Bloomington Local Food Resilience Strategy

Prepared for:
Bloomington Commission for Sustainability
Bloomington City Council
Department of Economic & Sustainable Development
City of Bloomington Planning & Transportation Department
Housing and Neighborhood Development
Department of Parks and Recreation

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Executive Summary

As supply chains face increasing instability and global systems undergo accelerated disruption — from climate disruptions and war to cyberattacks and changes to national policies and priorities — Bloomington must act swiftly to develop a resilient, decentralized food system that protects public health, ensures economic stability, and maintains food access in the face of growing risks. Critically, we must acknowledge that the City cannot produce all its food within its boundaries, and has regressed from the recommendation contained in the Peak Oil Task Force Report to achieve 20% self-provisioning. In addition, a previous administration recognized the importance of food to health, sustainability, and resilience of the City as seen by the adoption of the Sustainability Action Plan which spurred in 2019 “The Year of Food.” This was an initiative to increase access to healthy, local food, and strengthen the local food economy and support local growers while raising awareness about community food insecurity.

Since that time the Department of Economic and Sustainable Development, and the Commission on Sustainability largely ceased activity, support, and promotion for the local food system. Additionally,the role of a Value Chain Coordinator or Food Systems Manager, was funded via a grant for three years, at which time the task was to establish a venue for local producers to sell their products. The Bloomington Farm Stop Collective is the successful outcome of this endeavor. As encouraged in the Sustainability Action Plan, this was to become a permanent position although the City administration had changed its stance regarding hiring someone permanently for this position.

The strategy contained herein outlines a two-year action plan coordinated across City Council, City Planning, City Parks & Recreation, Monroe County, and the Bloomington Commission on Sustainability.

Why a 2-Year Timeline is Imperative. Population Food Needs: Bloomington’s ~79,000 residents require approximately 237,000 pounds of produce annually (assuming 3 pounds per person daily, including vegetables, fruits, and grains) and 39,500 pounds of meat (0.5 pounds

per person daily). Local production should aim to supply 20–30% of this to enhance resilience, with the rest from regional or external sources.

The urgency of this timeline is grounded in the convergence of five major risk factors:

1. **Increasing Likelihood of Economic Instability**
    - A recession is projected for Winter 2025–26, threatening jobs, food affordability, and household stability, with economist Steve Hanke predicting a 90%+ likelihood of a 2025 recession, citing M2 money supply contraction. (M2 money supply is currency that is in circulation, which includes cash, checking deposits, savings deposits, money orders - the most liquid money.) From a more conservative estimate, in June 2025, **J.P. Morgan** has increased the likelihood of a recession to **40% chance** by end of 2025.
    - Recent ICE raids to an agricultural processing facility and farms with plans to target more agricultural businesses and processing facilities, which as of this writing, has been *temporarily* halted.
    - Federal aid programs (SNAP, WIC, school meals) face cuts, there is a deepening food insecurity for low-income residents.
    - Instability in the Middle East and the possibility of war would substantially raise gasoline prices, which would as a result increase food transportation prices.
    - Dollar devaluation is expected to raise prices for fuel, imports, and agricultural inputs, therefore increasing the cost of food even further.
    - Ray Dalio, founder of Bridgewater Associates, the world's largest hedge fund, is recognized for his insights into macroeconomic trends, long-term debt cycles with research and strategies that have led to his ability to navigate volatile market conditions and predict significant economic events, warns of systemic debt and currency risks that could catalyze a major downturn.
    - Neil Howe, author of The Fourth Turning, projects that the 2020s represent a societal crisis era likely to involve economic realignment.
    - Catherine Austin Fitts, former Assistant Secretary of Housing and Urban Development for Housing, where she was charged with repairing the department's reputation in the aftermath of the savings and loan crisis, predicts systemic breakdowns in banking and food systems and urges regional self-sufficiency and individual household food stores.
    - Edward Dowd, former BlackRock executive, foresees rising economic instability tied to declining health and labor force participation.
    - Rick Rule of Rule Investment Media has advised increased resilience in energy and agriculture, anticipating higher commodity volatility and a return to tangible assets.

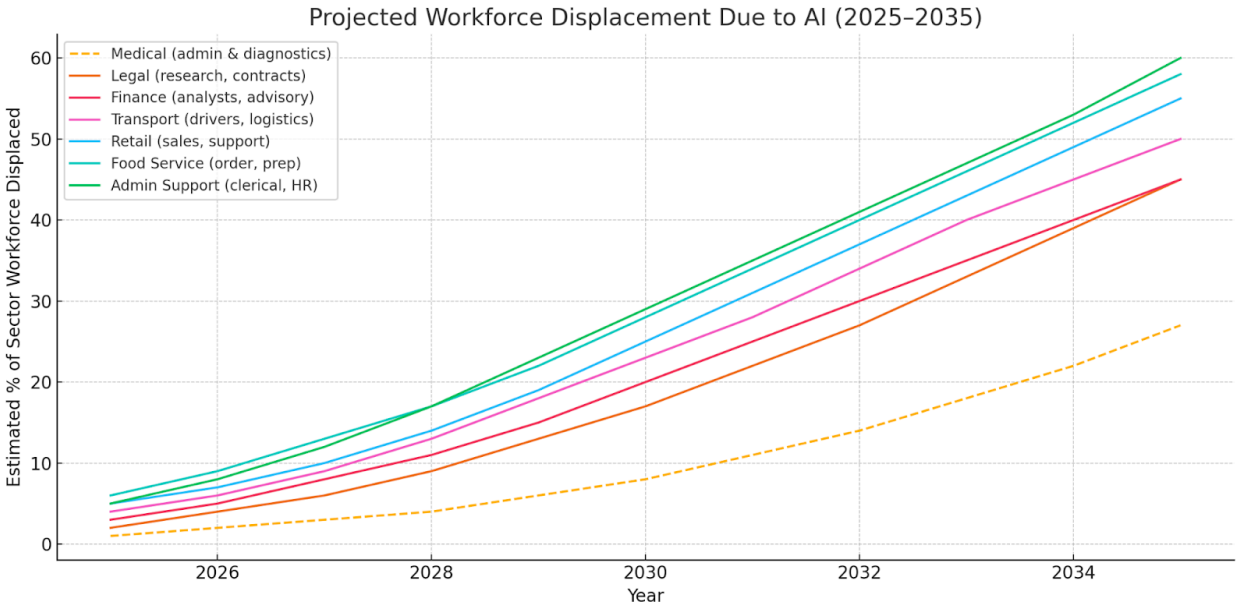
2. **Loss of Federal Support**
    - The USDA's $12.7M LFPA grant program has been cancelled, eliminating a key local food funding stream.

- Other COVID-era programs supporting food infrastructure and farm viability are ending.
- Local Food for Schools (LFS) Cooperative Agreement Program was cancelled in March 2025, with an allocation of $660 million to help school procure fresh, locally grown produce. Its termination affects school meal programs and local agricultural markets.
- Partnerships for Climate-Smart Commodities (PCSC) was cancelled in April 2025, which was aimed to support sustainable farming practices and reduce greenhouse gas emissions. Its cancellation halts funding for climate-resilient agricultural projects.
- Resilient Food Systems Infrastructure (RFSI) Program funding ceased as of January 2025. It was designed to strengthen the middle of the food supply chain, including processing and distribution. The halt in funding affects infrastructure development for local food systems.
- Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) aka Food Stamps, is facing proposed cuts of $90-$100 billion through 2034. There will be stricter eligibility requirements, funding shifts to states from federal, and benefit freezes beyond inflation.
- School Meal Programs will face funding reduction in the proposed 2025 budget. This potentially reduces access to free or reduced-priced meals for children, affecting nutrition and food security among students.
- Conservation Stewardship Program (CSP) has been suspended or defunded in certain areas. This supported farmers to maintain and enhance conservation practices. Funding cuts may hinder sustainable agricultural efforts.
- The implications for the City of Bloomington and Monroe County could lead to decreased support for local farmers through the loss of funding of local food procurement programs with a loss of market opportunities for small and mid-sized farming businesses. These funding sources, such as the LFPA grant funds, has already lead to a loss of fresh local produce in local food banks, which can lead to a loss of nutrient dense foods and greater food insecurity among low-income populations, with cuts to SNAP and school meal programs exacerbating the already existing problem. This may halt progress in adoption and the continuation of sustainable agricultural practices, through the termination of programs like PCSC and CSP for climate-resilient farming practices.

3. **AI-Driven Job Displacement**
    - Artificial Intelligence is rapidly replacing jobs in logistics, food service, retail, and professional sectors.
    - A regenerative food economy can provide durable, local jobs and workforce development pathways.

Projected AI-Driven Job Displacement by Sector (2025 - 2035)

Sector	2025	2027	2030	2033	2035
Administrative Support	5%	15%	30%	45%	60%
Food Service	3%	10%	25%	40%	55%
Retail & Sales	4%	12%	28%	38%	50%
Transportation	2%	10%	22%	35%	48%
Medical (Clerical/IT)	3%	8%	18%	30%	42%
Legal & Finance	2%	7%	15%	25%	35%



**Source:* McKinsey Global Institute, World Economic Forum, Goldman Sachs Research, augmented by projections from Ray Dalio, Edward Dowd, and Catherine Austin Fitts.*

The chart shows increasing automation risk in sectors such as:

- **Admin Support and Food Service**: Most vulnerable, with up to 60% of roles automated by 2035.
- **Retail, Transport, Finance**: Significant displacement by 2030–2035.
- **Medical** (non-clinical) and **Legal**: Moderate risk, especially in diagnostics, records, and document review.

