



City of Madison  
Task Force on Farmland Preservation  
FINAL REPORT



Introduced to the Madison Common Council May 2, 2023

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# Executive Summary

## Task Force Establishment & Purpose

The Task Force on Farmland Preservation was created by the Common Council in September 2022 to research, understand, and apply the decades of City support for food production spaces within its boundaries to the increasingly controversial decisions facing policy makers when valuable agricultural areas are proposed for development. Members were chosen for their expertise and familiarity with the subject matter and with City processes. The Task Force was charged with creating guidelines for decision-makers to help balance development interests with the strong community values that support local food production, local food businesses, and the preservation of farmland as expressed in adopted plans.

## Timeline & Process

The Task Force met monthly from October through December 2022, then biweekly from January through May 2023. Research teams also met weekly or biweekly starting in January 2023. Over 30 meetings were held in 7 months. In January 2023, three research teams were formed to focus on Policy Review, Land Characteristics, and Land Access. Each team created a Charter (Appendix C), reported regularly at Task Force meetings, and filed reports (Appendix D) to be used in drafting the final report and recommendations. The Task Force reviewed a draft report before submitting it for introduction to the Common Council.

## Conclusions & Recommendations

The competition for farmland in Madison is fierce. Emerging farmers desiring to grow food for local markets must compete for land with larger operators growing commodity crops and developers seeking to convert the land out of agricultural use. Meanwhile, consumer and institutional demand for locally produced food remains strong.

The City of Madison currently owns and leases ~ 200 acres of farmland that could be utilized by market growers who are looking for 1-5 acres of land. Creating policies that support land preservation and access for food production requires collaboration among City staff. This collaboration has been made more difficult by the lack of a Food Policy Director to coordinate departments, boards, commissions, committees, and community partners on food policy efforts.

Municipalities around the country have developed approaches that could be adapted to address Madison's stated needs and values. When creating guidelines to help decision-makers balance the desire for urban agriculture with the demand for development, it is important to fairly value the health, economic, and ecosystem services created when land is preserved for food production.

The Task Force on Farmland Preservation developed 43 recommendations in 4 topic areas: Land Use Planning, Staffing & Task Forces, Land Leasing & Soil Contamination, and Zoning & Land Use. An implementation matrix identifies responsible parties for each recommendation and the expected timeframe of implementation.

# Statement of the Issue

## Background

In 1962, the Madison community began formally supporting growing spaces with the establishment of the Eagle Heights Community Gardens. The Mayor's Advisory Committee on Community Gardens, recommended by an Ad Hoc Committee in 1997, became the Community Gardens Committee in 2005. The Advisory Committee was the only City body available for the discussion of food-related issues until 2012, when the City established the Madison Food Policy Council (MFPC) and created the position of Food Policy Director in the Mayor's Office. In 2016, the Community Gardens Committee adjourned after formally transferring its responsibilities to the MFPC. During the Imagine Madison process (2017-2018), the MFPC created a Work Group that (1) succeeded in adding food-related goals and/or strategies to every substantive chapter of the City's Comprehensive Plan that can be leveraged to improve urban agriculture in the community and (2) also provided clear feedback to the Plan Commission and Common Council on the need for balance between building development and farmland preservation. However, this feedback was largely ignored. At the end of 2020, the Food Policy Director position became vacant and has since been removed from the budget.

MFPC's Urban Agriculture Work Group, which supported food production spaces of all sizes from 2012-2020, was reorganized as the Regional Agriculture & Food Sovereignty (RAFS) Work Group to address issues raised during the pandemic. In 2022, RAFS submitted guidelines and suggested revisions of lease language to City Staff responsible for renting nearly 200 acres of City-owned land for cultivation. RAFS also advocated for the preservation of agricultural lands on the Voit and Raemisch Farms but, in both cases, decisions favored development of housing and commercial space in the absence of formal guidance on the community values that would have been fulfilled by preserving more space for food production. This Task Force was created by the Common Council in September 2022 to provide policy guidelines and recommendations to better inform these discussions and decisions in the future.

