



Community Planning and Economic Development Department

News Release

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Minneapolis City Goals: A Safe Place to Call Home ▫ Jobs & Economic Vitality ▫ Eco-Focused ▫ Livable Communities, Healthy Lives ▫ Many People, One Minneapolis ▫ A City That Works

Minneapolis ordinance now in place that allows more opportunities to grow food

March 30, 2012 (MINNEAPOLIS) – Mayor R.T. Rybak and the Minneapolis City Council today adopted a zoning code change that allows expanded food growing to occur in the city. The zoning code text amendment approves two new land uses—for market gardens and urban farms—and sets development and design standards. Minneapolis already allows community gardens in most areas of the city and there were more than one hundred of them in place last year. This effort takes food growing to a new level for the benefit of resident health, the environment and the economic vitality of the city.

Under the new code, regulatory barriers are removed that make it difficult to establish land uses for agriculture in the city. Urban agricultural land uses are now expanded in all zoning districts to include:

- Small market gardens, 10,000 square feet or less of growing area on the ground, on a rooftop, or inside a building. A new temporary use permit was also created, allowing a farmstand to operate for up to 15 days per year. This allows market and community gardeners limited ability to sell products at the location they are grown.
- Larger market gardens, on the ground, on a rooftop, or inside a building. Conditional use permit required; must be compatible with surrounding properties.
- Urban farms, limited to industrial districts and the general commercial district (C4 district), allowing produce to be grown, processed and distributed on the same lot.

The change in the zoning code originates from a broader vision and a specific recommendation for policy changes to support access to land for growing food and to support local food-related activities that was put forward in the first phase of the Homegrown Minneapolis initiative.

“This is simply the latest resident-generated action to gain more control of our food in Minneapolis,” said **Mayor R.T. Rybak**.” Through the Homegrown Minneapolis initiative, we are changing our policies in order to create yet more options for people to grow and consume fresh, healthy, local food, and more opportunities for new small businesses to grow and sell fresh, healthy, local food.”

“Today’s approval of the text amendments means that many barriers to the practice of urban farming have been eliminated,” said **Council Member Cam Gordon** (Ward 2). “These changes should help give residents better access to fresh, healthy food and, for the first time since the early 60s, will allow people to grow food commercially in our city.”

Stemming from the Homegrown Minneapolis initiative, the Minneapolis City Council formally adopted an Urban Agriculture Policy Plan in 2011. The Urban Agriculture Policy Plan clarified that development and agricultural land uses can be accommodated throughout the city. The plan was managed by the Minneapolis Departments of Health and Family Support and Community Planning and Economic Development and funded by the State Health Improvement Program and funded by the Minneapolis Department of Health and Family Support’s Statewide Health Improvement Program (SHIP), which aims to help residents live longer, healthier lives by reducing the burden of chronic disease.

The Urban Agriculture Policy Plan has been incorporated into the City’s comprehensive plan, [*The Minneapolis Plan for Sustainable Growth*](#), to guide the decisions of elected officials and provide a basis for land regulation through the zoning ordinance. The comprehensive plan contains several goals and policy statements regarding healthy communities through connections between land use, transportation, urban design and community access to food. A healthy community is a sustainable community, and planning and zoning provide us with opportunities to create a healthier population and a more sustainable environment.

[Homegrown Minneapolis](#) is a City and community partnership established to develop and implement strategies that will increase and improve the growing, processing, distributing, eating and composting of healthy, sustainable, locally grown foods. Under the leadership of Mayor R.T. Rybak and Council Member Gordon and the Minneapolis Department of Health and Family Support, Homegrown Minneapolis is bringing together key partners from local government, area businesses, community organizations, nonprofits and residents to leverage the food system to optimize resident health, environmental health and economic vitality.

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