Planning and Policies to Encourage Urban Agriculture in Denver:
A Path to Healthy Communities, Equal Food Access, and Sustainable Urban Development

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I. Introduction

Urban agriculture encompasses the growing, processing, and distributing of food or other products through intensive plant cultivation and animal husbandry in and around cities. The concept of urban agriculture dates back to the very earliest human societies. In fact, the ability to organize agriculture in close proximity to concentrated populations may have been the start of modern civilization, as we know it. However, the post-industrial era has transformed our food system. As cities grow larger an astonishing volume of inputs, especially for food, are required to meet the populations’ needs. By one estimate, “New York’s approximately eight million inhabitants … eat an amount of food that requires a land mass the size of Virginia to grow.” The political and economic support of subsidized commodity crops, like corn and soybeans, have created artificial prices and significantly increased the consumption of hydrogenated vegetable oils, processed corn sugars, and meat. Over consumption of these unhealthy food choices leads to obesity, heart disease, and other related illnesses. Additionally, the relentless separation of agriculture from urban centers has resulted in communities isolated from fresh and healthy food choices, living in areas now known as urban “food deserts.”

Food deserts are defined as neighborhoods with high poverty rates and limited access to healthy foods. People living in food deserts are more susceptible to obesity and other diseases related to poor nutrition and unhealthy diets. The barriers restricting access to healthy food are both physical and economic. In some communities the distance to the nearest grocery store is over three miles. With generally limited transportation options, existing convenient stores and small markets meet the community’s needs with lower quality food choices available at higher costs. The socioeconomic characteristics of food deserts tend to be lower income mixed race communities that spend more of their annual income on “food at home” than high-income predominantly white communities.

Food deserts have recently received national attention. In 2009, the USDA released a report indicating health risks in food deserts and potential actions to alleviate the food access problems. And in 2010, the Obama administration unveiled the Healthy Food Financing Initiative to promote greater access to healthy food in food deserts. The initiative is backed by $400 million in funding to bring grocery stores and healthy food retailers to food deserts. While federal programs develop and gain momentum, state and local governments have gotten deeply involved to assure their citizens have access to healthy foods. Cities in California, New York, Pennsylvania, and Washington, have already implemented strategies to confront food deserts. Denver city officials and planners have recently incorporated strategies for urban agriculture into a new zoning code, however there are still crucial steps to take on the path to encouraging more urban agriculture and more affordable and healthy food choices for Denver residents.

There are significant environmental costs associated with the current industrial food system including air pollution, water contamination, soil erosion, reduced bio-diversity, and climate change.
Food products shipped into urban areas typically travel between 1,500 and 2,500 miles from farm to plate.\textsuperscript{15} The inherent inefficiencies and petroleum-dependency of our current industrial food system have established a fragile and insecure arrangement where somehow hunger persists for millions in the midst of plenty for others.\textsuperscript{8} In order to develop socially equitable and sustainable cities, urban areas will have to rely on local agriculture to feed people and also for broader functions, including economic vitality, entrepreneurship, individual health, community well being, landscape beautification, and environmental restoration.\textsuperscript{11}

II. Opportunities for Policy and Business Innovations to Encourage Urban Agriculture in Denver

This paper will focus on city planning, market creation, distribution, and community economic development, as four distinct but interrelated approaches to encourage local food production in Denver. We have narrowed the focus of this paper to Denver for three reasons: First, because local agencies, equipped with police power to ensure public health, safety and well-being, are best suited to implement methods directed at solving unequal food access.\textsuperscript{xii} Second, because as University of Denver law students, we have built academic relationships with organizations such as the Denver Regional Council of Governments (DRCOG) and Live Well Colorado, who are both actively researching and planning for local food system improvements. And lastly, incorporating local food systems into the city’s strategic planning process directly supports the goals of establishing Denver as a new sustainable urban center.

Each section of this paper presents opportunities for innovative strategies to realize the environmental benefits, societal improvements, and sustainable long-term growth potential of Denver and the Rocky Mountain Metro-Region. By deliberately keeping a narrow focus on the City of Denver, this paper advocates for solutions that are scalable and replicable for other cities and municipalities faced with similar problems. By working with groups like DRCOG, these innovative strategies can be highlighted as successful models for supporting local food systems and larger regional food systems to benefit the entire Rocky Mountain metropolitan region.

