

CHAPTER 3: Existing Conditions

In order to build an understanding of the existing conditions that set the stage for some of the issues outlined in Chapter 4, Chapter 3 begins with some urban agriculture related definitions and ideas from other cities. It then describes the number and location of community gardens, farmers' markets, and other fresh food sources. The policies of other government entities that provide land for community gardens are also described. Lastly, other Minneapolis efforts under way related to furthering access to local healthy food are outlined.

THE CONCEPT OF URBAN AGRICULTURE

Agriculture has been practiced in and around cities as long as cities have existed. The articulation of "urban agriculture" as a concept began in the 1970s as international development organizations saw agriculture in urban areas as a way to improve nutrition and income of poor populations of developing countries. In the 1990s, urban agriculture also began to be seen as a way to improve the sustainability of cities. In the last five years, the importance of food systems to urban and regional planning has been recognized and this has increased interest in urban agriculture in the U.S., Canada and other developed countries. (Source: Urban Agriculture: Definition, Presence and Potentials and Risks).

For most of our country's history food was mostly regional, but as transportation options have expanded, the distance that food travels has increased. Today we find ourselves eating food produced thousands of miles away. Additionally, technology and mechanization have been increasingly applied to food production. This has increased abundance and lowered food costs, but has also resulted in unintended environmental and health impacts.

Consequently, interest in community gardens, farmers markets, community supported agriculture (CSAs), and local food production has skyrocketed, giving the local food movement great momentum.

A definition has yet to be formally developed, but "urban agriculture" generally describes the effort of supporting local food system production, processing, distribution, consumption and waste management in the urban environment.

OTHER DEFINITIONS

In order to better understand current urban agriculture related efforts in Minneapolis and other cities, a solid understanding of some common terms is needed. It is important that the City of Minneapolis ultimately uses a standard set of definitions for various urban agriculture activities, so that those activities can be fairly regulated at the appropriate level (i.e. some activities may require more regulation than others.) Some terms used in this document include:

Community Garden

A community garden is generally considered any space where plants are grown and maintained by a non-profit organization or group of individuals to meet the needs of that community. Most often community gardens generate produce for individual consumption. However, some gardens focus on the teaching of gardening skills by an organization or focus on beautification over food production. The number of participants in community gardens can vary from just a few to many depending on the size of the parcel. Community gardens are managed and owned by a variety of organizations. Often community garden space is leased by a community group from a governmental organization like the City of Minneapolis. Community gardens are allowed in most zoning districts including all residential districts.

Many land uses are defined in the Minneapolis Zoning Code, but “community garden” is not formally defined in the code. A working definition that the City has used is “a community garden is generally understood as a plot of ground managed and maintained by a group of individuals where herbs, fruits, flowers, or vegetables are cultivated, for personal or group use.”

Urban Farm

An urban farm is a commercial growing operation that is generally larger in scale than a community garden. The term urban farm does not appear in the zoning code. An urban farm is generally considered a commercial operation with a greater intensity of use than a community garden and may not be an appropriate land use in all zoning districts.

Market Garden

While the term “urban farm” connotes a large operation as described above, “Commercial garden” or “market gardens” are the terms sometimes used to describe smaller operations, similar in scale and intensity to a community garden, that sell commercially. Currently there is not a set threshold that differentiates a market garden from an urban farm. This plan will recommend definitions for both urban farms and market gardens.

Farmers Market

A farmers market is a location where area farmers and other vendors sell produce, typically in an open air format. The Minneapolis Zoning Code defines farmers markets as: “A publicly or privately operated establishment where primarily agricultural products such as raw vegetables, fruits, syrups, herbs, flowers, plants, nuts or handcrafted items are sold. Non-agricultural products may be sold but the area dedicated to such products shall not occupy more than twenty-five (25) percent of the total sales area. Canopies may be allowed in order to provide protection from the elements for both the operators and the products.” Farmers markets can be large or small or temporary or permanent.

In Minneapolis there are three types or scales of markets. The City owned “municipal market” serves as a regional destination. “Public Markets” is the term used for a variety of privately operated farmers markets. “Local Produce Markets” (also known as “mini-markets”) are small farmers markets with a maximum of five vendors. In addition, mini-markets only allow vendors who produce and sell their own fresh vegetables, fruits, or flowers.

Community Supported Agriculture (CSA)

Community Supported Agriculture consists of a community of individuals who pledge support to a farm operation with the growers and consumers providing mutual support and sharing the risks and

benefits of food production. Members or "share-holders" of the farm or garden typically pledge in advance to cover the anticipated costs of the farm operation and farmer's salary. In return, they receive shares in the farm's bounty throughout the growing season. By direct sales to community members, who have provided the farmer with working capital in advance, growers receive better prices for their crops, gain some financial security, and are relieved of much of the burden of marketing. (USDA, Alternative Farming Systems Information Center)

Local Food System

There is not one definition of "local food." The definition of local can relate to a specific geography like a tri-state area or a set radius like a 100 mile radius from where the food is sold. This plan, as a product of the City of Minneapolis, can only influence land use policy within the city boundaries.

EXAMPLES FROM OTHER CITIES

As Minneapolis embarks on altering policies and regulations, it is helpful to understand what other cities have done. Municipal policy and ordinance relating to urban agriculture varies dramatically. Some cities, like Cleveland, Ohio; Seattle, Washington; and Madison, Wisconsin, have updated their zoning codes to include language pertaining to specific elements of urban agriculture. Other cities like Philadelphia, Pennsylvania and Baltimore, Maryland have included urban agricultural elements in their Sustainability Plans as possible methods to restore ecological functions or provide equitable distribution of food in underserved areas. Still other cities like Portland, Oregon take a more active role in promoting and expanding urban agriculture through city-run programs and initiatives. Efforts vary from focusing on land use to focusing on empowerment or both. A full description of efforts in other cities can be found in the appendices but a few highlights are outlined below.