4. **Climate and Supply Chain Volatility**
    - **Climate instability** is accelerating globally, creating direct threats to agricultural output, food distribution, and economic resilience. Extreme weather and supply chain volatility threaten food availability. A centralized position can proactively plan for these risks.
    - **Extreme Weather Events**: Indiana faces increasing risks of summer droughts, spring floods, and tornadoes, each posing severe risks to crops, soil, and infrastructure.
    - **Flooding** overwhelms Monroe County's stormwater systems, degrading urban soils and threatening transportation networks.
    - **Droughts** in Indiana and surrounding states increasingly impact grain and livestock feed production, leading to reduced food supply and higher prices.
    - **Tornadoes** and severe weather events pose damage risks to greenhouses, urban farms, and critical transit corridors. The shift of “Tornado Alley” to the east includes Indiana as we have locally experienced tornadoes and straight-line winds.
    - **Tariffs and Global Trade Disruptions**: U.S. reliance on imported fertilizer and food components leaves local systems vulnerable to geopolitical tensions and shifting trade policies, particularly with China, Russia, and disruptions in the Red Sea and Suez Canal. [The practice of exporting U.S.-raised chickens to China for processing and re-importing them remains legally permissible since 2013, although escalating tariffs and trade tensions between the countries have created economic challenges that could impact this practice, with this possibly becoming a local producer opportunity as adjustments to the supply chain are made.]
    - **Cyberattacks** on logistics providers highlight vulnerabilities in our interconnected food systems, where a single attack can halt meat processing or grocery distribution.
    - **Fossil Fuel Volatility** directly affects transportation and fertilizer costs, stressing farmers and food hubs.
    - **Uncertainty caused by the Department of Homeland Security,** Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE) raids that have occurred at agricultural worksites, including meat packing facilities and farms.
    - ***Localized food production and storage*** *must be treated as essential infrastructure on par with water and energy. Urban farms, neighborhood food*

hubs, and community gardens can provide redundancy, accessibility, and security during climate or supply chain shocks. Supporting data sourced from the National Integrated Drought Information System (NIDIS), NOAA, USDA Climate Hubs, UN FAO, and the World Trade Organization (WTO).

5. **Local Risk and Opportunity**
    - **Farmland near city boundaries** is rapidly being lost to development; action is required to preserve it, this can be accomplished through zoning changes, and possibly include land trusts, such as the Sycamore Land Trust through such vehicles as conservation easements, which protects farmland while families continue to farm for income.
    - Short-term windows for ARPA, IRA, and CHIPS Act funding can support strategic infrastructure development now.

The following two-year roadmap aligns with grant cycles, local election terms, and climate-appropriate growing seasons. Delay will increase food insecurity, economic vulnerability, and community dependence on distant systems increasingly prone to disruption

24-Month Timeline for Implementation

Objective: Mobilize coordinated action across departments, governmental and legislative body's, agencies and the public to prepare Bloomington for potential severe food system disruptions by mid-2027.

Immediate (0–6 Months)

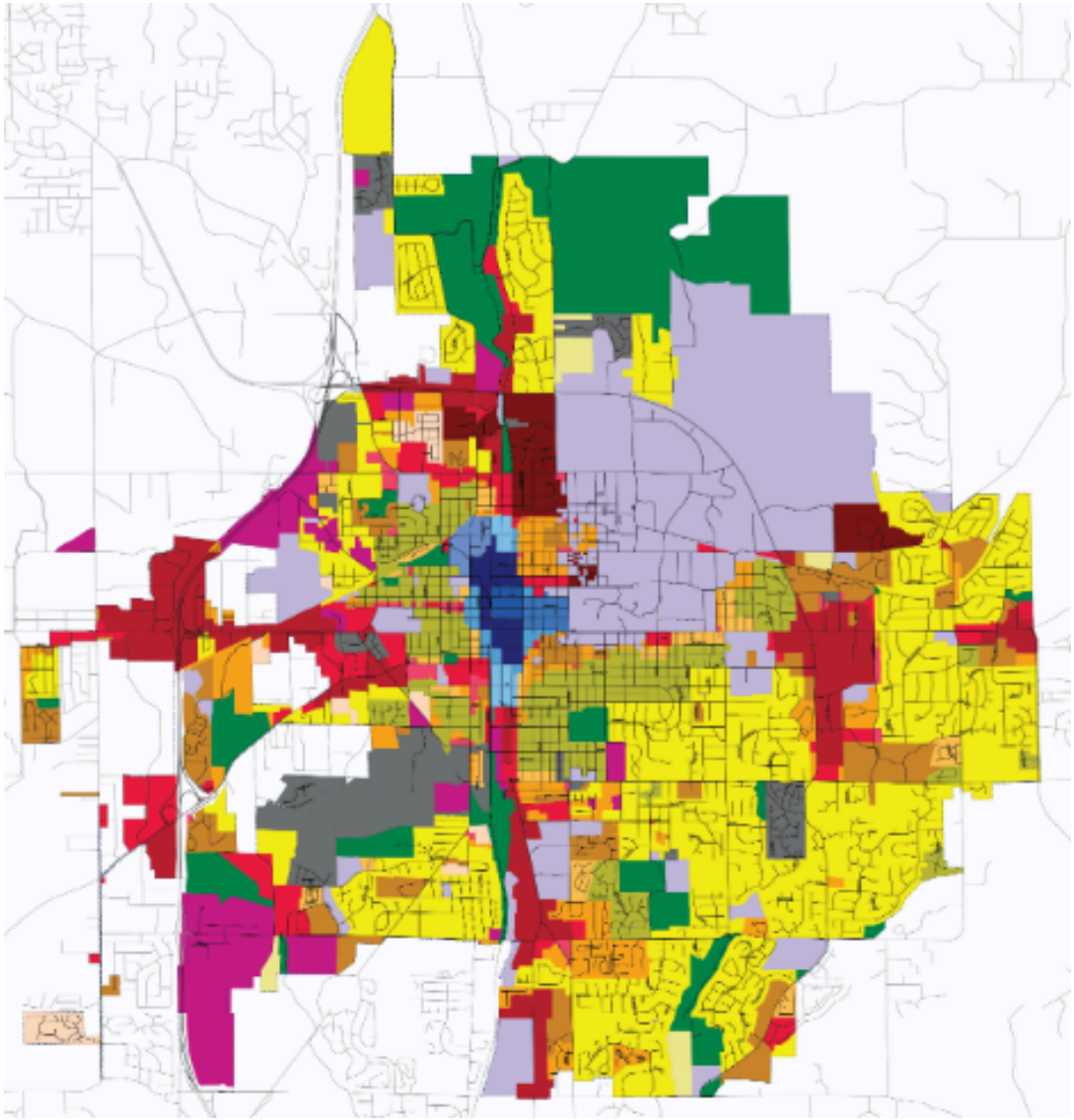
- **Commission on Sustainability:**
    - Propose the City Council include "Resilience" in the organization name, a change to the "Bloomington Commission on Sustainability and Resilience".
    - Food Resilience actions that can be taken include:
        - Apply for USDA/local resilience, and other federal applicable grants to support food and agricultural resilience.
        - Launch CSA promotion
        - Food System Mapping: Recommend or support the creation of a food asset map for Bloomington to identify current producers, distributors, and food deserts.
        - Organize a seed bank through a partnership with MCPL and possibly the MCCSC in local schools
        - Define sustainability agricultural goals for the City based on a population of 78,682 permanent residents, and 51,000+ students for an approximate total of 130,000 residents.
        - Develop a pathway and refine language for existing neighborhoods to modify covenants & restrictions, including for HOA's, to allow for City Food Resilience allowable uses and zoning overlays.
        - Create food resilience metrics for City Planning to include in development reviews based on the City's resilience and sustainability goals.
        - Review UDO for modifications to be in alignment with sustainability and food resilience goals.

	Landscaping Standards
20.10	HAND - Notice of Violation (NOV) corresponding enforcement & fines

20.05.052:LA-01	Plant Material Standards
20.05.057: Exhibit LA-A (5-57)	Permitted Plant Species
20.05.055 – LA-04	Planting Sizes
20.04.080	Buffer Yard Types
20.06.005	Subdivision Types (update)
20.07.130	Open Space Standards
20.07.200	Sustainable Development Standards
20.04	PUD's

- **Recommend City support:**
  - Prioritize purchasing from local producers.
  - Allocate funds to hire a Food Systems & City Farm Manager.
- **Incentivizing Food Production**: Propose tax abatements, grants, or other incentives for property owners converting underutilized land into food-producing plots.
- **Disaster Resilience Planning**: Include food systems in climate resilience strategies—e.g., distributed growing networks, seed-saving initiatives, and food storage nodes.

Neighborhood & Site Recommendations for Urban Farms, Orchards, and Gardens:



- **North Bloomington**
  - ***Arlington Park**, **Rev. Butler Park**, and city utility lands.*
  - ***IU edge sites** (10th Street corridor) for orchard installation and student partnership.*
  - ***Garden Hill/Maple Heights**: underserved in food access; ideal for a hub site.*

- **Central Core**
  - ***RCA Park**: already proposed for Urban Farm; flagship site with orchard, greenhouse, and education center.*
  - ***Switchyard Park (south end)**: community gardens + food forest on unused edges.*
  - ***B-Line Trail** & **Clear Creek Trail**: edible corridors and mini food forests.*

- **South Bloomington**
  - ***Winslow Farm Park**, **Goat Farm**, **Jackson Creek** corridors.*
    - *Leverage school grounds (e.g., Childs Elementary) for joint gardens & food literacy.*

- **West Side**
  - ***Near Crestmont & Butler**: high food insecurity; combine food hub + mutual aid + gardens.*
  - ***Fairview area**: alleyway gardens, church partnerships.*

- **East Side**
  - ***Southeast Park**, **Griffy Woods buffer zones**, and IU land south of Bypass.*
    - *Integrate edible buffers in subdivisions (e.g., Winslow Crossing).*

- **Periphery/Edge Areas**
  - ***City-owned parcels near Fullerton Pike**, **W. 17th**, and **SR 45/46** for edge-of-city food forests, market gardens, or livestock grazing.*

- ***Implementation Notes***

  Overview: The U.S. food system operates on a "just-in-time" supply chain, which means most grocery stores only stock about 3 days of food at normal consumption rates, rely on daily deliveries from regional distributors, and have no warehouse space on site.

