadelphia, which requires all agencies to maintain updated and publicly-available data about the status of their land (Philadelphia, 2022).

Additionally, collaborative documentation plans between governmental agencies and growers when developing land-use agreements will save effort for staff and gardeners by leveraging previously completed work, both internally, and if shared between organizations/municipalities, externally. Establishing common document templates will decrease staff time required to develop and guide residents through processes, and increase the ability of community members to grow food more independently.

Many entities have devoted time to creating inventories of existing or potential urban agriculture land including the St. Paul Department of Safety and Inspections, St. Paul Parks and Recreation Soil and Water Conservation Division, Minnesota State Horticultural Society, and St. Paul-Ramsey County Public Health (Maas, White Eagle).

"The prior director had a lot of paper files where I could see general gardening information. Anytime a new issue came up, we'd look in the file and see who's the contact at the city… or [see if it] is answered in the lease somewhere" (Horkey).

3.4.1 Learn from neighboring districts' experiences and share processes

Hennepin County, for example, is embarking on an extensive agricultural land protection effort, fully engaged with questions of urban food cultivation. Collaborative effort would be productive. The Minnesota Department of Agriculture is similarly in the process of reconsidering farmland preservation strategies, and many plans for the new Farm Bill include recommendations across a range of scales. Work with these larger efforts could help put Ramsey County's efforts in context and provide relevant resources.

A recent report summarizing Urban Agriculture Policy Recommendations published by the Policy Research Center for Socially Disadvantaged Farmers and Ranchers at Alcorn State University (Miller et al. 2022) echoes most of the conclusions above, noting that the changes needed in Ramsey County mirror those being made nationwide. Two key passages highlight this context:

> "The two greatest challenges the interviewees face are land access, including secure land tenure, and access to financial resources. The cost of purchasing land to farm in cities is generally prohibitive. And restrictive zoning and other existing city policies are not designed to support urban farming. Even if growers are able to access land, they may have licenses or short-term leases and, if operating on city-owned land, fear that the city may remove them from the property and/or sell the land to a developer at any point in time. Finally, urban farming and gardening can have a positive impact on a community, thereby driving up the value of land leading to gentrification and increased pressure from developers. In this case, if a producer is operating on city-owned land, the positive benefits of their work can lead to the city deciding to sell the land to an interested developer, and the farmer gets evicted."

> "Regarding the lack of access to financial resources, many interviewees choose not to apply for USDA funds because they either feel that there are not opportunities geared toward urban farming or the application and reporting process are too burdensome and time-consuming (some called the USDA "intimidating"). Some interviewees were simply not aware that the USDA offered financial and technical support for urban producers. Another common theme interviewees expressed was that while funds may be available for urban agriculture, these funds often go to large institutions or newer, white-led nonprofits that act as "gatekeepers", and not to those who have been doing this work and involved in the community for much longer."

3.5 Consideration for next steps: Urban agriculture helping meet Ramsey County's existing goals

Ramsey County's vision is to be "a vibrant community where all are valued and thrive" (Ramsey County, 2018). Three commitments of the county to reach this vision include increasing food security, pursuing racial equity, and engaging with the community. The planning frameworks of numerous county agencies and working groups are demonstrative of the pervasiveness of these values, however few of these frameworks incorporate urban food cultivation despite its ability to efficiently help Ramsey County meet these goals.

Ramsey County recognizes that publicly-owned parks, recreational, and open space offer vast advantages, "ranging from quality-of-life issues, ecological, environmental, psychological, and physiological benefits" (Dreon et al., 2022). As a result, the Ramsey County Open Space group performed analyses to characterize current conditions and identify where land could be dedicated or re-purposed in 'park-deserts' areas to meet the county's goal of providing equitable and inclusive access to open space and recreational amenities (Dreon et al., 2022). Findings are communicated in a report that describes processes for regularly evaluating land's potential to be open, parkland, or recreational space. As the committee has added urban agriculture to this list, this helps make community agriculture legible as another valuable way for communities to actively engage open space, with many positive benefits (Camps-Calvet et al. 2016, Jha et al. 2023).

Active Living Ramsey Communities (ALRC) is a coalition of community leaders, health organizations, staff from various county departments and municipalities, and residents that aims to "promote and create environments that make it safe and easy for everyone to integrate physical activity into their daily routine" (*About Active Living Ramsey Communities*, 2022). The group strives to improve community health, safety, and wellbeing; increase mobility for all residents through transportation options; and model fiscal accountability and transparency; all while emphasizing equity and engaging communities in decision making. ALRC's development of the Countywide Pedestrian & Bicycle Plan is a useful approach to planning because it provides "a set of tools, analyses, and actions to engage community members" (Active Living Ramsey Communities, 2015). Additionally, their approach focuses on equity, connection between places, and coordination within and across scales when supporting infrastructure development. As the ALRC has emphasized in recognizing the synergies between their existing active living efforts and community agriculture, this framework is well-suited to facilitating greater urban food cultivation in a wide range of circumstances, and in turn, food cultivation's incorporation would further ALRC's goals.

Expanding these and other county frameworks to encompass more interactive land uses like urban food cultivation would contribute even further to environmental benefits by giving residents the opportunity for placemaking, generating a sen-

timent of community control and ownership. As land and infrastructure procedures develop, urban food cultivation could be built into land inventory and protection efforts; future development and planning processes; and policy, information, and resource sharing practices.

3.5.1 Resources and land mechanisms to address main goals

> ***"I couldn't agree more with compiling all of these resources! It's crucial to have equity and autonomy and racial justice and* food justice* *at the center of that work — it's a burden. The few people who were in the center of this garden planning are never going to do it perfectly — and there are challenges at each stage. Once we get a hundred pound crop of tomatoes, it's a challenge figuring out how to get them out to people. So I'm very interested in something that can help me out and in learning from Appetite for Change [in Hennepin County] and communities that have long been strong on self-determination and autonomy."***
>
> (Gabe Pfeiffer, Metro Food Justice Network Ple-num)

Many of the practices recommended here are reported by community groups in terms of how they are keeping them alive and thriving, despite how policies are thwarting them — particularly policies concerned with keeping up appearances and promoting urban agriculture as a method of gentrification (explicitly the justification for Frogtown Farm, from a municipal and county perspective, for example, accounted for in terms of property tax increases). Repeated themes from this report as well as many done previously all emphasize that action is possible *and is being taken*, but could use more support and resourcing. People would like to make it more legible how important it is that they grow food to nourish each other; this is a big part of everybody's culture. A recent event was hosted at their Cambridge farm by farmers from the organization Sasa who have been commuting up to ten *thousand* miles per growing season from the metro up to Cambridge and Lino Lakes to farm. At this event promoting their need for more farmland, the host farmers emphasized that "health is our greatest wealth." Ramsey County's greatest wealth may be its vibrant assemblage of cultures who have nourished each other well enough to actively share food and culture and recreate the richness of culture together. Considering this default cultural condition of living with the land as it feeds us reminds us that we have so much to thank Indigenous peoples for, and we have not yet done that well as a broader culture with settler colonial habits of organizing our land policy and practices. The legal framework of property, which is one dominant way to look at land relationships, has inflicted a great deal of weathering and additional stress on many of these communities. So can we better honor, respect, and thank the food cultures we are graced with, and remove

* For example, from the St. Paul Ramsey County Food and Nutrition Commission, to the Minnesota Food Action Charter, the Asian Economic Development Association's Local Foods, Local Places Action Plan, the Hope Community and CLUES recommendations about community food planning, and associated writings by planners and planning scholars (e.g. Burga & Stoscheck's 2017 Does the Minnesota Food Access Planning Guide Address Food Justice and Equity? A Content Analysis of Policy Language), and the recent COVID food security response planning.

barriers to growing food in cities, while we also find resources to support people feeding each other instead of making it really hard for them to participate in this very fundamental part of being human?

AEDA Local Food Local Places Action Plan,
Goal: Elevate and sustain local rural and urban agriculture as an economic driver through land tenure initiatives and increased market access.

Supporting mechanisms for policy and community capacity to support longer term land access for Frogtown and Rondo food cultivators. Literacy building around these policy and community mechanisms is also needed. Currently, most people producing food do not own their own land and are farming on tenuous, short-term agreements, and are often subject to racial discrimination. Goal 2 addresses this through land tenure initiatives. The main actions supporting goal 2 include research to identify decision makers, literacy campaigns around the need for improving land access mechanisms, and a pilot project for community ownership of a community garden site in Rondo. Communication and community engagement, especially with business owners and other land holders who can help build community participation and amplify community voices to educate council members and others who will work to make policy changes to lease and other land use agreements.

Action: Develop a creative campaign to raise literacy around land access mechanisms.

What this is and why it is important	Creative campaign to continue keeping land relationships front and center, and to raise literacy around land access mechanisms, both in the community and in the related public service offices ● Educate council members and district commissioners on ecosystem service and social benefits of urban agriculture ● Craft lease model (and tax incentive – for example, for water service fee) for corporate lawns to grow food
Measures of success	Consistent discussion of land access mechanisms as part of community food strategies ● St. Paul/Ramsey County Food Security Office supports longer term (3 year/longer) land access with HRA and tax office ● Regular participation of business owners and other land holders in agricultural land use planning ● Adoption of core principles of land access and secure tenure education campaign by significant proportion of public and private land decision makers
Needed resources and possible sources	Operating funds; staff support; location for part time organizers — Legislative Citizen Commission on Minnesota Resources (LCCMR), watershed districts, and climate action plan budgets for potential funding?

Dream of Wild Health: Restoration of Indigenous Stewardship

Located near Hugo, northeast of Saint Paul in Washington County, Dream of Wild Health is an Intertribal Indigenous-led farming operation tied to a 501C3 that provides wholesale produce to local businesses, sends an Indigenous Food Share CSA to households, distributes produce for free to underserved communities, offers experience-based learning opportunities to Native American youth, and facilitates an extensive heritage seed-saving program. A multi-pronged engagement approach, a fluid, holistic mindset towards stewardship of the land, and a desire to restore a suite of pre-colonial understandings, skills and values all make Dream of Wild Health a unique and captivating example of agriculture as a driving social, cultural and environmental force. Despite the fact that it is located in semi-rural environs, the farm supports urban youth, urban businesses and urban communities, and gives educational opportunities to urban residents. This symbiosis highlights the necessity of strong linkage between cities and outlying agricultural areas, especially in the context of sharing knowledge with emerging urban growers, and giving them experiences they might not otherwise be afforded.

At the heart of any discussion of land use in the United States should be careful consideration for those who inhabited and stewarded this ground before European colonization, and continue to do so passionately and competently, despite a plethora of systematic disenfranchisements that have faced their communities for centuries. South Minneapolis hosts a robust Indigenous organizing network, with a strong nexus in the Franklin Cultural Corridor. Dream of Wild Health bases their urban presence here, as well as in the Ramsey County neighborhoods that host its Four Sisters farmers markets), and partners with a myriad of organizations to solidify sharing of resources, co-facilitation of efforts, and distribution of produce.

Plots at the Indigenous-led growing site Dream of Wild Health, where community youth help steward heirloom crops. (Courtesy of Kieran Morris, from a Urban Farm and Garden Alliance tour of Dream of Wild Health)

In 2021, Dream of Wild Health gave away thirty three percent of their yield to the community for free, distributing through CSA organizations, pop-up food stalls and a flow of excess from their farmers' market days. Grant funding, income from wholesale produce transactions and farmers' markets give the organization a varied pool of funding, allowing them to not only operate but extend their reach to the wider community. This in turn created circumstances that allowed for the fermentation of the "Garden Warriors" and "Kitchen Warriors" programs, which brought in Indigenous chefs and growers to educate youth in their trades. This program also creates a track to employment, and students who came up through the program have found their way into the kitchens of Owamni, an esteemed Indigenous eatery helmed by Sean "The Sioux Chef" Sherman, an acclaimed Oglala Lakota food innovator in the Twin Cities, who also purchases the restaurant's produce from Dream of Wild Health. All of these factors compound to enshrine the farm as a multilateral wellspring for Indigenous self determination and food-sovereignty.

In addition to serving a social function in rejuvenating pre-colonial practices and knowledge, Dream of Wild Health is also engaged in the cultivation and preservation of multiple Indigenous seed varieties, many of which have a net positive impact on the ecosystem in which they grow when compared to a standard monocultural approach. The farm experiments with many different varieties of produce every year, and specifically plants to encourage pollination, biodiversity and cooperation between Indigenous species. In a time where the climate can prove unpredictable and manifest in unknown ways each time the seasons change, this fluid approach allows the team to test new strategies for both producing and working in concert with the land. They also practice active soil remediation, and collaborate with a larger network of seed-saving organizations to proliferate the fruits of their efforts.

In 2020, Dream of Wild Health was able to obtain an additional twenty acres of adjacent land, allowing for further expansion of their growing operations.The ripple effect from this extension will carry far beyond a larger yield though. More space allows for more workshops, more educational and volunteer opportunities, and a larger sandbox for the resurgence of native species, which will then provide more seeds for saving and sharing. While Dream of Wild Health is located slightly outside of the cities in the peri-urban zone, the benefits that trickle down from their successes have a direct effect on indigenous communities in Minneapolis and Saint Paul, and can only help urban agriculture through being a source of native seed varieties, and font of invaluable experience and information.

3.5.2 Action and possibility mapping

Current Farm Bill organizing is advocating for funding for municipal policy evaluation and development, mechanisms to support land access and security for land tenure, and more federal financial and technical assistance for urban food cultivation (Miller et al. 2022); the county-level Farm Service Agency committee is currently hiring an executive director here, and a Cooperative Agreement program supporting urban agriculture is likely to start imminently. How can Ramsey County be ready to take advantage of this infrastructure to implement these recommendations?

In order to act expediently, given the many resources that already exist — even if they are not yet coordinated or particularly equitable to access — we suggest clustering agencies with similar service missions, domains, or district or neighborhood focus. For the four main actions above, we suggest the following four action clusters.

Jess Gilbert's 2015 *Planning Democracy* demonstrates the considerable value of different agencies coming together to address challenges such as how to provide land for community food cultivation, and demonstrates persistent equity gains from such coordination as long as seventy years after the coordination ceased to be maintained. So even if we can't always coordinate, every coordination could help.

1. Organizations that regulate land use could support long-term, affordable urban agriculture by revising tenure, land classification, and property tax processes. These organizations may include the Trust for Public Land, Minnesota Land Trust, Parks departments, the Housing and Redevelopment Authority, Public Housing, the Minnesota Department of Transportation, and the Department of Natural Resources. The Open Space Working Group's proposed management strategies and the partnerships involved in maintaining the Gateway garden serve as useful models for the variety of ways agencies can advance specific components of achieving long-term land tenure for urban food cultivation.

2. Libraries, schools, Parks departments, and nonprofit organizations, like Urban Roots and Minnesota State Horticultural Society, are well positioned to increase equity in urban food cultivation opportunities and cultural institutions' support. These entities could also develop programming related to youth development, stewardship relationships and processes, and other relevant topics.

3. Establishing meaningful, straightforward metrics that recognize the numerous positive outcomes of urban agriculture would reduce barriers to obtaining resources for growing food. In particular, agencies focused on water, climate, and sustainability could coordinate to develop shared and easily tracked metrics common to both their goals and the ecological benefits provided by urban agriculture, particularly as concerns about climate change become more prevalent. These metrics would help legitimize urban agriculture and improve access to support for all farmers and gardeners, instead of solely for those who are already well resourced and well connected.

4. As a statewide coordinator, the Board of Water and Soil Resources — with support of other community leaders and organizations, for example, the Emerging Farmers Working Group and relevant Metro Food Justice Network action teams — could further decrease the burden on individual growers and community groups. These organizations could work together to increase connective capacity both among agencies and between agencies and community members, which would strengthen the efficiency and effectiveness of resourcing efforts.

In the process of developing this report, we have reached out to the entities named above and ascertained their interest in helping to achieve the main recommendations of the report.

Consequently, although we recognize that new opportunities and ways of organizing may emerge, superceding these recommendations, we close the report with the hopes that these entities can workshop their current capacity to implement the actions identified in the report, plan to augment their capacity, and work together with entities with relevant governance roles across the Metro to resource and support the realization of the possibilities highlighted in our survey.

Summary table for supporting urban food cultivation in Ramsey County

Benefits	Challenges	Support Mechanisms and Goals	Action Clusters
1.3.1 Food security and well being	1.4.1 Food security benefits and investments undervalued → inaccessible costs of land, rent, materials	3.2.1 Support urban agriculture as a long-term land use by revising tenure and property tax processes -- main goals: longer-term leases and more inclusion in Green Acres or other tax abatement processes	3.4.1-1 Trust for Public Land, MN Land Trust, Community Land Trusts, etc., to help create and administer mechanisms for access and tenure. Parks, Housing and Redevelopment Authority, Public Housing, MnDOT, DNR, Open Space working group to help identify and provide land.
1.3.2 Equitable cultural learning and sharing	1.4.2 Equitable access to interactive greenspaces and environmental justice	3.2.2 Increase equity in urban agriculture opportunities and cultural institutions support -- main goals: a menu of supports for urban food cultivation currently offered, from plants to volunteers and mentoring to professional development and technical assistance	3.4.1-2 Libraries, schools, park programming. Urban Roots and other youth development and community engagement programs, Extension (including Master Gardeners/Land Connectors), State Horticultural Society and existing greenspace and farm and garden learning organizations.
1.3.3 Greenspace and ecological health	1.4.3 Policy frameworks → zoning restrictions and unclear UA policies	3.2.3 Meaningful, straightforward metrics to enable growing food — main goals: a draft expansion of the MDA urban agriculture grant rubric that could qualify urban food cultivation sites for additional resources (like water)	3.4.1-3 Climate action and adaptation plan and sustainability agencies and stakeholders. Water agencies (watershed districts and regional water services), Board of Water and Soil Resources (BWSR) →
1.3.4 Community relationships	1.4.4 Underdeveloped resource relationships → lack of infrastructure	3.2.4 clear communication and connection between relevant agencies, policies, and procedures -- main goal: catalog of contacts and venues where urban food cultivation support is addressed	3.4.1-4 → BWSR, community leaders and organizations, anchored by the Emerging Farmers' Working Group and the relevant Metro Food Justice Network action teams

Appendices

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Appendix P: Policy memos for each Ramsey County municipality
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Appendix B: Bibliography

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Appendix G: Glossary

Accessory structures: In most municipalities, accessory structures are defined as detached structures secondary to primary structures.* This implies that the existence of accessory structures is dependent on the presence of a primary structure, however some urban food cultivation sites do not have a primary structure. This presents difficulties with utilizing storage sheds, greenhouses, hoop houses (also sometimes called "membrane structures, for the plastic spread over the frames), and other structures relevant to urban agriculture because it is unclear 1) whether they are allowed without a primary structure on the lot, and 2) which building and zoning code standards they need to meet.

*Primary structures are usually a building where the main use of the lot occurs (e.g. a house in a residentially zoned area)

Agrarian: Relating to the cultivation of land for food, or to the parts of society and cultures concerned with agriculture. Also used as a synonym for "peasant"; in the United Nations declaration on the rights of peasants, a peasant is defined as "any person who engages or who seeks to engage, alone, or in association with others or as a community, in small-scale agricultural production for subsistence and/or for the market, and who relies significantly, though not necessarily exclusively, on family or household labour and other non-monetized ways of organizing labour, and who has a special dependency on and attachment to the land" (United Nations, 2018, pp. 4-5)

Agriculture: Agriculture means land and associated structures used for the purposes of growing produce, including fruits, vegetables, trees, plants, flowers and other similar crops, and raising animals—like chickens and bees—for food and other products.

Commercial and non-commercial agriculture: Commercial agriculture is the production of livestock or agricultural commodities and the offering of those commodities for sale, for profit. Non-commercial agriculture is the production of crops and livestock for the consumption of the farmer and community. Other distinguishing features include purpose, number of workers involved or not involved in overall farm decision making, scale of machinery use and farm size, and relationships with other businesses, including for finance.

Commons: Resources, rules, and/or practices that are shared, maintained, and reproduced by a community. The production of this report was carried out using commons-based practices, including public support in collaboration with community support, commitments to freely and openly share the results (including interviews and source documents), and resourcing of contributions (including illustrations, graphic design, and glossary and summary development, for example) by multiple community organizations and agencies with interest in stewarding urban food cultivation assets to be shared in common.

Community farm: Farms within settlements or cities that are locally owned and operated, and democratically controlled by the growers based in them. They keep funds and resources contained and circulating within the community where the farm is located, and create neighborhood institutions to share agricultural knowledge and practice. Additionally, many offer produce to residents, food shelves, and food justice nonprofits.
(FarmFolkCityFolk Society & The Land Conservancy of British Columbia. (2012). *Community Farming Benefits*. Community Farms Program. Retrieved December 15, 2022, from https://www.communityfarms.ca/program/progBenefits.shtml)

Community garden: A community garden is a cooperatively cultivated space, typically located in an urban or suburban landscape. Community gardens provide a way for individuals, families, or community groups who do not have access to adequate land to participate in gardening and small-scale agriculture. In the case of vegetable gardens, produce is usually intended for localized distribution and is primarily consumed by the individuals who have invested efforts in the garden throughout the season. There are also entrepreneurial and educational community gardens which provide more enrichment than fresh produce for a community. Community gardens range in their sizes and organizational structures, and may be located on public or private land.

Often, large community gardens will be subdivided into plots, which individuals then register to cultivate. Small fees are usually charged to participants in order to cover use of water and shared supplies. Benefits associated with community gardens may include aesthetics, food security, interpersonal relationships, crime reduction, community development, entrepreneurial opportunities, environmental sustainability, and many others.

Usage example: “Some [community] gardens are effectively subdivided to yield the maximum number of plots. Many include shared spaces, such as sitting gardens, areas of native habitat restoration, butterfly gardens, communal orchards, or herb gardens, and play areas” (2005: 265).

Resources:
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See also: American Community Gardening Association: http://www.communitygarden.org/index.php)
Food Systems Wiki Glossary http://foodglossary.pbworks.com/w/page/48854828/Community%20Garden

Resources:
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Food Systems Wiki Glossary: http://foodglossary.pbworks.com/w/page/48947612/Land%20trust
and
http://foodglossary.pbworks.com/w/page/48854835/Community%20Land%20Trusts

Community land trust: Community Land Trusts (CLTs) are a form of community land ownership designed to provide access to affordable housing and other land uses that benefit the community, such as businesses or agriculture. A nonprofit organization forms a Trust by acquiring land and the improvements on it (buildings, driveways, fences, etc.). The land remains in the Trust, and homeowners and businesses purchase and own the improvements while paying rent to the Trust for the land via long-term ground leases. Long-term leases provide tenure to homeowners and support the building of generational wealth for those less likely to enter asset ownership via market rates. If the owners decide to move, the CLT repurchases any improvements located on its land. Permanent affordability is maintained through resale prices set by a formula in the ground lease that is meant to give sellers a fair return on their investment, while presenting future buyers with access to housing at an affordable price.

The CLT is accountable to the community through governance by members on the board, which traditionally balances the interests of those directly benefiting from CLT services (people renting CLT land), those from the geographic neighborhood, and those representing public interests (social service providers, local officials, community leaders, funders, etc.). This model has been adapted to the needs of urban agriculture. Madison, Wisconsin's Troy Gardens and Providence, Rhode Island's South Side Community Land Trust are two examples of urban gardens using land in a CLT, and the Rondo CLT in Ramsey County holds land for community agriculture.

Usage example: With regard to Troy Gardens Cohousing, "the Madison Area Community Land Trust, has preserved 26 acres of open space surrounding the development as an organic farm, community garden and prairie" (Greene, 2008).

Community-based natural resource management (CBNRM): A decentralized approach to land and resource management with a focus on reciprocal relationships between the community and land. Many communities have systematically managed their resources together for centuries to increase the likelihood of long-term access and stability of livelihoods. Economic and political forces may pressure people to either shift away from these practices or work deliberately to establish and maintain them. (Adapted from Kumar, C. (2005). Revisiting 'community' in community-based natural resource management [PDF]. Oxford University Press. doi:10.1093/cdj/bsi036)
Example: NeighborSpace (Chicago): http://neighbor-space.org/

Contamination remediation: Remnant and redevelopment areas of cities can present challenges to food cultivation in the form of residual contamination from prior uses or ongoing contamination from contemporary pollution (from roads, trains, manufacturing, and waste processing). Many stereotypes of urban ecologies as polluted inaccurately underestimate the contamination of rural food sources (from pesticides, manufacturing, and the same atmospheric depositions that fall on cities). Further, areas of higher population density often have considerably

more resources dedicated to soil and contamination remediation. For common pollutants such as lead, contamination can be stabilized and remediated through growing plants and increasing soil organic matter.

Easement: An easement can be used to protect land. It is a voluntary agreement between a landholder and an entity to establish and protect specific land uses, allowing certain values to be preserved in the long term. For example, land may be placed in an easement to protect natural areas or features from removal—or an easement might be used to secure access to delineated areas, for example, for hunting or for the maintenance of utilities. In relation to urban food cultivation, an easement could ensure that a parcel of land would have the space and infrastructure necessary for growing food for a specified amount of time.

Enclosure: Process involved in the "modernization" of farming that systematically removed access to land used in common for agriculture in favor of two main ownership alternatives: state and private ownership.

Private ownership was seen as the goal to encourage individual initiative, as well as to prompt labor force participation by those unable to afford land. This significant historical shift in Euro-centric understandings of agricultural land relationships coincided with the colonial settlement of the United States, contributing ideological emphasis to the "land rights" discourses that persist in complicating discussions of public and community claims to land. It is notable that early colonial settlements under multiple settler cultures included commons that were later redivided to reinforce modern individual farming ideals.

It remains challenging for land holding to be assigned to a community without legal personality, or formal entity status, although Minnesota Indigenous communities have been part of the conversations that led to the Aotearoa New Zealand precedents of landforms gaining legal personhood, including the Whangenui River (see the Te Awa Tupua Whanganui River Settlement) and the Te Urewera Forest.

Equity: The distribution of power and resources so that all may meet their fundamental needs and fully participate in the life of their community. In the context of urban food cultivation, this means there is space for everyone to learn, participate, and benefit. This also means focused attention for BIPOC communities who have historically been excluded from or violently removed from accessing land, as well as a continuous evaluation process to ensure that standards of accommodating needs and supporting participation are being met. (Adapted from *Defining DEI*. (2021, July 26). University of Minnesota School of Public Health. Retrieved October 1, 2022, from https://www.sph.umn.edu/about/diversity-inclusion/resources/defining-dei/)

Food apartheid: Food apartheid is the restriction of nutritious food through economic, spatial, and psycho-social means. Quite frequently, this affects communities who have faced racist historical disadvantage and deprivation of traditional

food sources, such as indigenous and formerly enslaved peoples. In the United States, food apartheid leads to conditions in these communities in which fresh produce is rare and expensive compared to over-advertised processed foods rich in artificial sweeteners and preservatives.

Food justice: Operationalized efforts to guarantee safe, healthy, nutrient-dense food to all members of society, regardless of racial, religious, national, political, sexual, ethnic, economic or gender-based factors. These strides are primarily focused on eliminating historical disparities in food access between advantaged and disadvantaged groups, especially those negatively impacting non-white, indigenous, immigrant, and lower income community members. Food justice can be undertaken on a multilateral scale from the federal government to coalitions of neighbors. (Adapted from Minnesota Hunger Initiative. (n.d.). *What is Food Justice?* Retrieved December 15, 2022, from http://mnhungerinitiative.org/what-is-food-justice/)

Food security: A metric of consistent access to nutritious food for individuals, families, communities, settlements, cities, or nations. Can be viewed through the lenses of supply chain, economic accessibility, presence or absence of healthy food in communities due to structural discrimination, and environmental conditions conducive to crop growth or failure. Food justice is quite often a function of guaranteeing food security, especially within BIPOC and lower income communities facing legacies of low or negligible food security. (Adapted from U.S. Department of Agriculture Economic Research Service. (2022, October 17). *Definitions of Food Security*. Retrieved December 15, 2022, from https://www.ers.usda.gov/topics/food-nutrition-assistance/food-security-in-the-u-s/definitions-of-food-security/ and Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. (2020, June 18). *Food Security*. Retrieved December 15, 2022, from https://www.cdc.gov/climateandhealth/effects/food_security.htm)

Food Sovereignty: Food sovereignty is the ability and/or capacity of an individual, group or community to cultivate, acquire, distribute and consume food that encompasses health, nutrition, heritage, tradition, and environmental and economic sustainability, rather than a commerce-based model that favors maximum profit and neglects the aforementioned attributes. Quite frequently, food sovereignty is achieved through collective efforts by community members, organizations, and local businesses to combat histories of food insecurity, food shortage, or food apartheid. (Adapted from U.S. Food Sovereignty Alliance. (n.d.). *Food Sovereignty*. Retrieved December 15, 2022, from http://usfoodsovereigntyalliance.org/what-is-food-sovereignty/)

Greenhouse: A structure enclosed and used for the cultivation or protection of tender plants. In municipal zoning code, greenhouses are considered an accessory structure. A hoop house is a more temporary and easily transported structure that serves a similar purpose. *Note:* Under the MN Green Acres program (Statue 271.111, Subdivision 3 https://www.revisor.mn.gov/statutes/cite/273.111), the

presence of a greenhouse may qualify an agricultural site to meet its requirement for significant tax reductions (through a three-year rolling deferment program that continues as long as the site continues to be used for agriculture).