Cleveland, Ohio has created an urban garden district in its zoning code that establishes allowable agriculture practices and designates areas where they are permitted by right.

Madison, Wisconsin has updated its comprehensive plan to incorporate urban agriculture and establishes permitted and conditional uses within urban agricultural districts as well as dimensional standards for lots put into urban agricultural use.



Urban agriculture efforts across the country have been featured in Planning Magazine.

Seattle, Washington manages an extensive community gardening program through its Department of Neighborhoods that contains over 1900 plots within 68 gardens throughout the city. Seattle has also updated its code to define several urban agriculture uses, to allow community gardens and urban farms in a variety of zoning districts, to allow for height exceptions for rooftop greenhouses, and allow for some small livestock.

Detroit, Michigan is promoting urban agriculture as a use for much of their vacant land in the City. An Urban Agriculture Workgroup has been established to craft policy and alter the zoning code to facilitate urban agriculture in many forms. Detroit planning staff is working on definitions for urban gardens, urban farms, vertical farms, farmer's markets, farm stands, hoop houses, aquaculture, among others.

Vancouver, British Columbia has established design guidelines for urban agriculture installations which attempt to determine where and under what conditions urban gardens are appropriate.

Portland, Oregon has completed a land inventory study to determine what city owned properties might be available for urban agricultural use.

In Milwaukee, Wisconsin Growing Power is an urban farm that utilizes intensive and sustainable agricultural growing practices within city limits. Growing Power builds community through outreach and provides educational services for city residents.

Oakland, California has completed a food systems assessment of their community to gauge existing capacity of production, processing, distribution, consumption, and disposal facilities. This assessment enables Oakland to view urban agriculture as part of a holistic system.

In Boston, Massachusetts Earthworks manages an urban orchards program that plants and manages fruit bearing trees and shrubs throughout the city.

EXISTING URBAN AGRICULTURE RELATED FACILITIES IN MINNEAPOLIS

This section reviews the location of existing community gardens, farmers' markets, and other sources of fresh food so that the distribution of these land uses can be better understood and geographic gaps can be analyzed.

Community Gardens

Community gardens provide a variety of benefits, including building social capital by providing a gathering space for neighborhood residents. In addition, community gardens can play a role in community crime prevention as neighbors begin to know each other, turn vacant lots into green space, and provide more eyes on the street.

At the end of the 2010 growing season, 94 community gardens had been identified through a list provided by Gardening Matters, a local organization that supports and promotes community gardens in the Twin Cities, and augmented by City staff observations. It should be noted, however, that not every garden registers with Gardening Matters, so the list may not be all inclusive.

These gardens vary in type (i.e. food production, beautification, youth gardens), size, location, and organization. Some have been established on private land. Others have been established on land owned by the City, Hennepin County, the Minneapolis Parks and Recreation Board, or the Minneapolis School District.



The Dowling Community Garden, a victory garden begun in 1943, is used by approximately 250 gardeners. Photo courtesy of Gardening Matters and Google Maps.

The 94 community gardens are spread across approximately 18 acres of land (see table 2-1 below). Of this, approximately 13 acres are devoted primarily to food production, three acres to youth gardens and two acres to beautification gardens. Almost half (48 percent) of the land devoted to community gardens is on publicly owned land. The Minneapolis School District is the greatest contributor of land area for community gardens.