A. Innovative City Planning Methods Integrating Agriculture with Urban Areas

Historically, food systems are not part of the planning practice, and only the most progressive cities are incorporating urban agriculture into their plans and policies. The City of Denver is emerging as one of these progressive cities because it recognizes the importance of urban agriculture in its recently adopted zoning code. The city enacted the code in June 2010, and it utilizes and addresses the most innovative planning techniques and issues to date, so it is not surprising that the code includes urban agriculture.\textsuperscript{xiii}
The zoning code allows small gardens and commercial agriculture in various capacities and existing districts.\textsuperscript{xiv} This is necessary for a viable local food system because it creates a property right to grow food within city limits, and establishes it as a legitimate land use and community development strategy. Furthermore, according to the American Planning Association, the urban agriculture provision is a “standout example” because it goes beyond average community garden ordinance and allows commercial agriculture throughout the city.\textsuperscript{ xv}

However, because the 2010 zoning code is the first time the City of Denver has recognized urban agriculture, it does not address the issue in its comprehensive plan or its sustainability plan.\textsuperscript{xvi} A key indicator that a community supports urban agriculture is to incorporate it into the cities comprehensive, strategic, functional, and subarea plans.\textsuperscript{xvii} Incorporating strategies that can build a strong local food system is very important to the long-term public interest and the future vision for Denver’s growth.\textsuperscript{xviii} Therefore, the City of Denver can become a model for local food production if it incorporates urban agriculture into \textit{BluePrint Denver} and \textit{GreenPrint Denver}, which are its comprehensive and sustainability plans respectively.

1. Comprehensive and Sustainability Plans

The Live Well Colorado \textit{Food Policy Blueprint} points out that there are significant regulatory barriers to local food efforts throughout the Rocky Mountain region. For example, many cities have rules and regulations that impede food sharing, food gleaning programs, and the sale or donation from other small-scale food producers to individuals or organizations. The City of Denver should address these issues by integrating local food production and distribution into \textit{BluePrint Denver} and \textit{GreenPrint Denver}. Since the comprehensive and sustainability plans define a long-term vision of the future, they are the appropriate documents to establish priorities and develop initiatives for local food systems. Amending the comprehensive and sustainability plans is timely. The city adopted \textit{BluePrint Denver} in 2002, and comprehensive plans are typically revised every ten years, so it should update the plan within the next few years.\textsuperscript{xix} Similarly, \textit{GreenPrint Denver} is a five-year plan and the city adopted it in 2006, so it should be up for revision this year.\textsuperscript{xx} These are excellent opportunities to integrate urban agriculture into Denver’s vision of the future.

\textit{BluePrint Denver} and \textit{GreenPrint Denver} should prioritize urban agriculture in two ways: first, by establishing it as the “highest and best use” of land, and second, by viewing it on the same level as other vital infrastructure, such as roads and sewers.\textsuperscript{xxi} This can establish urban agriculture as a strategy for citywide improvements and can connect the local food system to other Denver sustainability projects. The city can implement these initiatives by creating a local food policy council and urban agriculture plan.\textsuperscript{xxii}
2. Food Policy Council

Denver should establish a local food policy council (“FPC”) in order to provide an effective forum for diverse groups of stakeholders to come together to design positive changes in their food system.\textsuperscript{xxiii} FPC’s are advisory groups to the city council, and are composed of representatives from the local food sector as well as a few city staff members. The central purpose of most Food Policy Councils is to identify innovative solutions and implement them on a local or state level, spurring economic development and “creating a more environmentally sustainable and socially just” food system.\textsuperscript{xxiv} “FPCs often engage in food system research and make policy recommendations, and can even be charged with writing food policy.”\textsuperscript{xxv} Thus, their objective is to be a collective, well-informed, advocacy-oriented voice to develop policies that increase the production and distribution of local foods within a community.\textsuperscript{xxvi}

A FPC could help the City of Denver create and implement the urban agriculture plan because it provides comprehensive practical and institutional knowledge that is necessary to link local food to citywide issues. The FPC would address each issue by creating working groups that address specific areas of the plan and focus on the implementation efforts. The city would ensure the timeliness and success of the working groups by assigning a city staff person to each group as the convener, and task the appropriate city departments to the recommendations forward.\textsuperscript{xxvii}

3. Urban Agriculture Plan

The urban agriculture plan would function similarly to a sub-area plan or a neighborhood plan. This way, a more focused plan would provide more detail than an all-encompassing citywide plan, and the citywide plans would then defer to the urban agriculture plan when addressing issues related to the local food system. In contrast to a sub-area or neighborhood plan, the urban agriculture plan specifically analyzes the relationship between local food and all other facets of a community.\textsuperscript{xxviii} A strong and focused urban agriculture plan can provide a comprehensive guide to local food production and distribution in Denver.\textsuperscript{xxix} A clearly defined plan can also integrate urban agriculture into existing policies and make recommendations for future actions that would strengthen the local food system.\textsuperscript{xxx}

Furthermore, once the plan is in place, the city must consider urban agriculture strategies when it reviews project proposals, and it can impose conditions that promote local food production and distribution.