## What does farmland preservation mean in the City of Madison?

Farmland Preservation is a land use term typically encountered in rural areas, where programs offer tax credits to incentivize keeping farmland in production and protected from development. In an urban context like the City of Madison, it should be thought of as protecting from development a variety of growing spaces that may range from a community garden plot to a multi-acre field. Urban agriculture is commonly understood as farming in urban areas by individuals using human scale technology (hand tools, small tractors) to grow high value, nutritious fresh fruits and vegetables for local consumption made available through sale at local markets and restaurants. The range of practices can include market farms, community gardens, school gardens, year-round production in greenhouses, orchards, rooftop gardens, and the raising of chickens, fish, and bees.

Standard definitions of "farmland preservation," and its tax incentive programs, have historically protected large farms and benefited white landowners while excluding communities of color. In Madison, there is a well-documented need to make farmland available on a more equitable basis. The rural model also fails where the "highest and best use" criterion for land use decisions tends to dictate

development, favoring roads and buildings over continued agriculture on open, well-drained fields to grow the City's tax base instead of food. But property taxes are not the only way the City can provide for collective community needs, and there is clear demand to make farmland available on a more equitable basis to Black, Hmong, Indigenous, Latinx, and other growers of color in the community who seek to generate income from the production of local foods.

Protecting growing spaces can also provide health, well-being, food security, and economic development for the community at large. Growing spaces also provide ecological benefits, protecting the environment while providing green infrastructure, stormwater management (infiltration), and ecosystem services (carbon capture, pollinators). The opportunity to provide these land-based benefits diminishes forever with each acre of farmland that is used for development.

## The need for farmland preservation in the City of Madison

Access to farmland within urban areas is a challenge nationwide. Like many cities, the competition for available farmland in Madison is fierce. Emerging farmers compete both with developers seeking to convert the land out of agricultural use and with larger operators growing commodity crops for national markets. Retiring farmers who have invested everything in their operation often have no other option than to sell their land to the highest bidder, who is typically the buyer that will ultimately convert the farmland to nonagricultural use. In Dane County, there are three times as many landowners over the age of 65 as under the age of 35, as these farmers retire and seek to transfer their land to the next owner, the threat of conversion to nonagricultural use looms large.

At the same time that the state of Wisconsin is losing farmers overall, the demand for land that will remain in agricultural use is high. Within the Madison area, there continues to be an interest in growing food for local markets. A recent poll conducted by Rooted, a Madison urban agriculture and food systems organization that manages the Gardens Network, shows that growers, particularly growers of color producing food for local markets, continue to seek smaller parcels of land for food production. Meanwhile, consumers in Dane County and the City of Madison continue to demonstrate support for local foods and the demand for locally grown products exceeds the supply.

The City of Madison might consider addressing these tensions in multiple ways: First, the stock of city-owned land is a ripe opportunity for creating farmland access for those farmers who cannot afford to purchase land near where they live. Creative and innovative partnerships between cities and nonprofit organizations can create long-term access and stability for growers. Second, ensuring that existing farmland is permanently available for agricultural use creates certainty within the community that space will always be open for food production for local markets. Finally, encouraging development within the city that balances affordable housing with growing spaces can help alleviate the tension between the need for housing and the demand for farmland. Such developments can afford residents a way to produce food for local markets near where they live.

## Existing Conditions

The Task Force on Farmland Preservation conducted the bulk of its work through three research teams: the Policy Review Team, the Land Characteristics Team, and the Land Access Team. The

teams developed charters to define key questions, keep track of their progress, and record the research leading to reports shared out to the full Task Force.

## Policy Landscape

The Policy Review Team was comprised of Alder Tag Evers; former Alder Rebecca Kemble, and former Chair of the Madison Plan Commission and Madison Food Policy Council Nan Fey. The Team brought decades of experience as Alders, Board, Commission and Committee Members, and as members of Madison Food Policy Council and other city-wide Task Forces, to bear on over twenty policy and process issues identified by the Farmland Preservation Task Force. These issues included farmland loss data and mitigation strategies, models from other cities/regions, land banking and other protection strategies, local food system infrastructure, City-owned lands and their management, and numerous maps and overlays. The Team also reviewed the City's Comprehensive Plan, Sustainability Plan, Zoning Code, Land Banking Policy, and Ag Lease and Food Innovation District Memos, as well as regional documents including a county-wide Farmland Preservation Plan, Pandemic Food System Study, and Regional Development Framework. They also met with City Staff to discuss various issues and opportunities and develop helpful maps.