The population of Bloomington is approximately 80,000 full-time residents and ~45,000 students during IU's academic year for a total of ~125,000 residents during most of the year. The City contains limited food warehousing space, a few local farms and CSAs, although they are not scaled to feed the entire population of the City. Hilltop Garden, Mother Hubbard's Cupboard, and community gardens are helpful but are in no way sufficient for emergency-scale food supply. Considering the number of days all of the sources of food, the City may have a food security window of approximately 5-days without incoming shipments.

To plan for Food Resilience, distributed food production (urban farming, backyard gardens), emergency food storage hubs, and resilient local distribution systems, such as pop-up markets and localized CSAs would be needed to meet hyperlocal needs. To support these endeavors food sovereignty policies would need to be passed to reduce dependence on centralized systems and to recirculate local wealth rather than sending monies to non-local corporations.

The development of neighborhood food hubs and a local seed bank is foundational to building a resilient, equitable, and climate-adapted local food system—especially in mid-sized cities like Bloomington. These tools provide the physical and social infrastructure needed to withstand disruptions, empower communities, and regenerate local food sovereignty.

In 2013–14 the Bloomington Food Policy Council (BFPC) conducted a Growers Survey as part of the report *Bloomington City Food System: A First Look* (January 2014). It was found that most active food gardeners owned their homes, suggesting that homeownership facilitates food gardening. *The Bloomington Food Access Report* (September 2021) found that a significant proportion of residents (15.7%) expressed that having access to a garden would improve their food access—even if they don't actively garden now. This points to a continued interest in gardening as a component of food security—and may be tied to homeownership and property access.

- *Pair siting of food hubs with transit access (Bloomington Transit stops).*
- *Prioritize land within ¼–½ mile of high-density housing or food-insecure census tracts.*
- *Use underutilized rights-of-way, detention basins, and easements as micro-sites.*
- *Collaborate with:*
  - ***Faith communities****: often have underused lawns.*
  - ***Schools & libraries****: for curriculum-aligned gardens.*
  - ***Neighborhood associations****: co-manage food forests and hubs.*
    - Seek ARPA/resilience funding based on current availability and application deadlines.

- *Draft and adopt an Interlocal Agreement between Monroe County and the City of Bloomington to coordinate food system governance, emergency planning, and zoning policy.*
- *Collaborate with Monroe County Commissioners and Bloomington City Council to adopt mutual ag zoning near municipal borders, including zoning overlays and agrihood provisions.*

- *Partner with IU, Ivy Tech, Purdue Extension, Soil & Water Conservation District, and local organizations to:*
  - *Draft an Emergency Food Playbook.*
  - *Identify 500–1,000 acres of county land for regenerative agriculture* (ex. cover crops, rotational grazing) and 50–100 acres for spindle orchards (ex. high-density apple trees yielding 1,000 bushels/acre).
  - *Establish policy and funding groundwork for food resilience based on models from Montgomery County, MD; Detroit's Office of Urban Agriculture; and Mic*higan's "10 Cents a Meal" and "Food as Medicine" programs.
- **Urban Agriculture Ordinances**:
  1) Advocate for updates to the Unified Development Ordinance (UDO) to support urban farms, and edible landscaping in all zones.
  2) **Local Procurement Policies**: Recommend city support for institutions (like schools and hospitals) to prioritize purchasing from local producers. [Michigan 10-cents a Meal program may be a good fit for a local pilot with daycare centers.]
  3) **Incentivizing Food Production**: Propose tax abatements, grants, or other incentives for property owners converting underutilized land into food-producing plots.
  4) **Infrastructure Needs**: A butchering facility, neighborhood farm stops (small retail points for local produce), and a food hub (centralized aggregation and distribution) are critical for a regional food system.
  5) **Zoning Flexibility**: Suggest zoning allowances for agrihoods, farm stands, and community-supported agriculture (CSA) distribution centers within
- **Public Engagement:**
  - Populate the Food Resilience Working Group to:
    - Begin CSA promotion and mutual aid network mapping.
    - Host seed-saving, edible gardening, edible landscaping, chicken keeping, and food storage classes at libraries as education initiatives.

- **City Council:**
  - Pass Food Hub Resolution and initiate Comprehensive Plan & UDO updates.
  - Designate RCA Park for an Urban Farm through a Master Plan amendment.
    - **Food Access**: RCA Park sits near a low-income area with limited food access.
    - **City Plan Alignment**: Supports Sustainability Action Plan goals on food equity, climate adaptation, and green infrastructure.
    - **Community Engagement**: Could serve as an educational, volunteer-driven project for residents and students (e.g., Ivy Tech, MCCSC, IU).
      - **Possibilities for Use**: Larger than a community garden, the farm could include CSA shares, farm stand, composting, and demonstration areas for water conservation and native plantings.
    - **Zoning/Planning Needs:**

- May require amending park use language to allow farming.
- Coordinate with Parks & Recreation and Utilities (especially for water access and soil safety testing).

- **Comprehensive Plan Updates:**
  - **Chapter: Environment or create a standalone "Food & Resilience" chapter**
    - Add: "Support development of local food infrastructure, including urban farms, community gardens, and distributed food hubs."
    - Add: "Develop strategies for climate-resilient food access, particularly in low-income and underserved areas."
  - **Chapter: Land Use**
    - Add policies allowing for agrihoods, edible landscaping, and food production in all residential zones.
    - Call for land audits to identify underutilized parcels for public food production.
  - **Chapter: Parks, Recreation & Cultural Amenities**
    - Add support for large-scale edible landscapes and urban farms within parks (specifically name RCA Park).
    - Reference food as a form of public engagement and education.
  - **Chapter: Parks, Recreation & Cultural Amenities**
    - Include policy supporting shared neighborhood gardens and food production infrastructure in multi-family and affordable housing developments.
  - **City Planning Changes for New Developments:**
    - **UDO Amendments**:
      - Require or incentivize **edible landscaping** (fruit trees, herbs) in common areas.
      - Allow and encourage **agricultural easements** in new subdivisions.
      - Enable **on-site food markets** or CSAs within neighborhood centers.
      - HOA Covenant Template:
        - Provide city-recommended language that permits gardens, chickens, rainwater catchment, etc.
        - Create a standard "Sustainable Neighborhood" C&R template.
        - **Clustered Development Bonuses:** Offer density or height bonuses for projects that allocate land for food production, especially in food-insecure areas.
      - **Retrofit Guidelines for Existing Developments**:

- Develop zoning overlays or incentives for converting underused lawns or vacant lots into food-producing spaces.
- Encourage co-op models for maintaining food plots in multi-family units

- **Fund a Food Systems & City Farm Manager** position that would oversee the development of the RCA Park Urban Farm, advocate for system wide needs, and coordinate local solutions that include access to affordable, nutritious local gardens/food for the unhoused.
  - **"Food is Infrastructure."** Just as Bloomington invests in roads, utilities, and housing, food must be treated as critical infrastructure in the face of climate, economic, and social disruptions.
    - **Climate Resilience**: Extreme weather and supply chain volatility threaten food availability. A centralized position can proactively plan for these risks.
    - **Health Equity**: Many Bloomington residents lack access to affordable, nutritious food. A Food Systems Manager can coordinate local solutions.
    - **Economic Development**: Local food systems create jobs, support small businesses, and retain money within the local economy.
    - **Cross-sector Coordination**: Food touches health, education, transportation, housing, and the environment. This role would centralize fragmented efforts across city departments.
    - **Precedents**: Cities like **Minneapolis, Austin, and Baltimore** have Food Policy Directors or Food Systems Coordinators who manage urban ag, emergency food planning, and food equity initiatives.
      - **Funding:** Start as a grant-funded (e.g., ARPA funds, USDA Local Food Promotion Program), then shift to general funds if outcomes prove strong.
- **Draft and sign an Interlocal Agreement** with Monroe County, and Ellettesville, with a possible later goal to form the Monroe County Food System Collaboration (MCFSC), a non-profit organization governed by a joint board with representatives from the County, each Municipality, Soil & Water Conservation representative, local farmers and producers.

- **City Planning:**
  - Identify city-owned buildings and parks for food hub pilots in each neighborhood to be reflective of the Comprehensive Plan.
  - **Edible Green Infrastructure**: Propose integrating edible landscaping into city parks, street medians, and stormwater retention areas.

- **Create urban agriculture zones and overlays**, and require all new developments to meet sustainability agricultural goals.
- **Begin code changes** to integrate edible landscaping, food gardening, and food storage areas in new development.

