

Planning Information Sheet:  
**Promoting Food Access  
with Comprehensive  
Planning and Ordinances**



Version 2.0.

DESIGN FOR HEALTH is a collaboration between the University of Minnesota and Blue Cross and Blue Shield of Minnesota that serves to bridge the gap between the emerging research base on community design and healthy living with the every-day realities of local government planning.

**Design for Health**  
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## Overview

Design for Health’s Planning Information Sheets series provides planners with useful information about opportunities to address important health issues through the comprehensive planning process and plan implementation. The series addresses a range of health issues that are relevant to many communities and can be efficiently and effectively integrated into local plans and policies. This information sheet discusses a number of opportunities that planners have to address food issues through planning and policy approaches.

### Key Points

- Food is an important health issue, as lack of access to food—in particular, healthy food choices—can contribute to obesity and other health problems (e.g., diabetes, heart disease, etc.) that are associated with being overweight.
- Key planning issues include: access to healthy food and local food production.
- Practical approaches that communities can use to address these issues through their comprehensive plans and ordinances include land-use policies that allow neighborhood retail near residential areas and ordinances that protect and foster community gardens and local agriculture.

## Understanding the Relationship between Food, Health, and Planning

Many planners may not have considered how access to food and local food systems relates to health, and even more likely, planners may not have thought about how their own short- and long-term planning decisions can limit or facilitate food access, production and distribution. In fact, a small survey of planners in 2000 found that most felt that they had limited involvement in food-system issues (Pothukuchi and Kaufman 2000). Before we discuss the specific actions planners might take, it is useful to highlight a number of issues related to the intersection of food, health and planning.

**Access to Healthy Food:** Typical Euclidean zoning separates communities into different land-use categories, often creating significant distances between residential areas and commercial services, such as supermarkets and restaurants. For those without access to transportation, this land-use pattern can make it difficult for people to reach supermarkets and make healthy food choices. In many urban areas, an additional problem may exist in terms of the quality of food available even when residents have access to food. In many cases, market forces can limit the viability of constructing large supermarkets with diverse products, in favor of neighborhood convenience stores that often have higher prices, fewer food choices and a lack of healthy fresh fruits and vegetables. These issues are

### Design for Health Planning Information Sheets addressing Food

DFH Planning Information Sheet:	Topics covered related to accessibility:	Link:
Promoting <b>Food Access</b> with Comprehensive Planning and Ordinances	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Local food production and distribution</li> <li>▪ Access to health foods (grocery stores, farmers markets, community gardens, etc.)</li> </ul>	<a href="http://www.designforhealth.net/techassistance/foodissue.html">http://www.designforhealth.net/techassistance/foodissue.html</a>
Promoting <b>Accessibility</b> with Comprehensive Planning and Ordinances	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Multimodal transportation systems</li> <li>▪ Transit planning</li> <li>▪ Specialized populations</li> </ul>	<a href="http://www.designforhealth.net/techassistance/Accessibility.htm">http://www.designforhealth.net/techassistance/Accessibility.htm</a>

particularly relevant in low-income and minority communities (Burdette and Whitacker 2003; Cummins et al. 2005; Sloane 2004). Fast-food restaurants also are often disproportionately located in these neighborhoods (Block et al. 2004).

There is very little research, however, that examines whether people who live near different kinds of food stores actually have different diets and if they do, whether this is explained by location or rather by socioeconomic factors or personal preferences. A study of over 7,000 children in the federal Special Supplemental Nutrition Program for Women, Infants, and Children, better known as WIC, for example, showed no relationship between obesity levels and fast-food location, but a study of over 900 pregnant women in North Carolina found those living less than two miles from a supermarket had more nutritious diets than those living over four miles away, after controlling for a variety of social factors (Laraia 2004; Burdette and Whitacker 2003). Overall, people with access to good transportation are likely to be less affected by distance. This is useful given that the economics of supermarkets makes it difficult to locate them at a neighborhood level and, even if they do, energy-dense foods tend to be less expensive than fruits and vegetables and, thus, attractive to low-income people (Drewnowski 2004). As people have money and inclination to make healthier food choices, however, improved access to healthy food through location of stores and good transportation systems can allow them to exercise those choices. Environments that allow for sufficient population densities to support a local supermarket also have the potential to address some of these issues.