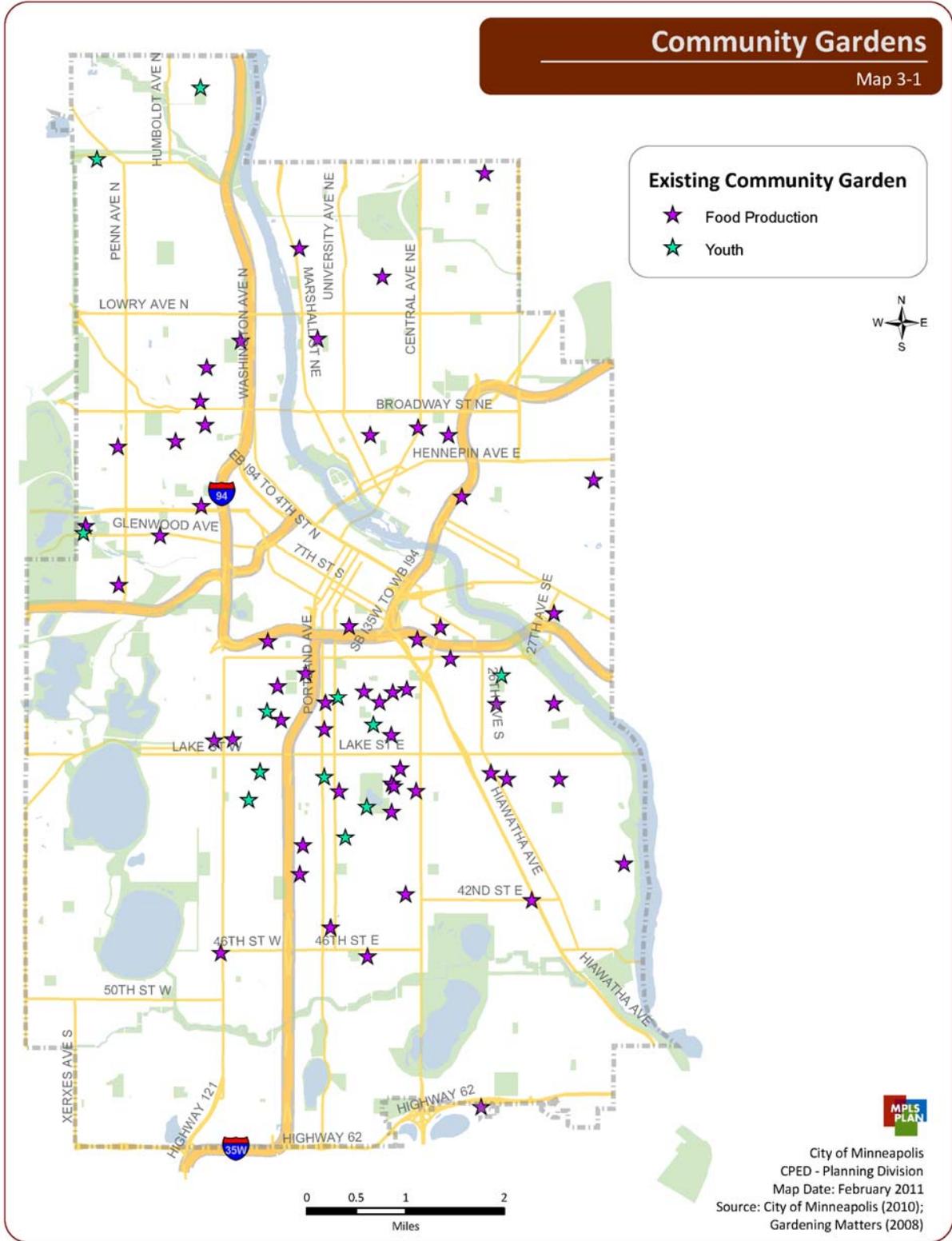
| Community Garden Land Area | Count | Square Feet | Acres |
|---|-----------|----------------|--------------|
| All Gardens | | | |
| Food Production | 57 | 581,976 | 13.36 |
| Youth | 12 | 125,266 | 2.88 |
| Beautification | 25 | 87,539 | 2.01 |
| Total | 94 | 794,781 | 18.25 |
| Public Property (city, county, school board, state, met council) | | | |
| Food Production | 20 | 230,710 | 5.30 |
| Youth | 6 | 90,900 | 2.09 |
| Beautification | 19 | 57,950 | 1.33 |
| Total | 45 | 377,037 | 8.72 |
| City Property | | | |
| Food Production | 11 | 29,210 | 0.67 |
| Youth | 0 | 0 | 0.00 |
| Beautification | 8 | 20,850 | 0.48 |
| Total | 19 | 50,060 | 1.15 |

There are approximately 19 existing gardens spread across just over one acre of land owned by the City of Minneapolis. In 2009 there were 13 gardens on City owned land. In 2010 the City launched the Homegrown Minneapolis Community Garden Pilot Program that made leases available for community gardens on 18 additional City-owned lots. During the 2010 growing season five of the lots were leased, leaving 13 lots or 1.4 acres of City owned land currently available for new community gardens.

All available lots have had the soil tested by Peer Engineering. This work was funded by Hennepin County's Environmental Response Fund (ERF) through Groundwork Minneapolis' Groundwork Assessment Program (GAP).

Map 3-1 shows existing gardens that produce food (as noted above, some community gardens are beautification gardens, and do not produce food). Food producing gardens are not evenly distributed throughout the city. There are more gardens clustered just south of downtown than in other areas. This cluster of gardens in the Phillips-Powderhorn communities is due, at least in part, to funding and support provided by the former Minneapolis Community Development Agency (MCDA) to promote community crime prevention, improve marketability of housing in these areas and to help defray the maintenance costs of MCDA owned properties. In 2001, the MCDA approved an Interim Community Garden Disposition Program, which allowed selected neighborhood gardeners presently who lease MCDA properties the opportunity to purchase the property and retain it as a permanent community garden. The MCDA made these community garden lots available for purchase by nonprofit corporations or public agencies with the capacity to manage land and coordinate community participation.

Areas farther from the core of the city have fewer gardens. This is due in part to the fact that there are fewer vacant parcels in these areas and more opportunities for people to garden within their own yards because there are more single family homes.



Farmers Markets

There is a permanent municipal market located near the intersection of Glenwood Avenue and Lyndale Avenue North. The municipal market and the potential for its expansion are discussed in the North Loop Small Area Plan (www.ci.minneapolis.mn.us/cped/north_loop.asp) which was adopted in March of 2010.

In 2009, there were 22 farmers markets operating in Minneapolis. In 2010, the number increased by 50 percent to 33 markets. The majority of the new markets are local produce markets or “mini-markets”, many of which are located in or closer to more residential neighborhoods (see map 3-2).