Short Term (6–12 Months)

- **Commission on Sustainability:**
  - Launch at least 2 food hub pilots in underserved areas.
  - Facilitate, with the county, land access partnerships for farming.
  - **Public Campaigns**: Work with City departments and nonprofits to launch "Grow Bloomington" or "Feed the B" campaigns focused on household- and neighborhood-level food production.
  - **Workshops and Classes**: Encourage the City to host gardening, permaculture, and food preservation classes through Parks & Recreation, and possibly reinstate People's University as a mode of delivery, capitalizing on knowledgeable local individuals.
  - **Youth Engagement**: Collaborate with Monroe County Community School Corporation to expand school gardens and farm-to-school programs.
- **City Council:**
  - Approve policies and funding for a community seed bank locations' and support.
  - **Integrate Food into the Comprehensive Plan**: Ensure the City's Comprehensive Plan includes goals for food security and infrastructure such as distribution hubs, farmers markets, and cold storage.
- **City Planning:**
  - **Require food infrastructure** in large new developments, including multi-family zoning districts.
  - **Use of City-Owned Land**: Recommend City land audits to identify parcels suitable for community gardens, orchards, or urban farms.
  - **Finalize food zone mapping**
  - UDO edits for barter/alternative currency markets. (The Totnes Pound in England is an example of a local currency.)
  - **Adopt a scalable chicken flock-size model:**
    - Base allowance: 6–8 hens on lots up to ⅓ acre.
    - +2 hens per additional ¼ acre, up to a max of ~20 hens on a typical 1–2 acre parcel.
    - This mirrors community gardens and allotment models and ensures more eggs in emergencies.
    - Permit 1 rooster per 10 hens *only on parcels ≥1 acre*, with neighbors notified or waiving. (Supports breeding and local resilience while minimizing noise.)
    - Base allowance: **6–8 hens** on lots up to ⅓ acre.

        - **+2 hens per additional ¼ acre**, up to a max of ~20 hens on a typical 1–2 acre parcel.
        - This mirrors community gardens and allotment models and ensures more eggs in emergencies.
        - **Incorporate composting and waste mitigation**
            - Mandate on-site **hot composting** or other approved systems for chicken waste, rather than strict setbacks
            - **Encourage integrated food-waste systems**
                - Incentivize compost coops, BSF bins, vermicomposting.
                - Possibly a **composter incentive program**,
- **Public Education - cooperate with existing local non-profits:**
    - Expand composting, garden, seed saving, food preservation, and orchard skills training.
    - Distribute “Resilience Ready” home guide.
- **Parks and Recreation:**
    - Expand existing garden space at all Community Garden sites
    - Increase plot sizes to allow for a more substantial amount of produce to be grown for a household. According to the book All New Square Foot Gardening by Mel Bartholomew, 16 square feet is needed per person for fresh eating and about 32 square feet per person to include preservation.
    - Consider adding community garden plots in neighborhoods with dense and multi-family housing, prioritizing lower income neighborhoods

Mid Term (12–18 Months)

- **City Council:**
    - Pass “Resilient Food Sovereignty Act.”
    - Support feasibility study for a barter/alternative local currency network.
- **City Parks:**
    - Begin implementation of seed-saving in public community gardens, in collaboration with MCPL and MCCSC.
- **City Planning:**
    - Approve emergency zoning overlay revisions.
- **Commission on Sustainability:**
    - Launch a community seed bank network: Monroe County Public Library (MCPL) and the Monroe County Community School Corporation (MCCSC) and other private and public schools in collaboration with City Parks & Rec.
    - **Benchmarking Resilience**: Advocate for performance indicators like percentage of food sourced locally, number of community garden plots per capita, or food waste diverted to compost.
    - Convene a county and surrounding county food systems summit as a City-County collaboration, possibly held at Ivy Tech.

- **Public Engagement:**
    - Establish a local food curriculum in schools and community centers (such as the Edible Schoolyard Project curriculum by Alice Waters) in collaboration with public school systems, and private and charter schools throughout the county.
    - Pilot a neighborhood-based barter exchange.

Long Term (18–24 Months)

- ***City Council:***
    - *Review policy outcomes; scale support for successful programs.*
- ***City Planning:***
    - *Incorporate food resilience metrics into development reviews.*
- ***Commission on Sustainability:***
    - *Finalize and promote citywide Food Emergency Response Plan.*
    - *Expand edible landscaping across all municipal properties.*
- ***Public Engagement:***
    - *Activate a full food hub network, one location in each neighborhood, preferentially located centrally and on a bus route with easy walk & bike accessibility.*
    - *Educate and train residents in home preservation, wild foraging, and decentralized distribution.*

Prioritized Policy Options

Summary:

Priority 1: Establish a Bloomington-Monroe County Food System Joint Venture

Objective: Decentralize food storage, aggregation, and distribution to increase local access and disaster resilience.

- **Rationale**: A cooperative agreement among Bloomington, Monroe County, and Ellettsville, modeled on the Convention Center joint venture, will coordinate regional food production, processing, and distribution. This addresses the city's limited land capacity by leveraging county farmland for regenerative agriculture and spindle orchards, while ensuring equitable access through urban food hubs and farm stops.

  The **U.S. food system operates on a "just-in-time" supply chain**, which means most grocery stores:

  - **Stock about 3 days of food** at normal consumption rates
  - **Rely on daily deliveries** from regional distribution centers
  - **Have little to no warehouse space on site**

  In the event of supply chain disruption (natural disaster, fuel shortage, cyberattack, etc.), **stores would empty in 1–3 days**, especially for high-demand goods like bread, meat, milk, and baby formula.

- **Actions**:
  - **City Council**: Draft and sign a memorandum of understanding (MOU) with Monroe County and Ellettsville to form the Monroe County Food System Authority (MCFSA), governed by a joint board with representatives from each entity. Allocate $250,000 from Bloomington's American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA) funds to seed the venture, matched by county and Ellettsville contributions.
  - **BCOS**: Conduct a regional food system assessment with the Soil & Water Conservation District, and Purdue Extension to identify 500–1,000 acres of county land for regenerative agriculture (e.g., cover crops, rotational grazing) and 50–100 acres for spindle orchards (e.g., high-density apple trees yielding 1,000 bushels/acre). Prioritize county-owned or leased land near urban centers for accessibility.
  - **Infrastructure Development**:
    - **Food Hub**: Establish a regional food hub on county land (e.g., near I-69 for transport) to aggregate, store, and distribute produce and meat.

Budget estimate of $1 million (shared across entities) for construction, targeting completion by 2027, with a pilot phase in 2026.

- **Butchering Facility**:
  - Purchase a portable abattoir, also known as a mobile slaughter unit (MSU), for a self-contained, trailer-mounted facility that provides on-site slaughtering and processing services for livestock for use across the county and municipalities for more immediate use. (Oregon State University Center for Small Farm Community Food Systems: Cost Calculator for a Mobile Slaughter Unit: https://www.nichemeatprocessing.org/cost-calculator-for-a-mobile-slaughter-unit/).
  - Develop a centralized small-scale, USDA-inspected butchering facility within an easily accessed food hub to process 500–1,000 animals annually (e.g., cattle, poultry). (Comparative study by the State of Nevada Extension Service: https://extension.unr.edu/publication.aspx?PubID=2299)
- **Neighborhood Farm Stops**: Fund 5–7 farm stops in Bloomington's renter-heavy neighborhoods, each 500–1,000 sq ft, to sell local produce and meat. Integrate with Urban Agriculture Incentive Zones (UAIZs) for on-site micro-gardens, espalier apple and pear trees where appropriate, and hoophouse for season extension.

- **Funding Suggestion**: Secure $2 million total ($1 million from ARPA, $500,000 from county, $500,000 from USDA Local Food Promotion Program grants and other funding sources) for land acquisition, hub, and facility startup.

- **Timeline**:
  - 0–3 months: Sign MOU and form MCFSA;
  - 3–12 months: Complete land assessment and secure funding;
  - 12–24 months: Lease 500 acres, pilot food hub operations, and open 3 farm stops.
- **Expected Outcomes**:
  - Secure 500 acres for regenerative agriculture (producing 10% of produce needs, ~23,700 pounds)
  - 50 acres for spindle orchards (5,000 bushels of fruit)
  - launch 3 farm stops serving 2,000 residents
  - initiate food hub operations, increasing local food supply by 15%.
- **Priority**: High, as it establishes the regional framework critical for scaling production beyond city limits.

Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) to create the Monroe County Food System Authority (MCFSA).

Parties:

- City of Bloomington, Indiana
- Monroe County, Indiana

- Town of Ellettsville, Indiana

Purpose: To establish a joint venture for a resilient regional food system, coordinating land use, production, processing, and distribution to meet 20–30% of Bloomington's food needs by 2030.

Objectives:

1. Identify and lease 500–1,000 acres for regenerative agriculture and 50–100 acres for spindle orchards by 2026.
2. Develop a regional food hub and butchering facility by 2027, with pilot operations in 2026.
3. Establish 5–7 neighborhood farm stops in Bloomington by 2027.
4. Promote equitable food access and sustainable practices, aligning with Bloomington's Climate Action Plan.

Governance:

- MCFSA Board: 9 members (3 from each entity), meeting quarterly.
- Annual budget approved by all parties, with initial funding of $2 million ($1M Bloomington ARPA, $500K Monroe County, $500K grants).

Commitments:

- Bloomington: $250,000 initial funding, urban policy support (e.g., UAIZs, farm stops).
- Monroe County: Land identification, $500,000 funding, rural infrastructure support.
- Ellettsville: $100,000 funding, participation in hub and farm stop networks.

Priority 2: Neighborhood Food Hubs

Definition: A food hub is a localized center that aggregates, stores, processes, distributes, and often grows food—while also offering education and community support. Neighborhood Food Hubs support:

- **Decentralized Resilience**: If highways shut down or major retailers close, neighborhood hubs can serve as micro-distribution centers.

- **Access and Equity**: Hubs embedded in lower-income or underserved neighborhoods reduce food deserts and transportation barriers.