**Local Food Production and Distribution:** An issue relevant to understanding the relationship of food, health and planning is the facilitation of local food production and distribution. Allowing for community gardens and local agricultural production may be useful in promoting awareness of healthy eating and in making fresh products more accessible. Programs that connect local farmers to schools have been seen in several locations (Siedenburg 2004; Stouder 2004). In addition, creating spaces and allowing shared use of urban spaces for

farmers' markets and the informal sale of locally grown agricultural products can contribute to easier access. Designating community gardens on land-use maps and using zoning to protect current and future gardens are options that communities might consider (Reid 2004). In addition, publicly owned lands, (e.g. school yards, greenways and vacant lots) can be used to site community gardens or farmers' markets. While farmers' markets often provide only limited access (i.e., often limited dates and times) to fresh agricultural products, they may be a solution at the neighborhood level. In addition, both community gardens and farmers' markets can promote social interaction and contribute to social capital (Bailkey 2004; Stauffer 2004).



Oakland, California

## Planning for Local Food Systems

This section discusses a number of practices that communities might undertake to more effectively plan for food access. We consider both comprehensive planning and regulatory efforts that planners can consider to improve access to healthy foods and make it easier to produce and distribute foods locally. First, a tool that communities might use to assess their situation relative to food access is the Community Food Security Assessment, developed by the U.S. Department of Agriculture's Economic Research Service (USDA ERS).

The assessment considers a range of issues including:

- Effectiveness of local infrastructure for delivering federal food-assistance programs.
- Adequacy of supermarkets, barriers to food shopping, modes of transportation, selection and price, and local markets.
- Income levels and number of persons in poverty, use of emergency-food system, and federal food-assistance programs.
- Loss of farmland, farm startups, use of sustainable production methods, and availability of locally-grown food in local stores.
- Number of community gardens, home gardens, farmers' markets, community-supported agriculture programs; food co-ops or other alternative food production/distribution arrangements; and open space available for food production.
- Scope of food policies affecting the community and evidence of integration of food-related issues into the local-planning process

Source: Cohen 2002

The analysis requires the collection of community demographic data, food resources (e.g., food-assistance programs, retail resources, emergency-food resources for residents who cannot purchase it), location of food resources, accessibility of food resources, and food production resources (Cohen 2002). In addition to the data specified in the Community Food Assessment described above, communities might also gather data about the impacts of the food system on the local economy by tracking employment, sales, wages, and food expenditures and consumption (Pothukuchi and Kaufman 2000). These analyses could be conducted as part of the comprehensive planning process to assist in understanding the range of factors that influence food access and to help then identify existing opportunities and constraints related to providing efficient and equitable access to high-quality food products.

In addition, state and local governments can facilitate the formation of Food Policy Councils. Food Policy Councils convene stakeholders, citizens and government officials to examine

food systems and develop food and agriculture policy recommendations. Findings and recommendations from the Food Policy Council in Knoxville, Tennessee, for example, has led to the development of school breakfast programs for low-income students, the establishment of multiple community and school gardens. This group also works with the regional transportation authority to identify and plan transit to provide better food access for transit users (SSAWG 2005, 51). Food policy councils can help in educating officials and the public, shaping public policy, improving coordination between existing programs, and starting new programs to improve access to healthy foods.



Emeryville, California

## Improving Access to Healthy Foods

As discussed above, promoting mixed-use environments that put residents in close proximity to commercial land uses, such as supermarkets and restaurants, may make it easier for them to access healthy foods. Since techniques to promote mixed-use were discussed extensively in the Building Social Capital through Comprehensive Planning and Ordinances worksheet, we will focus instead on more specific efforts to address food access.