4. Implementation

The plan and task force should address a few basic planning components, such as: (1) Analyzing GIS data to identify areas that lack fresh food resources.\textsuperscript{xxxi} For example, DRCOG created a Food Assets Map, appendix E, that identifies the location of every grocery store in its region. The city can condense this information to its jurisdictional limits, and overlay it with socioeconomic, age demographics, residential density, and vacant parcel data. (2) Enacting a zoning code that permits farmers markets as a primary use in the retail sales and sales services districts, and by right or subject to operational and site
standards in mixed use and commercial districts.xxxii (3) Adopting an administrative provision to sanction the use of city-owned property for farmers markets pursuant to operational and site standards.xxxiii And (4) Adopting resolution clarifying that residents may plant gardens in the strip of the public right-of-way between the sidewalk and the curb.xxxiv These actions would enhance Denver’s existing urban agriculture zoning code because they sanction local food distribution within the city.

B. Opportunities for Local Market Development

The success of an urban agriculture model is also highly dependent on its economic viability. Urban or local food systems are hindered by high cost, inefficiency, and lack of awareness.xxxv The recommendations in this section address these problems by promoting initiatives that allow Denver to create a viable economic framework for local food growers and while directly addressing food deserts and unequal food access.

Addressing the problem of food deserts requires dealing with complicated issues such as unemployment, socioeconomic inequality, and sustainable urban growth.xxxvi This section provides three solutions, which by capitalizing on economic opportunities in underserved communities, can create jobs, build stronger neighborhood relationships, and promote sustainable development. These goals are achievable by increasing the local food procured by large institutions, facilitating investment in isolated food deserts, and building awareness through existing sustainability models. Utilizing urban agriculture to directly confront food deserts will promote a wider adoption of smart growth principles while also growing a strong local food system for the benefit of Denver’s residents.

A quick survey of the plans and initiatives already implemented by states and cities shows that there is no single solution to solve food deserts and unequal food access.xxxvii Accordingly, Denver’s food system requires a unique and appropriately tailored approach.

1. Large Institutions’ Ability to Increase Demand for Locally Produced Food

In the City of Denver, there is ample opportunity to create demand through large city operated institutions. Large institutions such as schools, government buildings, and hospitals purchase millions of dollars of food per year. For example, the Denver public school system has $29.9 million yearly budget to spend on food.xxxviii Redirecting these funds to local growers will instantly create a viable market for locally grown food.

This is an important step in creating a viable urban agricultural market. These large institutions will instantly create a reliable stream of revenue for local growers. In return, the city will promote healthy food choices for its citizens and reinvest money into the community. Economic studies show that for every dollar spent on chain or processed food, thirteen cents returns to the community where the store is located. On the other hand, one dollar spent on local products returns forty-five cents to the
This recommendation will not only create a viable economic framework for local growers but also strength Denver’s local economy.

2. Financing Initiatives Create Jobs and Build Local Economies

Currently, there are many economic incentives that are in place to promote healthy food initiatives. Grants, low interest loans, tax credits, and venture capital programs exist to promote investment in underserved areas, job creation, training, and innovative sustainable endeavors. (Appendix A-D). Successfully implemented urban agriculture policy requires a system that understands the economic incentives available and uses them to drive investment through local food systems.

A financing initiative to promote local food production should be a multi-faceted partnership between the city, non-profits, and community interest groups. The focus of the financing program should directly address food desserts, unemployment, and community building. These are key components for an effective financing initiative, one that is attractive to government entities and private investors. This financial initiative is comprised of three interrelated components.

The first component is a government-sponsored office that organizes and manages available financing and grant options for individuals interested in investing in local food ventures. This group will also provide funding to supplement or match secured financing from other grants or loans.