- **Job and Skill Creation**: Can offer employment, internships, or volunteer opportunities in food production, culinary arts, logistics, and business management.

- **Health and Nutrition**: Serve as educational sites for cooking classes, gardening workshops, and chronic disease prevention.

- **Waste Reduction**: Can incorporate composting, gleaning, and food recovery from restaurants or grocery stores.

In short, Neighborhood Food hubs can be a CSA pick-up point, provide cold storage for local farmers, provide a shared-use kitchen for food entrepreneurs (as is seen at the Bloomington Farm Stop Collective), create culturally specific food boxes, and be a disaster food distribution site. In a crisis, centralized food distribution systems fail first, which is why the Permaculture Principal of Functional Redundancy supports resilience, in that every function is supported by many elements.

Objective: Decentralize food storage, aggregation, and distribution to increase local access and disaster resilience.

City Council

- **Resolution:** "Establishing Food Hubs as Critical Resilience Infrastructure"
- **UDO Amendment:** Permit “Food Hub” as a use in mixed-use, institutional, and overlay zones.
- **Comprehensive Plan Update:**
  “Support the development of neighborhood-based food hubs that aggregate, store, process, and distribute local food as part of the City’s emergency preparedness, equitable access, and climate resilience strategy.”
- **Cooperative Agreement**: A joint venture similar to the Monroe County Convention Center partnership involves shared governance, funding, and infrastructure development among Bloomington, Monroe County, and other municipalities. This will pool resources to address regional food production and distribution.
- .

City Planning

- Require new large developments (>20 units) to provide food storage/garden space or partner with a food hub.
- Identify retrofit opportunities in city-owned buildings.

Public Education

- Launch food hub pilots in high-need areas.
- Promote CSA pickups, gleaning programs, and mutual aid food exchange.

Commission on Sustainability

- Identify pilot locations and secure partners.

- Seek ARPA/resilience funding.
- Facilitate collaboration with HAND and Parks.

Grants and Funding Opportunities to Create a Local Resilient Food System (Select List):

Program Name	Deadline	Administered By	Eligible Uses
USDA Urban Agriculture Grants	Aug 15, 2025	USDA Office of Urban Ag	Equipment, outreach, planning
National Institute of Food	Oct 10, 2025	USDA Community Food Projects	Food hubs, education, infrastructure
Resilient Food Systems Infrastructure Grant	Nov 2025	USDA AMS	Aggregation, storage, local Processing
FEMA BRIC Program	Jan 2026	FEMA	Resilience infrastructure, food storage
Inflation Reduction Act Block	varies	State-administered	Farm infrastructure, renewable energy
Indiana Local Food Promotion Program	Feb 2026	Indiana Dept. of Agriculture	Food market expansion, promotion
Community Foundation Food Access Fund	Mar 2026	Monroe County CF	Local food access and farm tools
USDA Farm to School Grant	Dec 2025 (est.)	USDA FNS	School gardens, local procurement, curriculum integration
SARE Farmer/Rancher Grants	Winter 2025 (est.)	USDA SARE	On-farm research for regenerative ag and sustainability practices
NEH Local Heritage Foodways Grant	Jan 2026	National Endowment for the Humanities (NEH)	Educational programming on regional food history and place-based foodways
EPA Environmental Justice Collaborative	Apr 2026	EPA Office of Environmental	Food justice, urban ag, outreach in

Agreement		Justice	underserved communities
USDA Value-Added Producer Grant (VAPG)	Spring 2026 (est.)	USDA Rural Development	Processing, packaging, marketing of local ag products
BEDC Innovation Grants (Q1/Q3 Cycles)	Q1 & Q3 2026	Bloomington Economic Development Corporation	Urban ag innovation zones, food system entrepreneurship
Indiana LFPP (Additional Rounds)	Feb & Aug 2026 (est.) *[may not return]*	Indiana Department of Agriculture	Market expansion, procurement programs, food infrastructure
HEART Grant – Indiana (proposed)	TBD	Purdue University / IU Extension	Academic-community partnerships in regenerative agriculture
Kellogg Food Equity & Economic Justice	Rolling LOI	W.K. Kellogg Foundation	Food access equity, farm-to-institution, community-led food initiatives
HUD Community Development Block Grants (CDBG)	Annual / Rolling	HUD / City Planning Departments	Food infrastructure, gardens in low-income areas, urban resilience hubs
EDA Public Works & Economic Adjustment Assistance	Rolling	U.S. Economic Development Administration (EDA)	Infrastructure development, food hub construction, community kitchen retrofits
Bloomington Community Foundation Rapid Response Fund	Quarterly	Community Foundation of Bloomington & Monroe County	Small-scale projects, equipment purchases, pilot programs
Bloomington Urban Ag Mini-Grant (proposed)	Rolling	Parks Dept / BCOS / Local Nonprofit	Gardening, orchards, school projects, community pilot plots

.A full Gantt-style chart, 18-month grant calendar (Aug 2025–Jan 2027), and funding action guide to be created.

Priority 3: Urban Farms & Edible Landscapes

Objective: Localize food production capacity within city boundaries.

City Council

- **Master/Comprehensive Plan Amendment:** Designate RCA Park for an Urban Farm.
- Allocate funding for an Urban Agriculture Coordinator or partner nonprofit.
- Create a Community Food Commons Designation to designate shared food production spaces in neighborhoods, with zoning that allows shared maintenance and harvesting beyond designated garden spaces in City Parks.

City Planning

- Require 10% of green space in developments >10 acres be edible/agricultural.
- Update zoning overlays to encourage rooftop gardens, community composting.

Public Education

- Host classes on gardening, composting, and food preservation.
- Promote "Grow Your Block" initiatives and home garden networks.

Commission on Sustainability

- Draft Urban Farm proposal with stakeholders.
- Promote edible landscaping on public land.
- Host a City-County Community Resilience Summit.

NOTES:

Acreage Distribution by Strategy

Strategy	Acreage	Description
Neighborhood food hubs & urban farms	150–200 acres	Centralized sites for aggregation, education, cold storage, and distribution. Preferably 1–2 acres per neighborhood.

Community gardens (city parks, churches, schools)	100–150 acres	Easily accessible, walkable growing sites. Focused on participation, skills, and nutrition.
Edible landscaping & public food forests	50–100 acres	Spread across medians, school grounds, parks, stormwater buffers.
Institutional partnerships (IU, Ivy Tech, hospital)	50–100 acres	Leverage existing land & staff for food production and education.
Private/home gardens (zoned, supported)	100–200 acres	Encouraged through zoning, incentives, compost delivery, and training.
Urban micro-orchards & agroforestry	50–100 acres	High-yield perennials (spindle orchards, berry hedgerows, nuts) on marginal land.

Definitions

Regenerative Agriculture: Practices like cover cropping, no-till farming, and rotational grazing restore soil health, sequester carbon, and increase resilience to climate disruptions, aligning with Bloomington's Climate Action Plan (CAP) and sustainability goals.

Spindle Orchards: High-density, trellised orchards (e.g., apple, pear) maximize fruit production on limited land, suitable for peri-urban areas in Monroe County. Small spindle orchards within the City limits would be suitable, and espalier are suitable for even the smallest city lots

Espalier is a method of training trees or shrubs to grow flat against a support structure like a wall or trellis, creating a two-dimensional, often decorative, pattern.

Priority 4: Local Seed Bank

Definition: A seed bank stores locally adapted, open-pollinated seeds for future planting and biodiversity preservation.

This is important because:

- **Seed Sovereignty**: Ensures communities are not dependent on commercial seed companies or vulnerable to seed supply chain breakdowns.
- **Climate Adaptation**: Locally saved seeds adapt to regional soil, pests, and weather conditions over generations.
- **Cultural Preservation**: Preserves heirloom and heritage varieties important to Indigenous, immigrant, and Appalachian communities.
- **Food Security**: In the event of economic hardship or crisis, access to viable seeds becomes essential to grow food quickly and affordably.

A local seedbank can distribute seeds to residents (especially beginners, low-income households, and schools), offer seed-saving education and exchanges, partner with libraries (e.g., “seed libraries”) and community gardens, track regional biodiversity and rare crop genetics. Climate volatility threatens crop consistency with locally adapted seeds being the first line of defense against loss of biodiversity that can provide the genetics for greater local adaptability. As seen during Covid lockdowns, seed companies (such as Johnny’s Selected Seeds) prioritized farmer orders and did not take gardener orders until late into the growing season. Additionally, a local seed supply can offset price spikes, helping to keep local food production affordable and more attainable to all City residents.

Objective: Preserve regional biodiversity and ensure replanting capability during and post-disruption.

City Council

- **Comp Plan Update:**
  “Support the establishment of a community seed bank to preserve regional biodiversity, support home growing, and provide emergency seed access.”
- Allow public facilities (libraries, schools) to host seed bank infrastructure.

City Planning

- Require edible landscaping projects to include seed-saving plans.
- Designate community garden space for seed propagation.

Public Education

- Offer seed-saving workshops at public venues.
- Create a seed exchange program in partnership with local libraries.

Commission on Sustainability

- Initiate partnerships with the MCPL and local schools to launch the seed bank.
- Add seed bank creation to Commission goals.
- Seek grant funding from USDA, Seed Savers Exchange, and local donations.

Possible Scenarios to Consider

In support of a robust and resilient food system we must consider all scenarios in our rapidly changing world. If the monetary system were to be “turned off”—whether due to cyberattack, banking collapse, EMP, or other catastrophic disruption—and the current “just-in-time” food supply chain also fails, the impact on Bloomington’s local food economy and City operations would be immediate and severe. Here's a breakdown of how this scenario would likely unfold, and why it's crucial to build local resilience now.