In terms of promoting food access through comprehensive planning efforts, there are a number of approaches that might be considered.

Based on existing conditions in the community, planners might also consider including general goals, objectives or policies related to allowing neighborhood-level commercial facilities.

Examples from two regions include (Sources: City of Berkeley 2001, County of Arlington 2004):

- Berkely, CA: Land-use Policy (Neighborhood Commercial Areas) – Maintain and improve Neighborhood Commercial Areas as pedestrian-friendly and visually attractive areas that fully serve neighborhood needs.

*Related Action E* – Maintain and encourage a wide range of community and commercial services, including basic goods and services.

- Arlington County, VA: Development and Growth Goal – Preserve and enhance neighborhood retail areas. The County encourages the preservation and revitalization of neighborhood retail areas that serve everyday shopping and service needs and are consistent with adopted County plans. The Commercial Revitalization Program concentrates public capital improvements and County services in these areas to stimulate private reinvestment

Outside of the typical comprehensive planning approach, the San Francisco Sustainability Plan prepared by the San Francisco Department of the Environment provides a sustainability strategy that includes goals, long- and short-term

**Table 1. Improving Food Access - Excerpts from the San Francisco Sustainability Plan**

Goal	Long-term Objectives to Reach Sustainability	Objectives for the Year 2001 (Five-year Plan)	Actions
3. To ensure access by all people at all times to enough nutritious, affordable, safe, and culturally-diverse food for an active, healthy life.	3-A. Safe, convenient, reliable, and nonpolluting transportation is available to points of sale that provide nutritious, affordable safe, and culturally-diverse food.	3-A-1. Transportation to points of sale that provide nutritious, affordable, safe, and culturally-diverse food has improved.	3-A-1-a. Establish better and more fixed-route Muni service to enable shopping to be done with public transportation.
			3-A-1-b. Improve Muni and special-transit services to enable people with particular transit needs to shop using public transportation.
	3-B. Food markets are distributed within the City appropriately to the needs of residents.	3-B-1. The number of food markets in neighborhoods in the City (where market analysis indicates feasibility) where there is a dearth of nutritious, affordable and safe food has increased.	3-B-1-a. Increase community-based participation in the design and operation of food markets by creating a community-development corporation or similar entity.
			3-B-1-b. Explore mini-food markets in certain districts of the city; develop various market models for providing food.
	3-C. All corner stores carry a wide variety of nutritious, affordable, and safe food.	3-C-1. Ten percent of corner stores provide an adequate level of nutritious, affordable and safe food.	3-C-1-a. Create a system ofr distribution of wholesale nutritious, affordable and safe food to corner stores, which provides financing for inventory, capital items and technical assistance.

Source: City of San Francisco 1996

objectives and actions related to participation in the food system, education about sustainable food systems, regional sustainable agriculture, food production in the city, and recycling of agricultural products (City of San Francisco 1996). An additional area of focus related to food access provides an interesting and relevant example for communities to consider.

These goals, policies, and actions listed below, are just an excerpt from the City of San Francisco's Plan, many of which could be integrated into a community's comprehensive plan. In terms of plan implementation and policy efforts that communities can use to promote neighborhood level commercial, one approach is to establish design guidelines related to neighborhoods, as was done in Santa Rosa, California. This community of over 150,000 in Sonoma County north of San Francisco, specifies a number of goals and guidelines intended to promote commercial development and services in local neighborhoods. Excerpts are provided below:

**Goal** – To promote the development of new “neighborhoods” that incorporate a variety of uses as opposed to subdivisions that feature single-family homes exclusively.

Guidelines (Neighborhood Structure)

1. Design neighborhood and community shopping centers to include or, at a minimum, accommodate the following:
  - a. Buildings that house a variety of private-sector uses, such as: higher-density residential, small ‘Mom & Pop’ food stores, restaurants, day care, and other neighborhood-serving commercial businesses.
  
