

# SUSTAINABLE FOOD SYSTEMS

A **sustainable food system** provides **everyone** in the community with **access to fresh, nutritious food**, which helps in reducing dietary-related disease and hunger.





# STATE OF THE FOOD SYSTEM REPORT



OFFICE OF  
SUSTAINABILITY

CITY OF AUSTIN

## PURPOSE:

- Educate
- Connects existing goals
- Organize priorities and action plans

## OVERVIEW:

- Growing Food
- Selling Food
- Eating Food
- Recovering Food

# the facts



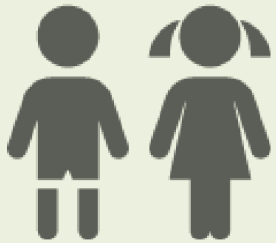
**18%**

of the population  
is **food insecure**



**FIVE**

zipcodes are **without  
grocery stores**



**26%**

of children are  
**food insecure**

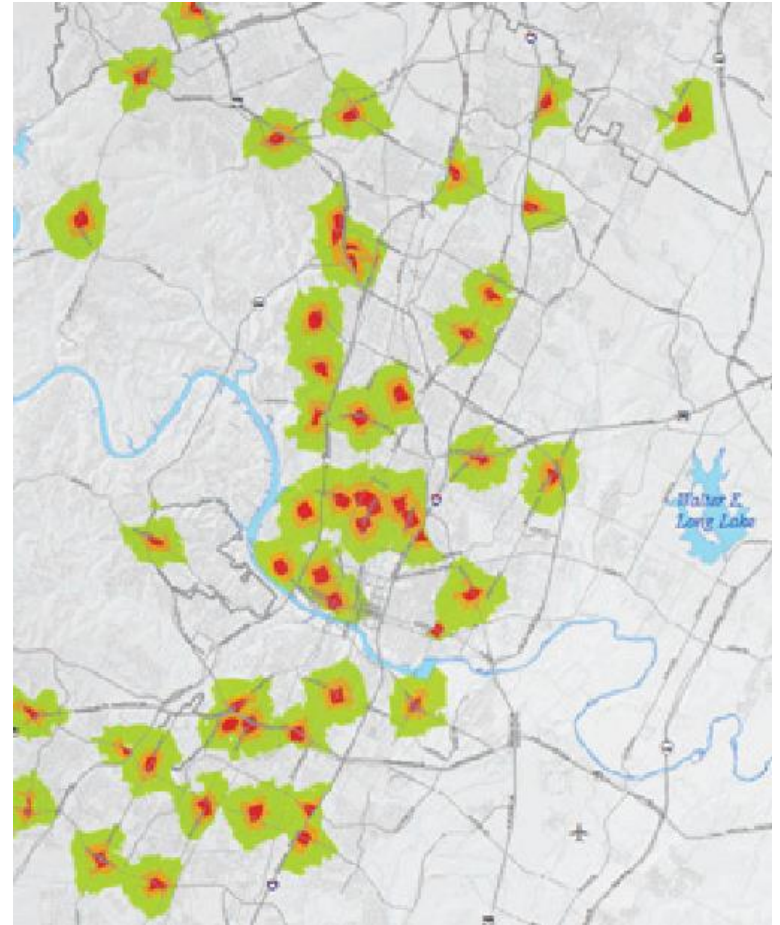


**33,589**

food insecurity calls  
**to united way**

# Mile Proximity Buffers Around Grocery stores

(Austin Food System Report, 2015)



**CODE NEXT**

*the vision*

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to create a  
CONNECTED  
PROTECTED  
community-integrated  
**FOOD SYSTEM**

**WHAT CODE DO WE  
CURRENTLY HAVE IN AUSTIN?**



# existing city codes & ordinances

- Market Gardens
- Documentation Requirements for Garden Permit Application
- Administration of Community Gardens
- Right of Way
- Temporary Exemption from Platting Requirements
- Zoning Chart/Permitted Use: shows that urban farms and community gardens are allowed across all zones.
- Certified Farmers Market Vendors, Permit required