IMMEDIATE IMPACTS (0–72 hours)

1. Grocery Stores and Retail

- Most stores would **stop accepting credit/debit cards** instantly. Cash would be accepted briefly—until physical currency runs out or becomes unsafe to handle.\
- Panic buying would **empty shelves in 1–2 days**.
- Retailers couldn’t restock because they rely on **real-time electronic transactions, ordering, and logistics systems**.

2. Food Access

- Vulnerable populations—those without cash, transportation, or existing pantry reserves—would feel the crisis **first and hardest**.
- **SNAP/EBT** would fail immediately, cutting off low-income residents from food purchases.
- Nonprofits and food pantries would **quickly exhaust their limited inventories**.

3. Local Farms & Food Producers

- Many farmers rely on:
    - **Digital sales platforms** (e.g., Square, online orders)
    - **Bank loans and operating credit**

    - **Fuel and feed shipments**

- Without access to money or supply chains, most could not harvest, store, or distribute food **at scale**, even locally.
- Few have the tools, labor, or community logistics set up for barter-based or manual economies.

SHORT-TERM CASCADE EFFECTS (3–14 days)

4. Transportation and Fuel

- Trucks would stop running due to fuel shortages or inability to process payments.
- **Food movement halts**, even within the city.
- Workers may not show up—no pay, no fuel, food insecurity.

5. City Operations

- **City employees may not be paid.**
  Water, sanitation, and emergency services could falter if digital systems or payment mechanisms fail.
  Without food, **civil unrest becomes likely**. Police, fire, and EMS could be overwhelmed.

6. Local Economy and Barter

- Informal systems may emerge:
  Barter for food, labor, and skills
    - Neighborhood-level trade and security groups
- People will turn to **backyard gardens, foraging, and mutual aid networks**, but only those already prepared will be effective.

MEDIUM-TERM IMPACTS (2–8 weeks)

7. Collapse of Institutional Feeding Systems

- IU dining, schools, hospitals, jails—**all rely on industrial-scale, just-in-time food purchasing**.

- Once stores, warehouses, and kitchens are empty, institutional feeding stops.

8. Breakdown of Social Order

- Hunger + stress + inequity = increased risk of:
  Theft and violence
    - Migration out of the city
    - Black markets forming

WHAT COULD MITIGATE THIS?

To soften the blow of such a scenario, Bloomington would need:

A. Neighborhood Food Hubs

- For local aggregation, mutual aid, emergency feeding
- Must be stocked *before* disaster

B. Urban Farms and Gardens

- Food growing embedded in neighborhoods
- Soil, water, and seed resources already established

C. Local Seed Bank

- To enable rapid replanting and food sovereignty

D. Community Currency or Barter Networks

- Organized pre-collapse to keep trade flowing without banks

E. Emergency Governance and Land Use Plans

- Legal frameworks for community land use, water access, food sharing
- Decision-making structures in absence of digital systems

CONCLUSION

> **If the monetary system and just-in-time food model both fail, Bloomington has 3–5 days of food and almost no local infrastructure to feed itself at scale.**

The “just-in-time” model of the food system was noted in the 2009 Peak Oil Task Force Report in the section on Food Security.

The imperative is clear: **decentralize food, diversify supply chains, localize currency/barter, and build resilient neighborhood systems** before a breakdown forces improvisation.

Prioritizing these mitigation points, and with each priority bullet point in most to least impactful actions to take, what actions City Council needs to approve (with wording to be in alignment in City Code and the Comprehensive Plan), City Planning needs to incorporate immediately for new and existing developments, Education the population needs, and immediate actions for the Commission on Sustainability to take.

Priority 5: Local Barter & Community Currency Networks

Objective: Maintain exchange of goods and services if digital or cash systems fail.

City Council

- Commission a feasibility study for timebanks/local currency.
- **Code Update:**
  "Recognize non-monetary exchange systems (e.g., timebanks, bartering) as valid forms of transaction for non-commercial food access and disaster response."
- Recognize "Sound Money" as currency and valid forms of transaction.

City Planning

- Permit use of civic space for community barter markets.
- Integrate barter exchange boards into food hubs.

Public Education

- Hold public workshops on timebank and local currency systems.
- Promote local exchange histories and resilience strategies.

Commission on Sustainability

- Convene local currency roundtables.
- Launch a resilience-focused barter pilot with partners.

Priority 6: Emergency Governance & Land Use

Objective: Ensure legal, land, and logistical frameworks for food security in a system breakdown.

City Council

- Pass a **“Resilient Food Sovereignty Act”** to allow temporary land/water allocation during emergency declarations.

City Planning

- Pre-map emergency food growing, storage, and distribution zones.
- Include food infrastructure in emergency response plans.

Public Education

- Release “Resilience Ready” guides.
- Publicize emergency food access maps.

Commission on Sustainability

- Develop a food emergency playbook.
- Coordinate with Emergency Management for integrated food planning.
- Identify food equity gaps in disaster planning.

Integration into 15-Minute City: A Summary Table

The 15-Minute City concept is a model that aims to create urban spaces where all essential services—such as food, work, education, healthcare, and recreation—are accessible within a 15-minute walk or bike ride. Below, we explore how each of the five prioritized tasks in Bloomington's Local Food Resilience Strategy aligns with this concept and its core principles.

Priority	**15-Minute City Alignment**	**Core Principles Supported**
Neighborhood Food Hubs	✅ Strong	Local access, equity, community engagement
Urban Farms & Edible Landscapes	✅ Strong	Local food, green space, sustainability
Local Seed Bank	☑️ Moderate	Accessibility to resources, education
Barter & Community Currency Networks	✅ Strong	Local economy, mutual aid, resilience
Emergency Governance & Land Use	☑️ Moderate	Crisis resilience, embedded redundancy

In acknowledging that homeownership is below 40% the 15-Minute City concept must include policies that prioritize integrating farm stops and food hubs into neighborhoods to align with dense, walkable urban designs..

Monroe County Agricultural Land Use Estimate

Monroe County Agricultural Land is approximately 63,200 acres. To feed a population of 139,000 the county would need to dedicate approximately 48,600 acres.

Population and Food Needs

Population: 139,000

- ➔ Produce: 3 lbs/person/day = 1,095 lbs/year
  - Total: 139,000 × 1,095 = 152,205,000 lbs
  - Vegetables (40%): 60,882,000 lbs
  - Fruits (30%): 45,661,500 lbs
  - Grains (30%): 45,661,500 lbs (animal feed and human consumption)
- ➔ Protein: 0.5 lbs/person/day meat + 0.5 lbs/day dairy = 182.5 lbs/year each
  - Meat: 139,000 × 182.5 = 25,367,500 lbs
    - Beef (40%): 5,073,500 lbs
    - Poultry (40%): 5,073,500 lbs
    - Pork (20%): 2,536,750 lbs
  - Dairy: 25,367,500 lbs
  - Legumes (20% protein): 5,073,500 lbs (must combine with whole grains for to create a complete protein for human nourishment)

1. **Yield Assumptions** (Regenerative Agriculture)
   - Vegetables: 20,000 lbs/acre/year
   - Fruits (Spindle Orchards): 40,000 lbs/acre/year
   - Grains: 4,000 lbs/acre/year
   - Legumes: 2,000 lbs/acre/year
   - Beef: 500 lbs/acre/year
   - Poultry: 1,000 lbs/acre/year
   - Pork: 800 lbs/acre/year
   - Dairy: 1,000 lbs/acre/year

2. **Land Requirements**
   - Produce:
     - Vegetables: 60,882,000 ÷ 20,000 = 3,044 acres
     - Fruits: 45,661,500 ÷ 40,000 = 1,142 acres
       - Spindle Orchards (High-Density Fruit)
         - Apples, pears: 300–500 trees/acre
         - Yield: ~30,000–50,000 pounds/acre/year

                - Required land for fruits (10% of diet):
                  ~8,000 people × 300 lbs fruit/year = 2.4M lbs → 50–75 acres
            - Regenerative Agroforestry (Polyculture)
                - Lower density, but integrates nuts, fruits, nitrogen-fixers, and forage
                - Yield: 10,000–20,000 lbs/acre/year (diverse)
                - Needed: ~150–300 acres (long-term rotation)
                  Total for perennial fruits, nuts, and orchard systems:
                - ~200–400 acres
        - Grains: 45,661,500 ÷ 4,000 = 11,416 acres
        - Subtotal: 15,602 acres

- Protein:
    - Beef: 5,073,500 ÷ 500 = 10,147 acres
    - Poultry: 5,073,500 ÷ 1,000 = 5,074 acres
    - Pork: 2,536,750 ÷ 800 = 3,171 acres
    - Dairy: 7,610,250 ÷ 1,000 = 7,610 acres
    - Legumes: 5,073,500 ÷ 2,000 = 2,537 acres
    - Subtotal: 28,539 acres
- Buffer (10% for fallow, infrastructure): (15,602 + 28,539) × 0.1 = 4,414 acres
- Total: 15,602 + 28,539 + 4,414 = 48,555 acres

4. Notes
    - Assumes 100% local production, though imports would reduce land needs.
    - Regenerative practices may increase land needs vs. conventional but enhance resilience.
        - Approximately 250 Regenerative Farmers on 10 acre plots for more intensive, small-scale permaculture or regenerative urban farming. Greater yields using intensive farming methods could reduce 40,000+ acres to **15,000–20,000 acres** if done efficiently (e.g., biointensive methods, stacked systems, food forests).
    - Existing farmland (~130,000 acres) can support 48,555 acres (~37%).
    - Estimated open or green space within the City: ~2,000–3,000 acres (includes parks, backyards, vacant lots)
    - **Conclusion**: To be entirely self-sufficient within city limits is likely *not feasible*—but partial self-reliance (e.g., 10–30%) as was encouraged in the Peak Oil Task Force Report is very achievable through planning and overlays.
    - MCFSA to coordinate land acquisition and infrastructure (food hub, butchering facility, farm stops).