Land disturbance: Activities associated with significant physical alteration of land, creating risk of erosion and sedimentation. In most cities, food cultivation practices (i.e. tilling, planting, and harvesting) are often excluded from the definition of land disturbance, as the ordinance is meant to regulate larger-scale construction activities.

Land tenure: The legal system of "holding" access to land, determining who can use land, for how long, and under what conditions. We emphasize land tenure, and not just access, because the formal and informal customs governing access to land for urban food cultivation in Ramsey County favor temporary and insecure land tenure. This has been named as the second greatest challenge to successfully producing food for communities, after accessing land in the first place.

Land trust: A private, non-profit conservation organization formed to protect natural resources, such as productive farm and forest land, natural areas, historic structures, and recreational areas. Land trusts purchase and accept donations of conservation easements. They educate the public about the need to conserve land, and some provide land-use and estate planning services to local governments and individual citizens.

Usage Example: "Public land trusts are an effective means of securing permanent sites for community gardens and entrepreneurial urban farms in the future." (Kaufman & Bailkey, 2004, p. 196).

Resources:
Davidson, M., & Dolnick, F. (Eds.). (1999). A Glossary of Zoning, Development, and Planning Terms. Chicago, IL: American Planning Association Planning Advisory Service.
Kaufman, J., & Bailkey, M. (2004). Farming Inside Cities through Entrepreneurial Urban Agriculture. In Greenstein & Sungu-Eryilmaz (Eds.), Recycling the City: The Use and Reuse of Urban Land (p. 177-199). Toronto: Lincoln Institute of Land Policy

Premises liability insurance: The most basic form of liability insurance covering risks suffered by visitors to a location covered by such a policy. Such insurance is often required for community farms and gardens to relieve the landholder of liability, and can often be acquired for community food cultivation via district councils or other local non-profit organizations associated with the efforts. Easier access to such insurance would be a useful resource because many urban food producers and landholders have named it as a barrier.

Property: In the context of land, property is a legal mechanism for securing the rights to use land.* In the United States, property is often described as a "bundle" of rights granted by the authorities to those who hold the rights to use land.

The principle of land as property has origins in treaties between the United States and Indigenous nations. Although Indigenous people successfully negotiated to retain some of the rights they had always had (e.g. hunting, fishing on their land), ultimately colonists unjustly stole millions of acres of Indigenous land through treaties, which transformed the natural world into private property through specific legal processes still in place to uphold "property." This established the foundation for

the prevailing system of property and land ownership in the United States. (Case, M. (2018). *The Relentless Business of Treaties: How Indigenous Land Became US Property*. Amsterdam University Press.)
*Property is understood differently depending on context and place

Right-of-way: Land—sometimes privately-owned—that non-landholders can access infrastructure on or travel through (e.g. sidewalks and utility corridors). In most municipalities, residents are permitted to grow plants in publicly accessible rights-of-way like boulevards. Much available and underutilized land is along transportation rights-of-way, but these spaces are often subject to contamination from fuel, salt, etc. (see contamination remediation).

Rank plant growth / rank vegetation: Overgrown, uncontrolled vegetation, shrubs, trees, vines that are conducive to the accumulation of refuse, debris or the harborage of vermin. Rank plant growth is often associated with weeds. In some cities, like St. Paul, the definition of weeds does not include crops.

Regenerative agriculture: Regenerative agriculture uses the natural dynamics of an ecosystem to repair soil or maintain fertility, resist pests and disease, and provide high yields. There is also an emphasis on fully utilizing the natural resources on a farm (rain, sun, soil nutrients) in a semi-closed nutrient cycle so that less external inputs (fertilizer, pesticides, etc.) need to be used for production. Because these systems are often more complex and intensive than traditional agriculture, they are most often used by small farmers. Examples of regenerative agriculture practices include intensive grazing (grazing animals on small parcels for short periods of time, and then moving them to other parcels) and traditional highland Vietnamese farming (food scraps go in the pond to feed the fish, biomass from the pond feeds the pigs, pig manure fertilizes the garden).

Source: Hellwinckel, C. and De La Torre Ugarte, D. (n.d.). Peak Oil and the Necessity of Transitioning to Regenerative Agriculture. Retrieved from http://www.farmfoundation.biz/news/articlefiles/1718-Hellwinckel%20and%20De%20La%20Torre%20Ugarte.pdf
[from the Food Systems Wiki Glossary http://foodglossary.pbworks.com/w/page/101088250/Regenerative%20Agriculture]

Resilience and resourcefulness: Resilience is often defined as the ability to withstand and recover from disruption. In food systems, this means continuously supplying sufficient, accessible, acceptable food for all. Planning equitably for resilience, however, requires adequate resourcing of communities, especially those vulnerable to disruption.
Disasters are rarely “natural,” they are frequently correlated with extraction of resources or systemic under-resourcing.
(Johns Hopkins Center for a Livable Future. (2022). *Food System Resilience*. Retrieved December 15, 2022, from https://clf.jhsph.edu/projects/food-system-resilience; MacKinnon, D., & Derickson, K. D. (2013). From resilience to

resourcefulness. *Progress in Human Geography*, *37*(2), 253—270. https://doi.org/10.1177/0309132512454775)

Urban agroecology: Agroecology is the approach to agricultural ecosystems interested in mimicking natural processes as much as possible in the land stewardship relationships involved in growing food (as well as fiber and other products of agriculture). As a field, agroecology is understood to have three related parts: practices involved in stewardship, the sciences involved in understanding these systems and relationships, and the movement to support community engagements with agroecologies and food sovereignty. Urban agroecologies are wonderful places to rebuild metabolic and learning relationships between the communities dependent on ecosystems for food and life and ecological processes. Ecologies are often degraded in both cities and intensive farming regions as a result of extractive rural-urban relationships that concentrate consumption in cities and production in rural places.

Urban food cultivation: The umbrella term "urban food cultivation" is most inclusive of both urban farms (such as the Urban Roots Rivoli Bluffs site and Frogtown Farm) and urban gardens (such as Rice Street Gardens and Victoria Garden). Most reports on the topic suggest that the similarities between farms and gardens are more important than their differences in urban contexts, and that combining them in our understanding helps reduce inaccurate binary stereotypes about the food cultivation associated with under-resourced urban areas (particularly in the global south) and over-resourced urban areas (particularly in the global north), since most features converge. Policy and planning strategies for thriving, sustainable cities should include provisions for a wide range of food cultivation activities. Concerns about externalized costs of "farming" that are less often associated with "gardening" should be addressed through policies incentivizing agroecological practices and preventing harmful social and ecological externalities.

Zoning: The control and direction of the use and development of properties, including existing and future land uses and structure restrictions. Zoning regulations are published through municipal code.

Zoning code can be changed relatively easily and quickly by local government. While this is helpful for community organizing related to zoning change, it also means relying on zoning for obtaining long-term land for urban food cultivation is a less secure option compared to utilizing an easement.

Resources:

Varghese, S., & Hansen-Kuhn, K. (2013). Scaling up agroecology: Towards the realization of the right to food. Institute for Agriculture and Trade Policy. https://www.iatp.org/sites/default/files/2013_10_09_ScalingUpAgroecology_SV_0.pdf;
Recknagel, C., Patton, B., & Hugunin, P. (2016). *Urban Agriculture in Minnesota: A Report to the Minnesota Legislature*. Minnesota Department of Agriculture. Retrieved January 24, 2023, from https://www.mda.state.mn.us/sites/default/files/inline-files/legrpt-urbanag2016.pdf;
WinklerPrins, A. M.G.A. (Ed.). (2017). *Global urban agriculture: convergence of theory and practice between North and South*. CABI; HLPE. (2019). *Agroecological and other innovative approaches for sustainable agriculture and food systems that enhance food security and nutrition*. A report by the High Level Panel of Experts on Food Security and Nutrition of the Committee on World Food Security, Rome. https://www.fao.org/3/ca5602en/ca5602en.pdf;
Place F, Niederle P, Sinclair F, Carmona NE, Guéneau S, Gitz V, Alpha A, Sabourin E and Hainzelin E. (2022). *Agroecologically-conducive policies: A review of recent advances and remaining challenges*. Working Paper 1. Bogor, Indonesia: The Transformative Partnership Platform on Agroecology.

Appendix O: Ramsey County Policy Overview Tables — Overview of policy in Ramsey County municipalities by activity

These tables contain information about the policies for various activities and relevant considerations for urban food cultivation in Ramsey County municipalities during 2022. Each table represents an activity.

A list of the activities reviewed is below:

- Compost/Waste
- Garden Equipment/Storage
- Produce Sales
- Fowl
- Livestock
- Bees
- Right-of-way
- Water Use Regulations
- Hydrants
- Water Availability
- Stormwater Fees
- Public Vegetation Regulation
- Nuisance regulations
- Land Disturbance/Erosion
- Fences
- Development - Land Dedication
- Motor Vehicle Operations

The list of municipalities we reviewed includes:

- Arden Hills
- Blaine
- Falcon Heights
- Gem Lake
- Little Canada
- Maplewood
- Moundsview
- New Brighton
- North Oaks
- North St. Paul
- Roseville
- Shoreview
- Spring Lake Park
- St. Anthony
- St. Paul
- Vadnais Heights
- White Bear Lake
- White Bear Township

District	Policy: Compost/Waste
Arden Hills	Waste must be in containers
Blaine	Permitted in RE areas up to 4 dwelling units; container <100 cubic feet and <5' tall; contents allowed: yards waste, straw, fruit and vegetable scraps, coffee grounds, egg shells
Falcon Heights	Waste must be in containers
Gem Lake	Waste must be enclosed except for farms with operational waste material
Little Canada	It shall be unlawful for any person to dispose of yard waste into the mixed municipal solid waste stream. All yard waste to be picked up by a licensed hauler shall be placed in separate bags or containers, and shall not contain mixed municipal solid waste, recyclables or other materials.
Maplewood	Compost allowed in small quantities on residential lot (not in front yard) if follow Maplewood Solid Waste Management composting operation guidelines
Mounds View	Backyard and small compost sites shall comply with State Pollution Control Agency rules
New Brighton	Yard waste may be composted privately
North Oaks	No accumulation of refuse or other waste material unless enclosed in containers and are awaiting collection; compost piles not considered refuse in residential settings
North St. Paul	Composting permitted on-site at single-unit, multi-unit, and institutional properties provided standards are met
Roseville	Composting allowed in composting area or container <5'x5'x5'
Shoreview	Yard waste shall be disposed of in reasonable time by composting in proper manner, hauling to composting site, or bagging/containing until waste pick up. Composting areas in rear yard (10' from property line, 30' from adjoining residence); All waste material shall be kept in completely enclosed container and property screened; containers must be stored behind principal or accessory structure closest to street
Spring Lake Park	Single-family or multiple-family dwelling must meet standards to engage in composting yard waste, or fruit or vegetable waste, or coffee grounds, at a dwelling
St. Anthony	Composting only allowed if: Enclosed container <5', no more than 100 ft^3; only organic yard materials (grass clippings, leaves, flowers, weeds, plant trimmings, straw); minimizes odor
St. Paul	Composting by residents on their own property is permitted provided the following regulations are complied with (container, container location, materials allowed, odor maintenance)
Vadnais Heights	Compost piles allowed; refuse must be kept in rear yard in waterproof, fly-tight container
White Bear Lake	Composting permitted in residential properties up to 4 units (in enclosed container in rear yard)
White Bear Township	Composting permitted in residential properties up to 4 units (in enclosed container in rear yard)

District	Policy: Garden Equipment/Storage
Arden Hills	----
Blaine	—-
Falcon Heights	Garden equipment and materials do not have to be stored in a building or screened if used on premises
Gem Lake	----
Little Canada	----
Maplewood	Metal storage building allowed as backyard storage shed
Mounds View	Accessory buildings and uses or equipment must be located in rear yard
New Brighton	----
North Oaks	----
North St. Paul	----
Roseville	Garden sheds may be built or sided with materials different in character from principal structure
Shoreview	All materials and equipment shall be stored in approved fully enclosed structure
Spring Lake Park	----
St. Anthony	The outside parking and storage on residentially-zoned property of materials, supplies, or equipment not customarily used for residential purposes in violation of requirements is declared to be a public nuisance
St. Paul	Any tools, equipment, and material shall be stored and concealed within an enclosed, secured structure.
Vadnais Heights	Outside storage of vehicles, equipment or materials considered a nonconforming use (use legally existing prior to the enactment of a Code provision prohibiting such use)
White Bear Lake	----
White Bear Township	There shall be no exterior storage of equipment or materials used in the home occupation, except personal vehicles

District	Policy: Produce Sales
Arden Hills	Selling of produce allowed without permit/license by cultivator
Blaine	—-
Falcon Heights	Sale of goods requires license (didn't see produce cultivator exemption)
Gem Lake	Selling of farm or garden products allowed without permit/license by cultivator
Little Canada	Selling of produce by farmers allowed without license
Maplewood	Selling of products produced on farm or garden by cultivator allowed without permit

Mounds View	Selling of farm or garden products allowed without permit/license by cultivator
New Brighton	May not sell or offer for sale any goods unless a license has first been obtained
North Oaks	----
North St. Paul	Selling of any farm or garden product produced on the same property as person resides without permit
Roseville	Seasonal outdoor sales permit required for sales of produce, plants, garden supplies, and/or farmers' market
Shoreview	Selling of farm or garden products allowed without permit/license by cultivator
Spring Lake Park	Peddler, solicitor and transient merchant, shall not apply to any person who makes initial contacts with other people for the purpose of establishing or trying to establish a regular customer delivery route for the delivery of perishable food and dairy products such as baked goods and milk, nor shall they apply to any person making deliveries of perishable food and dairy products to the customers on his or her established regular delivery route
St. Anthony	No license shall be required for any person to sell or attempt to sell, or to take or attempt to take orders for, any product grown, produced, cultivated, or raised on any farm
St. Paul	On-site sales limited to products grown on the site; only 3 sales in a calendar year between 7am-7pm. Sales shall be held on property occupied either by seller's dwelling unit or on property owned, rented, leased, or otherwise lawfully occupied by a charitable, institutional, or political organization. Sales shall not take place on the public sidewalk or boulevard.
Vadnais Heights	Selling of eggs, honey, or other produce not permitted on site; farmers selling their own products exempt from licensing and registration.
White Bear Lake	Selling of farm or garden products allowed without permit/license by cultivator
White Bear Township	No license shall be required for any person to sell or attempt to sell, or to take or attempt to take orders for, any product grown, produced, cultivated or raised on any farm.

District	Policy: Fowl
Arden Hills	Chickens allowed with license (2 year)
Blaine	Chicken operations must be registered by property owner with City; City will establish fee for registration
Falcon Heights	Chickens allowed with permit in districts where chickens are an allowed accessory use (R-1, R-2, R-3)
Gem Lake	Domestic fowl (chickens, ducks, turkeys, peacocks) allowed with license (1 year)
Little Canada	Prohibited
Maplewood	Poultry allowed with permit (2 years)
Mounds View	Chickens and ducks allowed with permit (1 year)
New Brighton	Keeping fowl allowed if meet standards and notify city compliance inspector (no license or registration required)
North Oaks	----

North St. Paul	Keeping of chickens allowed with registration
Roseville	Nuisance: Keeping of Non-Domestic Animals: The keeping of animals , other than those commonly called poultry or bees. (Does this mean keeping of poultry or bees is allowed?)
Shoreview	Chickens may be kept in RE and R1 properties if <2 acres max 4 hen chickens; if >2 acres, requires conditional use permit for >4 hen chickens
Spring Lake Park	Keeping of fowl considered public nuisance
St. Anthony	No person may keep swine, cattle, horses, goats, or more than 2 dogs or 3 dogs allowed under § 91.01 through 91.05 or fowl, within the city nearer than 500 feet to any human habitation or platted land, without approval of the City Council
St. Paul	No person shall keep, permit or harbor any female chicken in any dwelling or on the same lot or premises without a permit. Permits are divided into two (2) tiers. (Tier 1: 1-6 female chickens; Tier 2: 7-15 female chickens); permit required to keep any turkey, duck, goose, pigeon, or similar small bird
Vadnais Heights	Chickens allowed as an accessory use with a permit in R-1 district if meet standards
White Bear Lake	Keeping of chickens allowed with license and zoning permit
White Bear Township	Raising of chickens allowed in <2 acre lots (if 4 or fewer hens) in R-1 only

District	Policy: Livestock
Arden Hills	----
Blaine	Fences for livestock adjacent to single family zoning districts must have setback of 100 ft or more
Falcon Heights	----
Gem Lake	----
Little Canada	Prohibited
Maplewood	Pigs allowed on land < 40 acres with permit (1 year); Permit required for goats and sheep used for temporary vegetation management
Mounds View	----
New Brighton	----
North Oaks	----
North St. Paul	----
Roseville	----
Shoreview	Keeping of pigs requires license (2 years)
Spring Lake Park	Keeping of livestock considered public nuisance
St. Anthony	No person may keep swine, cattle, horses, goats, or more than 2 dogs or 3 dogs allowed under § 91.01 through 91.05 or fowl, within the city nearer than 500 feet to any human habitation or platted land, without approval of the City Council
St. Paul	Permit required to keep more than one rabbit or any hoofed animal, mink, ferret, or similar small animal

Vadnais Heights	----
White Bear Lake	----
White Bear Township	----

District	Policy: Bees
Arden Hills	----
Blaine	Bees are listed among animals considered livestock
Falcon Heights	----
Gem Lake	----
Little Canada	----
Maplewood	Beekeeping permitted outright in all zoning districts as accessory use
Mounds View	Keeping of honeybees allowed with license (valid indefinitely while hives operated continuously)
New Brighton	Keeping bees allowed if meet standards and notify city compliance inspector (no license or registration required)
North Oaks	----
North St. Paul	Keeping of bees allowed with registration
Roseville	Nuisance: Keeping of Non-Domestic Animals: The keeping of animals , other than those commonly called poultry or bees. (Does this mean keeping of poultry or bees is allowed?)
Shoreview	Bee hives may be kept in RE and R1 properties with license and proof of keeper training
Spring Lake Park	----
St. Anthony	----
St. Paul	No person shall keep or allow to be kept any hive or other facility for the housing of bees within the city without a permit.
Vadnais Heights	Beekeeping is an allowed conditional use in R-1 if meet standards
White Bear Lake	Keeping of bees allowed with license (5 year) [requires training course, liability insurance]
White Bear Township	----

District	Policy: Right-of-way
Arden Hills	Gardens allowed without permit
Blaine	----
Falcon Heights	Gardens allowed without permit
Gem Lake	Must obtain permit to carry out any activity in right-of-way
Little Canada	----

Maplewood	Gardens allowed in right-of-way without permit
Mounds View	Gardens allowed in right-of-way without permit
New Brighton	A permit shall be obtained from the City before any alteration is undertaken in right-of-way
North Oaks	----
North St. Paul	Only trees listed by city can be planted in boulevard; Gardens allowed in right-of-way without permit
Roseville	Gardens allowed without permit
Shoreview	Gardens allowed without permit
Spring Lake Park	Permit required. Except as otherwise provided in this chapter, no person may obstruct or excavate any right-of-way, or install or place facilities in the right-of-way, without first having obtained the appropriate permit from the city.
St. Anthony	Nothing herein shall be construed to repeal or amend the provisions of a city ordinance permitting persons to plant or maintain boulevard plantings or gardens or in the area of right-of-way between their property and the street curb. Persons planting or maintaining boulevard plantings or gardens shall not be deemed to use or occupy the right-of-way, and shall not be required to obtain any permits or satisfy any other requirements for planting or maintaining the boulevard plantings or gardens under this chapter; ALSO: No person may plant any tree or shrub on the public right-of-way without the permit referred to in § 94.53.(clarify -- some plants, but not trees or shrubs?)
St. Paul	Nothing herein or in chapter 135 shall be construed to repeal or amend the provisions of a city ordinance permitting persons to plant or maintain boulevard plantings or gardens or in the area of right-of-way between their property and the street curb (no permit required); A property owner in the city shall be permitted to plant, care for and maintain gardens on the boulevards adjacent to their property, subject to standards
Vadnais Heights	Boulevard plantings and gardens are allowed in right-of-way
White Bear Lake	Gardens allowed without permit
White Bear Township	----

District	Policy: Water Use Regulation
Arden Hills	During water emergency, nonessential water use prohibited on outdoor irrigation of yards, gardens, golf courses, parklands, and other non-agricultural land
Blaine	Irrigation prohibited water use within water conservation standards during critical drought situations (this includes gardens but not agriculture)
Falcon Heights	----
Gem Lake	----
Little Canada	Attended water uses such as hand watering of plants and gardens is permitted at all times
Maplewood	----

Mounds View	The Council may impose emergency regulations pertaining to the conservation of water. A water sprinkling ban may be implemented for the months of May, June, July, August and September by specifying dates and times
New Brighton	During an emergency, the City Manager may limit the times and hours when water may be used from the municipal water system for lawn and garden sprinkling, irrigation, car washing, air conditioning, or other uses specified in the declaration
North Oaks	During water use restrictions, hand watering of flowers or gardens is permitted unless specifically banned
North St. Paul	The use of water for lawn sprinkling purposes shall at all times be subject to limitation as to time and duration of use when in the opinion of the Council such limitation is necessary on account of emergency or for public benefit. The Council or designee may, when conditions make it necessary or advisable, forbid the use of water for sprinkling. (Doesn't mention limiting water use for agriculture)
Roseville	All water customers and consumers shall be governed by the applicable regulations promulgated by the Board of Water Commissioners of the City of Saint Paul as to limitations in the time and manner of using water and such other applicable regulations affecting the preservation, regulation and protection of the water supply
Shoreview	Between 5/15 and 9/15, garden watering permitted on even/odd address basis; garden watering not permitted 11am-5pm; attended water uses or hand-watering of plants and gardens permitted at all times
Spring Lake Park	During water emergency, mandatory restrictions upon nonessential water use shall be enforced: Outdoor irrigation of yards, gardens, golf courses, parklands, and other non-agricultural land, except for those areas irrigated with reclaimed water
St. Anthony	To promote and protect the public health, safety, and welfare of the city and its residents, it may be necessary during periods of drought or unusual water use for the City Council to declare the existence of an emergency with respect to the use of city water and to provide for restricted use; No person may draw or use the city water system for the purpose of watering lawns or gardens during any period of emergency as declared under § 52.08, except during the days and hours permitted
St. Paul	----
Vadnais Heights	Garden sprinkling limited 6/1-9/15 (even addresses can water between 6pm-12pm on even days, odd addresses on odd days); during water shortage, city may declare ban or limitations on water usage (property owner with recent plantings may request a waiver from city engineer)
White Bear Lake	No irrigating between 10am and 5pm from 5/1-9/30 (does not include outdoor vegetation utilized for agricultural purposes); During critical water deficiency outdoor irrigation regulations do not apply to fruit and vegetable gardens
White Bear Township	During water emergency, nonessential water use prohibited on outdoor irrigation of yards, gardens, golf courses, parklands, and other non-agricultural land

District	Policy: Hydrants
Arden Hills	Permit - deposit and rental fees
Blaine	----
Falcon Heights	----
Gem Lake	Permit - deposit, charges
Little Canada	Permit

Maplewood	----
Mounds View	Permit required to obtain water from a municipal water system hydrant
New Brighton	----
North Oaks	Permit - deposit, charges
North St. Paul	Permit
Roseville	Permit - deposit, rental charge
Shoreview	Permit - deposit, charges
Spring Lake Park	----
St. Anthony	----
St. Paul	Hydrant use requires application for permit, deposit, and hydrant and water use charges every 30 days
Vadnais Heights	Hydrant use requires application for permit, a deposit, and rental charges
White Bear Lake	----
White Bear Township	Hydrant use requires deposit, permit fee, rental fee

District	Policy: Water Availability
Arden Hills	Must get city administration permission to turn on or off water supply
Blaine	----
Falcon Heights	----
Gem Lake	----
Little Canada	No person shall turn on any water supply at the stop box without permission from the City
Maplewood	----
Mounds View	----
New Brighton	No person shall turn on any water supply at the stop box without permission from the City
North Oaks	Turning water back on after it is shutoff is subject to a fee
North St. Paul	No person shall tamper or interfere with the stop cocks at the main and sidewalk or with the box and cover
Roseville	No person except an authorized City employee shall turn on or off any water supply at the stop box without permission from the Public Works Director
Shoreview	----
Spring Lake Park	----
St. Anthony	----
St. Paul	The stop-cocks at main and sidewalk, together with box and cover, are the property of the water board and no person shall interfere with them.
Vadnais Heights	No person, except an authorized city employee, shall turn on or off any water supply at the curb

	stop without permission from the building official; No person shall permit water from the water system to be used for any purpose except upon their own premises unless written consent is obtained from the city.
White Bear Lake	----
White Bear Township	Permit required for tree planting and installation of irrigation systems; No unauthorized person shall operate a water curb stop connected to the Town’s water system

District	Policy: Stormwater Fees
Arden Hills	----
Blaine	----
Falcon Heights	Variance application required for reduction in stormwater fees (cap of 25%)
Gem Lake	----
Little Canada	----
Maplewood	----
Mounds View	----
New Brighton	Stormwater fees shall be established by ordinance
North Oaks	----
North St. Paul	----
Roseville	Fees: Storm water drainage fees for parcels of land shall be determined by multiplying the REF for a parcel's land use by the parcel's acreage and then multiplying the REF for a parcel's land use by the parcel's acreage and then multiplying the resulting product by the storm water drainage rate.
Shoreview	----
Spring Lake Park	All storm water utility fees shall be calculated based on the following formula: All other land uses: (REF)(Base Rate as established by the City Council) = Rate per Acre
St. Anthony	Other land uses not listed in the table in § 33.090 will be classified by the Public Works Director by assigning them to classes most nearly like the listed uses from the standpoint of runoff volume for the standard rainfall event.
St. Paul	----
Vadnais Heights	Surface water management fee for all individual parcels defined as the product of the residential surface water management fee (per acre), the appropriate utility factor based on land use, and the total acreage of the parcel.
White Bear Lake	----
White Bear Township	Stormwater drainage fees for non-residential developments which do not have buildings or significant paved areas, (i.e. cemeteries, railroad lines, etc.) shall be determined by dividing the total developed area by 12,000 square feet (typical square foot lot) then multiplied by 0.25 (a lesser runoff factor).

