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# City of Bloomington Sustainability Action Plan

## Local Food and Agriculture Working Group

### Meeting #4

**SPEA**

Lead for the Greater Good





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## Agenda

**6:00 pm – 6:10 pm:** Review of Sustainability Definition and Vision Statement

**6:10 pm – 6:25 pm:** Review of Meeting 2 and 3 Recommendations

**6:25 pm – 6:45 pm:** Presentation on Food Utility and Stability

**6:45 pm – 7:10 pm:** Root Challenges of Food Utility and Stability

**7:10 pm – 7:55 pm:** Breakout Discussions

**7:55 pm – 8:10 pm:** Sharing of Breakout Results

**8:10 pm – 8:25 pm:** Voting

**8:25 pm – 8:30 pm:** Wrap-up and Next Steps



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# City of Bloomington Sustainability Action Plan

## Agreements to Foster Civil Discourse\*

*\*Information provided by Lisa Marie-Napoli of Indiana University's Political and Civic Engagement (PACE) Program and based on work by Martin Carcasson of the Kettering Foundation*

- Be honest and respectful
- Be careful not to make assumptions
- Listen to understand
- It's okay to disagree, but do so with curiosity, not hostility
- Be brief and concise so everyone can participate
- Refrain from interrupting



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## Definition of Sustainable Community (Version 2.0)

A sustainable community works together to manage its environmental, social, and economic resources to ensure a healthy and just society for existing and future generations everywhere.



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## **Vision Statement for Sustainability Action Plan (Version 2.0)**

The City of Bloomington, Indiana will be recognized as a sustainability leader by working collaboratively with the community to preserve our natural resources, build a diverse and growing economy, and ensure a healthy and equitable standard of living while inspiring other cities and towns to do the same.



## Four Pillars of Food Security and Sustainability

- **Food Availability.** The term food availability is used to describe a situation when all members of the community have sufficient quantities of nutritious food consistently available to them as a result of adequate food production and trade. ***Sample subtopics:** Community gardening, Urban agriculture, and Support for Local Farming*
- **Food Accessibility.** The term food accessibility is used to assess whether individuals have access to appropriately nutritious food at an affordable price and convenient travel distance.  
***Sample subtopics:** Accessibility of Fresh Foods, Mobile Food Pantries, Use of SNAP at Farmers Market, Produce Prescriptions*
- **Food Utility.** The term food utility refers to developing a mindset towards food that views it as fuel for the body, consumed solely for its nutritional benefits.  
***Sample subtopics:** Education on Food Nutrition, Quality of School Lunches*
- **Food Stability.** The term food stability refers to resilience in food supply when faced with potential disruptions, such as drought, shipping disruptions, economic recession, political instability, and climate change.  
***Sample subtopics:** Next Generation of Farmers, Climate Change Mitigation and Adaptation*

**Sources:** Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations and U.S. Department of Agriculture



## Comprehensive Plan Goals Related to Food Availability

- *Goal 3.8: Promote and protect local food culture and Bloomington's food system*
  - *Policy 3.8.1: Work to provide residents with access to safe, nutritious, and affordable food, including through a sustainable, resilient local food sector*
  - *Policy 3.8.2: Support diverse, native-plant conservation and restoration efforts, to foster the plant pollinating network of animals, which greatly influences crop production*
  - *Outcomes: A local food culture has been promoted and protected.*
  - *Indicators: Number of restaurants and businesses serving and/or producing local food products, Number of home gardens and community gardens, Economic value of local food economy, Local regulator framework facilitates local food production and distribution, Food desert inventory*



## Comprehensive Plan Goals Related to Food Availability

- *Goal 3.8: Promote and protect local food culture and Bloomington's food system*
  - *Programs:*
    - *Encourage community gardens throughout the City.*
    - *Modify regulations for protective fence heights surrounding in dealing with white-tailed deer and other nuisance animals.*
    - *Assess the creation of an agricultural zoning district and/ or permitted urban agriculture uses within other existing zoning districts.*
    - *Increase the use of native pollinator-attracting plants through the UDO.*
    - *Enhance education about pollinators as a necessity for growing food, and encourage the use of pollinator-attracting native plants on private property.*
    - *Encourage neighborhood associations and home owners associations to be more tolerant of vegetative alternatives practices.*