4. Limit the distance from neighborhood edges to centers to not much more than one-quarter mile. One-quarter mile (a five-minute walk) is the generally accepted distance that people are willing to walk to a neighborhood center. Limiting the neighborhood size in this way helps to create an identity for a neighborhood, as well as support pedestrian activity.

6. Locate higher-density housing within the neighborhood center, where the residents can better support the commercial establishments, access public transit and easily take advantage of parks or plazas.
  
7. When Neighborhood or Community Shopping Center is indicated in the General Plan, provide design of the shopping center at the initial project submittal. Leaving the design for the Neighborhood or Community Shopping Center to a later time creates the potential for a commons that is not integrated or coordinated with the surrounding development

Source: City of Santa Rosa 2005



Farmers' Market

Metropolitan Design Center

Communities might also facilitate the protection and provision of neighborhood commercial by facilitating traditional neighborhood-development patterns. The University of Wisconsin Extension Program has provided a model Traditional Neighborhood Development (TND) ordinance. The ordinance calls for a mix of residential, commercial, civic, and open-space areas, allowing residents to live within one-quarter mile or a five-minute walk from these uses (Ohm et al. 2001). Commercial uses allowed in the TND area include food services, such as neighborhood grocery stores, butcher shops, bakeries, and restaurants, not including drive-throughs; cafes and coffee shops; neighborhood bars or pubs (Ohm et al. 2001). By limiting

drive-throughs, the ordinance likely limits the location of fast-food restaurants in this area. It is important to note, however, that mixed uses have not always been commercially successful in such new urbanist developments (Bartlett 2003).

## Promoting Local Food Production and Distribution

There are a number of comprehensive planning and plan implementation tools that communities might utilize to protect existing agricultural production, promote local and small-scale production, and facilitate the delivery of these products to the local market. One approach is to formally address agricultural production and promotion issues in the comprehensive plan. Dane County, Wisconsin, which includes about half of its 450,000 residents in Madison, also has a history of agricultural production and highlights a number of food-related issues in its Draft Comprehensive Plan (2006). The plan addresses protecting agricultural land, minimizing conflict between agricultural and adjacent uses, improving the economic viability of agriculture, and making connections between farmers and the local market. Specific policies and programs in the Agricultural, Natural and Cultural Resources element include:

3. Design and implement education workshops and distribute materials for farmers, developers, landowners, and the general public, including:
  - a. Educate landowners on their options and alternatives to development (ask non-profits and others to help) – TDR, PDR, etc.
  - b. Publicize benefits/drawbacks of conservation subdivisions.
  - c. Develop a publication giving notice to rural home/property owners of potential impacts of agricultural practices, such as road traffic (tractors, etc.) and manure odor; require distribution to all new rural property buyers.
  - d. Notify rural residential homeowners of farming practices by notices recorded with deeds, surveys and other legal documents.
  - e. Develop and distribute a map of Dane County that illustrates the types and location of agriculture in the county.

4. Establish a “Buy Dane County” farm-products campaign, that includes the following elements:
  - a. Develop a Dane County logo to enable farmers to foster local marketing efforts.
  - b. Work with local ad agencies on a campaign for Dane County-grown products.
  - c. Start a pilot project that tests the feasibility of selling Dane County-food products, including local institutional markets, grocery stores and restaurants.
  - d. Encourage local purchasing in county food-service facilities. Build on current efforts to establish a policy that 10 percent of food purchases through its Consolidated Food Service be made locally within two years. In addition, the county should support the initiative to create the Courthouse Catering enterprise, which proposes to source 75 percent of food locally for a cafeteria in the new courthouse.
  - e. Create an electronic Web site to market Dane County products over the Web.
  - f. Enlist restaurants and grocery stores to showcase county products—establish a government-sponsored council to promote goals.
  
9. Support local efforts to create public markets that provide year-round venues for farmers’ markets and additional market opportunities for Dane County farmers.
  