District	Policy: Public Vegetation Regulation
Arden Hills	Disturbing public flower, tree, shrub, plants prohibited; planting requires director permission
Blaine	----
Falcon Heights	No person shall damage, cut, trim, carve, kill or injure any tree or plant on public property
Gem Lake	----
Little Canada	No person shall injure, damage, destroy...etc. any public or private property in any public park, including trees, shrubs, or vegetation
Maplewood	It shall be unlawful for any person, on the grounds of the Maplewood Nature Center, to: Injure, cut, destroy, remove, plant or cultivate any living organism that cannot move voluntarily and that has the ability to synthesize food from carbon dioxide
Mounds View	No person may disturb or remove any flower, tree, shrub, or any plant whether wild or cultivated; no person may plant anything; No person may pick any flowers, fruit or vegetable (not self-grown); trample any flowers, vegetable gardens; no person may make unauthorized use of open space which is detrimental to turf/soil
New Brighton	No person may disturb or remove any flower, tree, shrub, or any plant whether wild or cultivated; no person may plant anything; No person may pick any flowers, fruit or vegetable (not self-grown); trample any flowers, vegetable gardens; no person may make unauthorized use of open space which is detrimental to turf/soil
North Oaks	----
North St. Paul	No person shall pick or cut any wild or cultivated flowers or cut, break or in any way injure or deface any plant in any public park; Carry within or out of any public park any wild flower, tree, shrub, plant or any newly plucked branch or portion thereof or any soil or other material belonging in or pertaining to such park
Roseville	No person shall break, cut, mutilate, injure, remove or carry away any tree, plant, flower, shrub, rock, soil, sand, fence, bench or any other property
Shoreview	No person shall pick any cultivated flowers or fruit or in any manner injure any tree, plant, shrub, flower, flower bed, turf
Spring Lake Park	No person shall mark, deface, or injure fences, trees, lawns
St. Anthony	No person shall deface, damage, or remove any structure, tree, plant, soil, rock, or other property in any park without permission from the Manager. Conduct prohibited by this division shall include: Damaging flowers, trees, or plants
St. Paul	It shall be unlawful for any person to deface, destroy, cut down or remove any of the trees or bushes growing or being maintained in or upon any boulevard or street lawn within the corporate limits of the city without having first obtained the permission and authority from the department of parks and recreation; No person shall climb any tree, or pluck any flower or fruit, whether wild or cultivated, or break, cut down, trample upon or remove, or in any manner injure or deface any statue, ornament, tree, plant, shrub, flower, flowerbed, turf or any of the buildings, fences, bridges or other construction within the several parks and parkways; It is unlawful for any person to willfully cut, break, injure, trim, chemically damage, pierce with nails or other objects, remove or destroy any tree located, standing or growing, or which may hereafter be planted or placed upon any public place of the city.
Vadnais Heights	No person shall climb any tree or remove, damage or deface any statue, ornament, cultivated tree,

	plant, flower, flowerbed, turf or any structure.
White Bear Lake	No person shall pick or cut any wild or cultivated flowers or cut, break or in any way injure or deface any plant in any public park; Carry within or out of any public park any wild flower, tree, shrub, plant or any newly plucked branch or portion thereof or any soil or other material belonging in or pertaining to such park
White Bear Township	No person shall pick or cut any wild or cultivated flowers or cut, break or in any way injure or deface any plant in any public park; Carry within or out of any public park any wild flower, tree, shrub, plant or any newly plucked branch or portion thereof or any soil or other material belonging in or pertaining to such park

District	Policy: UA As Nuisance
Arden Hills	Growths of vegetation greater than 8"
Blaine	Operation of tools and domestic maintenance equipment between 10pm and 7am
Falcon Heights	Vegetation that obstructs view of traffic; rank growths of vegetation
Gem Lake	Fences, structures, plantings > 30"; accumulations of manure or rubbish; noxious weeks and rank growth
Little Canada	Keeping of non-domesticated animals; Compost which causes offensive odors or is unsightly; Growths that impede vision between 2.5-10' in specific traffic areas; Rank growths, garbage cans that are not fly-tight
Maplewood	Cannot have any tree, shrubbery, plant or other view obstruction >2'6" --> if violates = nuisance
Mounds View	Obstructions which block view of traffic; any use of property which causes crowds or people to gather, obstructing traffic/use of public streets and sidewalks; no structures or plantings >30" in height
New Brighton	Accumulations of rubbish, tree branches, grass clippings, debris of any nature or description except in fly-tight containers; rank growths; obstructions within 15' of public street or right of way that obstruct view of traffic
North Oaks	----
North St. Paul	Exposed accumulation of decayed vegetable matter; noxious weeds and rank growths of vegetation; all obstructions which prevent people from having clear view of all traffic approaching an intersection
Roseville	Backyard Composting: All composting consisting of yard waste and/or kitchen waste which have been left unattended and which cause offensive odors, attract rodents and/or pests or are unsightly, or do not meet the requirements of Chapter 409.; Weeds and Vegetation: All noxious weeds in all locations. Also, turf grasses, nuisance weeds and rank vegetative growth not maintained at a height of eight inches or less
Shoreview	On corner lot no planting may obscure view, no planting within 15' of intersecting right-of-way lines; accumulation of debris; rank growth >9" on private/public, non-woody veg >18" on vacant;
Spring Lake Park	Public nuisance affecting health: accumulations of manure or rubbish; garbage cans which are not rodent-free or fly-tight, rank growths; the keeping of fowl or livestock; exposed accumulation of decayed or unwholesome food or vegetable matter; all trees, hedges, or other obstructions which prevent people from having a clear view of all traffic approaching an intersection

St. Anthony	Exposed accumulation of decayed or unwholesome food or vegetable matter; Accumulations of manure, refuse, or other debris; Garbage cans which are not rodent-free or fly-tight that emit foul and disagreeable odors; rank growth of vegetation; All trees, hedges, or other obstructions which prevent people from having a clear view of all traffic approaching an intersection;
St. Paul	Grass which has grown upon any property to a height of eight (8) or more inches or weeds; Conditions which are conducive to the presence, harborage or breeding of insects, rodents or other pests; Shrubs, bushes, trees, vines or other uncontrolled vegetation which has grown over the public sidewalk and which obstructs, interferes or renders dangerous for passage any public sidewalk; rank plant growth; Refuse, noxious substances or hazardous wastes laying, pooled, accumulated, piled, left, deposited, buried or discharged upon, in, being discharged or flowing from any property, structure or vehicle, except for: Compost piles established and maintained in accordance with the regulations of Chapter 357 of this Legislative Code
Vadnais Heights	Noxious weeds or grass >10"; accumulation of trash or debris of any nature; noxious fumes; unauthorized signs
White Bear Lake	No plantings > 36" permitted in traffic view area
White Bear Township	Accumulations of manure or rubbish; garbage cans which are not fly-tight; rank growths

District	Policy: Land Disturbance/Erosion
Arden Hills	Gardening, tilling, planting or harvesting are permitted
Blaine	----
Falcon Heights	----
Gem Lake	Gardening allowed without permit; Use of land for new and continuing agricultural activities shall not constitute a land disturbing activity
Little Canada	----
Maplewood	Tilling, planting, harvesting, gardening are not considered land disturbance activities
Mounds View	Tilling, planting, harvesting of agricultural crops allowed without permit
New Brighton	Permit required for land disturbance of one acre or more or land disturbance part of a development plan of one acre or more
North Oaks	Erosion control doesn't apply to land under agricultural use (unless soil loss determined to be excessive)
North St. Paul	Agricultural activities shall not constitute a land disturbing activity
Roseville	Tilling, planting, harvesting, gardening are not considered land disturbance activities
Shoreview	Land disturbance activity is any land change that may result in soil erosion from water or wind and the movement of sediments into or upon waters or lands within the City, including construction, clearing and grubbing, grading, excavating, transporting and filling of land (doesn't mention agriculture or gardening)
Spring Lake Park	Tilling, planting, or harvesting of agricultural, horticultural or forestry crops does not require permit for land disturbing activities >= 1 acre; --> do not need to submit Storm Water Pollution Prevention Plan; Rule D: Erosion and Sediment Control Plans - Rule D does not apply to normal farming

	practices that are part of an ongoing farming operation
St. Anthony	----
St. Paul	Activity of 1 acre or more shall submit control plan to city for approval; no land shall be disturbed until the plan is approved by city
Vadnais Heights	Tilling, planting, harvesting, gardening are not considered land disturbance activities
White Bear Lake	----
White Bear Township	Any 'land disturbing activity' must be approved by the Township's erosion control plan. This does not include residential gardens

District	Policy: Fences
Arden Hills	----
Blaine	Fences on properties zoned FR or AG and constructed to contain livestock, located a minimum of 300 ft away from any residentially owned property
Falcon Heights	Fences may be allowed in any zone but require permit and are subject to standards
Gem Lake	Fences to protect gardens exempt from City review if >=25' setback, 80% open, <6' high
Little Canada	Temporary fences to protect gardens allowed without permit (if <48" and not in front or side yard, nor a determined to be nuisance)
Maplewood	Fences shall have a maximum height of six feet for residential and ten feet for nonresidential uses; Barbed wire fencing shall only be used to fence in livestock on a farm and for top fencing around commercial uses where the base fence is six feet or more high
Mounds View	No fence shall exceed eight feet in height; No structures or plantings 30 inches or more in height, or fences shall be permitted within 30 feet of any corner formed by the intersection of street property lines or the right-of way of a railway intersecting a street, except properly constructed chain link fences
New Brighton	----
North Oaks	Fences, screening, planting strips, and landscaping are permitted within 30' of a lot line, but are subject to restrictions
North St. Paul	An open type fence of posts and wire is not considered to be a structure under this chapter. Fences that have the potential to obstruct flood flows, such as chain link fences and rigid walls, are regulated as structures under this chapter
Roseville	Fences protecting gardens shall be allowed to max of 8' in height
Shoreview	A building permit shall be required for the structures exempt from Minnesota State Building Code requirements but regulated within this Development Ordinance including but not limited to: fences
Spring Lake Park	Permit - No fence shall be erected or substantially altered in the city without securing a permit from the Building Inspector. All permits of this type shall be issued upon a written application which shall set forth the type of fence to be constructed, the material to be used, height, and exact location of the fence
St. Anthony	A building permit is required for the construction or alteration of a fence, and for any additions to a fence. The permit must be obtained in the name of the owner of the property on which the fence is

	or will be located.
St. Paul	No person shall construct, or cause to be constructed, any fence in the city without first obtaining and completing a fence plan review from the building official. A fence inspection is not required for all fence installations, but fences may be subject to inspections; permit required for fences > 7' ; fences in front yards no more than 4' tall
Vadnais Heights	Fences permit not required for farms; for residential lots not a farm, no boundary fences >6', front yard fences <4', all fences 25% open, corner lots all plantings and fences <30" in defined triangular area
White Bear Lake	Fences shall require a building (or zoning) permit from the White Bear Lake Building Official
White Bear Township	Fences, when constructed to enclose or screen any lot or tract of land or part thereof, shall be erected in such a manner as to be in compliance with the provisions of this Ordinance (depends on zoning district, etc.)

District	Policy: Development - Land Dedication
Arden Hills	Minn. Stat. Section 462.358, Subd. 2b, developers, as a prerequisite to approval of a subdivision to convey to the City or dedicate to the public use a reasonable portion of any such proposal for public use as parks, recreational facilities, playgrounds, trails, wetlands, or open space
Blaine	----
Falcon Heights	As a condition to approval of any subdivision of land, the owner shall dedicate a portion of the gross area of such land for public park, playground, open space, trail system or other public recreational purposes: eight percent for land zoned R-1, etc.
Gem Lake	Developers required to dedicate land to public green/open space (UA?)
Little Canada	A reasonable portion of each proposed PUD shall be dedicated for public use as parks, playgrounds, public open space or storm water holding pond areas
Maplewood	Developer of any tract of land in the city which is to be developed or redeveloped for commercial, residential, governmental, institutional, or industrial or like uses shall dedicate to the public, for public use as parks, playgrounds or public open space, such portion of his development tract equal to nine percent
Mounds View	In all subdivisions to be developed for residential, commercial, industrial or PUD, a subdivider shall dedicate a reasonable portion of the buildable land for public use as parks, recreational facilities, playgrounds, trails or public open space
New Brighton	Land being subdivided shall dedicate to the City a reasonable portion of the land for use as public parks, playgrounds, trails or open space
North Oaks	Subdivision to be developed for residential uses shall have a reasonable amount of land dedicated, set aside, conveyed, or preserved to or for open space purposes, parks and playgrounds, trails, or conservation purposes.
North St. Paul	Municipal subdivision regulations may require that a reasonable portion of any proposed subdivision be dedicated for public use as parks, playgrounds, trails, wetlands, or open space
Roseville	Senior Care Facilities shall include 150 sq ft of open space per resident (gardens); City encourages special design features (gardens)

Shoreview	City Council may require developer of proposed development/subdivision to dedicate, reserve, or otherwise convey to the City a reasonable portion of the total area of proposed development for public recreational use
Spring Lake Park	As a condition of subdivision approval, subdividers shall dedicate a portion of any proposed subdivision for conservation purposes or for public use as parks, recreational facilities as defined and outlined in M.S. § 471.191, playgrounds, trails, wetlands or open space
St. Anthony	The owners of a parcel of land of 1 acre or more in size and being subdivided shall dedicate to the city a reasonable portion of the land for use as public parks, playgrounds, trails or open space
St. Paul	For development that increases the number of residential dwelling units and/or increases the floor area of commercial and/or industrial buildings on a parcel of land, a reasonable portion of the buildable land, proportionate to the additional need for parks created by the development, may be required to be conveyed, or a fee in lieu of land shall be paid, on a one time basis, prior to the issuance of building permits, for public use for neighborhood- and community-scale parks, as defined in adopted city plans, playgrounds, recreation facilities, trails, wetlands, or open space needed as a result of the development, based on the following standards
Vadnais Heights	Authority. M.S.A. § 462.358, subd. 2b, 2c, permit the city to require dedication of park land, or cash in lieu of land, as part of the subdivision process in order to fulfill its plans for recreational facilities and open spaces. The city council shall determine whether park dedication is required in the form of land, cash contribution, or a combination of cash and land.
White Bear Lake	As a prerequisite to plat approval, subdividers shall dedicate land for parks, playground, public open spaces or trails and/or shall make a cash contribution to the City's park fund as provided by this Code
White Bear Township	For any residential development, a percentage of the proposed subdivision shall be conveyed to the Town for use as parks, playgrounds, trails or public open space

District	Policy: Motor Vehicle Operations
Arden Hills	----
Blaine	----
Falcon Heights	----
Gem Lake	----
Little Canada	----
Maplewood	Motor vehicles may be operated for maintenance (farming, gardening, mowing, landscaping) without permit
Mounds View	----
New Brighton	----
North Oaks	----
North St. Paul	----
Roseville	----
Shoreview	----
Spring Lake Park	----

St. Anthony	----
St. Paul	Permit required for an ag vehicle to be permitted to stop, stand, park on any street in R1-R1, RT1, RT2, RM1, RM3 zoning
Vadnais Heights	----
White Bear Lake	----
White Bear Township	----

2022 Ramsey County urban food cultivation zoning overview tables by municipality

These tables contain information about the zoning regulations for various activities and relevant considerations for urban food cultivation in Ramsey County municipalities during 2022. Each table represents an activity.

A list of the activities reviewed is below:

- Farming/Gardening
- Accessory Structures
- Poultry/Livestock
- Compost
- Sales
- Signs

The list of municipalities we reviewed includes:

- Arden Hills
- Blaine
- Falcon Heights
- Gem Lake
- Little Canada
- Maplewood

- Moundsview
- New Brighton
- North Oaks
- North St. Paul
- Roseville
- Shoreview
- Spring Lake Park
- St. Anthony
- St. Paul
- Vadnais Heights
- White Bear Lake
- White Bear Township

District	Zoning: Farming/ Gardening
Arden Hills	Permitted Use: FW (General farming, pasture, grazing, outdoor plant nurseries, horticulture, truck farming, forestry, sod farming, wild crop harvesting; gardens)
Blaine	Permitted Use: AG District (Minimum of 40 acres) Permitted Use: FR District (Minimum of 10 acres) Permitted Use: Senior Housing (Two hundred fifty (250) square feet per unit, Active open spaces (i.e., game areas, garden plots, etc.) shall be no less than fifty (50) feet in any direction)
Falcon Heights	Permitted Accessory Use: R-1, R-2, R-3, B-1, R-4, R-5M (Edible landscape areas/residential gardens) *Urban farm PUD district - Permitted Use: Urban Farm (parking, retail, office/training/kitchen, distribution/warehouse, greenhouse, storage building space)
Gem Lake	Permitted Use: R-1, R-2, R-3, R-4 (Agricultural activities, Truck gardening and other horticultural uses); Permitted use where annexed (Existing Farms); Accessory Use: R-1, R-2, R-3, R-4 (Plant and flower conservatories); Permitted Use: FW (Farming, gardens, etc.) *Garden overlay district: superimposed as overlay on any zoning district (land area must be >= 10 acres); permits temporary land use (community and market gardens interim use)
Little Canada	Permitted Use: FW (General farming, gardening, etc.)
Maplewood	Permitted Use: All zoning districts (Community and market gardens < 1 acre); Conditional Use: All zoning districts (Community and market gardens > 1 acre); Permitted Use: F (Commercial farming, gardening, greenhouses, or nurseries)
Mounds View	Permitted Use: FW (General farming, gardening, etc.)
New Brighton	Permitted Use: FW (General farming, gardening, etc.); Accessory Use: R-1, R-1A, R-2, R-4 (Conservatories for plants and flowers)

North Oaks	Permitted Accessory Use: RSL, RSM, RMM, RMH, RCM, PRD (Noncommercial greenhouses) Permitted Use: Lakes: Rec. Dev. Lakes, Nat. Env. Lakes (Agricultural; crop land and pasture) Permitted Use: Rivers and Streams: Historic Preservation, Recreation, or Scenic District Uses: Ag, Crop land and pasture, passive parks and historic sites (Ag); RSM/RSL Residential District Uses and PRD High Density Uses: Single residential (Ag); Industrial, Commercial, and Commercial Service District Uses: Commercial, Commercial Planned Development, Public, Semi-Public, Parks and historic sites, forest management, residential (Ag) Conditional Use: Rivers and Streams: Historic Preservation, Recreation, or Scenic District Uses: Forest management, sensitive resource management, active parks (Ag); RSM/RSL Residential District Uses: Parks and historic sites, forest management (Ag); PRD High Density Uses: Planned residential developments, parks and historic sites, attached dwelling, forest management (Ag)
North St. Paul	Interim Use: R-1, R-2, R-3, MU-1, MU-2, MU-3 (Community Garden); Permitted Use: FW (Residential Gardens)
Roseville	Permitted Use: I [subject to standards] (Garden, Public or Community); Permitted Use: PR [Not subject to standards] (Gardens, public or community (flower or vegetable)); Temporary Uses: LDR-1, LDR-2, MDR, HDR-1, HDR-2 (Seasonal garden structure; Private garden, community garden); Permitted Use: FW (General farming, gardening, etc.; Residential gardens);
Shoreview	Permitted Use: FW (Outdoor plant nurseries and horticulture, gardens); Conditional Use: I (Urban container farming -- hydroponics only as secondary use)
Spring Lake Park	Permitted Use: Floodplain District (Gardens, Agricultural uses such as general farming, pasture, grazing, forestry, sod farming, and wild crop harvesting. Farm fences); Permitted Use: C-2 (Greenhouses, nurseries)
St. Anthony	Accessory Use: R-1, R-1A, R-2, R-3, R-4 (Garden) Accessory Use: R-1, R-2, R-3, R-4 (Private nonprofit conservatories for plants and flowers)
St. Paul	Permitted or conditional use in: RL, R1-R4, RT1, RT2, RM1, RM2, RM3, T1, T2, T3, T4, OS, B1, BC, B2, B3, B4, B5, IT, I1, I2, F1, F2, F3, F4, F5, F6 (Agriculture) *Standards dependent on area of lot (< 1 acre, >1 acre)
Vadnais Heights	Permitted Use: R-1, R-2, R-3 (Crop or truck farming) Permitted Use: Floodway, Flood Fringe (Gardening, agriculture, general farming) Permitted Use: R-1, R-2, R-3, C-2, C-2A, C-3, Waterworks (Greenhouse) Accessory Use: C-1 (Greenhouse)
White Bear Lake	Permitted Use: R-1S, R-2, R-3, R-4, R-5, R-6, R-7, R-B, R-MH, PZ-R, O (Farming and agricultural related buildings and structures); Permitted Use: W (Grazing, farming, nurseries, gardening, harvesting of crops) *Farming and agricultural use for larger-scale agriculture (ag <10 acres considered "hobby farm")
White Bear Township	Permitted Use: R-1 (Agriculture, must be >2 acres not including R-1 minimum lot area); Permitted Use: R-1 (Production/storage of crops)

District	Zoning: Accessory Structures
Arden Hills	Membrane Structures: Permitted: B-1, B-2, B-3, B-4, NB, GB, CC, I-1, I-2, and I-Flex subject to Site Plan Review and City Council approval Temporary Accessory Structures (including membrane structures) may be in place for up to 6 months in B-1, B-2, B-3, B-4, NB, GB, CC, I-1, I-2, and I-Flex districts with approved permit from

	Building Official Accessory Structures: Permitted: R-1, R-2, R-3 (no more than 2 per lot)
Blaine	No accessory building or use shall be constructed or use developed on a lot prior to obtaining a building permit for the principal building or use to which it is accessory. All accessory buildings and uses shall comply with the regulations of the zoning district in which they are located
Falcon Heights	Permitted Accessory Use: R-1, R-2, R-3, B-1, B-2, R-4, R-5M *Urban farm PUD district - Accessory Use: Seasonal hoop houses for growing vegetables
Gem Lake	Conditional Use: R-3, R-4 (Agricultural structures) *Garden overlay district: Accessory uses: hoop houses, cold frames, planting beds, compost bins, rain barrels, similar structures used to facilitate plant growth
Little Canada	Permitted Accessory Use: R-1, R-2, R-3, R-4, R-C (Greenhouses); Permitted Accessory Use: R-1, R-2, R-3, R-4, R-C, C-1, C-2, I-1, I-2 (Storage buildings)
Maplewood	----
Mounds View	Accessory Use: R-1 (Tool houses and sheds, green houses)
New Brighton	Accessory Use: R-1, R-1A, R-2, R-4 (Private storage buildings)
North Oaks	Accessory Use: RSL, RSM, RMM, RMH, RCM, PRD (Small tool houses, sheds in same style as principal)
North St. Paul	Permitted Use: R-1, R-2, R-3, MU-3 (Accessory buildings and structures)
Roseville	Permitted Use: LDR-1, LDR-2, MDR, HDR-1, HDR-2 (garden shed, chicken coop)
Shoreview	Permitted Use: R1 (Accessory structures; not allowed in front yard except for riparian lot); Permitted Use: R4 (Accessory structures if approved in development plan); Permitted Use: C1A, C1, C2, I (Accessory structures)
Spring Lake Park	Accessory Use: R-1, R-2, R-3 (Tool house, shed, and similar storage)
St. Anthony	Accessory Use: R-1, R-1A, R-2, R-3, R-4 (Accessory buildings)
St. Paul	Permitted use in: IT, I1, I2, Conditional use in: B3, F4, F5, F6 (Greenhouse) Permitted in: RL, R1-R4, RT1, RT2, RM1, RM2, RM3, T1, T2, T3, T4, OS, B1, BC, B2, B3, B4, B5, IT, I1, I2, F1, F2, F3, F4, F5, F6 (Accessory structure)
Vadnais Heights	Accessory Use: R-1, R-2, R-3, Flood fringe (Accessory structures up to 200 sqft for storage of domestic supplies, <3 structures per lot)
White Bear Lake	Accessory Use: R-1S, R-2, R-3, R-4, R-5, R-6, R-7, R-B, R-MH, PZ-R (Noncommercial greenhouses and conservatories; Tool houses, sheds, buildings for storage)

District	Zoning: Poultry/Livestock
Arden Hills	----
Blaine	----
Falcon Heights	Permitted Accessory Use: R-1, R-2, R-3 (Chickens)

Gem Lake	Conditional Use: R-3 (Harboring/housing of ag animals on lots > 1 acre); Prohibited: All zoning districts? (Harboring/housing of ag animals on lots < 1 acre) *Garden overlay district: Animal husbandry prohibited
Little Canada	Prohibited: All zoning districts
Maplewood	Conditional Use: F (Livestock raising and handling); Permit required: All zoning districts (Poultry, goats and sheep)
Mounds View	Permitted Use: R-1 (Chickens or ducks, honeybees)
New Brighton	----
North Oaks	----
North St. Paul	----
Roseville	----
Shoreview	Permitted Use: R1 (Keeping of <4 chickens and honeybee colonies on properties <2 acres with license); Permitted Use: R1 (Keeping of non-domestic animals if property >2 acres with license, may require conditional use permit)
Spring Lake Park	Considered nuisance in all zoning districts
St. Anthony	----
St. Paul	Permitted in districts with permit, if meets standards
Vadnais Heights	Accessory Use: R-1, R-2, R-3 (Chicken keeping)
White Bear Lake	Permitted or Conditional Use: R-1S, R-2 (Hens); Permitted or Conditional Use: R-1S, R-2 (Bees)
White Bear Township	Permitted Use: R-1 (Raising and keeping of livestock if >2 acres of fenced property; ratio of livestock shall not exceed 4 animal units per 2 acres); Permitted Use: R-1 (Chickens on lots <2 acres if 4 or fewer and meets standards)

District	Zoning: Compost
Arden Hills	----
Blaine	Composting is permitted only in residential properties up to four dwelling units
Falcon Heights	Permitted Accessory Use: R-1, R-2, R-3, R-4, R-5M (Compost area or structure)
Gem Lake	----
Little Canada	----
Maplewood	Permitted Use: Residential Districts (Compost)
Mounds View	----
New Brighton	----
North Oaks	----
North St. Paul	Permitted Use: R-1, R-2, R-3 (Composting)
Roseville	Permitted Use: R-1?
Shoreview	----

Spring Lake Park	Permitted Use: R-1, R-2, R-3 (Prohibited in any other zoning district)
St. Anthony	----
St. Paul	Composting permitted by residents on their own property if meet standards
Vadnais Heights	----
White Bear Lake	----
White Bear Township	Conditional Use: O-S (Composting Sites)

District	Zoning: Sales
Arden Hills	Accessory Use: B-2, B-3, B-4, NB, GB (Outdoor Displays and Sales)
Blaine	----
Falcon Heights	Interim Use: B-2, R-5M (Farmers' Market)
Gem Lake	Permitted Use: R-1, R-2, R-3, R-4 (Only products produced on premises offered for sale)
Little Canada	Allowed Temporary Use: Farmers' Market; Seasonal Agricultural/Horticultural Sales
Maplewood	Permitted Use: F (Stands for sale of ag products produced on premises)
Mounds View	----
New Brighton	Special Permit Use: R-1, R-1A, R-2, R-3A, R-3B, R-4 (Farmers' Markets)
North Oaks	----
North St. Paul	Permitted Use: MU-1, MU-2, MU-3 (Farmers' Markets)
Roseville	----
Shoreview	Permitted Use: Residential Districts (Sale of produce with consent of property owner)
Spring Lake Park	----
St. Anthony	----
St. Paul	Permitted or conditional use in: RL, R1-R4, RT1, RT2, RM1, RM2, RM3, T1, T2, T3, T4, OS, B1, BC, B2, B3, B4, B5, IT, I1, I2 (Farmers Market)
Vadnais Heights	Accessory Use: R-1, R-2, R-3 (Sale of products)
White Bear Lake	----
White Bear Township	----

District	Zoning: Signs
Arden Hills	Allowed without permit: Wall: R1/R2 (8 sqft), R3/R4 (20 sqft); Freestanding: R1/R2 (6 sqft), R3/R4 (32 sqft)
Blaine	----
Falcon Heights	Allowed without permit: R-1, R-2, R-3, R-4, R-5M (not exceeding 10ft, at least 3 ft from property

	line)
Gem Lake	Allowed without permit: Wall signs not visible from right-of-way: RE, RX, RO, RS, G, OS/R (2 sqft of sign area for each lineal foot of building); Freestanding signs: RE, RX, RO, RS, G, OS/R (maximum 10 sqft, up to 6 ft height)
Little Canada	Allowed without permit: Directional/Information Signs: All zoning districts (> 4 sqft requires City Council approval)
Maplewood	Permitted: all zoning districts: noncommercial opinion signs (< 16 sqft, < 6 ft height)
Mounds View	Allowed without a permit: all zoning districts: any sign less than 8 sqft; non-commercial signs (< 9 sqft); R-1, R-2, R-3, R-4: incidental signs (1 sqft)
New Brighton	Allowed without a permit: all zoning districts: all signs (<4 sqft, <4 ft height, 7 ft setback from street); R-1, R-1A, R-2, R-3A, R-3B, R-4: non-commercial signs (<6 sqft, <4 ft height, 7 ft setback from street, 5 ft away from privately owned property)
North Oaks	Conditional use: RSL, RSM, RMM, RMH: non-neon signs (height doesn't exceed height of structure sign permanently affixed to); Accessory use: R: non-illuminated signs (<2 sqft)
North St. Paul	Allowed without a permit: all zoning districts: murals; With a permit: R-2, freestanding and wall signs (<32 sqft); R-3, MU-1, MU-2, MU-3: freestanding and wall signs (<60 sqft)
Roseville	Allowed without a permit: all zoning districts: signs erected by a public agency in and/or above or overhanging a public right-of-way; window signs (affixed to or painted on windows or placed within 36 inches of window to be viewed from exterior <25% of total window area)
Shoreview	Permitted: R2, R3, T: wall signs: (<20 sqft)
Spring Lake Park	Permitted: R-1, R-2, R-3: one non-commercial sign (< 6 sqft)
St. Anthony	Allowed without a permit: R-1, R-1A, R-2: one non-commercial sign (< 6 sqft per surface, total 12 sqft all sign area, 10 ft from lot line)
St. Paul	Allowed without a permit: signs 6 sqft or less in area | Permitted: RL, R1, R2, R3, R4, RT1, RT2, RM1, RM2, RM3: freestanding sign (< 4 ft height, at least 2 inches from property line); For parks, community centers, religious, civic, educational or philanthropic institutions, one identification sign (< 30 sqft)
Vadnais Heights	Permitted: C-1, C-1A: one freestanding sign (< 50 sqft, < 16 ft height); murals; wall signs (< roof height, < 10% wall area)
White Bear Lake	Allowed without permit: all zoning districts: signs (< 0.5 sqft); individuals signs (> 100' from curb; < 6' in height, 3 sqft in size, letters/numbers <6"; < 6' in height, 6 sqft in size, letters/numbers < 3" in height); signs affixed on city owned property
White Bear Township	Permitted: R-1, R-2, R-3: one sign per front lot (<10 ft from ground level, signs > 1.5 sqft must be 10 ft from lot line); OS (< 32 sqft)

Appendix P: Policy memos for each Ramsey County municipality

Section 2.2.2 of the Report refers to these following individual policy memos, and provides more detail on how policies were reviewed and summarized. For reference, we repeat some of the overview here, along with the section on how to use the policy memo. These memos provide a summary of:

1. known activities related to urban agriculture in the municipality – like community gardens, farmers' markets, and compost collection sites;
2. where urban agriculture is permitted to occur based on zoning code; and
3. city programs or future plans that incorporate urban agriculture.