The second component is an organization that coordinates relationships between communities and developers recognizing the unique needs and the available resources of potential supermarkets, producers, or other investors. This group will provide negotiating expertise and help maintain strong relationships with potential investors. The group will also help attract new supermarket chains, and facilitate funding for existing stores interested in modifying operations for the explicit purpose of selling fresh produce.

Finally, the third group is a community-based group, made up of non-profits, education institutions, and advocacy groups dedicated to enhancing job opportunities for the local population. Ideally, the increased investment will create a large number of new and stable job opportunities. The jobs should range from short-term construction jobs, design and engineering work, to contract drafting and longer-term retail level employment. It is important that the local community realize the benefits of these job opportunities. Employing local residents will increase the economic strength of communities and ultimately, the region as a whole. This financing initiative integrated amongst all three organizations will create jobs for the population, strengthen the local economy, and provide healthy food to the citizens of Denver.

3. Green Building Certification for Urban Agriculture Improvements

Although food is not traditionally associated with energy efficiency goals invoked to combat climate change, there is growing evidence that our industrialized food system has significant and negative
environmental impacts. Currently, food travels thousands of miles from farm to plate, and significantly impacts water, air, and soil quality. Coupling food policy with already successful sustainability initiatives, designed to protect natural resources and reduce petroleum dependency, will build awareness and create new market opportunities for urban agriculture. Specifically, adopting local food production and consumption requirements for green building certification can help reduce the use, cost, and negative environmental impact of the current industrialized petroleum dependant food system.

A major component in the nation’s efforts to meet energy efficiency goals is the development of energy efficient and environmentally friendly “green buildings.” Programs exist on the national and local levels that provide energy saving criteria to certify green buildings. On the national level, the US Green Building Council (USGBC) uses a Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design (LEED) system to rate buildings. LEED is an internationally recognized certification for environmentally friendly buildings highlighting strategies intended to improve water efficiency, energy savings, carbon emissions, environmental quality, and the stewardship of natural resources. Locally the City of Denver has similar programs in the Built Green Colorado initiative and through the Denver Sustainability Committee. Green projects are a leading factor in reducing the use, cost, and negative environmental impact of energy and natural resource consumption.

Crucial oversights of green certification requirements on the national, state, and local levels are environmentally responsible and economically beneficial food policies. Excluding food related policies from green building certification neglects the benefits of local food systems, such as: job creation, decreased food-miles traveled, increased green space, community organization, and reduced petroleum dependency. Potential criteria for a green building certification framework could include some or all of the following factors:

- Distance from grocery stores
- On-site gardens
- Kitchens designed to cook fresh food
- Adequate storage for fresh food
- Absence of vending machines
- Contracts with local growers
- Sponsoring on-site famers market
- Sponsoring on-site educational urban agricultural events

Denver will receive two major benefits from adding food policies to green building certification. First, coupling food policy with sustainable development policy integrates food access and urban agriculture into the discussion. Including food policy in sustainable development planning will create new market opportunities and further innovative ways to promote strong local food systems. Second, requiring
food production and consumption criteria in green building designs will compel developers and property owners to begin thinking about economic decisions that will impact their property's agriculture footprint. Green building certification is a desirable and marketable designation and adding food system criteria to green design standards will create business for local growers, benefit the health of urban Denver residents, and encourage more environmentally friendly businesses practices.

C. Community Food Hubs Address Distribution Needs

A community food hub is a central facility where mid to small size local and regional growers connect with individual consumers, as well as mid-to-large size organizations in need of healthy, fresh, local food. These facilities can be placed throughout a metropolitan area in order to build a network of local food distribution centers. They are created to provide better access to locally produced food, help meet the increasing demand for local food by organizations and consumers, and to provide a “storefront” for small and mid-sized local growers who are otherwise left out of the marketplace.

1. Benefits of Community Food Hubs

In addition to the opportunities identified in the introduction that can decrease food miles traveled, and limit the environmental costs associated with food delivery systems, there are several communities in the Denver Metropolitan area that are in need of affordable, fresh, and local food choices. These communities have been identified through a Geographical Information Systems (GIS) study of food assets within the City of Denver, produced by the DRCOG, that overlays proximity to major grocery stores, other food outlets, and socioeconomic information. This map can be used to identify areas that would benefit the most from the creation of a community food hub.

