

Urban Agriculture Regulations in the City of San Diego Frequently Asked Questions

What is Urban Agriculture?

Urban agriculture is the growing of food in and around cities for local consumption. Urban agriculture can range from someone raising a few chickens in the backyard to an urban farm located on a former vacant lot.

Why is Urban Agriculture important?

- Increases education and awareness about healthy foods and the food system
- Reduces the environmental impact of food system by reducing the need for packaging and transporting our foods long distances
- Increases access to locally grown, healthy foods
- Allows micro-enterprise opportunities and increased livelihoods in the food sector
- Offers the potential to reduce household food costs
- Brings the natural world into our urban environments

What is the City of San Diego doing about it?

- The City of San Diego won a \$50,000 grant from SANDAG to explore ways it reduce barriers to urban agriculture.

What specific urban agricultures issues are the City currently looking at?

- **Poultry:** Current regulations do not allow the keeping of poultry within fifty feet of ANY residence, including that of the owner of the birds. This means that only those with very large yards can have chickens.
- **Goats:** Current City regulations prohibit goats, including pygmy goats, outside of agricultural zones, except for brush management.
- **Bees:** Existing regulations, which are thirty years out of date, have rules that require hives be kept far distances from neighbors and public right of ways. These rules do not take into account the flight patterns of bees and effectively prohibit beekeeping in much of the City.
- **Community garden sales:** Currently community gardens in residential zones cannot sell anything on-site and the City is exploring allowing the existing garage sale regulations to apply so they can have fruit and vegetable sales three times a year (for two days each).
- **Small urban farms:** Produce currently cannot be sold onsite (except for community gardens in commercial zones). Innovations in intensive agriculture have made this a viable approach to urban food production. The City is exploring allowing retail farms smaller than 4 acres in commercial zones.
- **Farmers' markets on private property:** Currently it is more difficult and expensive to start one on private property (e.g., a shopping mall parking lot) than on public property (e.g., a temporarily closed street).

Who at the City can I give my comments and input to?

Email Dan Joyce, Senior Planner, Development Services Department -- djoyce@sandiego.gov

I would like to get involved, spread the word and/or stay in the loop. What should I do?

Join the 1 in 10 google group (groups.google.com/group/sdfoodshed) to stay up to date.

You can also contact the following organizations:

International Rescue Ctte.
Anchi Mei
Anchi.Mei@rescue.org

Project New Village
Diane Moss
projectnewvillage@gmail.com

1 in 10 Coalition
Parke Troutman
info@sdfoodpolicy.org

City of San Diego Urban Agriculture Regulations Reform

FORMAL MEETINGS TIMELINE

The following dates are **tentative** and based on the best of our knowledge currently.

- **October 25 Community Planners Committee (CPC) Meeting**
A committee of the chairs of the City's community planning groups. Provides feedback to City on possible code changes. Strictly advisory but City Council takes their views seriously.
- November 1 Draft UA regulations released**
Begin public comment period on UA regulations
- **November 8 Code Monitoring Team (CMT) Meeting**
Monthly meeting of 8–12 volunteers (several professionals like planners, developers, architects and a few community planner group members) who work with the Land Development Code on a daily basis. Provides feedback on possible code changes.
- November 15 End of public comment period on UA regulations**
- November 22 Revised UA regulations released**
- **December 8 Planning Commission Meeting**
7–member appointed board reviews possible code changes and provides recommendations to City Council. (They also make many routine land–use decisions to avoid cluttering the council's calendar.)
- ***January 24 City Council First Hearing of new UA regulations**
8–member body elected by district. Must vote twice on every proposed code change.
- February City Council Second Reading of new UA regulations**
Usually just a formality, but required by the City's charter.
- February Mayor signs new Urban Agriculture Regulations into law**
Has 10 business days after receiving legislation by City Council to veto or sign legislation.

** Meetings we need you to attend

***The FINAL City Council Vote, we REALLY need you there!