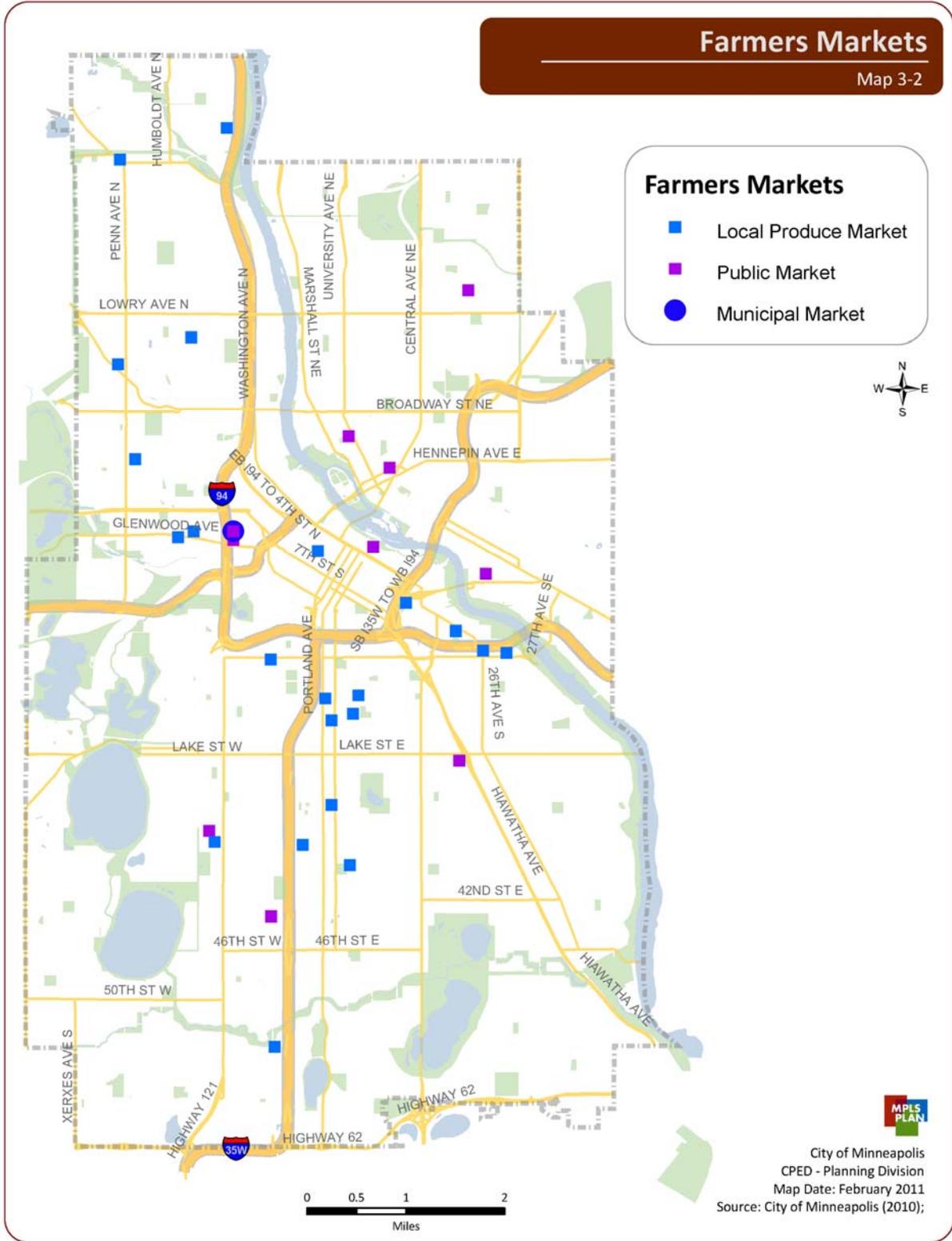


The Mill City Farmers Market attracts weekend visitors to downtown. Photo courtesy of: www.millcityfarmersmarket.org.

Other markets include:

- ALLINA ABBOTT NW HOSPITAL LOCAL PRODUCE MARKET
- AUDUBON NEIGHBORHOOD ASSOCIATION MARKET
- AUGSBURG COLLEGE LOCAL PRODUCE MARKET
- BAO VANG LOCAL PRODUCE MARKET
- BRIAN COYLE CENTER LOCAL PRODUCE MARKET
- CALVARY LUTHERAN CHURCH LOCAL PRODUCE MARKET
- CAMDEN LOCAL PRODUCE MARKET
- CHILDREN'S LOCAL PRODUCE MARKET
- EBENEZER PARK LOCAL PRODUCE MARKET
- EBENEZER TOWER LOCAL PRODUCE MARKET
- EMERGE/STREETWERKS YOUTH MINI MARKET
- FARMERS MARKET ANNEX
- FIFTH STREET LOCAL PRODUCE MARKET
- GLENDALE LOCAL PRODUCE MARKET
- HERITAGE LOCAL PRODUCE MARKET
- KINGFIELD FARMERS MARKET
- MIDTOWN FARMERS MARKET
- MIDTOWN GLOBAL MARKET
- MILL CITY FARMERS MARKET
- MINNEAPOLIS URBAN LEAGUE LOCAL PRODUCE MARKET
- NE MINNEAPOLIS FARMERS MARKET
- NICOLLET MALL FARMERS MARKET
- PARK AVENUE METHODIST CHURCH LOCAL PRODUCE MARKET
- RED STAG SUPPER CLUB FARMERS MARKET
- SABATHANI LOCAL PRODUCE MARKET

- SEWARD TOWER WEST LOCAL PRODUCE MARKET
- SEWARD TOWER EAST LOCAL PRODUCE MARKET
- SAINT ANNE'S SENIOR COMMUNITY LOCAL PRODUCE MARKET
- SAINT OLAF COMMUNITY LOCAL PRODUCE MARKET
- STEVENS SQUARE LOCAL PRODUCE MARKET
- TANGLETOWN GARDENS LOCAL PRODUCE MARKET
- UPTOWN MARKET
- WALKER PLACE LOCAL PRODUCE MARKET



Other Sources for Fresh Produce

Other potential sources for fresh produce include CSA drop off locations, full service grocery stores, food shelves, soup kitchens and meal delivery services. The locations of these other sources for fresh produce are illustrated on map 3-3 on the following page. It should be noted that community gardens are not mapped with these other sources because even though they provide food for those who garden in them, they do not generally supply food to the public at large. While this plan will not make recommendations about all healthy food sources, understanding their location provides context for other recommendations.