A community food hub is associated with multiple major benefits. First, it allows increased access to fresh and healthy food choices for restaurants, markets, and consumers. A food hub can create the necessary infrastructure to allow local food buyers to purchase, prepare, and serve local fresh food directly to the community. As such, the hub also functions as a traditional community center, capable of providing community based services, like shared kitchen space, or a healthy cooking classes. The hub can also create jobs along the entire food supply chain needed for the successful operation of the hub. In practice, food hubs on average account for almost one million dollars in sales annually.

2. Implementing Community Food Hubs

A community food hub serves as an aggregator. Every morning food is delivered or picked up depending on proximity and taken to the community hub. A hub can serve upwards of 40 small to mid-sized local farmers. The food from producers entering a hub is recorded in an online database available to restaurants, schools, food service directors, and individual consumers. The hub’s staff can update the database as new food comes in, and include information like, types of foods, place of origin, food miles
traveled, nutritional information, as well as information on the grower. Consequently, a restaurateur desiring more local ingredients on the menu, can log onto the web-based tool each morning, see what is in stock and fresh, reserve some items, and create a menu based on the fresh local produce acquired at the community food hub. The hub could also organize and schedule deliveries directly to the restaurant.

A successfully implemented food hub is comprised of several major components. First, as an aggregator of products from multiple growers, the hub maintains a volume comparable to, and competitive with, food wholesalers, thus increasing the ability of small food producers to take advantage of economies of scale. Second, a physical facility allows for a number of beneficial functions. The facility can be used to store and preserve food, as well as host community organizations dedicated to increasing benefits of local healthy food choices. Third, a community food hub will be able to provide many services that small and mid-sized farmers cannot otherwise access on their own, such as, the web-based database, business and enterprise services, as well as liability insurance that meets the requirements of local organizations. Lastly, the hub creates convenient access to locally grown foods. Many of the problems associated with food deserts are attributed to a lack of choice. Strategically establishing community food hubs can eliminate limited healthy food choices and establish a foundation for equal food access regardless of socioeconomic disadvantages.

D. Community Economic Development

Economic development and community building efforts meet at urban agriculture and strategies to address equal food access. The American Economic Development Council defines economic development as the "process of creating wealth through the mobilization of human capital, financial capital, physical resources and natural resources to generate marketable goods and services." At the local level, economic development is best understood as a set of state and local governmental practices designed to encourage the creation of new business or the relocation of existing businesses from one geographic area to another. Community building, by contrast, refers to social, human, and "place-based" development at the neighborhood or community level. In the domestic, local context, community building is a self-help strategy employed by community organizations.

Community economic development (CED) can be characterized as a hybrid of the two that promotes the overall quality of the community. CED views the neighborhood holistically, valuing human, environmental, and economic assets. By treating the area as a distinct and insular economic unit, stabilization and revitalization of the community can be encouraged through organizations, the built environment, and economic development. The theory is that by encouraging the social, physical, and human development of a neighborhood or community, overall quality of life, human health, economic health, and environmental health can all be improved.
Encouraging local food production creates opportunities for community members to empower themselves, ensure development is responsive to community needs, and maintain a long-term vision for a healthy and productive community. Urban agriculture is not only a good fit for the community economic development model, but it also can be seen as an innovation to the CED strategy. Food is a basic need for any community, the emotional connection to food is very strong, and the benefits of fresh and nutritious foods have far reaching health benefits.

Community economic development, as it relates to local food systems, emphasizes self-reliance within distinct economic areas.\textsuperscript{ix} Community food security programs help to keep family farms in business and they educate farmers on sustainable agriculture and the business of farming.\textsuperscript{xi} Increasing food security and access to local produce also helps small businesses, local suppliers, and neighborhood consumers keep money in the community. Common activities where CED connects with local food systems revolve around production and marketing.\textsuperscript{xii} These projects often involve young people as the key leaders and organizers addressing future food system challenges and encourage community members and community organizations to be closely involved.\textsuperscript{xiii}

“Although most think of the U.S. as a country of great abundance, almost 50 million people had a hard time finding enough to eat.”\textsuperscript{xliv} It is also estimated that “one in four children do not have dependable access to adequate food.”\textsuperscript{xlv} Community based food programs, operating according to the principles of CED, can make significant improvements to equal food access in underserved urban areas.

III. Conclusion

Each of the four sections addressed above have important interrelated concepts that depend on each other during their implementation. Therefore, to address the stated goals of cultivating a robust local food system in Denver-area food deserts, a whole-system approach is necessary. Planning innovations and a Denver Food Policy Council will inform new market formation, distribution hubs will in turn rely on market supports, and community economic development organizations will further improve the health of local economies and communities.