### Need for high level direction and coordination of overall food policy

The Team's research identified critical gaps in the City's support for urban agriculture and the local food system:

- Absence of city-wide leadership and coordination with the vacancy of the Food Policy Director position
- A misalignment between Urban Agriculture zoning and actual urban agricultural practices, leading to this zoning category being underutilized
- Restrictive state building code regulations that limit the use of season-extending hoop houses, and lack of guidance from the City about how to comply with those regulations
- Land Banking policy and fund prioritizing development only
- Agricultural leases on city-owned lands are short-term, lack transparent processes for access, and have not been updated.
- No policy for temporary growing space on city-owned land in transition to other uses exists.
- No comprehensive repository of information and guidance for residents interested in pursuing urban agriculture exists.

### Practices from other localities

Around the country, many cities, towns, and villages operate Purchase of Agricultural Conservation Easement (PACE) or Purchase of Development Rights (PDR) programs. These programs purchase agricultural conservation easements from interested landowners. The easement is a voluntary deed restriction that limits the future development of the land and ensures that a property remains permanently available for future agricultural use. The easement compensates a landowner for the development rights and offers an alternative to selling the land for development. The landowner who sells the protected land would receive similar compensation to the landowner who sells the land for development. The difference, however, is that agricultural conservation easements "run with the land", guaranteeing that land remains in agricultural use in perpetuity while allowing future farmers access

to that land for a more affordable price. Once land is developed, it is permanently unavailable for agricultural use.

Dane County currently has a Transfer of Development Rights (TDR) program. This program transfers development credits between sending and receiving areas. A property that transfers its development rights is protected with an easement and the landowner is compensated for that protection. Development projects in the receiving area to which the credits have been transferred are able to take advantage of increased density credits. This program has not been utilized within city limits. Similarly, while Wisconsin has a state Farmland Preservation Program that is implemented at the county level, Dane County excludes land from its Farmland Preservation Plan if that land is within an Urban Service Area. As a result, land within the City of Madison is not currently eligible for the Farmland Preservation Programs.

The City of New Haven, Connecticut recently established a Food Systems Policy Division (FSPD) to coordinate and provide the enabling conditions for co-creating with community members an environmentally sustainable and socially just local food system within that city. FSPD considers equitable and just access to growing space within the city as the foundation for improving everything in the food system from food access and security to creating new jobs and encouraging community development. Together with leadership from community members and organizations, FSPD is creating an Urban Agriculture Master Plan which Food System Policy Director Latha Swamy says “will bring food closer to the people who need and want it, and right in their neighborhood, with gardens and farms that the community has ownership over.”

## Land Characteristics

The Land Characteristics Team was comprised of Plan Commission member Alder Erik Paulson; Sustainable Madison Committee member Jeannette LeZaks, Director of Research and Innovation at Slipstream (a nonprofit combating climate change while focusing on equity); and Marcia Caton Campbell, a community and regional food systems planner who is executive director of Rooted (Madison’s largest urban agriculture organization), and a member of the Dane County Food Council. This team focused on (1) understanding the soil characteristics considered optimal for agriculture and how those characteristics were taken into consideration in the Comprehensive Plan, and (2) understanding the definition of “brownfields” and how other cities have handled urban agriculture on lands that might be considered brownfields. The Team consulted USDA Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS) soil scientists about agricultural soils, and consulted USEPA website resources and brownfields policies from other cities around the country.