Conclusion

Approximately **48,555 acres** of land are needed to feed Monroe County's 139,000 residents using regenerative annual and perennial agriculture, including vegetables, fruits, grains, meat, dairy, and legumes. This is achievable within the county's ~130,000 acres of farmland, with the MCFSA facilitating land use and infrastructure development. The estimate aligns with the prior joint venture framework, scaling initial pilots (500–1,000 acres) toward long-term self-sufficiency.

Conclusion

A resilient food system is a public good, an equity issue, and a necessary adaptation to 21st-century risks. Bloomington is well-positioned to lead among mid-sized cities in building a decentralized, regenerative, and socially supported local food economy. This roadmap provides a clear, multi-agency, community-powered path forward. To be effective, focus must center on initiating a joint venture between City and County since the City cannot provision itself, land must be secured, and the infrastructure created to pilot this strategy, with full implementation extending beyond two years.

Pathway to Establishing a Regional Food Resilience Nonprofit

It is not uncommon for an interlocal agreement to lead to the formation of a non-profit entity, which there is a precedent for in Montgomery County, Maryland. The Office of Food Systems Resilience, created in 2023 based on the County's Food Security Task Force recommendation. A primary need for the County, and communities within its political boundaries, is that of a food systems coordinator. The Office of Food Systems Resilience for Montgomery County develops and implements interagency budgetary, regulatory, and operational strategies to build a more equitable, efficient, resilient, and sustainable food system, which Monroe County producers and residents would benefit.

Interlocal Agreement + Joint Overlay Zoning District

1. Interlocal Agreement on Food Resilience Zoning (Per Indiana Code § 36-1-7)

This agreement would:

- **Acknowledge mutual interest** in preserving land for agriculture and building food resilience infrastructure.
- **Suspend annexation/zoning disputes** in specifically designated agricultural/resilience zones for a fixed term (e.g., 5–10 years).

- **Allow both City and County planning staff** to co-review and co-approve plans within these zones, particularly for:
    - Mobile home parks seeking to become food-resilient villages.
    - Large-lot developments interested in shared orchards, food hubs, or gardens.

Could also form a **Joint Agricultural Land Use Board** for review.

2. Creation of a “Food Resilience Overlay District” in Both UDOs

Both the City and County could independently adopt—but align—a zoning overlay called something like:

"FOOD-R: Food Resilience Overlay District"

It would:

- Apply to specific parcels or neighborhoods (e.g., mobile home parks, peri-urban fringe, vacant lots).
- Permit:
    - Market gardens
    - Orchards (including regenerative/perennial systems)
    - Mobile greenhouses, hoop houses
    - Composting and seed-saving operations
    - Mobile food hubs
- Incentivize:
    - Rain catchment and greywater reuse
    - Local composting partnerships
      Community kitchens and preservation infrastructure

Zoning Text Example (for both UDOs):

> "**FOOD-R**: The Food Resilience Overlay is intended to facilitate small- to mid-scale food production within residential, transitional, and mobile home districts to support local food access, sustainability, and emergency preparedness. Uses permitted include community gardens, orchards, edible landscapes, greenhouses, seed banks, composting, and cooperative food storage/distribution facilities."

3. For Mobile Home Parks: "Agri-Village" Special Development Designation

As a condition of permitting or tax incentives, mobile home parks could voluntarily adopt a **Food Sovereignty Covenant**, allowing:

- **On-site edible landscaping, shared garden space, and compost stations.**
- **Increased density or reduced parking minimums** in exchange for dedicated ag infrastructure.
- **Resilience service credits** for participation in community gardening, food preservation, or local barter.

4. Land Preservation Mechanism

- Monroe County could place high-conflict annexation areas under an **Agricultural Conservation Easement** with development rights held by a joint land trust (e.g., Sycamore Land Trust + City/County).
- This guarantees long-term agricultural use without requiring annexation or zoning battles.

Benefits

- Provides a **neutral, non-annexation pathway** to achieve shared land-use goals.
- Turns mobile home parks into models of **climate adaptation and food security**.
- Builds political goodwill and trust around a shared public good.
- Allows each party to maintain its legal authority while aligning around **overlay zoning**.

Given the current legal and political tensions between the **City of Bloomington** and **Monroe County** over annexation and zoning, any cooperative planning effort—especially around food resilience—must be carefully navigated. The problem is the solution, with this issue presenting an opportunity: *food production and community resilience*. These are **non-partisan, public-benefit objectives** that can serve as neutral ground for constructive agreement.

ADDENDUM #1

Draft Interlocal Agreement (MOU)

Title: *Regional Food Resilience and Agricultural Sovereignty Agreement*

Purpose:
This Interlocal Agreement establishes a collaborative framework between the City of Bloomington, Monroe County Government, the Town of Ellettsville, and participating municipalities to strengthen regional food resilience through land use planning, cooperative governance, and shared infrastructure.

Parties:

- City of Bloomington
- Monroe County Government
- Town of Ellettsville
- [Other Townships and Municipalities within Monroe County]

Terms of Agreement:

1. **Shared Goals:**
    - Establish a **countywide food resilience strategy** incorporating food hubs, urban agriculture, emergency governance, and seed banking.
    - Protect and develop **perennial and regenerative agriculture** systems on public and private land.
    - Ensure zoning and overlays align to allow urban and rural food production without displacement or loss of food-growing land.

2. **Food Resilience Overlay Implementation:**

    - Each jurisdiction will adopt and map a **Food Resilience Overlay (FRO)** identifying:
        - Areas prioritized for community or urban agriculture.
        - Infrastructure for food aggregation, preservation, and barter markets.
        - Suitable zones for integrated livestock, orchards, and perennial food systems.

3. **Joint Governance Entity:**
   A **Monroe County Food System Authority (MCFSA)** will be established, composed of:
        - 2 representatives from each participating entity (including at least one from sustainability and one from farming/ag).

        - The council will advise on implementation, annual evaluation, and funding opportunities.

4. **Funding and Resources:**
    - Collaboratively pursue USDA, FEMA, HUD, and philanthropic funds for land acquisition, infrastructure, staffing (e.g., a Food Systems Director), and education.
    - Share tools, data, and infrastructure to reduce redundancy.

5. **Term and Amendments:**
    - Agreement is effective for 10 years, renewable by mutual consent.
    - Amendments may be made with a majority vote of the RFRC and approval of all participating councils.

ADDENDUM #2

Proposed Ordinance Language for Food Resilience Overlay (City of Bloomington)

Ordinance XX-25: Establishment of the Food Resilience Overlay District (FROD)

Section 1: Purpose
The Food Resilience Overlay District is created to ensure food system security, biodiversity preservation, and public access to localized, resilient food production and distribution infrastructure.

Section 2: Boundaries
Designated on the Comprehensive Plan Land Use Map and UDO Zoning Map, including but not limited to:

- RCA Park (Urban Farm)
- Vacant lots adjacent to transit corridors
- Existing or potential community gardens, food hubs, and farmer cooperatives

Section 3: Permitted Uses

- Urban and community agriculture
- Market and barter gardens
- Orchards (traditional, spindle, or regenerative)

- Composting and food scrap collection
- Greenhouses, aquaponics, and food preservation structures
- Mobile food distribution and CSA delivery

Section 4: Incentives

- Priority for infrastructure grants and capital improvement funding
- Waived permitting fees for food-related structures
- Density bonuses or parking reductions if integrating agricultural uses

Section 5: Development Requirements

- New developments within the overlay must dedicate at least 5% of area to food-growing or aggregation infrastructure.
- Include perennial planting plans and edible landscaping.
- Integrate food storage and emergency access planning into site designs.

1. Formation of a Joint Food Resilience Cooperative Agreement (JFRCA)

- **Legal Entity Type**: 501(c)(3) nonprofit corporation or potentially a 501(c)(4) if advocacy and public policy engagement are core goals.
- **Incorporating Parties**: City of Bloomington and Monroe County as founding members, with optional inclusion of Ellettsville and other municipalities.
- **Precedent**: The nonprofit model used for the Monroe County Convention Center Expansion, which involved shared governance and funding streams across jurisdictions.

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2. Core Purposes of the Nonprofit

- Coordinate multi-jurisdictional food system resilience efforts.
- Own or lease property for urban farms, orchards, food hubs, etc.
- Manage grant funding and donations for infrastructure, education, and equity initiatives.
- Hire staff (e.g., Executive Director, Food Systems Coordinator). [Since the City continues to NOT find having a Food Systems Coordinator important, this organization would be able to fund this position, and possibly Bloomington Parks & Rec, with funding allocated by City Council, oversee the operations at RCA Park Community Regenerative Farm.
- Serve as the central fiscal agent and convenor for intergovernmental implementation.

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3. Governance Structure

- **Board of Directors**:
    - 1 appointees each from the City of Bloomington and Monroe County.
    - 1 appointee from Ellettsville and other municipalities (rotating or permanent).
    - 1 representative from IU and 1 from Ivy Tech.
    - 1 representative from Soil & Water Conservation
    - 3 local farmers, orchard or vintner, or food/fiber producers.
    - 1 seed company or nursery representative
    - 1 restaurant or food processor representative.