The FPC will be most suitably positioned to determine the particular needs of communities and help to build strong relationships with local citizens. For example, recommendations made by the FPC will work by driving investment into areas with limited healthy food choices through local financing institutions and community groups. Similarly, the FPC can secure funding and strategic locations for regional food distribution. Lastly, a strong FPC will work with community groups and local non-profits to identify particular community food needs and promote a positive and healthy quality of life.
### Appendix A, Federal Funding Opportunities

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Program</th>
<th>Agency</th>
<th>Potential Use</th>
</tr>
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</table>
| Community Food Security Projects Competitive Grants Program            | USDA         | • Food Policy Council  
• Regional Food Hub  
• Community Gardens |
| Hunger Free Communities Grant                                          | USDA         | • Cooperative grocery store  
• Community gardens |
| Specialty Crop Block Grant                                             | USDA         | • Regional food hub |
| Agriculture and Food Research Initiative Competitive Grants Program    | USDA         | • Developing food access strategies |
| Healthy Food Financing Initiative                                      | USDA, HHS, TR| • Corner store conversion  
• New supermarkets |
| Regional Innovation Initiative                                         | USDA         | • Regional economic development |
| Green Jobs Innovation Initiative                                       | DOL          | • Migrant farmer training  
• Regional food hub |
| Workforce Innovation Partnership                                       | DOL, DOE     | • Urban farm job training  
• Culinary skills development  
• Regional Food Hub |
| Healthy Communities Initiative                                         | EPA          | • School/Community Gardens |
| Interagency Partnership for Sustainable Communities                    | EPA, DOT, HUD| • Integrate food systems into green building certification |
## Appendix B, Tax Incentives

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Economic Incentive</th>
<th>Description</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Personal Property Tax Credits</td>
<td>Cities, counties, and special districts may negotiate a personal property tax rebate of up to 50 percent for 10 years.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Local Tax Abatement</td>
<td>Cities may consider waiving or rebating local sales/use taxes for construction materials, personal property, and manufacturing equipment</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Job Growth Incentive Tax</td>
<td>The program allows companies to apply to the Colorado Economic Development Commission (EDC) for a state income tax credit based on the payroll tax cost they incur from creating new jobs. To qualify for the credit, companies must create at least 20 new jobs in urban areas or five new jobs in rural enterprise zone areas, and pay wages above the local average.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Contaminated Land Redevelopment Income Tax Credit</td>
<td>An income tax credit for expenses associated with the redevelopment of contaminated land is available for qualified projects.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Enterprise Zones</td>
<td>The Enterprise Zone Program provides tax credits for private enterprise to expand and for new businesses to locate in economically distressed areas of Colorado as designated by the Colorado Economic Development Commission (EDC).</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Certified Capital Companies Program (CAPCO)</td>
<td>The CAPCO program was created by the Colorado State Legislature in 2001 to provide venture capital funds to new and expanding small businesses throughout the state.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Colorado Venture Capital Authority (VCA)</td>
<td>The Colorado General Assembly passed legislation that established a Colorado Venture Capital Authority in 2004. The VCA makes seed and early-stage capital investments in businesses from $250,000 to $3.3 million.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>New Market Tax Credit (NMTC)</td>
<td>Permits taxpayers to receive a credit against Federal income taxes for making qualified equity investments in designated Community Development Entities (CDEs).</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Colorado Innovation Investment Tax Credit</td>
<td>Provides a state income tax credit for qualified investors that make investments during a calendar year in a small qualified Colorado business involved primarily in research and development or manufacturing of new technologies, products, or processes.</td>
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</table>
### Appendix C, Local Grant Programs

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Economic Incentive</th>
<th>Description</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Existing Industry Grant</td>
<td>Grants are awarded to Colorado companies working to implement a new technology to remain competitive and retain jobs in Colorado.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Colorado FIRST</td>
<td>Grants are for companies moving to the state or for existing companies planning to expand.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Planning and Feasibility Study Grants</td>
<td>These grants are designed to provide funding to determine the feasibility of a project or to plan for a project. Generally, funding may be provided up to $20,000 per study; however, this amount may vary based on a number of factors.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Infrastructure Assistance Program</td>
<td>The infrastructure program utilizes federal funds from the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development to construct or improve infrastructure. To receive the grants, companies must demonstrate that the project will create or retain low- and moderate-income jobs</td>
</tr>
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### Appendix D, Other Economic Incentives