## Agricultural Soils

Land considered of high quality for agricultural purposes within Madison city limits is primarily found on the periphery and is disappearing quickly; there are few parcels remaining within municipal boundaries that fall into this category. From the USDA NRCS, the Land Characteristics team learned that, with respect to Productive Agricultural Soils:

“In general these [agricultural soils] are directly related to soil health which are comprised of both biotic and abiotic factors contributing to the soil functionality. High organic matter content, soil reaction

levels (pH between 6.5 – 7.3), high cation exchangeable site availability (finer earth textures, excluding clays), high nutrient availability within acceptable levels, macro and micro element stability (no deficiencies), tortuosity (pores connectivity allowing infiltration/translocation), no root restrictive layers (bedrock, clay pan, fragipan, etc.) within 75-100cm/30-40”), adequate water table depths (usually below 75-100cm/30-40”), lower erosion potential (less sloping, high OM, low disturbance/tillage), and no overland flow (flooding and/or ponding) are all desirable fields for the potential of “good” agriculture” (Email from USDA NRCS soil scientist, 3/10/23).

City staff confirmed for the Farmland Preservation Task Force that they used NRCS soil definitions for Productive Agriculture Soils and Natural Limitations for Building Site Development in mapping these soils for the Comprehensive Plan. With respect to Natural Limitations for Building Site Development, sites with clay soils, steep slopes, and/or areas prone to flooding have natural limitations for development. Generally speaking, the same flat and well-drained soils that are considered “good” for agriculture are also the soils most desirable for development.

## Brownfields

Urban farmers and community gardeners need confidence that the soils in which they are growing food are safe and not contaminated by lead, heavy metals, or groundwater contamination. The City of Madison does not have a brownfields testing policy related to urban agriculture. Growers need clear guidance from the City of Madison on whether they are allowed to test soils for contaminants on properties they lease that are city owned, possibly necessitating remediation by the landowner, or the City prefers that urban agriculture on city-owned land be conducted “from the ground up” in raised beds with a barrier (e.g., landscape fabric or clay cap) between the ground and the growing medium to ensure safe growing of food.

Brownfields definition is set by USEPA, while cleanup standards for Wisconsin are set by WI DNR. Landowner consent is often required before soil testing to determine brownfield status, because of the cleanup obligations imposed upon landowners by the Comprehensive Environmental Response, Compensation, and Liability Act of 1980 (commonly referred to as CERCLA or Superfund). It is important to note that brownfield designations can include sites where there is a *public perception of contamination*, in addition to the actual finding of contamination based on testing.

Some cities choose to impose requirements that growers engage in urban agriculture “from the ground up,” so that brownfields concerns are alleviated. USEPA designates this Raised Bed Method a Best Practice for food production in urban soils. From an equity perspective, the Raised Bed Method is not without cost, though it is far less expensive than brownfields testing and remediation, which must be done by licensed civil/environmental engineers from an approved list at the WI DNR. The time and money it takes to have Phase I Environmental Site Assessments (and sometimes additional Phase II) environmental assessments conducted by professional environmental engineers is prohibitive for community groups with small/no budgets, and the bureaucratic process of navigating such studies can be onerous. Similarly, when community gardeners or urban farmers want to establish their growing spaces, the time that bioremediation takes can be a deterrent. Bioremediation would be a useful practice if sites could be identified for remediation years in advance of their desired use as food production spaces. Regenerative agriculture, while an excellent practice for rebuilding agricultural soil health, is not practically possible in urban areas because it requires significant animal

husbandry (e.g., sheep, goats, pigs, cows) at a scale that is typically not allowable under city zoning ordinances.

Since testing on city-owned land is not likely to be an effective approach for reasons outlined above, a more effective approach would be to follow the model of other cities that have adopted USEPA's Raised Bed Method Best Practice for food production in urban soils.

## Land Access

The Land Access Team was comprised of Alison Volk, Land Protection Projects Director for the American Farmland Trust, with expertise in farmland preservation; Mark Voss, a real estate change agent with expertise in urban agriculture; and Yimmuj Yang, Community Director of Groundswell Conservancy, a nonprofit organization that supports small farmers. This team focused on identifying strategies for ensuring continuous and equitable access to farmland, particularly for growers from underserved communities seeking to generate an income from the production of food and fiber.

### City-Owned Land

The City of Madison currently leases approximately 200 acres of farmland. Considering many market growers are looking for 1-5 acres of land, city-owned agricultural parcels could support numerous food producers. Currently, however, the process for leasing this land is not transparent or accessible to emerging farmers. There is no call for proposals and no way to learn when land is available for leasing. The land that is leased is currently operated by commodity growers and the leases are typically only one to two years in length.

