

Memorandum



CITY OF DALLAS

DATE December 11, 2009

TO Members of the Transportation and Environment Committee:
Linda Koop (Chair), Sheffie Kadane (Vice Chair), Jerry R. Allen, Tennell Atkins, Carolyn R. Davis, Vonciel Jones Hill, Angela Hunt, Delia Jasso, Pauline Medrano and Ron Natinsky

SUBJECT Sustainable Local Food Production and Distribution: Community Gardens and Farmers Markets

On December 14, 2009 staff will brief the Committee on the City's efforts to promote sustainable local food production and distribution. Please find attached a copy of the presentation, and feel free to contact me if you require additional information.

A handwritten signature in cursive script, appearing to read 'Jill Jordan'.

Jill A. Jordan, P.E.
Assistant City Manager

C: Honorable Mayor and Members of the City Council
Mary K. Suhm, City Manager
Deborah A. Watkins, City Secretary
Thomas P. Perkins, City Attorney
Craig Kinton, City Auditor
Judge C. Victor Lander
David K. Cook, Chief Financial Officer
Ryan S. Evans, First Assistant City Manager
A. C. Gonzalez, Assistant City Manager
Jill A. Jordan, PE, Assistant City Manager
Forest Turner, Interim Assistant City Manager
Frank Libro, Public Information Office
Helena Stevens-Thompson, Assistant to the City Manager



Sustainable Local Food Production and Distribution: Community Gardens and Neighborhood Markets

Dallas City Council
Transportation and Environment Committee
December 14, 2009

Purpose

To brief the Committee on the following related elements of sustainable local food production and distribution:

- Community Gardens
- Farmers Markets

Sustainability: Definition

Making decisions and taking steps that balance environmental, social, and economic demands of current and future generations.

Sustainability: Contribution of local food production

Economic:

- supports self-sufficiency, entrepreneurship, and creates local markets
- eases financial burden on families from high grocery bills
- promotes healthy nutrition; reduces medical needs/expenses

Environmental:

- creates or maintains green space in a productive capacity
- reduces urban heat island effect
- assists with stormwater/watershed management
- reduces emissions from transport and visits to markets

Social:

- increases local food security
- encourages neighborhood collaboration; reduces crime
- helps addresses hunger, e.g. donation gardens



Community Gardens

Definition

- “Any piece of land gardened by a group of people.”
--American Community Gardening Association
- Typically considered a publicly functioning asset in terms of ownership, access and management
- May consist of individually tended plots on a shared parcel or may be communal (everyone shares a single plot)

Purpose

In addition to growing food for individual consumption, community gardens may provide additional benefits :

1. economic – job training or entrepreneurial;
2. social – therapy or food pantry; or
3. environmental – reducing urban heat island effect; or
4. educational – school or demonstration



4. School garden in Dallas



1. For profit urban garden in Cleveland



2. Relaxation garden in Boston



3. City Hall rooftop garden in Chicago

Purpose

Bottom line:

Community Gardens can provide a multitude of benefits in a variety of locations, and represent a relatively inexpensive, low-tech approach to becoming a more sustainable city.

Examples of existing gardens in Dallas



Our Savior
(religious institution)



Lake Highlands
(public/private)



Kramer School
(education institution)

Challenges to Success

- **Organization:** Individuals must voluntarily band together to organize, own and operate community gardens.
- **Maintenance:** Gardens can potentially falter from neglect such that they become code challenges with overgrown areas.

City Government Role

Cities with successful, long-term track records of facilitating community gardens:

- Remove obstacles and barriers (e.g. zoning, land use issues, provide suitable land); and
- Collaborate with garden stakeholders (e.g. partnering with or helping to establish non-profits to maintain the gardens);
- Provide direct or indirect monetary and technical support (e.g. staff resources, technical assistance, grants, GIS mapping, newsletters);
- Protect adjacent properties from code issues.