11. Continue to support the Dane County Food Council to:
  - a. Help capitalize on Dane County’s exceptional assets.
  - b. Coordinate efforts to build a stronger local food system.
  - c. Advise County government to address food-system issues, particularly aimed at strengthening the capacity of the local and regional food system.
  - d. Assist in food-related education.
  - e. Gather relevant data and information.
  - f. Play a coordinating role among groups in the local food system.
  - g. Develop policies to address food system issues

Source: Dane County 2006



The San Francisco Sustainability Plan discussed in the previous section also offers sample goals related to food production and distribution. A few excerpts are provided on the following page. These and many other of the goals objectives, and actions included in the plan could be tailored to individual communities.

Related specifically to food distribution, Washtenaw County, Michigan, includes a discussion of new markets as part of the background materials in the agriculture chapter of its comprehensive plan. Washtenaw County has a population of over 340,000, with approximately a third of the population living in the city of Ann Arbor, home to the University of Michigan. The plan describes the growth in direct sales of agricultural products to consumers, including produce-oriented farms, “u-pick” operations, hayrides, pumpkin patches, and community-supported agriculture programs that allow consumers to purchase rights to food before it is available to the broader market. It includes an objective to “encourage and support programs that will maintain the viability of agriculture through new and expanding markets for locally-grown products.” Related objectives include:

**Recommendation 1.1 New Market Opportunities:** Develop a collaborative effort between Washtenaw County, MSU Extension, UM Business School, local governments and agricultural organizations to find new market opportunities for Washtenaw County and the region’s agricultural sector. Opportunities include ethanol production, direct producer-to-consumer marketing of farm products, local food-distribution network, grain elevators and livestock markets.

**Recommendation 1.2 New Market Zoning:** Develop model zoning ordinance language that allows small agri-business activities, such as processing, in agricultural-zoning districts to add value to products generated on Washtenaw County farms.

**Recommendation 1.3 New Market Education:** Support existing programs that encourage and educate producers on new entrepreneurial opportunities in the agricultural sector

Source: County of Washtenaw 2004

Comprehensive plans provide a policy framework to raise awareness of key issues and goals, but community policies are important in facilitating land-use and development decisions that can contribute to expanded local food production and distribution. Community gardens can be an important way for individuals and neighborhoods to produce some food for themselves, but in some cases the locations of these land uses are limited by zoning regulations.

One approach used by the Boston Redevelopment Authority, the City of Boston’s planning and economic development agency, to protect community gardens is by providing them with a specific zoning designation as part of the City’s open-space zoning district. Community gardens are designated as a sub-district with the following stated purpose: “Community Garden open space (OS-G) subdistricts shall consist of land appropriate for and limited to the cultivation of herbs, fruits, flowers, or vegetables, including the cultivation and tillage of soil and the production, cultivation, growing, and harvesting of any agricultural, floricultural, or horticultural commodity; such land may include Vacant Public Land”. The ordinance does not require a minimum land area and allows the OS-G designation on public land and on private land if the owner provides consent (Boston Redevelopment Authority 2006).



Outdoor Market, Stockholm, Sweden

**Table 2. Increasing Urban Agricultural Production and Food Distribution-Excerpts from the San Francisco Sustainability Plan**