For more detailed information, there is a background section that contains two tables, one that displays the municipality's policies related to urban agriculture activities, and one that describes the zoning districts in which urban agriculture is allowed. Any background information helpful for context is included below the tables. Once policy conditions are established, there are two sections, one that lists challenges, and one that lists opportunities related to urban agriculture in the municipality. Finally, there is an "Attachments" section where people who would like to learn more can find links to the resources that we consulted, like city code and community garden and farmers' market websites.

How to Use Policy Memos

"Urban Agriculture Policy Table" category descriptions - each contains policy related to:	
Compost	Collection of organic material to be decomposed and reused to help fertilize soil
Water Access	Accessing water for agriculture: 1) during water conservation periods, 2) from hydrants, and 3) considering timing of water supply
Fowl/Livestock	Keeping of fowl like chickens, ducks, turkeys; keeping of livestock
Bees	Keeping of bees
Sale of Products	Sale of products grown or produced by seller
Land Disturbance	Alteration of land surface, including (or not including) gardening, tilling, etc.
Fences	Barriers enclosing a yard or garden
Equipment Storage	Storing equipment or tools in an enclosed structure or screened area
Right-of-way	Growing plants in a right-of-way (for example, a boulevard)
Vegetation Regulation	How the city expects people to interact with public vegetation
UA as Nuisance	How urban agriculture activities may be (unfairly) considered a public nuisance affecting health or peace and safety

"Urban Agriculture Zoning Table" category descriptions - each contains zoning code related to:	
Farming/Gardening	Growing produce, including fruits, vegetables, trees, plants, flowers and other similar crops
Accessory Structures	Structures incidental to agricultural activities like storage sheds, greenhouses, and hoop houses
Sale of Products	Sale of products grown or produced by seller
Fowl/Livestock	Keeping of fowl, livestock, or bees
Compost	Collection of organic material to be decomposed and reused to help fertilize soil

The table below provides a very general overview of the tendencies in the policies we reviewed. We have arranged them in this format to make it easiest for municipal entities to see where there may be room for improvement in their relevant policies (recognizing that conditions vary across municipalities). If there are not pressing reasons for the more restrictive policies – or if policies currently prohibiting or inhibiting urban food cultivation could be modified to work around the pressures that motivated the policies in the first place – this would help move more districts toward supporting urban agriculture (see also Varghese and Hansen-Kuhn 2013, Place et al. 2022).

Table: Policy Options for Supporting Urban Agriculture (see category description table above)				
Policy target	Prohibitive: policy prohibits an activity associated with urban agriculture, policy addressing activity does not exist	Inhibitive: policy allows some urban agriculture activity, but could be adjusted to be more supportive	Sufficiently supportive: policy sufficiently supports urban agriculture	Proactively supportive: policy creates infrastructure for urban agriculture expansion and multifunctional benefits
Compost	Does not allow any composting.	Requires strict enclosure and setback standards that may reduce the amount of compost, limiting available soil fertility source.	Allows open composting with attention to best practices but without inhibitive standards.	Incentivizes diversion of compostable materials to provide high-quality soil amendments and provides support and technical assistance for testing compost quality.

Water Access	Does not allow residents to access stop boxes, hydrants, or other water hookups without offering alternative sources of water for growing food. During water shortages, water use for food cultivation is prohibited as a result of being grouped with use for lawn watering.	Makes procedures to access water hookups (i.e. to hydrants) costly or time consuming, and provides limited support for utilizing water utilities and infrastructure.	Provides support for obtaining water hookup permits, and facilitates use of existing water utilities and infrastructure. During water shortages, watering for food cultivation is exempt from water use restrictions.	Subsidizes water when used for agriculture projects with community benefits and supports water testing when needed. Incentivizes water conservation, soil water holding capacity building (building soil organic matter), and water quality improvements (i.e. phosphorus uptake).
Fowl/ Livestock	Does not allow keeping fowl or livestock.	Requires following arduous licensing / permitting procedures or unclear processes to keep fowl or livestock.	Has licensing / permitting processes and standards for keeping fowl and livestock that are affordable and achievable.	Provides support for obtaining licenses / permits, meeting standards, and accessing relevant resources, enabling the safe and considerate keeping of fowl or livestock.
Bees	Does not allow keeping bees.	Requires following arduous licensing / permitting / certification procedures or unclear processes to keep bees.	Has licensing / permitting / certification processes and standards for keeping bees that are affordable and achievable.	Provides support for obtaining licenses / permits / certifications, meeting standards, and accessing relevant resources, enabling the safe and considerate keeping of bees.
Sale of Products	Does not allow produce or product sales at any time of the year.	Makes sales of produce or products occur only a few times per year by owners of the parcel or people who grew products on that specific parcel.	Allows regular sales of produce on parcels by all involved growers no matter ownership status or where the products were grown.	Supports roadside stands (in compliance with cottage rules) and offers clear guidance for compliance with traffic ordinances.
Land Disturbance	Does not allow tilling, planting, or harvesting.	Requires people tilling, planting, or harvesting to obtain land disturbance licenses and permits.	Allows tilling, planting, and harvesting for food cultivation without obtaining land disturbance licenses and permits.	Incentivizes agroecological methods for restoring soil quality in urban areas and supports access to soil remediation programs (e.g. via EPA).

Fences	Does not allow fences of certain types and heights that may be used for urban food cultivation.	Enforces maximum material and height regulations, limiting grower protection of plants. Requires arduous processes for meeting fence standards.	Outlines how fences can be appropriate for food cultivation while also meeting safety / visibility regulations.	Proactively evaluates fence and involves inspectors at the outset to ensure fence is meeting both food cultivator needs and city code. Supports navigating permitting and building processes.
Equipment Storage	Does not allow outdoor equipment storage by considering it a nuisance or does not allow enclosures where equipment can be stored.	Requires equipment to be stored in enclosed spaces (for example, sheds that must meet accessory structure standards).	Allows equipment to be stored outdoors. Standards for accessory structures for storing equipment are amenable to urban food cultivation (for example, allowing accessory structures on lots without a primary structure).	Provides support for alternative equipment storage and access strategies (for example, tool libraries). Supports construction and use of accessory structures like sheds and greenhouses.
Right-of-way	Does not allow any plantings in any right-of-way.	Establishes a short list of plants or trees (of specific type and height) that may be planted and maintained in approved rights-of-way.	Allows a broad variety of plants and trees to be planted and maintained in most rights-of-way.	Supports proactive negotiation of right-of-way arrangements, for example, on public utility land, and with supports from relevant programs (such as curb cut and native planting programs).
Vegetation Regulation	Does not allow residents to interact with public vegetation, justified by the intent to protect public property from damage.	Limits interactions with vegetation in public spaces to specific areas and to planting / harvesting only plants maintained by specific food cultivators themselves, or in specific zones.	Allows meaningful interactions with public vegetation (such as fruit trees, medicinal plants, and forage crops) in all spaces, including appropriate harvesting by all residents.	Incentivizes agroecological methods for maintaining and restoring ecological integrity and biodiversity conservation/habitat; supports public education regarding appropriate stewardship and rehabilitation of sites affected by toxins.
UA as Nuisance	Does not allow many harmless activities related to urban food cultivation, justified by the intent to maintain public health or peace.	Limits urban food cultivation through standards meant to regulate other activities that may be considered a nuisance (for example, regulations about rank growth).	Evaluates urban food cultivation activities more loosely in relation to nuisance standards.	Values urban food cultivation's community benefits and therefore, related activities done considerately are exempt from nuisance regulations.

Arden Hills: Mechanisms Facilitating and Discouraging Urban Agriculture

Valentine Cadieux, Kara Komoto, Kieran Morris
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Purpose: This memo provides an overview of the main mechanisms facilitating and discouraging food cultivation in Arden Hills policies and practices.

KEY POINTS BASED ON A 2022 REVIEW:

- The City of Arden Hills explicitly allows residents to practice urban agriculture through a city community garden and gardens in the floodway zoning district. Residents also may keep chickens if they obtain a two-year license. Arden Hills has a yard waste collection site operated by Ramsey County where residents can drop off food scraps and yard and garden waste, and pick up wood mulch and compost.
- Where and how urban agriculture can be practiced in Arden Hills is unclear. Urban agriculture is not a land use addressed in the zoning code outside of farming in the floodway district. It seems as though residential gardens would be permitted–especially considering that membrane structures like hoop houses are allowed in residential districts–however, regulations should be more transparent.
- The City of Arden Hills is actively considering devoting more land to community gardens through park and open space acquisitions in its comprehensive plan. Urban agriculture could help the city meet some of its sustainability goals, including increasing access to local foods, walkable environments, and landscaping with more trees and vegetation.

BACKGROUND:

Arden Hills Urban Agriculture Policy Table			
Compost	**Water Access**	**Fowl/Livestock**	**Bees**
Waste must be in enclosed containers	1) Agricultural uses are exempt from nonessential water use prohibition during water emergencies 2) Hydrant use requires deposit and rental fees 3) Turning on or off the water supply requires city administration permission	Keeping of chickens is allowed with a license (2 year)	

Sale of Products	Land Disturbance	Fences	Equipment Storage
Selling of produce is allowed without a permit/license by those who cultivated it	Gardening, tilling, planting, or harvesting are not considered land disturbance activities and are permitted without a permit		
Right-of-way	**Vegetation Regulation**	**UA as Nuisance**	
Gardens are allowed in rights-of-way without a permit	Disturbing public flowers, trees, shrubs, and plants is prohibited. Planting requires permission from city administration	Considered a nuisance: 1) Growths of vegetation greater than 8”	

Arden Hills Urban Agriculture Zoning Table	
Farming/Gardening	
General farming, pasture, grazing, outdoor plant nurseries, horticulture, truck farming, forestry, sod farming, wild crop harvesting: Permitted use in floodway district	
Accessory Structures	**Sale of Products**
Accessory Structures: Permitted use in the single family residential district (R-1), single & two family residential district (R-2), and townhouse & low density multiple dwelling district (R-3) [no more than 2 per lot] **Membrane Structures (air-supported, air-inflated, membrane covered cable, or membrane covered frame; e.g. hoop house)**: Permitted use in all business districts (B-1, B-2, B-3, B-4, NB, GB), the Civil Center District (CC), Industrial Districts (I-1, I-2), and the I-Flex district subject to Site Plan Review and City Council approval **Temporary Accessory Structures** (including membrane structures): Permitted use (for up to 6 months) in all business districts (B-1, B-2, B-3, B-4, NB, GB), the Civil Center District (CC), Industrial Districts (I-1, I-2), and the I-Flex district with approved permit from Building Official	**Outdoor displays and sales**: Accessory use in the general business district (B-2), service business district (B-3), retail business district (B-4), neighborhood business district (NB), and gateway business district (GB)
Fowl/Livestock	**Compost**

- Arden Hills Community Garden
    - Xcel Energy gave the City of Arden Hills a temporary land use permit on Old Highway 10 to create a community garden
    - The garden contains 15 plots of 20’x20’, which cost $55/year
    - Priority for plots is given to previous lessees until April 4th, when they are distributed on a first-come, first-served basis

CHALLENGES/BARRIERS:

- There is little in the city code about urban agriculture, making it unclear what is allowed.
- Keeping of animals is limited to chickens, which requires an arduous and costly approval process.
- Public nuisance regulations may restrict urban agriculture activities, for example, composting and the keeping of animals.
- Prohibiting people from disturbing public trees and vegetation prevents residents from participating in and benefiting from collective food production in public places like city parks.
- Accessing water outside of water turn on and off dates requires getting permission which may restrict season extension, and accessing hydrants in the absence of other water sources is costly.

OPPORTUNITIES:

- More clearly address urban agriculture in the city code by explicitly stating how different forms of urban agriculture are allowed in various zoning districts (add gardens, farming, keeping of animals to use table in zoning code).
- Make keeping chickens more accessible by decreasing license requirements and fees. Expand the types of animals that residents can have by creating standards for keeping pigs, bees, etc.
- Be more permissive of both landscapes other than grass lawn and composting in the city, as long as they do not impact the safety and well being of residents.
- Adjust public vegetation regulations to facilitate collective food production and consumption in public spaces while still protecting other vegetation and structures.
- Be more flexible with water turn on and off dates to extend the growing season and decrease barriers to water access through lower hydrant deposit fees and rental charges.
- Continue allowing people to sell their own produce, plant in rights-of-way, compost in residential areas, and grow food without obtaining a land disturbance permit.
- Ensure that the number of public garden plots meets demand. Add more plots in the existing community garden and create opportunities to grow food in city parks or other public spaces for little/no cost to residents.

ATTACHMENTS:

- Arden Hills City Code
- Find your zoning district: Zoning Map
- Contact for zoning questions: Planning & Zoning

Blaine: Mechanisms Facilitating and Discouraging Urban Agriculture

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Purpose: This memo provides an overview of the main mechanisms facilitating and discouraging food cultivation in Blaine policies and practices.

KEY POINTS BASED ON A 2022 REVIEW:

- Despite being a municipality with quite a bit of open green space, there is little support and few policies in place to support any form of urban growing operation. The recognized agricultural uses noted through the city's zoning process require many acres of space to be considered Agricultural or Farm Residential land, which could discourage those wishing to start a growing site within more densely populated areas of the city.
- There are two community gardens within the municipality, detailed below, however they are relatively small compared to the potentially available area. Support for some form of community gardens or farms on residentially-zoned lots, or expanding such land uses on public lots, would work to enable collective and long-term stewardship to fully serve Blaine residents, especially those who do not own appropriate land.

BACKGROUND:

Blaine Urban Agriculture Policy Table			
Compost	**Water Access**	**Fowl/Livestock**	**Bees**
Permitted in RE areas of up to four dwelling units. Must be conducted in a container less than 100 cubic feet large, and five feet high. Must only contain yard waste + straw, fruit and	Irrigation is a prohibited water use within water conservation standards during critical drought situations, this includes 'gardens,' but not Agriculture.	Fences to control livestock adjacent to single family zoning districts, excluding AG and FR, shall have a minimum setback of one hundred (100) feet. All chicken operations must be registered by the property owner	Listed among animals considered livestock. Hives can be burned if diseased.

vegetable scraps, coffee grounds, egg shells generated from the site on which the composting is located.		with the City prior to placement. The City Council will establish a fee for registration.	
Sale of Products	**Land Disturbance**	**Fences**	**Equipment Storage**
	Buffer means land that is used to protect adjacent lands and waters from development and more intensive land uses. The land is kept in a natural state of trees, shrubs, and low ground cover and understory of plants and functions to filter runoff, control sediment and nutrient movement, and protect fish and wildlife habitat. In areas of agricultural use, the land may be used for less intensive agricultural purposes provided its function as a buffer remains intact.	A fence located on a property zoned FR or AG and constructed to contain livestock and located a minimum of 300 feet from any residentially zoned property.	
Right-of-way	**Vegetation Regulation**	**UA as Nuisance**	
	When the owner, lessee or occupant of any land within the city permits a nuisance to exist, the city manager or authorized representative, shall cause to be served a notice in writing upon the owner, lessee, or occupant if other than the owner, stating specific instructions and methods when and how the nuisance is to be controlled or eradicated.	No person shall engage in the following activities between the hours of 10:00 p.m. and 7:00 a.m. daily: Operation of tools and domestic maintenance equipment powered by external air compressors or internal combustion engines including, but not limited to, use of lawn mowers, hedge clippers, chain saws, mulchers, garden tillers, edgers, or other similar domestic power maintenance equipment.	

<table>
<tr><th colspan="2">Blaine Urban Agriculture Zoning Table</th></tr>
<tr><th colspan="2">Farming/Gardening</th></tr>
<tr><td colspan="2">AG District: Minimum of 40 acres
FR District: Minimum of 10 acres
Senior Housing: Two hundred fifty (250) square feet per unit, plus on-site sidewalk system with sitting areas. This area shall not include setback area requirements for parking lots. Active open spaces (i.e., game areas, garden plots, etc.) shall be no less than fifty (50) feet in any direction, unless integrated with primary use areas of the site and having suitable access to residents.</td></tr>
<tr><th>Accessory Structures</th><th>Sale of Products</th></tr>
<tr><td>Accessory structures: No accessory building or use shall be constructed or use developed on a lot prior to obtaining a building permit for the principal building or use to which it is accessory.

All accessory buildings and uses shall comply with the regulations of the zoning district in which they are located.</td><td></td></tr>
<tr><th>Fowl/Livestock</th><th>Compost</th></tr>
<tr><td></td><td>Composting is permitted only in residential properties up to four dwelling units</td></tr>
</table>

- Blaine has two community gardens, a government-supported one near City Hall with 56 plots, and the services available to prepare the soil for planting, stake each plot, and make water accessible. There is also a growing site facilitated by Chain of Lakes Church, with 32 plots, however the vacant land currently being used to house it is a prospective building site for another church. As a municipality with a population of sixty five thousand, it would be highly beneficial to provide further growing sites, or the policies and resources for residents to create their own within non-designated zones.

CHALLENGES/BARRIERS:

- Selling produce may require a license, which is often not a requirement in other districts and may serve as a barrier to growers with limited resources and time.
- Public nuisance regulations may restrict urban agriculture activities, for example, composting, keeping livestock, and planting in particular areas of a yard.
- The space and infrastructure necessary to make a composting site legal could serve as a barrier to smaller growing operations or those with limited resources.
- During a 'critical drought' situation, water can be turned off to gardening operations, which could severely hamper any growing site if no contingency is put in place.

OPPORTUNITIES:

- Incorporate urban agriculture into public/institutional open spaces, for example at a school, city parks, nature preserves, and outdoor recreation areas. Furthermore, allow community gardens where anyone can grow food on private land as a permanent use.
- Develop standards for fences that will allow growers to construct garden fences without obtaining a permit, or make the process of obtaining a permit more straightforward and less costly.
- In keeping with zoning policy, encourage the creation of small, publicly available gardens within designated buffer zones in more residential areas.

ATTACHMENTS:

- Blaine City Code
- Find your zoning district: View current zoning map
- Contact for zoning questions: Zoning Information | Blaine, MN Planning and Zoning

Falcon Heights: Mechanisms Facilitating and Discouraging Urban Agriculture

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Purpose: This memo provides an overview of the main mechanisms facilitating and discouraging food land access in Falcon Heights city policies and practices.

KEY POINTS BASED ON A 2022 REVIEW:

- Falcon Heights city code allows for residents to practice urban agriculture through residential gardens, a city community garden, and as part of planned unit developments. Falcon Heights has a food scraps collection site operated by Ramsey County where residents can bring their food scraps, which will be made into compost.
- Falcon Heights provides some opportunity for urban agriculture, but space for growing food is limited; zoning limits food production on residential property by only allowing the landowners to grow food there. This prevents those who do not own or rent land suitable for food production from being able to grow food consistently and effectively.
- To meet goals of providing land for community food production where needed, amendments to the new ordinance are needed to limit restrictions on food production. For example, these might allow some form of community gardens or farms on residentially-zoned lots or expanding such land uses on public lots, enabling collective and long-term stewardship to fully serve Falcon Heights residents, especially those who do not own appropriate land.

BACKGROUND

Falcon Heights Urban Agriculture Policy Table			
Compost	**Water Access**	**Fowl/Livestock**	**Bees**
Waste must be in enclosed containers		Keeping of chickens allowed with a permit	Keeping of bees allowed with a permit
Sale of Products	**Land Disturbance**	**Fences**	**Equipment Storage**
Sale of goods requires obtaining a license		Fences may be allowed in any zoning district, but require a permit and are subject to standards	Garden equipment and materials do not have to be stored in a building or screened if used on

			premises
Right-of-way	**Vegetation Regulation**	**UA as Nuisance**	
Gardens are allowed in rights-of-way without a permit	No person shall damage, cut, trim, carve, kill or injure any tree or plant on public property	Considered a nuisance: 1) Vegetation that obstructs view of traffic 2) Rank growths of vegetation	

Falcon Heights Urban Agriculture Zoning Table	
Farming/Gardening	
Edible landscape areas and residential gardens: Accessory use in all residential districts (R-1, R-2, R-3, R-4, R-5M), and B-1 limited business district **Urban farming**: Permitted use in urban farm planned unit development (PUD) district (includes parking, retail, office/training/kitchen, distribution/warehouse, greenhouse, storage building space)	
Accessory Structures	**Sale of Products**
Accessory structures: Permitted accessory use in all residential districts (R-1, R-2, R-3, R-4, R-5M), and the B-1 and B-2 limited business districts **Seasonal hoop houses for growing vegetables**: Accessory use in urban farm PUD district	**Farmers' Market**: Interim use in the B-2 limited business district, and the mixed use high density residential district (R-5M)
Fowl/Livestock	**Compost**
Chickens and Beekeeping: Permitted accessory use in the one-family residential district (R-1), one- and two-family residential district (R-2), and medium density multiple-family residential district-apartment buildings district (R-3)	**Compost area or structure**: Permitted accessory use in all residential districts (R-1, R-2, R-3, R-4, R-5M)

- Falcon Heights has a strong history of horticulture and market gardening, still evident in the urban form of several neighborhoods.
- Recent controversy over front yard vegetable gardens brought attention to Falcon Heights:
    - Some residents complained to city officials when in spring 2020--during the COVID-19 pandemic--Quentin Nguyen, a Southeast Asian immigrant and resident of Falcon Heights, began creating a front yard vegetable garden for use by family and neighbors.
    - On May 13, 2020, Falcon Heights adopted interim ordinance 20-04, prohibiting front-yard vegetable gardens while city staff studied gardens' health, safety, and welfare impacts on city residents to establish guidelines.
    - The new ordinance 20-07 was drafted by Environment and Planning Commissions and adopted on December 9, 2020.

- Ordinance No. 20-07
    - The new ordinance allows edible landscaping in backyards and front yards in residentially-zoned property, but only by the property owners or residents of that lot. New community gardens are not allowed within residential properties, although existing community gardens are not affected. Aside from the state-owned land comprising the University of Minnesota and Fairgrounds, the majority of the land in Falcon Heights is residentially-zoned.
    - Retail sales of produce from edible landscaping activities are not allowed on the property. It is notable that other nearby municipalities who have recently amended city codes have tended to move toward being more permissive about farm stands for produce grown on site, not less, regulating these via a certain number of days per year they can operate.
    - Officially cited concerns about the expansion of food production appear to be largely about traffic management.
- Falcon Heights Community Garden
    - City has one community garden with 38 plots in the Community Park.
    - Priority has been historically given to returning gardeners, then on a first come, first served basis with preference for 1) Falcon Heights apartment and townhome residents; 2) Other Falcon Heights Residents; 3) Non-Residents of Falcon Heights. Public discussion during the introduction of Ordinance No. 20-07 suggested a shift to prioritize renters by reducing priority to longer-term gardeners, with acknowledgement that this reduces capacity for long-term soil stewardship.
    - This policy has been considered for equity, recognizing that existing supply may not meet needs of new gardeners.

CHALLENGES/BARRIERS:

- There is limited public space for people to grow food if they do not have a private yard, and people are not permitted to cultivate food on lots that they do not own.
- Keeping of animals is limited to chickens and bees, which are only allowed in specific zoning districts and requires obtaining a permit.
- Selling produce may require a license, which is often not a requirement in other districts and may serve as a barrier to growers with limited resources and time.
- Public nuisance regulations may restrict urban agriculture activities, for example, composting, keeping livestock, and planting in particular areas of a yard.
- Prohibiting people from disturbing vegetation at parks may set a precedent that prevents residents from participating in and benefiting from collective food production in other public places.
- Building fences less than seven feet requires obtaining a permit, while building a fence greater than seven feet requires an additional building permit, which may be confusing to growers.

OPPORTUNITIES:

- Incorporate urban agriculture into public/institutional open spaces, for example at a school, city parks, nature preserves, and outdoor recreation areas. Furthermore, allow community gardens where anyone can grow food on private land as a permanent use.
- Alter code to allow the keeping of chickens and bees in more zoning districts and make standards and process of getting a permit to keep animals less arduous and costly. Expand the code to allow pigs, ducks, turkeys, etc.
- Allow cultivators to sell their produce without obtaining a license or permit.
- Urban agriculture requires infrastructure and plants that may not be common in the city and may not meet public nuisance regulations, but oftentimes may not have a negative impact on the public. Be sure to consider potential benefits of the infrastructure/plant growth when evaluating these cases. For example, allow composting in the open if it does not create a nuisance.
- Adjust public vegetation regulations to facilitate collective food production and consumption in public spaces while still protecting other vegetation and structures.
- Guide growers who wish to construct garden fences greater than seven feet through the permitting process and provide support to growers for associated fees.
- Continue allowing people to plant in rights-of-way; store equipment outside; and have gardens, chickens, and compost in many zoning districts as an accessory use.

ATTACHMENTS

- Falcon Heights City Code
- Interim Ordinance No. 20-04
- Ordinance No. 20-07
- Beekeeping in Falcon Heights
- Find your zoning district: Zoning Look-Up and Mapping
- Contact for zoning questions: Community Development, Planning, and Zoning

Gem Lake: Mechanisms Facilitating and Discouraging Urban Agriculture

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Purpose: This memo provides an overview of the main mechanisms facilitating and discouraging food cultivation in Gem Lake policies and practices.

KEY POINTS BASED ON A 2022 REVIEW:

- The City of Gem Lake does not appear to have any city-supported urban agriculture on public or private land. Gem Lake permits residents to practice some forms of urban agriculture–like residential gardens–in most zoning districts, however other forms–like the keeping of fowl or livestock–are prohibited in most districts.
- Gem Lake recognizes the value of local food production and allows currently vacant land to be used for urban agriculture through a Garden Overlay District. Despite this, the city has not devoted any land for long-term agricultural use and plans to continue prioritizing residential development. While the Garden Overlay District enables the creation of community and market gardens, these gardens are considered an interim use until the land can be developed.
- Gem Lake acknowledges the benefits of urban agriculture in terms of public health but does not intend to retain it as a long-term land use. Consequently, Gem Lake's comprehensive plan does not include incorporating urban agriculture into the future city landscape.