(Examples of successful city programs can be found in Appendix A)

Dallas' Experience

- Dozens of community gardens in Dallas have grown “organically” with little municipal participation
- 2008: City partnered with LHAIA to pilot a community garden on unused City property in Lake Highlands; assisted with grants, equipment donations and technical assistance
- 2009: City facilitated expansion of Lake Highlands garden that quadrupled the number of plots and added a donation garden; City’s ‘Loving My Community’ grant program funded two additional community garden projects



Our Savior (independent)



Lake Highlands (public/private)

Local Challenges

Groups wishing to establish community gardens in Dallas face several challenges including:

- City Code does not allow for community gardens as a primary use on private property
- Locating suitable land is difficult
- No single point of contact in the City to assist with navigating the various permits required

Steps for Overcoming Challenges

1. Strong Policy Statement

The first step the City of Dallas can take to join the ranks of other cities with community gardening success is to commit to a policy that:

- acknowledges local food production as a beneficial and desirable activity, and
- supports the creation of community gardens as a key element of local food production.
- Sample language: The City of X recognizes local food production as a valuable activity that can contribute to sustainability in community development, environmental awareness, positive social interaction and community education. In order to promote local food production, the City of X will collaborate with interested groups in assisting with the development of community gardens (Gardening Matters, Minneapolis, MN).

Steps for Overcoming Challenges

2. Support Land Use

The second step to support such a policy in Dallas, is to increase the available space on which food can be grown by:

- Amending Chapter 51A of City Code: Modify the Agricultural Land Use to include a definition for 'Community Gardens' and specify requirements, zoning applicability and other provisions (ZOAC and CPC will need to consider this amendment)
- Assisting in securing suitable sites: Identify surplus or underutilized City-owned sites for potential use as gardens; explore allowing community gardens on Land Bank properties as an alternative to mowing (may require amending Chapter 329 of the Local Government Code 2011 State Legislative Session)

Steps for Overcoming Challenges

3. 'One-Stop Shop'

The third step to support such a policy in Dallas, is to streamline the process for complying with existing City requirements:

- Establishing a 'one-stop shop': Appoint staff liaison to the gardening community to provide guidance in obtaining a water supply, water meter and various permits when necessary (plumbing, irrigation, electrical, building); to assist in grant preparation; and to work with departments to identify land suitable for community gardens and draft use agreements with interested gardening groups

Next Steps

- Council action to approve policy language regarding support for local food production through community gardens
- Take Development Code amendments creating a 'Community Garden land use' before ZOAC



Neighborhood Markets

Farmers Market Definition and Purpose

- Marketplace for multiple local farmers and growers to sell or distribute their agricultural products directly to consumer
- Promotes healthy food choices by providing a convenient means of making locally-grown products available to consumers

Downtown Farmers Market

- City owns and operates Dallas (downtown) Farmers Market (DFM)
 - Provides a means of distributing locally-grown farm products
 - Serves as economic anchor/destination on southeast corner of CBD
- Downtown farmers market
 - Opened to public in 1941
 - Established and governed by Chapter 29 of City Code
 - Operated as division of Convention and Event Services
 - Consists of 12 acres and 6 buildings
 - Operated 24x7 year around and closed only 3 days each year
 - Attendance estimated to be 2,000,000 per year
- City continues investment in downtown farmers market
 - 2006 Bond program (\$6.6m) funds infrastructure and other improvements
 - FY10 operating budget includes, \$1.7m revenue and \$1.8m expense

Downtown Farmers Market (continued)

- Vendors at downtown farmers market
 - Local farmer roster has grown from 50 in 2008 to 150 in 2009
 - Number of non-farmer vendors include 47 produce (38 retail and 9 wholesale), 20 food, 7 non-food, and 2 floral/plant
- Items sold include produce (fruits/vegetables), specialty foods, eggs, meat, plants, jewelry, crafts and imports such as pottery
- Licenses and fees
 - Vendors are required to have a license to participate in DFM
 - \$0 for farmers who are exempt from this fee
 - \$125 semi-annual or \$250 annual fee for non-farmers
 - Daily stall rental is required and varies by type of dealer and time of year
 - Farmers range from \$7-\$21 per day
 - Others range from \$10-\$25 per day

Neighborhood Farmers Markets

- Over last few years, business owners have shown interest in establishing Neighborhood Farmers Markets
 - Increased popularity with many citizens and stakeholders
 - Increases foot traffic to the anchor business
 - Supports local economy
 - Creates sense of community
 - Serve as another means for local growers/farmers to sell/distribute products directly to consumers
 - Promotes healthy food choices
 - Encourage sustainable living

