



Legislation Text

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AGENDA INFORMATION SHEET

DEPARTMENT: Development Services, Planning Division

ACM: Jon Fortune

DATE: September 12, 2016

SUBJECT

Discuss current regulations associated with urban farming in the City of Denton.

BACKGROUND

At the request of the Committee on the Environment, the following discussion outlines current guidelines associated with agriculture and urban farming in the City of Denton.

The City of Denton has recognized the need to include urban agriculture and local food production within the broader sustainability goals for the community. *Simply Sustainable, A Strategic Plan for Denton's Future*, was adopted in February 2012 as the City's sustainability plan. The document's vision aims to protect water resources, air quality, and open space in order to, "improve the environment, create economic value, and support and strengthen our community." To achieve this vision, *Simply Sustainable* dedicates a chapter to strategies which promote local food production and distribution, including increasing the number community gardens, food cooperatives, and vendors at farmers markets. According to the plan, local food production is a necessary component to sustainability, as it provides access to healthy food while supporting local business and environmental objectives.

The Denton Plan 2030 also demonstrates a commitment to local food and agriculture with the following elements:

- **Element 2: Land Use** - Urban agriculture is encouraged within the development criteria for rural, residential, and downtown Future Land Use categories.
- **Element 5: Parks, Conservation, and Environment Overview** - Recommendations to create a green infrastructure network include:
 - Survey of Prime Agricultural Land in conjunction with the State of Texas Department of Agriculture to determine potential locations and value of agricultural land threatened by development.
 - Support for local food production that expands community gardens and urban agriculture to promote access to healthy foods and seeks out methods to make local food production easier
- **Element 8: Community Health, Safety, & Services** - Recommends planning for healthy communities

by expanding community gardens and urban agriculture.

CURRENT REGULATIONS

How do current regulations within the City of Denton and the Denton Development Code (DDC) address the local food production and urban agriculture goals identified in Simply Sustainable and The Denton Plan 2030?

The DDC defines Agricultural Activity as, “Land used exclusively as a bonafide agricultural operation by the owner or tenant. The use of land for agricultural purposes including farming, horticulture, animal and poultry husbandry, and the necessary accessory uses, provided that the operation of the accessory use is clearly incidental to the agricultural activity. An accessory use shall include incidental sales by the producer of products raised on the farm.”

Agricultural Activity encapsulates Agriculture, Livestock, and Sale of Products Grown on Site, land uses contained in the DDC’s Permitted Use tables. Agriculture as a use is not defined in the DDC; however, Livestock and Sales of Products Grown On-Site are defined as follows:

Livestock: Facilities for the raising, breeding, or maintenance of domestic animals including, but not limited to cattle, horses, sheep, swine, goats, and poultry. This definition does not include feed lots or similar uses.

Sale of Products Grown On-site: Roadside stands or other temporary structures constructed for the sale of agricultural or horticultural products raised substantially on the premises.

Agricultural Activity as a Permitted Use

Agriculture is permitted by right in all zoning districts within the City of Denton, subject to platting, infrastructure, accessory building, storage, site design, and parking requirements necessary to support activities on the site. Livestock and Sale of Products Grown on Site are permitted in accordance with Exhibit 1, which outlines the zoning districts where Agricultural Activity is permitted and any limitations.

EXHIBIT

1. Zoning Districts where Agricultural Activity is Permitted

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