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Economic Incentive</th>
<th>Description</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Colorado Economic Development Commission</td>
<td>Provides state funds for qualified economic development projects. Funds may include grants, low interest, short-term loans, or an interest write-down on a loan. Each project is considered on a case-by-case basis using factors such as the number of jobs, salary levels, location, local participation, and resource availability.</td>
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| Low Interest Loans | - **Rural Lender Advantage**: Initiative is designed to accommodate the unique loan processing needs of small community/rural-based lenders by simplifying and streamlining loan application process and procedures, particularly for smaller SBA loans. It is part of a broader SBA initiative to promote the economic development of local communities, particularly those facing the challenges of population loss, economic dislocation, and high unemployment.  
- **B&I Loan**: If your business is located in a rural community, you may qualify for special financing. The U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) currently maintains a Business and Industry (B&I) Guaranteed Loan Program. The USDA provides guarantees of up to 80 percent of a loan made by a commercial lender.  
- **CDC/504**: A loan program that is a long-term financing tool, designed to encourage economic development within a community. The 504 Program accomplishes this by providing small businesses with long-term, fixed-rate financing to acquire major fixed assets for expansion or modernization. |
| Small Business Development Centers | Community-based Small Business Development Centers provide free one-on-one counseling services in the areas of business research and marketing, new business feasibility analysis, business plan preparation, finance packaging, and other small business topics. |
| Strategic Fund | The fund provides performance-based incentive payments to qualifying companies that create new, full-time, permanent jobs in Colorado that are maintained for at least one year and meet other requirements such as potential for economic spinoff |
| Job Creation Performance Incentive Fund (PIF) | The fund provides performance-based incentive payments to qualifying companies that create net new jobs, which pay above average wages. |
| Training Assistance | Cities may offer additional training assistance for qualified projects. |
| Waiver of Permit Fees | In addition to expediting the building permit process, cities may choose to waive all or part of various permit fees. |
Appendix E, Food Assets for the Denver Area

Prepared by Denver Regional Council of Governments

(See the attached pdf for a more detailed image)
networks as analogous to other vital infrastructure such as roads or sewers. It aims to improve food access, security, and sustainability. It creates recommendations to the Minneapolis City Council, and it recommended that the City “prioritize local food production and distribution when determining the highest and best use of City-owned and private land, and when planning new development or re-development projects that could potentially affect existing local food resources.” Janine de la Salle & Mark Holland, eds, *Agricultural Urbanism: Handbook for Building Sustainable Food Systems in 21st Century Cities*, Green Frigate Books, Winnipeg, Manitoba (2010) in PSA 563, at 55. (A “new” planning framework “that sees municipal food networks as analogous to other vital infrastructure such as roads or sewers. It aims to improve food access, security, and sustainability.”)

[4] Ibid.
[6] Ibid.
[8] Ibid.
[12] Denver, City of. 2010. Zoning Code. Article 11: Use Limitations. Section 11.6.1: Garden, Urban; Section 11.8.4: Garden; Section 11.8.6: Keeping of Household Animals; Section 11.10.9: Garden. Available at: http://denvergov.org/cpd/Zoning/DenverZoningCode/tabid/432507/Default.aspx (last visited April 26, 2011). (Permits urban gardens (with accessory structures and beekeeping) as primary uses in most districts, (subject to administrative review and specific standards.) Permits on-site sales for urban gardens in nonresidential districts. Permits accessory gardens in all residential districts, subject to specific standards. Permits accessory beekeeping in most districts, subject to specific standards. Permits accessory gardens in most nonresidential districts, subject to specific standards.
[14] A comprehensive plan is a long-term vision of a community that identifies local economic, social, and health issues and recommends policies and programs to address the issues. A sustainability plan is similar to a comprehensive plan because it is a framework to guide the adoption and implementation of programs and policies in a city. The plans differ because a sustainability plan is a reaction to energy use and greenhouse gas concerns, so its purpose is to promote sustainable development practices.