Neighborhood Farmers Markets Identified in Dallas

Name	Location	Anchor Business	Schedule	Vendors	Products
Bolsa	614 Davis Street	Bolsa Restaurant	Monthly - 1 st Sunday	5	Produce, meat, local gourmet specialty foods
Celebration Market	4503 W. Lovers Lane	Celebration Restaurant	Weekly - every Saturday	12	Produce, meat, specialty foods, crafts
Milestone	4531 McKinney	Milestone Culinary Arts	Monthly - 3 rd Sunday (May – Nov)	16	Produce, meat, specialty foods, crafts
Mockingbird Station	5300 E. Mockingbird Lane		Weekly - every Thurs. evening (April & May)	8	Produce, meat, specialty foods, crafts
North Haven Gardens	7700 North Haven		Monthly - 1 st Sunday (April – Aug)	7	Produce, meat, specialty foods
White Rock Lake	702 N. Buckner Blvd	Green Spot Market & Fuel	Monthly - 2 nd Saturday (June – Dec)	26	Produce, honey, meat, specialty foods, crafts, bicycle parts/repairs, plants, apparel

Vision and Action Needed

- It is vision to have a strong and vibrant Dallas Farmers Market (downtown) and despite challenges, develop satellite neighborhood farmers markets
- To accomplish this, following is needed:
 - Ensure neighborhood farmers markets are complimentary to downtown farmers market with similar guidelines, regulations and fees
 - Establish clear permitting process for neighborhood farmers market operators and vendors
 - Provide oversight to neighborhood farmers markets to ensure vendors are protecting health, safety and general welfare of citizens through their distribution of safe food products
 - Allow neighborhood farmers markets to operate temporarily throughout city neighborhoods as long as approved/permitted by City

Neighborhood Markets: Next Steps

- Recommend that neighborhood farmers markets be allowed and regulated by City
- Develop guidelines using research and experience of other cities (draft guidelines located in Appendix B) – December
- Assemble stakeholder group to consider and provide input on guidelines, regulations, fees and process – January
- Brief Transportation and Environment Committee on final recommendations and amendments to Chapter 29 of City Code (Municipal Farmers Market) – February
- Seek City Council approval – March



Appendix A

Community Gardens: Examples of City Successes

Boston, MA:

- City began sponsoring a War Gardens Program in 1931 involving 30,000 residents
- In the 1970's, City began providing land to local non-profits to garden
- In 1975, City first applied CDBG funds towards the creation of City-sponsored gardens (now known as the Grassroots Program)
- Annually, 3-5 Technical Assistance grants up to \$25,000 and 3-5 Construction grants up to \$150,000 are awarded (capital construction only, no maintenance)
- Gardens range from food production for consumption and education to neighborhood beautification – City considers gardens of all types as critical to their open space management program

Community Gardens: Examples of City Successes

Seattle, WA:

- Department of Neighborhoods created the P-Patch Program in 1973 in conjunction with a local non-profit
- Currently provides 68 gardens with 4 more planned in 2009
- 3,800 gardeners work 23 acres of land
- City provides searchable interactive map and technical resources
- In this decade 22 gardens were awarded City grants in amounts ranging from \$2,000 to \$15,000
- A recent gardener survey indicated that one quarter of gardeners share produce once a week and 38% report sharing at least once a month

Community Gardens: Examples of City Successes

Oakland, CA

- Parks and Recreation Department sponsors 8 community gardens throughout the City; the first began in 1973
- City coordinates a volunteer program with liaisons in charge of each garden
- Rules, regulations and application for individual participation are hosted on the City's website
- Sale of t-shirts funds the purchase of gardening tools