BACKGROUND:

Gem Lake Urban Agriculture Policy Table			
Compost	**Water Access**	**Fowl/Livestock**	**Bees**
Waste must be kept in enclosed containers except for farms with operational waste material	Hydrant use requires deposit and rental and water use charges	Domestic fowl (chickens, ducks, turkeys, peacocks) are allowed with a license (1 year)	
Sale of Products	**Land Disturbance**	**Fences**	**Equipment Storage**
Selling of produce is allowed without a	Use of land for new and continuing agricultural	Fences to protect gardens are exempt from City review if	

permit/license by those who cultivated it	activities do not constitute land disturbing activity (permit not required for agriculture)	they have a setback of at least 25', are 80% open, and are less than 6' tall	
Right-of-way	**Vegetation Regulation**	**UA as Nuisance**	
To carry out any activity in a right-of-way, permit must be obtained		Considered nuisance: 1) Fences, structures, or plantings >30" in front yard setback on corner lots 2) Accumulations of manure or rubbish 3) Rank growth	

Gem Lake Urban Agriculture Zoning Table	
Farming/Gardening	
Agricultural activities; Truck gardening and other horticultural use: Permitted use in all residential districts (R-1, R-2, R-3, R-4), and the floodway district (FW), and where agricultural operations have been annexed **Plant and flower conservatories**: Accessory use in all residential districts (R-1, R-2, R-3, R-4) **Community and market gardens**: Interim use in Garden Overlay District (may be imposed on any zoning district, but requires land area to be at least 10 acres)	
Accessory Structures	**Sale of Products**
Agricultural structures: Conditional use in low-density residence (R-3) and medium-density residence (R-4) districts **Hoop houses, cold frames, planting beds, compost bins, rain barrels**: Accessory use in Garden Overlay District	**Sale of products produced on premises**: Permitted use in all residential districts (R-1, R-2, R-3, R-4)
Fowl/Livestock	**Compost**
Harboring/housing of agricultural animals: Conditional use in low-density residence (R-3) [lot must be at least 1 acre]; Prohibited on lots less than 1 acre in all zoning districts and in Garden Overlay District	

- Gem Lake Garden Overlay District
    - The Garden Overlay District can be superimposed on any zoning district on land with an area of 10 acres or more
    - The overlay district is meant to allow community and market gardening as an interim use on a parcel until it develops in accordance with the underlying zoning district
    - Accessory structures like hoop houses, cold frames, planting beds, compost bins, rain barrels, and other structures that facilitate plant growth are allowed accessory uses
    - Animal husbandry and aquaculture are prohibited

    - To re-zone as Garden Overlay District, residents must submit an application and renew interim use permits annually. There is no guarantee that growers will be able to access the land perpetually because the Garden Overlay can be terminated if the city approves a zoning application for a use permitted in the underlying zoning district.

CHALLENGES/BARRIERS:

- Gem Lake views urban agriculture as an interim land use, but practicing urban agriculture on the same land for long periods of time is crucial to experiencing urban food cultivation's complete set of benefits. This is a barrier related to the Garden Overlay District, which is temporary and may require growers to leave their land with 6 months of notice to accommodate development.
- The Garden Overlay District application is restrictive (requires 10 acres) and the process of applying for and annually renewing the Garden Overlay District is difficult and requires time and resources.
- Accessory structures are only allowed in some residential districts and it is unclear which districts composting is permitted in.
- Pigeons and domestic fowl are permitted if standards are met and a license is obtained, however the keeping of livestock is not permitted in the city. Obtaining a license requires submitting an application that includes a site plan, demonstration that infrastructure standards will be met, information about the number of birds to be kept on the premises, etc. More details about standards and licensing are in the "Gem Lake Animal Control" link in the attachments.
- Public nuisance regulations may restrict urban agriculture activities, for example, composting, building fences, and planting in particular areas of a yard.
- Requiring a permit for any activity in the right-of-way limits space where people may grow food and counters the Minnesota state statute that permits people to plant in rights-of-way.
- People without yards do not have a space where they can cultivate food.
- Accessing hydrants in the absence of other water sources is costly because it requires a permit, a deposit, and rental and water use charges.

OPPORTUNITIES:

- If Gem Lake considers urban agriculture an important, long-term land use, it will maximize benefits to residents and the environment, and contribute to community goals (maintaining openness of the physical environment; protecting and enhancing the natural environment; providing a safe, healthy, and attractive residential environment).
- Provide residents with resources to aid them in submitting Garden Overlay District applications and consider making the district more flexible to include smaller-scale agriculture (land area that is less than 10 acres).
- Allow accessory structures in all residential districts and address composting more clearly in zoning code.
- Permitting the keeping of livestock and bees can be done without compromising the well-being and safety of residents and the environment. Consider adding standards for keeping animals other than domestic fowl into the code.

- Be lenient when evaluating public nuisances related to urban agriculture and regulating rights-of-way.
- Decrease barriers to water access through lower hydrant deposit fees and rental and water use charges.
- Consider incorporating urban agriculture into public/institutional open spaces, for example at the White Bear Montessori School or the golf course/recreational space.
- Continue allowing people to sell their own produce, build fences to protect their gardens, and garden without obtaining a land disturbance permit.

ATTACHMENTS:

- Gem Lake Ordinances
- Gem Lake Zoning Ordinance (Section 14 - Garden Overlay District, pg. 62)
- Gem Lake Animal Control
- Find your zoning district: City of Gem Lake Zoning Map (link above ordinance list)
- Contact for zoning questions: Zoning , Subdivision and other Land Use Matters

Little Canada: Mechanisms Facilitating and Discouraging Urban Agriculture

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Purpose: This memo provides an overview of the main mechanisms facilitating and discouraging food cultivation in Little Canada, MN policies and practices.

KEY POINTS BASED ON A 2022 REVIEW:

- The City of Little Canada explicitly allows residents to grow food in the floodway district and greenhouses in residential districts, although the keeping of fowl or livestock is prohibited. Residential gardens are likely permitted and residents can enjoy obtaining goods from the city's seasonal farmers' market and learning to garden through Parks and Recreation programming.
- Where and how urban agriculture can be practiced in Little Canada could be clearer. Urban agriculture is not a land use addressed in the zoning code outside of farming in the floodway district and greenhouses in residential districts.
- In its comprehensive plan, the City of Little Canada has the goal of identifying a location and funding for a community garden in the city and would like to create wellness programming that may include growing food.

BACKGROUND:

Little Canada Urban Agriculture Policy Table			
Compost	**Water Access**	**Fowl/Livestock**	**Bees**
All yard waste to be picked up by a licensed hauler shall be placed in separate bags or containers, unclear whether on-site composting is allowed	1) Attended water uses such as hand watering of plants and gardens is permitted at all times 2) Hydrant use requires obtaining a permit, a deposit, and rental and water use fees 3) Turning on or off the water supply requires city administration permission	Keeping of fowl and livestock is prohibited	Not explicitly mentioned, but likely included in prohibition of all livestock
Sale of Products	**Land Disturbance**	**Fences**	**Equipment**

			Storage
Selling of produce is allowed without a permit/license by those who cultivated it		Temporary fences to protect gardens are allowed without a permit if they are less than 48" and not in the front or side yard	
Right-of-way	**Vegetation Regulation**	**UA as Nuisance**	
	No person shall injure, damage, destroy, or disturb any public or private property in any public park, including trees, shrubs, or vegetation	Considered nuisance: 1) Keeping of non-domesticated animals 2) Compost which causes offensive odors or is unsightly 3) Growths that impede vision between 2.5-10' in specific traffic areas/rank growths	

Little Canada Urban Agriculture Zoning Table	
Farming/Gardening	
General farming, gardening, etc.: Permitted use in floodplain district	
Accessory Structures	**Sale of Products**
Greenhouses: Permitted accessory use in all residential districts (R-1, R-2, R-3, R-4, R-C) **Storage buildings**: Permitted accessory use in all residential (R-1, R-2, R-3, R-4, R-C), general commercial (C-1), corridor mixed (C-2), and industrial (I-1, I-2) districts	**Farmers' Market, Seasonal Agricultural/Horticultural Sales**: Allowed temporary use (180 days per calendar year) in any district with zoning certificate, must meet standards
Fowl/Livestock	**Compost**
Keeping of fowl or livestock: Prohibited in all zoning districts	

CHALLENGES/BARRIERS:

- There is little in the city code about urban agriculture, making it unclear what is allowed.
- Keeping of fowl and livestock is prohibited and it is unclear whether bee keeping is permitted.
- Public nuisance regulations may restrict urban agriculture activities, for example, the keeping of animals, composting, building fences, and planting in particular areas of a yard.
- Prohibiting people from disturbing public trees and vegetation prevents residents from participating in and benefiting from collective food production in public places.
- Accessing water outside of water turn on and off dates requires getting permission which may restrict season extension, while accessing hydrants in the absence of other water sources requires a permit and is costly.

- There are not any spaces for people without private yards to practice urban agriculture in the city.

OPPORTUNITIES:

- The city code could provide greater detail about regulations related to urban agriculture to make it clearer to residents what activities (gardening, composting, etc.) are allowed and where they are allowed (residential areas, rights-of-way, etc.).
- Consider adding standards for keeping fowl, livestock, and bees into city code so residents can keep these animals in a way that is suited to the community.
- Urban agriculture requires infrastructure and plants that may not be common in the city and may not meet public nuisance regulations, but would not have a negative impact on the public. Consider potential benefits of the infrastructure/plant growth when evaluating these cases.
- Adjust public vegetation regulations to facilitate collective food production and consumption in public spaces while still protecting other vegetation and structures.
- Be more flexible with water turn on and off dates to extend the growing season and decrease barriers to water access through lower hydrant deposit fees and rental charges.
- Follow through on the goal to create a community garden and commit to creating further opportunities to grow food in city parks or other public spaces for little/no cost to residents.
- Continue allowing residents to sell their own produce, water agricultural plants at all times, and have greenhouses in residential areas. Continue supporting the farmers' market and creating educational opportunities related to food cultivation.

ATTACHMENTS:

- Little Canada City Code
- Little Canada Zoning Code
- Find your zoning district: Zoning Map
- Contact for zoning questions: Planning & Community Development

Maplewood: Mechanisms Facilitating and Discouraging Urban Agriculture

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Purpose: This memo provides an overview of the main mechanisms facilitating and discouraging food cultivation in Maplewood policies and practices.

KEY POINTS BASED ON A 2022 REVIEW:

- Maplewood residents are in close proximity to multiple community gardens where they may be able to rent a plot to cultivate food. This includes Edgerton Community Garden, which is run by the city's parks department. Other nearby gardens are Harvest Gardens Community Garden, Lakeview Peace Gardens, and Rice Street Gardens. Growers may get free compost and woodchips from Ramsey County compost sites. Maplewood also has a collection site operated by Ramsey County where residents can bring food scraps, which will be made into compost.
- The City of Maplewood has addressed urban agriculture relatively well in its code. The city explicitly allows people to grow food–residential, community, and market gardens–and keep fowl, some livestock, and bees in all zoning districts. Commercial farming, greenhouses, and nurseries are a conditional use in the farm residence district, and composting is permitted in all residential districts.
- Based on its comprehensive plan, Maplewood intends to support existing urban agriculture and further incorporate accessible community gardens and urban farms into the city as part of its goal to improve the local food system and increase community resilience and well-being.

BACKGROUND:

Maplewood Urban Agriculture Policy Table			
Compost	**Water Access**	**Fowl/Livestock**	**Bees**
Compost allowed in small quantities on residential lots (not in front yard) if following Maplewood Solid Waste Management composting operation		1) Poultry allowed with a permit (2 years) 2) Pigs allowed on land less than 40 acres if standards are met and permit is obtained (1 year)	Beekeeping permitted outright in all zoning districts as accessory use

guidelines		3) Goats and sheep allowed temporarily for vegetation management with a permit	
Sale of Products	**Land Disturbance**	**Fences**	**Equipment Storage**
Selling of produce is allowed without a permit/license by those who cultivated it	Tilling, planting, harvesting, or gardening are not considered land disturbance activities	Maximum height of fences is 6' for residential uses and 10' for nonresidential uses; Barbed wire fencing may be used to fence in livestock on a farm	Metal storage buildings are allowed as backyard storage sheds
Right-of-way	**Vegetation Regulation**	**UA as Nuisance**	
Gardens are allowed in the right-of-way without a permit	At the Maplewood Nature Center: injuring, cutting, destroying, removing, planting, or cultivating any trees, shrubs, plants is prohibited	Considered nuisance: Any tree, shrubbery, plant that is greater than 2'6" that obstructs intersection views	

Maplewood Urban Agriculture Zoning Table	
Farming/Gardening	
Community and market gardens less than 1 acre: Permitted use in all zoning districts **Community and market gardens greater than 1 acre**: Conditional use in all zoning districts **Commercial farming, gardening, greenhouses, or nurseries**: Permitted use in farm residence district (F)	
Accessory Structures	**Sale of Products**
	Stands for sale of agricultural products produced on premises: Permitted use in farm residence district (F)
Fowl/Livestock	**Compost**
Livestock raising and handling: Conditional use in farm residence district (F) **Poultry, goats, and sheep**: Allowed use in all zoning districts with a permit	**Compost**: Permitted use in all residential districts

- Edgerton Community Garden
    - The community garden is in Edgerton Park near Edgerton Elementary school and is run by the City of Maplewood Parks & Natural Resources department.
    - The garden contains 12'x15' in-ground plots, 4'x8' raised beds (18" high), and 3'x5' ADA accessible raised beds that can be rented for $25/year. Maplewood residents enrolled in food assistance programs are eligible for a reduced rental fee of $10/year.
    - When assigning plots, priority is given to returning gardeners. Any remaining plots are granted on a first come, first served basis to Maplewood residents.
- Rice Street Gardens
    - Rice Street Gardens is a community garden on the western edge of Maplewood that began when the land was owned by St. Paul Regional Water Services, which has been holding the parcel for future use and leasing it to RSG annually since 2016.
    - Rice Street Gardens has around 260 15'x20' plots that are used by a diverse group of growers.
    - St. Paul Regional Water Services planned to sell the land to a developer for housing, but eventually the developer abandoned the project, leaving the future of the land uncertain. This has prompted attempts to secure long-term ownership of the parcel to retain Rice Street Gardens and the value it adds to the community.

CHALLENGES/BARRIERS:

- Insecure land tenure and limited community garden space is restricting the ability of residents–particularly those without yards–to cultivate food. The demand for space to grow food is not met by current conditions.
    - Rice Street Gardens, which contains over 200 large plots, often has a waitlist. This space is experiencing a change in land ownership, which potentially could displace many growers.
    - The city community garden has a wait list for the 2022 season.
- The process of obtaining permits to keep animals or to have gardens greater than 1 acre may be time-consuming, confusing, and costly.
- Public nuisance regulations may restrict urban agriculture activities, for example, composting, keeping livestock, and planting in particular areas of a yard.
- Prohibiting people from disturbing vegetation at the nature center may set a precedent that prevents residents from participating in and benefiting from collective food production in other public places.

OPPORTUNITIES:

- The city and county should support transferring ownership of the Rice Street Gardens parcel to growers, which will retain a major urban agriculture site that provides countless benefits to the community. Maintaining RSG will also help the city advance toward its principles of resilience, equity, health, and age-friendliness, and specifically will aid the city in meeting its local food access goals.

- Ensure that the number of public garden plots meets demand. If possible, add more plots to the existing community garden and create opportunities to grow food in other city parks or public spaces for little/no cost to residents.
- Decrease permit fees and provide residents with resources to aid them in obtaining permits relevant to urban agriculture.
- Urban agriculture requires infrastructure and plants that might not be common in the city and may not meet public nuisance regulations, but are not having a negative impact on the public. Consider potential benefits of the infrastructure/plants when evaluating these cases.
- Adjust public vegetation regulations to facilitate collective food production and consumption in public spaces while still protecting other vegetation and structures.

ATTACHMENTS:

- Maplewood City Code
- Edgerton Community Garden
- Rice Street Gardens
- Find your zoning district: Interactive Zoning Map
- Contact for zoning questions: Planning

Mounds View: Mechanisms Facilitating and Discouraging Urban Agriculture

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Purpose: This memo provides an overview of the main mechanisms facilitating and discouraging food cultivation in Mounds View policies and practices.

KEY POINTS BASED ON A 2022 REVIEW:

- The City of Mounds View does not appear to have any public spaces where people can cultivate food despite having many city parks with community amenities. Ardan Park has a yard waste and food scraps collection site operated by Ramsey County where residents can drop off food scraps and yard and garden waste, and pick up compost.
- Where and how urban agriculture can be practiced in Mounds View is unclear. Urban agriculture is not a land use addressed in the zoning code outside of farming in the floodway district; chickens, ducks, and bees as a permitted use in R-1; and greenhouses as a conditional use in R-1. Zoning code that affects urban agriculture should be more transparent.
- Mounds View does not appear to have plans to incorporate urban agriculture into its landscape based on its comprehensive plan. The city should consider facilitating urban agriculture as part of its goal to support community health and increase access to healthy food.

BACKGROUND:

Mounds View Urban Agriculture Policy Table			
Compost	**Water Access**	**Fowl/Livestock**	**Bees**
Backyard and small compost sites shall comply with State Pollution Control Agency rules	Permit required to obtain water from a municipal water system hydrant	Chickens and ducks allowed with permit (1 year)	Keeping of honeybees allowed with license (valid indefinitely while hives operated continuously)
Sale of Products	**Land Disturbance**	**Fences**	**Equipment Storage**
Selling of	Tilling, planting, harvesting	1) No fence shall exceed 8’ in	Accessory

produce is allowed without a permit/license by those who cultivated it	of agricultural crops allowed without permit	height 2) No structures or plantings greater than 30" in height, or fences are allowed within 30' of any intersection corner, unless properly constructed chain link	buildings and equipment must be located in rear yard
Right-of-way	**Vegetation Regulation**	**UA as Nuisance**	
Gardens allowed in right-of-way without permit	1) No person may disturb or remove any flower, tree, shrub, or any plant whether wild or cultivated 2) No person may plant in public area 3) No person may pick any flower, fruit, or vegetable (not self-grown)	Considered nuisance: 1) Obstructions which block view of traffic 2) Structures or plantings greater than 30" in height	

Mounds View Urban Agriculture Zoning Table	
Farming/Gardening	
General farming, gardening: Permitted use in floodway (FW) district	
Accessory Structures	**Sale of Products**
Tool houses and sheds, greenhouses: Accessory use in single-family residential district (R-1)	
Fowl/Livestock	**Compost**
Chickens or ducks, honey bees: Permitted Use in single-family residential district (R-1)	

CHALLENGES/BARRIERS:

- There is little in the city code about urban agriculture, making it unclear what is allowed.
- Keeping of animals is limited to chickens/ducks and bees, which require an arduous and costly approval process.
- There is not any public space for people to grow food if they do not have access to a private yard.
- Accessing water from hydrants may not be possible because it is only allowed in specific locations and it is costly because it requires a permit.
- Public nuisance regulations may restrict urban agriculture activities, for example, keeping of livestock or honey bees, composting, building fences, and planting in particular areas of a yard.

- Prohibiting people from disturbing public trees and vegetation prevents residents from participating in and benefiting from collective food production in public places like city parks.
- Accessory structures are only allowed in the rear yard of properties in the city.

OPPORTUNITIES:

- More clearly address urban agriculture in the city code by explicitly stating how different forms of urban agriculture are allowed in various zoning districts.
- Make keeping fowl and bees more accessible by decreasing application requirements and fees. Expand the types of animals that residents can have by creating standards for keeping other appropriate livestock.
- Consider incorporating urban agriculture into public/institutional open spaces, for example at a school or at some of the many parks in the city.
- Decrease barriers to water access by allowing residents to draw water from any hydrant and making obtaining a permit straightforward and affordable.
- Urban agriculture requires infrastructure and plants that may not be common in the city and may not meet public nuisance regulations, but generally would not have a negative impact on the public. Consider potential benefits of the infrastructure/plant growth when evaluating these cases.
- Adjust public vegetation regulations to facilitate collective food production and consumption in public spaces while still protecting other vegetation and structures.
- Allow accessory structures to be located anywhere on property and do not require the presence of a primary structure in order for a lot to have an accessory structure. This will create greater flexibility for urban agriculture.

ATTACHMENTS:

- Mounds View City Code
- Find your zoning district: Zoning Map
- Contact for zoning questions: Community Development

New Brighton: Mechanisms Facilitating and Discouraging Urban Agriculture

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Purpose: This memo provides an overview of the main mechanisms facilitating and discouraging food cultivation in New Brighton policies and practices.

KEY POINTS BASED ON A 2022 REVIEW:

- The City of New Brighton has supported a community garden run by a local church on its own land, however this garden appears to have few plots open for the public. The city also has a farmers' market from June to mid-October, with a winter indoor market from November to April. New Brighton has a food scraps collection site operated by Ramsey County where residents' food scraps will be made into compost.
- New Brighton zoning code could more thoroughly address urban agriculture activities. The city only explicitly allows gardening in the floodway district, while plant conservatories, accessory structures, and farmers' markets are allowed in residential districts.
- The city supports vendors, including growers, by holding a farmers' market/winter indoor market and by planning for future development of flexible spaces and a building specifically built for a year-round market. Incorporating urban agriculture spaces where produce would be grown is not addressed in the city's comprehensive plan.

BACKGROUND:

New Brighton Urban Agriculture Policy Table			
Compost	**Water Access**	**Fowl/Livestock**	**Bees**
Yard waste may be composted privately	1) During an emergency, municipal water use for lawn and garden sprinkling, irrigation, and other uses may be limited 2) No person shall turn on any water supply at the stop box without permission from the City	Keeping fowl is allowed without a license or registration if meeting standards and city compliance inspector is notified	Keeping bees is allowed without a license or registration if meeting standards and city compliance inspector is notified

Sale of Products	Land Disturbance	Fences	Equipment Storage
May not sell or offer for sale any goods unless a license has first been obtained	Permit required for land disturbance of one acre or more		
Right-of-way	**Vegetation Regulation**	**UA as Nuisance**	
A permit shall be obtained from the City before any alteration is undertaken in right-of-way	1) No person may disturb or remove any flower, tree, shrub, or any plant whether wild or cultivated 2) No person may plant in public area 3) No person may pick any flower, fruit, or vegetable (not self-grown)	Considered nuisance: 1) Accumulations of tree branches, grass clippings, debris of any nature except in fly-tight containers 2) Rank growths 3) Plants within 15' of public street or right-of-way that obstructs view of traffic	

New Brighton Urban Agriculture Zoning Table	
Farming/Gardening	
General farming, gardening: Permitted use in floodway district (FW) **Conservatories for plants and flowers**: Accessory use in single family residential (R-1, R-1A), two family residential (R-2), and residential housing (R-4) districts	
Accessory Structures	**Sale of Products**
Private storage buildings: Accessory use in single family residential (R-1, R-1A), two family residential (R-2), and residential housing (R-4) districts	**Farmers' Markets**: Special permit use in all residential districts (R-1, R-1A, R-2, R-3A, R-3B, R-4)
Fowl/Livestock	**Compost**

- New Brighton Farmers' Market
    - The city holds a weekly farmers' market on Wednesday at the Community Center from June to mid-October. The indoor winter market is held inside the Community Center on the second Wednesday of the months November to April.

CHALLENGES/BARRIERS:

- There is little in the city code about urban agriculture, making it unclear what is allowed.
- There is very little public space for people to grow food if they do not have access to a private yard.

- Residents are not allowed to plant in the right-of-way.
- Public nuisance regulations may restrict urban agriculture activities, for example, composting and planting in particular areas of a yard.
- Prohibiting people from disturbing public trees and vegetation prevents residents from participating in and benefiting from collective food production in public places like city parks.
- Selling produce may require a license, which is often not a requirement in other districts and may serve as a barrier to growers with limited resources and time.
- There is potential that watering crops will be limited during water emergencies.

OPPORTUNITIES:

- More clearly address urban agriculture in the city code by explicitly stating how different forms of urban agriculture are allowed in various zoning districts.
- Consider incorporating urban agriculture into public/institutional open spaces, for example at a school, at some of the many parks in the city, or in future flexible field spaces.
- Allow residents to utilize the right-of-way to grow food.
- Urban agriculture requires infrastructure and plants that may not be common in the city and may not meet public nuisance regulations, but generally would not have a negative impact on the public. Consider potential benefits of the infrastructure/plant growth when evaluating these cases.
- Adjust public vegetation regulations to facilitate collective food production and consumption in public spaces while still protecting other vegetation and structures.
- Allow cultivators to sell their produce without obtaining a license or permit.
- Make watering crops or other agricultural water uses exempt from municipal water use restrictions or limitations.

ATTACHMENTS:

- New Brighton City Code
- Find your zoning district: Planning & Zoning Maps - Zoning
- Contact for zoning questions: Community Assets & Development

North Oaks: Mechanisms Facilitating and Discouraging Urban Agriculture

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Purpose: This memo provides an overview of the main mechanisms facilitating and discouraging food cultivation in North Oaks policies and practices.

KEY POINTS BASED ON A 2022 REVIEW:

- The City of North Oaks allows residents to garden and have greenhouses, however there do not appear to be any public places for people to grow food.
- Where and how urban agriculture can be practiced in North Oaks is unclear. Urban agriculture is not addressed in the zoning code aside from greenhouses and agricultural uses in the shoreland management area.
- North Oaks does not appear to have any city-supported opportunities for food cultivation, however there is a North Oaks Garden Club that focuses on education and community service. The club also has an annual plant sale with proceeds that support community activities.

BACKGROUND:

North Oaks Urban Agriculture Policy Table			
Compost	**Water Access**	**Fowl/Livestock**	**Bees**
Compost piles not considered refuse in residential settings	1) During water use restrictions, hand watering of flowers or gardens is permitted unless specifically banned 2) Hydrant use requires permit, deposit, and water use charges 3) Turning water back on after it is shut off is subject to a fee		
Sale of Products	**Land Disturbance**	**Fences**	**Equipment Storage**
	Erosion control requirements don't apply to land under	Fences, screening, planting strips, and landscaping are	

	agricultural use (unless soil loss determined to be excessive)	permitted within 30' of a lot line, but are subject to restrictions	
Right-of-way	**Vegetation Regulation**	**UA as Nuisance**	

North Oaks Urban Agriculture Zoning Table	
Farming/Gardening	
Non-commercial greenhouses: Permitted accessory use in all residential districts (RSL, RSM, RMM, RMH, RCM, PRD) **Agricultural use, crop land, and pasture**: Permitted use in some Lakes; Rivers and Streams land use districts in shoreland management area	
Accessory Structures	**Sale of Products**
Small tool houses, sheds: Accessory use in all residential districts (RSL, RSM, RMM, RMH, RCM, PRD)	
Fowl/Livestock	**Compost**

CHALLENGES/BARRIERS:

- There is little in the city code about urban agriculture, making it unclear what is allowed.
- Keeping of animals other than dogs and cats does not appear to be permitted.
- There is not any public space for people to grow food if they do not have access to a private yard.
- Accessing water outside of water turn on and off dates requires getting permission which may restrict season extension, while accessing hydrants in the absence of other water sources requires a permit and is costly.

OPPORTUNITIES:

- More clearly address urban agriculture in the city code by explicitly stating how different forms of urban agriculture are allowed in various zoning districts.
- Create standards that allow residents to keep fowl, pigs, bees, etc.
- Consider creating opportunities to grow food in public/institutional open spaces–for example at schools, churches, recreational fields, or golf courses–for little/no cost to residents.
- Be more flexible with water turn on and off dates to extend the growing season and decrease barriers to water access through lower hydrant deposit fees and rental charges.

- Incorporate urban agriculture into comprehensive plan to benefit future health of residents and environment.

ATTACHMENTS:

- North Oaks City Ordinances
- Find your zoning district: Contact North Oaks City staff at 651-792-7750 to request the zoning information for a specific property.
- Contact for zoning questions: Directory - City Planner

North St. Paul: Mechanisms Facilitating and Discouraging Urban Agriculture

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Purpose: This memo provides an overview of the main mechanisms facilitating and discouraging food cultivation in North St. Paul policies and practices.

KEY POINTS BASED ON A 2022 REVIEW:

- The City of North St. Paul recognizes the benefits of urban agriculture, but does not presently have dedicated public spaces where people can cultivate food.
- North St. Paul includes urban agriculture in its zoning code by allowing community gardens as an interim use in all zoning districts. Beekeeping and keeping of chickens are allowed in the city with a license.
- North St. Paul encourages community gardens as part of its strategy to support the health and welfare of its residents. Actively expanding the existence and accessibility of community gardens and other forms of urban agriculture would complement the city's strategy of supporting local food access.