CSAs

The Land Stewardship Project has identified 48 CSA farms that serve the Minneapolis-Saint Paul metropolitan area. The majority of farms are located within 100 miles of the metro area with the exception of three farms which are located near the border of Minnesota, Iowa, and Illinois. Within the city, about 67 drop off sites are located in South and Southeast Minneapolis. About 7 drop off sites serve Downtown Minneapolis, and 19 sites serve North and Northeast Minneapolis.

Grocery stores

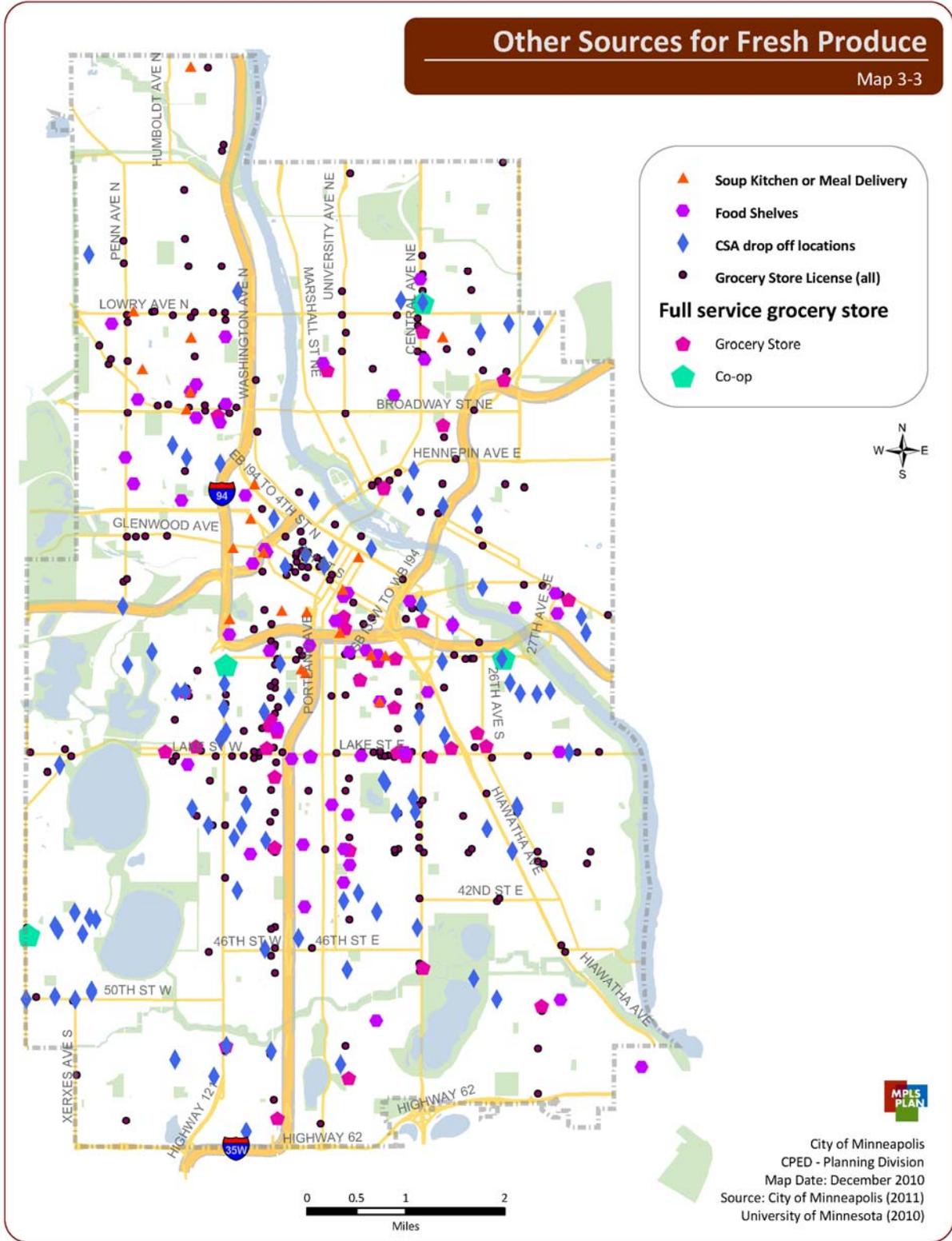
A “full service” grocery store was identified as any establishment that has a grocery store license, a meat market license and a food manufacturer license (for prepared packaged foods, often found at a deli counter). This method was used to identify larger conventional grocers that tend to provide a wider range of fresh food products and often have the best quality and lowest prices for fruits and vegetables. Co-ops are mapped with the grocery stores.

Other stores (corner stores, convenience stores or gas stations, specialty food stores, etc) may have one or some combination of the above mentioned license types and may sell some fresh foods. Although efforts are being undertaken to improve the selection of fresh foods at many of these locations, it is difficult to distinguish which establishments have healthy food options and which do not. Thus, they are not mapped here.