Appendix B

Draft Guidelines for Consideration

Who will issue permits for neighborhood markets?	Neighborhood Market permits will be issued through Dallas Farmers Market.
Who can apply for a permit?	An individual or group may apply for Neighborhood Market permit.
What is the applicant responsible for?	Applicant will be responsible for ensuring that market and vendors comply with all established rules and regulations, and will serve as onsite manager of market.
Will fees be charged?	Market organizers will be required to pay \$250 annual fee to City. Vendor license fee paid to City is \$0 for farmers and \$125 annually for non-farmers. Daily stall fees paid to City range from \$7-\$25 for all vendors in same amounts as at DFM.
Where will neighborhood markets be allowed to operate?	Commercially zoned private property, city owned property, churches, and schools. Temporarily over-ride zoning with permit.
Is approval of property owner required?	Notarized approval of property owner is required and must be submitted along with permit application.
What distance from Dallas Farmers Market is required?	3 miles.
What distance from other markets is required?	3 miles between neighborhood markets.
Is there a limit on number of markets that will be permitted?	No more than 10 neighborhood markets will be permitted each year.

Draft Guidelines for Consideration (continued)

When are neighborhood markets allowed to operate?	No more frequent than one time per week, and limited to 24 times per year. Not to exceed 6 hours per occurrence.
What type of products can be sold at neighborhood markets?	At least 80% of vendors must sell local farm-grown produce. No more than 20% of vendors may sell non-potentially hazardous foods, value added foods, other specialty foods and vendor made/sold art/craft items. Potentially hazardous foods, live animals or sale of services are not allowed.
What is considered local?	Produce must be grown within a Texas county that is completely or partially located within a 150-mile radius of DFM.
Will slicing and sampling of foods be allowed?	Only with a Temporary Food Establishment permit and if all requirements of Chapter 17 (Food Establishments) are met. Food Establishment permits in conjunction with Neighborhood Market permit will be exempt from frequency restrictions for sampling.
Are other permits or approvals required?	Tent permit, building permit, electrical permit, food establishment permit, alcoholic beverage licenses, and all other permits and licenses required by ordinance or other law may be required and must be applied for separately.
What other issues will the permit address?	Other items that will be addressed include traffic control, parking, insurance, public restrooms, access to running water, solid waste disposal, etc.