BACKGROUND:

North St. Paul Urban Agriculture Policy Table			
Compost	**Water Access**	**Fowl/Livestock**	**Bees**
Composting permitted on site at single-unit, multi-unit, and institutional properties, provided standards are met	1) Using a hydrant requires a permit 2) No person shall tamper or interfere with the stop cocks at the main and sidewalk or with the box and cover	Keeping of chickens is allowed with license / registration	Keeping of bees is allowed with license / registration
Sale of Products	**Land Disturbance**	**Fences**	**Equipment Storage**
Selling of any farm or garden product produced on the same	Agricultural activities do not constitute a land disturbing activity		

property as the seller resides is not presently regulated			
Right-of-way	**Vegetation Regulation**	**UA as Nuisance**	
1) Gardens are allowed in the right-of-way without a permit 2) Only trees listed or approved by the city can be planted in the boulevard with a permit	1) No person shall pick, cut, break, injure, or deface any wild or cultivated flowers or plant in any public park 2) No person shall carry within or out of any public park any wild flower, tree, shrub, or plant	Considered nuisance: 1) Exposed accumulation of decayed vegetable matter 2) Rank growths of vegetation 3) All obstructions which prevent people from having a clear view of all traffic approaching an intersection	

North St. Paul Urban Agriculture Zoning Table	
Farming/Gardening	
Community Garden: Interim use in all residential (R-1, R-2, R-3) and mix use (MU-1, MU-2, MU-3) districts **Residential Gardens**: Permitted use in all districts	
Accessory Structures	**Sale of Products**
Accessory buildings and structures: Permitted use in all residential (R-1, R-2, R-3), and the corridor mix use (MU-3) districts	**Farmers' Markets**: Permitted use in all mix use districts (MU-1, MU-2, MU-3)
Fowl/Livestock	**Compost**
	Composting: Permitted use in all residential districts (R-1, R-2, R-3)

CHALLENGES/BARRIERS:

- North St. Paul views urban agriculture as an interim land use, but practicing urban agriculture on the same land for long periods of time is crucial to experiencing UA's complete set of benefits.
- There is not any public space for people to grow food if they do not have access to a private yard.
- In order to sell produce without a permit, the seller must reside on the lot where it is grown.
- Public nuisance regulations may restrict urban agriculture activities, for example, composting, keeping livestock, and planting in particular areas of a yard.

- Prohibiting people from disturbing vegetation at parks may set a precedent that prevents residents from participating in and benefiting from collective food production in other public places.
- Trees that are planted in the boulevard require a permit and are limited to trees listed on file in the Department of Community Services.
- Keeping of animals is limited to chickens and bees, which require a registration process.
- Accessing water outside of water turn on and off dates is prohibited, which restricts season extension, while accessing hydrants in the absence of other water sources requires a permit and is costly.

OPPORTUNITIES:

- Consider urban agriculture as an important, long-term land use, allowing it to maximize benefits to residents and the environment and contribute to community goals (improving public health and local food access).
- Incorporate urban agriculture into public/institutional open spaces, for example at a school, city parks, nature preserves, and outdoor recreation areas. Furthermore, allow community gardens where anyone can grow food on private land as a permanent use.
- Allow people to sell produce without a permit even if they do not reside on the property.
- Urban agriculture requires infrastructure and plants that may not be common in the city and may not meet public nuisance regulations, but generally would not have a negative impact on the public. Consider potential benefits of the infrastructure/plant growth when evaluating these cases.
- Adjust public vegetation regulations to facilitate collective food production and consumption in public spaces while still protecting other vegetation and structures.
- Allow the planting of trees in the boulevard without a permit–only require notifying the city–and make the list of trees allowed more accessible. If fruit and nut trees are not allowed, add them to the list.
- Make keeping fowl and bees more accessible by decreasing registration requirements. Expand the types of animals that residents can have by creating standards for keeping other appropriate livestock. Clarify zoning code about where fowl, livestock, and bees can be kept.
- Decrease barriers to water access by allowing residents to get permission to access water past turn on and off dates to extend the growing season and by lowering hydrant permit fees and rental charges.
- Continue allowing people to plant in rights-of-way, have greenhouses and residential gardens, to keep chickens and bees, and compost.

ATTACHMENTS:

- North St. Paul City Code
- Find your zoning district: Zoning Map
- Contact for zoning questions: Planning & Zoning

Roseville: Mechanisms Facilitating and Discouraging Urban Agriculture

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Purpose: This memo provides an overview of the main mechanisms facilitating and discouraging food cultivation in Roseville policies and practices.

KEY POINTS BASED ON A 2022 REVIEW:

- There are some supports in Roseville for urban agriculture, but few specific policies in place to encourage or protect it specifically. There are 120 plots available through the Oasis Park community garden, and opportunities to volunteer with the municipality's urban orchard demonstration site. More publicly available growing space and direct municipal support through allotment of resources or tax incentives would be extremely helpful in encouraging further development of urban agriculture within the city.
- Community/seasonal/public gardens and garden structures are permitted in virtually every class of residential district, but on a temporary basis with a permit. Enabling longer-term food producing uses of these spaces would go a long way towards ensuring their longevity and utility for potential public benefit.
- If a grower's goal in Roseville is to sell produce from their growing endeavors, it is permitted in residential areas with consent of the property owner, however a seasonal outdoor sales permit is required to do so legally.

BACKGROUND:

Roseville Urban Agriculture Policy Table			
Compost	**Water Access**	**Fowl/Livestock**	**Bees**
Composting allowed in composting area or container <5'x5'x5'	1) City may limit the time and manner of using water for all municipal water consumers 2) Hydrant use requires permit, deposit, and rental charge 3) No person except an authorized City employee	Allowed but unclear standards	Allowed but unclear standards

	shall turn on or off any water supply at the stop box without permission from the Public Works Director		
Sale of Products	**Land Disturbance**	**Fences**	**Equipment Storage**
Seasonal outdoor sales permit required for sales of produce, plants, garden supplies, and/or farmers' market	Tilling, planting, harvesting, gardening are not considered land disturbance activities	Fences protecting gardens shall be allowed to max of 8' in height	Garden sheds may be built or sided with materials different in character from principal structure
Right-of-way	**Vegetation Regulation**	**UA as Nuisance**	
Gardens allowed in right-of-way without permit	In any Roseville park, no person shall break, cut, mutilate, injure, remove, or carry away any tree, plant, flower, shrub, rock, soil, sand, or any other property	Considered nuisance: 1) The keeping of animals, other than those commonly called poultry or bees 2) All composting consisting of yard waste and/or kitchen waste which have been left unattended and which cause offensive odors, attract rodents, and/or pests, or are unsightly, or do not meet requirements 3) Weeds and rank vegetative growth not maintained at a height of fewer than eight inches	

Roseville Urban Agriculture Zoning Table	
Farming/Gardening	
Garden, public or community: Permitted Use in industrial district (I) [subject to standards] **Gardens, public or community (flower or vegetable)**: Permitted use in parks and open space [Not subject to standards] **Seasonal garden structure, private garden, community garden**: Temporary use in low density residential (LDR-1, LDR-2), medium density residential (MDR), and high density residential (HDR-1, HDR-2) districts **General farming, gardening**: Permitted use in floodway district	
Accessory Structures	**Sale of Products**
Accessory structures: Permitted use in low density residential (LDR-1) and industrial district (I)	**Sale of produce with consent of property owner**: Permitted use in residential districts
Fowl/Livestock	**Compost**
Keeping of chickens and bees: Permitted use in	

single-family residential (R1), license required if lot less than 2 acres **Keeping of non-domestic animals**: Permitted on lots more than 2 acres, may require conditional use permit	

- Roseville is making an effort to create accessibility to urban agriculture through its Oasis Park site, however there are only 120 plots available here, with a limit of one double plot per household. This municipality has a population of over thirty six thousand people, and a great deal more land could be set aside for public use for food cultivation, if the city wants to support nascent urban growing efforts.
- New Life Presbyterian Church also operates the Seeds of Hope Community Garden, which is a 3-part charter agreement of 1/3 church members, 1/3 surrounding community non-church members, and 1/3 immigrant growers. The garden supports vegetable growing for approximately 28 individuals and their families. All garden plots are rented by their gardener to grow their own vegetables at a cost of $32 per season. This fee covers the cost of water. In addition to renting garden plots, the site also supports designated food shelf plots where gardeners plant, grow, and deliver fresh vegetables to surrounding food shelves. These plots are voluntarily maintained by community and church members.

CHALLENGES/BARRIERS:

- Water access, and the limiting thereof could present a substantial challenge to potential urban growers. Putting in place some policy to waive or offset the hydrant permit, deposit, and rental charge for growing sites could be a start, as could an agreement entailing an extended time period of water operation for registered irrigation purposes in non-designated agricultural zones.
- Public nuisance regulations may restrict urban agriculture activities, for example, composting, and keeping livestock other than poultry and bees.
- Prohibiting people from disturbing vegetation at parks may set a precedent that prevents residents from participating in and benefiting from collective food production in other public places.
- Composting is only allowed in a 5ft x 5ft x 5ft container or designated composting area which could prove a hindrance to composting for growers with less space or means.

OPPORTUNITIES:

- The urban orchard demonstration site is an extremely unique opportunity for the general population to become involved in food forestry. Opening this site up to further public use or even creating more orchards on suitable public lands could be an excellent modality for expanding the concept to further serve the community.
- Allowing growers to sell their produce on private or public property without the need to obtain permits would be a solid step towards encouraging further economic development for grassroots growing operations.

- Further allowing animal husbandry outside of poultry and bees, and their permission in smaller properties could be helpful in cultivating an additional segment of the potential for urban agriculture, especially in an area with open green spaces.

ATTACHMENTS:

- Roseville City Code
- Oasis Park Community Garden
- Roseville Urban Orchard Demonstration Project
- Planting Seeds of Hope Community Garden
- Find your zoning district: Zoning Map
- Contact for zoning questions: Community Development

St. Anthony: Mechanisms Facilitating and Discouraging Urban Agriculture

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Purpose: This memo provides an overview of the main mechanisms facilitating and discouraging food cultivation in St. Anthony policies and practices.

KEY POINTS BASED ON A 2022 REVIEW:

- The City of St. Anthony does not appear to have any public space where residents can grow food, nor any city-supported community gardens on private land or city-facilitated markets. St. Anthony has a food scraps collection site operated by Ramsey County where residents can bring their food scraps, which will be made into compost.
- Where and how urban agriculture can be practiced in St. Anthony could be more detailed and explicit. St. Anthony allows gardens and private nonprofit conservatories in residential districts as an accessory use, and while fowl and livestock may be kept with City Council approval, it is unclear in which districts this would be allowed.
- In its comprehensive plan, St. Anthony includes many promising future actions to incorporate urban agriculture into the city. An explicit goal is to support the growth of urban agriculture, and related actions include addressing urban agriculture in city code, collecting and supplying compost, starting farmers' markets or other sale/purchase opportunities, facilitating a private homeowner garden rental program, creating community gardens in public spaces, and acquiring and leasing land to residents for urban agriculture.

BACKGROUND:

St. Anthony Urban Agriculture Policy Table			
Compost	**Water Access**	**Fowl/Livestock**	**Bees**
Composting allowed if it includes only organic yard materials in an enclosed container and odor is minimized	No person may use the city water system for watering lawns or gardens during any period of emergency, except during the days and hours permitted	No person may keep swine, cattle, horses, goats, or fowl within the city nearer than 500 feet to any human habitation or platted land, without approval	

		of the City Council	
Sale of Products	**Land Disturbance**	**Fences**	**Equipment Storage**
No license shall be required for any person to sell any product grown, produced, cultivated, or raised on any farm		A building permit is required for the construction or alteration of a fence, and for any additions to a fence	The outside storage on residentially-zoned property of materials, supplies, or equipment not customarily used for residential purposes is declared to be a public nuisance
Right-of-way	**Vegetation Regulation**	**UA as Nuisance**	
Gardens allowed in right-of-way without permit	No person shall deface, damage, or remove any structure, tree, plant, soil, rock, or other property in any park without permission from the Manager	Considered nuisance: 1) Exposed accumulation of decayed or unwholesome food or vegetable matter, manure, refuse, or other debris 2) Garbage cans which are not rodent-free or fly-tight that emit foul and disagreeable odors 3) Rank growths of vegetation 4) Trees, hedges, or other obstructions which prevent people from having a clear view of traffic at intersections	

St. Anthony Urban Agriculture Zoning Table	
Farming/Gardening	
Garden: Accessory use in all residential districts (R-1, R-1A, R-2, R-3, R-4) **Private nonprofit conservatories for plants and flowers**: Accessory use in single family residential (R-1), two family residential (R-2), townhomes (R-3), and multiple dwellings (R-4) districts	
Accessory Structures	**Sale of Products**
Accessory buildings: Accessory use in all residential districts (R-1, R-1A, R-2, R-3, R-4)	
Fowl/Livestock	**Compost**

CHALLENGES/BARRIERS:

- There is little in the city code about urban agriculture, making it unclear what is allowed.
- There is no public space for people to grow food if they do not have access to a private yard.

- Keeping of fowl or livestock requires obtaining city council approval, which is an unclear and likely time and resource-consuming process. Keeping of bees is not mentioned in the code.
- Public nuisance regulations may restrict urban agriculture activities, for example, composting, storing tools/equipment, keeping fowl/livestock, building fences, and planting in particular areas of a yard.
- Prohibiting people from disturbing public trees and vegetation prevents residents from participating in and benefiting from collective food production in public places like city parks.
- Constructing fences requires obtaining a building permit.

OPPORTUNITIES:

- More clearly address urban agriculture in the city code by explicitly stating how different forms of urban agriculture are allowed in various zoning districts.
- Consider incorporating urban agriculture into public/institutional open spaces, for example at a school or at some of the many parks in the city.
- Make keeping chickens and livestock more accessible by making the approval process transparent and inexpensive. Expand the types of animals that residents can have by creating standards for keeping bees.
- Urban agriculture requires infrastructure and plants that may not be common in the city and may not meet public nuisance regulations, but generally would not have a negative impact on the public. Consider potential benefits of the infrastructure/plant growth when evaluating these cases.
- Adjust public vegetation regulations to facilitate collective food production and consumption in public spaces while still protecting other vegetation and structures.
- Develop standards for fences that will allow growers to construct garden fences without obtaining a permit or make the process of obtaining a permit more straightforward and less costly.
- Continue allowing composting; the keeping of fowl/livestock; sale of agricultural products without a license; gardening in rights-of-way; and gardens, conservatories, and accessory structures in residential districts. Follow through with goals and objectives for supporting the growth of urban agriculture listed in city's comprehensive plan.

ATTACHMENTS:

- St. Anthony City Code
- Find your zoning district: Planning Documents - zoning map
- Contact for zoning questions: Planning

Saint Paul: Mechanisms Facilitating and Discouraging Urban Agriculture

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Purpose: This memo provides an overview of the main mechanisms facilitating and discouraging food cultivation in Saint Paul policies and practices.

KEY POINTS BASED ON A 2022 REVIEW:

- The City of Saint Paul attempted to significantly revise its policies and practices circa 2013 to better facilitate urban agriculture. Saint Paul's zoning code explicitly addresses urban agriculture–defined as the principal use of land for production of food or horticultural crops to be harvested, sold, or donated–which may be allowed in all zoning districts, but requires the submission of an urban agriculture application. Standards are dependent on the zoning district and the size of the parcel where urban agriculture is being practiced. Residents must obtain a permit to keep animals. The initial permit costs $76, and annual renewal costs $28.
- In its comprehensive plan, the City of Saint Paul has a land use goal of encouraging the equitable spatial distribution of community food assets, including urban farms and community gardens, and also plans to support community gardens as part of its parks, recreation, and open space goals.
- Encouraged by the Saint Paul Ramsey County Food and Nutrition Commission, Saint Paul also went through an effort to better coordinate support for urban agriculture, for example, building application processes to more straightforwardly enable urban agriculture in some municipal spaces.
    - The City Housing and Redevelopment Authority (HRA) posts a form for groups to apply to garden on its land holdings, with the explicit provision that this is an interim use that will be displaced as soon as there are other plans for the land: https://www.stpaul.gov/DocumentCenter/Government/Planning & Economic Development/Housing and Redevelopment Authority (HRA)/Garden Lease Guidelines.pdf
    - Saint Paul allows groups to grow food in parks, through an application process for community gardens ("Start a Community Garden"): https://www.stpaul.gov/departments/parks-and-recreation/natural-resources/blooming-saint-paul

    - There are numerous urban farms and gardens in Saint Paul. The city does not operate these spaces, but does lease some of the land through its Real Estate Office (such as the Green Spirit Garden in the Hamline Midway district).
    - Saint Paul also runs City Market, where people may rent a stall to sell their produce once they have obtained a producer's certification and paid rental fees.
- More active expansion and maintenance of urban agriculture could help the city meet other goals, such as neighborhoods that support daily needs within walking distance; infrastructure for all ages and abilities; programming and spaces responsive to changing needs; environmental and economic sustainability; a healthy network of community partnerships; and stormwater management.

BACKGROUND:

Saint Paul Urban Agriculture Policy Table			
Compost	**Water Access**	**Fowl/Livestock**	**Bees**
Residents permitted to compost on own property if meeting regulations (container type, container location, materials allowed, odor maintenance)	1) Hydrant use requires application for permit, deposit, and hydrant and water use charges every 30 days 2) The stop-cocks at main and sidewalk, together with box and cover, are the property of the water board and no person shall interfere with them	1) Permit required to keep chickens (Tier 1: 1-6 female chickens; Tier 2: 7-15 female chickens) 2) Permit required to keep any turkey, duck, goose, pigeon, or similar small bird 3) Permit required to keep more than one rabbit or any hoofed animal, mink, ferret, or similar small animal	Permit required to keep hive or any other facility for housing bees within the city
Sale of Products	**Land Disturbance**	**Fences**	**Equipment Storage**
On-site sales limited to products grown on the seller's property or property occupied by charitable, institutional, or political organization; only 3 sales in a calendar year held between 7am-7pm	Activity of 1 acre or more shall submit control plan to city for approval; no land shall be disturbed until the plan is approved by city	1) Constructing a fence requires obtaining and completing a fence plan review from the building official 2) Permit required for fences greater than 7 feet 3) Fences in front yards no more than 4 feet	Any tools, equipment, and material shall be stored and concealed within an enclosed, secured structure
Right-of-way	**Vegetation Regulation**	**UA as Nuisance**	
A property owner in the city shall be permitted to	No person shall climb any tree, or pluck any flower or	Considered nuisance in these cases: 1) Weeds or grass which has grown upon any	

plant, care for, and maintain gardens on the boulevards adjacent to their property, subject to standards	fruit, whether wild or cultivated, or break, cut down, trample upon or remove, or in any manner injure or deface any statue, ornament, tree, or plant shrub, flower, flowerbed, turf in any public place in the city	property to a height of eight (8) or more inches 2) Conditions which are conducive to the presence, harborage, or breeding of pests 3) Shrubs, bushes, trees, vines, or other uncontrolled vegetation which has grown over the public sidewalk and which obstructs, interferes, or renders dangerous for passage any public sidewalk 4) Rank plant growth ("overgrown, uncontrolled vegetation, shrubs, trees, vines that are conducive to the accumulation of refuse, debris or the harborage of vermin")

St. Paul Urban Agriculture Zoning Table	
Farming/Gardening	
Agriculture: Permitted or conditional use in all residential (RL, R1-R4, RT1, RT2, RM1-RM3), traditional neighborhood (T1, T2, T3, T4), business (OS, B1, BC, B2, B3, B4, B5), transitional industrial (IT), light industrial (I1), general industrial (I2), and ford districts (F1-F6) [Standards dependent on area, < 1 acre and > 1 acre] **Agriculture > 1 acre**: Requires conditional use permit in all residential (RL, R1-R4, RT1, RT2, RM1, RM2, RM3), traditional neighborhood (T1, T2, T3, T4), and business (OS, B1, BC, B2, B3, B4, B5) districts *To establish agricultural use on vacant property, must submit urban agriculture application ($32) and provide a soil test ($17)	
Accessory Structures	**Sale of Products**
Greenhouse: Permitted use in transitional industrial (IT), light industrial (I1), and general industrial (I2) districts; Conditional use in general business (B3), and ford districts F4-F6 **Accessory use**: Permitted in all residential (RL, R1-R4, RT1, RT2, RM1-RM3), traditional neighborhood (T1, T2, T3, T4), business (OS, B1, BC, B2, B3, B4, B5), transitional industrial (IT), light industrial (I1), general industrial (I2), and ford districts (F1-F6)	**Farmers Market**: Permitted or conditional use in all residential (RL, R1-R4, RT1, RT2, RM1-RM3), traditional neighborhood (T1, T2, T3, T4), business (OS, B1, BC, B2, B3, B4, B5), transitional industrial (IT), light industrial (I1), and general industrial (I2) districts
Fowl/Livestock	**Compost**
Keeping of animals: Permitted in residential districts with permit, if meets standards	**Composting**: Composting permitted by residents on their own property if meet standards

- St. Paul conducted an Urban Agriculture Zoning Study from 2011-2013 that aimed to adjust city policy–zoning in particular–to support currently operating and future establishment of urban agriculture.
    - City concerns about tax implications of urban agriculture were dispelled by the study, which asserted that urban agriculture would have negligible impacts on tax receipts for the city and county. Most major municipalities in the U.S. offer urban agriculture parcels in the city either full tax abatement, partial tax abatement, or tax rates used for agriculture elsewhere in the state (Meenar 2017).
    - Actions clarified or created 'farmers market' and 'agriculture' definitions and standards dependent on size, and established farmers markets and agriculture as permitted or conditional principal uses in residential, business, and industrial zoning districts.
- Although many barriers were removed, the study did not have the authority to institute cross-department communication and collaboration that would actually have facilitated effective response to the community feedback asking for more UA.
- Listening sessions by the St. Paul Ramsey County Food and Nutrition Commission in 2017-2018 and the Ramsey County COVID Food Security Response coordination in 2020-2021 heard strong calls for land for growing food and many complaints about the number of different offices with distributed power to block but not facilitate garden initiation (for example on vacant or publicly owned lots).

CHALLENGES/BARRIERS:

- To have a garden in a park, groups must apply and submit a proposal, cover all costs associated with site requirements, provide comprehensive general liability insurance, maintain the space according to predetermined aesthetic standards, submit annual reports, hold an approved educational event at least once a year, and must be non-profit. (In addition, existing leases for farms in parks require lease rents at a percentage of all income, unrealistically anticipating profitability from what should probably instead be considered a public educational and programming service.)
- It is likely that the demand for space to grow food–particularly in public places for people without private yards–is not met by current conditions.
- Public nuisance regulations may restrict urban agriculture activities, for example, composting, keeping livestock, storing equipment, and planting in particular areas of a yard.
- The process of obtaining permits to keep animals, to have gardens greater than 1 acre, or farmers markets with greater than 5 vendors may be time-consuming, confusing, and costly.
- Accessing water outside of water turn on and off dates is prohibited, which restricts season extension. Accessing hydrants in the absence of other water sources requires submitting an application, getting/renewing a permit every 30 days, paying a cash deposit of $1000 in advance, and charges for water use.
- Prohibiting people from disturbing public trees and vegetation prevents residents from participating in and benefiting from collective food production in public places like city parks.
- Building fences greater than 7 feet requires obtaining a building permit.

OPPORTUNITIES:

- Allowing urban agriculture in parks is encouraged, however instead of requiring external groups to do the labor of organizing and acquiring the resources necessary to establish community food production, the parks department itself should provide these services. For residents, this would decrease bureaucracy navigation, time, and resource barriers and allow people who are not associated with a group access to space for food cultivation.
- Ensure that the number of public garden plots and other food cultivation spaces meets demand. Create and support long-term opportunities for people to grow food in city parks, at schools or churches, or other in public spaces for little/no cost to residents.
- Urban agriculture requires infrastructure, equipment, and plants that might not be common in the city and may not meet public nuisance regulations, but are not having a negative impact on the public. Consider potential benefits of the infrastructure/plants when evaluating these cases.
- Decrease permit fees and provide residents with resources to aid them in obtaining permits relevant to urban agriculture.
- Decrease barriers to water access by allowing residents to get permission to access water past turn on and off dates to extend the growing season and by lowering hydrant deposit, permit, and rental fees.
- Adjust public vegetation regulations to facilitate collective food production and consumption in public spaces while still protecting other vegetation and structures.
- Develop standards for fences that will allow growers to construct tall garden fences without obtaining a permit, or make the process of obtaining a permit more straightforward and less costly.
- Continue allowing residents to compost, plant in rights-of-way, sell produce without a permit on their parcel, keep animals, and practice urban agriculture in any zoning district.

ATTACHMENTS:

- St. Paul City Code
- St. Paul Zoning Permits and Land Uses (Farmers' Markets, Fence Requirements, Urban Agriculture)
- St. Paul Gardening Policy
- St. Paul Parks Community Food Production Policy
- Find your zoning district: View the interactive Saint Paul Zoning Districts map
- Contact for zoning questions: Planning and Economic Development

Shoreview: Mechanisms Facilitating and Discouraging Urban Agriculture

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Purpose: This memo provides an overview of the main mechanisms facilitating and discouraging food cultivation in Shoreview policies and practices.

KEY POINTS BASED ON A 2022 REVIEW:

- The City of Shoreview has a farmers' market and supports the Shoreview Community Garden Club, which has gardening and horticulture programming. Shoreview does not appear to have city-supported public spaces where residents can grow food.
- Shoreview's zoning code includes urban agriculture through allowing gardening in the floodway district and urban container farming as a secondary use in the industrial district. Residents are allowed to keep chickens, bees, and pigs in a number of residential properties if standards are met.
- The City of Shoreview does not seem to have plans to incorporate urban agriculture into its landscape based on its comprehensive plan, although it does intend to continue supporting gardening programming through the Shoreview Community Garden Club. Urban agriculture could contribute to meeting the city's goal of supporting community health through land uses that improve opportunities for physical activities and access to healthy food, social services, and the environment.

BACKGROUND:

Shoreview Urban Agriculture Policy Table			
Compost	**Water Access**	**Fowl/Livestock**	**Bees**
Yard waste shall be disposed of in reasonable time by composting in proper manner, hauling to composting site, or bagging/containing until waste pick up. Composting areas must	1) Between 5/15 and 9/15, garden watering permitted on even/odd address basis; garden watering not permitted 11am-5pm; attended water uses or hand-watering of plants and gardens permitted at	1) Chickens may be kept in RE and R1 properties if <2 acres, max 4 hen chickens; if >2 acres, requires conditional use permit for >4 hen chickens 2) Keeping of pigs	Bee hives may be kept in RE and R1 properties with license and proof of keeper training

be in rear yard (10′ from property line, 30′ from adjoining residence)	all times 2) Hydrant use requires a permit, deposit, and charges	requires license (2 years)	
Sale of Products	**Land Disturbance**	**Fences**	**Equipment Storage**
Selling of farm or garden products allowed without permit/license by cultivator		Fences require a building permit	All materials and equipment shall be stored in approved, fully enclosed structure
Right-of-way	**Vegetation Regulation**	**UA as Nuisance**	
Gardens allowed in right-of-way without a permit but growers must register with the city	No person shall pick any cultivated flowers or fruit or in any manner injure any tree, plant, shrub, flower, flower bed, or turf at public facilities	Considered nuisance: 1) On corner lot, any planting that may obscure view within 15′ of intersecting right-of-way lines 2) Accumulation of debris 3) Rank growth greater than 9″ on private/public land, non-woody vegetation greater than 18″ on vacant land	

Shoreview Urban Agriculture Zoning Table	
Farming/Gardening	
Outdoor plant nurseries and horticulture, gardens: Permitted use in floodway district **Urban container farming**: Conditional use in industrial (I) district (Hydroponics only as secondary use)	
Accessory Structures	**Sale of Products**
Accessory structures: Permitted use in detached residential (R1), commercial (C1A, C1, C2), and industrial (I) districts; and in the mobile home residential district (R4) if approved in development plan	**Sale of produce with consent of lot owner**: Permitted use in residential districts
Fowl/Livestock	**Compost**
Keeping of chickens and bees: Permitted use in detached residential (R1), lots less than 2 acres require license **Keeping of non-domestic animals**: Permitted use in detached residential (R1), if lot greater than 2 acres, may require conditional use permit	

- Shoreview Farmers' Market
    - The outdoor farmers' market occurs on Tuesday afternoons from June to October in the lower parking lot at the community center.

    - The indoor farmers' market occurs on select Tuesdays in the upper level of the community center.
    - The city encourages residents to shop at the farmers' market with a frequent shopper program.
- Shoreview Community Garden Club
    - The Shoreview Community Garden Club educates members about gardening and horticulture, hosts member meals, holds a public plant sale, and runs/participates in garden tours.
    - Meetings are held monthly on Wednesdays at the community center. The public (non-members) is invited to attend for a minimal charge.