### Permanent Protection

The City does not have a mechanism for permanently protecting the current supply of agricultural land. Within city limits, permanent protection is typically achieved through the purchase of agricultural conservation easements. The purchase of easements compensates landowners for removing their development rights. This reduces the future purchase price of the land making the land more affordable for future farmers. Easements also provide retiring farmers with an alternative to selling their land for development. The state currently has a program in which it provides funding for the purchase of agricultural conservation easements, however this program has not been funded since 2011.

### Agricommunities

The protection of agricultural land is often considered at odds with the need for affordable housing. However, growers within the city who cannot afford to purchase land are often in search of growing spaces close to where they live. Agricommunities balance the need for affordable housing with available agricultural land. These are typically areas where land has been set aside for agricultural use next to affordable housing developments. These are also complex projects that depend on partnerships between conservation organizations, community land trusts, and community organizations invested in food and agriculture.

In Madison, the only example of an agricomunity is Troy Gardens, which is owned by Madison Area Community Land Trust (MACLT) and farmed by Rooted under a ground lease. Based on conversations with Greg Rosenberg and Olivia Williams of MACLT, the city has been verbally supportive of agricomunities and community land trusts, however there is little funding available to expand these projects to other neighborhoods or communities. There is also a lack of fluency among developers for crafting these projects and navigating city regulations.

## Conclusions & Recommendations

The competition for farmland in Madison, which is some of the best in Dane County, is fierce. Emerging farmers desiring to grow food for local markets must compete for land with larger operators growing commodity crops for national and export markets as well as developers seeking to convert the land out of agricultural use. Meanwhile, consumer demand for locally produced food remains strong.

The City of Madison currently owns and leases approximately 200 acres of farmland that could be utilized by market growers who are looking for 1-5 acres of land, thereby supporting numerous local food producers. In situations where farmers are looking to sell their property to provide retirement income, more needs to be done to permanently protect that land for food production; this could include the purchase of agricultural conservation easements to both keep the land for food production and make the land more affordable for future farmers. The obvious win-win scenario for the direct competition between development and food production is to identify locations for “agricommunities” that can be designed to both provide housing and support urban agriculture. These solutions will require collaboration among and between City staff that has been made more difficult with lack of a Food Policy Director to coordinate departments, boards, commissions, committees, and community partners on food policy efforts.

It is also important to note that other communities have developed approaches that are worth understanding and could be adapted to address Madison’s stated needs and values. When creating guidelines to help decision-makers balance the desire for urban agriculture with the demand for development of buildings, it is important to fairly value the health, economic, and ecosystem services contributions to the community made by acres within municipal boundaries that are protected for food production.

## Recommendations

The Task Force developed 43 recommendations in 4 topic areas: Land Use Planning, Staffing & Task Forces, Land Leasing & Soil Contamination, and Zoning & Land Use, a summary of which are provided here.

### Land Use Planning

- Comprehensive Plan (2018) should be amended, or updated, to note important contributions of agriculture in cities, noting the range of activities (community & market gardens), equitable access to land and jobs, community food system and climate resilience

- Parks & Open Space Plan update (beginning in 2023) should require pro-active planning for food production on city-owned lands, ranging from community to market gardens, and coordinate with the Office of Real Estate on revising leases accordingly.
- Area Planning Processes should include urban agriculture and food access issues when conducting public input sessions and developing the 12 city sector plans.