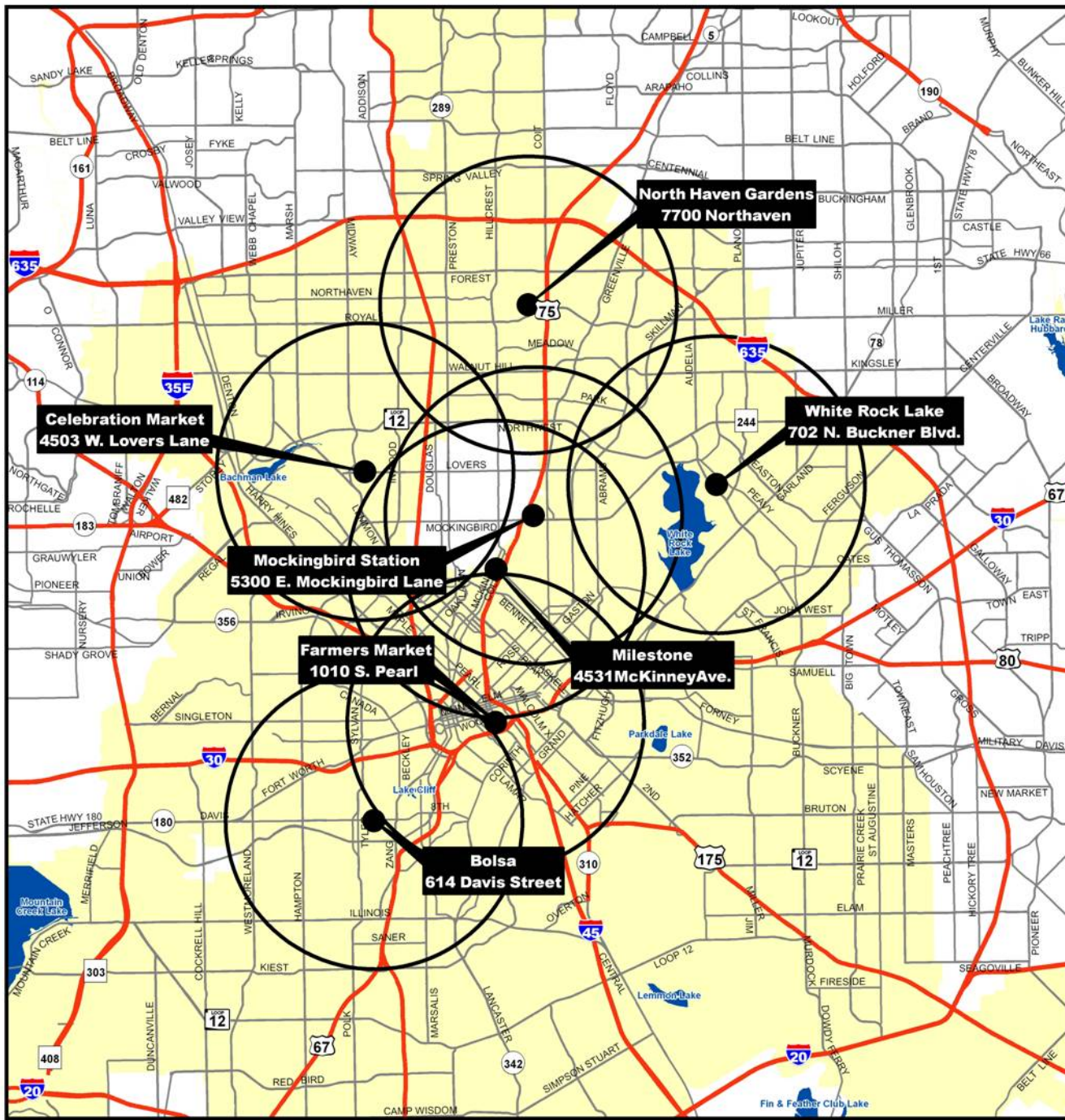
Markets in Other Cities

- Other cities are dealing with neighborhood markets too and offer guidance
- Fort Worth, TX:
 - 1) City does not own or operate
 - 2) Neighborhood markets are allowed on properly zoned private property that has another active business on the property
 - 3) Permitting process exists and fees range from \$65 to \$200 annually
 - 4) Only fruits, vegetables or other produce are allowed (cutting/slicing are not allowed)
- Houston, TX:
 - 1) City does not own or operate
 - 2) Neighborhood markets are allowed on non-residential private property
 - 3) Permitting process exists and allows sale of farm produce as a peddler with fee of \$100 annually and allows certified farmers markets with fee of \$150 to \$250 annually
 - 4) Only farm-grown produce or packaged processed foods are allowed

Markets in Other Cities (continued)

- Seattle, WA:
 - 1) City does not own or operate, but does allow markets on City property
 - 2) Most are located on private property, but recently allowed to locate on public property such as Parks; when located on private property, zoning must be complied with or change of use action must be taken
 - 3) Permitting process exists and includes \$250 annual fee + \$10 hourly use fee (other fees may apply as well)
 - 4) Markets must include 70% of vendors from Washington State farms, and sale only fresh farm products, value added farm products, dried flowers/crafted farm products, processed foods, and prepared foods
- Austin, TX:
 - 1) City does not own or operate, however, Austin contributes some funding
 - 2) Neighborhood markets are privately operated and must comply with zoning restrictions
 - 3) Permitting process exists and includes annual permit from \$90 to \$210 dependent upon products sold
 - 4) Products sold include produce, prepared food and crafts

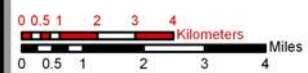
Three Mile Buffer of Locations of Interest



Legend

- Locations
- Buffer (3mi.)
- Major Roads
- Major Lakes
- Dallas City Limits

Data Source:
 Roads; City Limits; Lakes - City of Dallas Public Works GIS Division
 Locations - Submitted by city staff



This data is believed to be correct, but its accuracy cannot be guaranteed. It is the users' responsibility to confirm the accuracy of this data. Please contact the original creators of this data for questions pertaining to its use. Information about this data can be viewed in the metadata file associated with it. If you have any questions please contact the City of Dallas Infrastructure and Management/GIS Division

Projected coordinate system name:
 NAD_1983_StatePlane_Texas_North_Central_FIPS_4202_Feet
 Geographic coordinate system name: GCS_North_American_1983