As illustrated on map 3-3 below, full service grocery stores are not uniformly distributed throughout the city. The full service stores are clustered in the center of the city and are noticeably not located where there are large numbers of people without access to vehicles, higher proportions of people living in poverty and people of color (see Maps 4-7 through 4-10 in Chapter 4 of this document for an illustration of these social conditions). This creates an environment where it is more difficult for people living in these neighborhoods to physically access fresh foods than more fattening junk foods and restaurant foods. This is due in part to the prevalence of lower density residential zoning in these areas where it is difficult to locate a large grocery store.

Food shelves, soup kitchens and meal delivery services

Food shelves, soup kitchens and meal delivery service providers around the country are involved in figuring out ways to provide more fresh foods through their services. Some are partnering with community gardening groups and CSAs to increase availability.



Local Food Processing and Community Kitchens

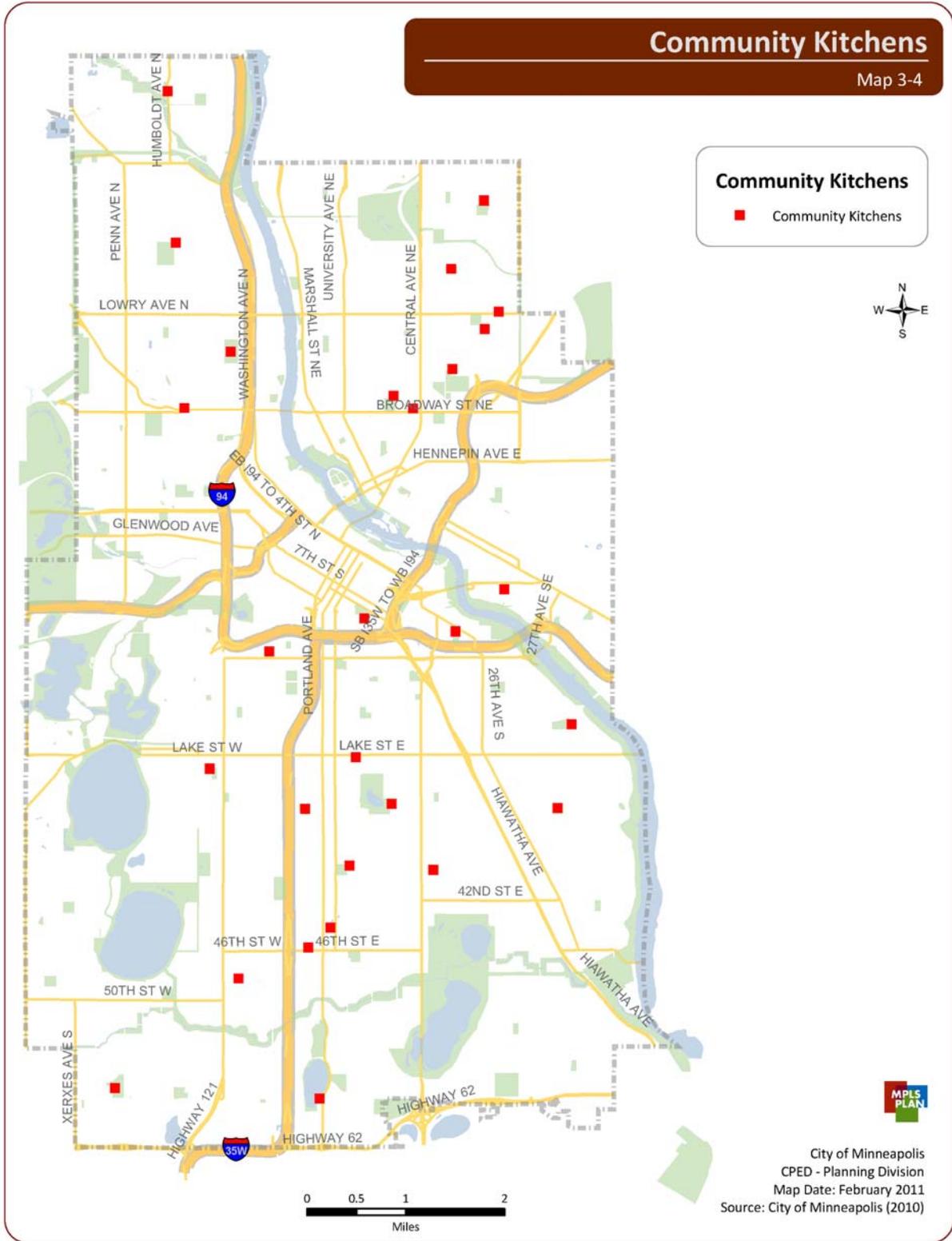
A large element of the local food supply chain is food processing. Ideally, a system could arise in which food is grown locally and then processed locally. However, such a system is difficult to track. Food processing can be the canning and preservation of food for individual use or the transformation of produce into a food product, for example tomatoes into salsa. The term “value added” agriculture is often used to describe the process of increasing the economic value and consumer appeal of an agricultural commodity.

The U.S. Department of Agriculture defines value-added products as follows:

- A change in the physical state or form of the product (such as milling wheat into flour or making strawberries into jam).
- The production of a product in a manner that enhances its value, as demonstrated through a business plan (such as organically produced products).
- The physical segregation of an agricultural commodity or product in a manner that results in the enhancement of the value of that commodity or product (such as an identity preserved marketing system).

As a result of the change in the physical state or the manner in which the agricultural commodity or product is produced and segregated, the customer base for the commodity or product is expanded. There is great potential to better track and increase the opportunity for value added agriculture in Minneapolis, but a better understanding of market forces is needed.