CHALLENGES/BARRIERS:

- There is not any public space for people to grow food if they do not have access to a private yard.
- Public nuisance regulations may restrict urban agriculture activities, for example, composting, keeping livestock, and planting in particular areas of a yard.
- Prohibiting people from disturbing public trees and vegetation prevents residents from participating in and benefiting from collective food production in public places like city parks.
- Keeping of animals is limited to chickens, bees, and pigs. Keeping chickens and bees on a lot less than 2 acres requires a permit, while keeping pigs is not allowed on a lot less than 2 acres.
- Accessing hydrants in the absence of other water sources requires a permit, deposit, and other costly charges.
- Requiring materials and equipment to be stored in fully enclosed structures might serve as a barrier to growers in urban areas. It is unclear whether accessory structures, which are only permitted in specific districts and must meet standards, are allowed on lots without a principal structure. If a grower cannot have or build an accessory structure on an agricultural lot, they will encounter storage difficulties.
- Building fences requires obtaining a building permit.

OPPORTUNITIES:

- Incorporate urban agriculture into public/institutional open spaces, for example at schools, city parks, outdoor recreation areas, on the edge of trails, and at the community center commons.
- Urban agriculture requires infrastructure and plants that may not be common in the city and may not meet public nuisance regulations, but generally would not have a negative impact on the public. Consider potential benefits of the infrastructure/plant growth when evaluating these cases.
- Adjust public vegetation regulations to facilitate collective food production and consumption in public spaces while still protecting other vegetation and structures.
- Make keeping chickens, pigs, and bees more accessible by making lot size and licensing requirements less stringent.
- Decrease barriers to water access through lower hydrant permit, deposit, and rental fees.

- Allow growers to keep seasonal material and equipment outdoors on their lot. Allow storage sheds on any parcel without requiring a principal structure.
- Develop standards for fences that will allow growers to construct garden fences without obtaining a permit, or make the process of obtaining a permit more straightforward and less costly.
- Continue supporting the garden club, holding the farmers' market, permitting gardens in the right-of-way, allowing growers to sell products without a permit, and practicing intergovernmental coordination.

ATTACHMENTS:

- Shoreview City Code
- Shoreview Farmers' Market
- Shoreview Community Garden Club
- Find your zoning district: Zoning Map
- Contact for zoning questions: Community Development

Spring Lake Park: Mechanisms Facilitating and Discouraging Urban Agriculture

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Purpose: This memo provides an overview of the main mechanisms facilitating and discouraging food cultivation in Spring Lake Park policies and practices.

KEY POINTS BASED ON A 2022 REVIEW:

- The City of Spring Lake Park has a raised-bed community garden in Sanburnol Park where residents can grow food.
- Spring Lake Park's zoning code is unclear about where urban agriculture can be practiced aside from in the floodplain district and in greenhouses in C-2 zoned neighborhood and service commercial district. Storage sheds and compost are allowed in residential districts, while fowl and livestock appear to be considered a nuisance in all zoning districts.
- Despite supporting a community garden in one of its parks, the City of Spring Lake Park does not include urban agriculture in its comprehensive plan. Urban agriculture can provide city residents with opportunities for active living, and community building through gathering places and programming.

BACKGROUND:

Spring Lake Park Urban Agriculture Policy Table			
Compost	**Water Access**	**Fowl/Livestock**	**Bees**
Single-family or multiple-family dwelling must meet standards to engage in composting yard waste, fruit / vegetable waste, or coffee grounds	Agricultural land is exempt from mandatory restrictions on water use during water deficiency	1) Keeping of fowl considered public nuisance 2) Keeping of livestock considered public nuisance	

Sale of Products	Land Disturbance	Fences	Equipment Storage
	Tilling, planting, or harvesting of agricultural, horticultural, or forestry crops does not require permit for land disturbing activities	All fences require a permit granted by the Building Inspector. Process includes written application describing the type of fence to be constructed, the material to be used, height, and exact location of the fence	
Right-of-way	**Vegetation Regulation**	**UA as Nuisance**	
Permit required	No person shall mark, deface, or injure fences, trees, or lawns	Considered nuisance: 1) Accumulations of manure or rubbish; garbage cans which are not rodent-free or fly-tight; exposed accumulation of decayed or unwholesome food or vegetable matter 2) Rank growths 3) Keeping of fowl or livestock 4) All trees, hedges, or other obstructions which prevent people's view of traffic at an intersection	

Spring Lake Park Urban Agriculture Zoning Table	
Farming/Gardening	
Gardens, general farming, farm fences: Permitted use in Floodplain district **Greenhouses, nurseries**: Permitted use in neighborhood & service center commercial district (C-2)	
Accessory Structures	**Sale of Products**
Tool house, shed, storage: Considered an accessory use in R-1, R-2, R-3 (all residential districts)	
Fowl/Livestock	**Compost**
Fowl/Livestock: Considered nuisance in all zoning districts	**Compost**: Permitted use in R-1, R-2, R-3 (all residential districts)

- Community garden
    - Spring Lake Park has a community garden in Sanburnol Park with 4'x8' raised-beds.
    - Plots cost $20/year, priority is given to returning gardeners, then assignment is based on a first-come, first-served basis.

CHALLENGES/BARRIERS:

- Public nuisance regulations may restrict urban agriculture activities, for example, composting, keeping fowl/livestock, building fences, and planting in particular areas of a yard.
- Fowl, livestock, and bees are considered a nuisance and are not allowed anywhere in the city.
- Residents are not allowed to plant in rights-of-way.
- There is little public space for people to grow food if they do not have access to a private yard.
- Constructing fences requires obtaining a building permit.
- Prohibiting people from disturbing public trees and vegetation prevents residents from participating in and benefiting from collective food production in public places like city parks.

OPPORTUNITIES:

- Urban agriculture requires infrastructure and plants that may not be common in the city and may not meet public nuisance regulations, but generally would not have a negative impact on the public. Consider potential benefits of the infrastructure/plant growth when evaluating these cases.
- Permitting the keeping of fowl, livestock, and bees can be done without compromising the well-being and safety of residents and the environment. Consider adding standards for keeping these animals into city code.
- Allow residents to utilize the right-of-way to grow food.
- Consider incorporating more urban agriculture into public/institutional open spaces, for example, expanding the existing community garden, or adding urban agriculture into other city parks or at a school.
- Develop standards for fences that will allow growers to construct garden fences without obtaining a permit or make the process of obtaining a permit more straightforward and less costly.
- Adjust public vegetation regulations to facilitate collective food production and consumption in public spaces while still protecting other vegetation and structures.
- Continue making urban agriculture exempt from water use restrictions, permitting composting in residential districts, and allowing gardening without a land disturbance permit.

ATTACHMENTS:

- Spring Lake Park City Code
- Spring Lake Park Community Garden
- Find your zoning district: Official Zoning Map
- Contact for zoning questions: Code Enforcement

Vadnais Heights: Mechanisms Facilitating and Obstructing Urban Agriculture

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Purpose: This memo provides an overview of the main mechanisms facilitating and obstructing food land access in Vadnais Heights city policies and practices.

KEY POINTS BASED ON A 2022 REVIEW:

- Vadnais Heights city code allows for residents to practice urban agriculture through residential gardens, greenhouses, keeping chickens, and beekeeping. Vadnais Heights has had a farmers market in the past, but did not in 2022 and it is unclear whether it will run in the future.
- Gardens, agriculture, and greenhouses (and structures associated with these), as well as general farming, pasture, grazing, outdoor plant nurseries, horticulture, tree farms, truck farming, forestry, sod farming, and wild crop harvesting, are all named as land uses allowed in the floodplain and flood fringe districts. Crop farming, greenhouses, and keeping chickens and bees are also allowed in most residential districts.
- In its comprehensive plan, Vadnais Heights includes "encouraging and supporting urban food cultivation" as a priority, however it is part of a goal to "attract and maintain businesses and developments that will offer a variety of jobs" in the plan's economic competitiveness section. While economic development is an important benefit of urban food cultivation, the city should expand support to community agriculture and other benefits of growing food, not just commodity agriculture.

BACKGROUND

Vadnais Heights Urban Agriculture Policy Table			
Compost	**Water Access**	**Fowl/Livestock**	**Bees**
Compost piles are allowed. Refuse must be kept in rear yard in waterproof, fly-tight container	1) Garden sprinkling limited between 6/1-9/15. During water usage bans or limitations, property owners with recent plantings may request a waiver from the city engineer 2) Hydrant use requires an	Chickens allowed as an accessory use with a permit in R-1 district if meet standards	Beekeeping is an allowed conditional use in R-1 if it meets standards

	application for permit, a deposit, and rental charges 3) Turning on or off the water supply requires city administration permission; water cannot be used for any purpose except upon resident premises unless consent is obtained from city		
Sale of Products	**Land Disturbance**	**Fences**	**Equipment Storage**
Selling of eggs, honey, or other produce not permitted on site; farmers selling their own products are exempt from licensing and registration	Tilling, planting, harvesting, gardening are not considered land disturbance activities	Fence permit not required for farms; for residential lots that are not a farm, no boundary fences >6′, front yard fences must be <4′, all fences 25% open, for corner lots all plantings and fences <30″ in defined triangular area	Outside storage of vehicles, equipment or materials are considered a nonconforming use (a use legally existing prior to the enactment of a Code provision prohibiting such use)
Right-of-way	**Vegetation Regulation**	**UA as Nuisance**	
Boulevard plantings and gardens are allowed in right-of-way	No person shall climb any tree or remove, damage or deface any statue, ornament, cultivated tree, plant, flower, flowerbed, turf or any structure	Considered a nuisance: 1) Noxious weeds or grass >10″ 2) Accumulation of trash or debris of any nature 3) Noxious fumes 4) Unauthorized signs	

Vadnais Heights Urban Agriculture Zoning Table
Farming/Gardening
Crop or truck farming: Permitted use in residence one (R-1), residence two (R-2), and residence three (R-3) districts (all residential districts) **Gardening, agriculture, general farming**: Permitted use in floodway, flood fringe **Greenhouse**: Permitted use in residence one through three (R-1, R-2, R-3), and commercial two (C-2), commercial two-a (C-2A), commercial three (C-3), and waterworks district; Accessory use in commercial one district (C-1)

Accessory Structures	Sale of Products
Accessory Structures (up to 200 square feet for the storage of domestic supplies, <3 structures per lot): Accessory use in residence one through three (R-1, R-2, R-3) and flood fringe districts	**Sale of products:** Accessory use in residence one through three (R-1, R-2, R-3) districts
Fowl/Livestock	**Compost**
Chicken keeping: Accessory use in residence one through three (R-1, R-2, R-3) districts **Beekeeping:** Conditional use in residence one and residence two districts (R-1, R-2)	

- Vadnais Heights has focused on protecting adjacent rural farms from urbanization, and has provided some policies designed to support commodity farming, but has largely not included community agriculture in its definition of agricultural land for protection -- this is particularly notable in the way that produce for consumption by those who have grown it is explicitly excluded from agricultural protections.
- Recent programming through Vadnais Heights Parks may be providing attention to urban food production within the built up area. This Parks programming could help more residents get involved in sharing knowledge and activities related to urban food cultivation in a municipality with land that has been designated as sensitive to flooding, in the floodplain.

CHALLENGES/BARRIERS:

- The city code about urban agriculture is complicated and difficult to find, making it unclear what is allowed.
- Keeping of animals is limited to chickens and bees, both of which require an arduous and costly approval process.
- Public nuisance regulations may restrict urban agriculture activities, for example, the keeping of animals, composting, building fences, and planting in particular areas of a yard.
- Accessory structures are only allowed in some districts and it is unclear which districts composting is permitted in.
- Selling produce on site is prohibited in most districts.
- Prohibiting people from disturbing public trees and vegetation prevents residents from participating in and benefiting from collective food production in public places.
- Accessing water outside of water turn on and off dates requires getting permission which may restrict season extension, while accessing hydrants in the absence of other water sources requires a permit and is costly.
- There is potential that watering crops will be limited during water emergencies.
- There are not any spaces for people without private yards to practice urban agriculture in the city.

OPPORTUNITIES:

- The city code could provide greater detail about regulations related to urban agriculture to make it clearer to residents what activities (gardening, composting, etc.) are allowed and where they are allowed (residential areas, rights-of-way, etc.).
- Consider adjusting or adding clearer and less strict standards for keeping fowl, livestock, and bees into city code so residents can keep these animals in a way that is suited to the community.
- Urban agriculture requires infrastructure and plants that may not be common in the city and may not meet public nuisance regulations, but would not have a negative impact on the public. Consider potential benefits of the infrastructure/plant growth when evaluating these cases.
- Allow accessory structures in all districts and address composting more clearly in zoning code.
- Allow growers to sell produce on the site where it was grown.
- Adjust public vegetation regulations to facilitate collective food production and consumption in public spaces while still protecting other vegetation and structures.
- Be more flexible with water turn on and off dates to extend the growing season and decrease barriers to water access through lower hydrant deposit fees and rental charges.
- Make watering crops or other agricultural water uses exempt from municipal water use restrictions or limitations in appropriate cases (such as growing food for community consumption).
- Follow through on the ongoing goal to support urban agriculture–including a community garden–and commit to creating further opportunities to grow food in city parks or other public spaces for little/no cost to residents.
- Continue allowing residents to grow food in the city and in rights-of-way, keep chickens and bees, and compost.

ATTACHMENTS:

- Vadnais Heights City Code
- Vadnais Heights Zoning Code
- Find your zoning district: Zoning Map
- Contact for zoning questions: Community Development & Building

White Bear Lake: Mechanisms Facilitating and Discouraging Urban Agriculture

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Purpose: This memo provides an overview of the main mechanisms facilitating and discouraging food cultivation in White Bear Lake policies and practices.

KEY POINTS BASED ON A 2022 REVIEW:

- The City of White Bear Lake appears to have a community garden at a local church with plots that are open to the public to rent; the White Bear Area YMCA also rents raised beds in their community garden. The city also has a longstanding farmers' market with more than 50 vendors. Despite ample green space, there do not appear to be any other city-supported urban agriculture activities in White Bear Lake. White Bear Lake has a food scraps collection site operated by Ramsey County where residents can bring their food scraps, which will be made into compost.
- White Bear Lake zoning code allows farming and agriculture-related structures in most zoning districts; however, "farming" only applies to agriculture taking place at a scale of 10 acres or greater. Since urban agriculture often takes place at a smaller scale, it is unclear whether it is also allowed in those districts. Greenhouses and storage sheds are allowed as an accessory use in many districts. Depending on the situation, chickens and bees are either permitted or a conditional use in some residential districts.
- In its comprehensive plan, White Bear Lake aims to incorporate urban agriculture into the city. It names vegetable stands, farmers' markets, community supported agriculture, and community gardens as important components of healthy living and food access. The city values the existing community garden and farmers' market for building community. White Bear Lake is also considering revising code to allow the keeping of bees and chickens on school properties, expanding to allowing ducks and turkeys, and the keeping of bees on commercial and industrial properties.

BACKGROUND:

White Bear Lake Urban Agriculture Policy Table			
Compost	**Water Access**	**Fowl/Livestock**	**Bees**

Composting permitted in residential properties (up to 4 units), but must be in enclosed container in rear yard	Outdoor irrigation regulations do not apply to fruit and vegetable gardens during critical water deficiency	Keeping of chickens allowed with license and zoning permit	Keeping of bees allowed with license (5 year) [requires training course, liability insurance]
Sale of Products	**Land Disturbance**	**Fences**	**Equipment Storage**
Selling of farm or garden products allowed without permit/license by cultivator		Fences require a building or zoning permit from the city Building Official (in R-MH district)	
Right-of-way	**Vegetation Regulation**	**UA as Nuisance**	
Gardens allowed in right-of-way without permit	No person shall: 1) Pick, cut, break, or injure any wild or cultivated plant in any public park 2) Carry within or out of any public park any wild flower, tree, shrub, plant or any newly plucked branch or portion thereof or any soil or other material belonging in or pertaining to such park	Considered nuisance: 1) No plantings greater than 36" permitted in area that will block view of traffic	

White Bear Lake Urban Agriculture Zoning Table	
Farming/Gardening	
Farming: Permitted use in all residential (R-1S, R-2, R-3, R-4, R-5, R-6, R-7, R-B, R-MH, PZ-R), open space (O), and wetlands overlay (W) districts *Farming/agricultural use for larger-scale agriculture (agriculture less than 10 acres considered "hobby farm")	
Accessory Structures	**Sale of Products**
Agricultural-related buildings and structures: Permitted use in all residential (R-1S, R-2, R-3, R-4, R-5, R-6, R-7, R-B, R-MH, PZ-R) and open space (O) districts **Non-commercial greenhouses and conservatories; tool houses, sheds, storage buildings**: Accessory use in all residential districts (R-1S, R-2, R-3, R-4, R-5, R-6, R-7, R-B, R-MH,	

PZ-R)	
Fowl/Livestock	**Compost**
Hens: Permitted or conditional use in low density single family - shoreland (R-1S), and single family residential (R-2) districts **Bees**: Permitted or conditional use: in low density single family - shoreland (R-1S), and single family residential (R-2) districts	

- White Bear Lake Farmers' Market
    - The market, which has more than 50 vendors, runs from 8am-12pm from the end of June to the end of October.
    - The farmers' market accepts vouchers.
- White Bear Lake United Methodist Church - Community Garden Plots
    - Community garden plots are open for members of the public to rent for $20/plot with a limit of 2 plots.

CHALLENGES/BARRIERS:

- There is limited public space for people to grow food if they do not have access to a private yard.
- Farming and agricultural activities apply only to lots greater than 10 acres. Any agricultural land uses on lots less than 10 acres are considered hobby farms.
- Public nuisance regulations may restrict urban agriculture activities, for example, composting, keeping livestock, and planting in particular areas of a yard.
- Keeping of chickens is limited to single and two-family residential properties and requires obtaining a zoning permit and meeting standards, while keeping of bees requires obtaining license and meeting standards.
- Prohibiting people from disturbing vegetation at parks may set a precedent that prevents residents from participating in and benefiting from collective food production in other public places.

OPPORTUNITIES:

- Incorporate urban agriculture into public/institutional open spaces, for example at a school, city parks, nature preserves, and outdoor recreation areas.
- Redefine farming and agricultural activities to include small-scale agriculture to acknowledge, include, and support urban agriculture in city code.
- Urban agriculture requires infrastructure and plants that may not be common in the city and may not meet public nuisance regulations, but generally would not have a negative impact on the public. Consider potential benefits of the infrastructure/plant growth when evaluating these cases. For example, allow composting in the open and in spots other than the rear yard if it does not create a nuisance.

- Alter code to allow the keeping of chickens and bees in more zoning districts and make standards and the process of getting permission to keep animals less arduous and costly. Expand the code to allow other appropriate livestock.
- Adjust public vegetation regulations to facilitate collective food production and consumption in public spaces while still protecting other vegetation and structures.
- Continue allowing the watering of agricultural vegetation during water deficiency, gardening in rights-of-way, selling of produce without a permit by cultivators, agricultural activities in most zoning districts, the keeping of chickens and bees, and composting in residential areas.

ATTACHMENTS:

- White Bear Lake Municipal Code
- White Bear Lake Farmers' Market
- Community garden plots at White Bear Lake UMC Church - WBLUMC; YMCA community garden plots, call: 651-777-8103
- Find your zoning district: Interactive Zoning Map
- Contact for zoning questions: Community Development

White Bear Township: Mechanisms Facilitating and Discouraging Urban Agriculture

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Purpose: This memo provides an overview of the main mechanisms facilitating and discouraging food cultivation in White Bear Township's policies and practices.

KEY POINTS BASED ON A 2022 REVIEW:

- Likely because of its suburban location, White Bear Township has a generally traditional framework for its concept of agriculture, requiring relatively large areas of suitable, undeveloped land and a rigorous permitting process for a growing operation to be considered true agriculture and gain the benefits of agricultural policies. It would be helpful to any prospective urban growers there if code were amended to include a wider range of agricultural practices.
- Currently, growing operations within residential areas need to be at least two acres to be considered agriculture by the municipality, which could hamper the efforts of those growing on a smaller scale within a neighborhood or attempting to establish a garden adjacent to a community building or group living situation.
- Based on White Bear Township's direct proximity to White Bear Lake, if at all possible, it would be logical for benefits or incentives initiated in either to carry over to the other, allowing growers to network growing and selling efforts.

BACKGROUND:

White Bear Township Urban Agriculture Policy Table			
Compost	**Water Access**	**Fowl/Livestock**	**Bees**
Composting is permitted only in residential properties of up to four units. No herbicide or pesticide is to be	No unauthorized person shall operate a water curb stop connected to the Town's water system. Hydrant use requires deposit, permit fee, rental fee.	Allowed. Includes, but not limited to: cows, goats, horses, sheep, swine, and other hoofed animals, but there are no specific standards. Animals must be contained	Allowed but no specific standards.

used on compost.		by a sturdy wood, metal, or electrical fence. Pens or corrals shall contain at least 800 square feet per animal including a stable under roof of at least 100 square feet per animal unit. The pen or corral shall be no closer than 100 feet from any structure other than the applicant's.	
Sale of Products	**Land Disturbance**	**Fences**	**Equipment Storage**
No license shall be required for any person to sell or attempt to sell, or to take or attempt to take orders for, any product grown, produced, cultivated or raised on any farm.	Any 'land disturbing activity' must be approved by the Township. A permit is required for tree planting and installation of irrigation systems. No person shall plant or cause to be planted in a public space any wild cultivated or exotic tree, shrub, or plant except in specifically designated areas with the written permission of the Town Board. Land disturbance activity does not include tilling, planting, or harvesting of agricultural, horticultural, or silvicultural crops.	Fences, when constructed to enclose or screen any lot or tract of land or part thereof, shall be erected in such a manner as to be in compliance with the provisions of this Ordinance (depends on zoning district, etc.) Except for lands used for agricultural purposes, no barbed wire fence or portion thereof is to be erected within the Town of White Bear.	There shall be no exterior storage of equipment or materials used in the home occupation, except personal vehicles. A permit for an individual garage exceeding 1,000 square feet in area, but no larger than 2,500 attached or detached, or an individual accessory building shall be obtained. Such permit may be applied for where the property is in agricultural use or about agricultural zoning. Pole barns shall be allowed on agriculturally used property or on property which abuts agricultural zoned property in a surrounding community.
Right-of-way	**Vegetation Regulation**	**UA as Nuisance**	

		Accumulations of manure or rubbish; garbage cans which are not fly-tight; rank growths. Any domestic animal which habitually or frequently barks or cries, frequents school grounds, parks or public benches, chases vehicles, molests or annoys any person away from the property, is repeatedly at large or attacks other animals. Weeds, grass, brush, or other rank vegetation of an average height greater than 8 inches.

White Bear Township Urban Agriculture Zoning Table	
Farming/Gardening	
General farming, gardening: Agricultural operations may occur on tracts of two acres or more, not including the minimum lot area required in the suburban residential district (R-1). (In other words, one must currently have two acres in addition to the minimum area required for the housing lot in order to farm.) Agricultural operations may include the production and storage of farm crops, as well as the keeping of domestic farm animals.	
Accessory Structures	**Sale of Products**
Accessory structures: Every single family dwelling shall be permitted to have one garage, attached or detached, and one accessory building auxiliary to the single family dwelling.	**Sale of produce with consent of property owner**: No license shall be required for any person to sell or attempt to sell, or to take or attempt to take orders for, any product grown, produced, cultivated, or raised on any farm.
Fowl/Livestock	**Compost**
Keeping of chickens and bees: The raising or keeping of livestock is permitted only if there are a minimum of two (2) acres fenced property available. The ratio of livestock shall not exceed four (4) animal units per each two (2) acres. **Keeping of non-domestic animals**: The fenced tract where animals are pastured shall be enclosed by a sturdy wood, metal or electrical fence which will keep the animal or animals confined therein. Pens or corrals shall contain at least 800 square feet per animal including a stable under roof of at least 100 square feet per animal unit. The pen or corral shall be no closer	**Composting**: Composting is permitted only in residential properties of up to four units.

than 100 feet from any structure, other than the applicants, which is used for residential purposes, and shall be so located as not to create a nuisance to neighbors or the public.	

- As it stands, there are no specific municipality-supported community urban food cultivation projects in the Township. It is possible that interested residents are growing at the nearby church-based White Bear Lake community garden, however, there are ample spaces within the Township that could potentially be utilized for growing.

CHALLENGES/BARRIERS:

- There are not many opportunities for those in the Township with an interest in smaller than two acre growing operations. At least two acres of land (in addition to the minimum lot area required for a house) are required for an operation to be considered agriculture, and at least two acres of fenced land are required for livestock husbandry.
- Public nuisance regulations may restrict urban agriculture activities, for example, composting, keeping livestock, and planting in particular areas of a yard.
- Composting is permitted only in residential properties of up to four units, which could be a barrier to those in group housing situations wishing to set up a sustainable growing process.

OPPORTUNITIES:

- There is a policy written into the township's code that states no license shall be required for any person to sell or attempt to sell, or to take or attempt to take orders for, any product grown, produced, cultivated or raised on any farm. This could be supportive and empowering for urban growers, especially if policy could better support urban agriculture operations.
- Incorporate urban agriculture into public/institutional open spaces, for example at a school, parks, nature preserves, and outdoor recreation areas. Furthermore, allow community gardens where anyone can grow food on private land as a permanent use.

ATTACHMENTS:

- White Bear Township Ordinances
- Find your zoning district: Zoning Map
- Contact for zoning questions: Planning & Community Development

Appendix Q: Incorporating Urban Food Cultivation in Open Space Stewardship

In 2022, the Ramsey County Open Space Work Team produced a report, *Open Space Access Assessment Report* (OSR), to guide County staff in increasing access to open space in the county, which was acknowledged as an ongoing need. The report outlined existing open space and gaps in access to open space, then recognized “underutilized” space that could be repurposed to fill those gaps, and provided recommendations for realizing County open space goals. As part of the parallel process of reviewing urban food cultivation opportunities and barriers, TCALT was asked to review the May 26 draft version of the Open Space report, and met with many members of the Work Team to compare findings and align recommendations to facilitate straightforward implementation. Many of the opportunities and recommendations drawn from the open space analyses already aligned with TCALT’s assessment of land access for urban agriculture in the county; however, the Open Spaces group had not considered urban food cultivation as a potential open space land use. TCALT had the opportunity to present some suggestions (all recommendations we posed are included below, including conceptual changes and language edits) to the Work Team about how to make the report inclusive and supportive of urban agriculture. Work Team leadership was receptive to TCALT feedback, agreeing to incorporate the changes documented below. Unfortunately, directly after this, the work group experienced high staff turnover and disbanded before these adjustments were made to the final Open Space Access Assessment report. Despite this challenge, the interfacing between the Urban Food Cultivation team and the Open Space Work Team demonstrates a promising future for integrating urban food cultivation into regular county plans and processes, particularly through the straightforward addition of community food cultivation to the working list of open spaces as "park, recreational, and/or natural areas."

Specific Changes to Language and Text

Framing

- intro: "recreation and conservation" can be broadened to ”recreation, conservation, and other open space activities" (or “open space amenity uses). There currently isn't much active engagement with the greenspaces acknowledged/ encouraged, and there’s a tendency to treat food cultivation as a niche interest like “rose gardening.”
- "food cultivation” can be added to the list "park, recreational and/or natural areas"
- make clear that such uses are included in "open space amenity uses" by mentioning it one more time in the list (with pocket parks) as "community gardens and farms"
- in recommendation b3, include mention of urban food cultivation as a non-niche open space land use engagement strategy
- urban food cultivation can be added to the recommendation and framing language of "open space, parks, and trails"
- "community food production" can be added in the list after housing in the Expansion and linkage section

- Part iii: in the underutilized section, note that food cultivation has been advocated on at least half of these sites - not exclusively, but the process of negotiating what urban food cultivation land uses meet community open space goals could help identify a range of ways the county could supplement open space (via better use of tax assessment tools like Green Acres or other incentives)

Conceptual Changes/Additions

Opportunities

- **General comments:** There is a tension between initial framing of open space as raising property values (and hence contributing to gentrification and displacement) and equity; including urban food cultivation could help address this by including substantive ways that residents engage in co-stewardship of open spaces in ways that have been demonstrated to also increase their participation in planning and other supports for community stability, housing provision across a range of affordability options, and basic needs provision. Additionally, the report could be meaningfully leveraged to connect and support other initiatives that the County seeks to meet, including non-recreational existing and emerging needs for land such as housing, economic development. Including urban agriculture in processes and planning supports Ramsey County food security efforts and repeated demonstrations of space for urban food cultivation and community stewardship of land as related emerging needs.
- **Land access facilitation**: In the proposed public inventory of underutilized land (OSR: Part III), it would be helpful to include information about underutilized land suitable for urban agriculture. Similarly, you could include urban agriculture in existing and developing parks and open space, particularly in “park deserts” (OSR: Part II) since urban agriculture can help ameliorate a number of equity challenges, especially when on public land.
- **Policy update/pattern change:** When creating a public overview of types of resources available and agencies that manage them (OSR: Part I), expand regular information-sharing procedures to all prominent land-holding agencies in the county and establish clear, consistent, and common pathways for the public to access land for food cultivation (OSR: Part III). Saint Paul district councils are interacting with the city Housing and Redevelopment Authority, could the Open Space committee recommend a straightforward and parallel process? It may be useful to develop trainings that help staff understand that land for food production is relevant to their work. Finally, revise any inhibitive provisions with county origins to be supportive of urban agriculture rather than inhibitive or restrictive (for example, advocating for property tax exemption/abatement or changes to the Green Acres tax deferment process).