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knowledge by integrating context-sensitive urban agriculture and other food-related activities into a wide range of development settings.”

xxii Baltimore, City of, Office of Sustainability. 2009. *Baltimore Sustainability Plan*, at 75. Available at: http://www.baltimoresustainability.org/uploads/files/Sustainability_Plan.pdf (last accessed April 26, 2011). (Baltimore adopted a sustainability plan that relates urban agriculture to its “greening” and “cleanliness” themes. The sustainability plan established follow-up strategies, and it recommends creating a citywide urban agriculture plan that will “promote healthy, local, and, where possible, organic food production and food professions, and include multiple stakeholders currently involved in food production and job training. The plan should identify the predicted demand for urban-farmed food and recommend location and distribution of urban agricultural institutions. It could also identify the best distribution of existing food networks and identify gaps that need to be filled.”) Cleveland Urban Design Collaborative, Kent State University. 2008. *Re-Imagining a More Sustainable Cleveland: Citywide Strategies for Reuse of Vacant Land*, at 31. Available at: www.cudc.kent.edu/shrink/Images/reimagining_final_screenres.pdf (last accessed April 26, 2011). (The City of Cleveland created a sustainability plan that integrates urban agriculture into other sustainable development strategies. The plan identified and developed citywide goals, principles, and strategies, which include policy recommendations for returning vacant land and properties to productive use.)

xxiv Homegrown Minneapolis, at 12.


xxvi Ibid.

xxvii Ibid.

xxviii Minneapolis Department of Health and Family Support. "Implementation Efforts." *City of Minneapolis, Minnesota - Official Web Site*. Available at: http://www.ci.minneapolis.mn.us/dhfs/hgimpefforts.asp (last accessed April 26, 2011). (The Minneapolis City Council established seven working groups to implement Homegrown Minneapolis’ final report. The council assigned each working group a city staff person as the convener, and tasked the city departments to move their recommendations forward.)

xxix A sub-area or neighborhood plan analyzes all issues within a specific area of the city.


xii Homegrown Minneapolis, at 12.

xxi PSA 563, supra n. iii, at 74-79. (The City of Cleveland started its local food initiative to reuse vacant and abandoned properties. To do this, the city conducted a parcel-level inventory of the city and used the information to develop its strategies. Subsequently, the city established an urban agriculture zoning district that permits community gardens and market gardens, i.e., small commercial enterprises; passed an ordinance to permit the keeping of poultry, small farm animals, and bees throughout the city; implemented several training and grant programs to provide financial resources and education to beginning farmers; and initiated more than 100 new urban-agriculture projects.

xxii Durham, North Carolina, City of. *Unified Development Ordinance*. Article 5, Section 5.1.2: Use Table; Section 5.2.5.F: Retail Sales and Service. Available at: www.durhamnc.gov/udo (last accessed April 26, 2011). (Outdoor farmers markets are listed as a primary use in the retail sales and service use category. Farmers markets are permitted by right or with a development plan in a number of mixed use and commercial districts.) Little Elm, Texas, City of. *Code of Ordinances*. Chapter 106: Zoning, Article I: In General. Section 106-33.5: Farmers Market Regulations. Available At: http://municode.com/index.aspx?clientid=13870&stateId=43&stateName=Texas (last accessed April 26, 2011). (Farmers markets are permitted uses in multiple zoning districts subject to specific operational and site standards.)

Seattle, City of, Department of Transportation. (2011) “Department of Transportation Client Assistance Memo 2305: Gardening in Planting Strips.” January 1. Available at: www.seattle.gov/transportation/stuse_garden.htm (last accessed April 26, 2011). (Clarifies that residents may plant raised-bed gardens in the strip of the public right-of-way between the sidewalk and the curb.)


\( \text{xxi} \) Ibid


\( \text{xxiii} \) Department of Agriculture, United States. 2011. "Regional Food Hubs." Available at: http://www.ams.usda.gov/AMSv1.0/getfile?dDocName=STELPRDC50

\( \text{xxiv} \) See Appendix E

\( \text{xxv} \) Department of Agriculture, United States. 2011. "Regional Food Hubs." Available at: http://www.ams.usda.gov/AMSv1.0/getfile?dDocName=STELPRDC50

\( \text{xxvi} \) Ibid.


\( \text{xxviii} \) Ibid.

\( \text{xxix} \) Ibid.

\( \text{xx} \) Department of Agriculture, United States. 2011. "Regional Food Hubs." Available at: http://www.ams.usda.gov/AMSv1.0/getfile?dDocName=STELPRDC50


\( \text{xli} \) McFarlane, Audrey, G. “Race, Space, and Place: The Geography of Economic Development.” San Diego Law Review. (Spring, 1999).

\( \text{xlii} \) Ibid.

\( \text{xliii} \) Ibid.


\( \text{xlvii} \) Ibid.

\( \text{xlviii} \) Ibid.

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