## Recommendations for Food Availability from Meetings 2-3

- Provide space/opportunity within city to vend (e.g. Fresh Stops in Louisville)
- Foster networking/collaboration opportunities for gardeners/farmers
- Influence institutional purchasing policies to favor local purchase
- Research appropriate legislation to promote farming (e.g. allow local farmers to collect food scraps)
- Encourage churches and other places citizens frequent to have community gardens or greenhouses
- Encourage schools to have their own gardens and involve children to create connection with food
- Adapt zoning to allow for sale of produce from urban farms
- Tours of urban agriculture initiatives
- Encourage and educate people on container gardening to get them started
- Adopt composting program to minimize food waste and improve soil
- Identify resources and land available that can be repurposed for growing
- Foster new farming through immigration
- Remove zoning and licensing barriers to farming
- Organize to apply for grants and publicly funded programs
- Create incentives for urban and periurban farming



## Additional Ideas from Brainstorming from Meeting 2

- Ensure Public Housing provides garden space for low-income residents
- Provide economic incentives to encourage entrepreneurs to engage in urban farming (e.g. train cars into gardens)
- Develop a city farm
- Training for residents by Mother Hubbard's Cupboard
- Map locations of gardens to obtain accurate count
- Encourage volunteers to help with education and garden tours to inspire gardeners
- Encourage food education in schools
- Provide opportunities for farm to school
- Research how HOAs would change covenants to facilitate urban agriculture
- Encourage apartment gardens



## Additional Ideas from Brainstorming from Meeting 2

- Encourage food repurposing and rescue
- Encourage composting
- Collaborate with Monroe County Soil and Water Conservation District to educate individuals regarding soil health
- Identify or encourage development of distribution center (e.g. mini food hub)
- Recruitment, training and support for new farmers
- Pair up people with space for gardening with those who want to garden (e.g. partnership between businesses and residents)
- Increase food testing to identify best practices through partnership with IU/Purdue and offer Website to share results



# Recommendations for Food Availability from Meetings 2-3

## Potential Metrics

- Number of children involved in school garden activities
- Number of garden plots in the community gardens
- SNAP spending on fresh food at farmers markets and grocery stores
- Acres of farmland
- Number of farmers adopting best management practices
- Sales of local food to institutions
- New farmer program/network established
- Number of full-time and part-time farmers
- % food grown and consumed by self locally
- Money spent on local vs outside food



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# Recommendations for Food Availability from Meetings 2-3

## Potential Partners

- Churches
- University Farm
- Neighborhood associations
- Schools
- Collaborative Regional Alliance Farmer Training (CRAFT)
- Monroe County Soil and Water Conservation District
- USDA Natural Resources Conservation Service
- Purdue University



## Recommendations for Food Accessibility from Meeting 3

- Create more vending options to address food deserts through changes to zoning (Food Wagon)
- Encourage utilization of SNAP for fresh food
- Create farm market on Wednesday mornings at Monroe County United Ministries to sell half-price food from Tuesday farmers market
- Expand outreach regarding SNAP Double Bucks
- Ensure living wage for all City employees
- Explore partnerships with FoodBank Gleaning Program to clean up farm land already harvested
- Introduce sustainability metrics to Jack Hopkins Social Services Funding criteria
- Educate community on current situation in Bloomington to identify appropriate changes
- Research on food storage vehicles, hubs, and logistics
- Provide free bike share for low income families
- Improve public transportation to decrease food deserts
- Promote businesses that provide living wage
- Provide farmers market shoppers for people with limited mobility
- Provide refrigeration at community gardens



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# Recommendations for Food Accessibility from Meeting 3

## Potential Metrics

- Number of SNAP Dollars doubled at Farmers Market
- Public transportation routes improved in Food Deserts
- Number of Bikeshare bikes checked out from Food Deserts
- % Workforce paid a living wage



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# Recommendations for Food Accessibility from Meeting 3

## Potential Partners

- Bicycle and Pedestrian Commission
- Planning Department
- Economic and Sustainable Development Department
- Community Bicycle Project
- Parks and Recreation Department