

## Recommendation #1

**Conduct detailed feasibility analyses related to creating a permanent food market(s) and/or food hub(s).**

- Permanent Market Example: Pike Place Market in Seattle hosts 90-120 farmers and artisans in a central urban public market. As well as being home to permanent restaurants and shops (including the original Starbucks and Sur La Table), the Market collectively accounts for over \$100 million in sales annually. Approximately 60 percent of the 10 million annual patrons are tourists.
- Food Hub Example: 21 Acres and the Puget Sound Food Network serve as the connection between farmers, small scale processors, and local consumers. Restaurants, institutional buyers, and other food retailers all expressed interest in some type of centralized local food market.

## Recommendation #2

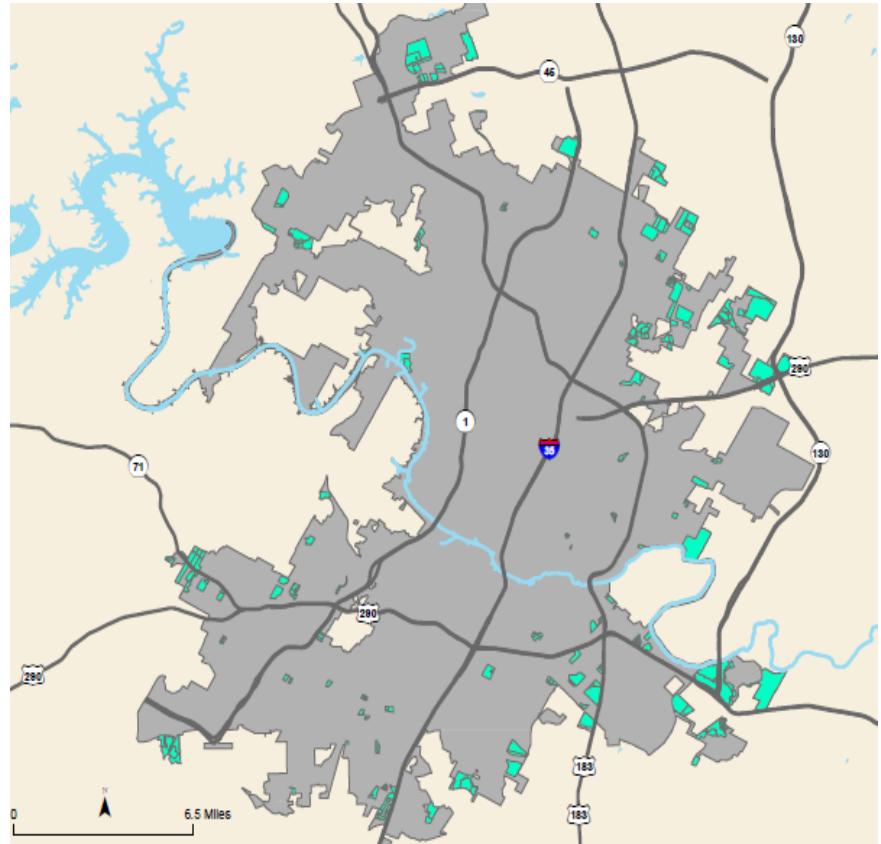
**Identify infrastructure, facilities, and programs that could further support local food manufacturing/processing.**

- Food processing traditionally is largely about economies of scale, wide-spread distribution, and a focus on cost-competitiveness.
- Additional resources related to business development and processing capacity to support small-batch value-added products are needed.
  - Oregon State Food Innovation Center in Portland provides help with product development, nutrition analysis and sourcing of ingredients, packaging, food safety, marketing and distribution.
  - Contract processing facilities are an area of opportunity as well.
  - Further growth of small business support and networks, including financing, (much like Austin's technology sector) would enhance food sector economic development.

## Recommendation #3

### Work to make public lands available for urban agriculture.

- Per map, about 4% of Austin's land mass has ag exemption.
- Average size is 15 acres; below 10 acres there are challenges with securing exemption (legislation pending to address).
- City has begun the process of examining if and how to allow use of vacant lands for urban agriculture – opportunity to provide leadership to other jurisdictions.



*535 parcels within the City of Austin, marked in green, totaling about 8,000 acres, are ag exempt.*

## Recommendation #4

### **Investigate resources to provide economic development support to local farmers.**

- Zoning and regulation - Portland is an example of a regulatory environment that is responsive to urban agriculture and farm stands.
- Focused technical assistance around business planning, securing financing, etc. could be provided through the City's Small Business Development office.
- Other economic development resources:
  - USDA micro-lending program provides up to \$35k at competitive interest rates – repayment term varies.
  - Texas A&M Ag Extension Strong Starts program on urban farming served 35 participants from 11 Central TX counties last year – “most participants own five acres or less.”

## Recommendation #5

**Explore ways to use mobile vendors to mitigate access issues in certain parts of the community.**

- Range of ideas on how to address food insecurity have been explored and/or implemented, i.e.;
  - incentivizing grocery stores, expanding community gardens and farmer's markets, SNAP multiplier programs, subsidized public transportation, etc.
- Mobile vendors are another idea that could be successful.
  - In Portland, My Street Grocery is a community mobile grocer that sees itself as “a traveling farmers market or a mini grocery store on wheels.”
  - New York City's Green Cart initiative - 1,000 new permits for street vendors who can sell only raw fruits and vegetables in areas of the city designated in need.

## Recommendation #6

**Explicitly incorporate the role of local food in external marketing and community education efforts.**

- Evolve the Austin brand to include a more expansive view of entertainment, creativity, and lifestyle.
  - more research needed on exact forum and content of message(s)
- Education and outreach
  - greater consumption of local food will have positive implications for both the community's economic and physical well-being
- City can provide leadership, not only through its own efforts, but in partnership with other institutions and stakeholders.
- Ultimate measure of these recommendations and other City actions is not just implementation but awareness, which puts further emphasis on outreach efforts