It would be helpful to identify some of the venues for planning, assessment, and repurposing where these pattern changes can be encouraged. Are there opportunities TCALT and partners (such as the new federal USDA Urban Agriculture Service Center) could help support - trainings, planning for community engagement, etc.?

Appendix R: Illustrated Guide to Resources and Resource List

Welcome & instructions for how to use the illustrated table of contents & overview of resources for community farms & gardens

Welcome, current and future gardeners and farmers. The next page provides an overview to a collection of resources to help navigate the process of establishing and maintaining your own community farm or garden. The goal of this guide is to meet you where you are, and help get you where you want to be. The guide itself can be found at http://www.tcalt.org/resources/

- Are you and fellow community members interested in starting a garden but don't know how to start?
- Do you have a plot of land but don't know how to get other people involved?
- Are you looking for how to get access to water at your site?

Wherever you are in the process, this illustrated guide may help guide you to who to talk to, what materials you may need, and other supports and resources.

To use this guide, choose the questions that relate to your project, then refer to the associated resources in the following resource guide with more details and links.

This guide is organized around three categories of resources that correspond to important steps in establishing and maintaining a community farm or garden:

- the "seed": resources related to community farm and gardening organizing and partnership possibilities;
- the "soil": resources relating to how to find and secure land, and understand pertinent tax and insurance responsibilities and relevant policies;
- and the "plants": resources related to programming, services, and maintaining urban food cultivation sites.

Not every site's process or needs are the same; by providing this illustrated guide, our goal is to help streamline the process of matching available supports to urban food cultivation sites that need them.

Additionally, we are able to supply some information on contacts who will be important in getting support, getting approval, and getting other resources. If you locate additional resources or discover new contact information or other updates, please contact us at tcalt@tcalt.org and we will do our best to update information. If you have any additional questions not answered in this guide, or if you would be interested in co-hosting a workshop on accessing or further developing these resources, please also contact us, since our next steps in this work involve working with communities and resource holders to keep improving access processes (which still often could use some improvement). Thank you for your interest in community gardening; we are happy to support you along the way!

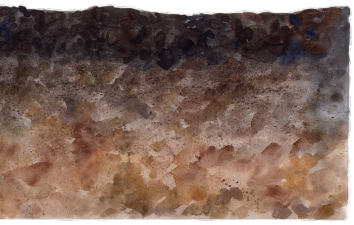
The checklist below corresponds to the categories on the following illustrated table of contents. This is provided to help you organize your notes about which resources are relevant to your project.

Note that because this is primarily a web resource, we refer to sections by section name (R1, R2, etc.) and links rather than by page number. See other side for more detail.

Section 1: The Seed.

Resources related to community farm and gardening organizing and partnership possibilities:

- ☐ 1a. Organizing the main people involved
  - ☐ Relevant pages from Gardening Matters toolkit
  - ☐ Nothing About Us Without Us
  - ☐ Excerpt resources from MDA Emerging Farmers Report
- ☐ 1b. Community engagement: Finding potential partners
- ☐ 1c. Mentorship opportunities
  - ☐ How to find existing urban agriculture communities
- ☐ 1d. Stewardship agreement
  - ☐ Agreement template for stewardship responsibilities
  - ☐ Conflict resolution guidelines
  - ☐ Other resources
  - ☐ Considering benefits beyond food offered by urban food cultivation



Section 2: The Soil.

Resources relating to how to find and secure land, and understand pertinent tax and insurance responsibilities and relevant policies:

- ☐ 2a. Identifying who owns vacant land
  - ☐ Ramsey County Interactive Tax Map
  - ☐ Ramsey County Tax Assessor's Office
  - ☐ Accessing vacant public land
    - ☐ Garden Lease Guidelines for St. Paul HRA
    - ☐ Accessing MNDot land
    - ☐ Parks Community Gardening
  - ☐ Contacting current landholders
    - ☐ St. Paul District Council Directory

- ☐ Gardening Matters Renters Talking Points
- ☐ Gardening Matters Sample Letter to the Landholder

☐ 2b. Garden locations
- ☐ Map of community gardens in Minnesota
- ☐ MN Horticultural Society Map

☐ 2c. Land suitability checklist
- ☐ Land suitability for desired plants
- ☐ Available water sources
- ☐ Site accessibility
- ☐ Garden planning and design
- ☐ Prior uses and potential hazards
- ☐ Land characteristics and land use restrictions list
  - ☐ How to get information on land use history
  - ☐ Farming and gardening restrictions
  - ☐ Accessory structures (greenhouse, hoop house, high tunnels, shed)
  - ☐ Fowl, livestock, bees
  - ☐ Compost production and/or storage
  - ☐ On-site produce sales
  - ☐ Signs, community boards

☐ 2d. City ordinances and planning standards list
- ☐ Fence
- ☐ Parking spots
- ☐ Right-of-way cultivation
- ☐ Growing or composting close to lot lines
- ☐ Reduced stormwater drainage fees

☐ 2e. Suitable land tenure agreements
- ☐ Long-term leases
- ☐ Application processes for public lands
- ☐ Key Concepts

☐ 2f. Taxes
- ☐ Tax responsibility discussion
- ☐ Strategies to reduce tax burdens
  - ☐ Property tax exemption
  - ☐ Eligibility for Green Acres (property tax relief for agricultural land)
  - ☐ Possibility for easement

☐ 2g. Insurance
- ☐ Joining district council, city, or other organization’s insurance
- ☐ Applying for premises liability and other insurance as needed
- ☐ Other Land Administration Resources

Section 3: The Plants.

Resources related to programming, services, and maintaining urban food cultivation sites:

- ☐ 3a. Getting seeds or starts
  - ☐ Minnesota Green
  - ☐ Community Free Seed Libraries
  - ☐ Ujamaa Seed
- ☐ 3b. Compost
  - ☐ Composting at home
  - ☐ Getting compost
  - ☐ Composting Infrastructure
  - ☐ Alternatives to compost
- ☐ 3c. Initial and repeated soil testing
  - ☐ Understanding soil testing
- ☐ 3d. Resources for growing
  - ☐ Planting and growing guides
  - ☐ Guía de Jardinería (CLUES)
  - ☐ Ramsey County Land Connectors (formerly/also known as Master Gardeners)
  - ☐ Season Extension Infographic
- ☐ 3e. Access to infrastructure or tools
  - ☐ MN Tool Library
  - ☐ Grants
- ☐ 3f. Other relevant resources
  - ☐ Local organizations

Extended table of contents

1b. Who can this land feed? Community engagement: Finding potential partners
Who will this growing space impact? Are people from the community involved in and actively participating in the planning and decision making for your site?

For strategies for working with potential partners, see 1b1: *Gardening Matters community garden organizers toolkit*, including many resources on practicalities of roles, responsibilities, inclusive planning, and conflict resolution, and 1b2: excerpt resources from the MDA Emerging Farmers Report and *Nothing about Us without Us*.

1c. What opportunities exist for nearby mentorship?

See resources on how to plug in to existing urban agriculture communities.
If you are interested in qualifying for potential sources of support and resources, include activities at your site that meet food cultivation benefits named by local organizations or programs. More resources in section 3!

1d. If you have found land to use, do you have a stewardship agreement or support from whoever holds the land?

Agreement templates for stewardship responsibilities and considerations for what kinds of resources may be available to support stewardship of land, water, and cultural practices of growing food.

2. *The soil.* Where will you produce food, using what kind of land access and tenure arrangement?

How to look for land / how to tell if the land is suitable to your goals (from pop-up gardens at the shortest end of the tenure spectrum to fruit trees at the longer term)

2a. What options for land are available?

To identify who owns land that appears to be vacant, see these resources:

- ☐ See the *Ramsey County Interactive Tax Map*.
- ☐ Resources for help accessing vacant **public** land.
- ☐ Resource on how to contact current land holders.

2b. To find some of the existing gardens in Minnesota, see the *Minnesota State Horticultural Society's community garden map*.

See resources for reaching out to current landholders.

2c. Is the land suitable for your short and long term goals?

See the Land suitability checklist to consider relevant questions.

See additional relevant details to consider about your land and a possible land use restrictions list to check for activities that may be restricted in your zoning district. This will help determine what to ask about or check for in the city code where your site is.

What city ordinances or planning standards apply?

2d. Are there any use restrictions for the site (zoning, easements)?

See policy table for an overview of likely policies in different locations and where to find out more.

2e. How will you secure the land tenure appropriate for what's planned on the site? See resources on long term leases on private land and available application processes for public lands.

2f. See discussion of which arrangements are responsible for taxes, and strategies used to reduce tax burdens.

2g. What kind of insurance will be needed for this growing space?

See instructions on how to check to see if a district council, municipality, or other organization will put your community farming or gardening project on their insurance, or to understand your options and what to consider if applying for liability insurance independently.

3. *The plants!* Programming / resources / services:

3a. Are you planning to grow from seed or starts? See potential sources of seeds or starts.

3b. Do you want to compost or source compost? See compost resources including obtaining compost from Ramsey County.

3c. Do you know how to test the soil (for lead, arsenic, and cadmium, as well as for pH and soil nutrients)? Resources on initial and repeated soil testing, including how to read soil test results and find which parts are relevant to you.

3d. Would you like to learn more about growing? See list of useful contacts and growing guides.

3e. Do you need access to additional infrastructure or tools? See list of places where you may be able to access tools or funding for infrastructure. See guides to grants (including MDA Urban Agriculture Grant) to view some of the named benefits of urban food cultivation.

3f. What other resources are available to help your project? See list of local organizations that may be able to help.

Urban food cultivation resource guide

The following pages are organized using the same categories as the illustrated table of contents and the checklist of resources -- see those two resources for overviews:

- resources related to community farm and gardening organizing and partnership possibilities;
- resources relating to how to find and secure land, and understand pertinent tax and insurance responsibilities and relevant policies;
- and resources related to programming, services, and maintaining urban food cultivation sites.

Section 1. *The seed* - people and partnership possibilities
Facilitation of community organizing and relationships with land and resource holders

1a. Core people involved, supportive relationships: Finding potential partners

Schools

- St. Paul Public Schools District Map
- Ramsey County School Districts
- Ramsey County Colleges, Trade Schools, and Universities

Faith Communities

- Interfaith Action - bring together volunteers, civic leaders, and interfaith clergy for opportunities that build connection and understanding and that inform effective, responsible, and systemic action.
- FaithLands - FaithLands is a growing national movement to connect and inspire faith communities to use their land in new ways that promote ecological and human health, support local food and farming, enact reparative justice, and strengthen communities. The Upper Midwest community involved in Commons Land (see http://commons.land) are connected to FaithLands initiatives and networks.

1b. Who can this land feed? Community engagement

1b1. Gardening Matters toolkit

- Developing Values and Vision for Your Garden
- Community Building Beliefs
- CG Resource Guide: Elements to Co-Creating a Local Community Garden

1b2. *Nothing About Us Without Us: Disability Oppression and Empowerment* - James Charlton (Excerpt resource from MDA Emerging Farmers Report)
Available online (Internet Archive) and for loan at the St. Paul Public Library

1c. Mentorship -- How to find existing urban agriculture communities

- Ramsey County Community Garden Map
- Community Gardeners in Minnesota
- Sustainable Farming Association - Twin Cities Growers Network
- MN Community Gardening

1d. Stewardship

1d1. Agreement template for stewardship responsibilities

- Community Garden Policy (Minneapolis Park and Recreation Board), in particular see section E and F for an example of equitable garden member application and garden management practices.
- Ground Rules: A Legal Toolkit for Community Gardens (ChangeLab Solutions, NPLAN), this toolkit contains sample garden lease, gardener's agreement, and garden rules documents.
- Community Garden Management Toolkit (Springfield Food Policy Council), see page 46 for a sample activities maintenance schedule
- Community Garden Planning Questions
- AARP Creating Community Gardens Guide and Planning Worksheets

1d2. Conflict resolution guidelines

- Establishing a shared vision, purpose, and rules in community gardens are important to create respectful, inclusive, and fulfilling public spaces.
- Sample Gardener Agreements
- GM Facilitators Tool Box
- Theft and Vandalism Guide

Other resources (**and see section 3 below for a guide to the MDA urban agriculture grant program**):

- Art of Questions
- Ten Tips on Local Advocacy
- Sample Budget Worksheet

Section 2: *The soil* - land and related tax, insurance, and policy resources + maps / general orientation]

2a. What options for land are available?

Map of Community Gardens: Minnesota State Horticultural Society Community Garden Map

2a1 - Identifying who owns vacant land

Ramsey County Interactive Tax Map

Ramsey County Tax Assessor's Office: For properties in Ramsey County, call Property Records at 651-266-2000 or visit their website.

2a2 - Accessing vacant public land

Garden Lease Guidelines for City of St. Paul HRA Land

Accessing MnDOT Land

- State statutes guide how MnDOT handles the designation and sale of surplus highway rights of way. Most units of government have real estate, land or right of way offices. A good place to start if interested in purchasing MnDOT right of way for an urban food project is to contact the MnDOT's Office of Land Management at LandSales.MN.DOT@state.mn.us.
- If a government agency is leading a garden project as a public project- they should reach out to MnDOT before nonprofit or neighborhood partners. Considerations such as the existence of environmental

reports and soil condition surveys are addressed in the FAQ, and considerations for urban soils from the EPA or MN Department of Health are good resources.
    - Another alternative to purchasing right of way is often land use agreements, leasing, permits and licenses. For most government entities, these are considered temporary and short term uses of public lands but urban food cultivation may or may not be an allowable use based on many factors. (MnDOT Community Garden Permits - at bottom under "Miscellaneous work permit special provisions" - permit has to be submitted annually)

  Accessing Parks and Recreation land St. Paul Parks and Recreation Community Gardening; Minneapolis Park and Recreation Board Gardening Program
    - Gardening policies PDF
    - Project Proposal Form

Contacting current landholders

- If you live in St. Paul, district councils may be able to help you/your group access land - St. Paul District Council Directory
- GM Renters Talking Points
- GM Sample Letter to Landholder

2b. Land suitability checklist

1. What do you want to grow and is the land identified suitable for that?
    a. University of Minnesota Extension - Yard & Garden
        i. Great resource for identifying what kind of plants you may want to grow and how to best care for them.
    b. USDA Hardiness Zones
        i. Hardiness Zones are important in determining what kind of plants will do well in your community farm or garden.(MN Horticulture Society, USDA)
    c. GM Resource Attachment III: Garden Site Evaluation
        i. Checklist of important considerations for your site
    d. Washington State University Extension
        i. Additional considerations for your site
2. What water sources, and their quality, are available to you?
    a. Hydrants located on the site of the garden site can be used with a permit.
        i. Ramsey County Hydrant Permit
    b. Rain Barrels
        i. With permission, you can also capture rainwater from adjacent properties. (UMN Extension)
    c. Drip Irrigation
        i. Drip and soaker-hose irrigation can be used in all areas of the garden for transplanted and established plants, and especially for deep-rooted fruit trees and ornamentals. (Colorado State University Extension)
    d. Residential/Commercial Property Water Agreement

        i. Ask nearby residences or businesses to access their water. A water meter attached to a spigot can be used to measure use. It is also important to discuss any fees, how it will be secured, and any other relevant concerns with the property owner.
3. Where is the site located and will that impact accessibility?
    a. Metro Transit Schedules and Maps
    b. Transit Assistance Program (Metro Transit)
    c. ACGA COMMUNITY GREENING REVIEW: The Accessible Garden
4. Garden planning and design
    a. “Gardeners should be involved in the planning, design, and setup of the garden. Involving all gardeners in making these decisions is inclusive and community-oriented. Connect with other community gardens in the area with similar visions for lessons, ideas, and relationships.” - Gardening Matters Resource Guide (2019)
    b. UMN Extension: Landscape Design
    c. Garden design charrette and considerations (Collard Greens and Common Ground pg. 13-19)
    d. Garden design resources
    e. Are raised beds right for you?
    f. Building Raised Beds (GM) (MN Horticulture Society)
5. What other challenges may arise here? What prior uses were on and what potential hazards are near your site (nearby land use, traffic, etc.), and what resources may be needed to help mitigate these (fences, soil amendment, etc.)?
    a. Process for getting soil tested for quality and safety: https://www.ramseycounty.us/your-government/projects-initiatives/urban-ag-community-gardening#tab-7-0
    b. UMN Extension soil testing & soil health videos
    c. UMN Extension Jardinería (Español) videos (soil testing, garden prep)
    d. Soil remediation - EPA Brownfields Program - prevent, assess, safely clean up, and sustainably reuse brownfields

2c. Land characteristics and land use restrictions list

1. How to get deed or find details about land history
    a. Property Tax look up
    b. Ramsey County Recorder's Office

Land use restrictions list

1. Can you farm or garden?
2. Do you want to have a greenhouse, hoop house, or high tunnel? Will you need a place to store tools?
3. Are you planning to have fowl/livestock/bees?
4. Will you make your own compost?
5. Do you plan to sell produce on site?
6. Do you need a sign/community board?

If your site is in Ramsey County, check our zoning overview table to see the rules for your food cultivation activities in the city and zoning district where your site is located. If you do not live in Ramsey County, review the city code or ask for assistance from the planning or community development office in

the city where your site is located.

If your site is located in Minneapolis, check out Homegrown Minneapolis to see rules for your food cultivation activities.

2d. Ordinances and planning standards

1. Are you going to need a fence? (Consider height needed for deer vs. rabbits, etc.)
2. Are you going to need parking places? Access to the site by commercial vehicles?
3. Are you interested in expanding cultivation into a right-of-way?
4. Will you be growing or composting close to the lot lines or road?
5. Can your site receive reduced stormwater drainage fees?
    a. Some cities reduce stormwater drainage fees based on the site's percentage of permeable surface.

If your site is in Ramsey County, check our policy overview table to see the rules for your food cultivation activities in the city and zoning district where your site is located. If you do not live in Ramsey County, visit the city code or ask for assistance from the planning or community development office in the city where your site is located.

2e. Securing suitable land tenure

1. FLAG - Sustainable & Long-Term Leases in Minnesota
2. Application processes for public lands
    a. Each entity may have standardized lease terms, discuss needs and terms with the landowner.
    b. See 2a2 - Accessing Public Land
3. Center for Community Land Trust Innovation -Land Tenure: Key Concepts

2f. Taxes

1. Discussion of which arrangements are responsible for taxes
    a. Public Land
        i. If your farm/garden is located on publicly-owned land, you are exempt from property taxes.
    b. Private Land
        i. If leasing on privately owned land and not holding tax exemption status, discuss tax obligations with the current landowner. See *Strategies to Reduce Tax Burdens* for more information.

2. Strategies to reduce tax burdens
    a. Is this a non-profit use of the land? If so, consider MN statute property tax exemptions. This exemption may already–or potentially could–apply to your urban food cultivation site, but requires application and approval from the tax assessor every three years.
        i. Ramsey County Tax Exemption Application
            1. For public sites deemed to be of charitable use, you may be eligible for tax exemption if registered as a

501(c)(3) charitable organization. Qualified exempt organizations will need to acquire the property and use it for exempt purposes prior to July 1 of the current year in order for the property to be exempt from the next year's payable taxes.

b. If not a non-profit use of the land,
    i. Consider your eligibility for Green Acres
        1. Green Acres and Rural Preserve
        2. Minnesota's Property Tax Programs for Agricultural and Rural Lands
        3. Ways for your site to qualify: setting up greenhouse, establishing 2a agricultural land classification
    ii. If you own the land, consider putting an easement on it
        1. Easements restrict land uses. This reduces property values, which decreases taxes.
        2. Conservation easement memo
c. Notes on *The Tax Implications of Urban Agriculture: Liabilities and Incentives* (Full Chapter - Martha Horrell Chumbler)

2g. Insurance

1. Instruction on how to check if a district council, city, or other organization will put your farming or gardening project on their insurance:
   Premises liability coverage is often required for farming/gardening activities on public land, and may be optional when leasing private land. The extent of the coverage may vary depending on standards that are set by the landowner. Check with the landowner for their insurance coverage requirements.
    a. District Council
        i. For Saint Paul residents, District Councils can facilitate community gardens through funding and insurance coverage.
            1. District Council Directory
    b. Local nonprofits and businesses, and adjacent landowners
        i. Nonprofits such as religious organizations, clubs, social service organizations, and so on may be able to add the garden to their existing policy. Businesses, homeowners, and other landowners in the community may be willing to sponsor the garden and add the garden to their existing policy, or by expanding their coverage.
2. How to apply for premises liability and other insurance as needed
    a. If applying for liability insurance independently, it is important to understand what your options are and what you will need to consider when shopping for coverage. For more information, visit Urban Ag Law: Liability, Risk, and Insurance.
3. Other Land Administration Resources
    a. Sample Documents for administering urban food cultivation lands

Section 3. *The plants* - Programming / Resources / Services

3a. Getting seeds or starts

1. Minnesota Green - distributes donated plants, seeds, gardening tools and supplies to community and public gardens
2. Community Free Seed Libraries (Como Community Seed Library, White Bear Lake Seed Library)
3. Ujamaa Seed

3b. Compost

*It is recommended that you test your soil (see soil testing resources, p. [x]) before you add compost to your growing space. Results will determine whether compost or an alternative may be better suited to your soil and the surrounding environment. Excessive additions of compost may result in phosphorus runoff, which can be harmful to watershed health.

3b1. Guides to composting in home gardens

- Composting in home gardens (UMN Extension)
- Backyard Composting (Ramsey County)

3b2. Getting compost

- Ramsey/Washington Recycling & Energy compost program
- Pick up compost from select Ramsey County Yard Waste locations (check collection site to see what materials are available for pick up)

3b3. Composting infrastructure

- Programs - Compost Market Development (Ramsey/Washington Recycling & Energy)
- Composting and Rain Water Bins (Recycling Association of Minnesota)
- BizRecycling Grants (Ramsey/Washington Recycling & Energy) - provides grants to help businesses, nonprofits, schools, multi-unit residential properties and institutions in Ramsey or Washington County reduce waste and improve recycling. Your site may be able to partner with a local entity to qualify for the recycling grant to get composting equipment or assistance related to food waste reduction efforts. [applications accepted throughout the year]
- For assistance applying, contact info@bizrecycling.com or call 651-266-1199

3b4. Alternatives to compost (nutrients, managing compaction, filling beds)

- Managing soil and nutrients in yards and gardens (UMN Extension)
- Managing soil compaction
- Filling beds - obtain topsoil from a garden center

3c. Initial and repeated soil testing

Understanding the soil test (UMN Extension)

3d. Growing educational resources

- Planting and growing guides (UMN Extension)
- Guía de Jardinería (CLUES)
- Ramsey County Land Connectors (formerly/also known as Master Gardeners)
- The Land Connection Season Extension Infographic

3e. Access to infrastructure or tools

- Minnesota Tool Library
- Grants

i. **Lakewinds Organic Field Fund** - provides funding to farmers working on the development and sustainability of organics (for purchase of equipment and tools, projects that improve soil health, etc.)
ii. **Mill City Farmers Market Grants** - (must have been in operation for more than one year) provides funding to local, regenerative farmers and other food producers who are improving sustainable farming and business practices or growing toward the "next stage" of their local food businesses
iii. **Neighborhood STAR Program** (Neighborhood Sales Tax Revitalization) - provides loans and grants for physical (capital) improvement **projects within Saint Paul neighborhoods** to any public, private, non-profit or for-profit entity. Improvements may include commercial and housing rehabilitation, parks, streetscape projects, and economic development activities. STAR-funded capital improvements should have an expected life of seven or more years. *This means to use STAR funds, land tenure must be secure for at least seven years. You may be able to partner with your district council to apply. Having a city councilor or STAR Board member champion is also helpful. [annual, applications often due in spring.] For assistance applying, contact Nancy Vang (651-266-6474; PED-NeighborhoodStar@ci.stpaul.mn.us)
iv. **AGRI Urban Agriculture Grant Program** (Minnesota Department of Agriculture) - helps organizations and communities obtain the materials and services necessary to successfully promote urban youth agricultural education and urban agriculture community development [annual - applications due in early January] For assistance applying, contact Emily Mehr (651-201-6456; Emily.Mehr@state.mn.us)
v. **Guide to MDA urban agriculture grant rubric**:

If you can answer yes to any of the following questions, you may be eligible for MN Department of Agriculture grants that can help with building water access, fencing, soil remediation, business startup, or other resource needs, see p. [x] for more details.

- Can you demonstrate the capacity to successfully implement and sustain an urban agriculture project?
- Can you demonstrate community engagement in and support for the project?
- Do you have a work plan that is adequately thorough and realistic? Do you have plans for an appropriate budget? (The discussions of resources in this guide may help provide ideas for what to budget.)
- Can you describe how your project serves communities of color or Native American tribal communities? (See also *Nothing About Us Without Us* resource above)
- Does the project advance urban youth agricultural education and/or urban agriculture community development?
- Can you demonstrate commitment to positive environmental impact such as:
    - **Promotion of clean water,**
    - healthy soils, carbon sequestration,
    - **and pollinator habitat;**
    - Reduction of waste or more efficient use of energy, water, nutrients, or other inputs;
    - Promotion of organic and sustainable agriculture?

- Can you demonstrates a commitment to economic justice, such as through:
    - Creation of living-wage jobs;
    - Provision of entrepreneurial education and skills training;
    - Protection of land tenure;
    - Expansion of urban lands for agricultural use;
    - Reducing or eliminating health disparities related to food access?

vi. Environmental Quality Incentives Program (Natural Resources Conservation Service) - High Tunnel Initiative - provides financial assistance for installing high tunnels/hoop houses [applications accepted throughout the year]. For assistance applying, find your local NRCS service center or staff person (the nearest office and contact may be 430 3rd St; Suite 250; Farmington, MN 55024-1355; Christopher Schmidt - chris.schmidt@usda.gov)

vii. Urban and Community Conservation Grant Initiative (National Association of Conservation Districts) - designed to enhance conservation districts' urban agriculture conservation technical assistance activities in developed and developing areas of both urban and rural communities. The program has supported community farming and gardening programs, expanded outreach capacities to current and underrepresented clients, planned operations to extend growing seasons using hoop houses and other practices, remediated poor-yielding agricultural sites, and contributed to many other natural resource conservation efforts. *This would require collaboration between conservation districts and farmers or gardeners. [annual - applications due in spring]

Find your conservation district

If you have further questions after contacting staff at your local conservation district, contact Ariel Rivers (ariel-rivers@nacdnet.org)

3f. What other resources are available to help your project?

NGOs: Information and resource availability - Mentorship and education

Youth: Urban Roots, Youth Farm, Project Sweetie Pie,

Immigrant, Refugee, BIPOC: Hmong American Farmers Association (HAFA), CAPI USA (Food cultivation in North Minneapolis), Big River Farms, Emerging Farmers Conference, Comunidades Latinas Unidas en Servicio (CLUES), Asian Economic Development Association (AEDA)

Legal: Farmers' Legal Action Group, Minnesota Farmers Union

Agriculture: Urban Farm and Garden Alliance (UFGA -- in Rondo and Frogtown), Frogtown Farm, Homegrown Minneapolis, Minnesota State Horticultural Society, Renewing the Countryside, Sustainable Farming Association (SFA has a Metro Growers Network)

Public health promoters/foundations: St. Paul-Ramsey County Public Health - Statewide Health Improvement Partnership, The Food Group