Goal	Long-term Objectives to Reach Sustainability	Objectives for the Year 2001 (Five-year Plan)	Actions	
4. To create, support and promote regional sustainable agriculture	4-A. There are farmers' or gardeners' markets in every neighborhood.	4-A-1. Three additional certified farmers' markets have been established in locations close to San Francisco residential neighborhoods. The markets enjoy greater participation from local small farmers and gardeners.	4-A-1-a. Through existing venues, such as conferences, encourage farmers to cell as mobile-produce vendors at farmers' markets	
			4-A-1-b. Develop workshops for career counselors about the field of organic farming; promote organic farming as a career choice at career fairs, seminars, and famers markets.	
			4-A-1-c. Organize field trips for students to regional and organic farms.	
			4-A-1-d. Assist land trusts and encourage the local, state and federal governments to set aside agricultural land close to urban fringes.	
5. To maximize food and agricultural production within the City itself.	5-A. Community and rooftop gardens exist in every neighborhood and business district, allowing sifficient access for all residents.	5-A-1. The number of community, school and residential edible garden training projects has doubled.	5-A-1-a. Develop a collarborative school gardening program between the school district and non-profit organizations and/or volunteers who provide training and on-going supervision.	
			5-A-1-b. Establish demonstration farms on available land in San Francisco, such as Treasure Island, the Presidio and any other public land (with sensitivity to the needs of native plants and wildlife).	
	5-B. All new publicly-funded construction has rooftop and/ or ground-level gardening space.	All new housing projects have a dedicated amount of edible-garden space.	5-C-1-a. Modify city regulations to require green spaces in housing projects.	
	5-C. All new private multi-unit residential construction has gardening space.			
	5-G. All vacant land has become utilized for appropriate ecological purposes, including food production, wildlife and native plant habitat, or Christmas-tree or other forestry products farms.	5-G-1. Fifty percent of all vacant land not appropriate for biodiversity refuge has become utilixed for productive purposes.		5-G-a. Identify and make available for edible gardens appropriate vacant space (temporary or permanent).
				5-G-1-b. Identify and catalogue all public vacant properties for ecological purposes, including greenhouse and food-producing activities.
				5-G-1-c. Donate vacant land to non-profit organizations for gardening projects.
				5-G-1-d. Amend the City Charter to allow for the discounted sale of unused or other city properties to non-profit organizations for community-based food-related projects.

Source: City of San Francisco 1996

A more general view of community approaches to zoning food-related land uses is provided in the table below. The table notes the use status of farmers’ markets, community gardens and grocery stores in five major U.S. cities. This analysis suggests that there is significant variation in how communities regulate the locations of food-related land uses. Farmers’ markets are sometimes allowed in industrial, commercial and residential districts. Community gardens are allowed in each of these districts, as well as floodplain districts in Minneapolis. In all

of the communities, grocery stores are limited to commercial and industrial districts, but many of the communities have neighborhood commercial districts that may facilitate the location of farmers’ markets in areas close to where people live.

In addition to zoning regulations, local health regulations may also affect the location and conduct of farmers’ markets. In the health and safety section of Missoula, Montana’s city code, for example, farmers’ markets are allowed in

**Table 3. Summary of Zoning Regulations for Food-related Land Uses**

City	Use Status	Farmers’ Markets	Community Gardens	Grocery Stores
Ann Arbor, MI	Permitted		Public Land (PL)	Local Business (C1), Campus Business (C1A), Community Convenience Center (C1B), Business Service (C2B), Business Service/Residential (C2B/R), Fringe Commercial (C3)
	Conditional			Limited Industrial (M1), Limited Light Industrial (M1A)
	Prohibited			
Arlington County, VA	Permitted			Restricted Local COmmercial (C1R), Local Commercial (C1), General COmmercial (C2 & C3), Commercial Townhouse (CTH), Commercial Redevelopment (CR), Limited Industrial (CM), Light Industrial (M1), Service Industrial (M2)
	Conditional			Commercial Office Building Hotel and Apartment (CO1.0 & CO1.5)
	Prohibited			
Boston, MA	Permitted	Industrial Restricted (M), General Industrial (I), Waterfront Industrial (W)	Single Family Residential (S), General Residential (R), Apartment (H), Business Local (L), Business General (B), Industrial Restricted (M), General Industrial (1), Waterfront Industrial (W)	Business Local (L), Business General (B), Industrial Restricted (m), General Industrial (I)
	Conditional	Business Local (L), Business General (B)		Waterfront Industrial (W)
	Prohibited	Single Family Residential (S), General Residential (R), Apartment (H), Industrial Maritime Economy Reserve (MER)	Industrial Maritime Economy Reserve (MER)	Industrial Maritime Economy Reserve (MER), Single Family Residential (S), General Residential (R), Apartment (H)