The primary issue for many involved in food processing is having the necessary facilities in which to do the processing. The Homegrown Minneapolis initiative recommended that a complete inventory of community kitchens/facilities that can be used for local food purposes (including individual and small business level processing, storage, aggregation, and preservation) be conducted so that residents and entrepreneurs can be linked with these opportunities. A survey of community kitchens was completed in the fall of 2010 and the list was made available to people interested in processing. The community kitchens available to the public are mapped on the following page (map 3-4).



EXISTING CITY POLICY AND REGULATION RELATED TO URBAN AGRICULTURE

As mentioned in the introduction, the City has some broad policies related to encouraging urban agriculture. The zoning code is the primary mechanism for implementing the policies found in the City's Comprehensive Plan. At this time, the zoning code only touches on a few activities related to urban agriculture, primarily community gardens and farmers' markets. These regulations are described below.

Community Gardens

Community Gardens are allowed in all but two zoning districts, the B4-Downtown Business District and the I3-General Industrial district. Some specific development standards for community gardens exist. These are as follows:

- Overhead lighting shall be prohibited.
- Signage shall be limited to a single, non-illuminated, flat sign of four (4) square feet.
- No more than two (2) vehicles shall be parked on-site, excluding those parked within an enclosed structure.
- No retail sales shall be permitted, except as an approved temporary use, as specified in Chapter 535, Regulations of General Applicability.

For City owned parcels that have been made available through the Homegrown Minneapolis Community Garden Pilot Program, a lease (of varying length depending on the experience of the gardening group), liability insurance, and an approved site plan are required. A qualifying gardening group must be a not-for-profit or a group with a not-for-profit sponsor. An analysis of the 2010 pilot program is available in the appendices.

The Minneapolis Public Housing Authority (MPHA) does not have a formal policy related to community gardens, but it does allow gardens for MPHA residents where feasible.

Farmers' Markets

Farmers' markets are regulated by two City departments: Community Planning and Economic Development (CPED), and Regulatory Services and Emergency Preparedness (Environmental Health Division and Business Licensing Division). However, local produce markets, those with five or fewer vendors, do not require a business license when certain criteria are met.

In the Fall of 2010 an effort began, separate from but related to this planning process, to evaluate how to better coordinate the Health and Zoning code language related to farmers markets. City staff was directed by the City Council to work with farmers' market managers on these potential revisions.

Farmers' markets are allowed in most zoning districts with certain conditions:

- In all Residential Districts, markets are permitted as Temporary Uses, and must be located on institutional or public property or on a site that is 20,000 square feet or larger. Farmers markets in residential districts may not be open for more than 75 calendar days per year (these do not have to be consecutive days).
- In the Office Residential 1 (OR1) District, markets are permitted as a Temporary Use and like in Residential Districts they must be located on institutional or public property or on a lot larger

than 20,000 square feet and open for no more than 75 days per year. Permanent markets are allowed in the OR2 and OR3 districts.

- In the Commercial and Industrial Districts, temporary markets are not limited to industrial or public property and permanent markets are allowed in all commercial and industrial districts (C1, C2, C3, C3A, C3S, C4, I1, I2, and I3).
- A site plan is required for all farmers markets.

Provisions for Growing Space in New Development

In August of 2009, the City's regulations about Planned Unit Developments, which are certain large-scale, mix-use developments over an acre in size, were updated to include incentives for better quality, unique design. One amenity that a developer can provide in return for the relaxation of some required standards is the provision of permanent and viable growing space and/or facilities such as a greenhouse or a garden conservatory at a minimum of sixty (60) square feet per dwelling unit to a maximum required area of five thousand (5,000) square feet.

As interest in urban agriculture has grown, a reexamination of City policy and regulation is needed to determine whether or not additional guidance is necessary. For example, there are no firm policies or regulations related to urban farms, roof top gardens, or temporary structures such as hoop houses. This is discussed in detail in coming chapters.

Animals

This plan is focused on land use and the zoning code. However, animals are considered by many to be a component of urban agriculture. The keeping of bees and fowl like chickens, ducks, and turkeys is currently allowed. A permit is required and eighty percent (80%) of property owners within 100 feet of the applicant's property must provide signatures supporting the permit. Hoofed animals are not allowed within the city.

OTHER PUBLIC AGENCY POLICIES

Community gardens are located on land owned by the Minneapolis Park and Recreation Board (MPRB), the Minneapolis Public Schools (MPS), and the Minneapolis Public Housing Authority (MPHA). Hennepin County sells tax forfeited parcels and some community gardens have been built on those.



*Youth Farm & Market works with almost 500 youth ages 9-13 and farms 9 sites in Minneapolis and St. Paul.
Photo courtesy of: www.youthfarm.net*

Minneapolis Parks and Recreation Board (MPRB)

The MPRB provides educational programs to teach youth the art of gardening, provides opportunities for experienced gardeners to volunteer in gardens within the parks, and serves as a property holder of some vacant lots allowing opportunities for community gardens.

With supervision from the MPRB's professional gardeners, volunteers can garden at a variety of locations. These gardens are primarily flower gardens rather than produce producing.

The MPRB youth programs provide hands-on educational activities related to both good production and beautification at Luxton, Sibley, Van Cleve, and Webber Parks. The MPRB also partners with Youth Farm & Market at Powderhorn Park to provide educational gardening activities.