**WHAT CODE DO WE WANT  
TO HELP ACHEIVE OUR VISION?**

# *what we want*

## **Production**

- Protecting Farmland
- Protecting Community Gardens

## **Connection: Removal of Regulatory Barriers**

- Permitted uses
- Madison, WI

## **Connection: Incentivizing Food Access and Production**

- Density Bonuses
- Gardens in Real Estate

## **Community Oriented**

- Traditional Neighborhood Development



HOW TO GET  
WHAT WE WANT

# urban core transect

- **Production**
  - Remove right of way restrictions to allow for edible landscapes
  - Reduce FAR for greenhouses
  - Provide allowances for rooftop agriculture/gardens, vertical farming, indoor farming, aquaculture
- **Processing**
- **Distribution**
  - Designate space for bicycle/non-motorized vehicle food distribution
  - Clustering of distribution locations to increase efficiency
- **Consumption**
  - Incentivize local food retail by attaching it to a density bonus program
  - Ensure that mixed-use development includes food retail
- **Food Waste Recovery**
  - Community composting infrastructure

# urban transect

- **Production**
  - All food production should be **permitted use**.
  - Utilize community gardens in new housing developments
- **Processing**
  - Commercial kitchens
  - Support food manufacturing and animal processing facility
- **Distribution**
  - Designate space for a combination of bicycle/non-motorized vehicle local food distribution
- **Consumption**
  - Wholesale farmers markets, farm stands, permanent farmers markets with subsidized infrastructure, food hubs corner markets, community farm stands
  - Neighborhood food-buying Coops
- **Food Waste Recovery**
  - Community composting system

# suburban transect

- **Production**
  - Prioritize preservation of prime farm land
  - Establish limits on sub-dividing farm land
  - Utilize community gardens in new house developments
  - Allow for conversion of underutilized industrial sites into urban farms
  - All food production should be permitted use.
- **Processing**
  - Commercial kitchens, food manufacturing and animal processing facility  
– utilize for job creation
- **Distribution**
  - Incentive food hubs
- **Consumption**
  - Incentive full-service grocery stores in low income communities
  - Require access to healthy food in all new developments
- **Food Waste Recovery**
  - Community composting system
  - Siting of bulk composting facilities

# rural transect

- **Production**
  - Prioritize preservation of prime farm land
  - Establish limits on sub-dividing farm land
  - Allow all food community gardens, school gardens, aquaculture
- **Processing**
  - Food manufacturing and animal processing facility – utilize for job creation
- **Distribution**
  - Support diverse models
- **Consumption**
  - Require access to healthy food in all new developments
- **Food Waste Recovery**
  - Community composting system
  - Bulk composting facilities



**ACTIONS**  
TO GET WHAT WANT

# how should the code be implemented:

- **Strive** to maintain and enhance the viability of Austin's agricultural economy and related resources
- **Maintain** the integrity of highly productive agricultural lands throughout the City
- **Encourage** development patterns that will allow the continuation of agricultural land use throughout the City.
- **Promote** local and community agricultural businesses related to ranching, livestock production and farming
- **Promote** a healthy agricultural community by supporting efforts to strengthen the agricultural economic base
- **Limit** variances and require developers to contribute to a farmland bank within City limits

# recommendations:

- **Include**, for each of the four transects – urban core, urban, suburban, and rural), language that recognizes the value of agricultural uses and encourages density-appropriate farming activities.
- **Institutionalize** community garden property so that it is considered the best and highest use
- **Streamline** the Urban Farm Ordinance so business can easily receive their permits at no-cost. Eliminate the Certificate of Compliance.
- **Require** all new multi-family housing developments to create a ‘food access plan’ documenting how new residents will be able to easily access healthy, fresh, affordable food.
- **Create** specific land development code for farmers markets, eliminate fees for permits, permanently prioritize this use. Invest in permanent infrastructure at all farmers markets.