City	Use Status	Farmers' Markets	Community Gardens	Grocery Stores
Minneapolis, MN	Permitted	High-density Office Residence District (OR2), Institutional Office Residence District (OR3), Neighborhood Commercial (C1), Neighborhood Corridor Commercial (C2), Community Activity Center District (C3A), Community Shopping Center District (C3S), General Commercial District (C4), Downtown Business District (B4), Downtown Service District (B4S), Downtown Commercial District (B4C), Light Industrial (I1), Medium Industrial (I2)	Single-family (R1 & R1A), Two-family (R2 & R2B), Multiple-family (R3, R4, R5, & R6), Neighborhood Office Residence District (OR1), High Density Office Residence District (OR2), Institutional Office Residence District (OR3), Neighborhood Commercial (C1), Neighborhood Corridor Commercial (C2), Community Activity Center District (C3A), Community Shopping Center District (C3S), General Commercial District (C4), Downtown Service District (B4S), Downtown Commercial District (B4C), Light Industrial (I1), Medium Industrial (I2), Floodplain Overlay (FP)	Neighborhood Commercial (C1), Neighborhood Corridor Commercial (C2), Community Activity Center District (C3A), Community Shopping Center District (C3S), General Commercial District (C4), Downtown Service District (B4S), Downtown Commercial District (B4C), Light Industrial (I1), Medium Industrial (I2), Floodplain Overlay (FP)
	Conditional			
	Prohibited	Neighborhood Office Residence District (OR1), General Industrial (I3)	General Industrial (I3), Downtown Business (B4)	Neighborhood Office Residence District (OR1)
San Francisco CA	Permitted	Residential House District One-family (RH-1, RH-1D, RH-1S) Residential House District Two-family (RH-2), Residential House District Three-family (RH-3), Residential House District Four-family (RH-4), Residential Commercial Combined Districts – Low-density (RC-1), Residential Commercial Combined Districts – Moderate-density (RC-2), Residential Commercial Combined Districts – Medium-density (RC-3), Residential Commercial Combined Districts –High-density (RC-4)		Neighborhood Shopping (C-1), Community Business (C-2), Downtown Office (C-3-O), Downtown Retail (C-3-R), Downtown General Commercial (C-3-G), Downtown Support (C-3-S), Heavy Commercial (C-M), Light Industrial (M-1), Heavy Industrial (M-2)
	Conditional			
	Prohibited			

Sources: City of Ann Arbor, MI 2006; County of Arlington, VA 2006; City of Boston, MA 2006; City of Minneapolis, MN 2006; City of San Francisco, CA 2006

most commercial districts, including the central business district, some industrial districts and city parks with approval of the City Council (City of Missoula 2006). The ordinance provides basic requirements, including that agricultural products be produced in western Montana, that hours and dates be approved by the City Council, and that vendors not impede access to fire hydrants (City of Missoula 2006).

The City of Saint Paul, Minnesota, has specific regulations related to its large downtown farmers' market in a specific city-market section of its code. The ordinance specifies the location, types of products that can be sold, traffic, parking, role of the farmers' market director, and licensing requirements (City of Saint Paul 2006).

The City of Minneapolis, Minnesota, also has a large centralized farmers' market that is governed by the municipal-market section of the food section of the City Code. The ordinance deals with many of the same issues as the Saint Paul code, but also addresses refuse removal, sale of non-food items and provision of eating facilities. The code also provides a favored position for local vendors by giving first priority in assigning market space to those who raise their own produce (City of Minneapolis 2006).

## Final Thoughts

The examples provided here are just a sample of the approaches that communities can use to address food access, production and distribution. The examples illustrate language that can be integrated into comprehensive plans and, also, policies that can be used in zoning regulations and other municipal ordinances. The sample plan and policy language focus on creating an environment that facilitates the provision of food-related resources in accessible locations and appropriately managing production and distribution, without unnecessarily impeding these activities. Incorporating any of these ideas into a local plan or code requires knowledge of the local context and many of the examples can be effectively tailored to meet local conditions, issues and concerns.



Virginia Supermarket

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