- **Advisory Committees**:
    - Food Infrastructure & Land Use
    - Education & Outreach
    - Emergency Response & Equitable Distribution
    - Regenerative/Permaculture/Organic

4. Relationship to Government

- **Not a government agency**, but authorized and supported by Interlocal Agreements or MOU (similar to the Convention Center model).
- May receive annual budget line-items or in-kind support from City/County.
- Retains flexibility to pursue federal/state grants, philanthropic funding, and partnerships.

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5. Operational Powers

- **Acquire land** for food production or public orchards.
- **Operate public markets, food hubs, or seed banks**.
- **Contract with local farmers or orgs** for services or educational programming.
- **Serve as liaison** to regional and state food system agencies.

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6. Initial Steps to Establish

1. **City Council and County Commissioners jointly draft a resolution** expressing intent to form the nonprofit.
2. **Commission a legal review** and incorporation plan with a nonprofit attorney.
3. **Hold stakeholder listening sessions** to draft bylaws, board structure, and strategic vision.
4. **File Articles of Incorporation** with the State of Indiana.
5. **Apply for IRS 501(c)(3) status** and begin initial fundraising.
6. **Transfer responsibilities from the ad hoc Food Resilience Council** into this formal body.

Potential Names:

- Monroe County Food System Authority (MCFSA)
- Monroe County Food Resilience Council (MCFRC)
- The Heartland Food System Resilience Project
- Greater Bloomington Food Sovereignty Alliance

DRAFT BCOS RESOLUTION:

Passed X-Y-Z

Sponsor(s):
Jami Scholl
Name 2

RESOLUTION 2025-XX

TO CHANGE THE NAME OF THE BLOOMINGTON COMMISSION ON SUSTAINABILITY TO 'THE BLOOMINGTON COMMISSION ON SUSTAINABILITY AND RESILIENCE'

Resilience is necessary for sustainability because it provides the capacity to withstand and adapt to disruptions. Without resilience, even the best-designed sustainable systems can fail under stress and experience disruptions. A system that cannot recover from disruptions is not truly sustainable.

WHEREAS, To more clearly recognize that resilient systems are necessary for sustainability to be possible; and

WHEREAS, In recognition of significant past and potential near term disruptions such as climate induced droughts and destructive winds, economic downturns and changes to the monetary system, AI job displacement, food system disruptions, federal policy changes, and pandemics can threaten current systems; and

WHEREAS, In recognition that current systems do not go through regular or planned stress-testing to measure resilience and therefore sustainability; and

NOW THEREFORE, BE IT HEREBY RESOLVED BY THE BLOOMINGTON COMMISSION ON SUSTAINABILITY, THAT:

That the Bloomington Commission on Sustainability requests for the Bloomington City Council to:

- Add the word "Resilience" to the current Commission name to be henceforth known as the 'Bloomington Commission on Sustainability and Resilience'.

PASSED AND ADOPTED by the Bloomington Commission on Sustainability upon this XX day of YYYYYYY, ZZZZ.

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JUSTIN VASEL, Chair
Bloomington Commission on Sustainability

DRAFT BCOS RESOLUTION:

Passed X-Y-Z

Sponsor(s):
Jami Scholl
Name 2

RESOLUTION 2025-XX

TO ADOPT A SCALABLE POULTRY FLOCK-SIZE MODEL

A chicken flock is already allowed within the City. This resolution would allow for the expansion of the existing system to reflect the size of the available lot since sizes are not standard. Poultry provides an economical way for a household to attain a high quality complete protein while simultaneously providing the services of eating nuisance insects and producing a high nitrogen fertilizer that can be used for gardens.

WHEREAS, To better support household, neighborhood, and community food sovereignty and security; and

WHEREAS, In support of small local urban agricultural businesses; and

WHEREAS, To support affordable nutrient dense food to enhance public health and food as medicine programs; and

NOW THEREFORE, BE IT HEREBY RESOLVED BY THE BLOOMINGTON COMMISSION ON SUSTAINABILITY, THAT:

That the Bloomington Commission on Sustainability requests for the Bloomington City Council to:

- Adopt a scalable poultry flock-sized model as outlined in the Local Food Resilience Strategy

PASSED AND ADOPTED by the Bloomington Commission on Sustainability upon this XX day of YYYYYYY, ZZZZ.

JUSTIN VASEL, Chair
Bloomington Commission on Sustainability

DRAFT BCOS RESOLUTION:

Passed X-Y-Z

Sponsor(s):
Jami Scholl
Name 2

RESOLUTION 2025-XX

TO CREATE A RESILIENT AND SUSTAINABLE LOCAL FOOD SYSTEM: FUND AND HIRE A FOOD SYSTEMS & CITY FARM MANAGER

A Food Systems & City Farm Manager or Value Chain Coordinator position would allow for the development, coordination, information, education, and support for the local food system. As evidenced by the success of the Bloomington Farm Stop Collective, and in recognition of numerous threats to the food system, a Food Systems & City Farm Manager would allow for greater local resilience and would be in support of public health, equity, and the local food economy to achieve long-term community sustainability.

WHEREAS, In recognition that the Office of Economic and Sustainable Development will not be adding a Value Chain Coordinator role as suggested in the Sustainability Action Plan and in the 2019 Year of Food Initiative; and

WHEREAS, In recognition that supporting local food production reduces greenhouse gas emissions, supports equitable distribution of nourishing foods, and enhances the local economy by developing and supporting local farm businesses; and

WHEREAS, Loss of federal support for SNAP, WIC, and school meal programs, in addition Cancellation of the USDA's $12.7M LFPA program removes funding that purchased local food for food banks, and many COVID-era USDA programs supporting local food infrastructure are ending; and

WHEREAS, AI-driven job displacement: job loss is accelerating due to automation across food service, retail, logistics, and white-collar sectors including healthcare, with a local food economy employment opportunities and skill development in regenerative agriculture, processing, and distribution can be created; and

WHEREAS, Extreme weather, droughts, and cyberattacks on infrastructure expose vulnerabilities in national and global food systems that the local communities must be prepared to feed themselves should transportation, fuel, or communications systems be disrupted; and

NOW THEREFORE, BE IT HEREBY RESOLVED BY THE BLOOMINGTON COMMISSION ON SUSTAINABILITY, THAT:

The Bloomington Commission on Sustainability encourages the Bloomington City Council to

- Fund a Food Systems Manager/Coordinator position
- Create Neighborhood Food Hubs
- Designate RCA Park as an Urban Teaching Farm & Agri-business Incubator
- Allow for and support the creation and adoption of a local Seed Bank Network
- Fund a Food Systems Manager/Coordinator position

PASSED AND ADOPTED by the Bloomington Commission on Sustainability upon this XX day of YYYYYYY, ZZZZ.

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JUSTIN VASEL, Chair
Bloomington Commission on Sustainability

DRAFT BCOS RESOLUTION:

Passed X-Y-Z

Sponsor(s):
Jami Scholl
Name 2

RESOLUTION 2025-XX

TO CREATE A RESILIENT AND SUSTAINABLE LOCAL FOOD SYSTEM

SECTION 1: As supply chains face increasing instability and global risks mount — from climate disruption to cyberattacks and changes to national policies and priorities — Bloomington must establish a resilient, decentralized food system to ensure long-term community well-being. This report presents a prioritized food resilience strategy organized by impact and urgency, outlining specific actions for City Council, City Planning, Housing and Neighborhood Development, Parks and Recreation, the public, and the Bloomington Commission on Sustainability and Resilience.

Why a 2-Year Timeline is Imperative: The urgency of a two-year implementation timeline is grounded in the convergence of multiple near-term crises that demand preemptive action:

WHEREAS, Imminent Economic Instability based on recession forecasts for Winter 2025–26, and a U.S. dollar devaluation as evidenced by the increase of gold price; and

WHEREAS, Current international conflicts, including but not exclusively, between Israel-Iran, and involving the United States continue to escalate and could lead to a broadscale war that would affect the local food supply; and

WHEREAS, Loss of federal support for SNAP, WIC, and school meal programs, in addition Cancellation of the USDA's $12.7M LFPA program removes funding that purchased local food for food banks, and many COVID-era USDA programs supporting local food infrastructure are ending; and

WHEREAS, Extreme weather, droughts, and cyberattacks on infrastructure expose vulnerabilities in national and global food systems that the local communities must be prepared to feed themselves should transportation, fuel, or communications systems be disrupted; and

WHEREAS, AI-driven job displacement: job loss is accelerating due to automation across food service, retail, logistics, and white-collar sectors including healthcare,

with a local food economy employment opportunities and skill development in regenerative agriculture, processing, and distribution can be created; and

WHEREAS, In recognition that the local food economy provides nutrient dense foods while reducing shipping costs and positively supporting sustainability goals; and

WHEREAS, Farmland near city limits is under threat from development. Action is needed before this land is lost, as well as the opportunities to apply for existing federal and state funding windows (ARPA, IRA, CHIPS), which present a short-lived opportunity to build resilient infrastructure.

NOW THEREFORE, BE IT HEREBY RESOLVED BY THE BLOOMINGTON COMMISSION ON SUSTAINABILITY, THAT:

The Bloomington Commission on Sustainability encourages the Bloomington City Council to

- adopt the 24-Month Food Resilience Strategy
- Create a Food-R overlay
- Adopt an Interlocal Agreement with Monroe County for a joint Food Resilience Cooperative Agreement
- Allow for Mobile Home Parks to be designated Agri-hoods
- Create Neighborhood Food Hubs
- Designate RCA Park as an Urban Teaching Farm & Agri-business Incubator
- Allow for and support the creation and adoption of a local Seed Bank Network

PASSED AND ADOPTED by the Bloomington Commission on Sustainability upon this XX day of YYYYYYY, ZZZZ.

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JUSTIN VASEL, Chair
Bloomington Commission on Sustainability