The MPRB is willing to hold land for citizen groups that meet certain criteria (i.e. have liability insurance and the support of the appropriate neighborhood organization, adjacent property owners, and district park commissioner) so that they can establish a community garden. This land is typically made available through tax forfeiture, and the holding of the land must be approved by the park board. The MPRB currently holds land for the Bancroft Neighborhood Association, the Shingle Creek Neighborhood Association, and the Soo Line Garden.

Minneapolis Public Schools(MPS)

MPS has a set of policies adopted by its Board of Education on November 12, 2009 that govern gardens on school property (Policy 7000 Gardens on School Property; Policy 7000A Definitions: Gardens; Policy 7000B Application and Approval Process).

MPS recognizes four types of gardens:

- School Gardens
- Landscaping or Beautification Projects
- Community Gardens
- Inter-Governmental Projects

MPS has approximately 35 school gardens, which include prairie planting gardens, rain gardens, flower bed gardens, butterfly gardens, raised bed gardens, orchard nature areas, vegetable gardens, native plant gardens and peace gardens. School gardens are created, maintained and used by students at the school. Garden programs fit the standards based curriculum as taught at a particular school and conform to district curricular guidelines and beliefs about learning. The school principal or site administrator assumes responsibility for oversight of all such gardens.

Landscaping or beautification projects improve the aesthetic of a school site. They usually involve the students and staff at a particular site working with a partner organization such as a school based parent organization or a neighborhood organization

MPS currently has three community gardens two of which are located on the north side of the city and one on the south side. A community garden is created and maintained by an organization that is qualified as a community partner under school district policies. It is governed by a license agreement between the sponsoring organization and the school district. Individual garden plots are assigned under the sponsoring organization's authority.

Intergovernmental Projects are usually landscaping or gardening projects in which MPS enters into an agreement with another governmental agency to change the existing landscape of school premises to serve an identified public environmental good.

Hennepin County

Hennepin County deals with properties that have been seized from the landowner due to overdue taxes. These properties are sold at auctions to return them to the tax roll. As mentioned above, the

Minneapolis Parks and Recreation Board is willing to buy lots that meet certain criteria and hold them as community gardens.

EXISTING HEALTH CONDITIONS

A primary reason for reviewing the location of existing fresh food sources and examining the existing regulations is to assist with bolstering public health. The ability or inability of a family or individual to easily purchase healthy, fresh food is a growing concern. Diet is a key component of health, and in general our society is becoming less healthy.

In the latest survey of Minneapolis residents, 18.8% were classified as obese and 32.5% as overweight. In addition, only 32.9% of Minneapolis residents eat five or more fruits or vegetables daily (source: Behavioral Risk Factor Surveillance Survey, 2005 - 2008.) Eating habits and weight have a direct correlation to disease and health care costs. Thus, the City of Minneapolis has a keen interest insuring access to healthy foods.

CONCURRENT EFFORTS

The Homegrown Minneapolis Task Force has been working to implement the eight other actions steps that were identified when the *Homegrown Minneapolis Report* was presented to the City Council in the summer of 2009. These other action steps and the current status of their implementation are listed below:

- **The formation of a City advisory committee on food policy** - The current Homegrown Minneapolis Implementation Task Force expires in July 2011. As part of phase two efforts, a Local Food Policy Entity Working Group was set up to research food policy council models in other cities and to strategically plan and propose options for a third phase entity. A series of strategic interviews and discussions to gather input on the potential structure are currently underway.
- **The implementation of a community garden program that allows organizations to lease non-developable city-owned property for community gardens** - In early 2010, 18 City-owned parcels were identified as being good candidate sites for community gardens. A new community garden specific land use application was developed and the previous lease agreement was revised and updated.
- **The development of suggestions relating to the City's State legislative agenda** - For the past two years, language supporting healthy, local sustainable food systems has been submitted to the Council for consideration for its State legislative agenda. For 2011, the following language was submitted:
 - Support efforts that will remove barriers and provide incentives for expanding local food production, thereby increasing our food security, expanding green jobs, and reducing our carbon footprint.
 - Support efforts to shift to a more sustainable food system that will increase consumption of healthy foods, thereby improving nutrition and reducing obesity and chronic disease.

- Support efforts to ensure equitable distribution of food and expand access to healthy, sustainably produced, locally grown food for people with low incomes.
- **The development of a Sustainability Indicator for sustainably and locally-grown foods** - A Local Food sustainability indicator was included in the City's Living Well sustainability report for the first time in 2010. A Local Food Targets Working Group met four times between December 2009 and March 2010 to develop initial target language which is currently available to those interested in providing feedback. City staff has developed the baseline data and maps for two of the potential targets related to food growing acres in the city and the location of food sources to residents. Proposed targets will need to go through a formal Council adoption process in the next round of sustainability target updates.
- **The creation of an inventory of community kitchens and processing and distribution of sustainably and locally-grown food** - A Community Kitchens Inventory was completed in 2010 and documents the more than 30 community kitchens available through the city for use by residents.
- **A plan for improved coordination of farmers' markets** - This effort involves the cooperation of City regulatory services staff and farmers' market managers, and will evaluate and improve all farmers' market related ordinances, starting in fall of 2010.
- **And improved equity of access and food security, including the use of EBT at farmers markets** - The City provided seed funding and other resources for mini farmers markets in the City that help improve access to fresh fruits and vegetables and led to a tripling of the markets in the city over the last two years. Additionally, the City helped launch Electronic Benefits Transfer (EBT) at the municipal and northeast farmers markets during 2010, making healthy food accessible to more residents. A short-term Market Bucks incentive program was also offered this summer to double the purchasing power of EBT users at the markets.

- Page intentionally left blank -