## Staffing and Task Forces

- Food Policy Director position (created in 2012, de-funded in 2020) should be restored to:
  - Represent the City at national and international food policy gatherings
  - Serve as a liaison among and between City Departments on food issues
  - Serve as link to City supports for urban growers
  - Create a comprehensive website to provide public information on food issues
  - Coordinate the implementation of food-related issues in the Comprehensive Plan
- Re-convene the Integrated Pest Management Policy Task Force (est. 2018)

## City Land Leasing and Soil Contamination

- Common Council approve a resolution implementing recommendations in the January 2022 “Ag Leases Memo” from the Madison Food Policy Council RAFS Work Group
  - Revise lease terms and duration to match Wis. Stat. Ch. 51
  - Create an RFP process to advertise and make leases available to a wider range of farmers, especially from historically disadvantaged and marginalized communities
  - Time the process to allow for multi-year planning by farmers
  - Extend leases up to 15 years depending on future use factors
  - Prioritize leasing to growers, especially those from historically disadvantaged and marginalized communities, for local markets
- Continue to partner with local organizations to allow for multiple growers on a single site
- Consider ground leases to allow growers to build equity
- Adopt USEPA Raised Bed Method as a best practice for growing on urban soils
- Direct SEED Grant funding toward new farm infrastructure costs, prioritizing historically disadvantaged and marginalized populations

## Zoning & Land Use

- Review to identify impediments to locating urban agriculture near housing
- Incentivize development of “agri-communities” by providing bonuses for projects that combine housing with protection of farmland
- Amend the LandBanking Policy to “welcome urban agriculture”
- Define and illustrate the appropriate “code path” for building hoop houses

## Appendices\*

\*For final version we will have to make pdfs of all the documents and then merge them.

DRAFT Task Force on Farmland Preservation Recommendations Implementation Matrix

Topic	#	Recommendation	Responsible Staff (BCC)	Timeframe
Land Use Planning	1	Revise the following sections in the Comp Plan or include these items in the 2025 update:	Planning (Plan Commission)	Medium 6-24 months
Land Use Planning	1.1	Introductory narrative of Chapter 2 should note contributions of agriculture in cities	Planning (Plan Commission)	Medium 6-24 months
Land Use Planning	1.2	Address urban agriculture more broadly in Goal 4	Planning (Plan Commission)	Medium 6-24 months
Land Use Planning	1.3	Introductory text of Chapter 8 should include market gardens and farmland so that readers and implementers recognize the role of urban agriculture in Goals 21, 23, and 24	Planning (Plan Commission)	Medium 6-24 months
Land Use Planning	2	Parks Division should proactively plan for urban agriculture and add urban agriculture goals in the next Parks and Open Space Plan	Parks (Parks Commission)	Medium 6-24 months
Land Use Planning	3	Area Planning Processes should include urban agriculture and food access issues when conducting public input sessions and developing the 12 city sector plans.	Planning (Plan Commission)	Ongoing
Land Use Planning	4	Implement food-related Comp Plan Goals & Strategies:		
Land Use Planning	4.1	<u>Land Use: Strategy 6</u> - Facilitate compact growth to reduce the development of farmland.	Planning (Plan Commission)	Ongoing
Land Use Planning	4.2	<u>Neighborhoods: Strategy 8</u> - Ensure access to food that is affordable, nutritious and culturally specific. Identify public and private spaces suitable for community gardens and explore expansion of existing gardens to meet demand.	Planning, Food Policy Director, Parks (Parks Commission, Madison Food Policy Council)	Ongoing
Land Use Planning	4.3	<u>Economy &amp; Opportunity: Strategy 7</u> - Support efforts for businesses and consumers to produce and buy local food, products and services. Foster a Northside Food Innovation District. Recognize the contribution of urban agriculture to the local economy.	Food Policy Director, Economic Development (Economic Development Committee, Madison Food Policy Council)	Ongoing
Land Use Planning	4.4	<u>Culture &amp; Character: Strategy 3</u> - Create safe and affirming community spaces that bring people together and provide social outlets for underrepresented groups. Identify existing underutilized spaces, both public and private, and help increase their usage and activation.	Planning, Community Development, Parks, Food Policy Director (Parks Commission, Madison Food Policy Council)	Ongoing
Land Use Planning	4.5	<u>Green &amp; Resilient: Strategy 9</u> - Support sustainable farming and gardening practices that protect the ecosystem and public health. Identify opportunities for local food production within the city. Recognize the contribution of farmland to climate resiliency goals.	Food Policy Director, Sustainability & Resilience Manager (Madison Food Policy Council, Sustainable Madison Committee)	Ongoing
Land Use Planning	4.6	<u>Effective Government: Strategy 1</u> - Pursue regional solutions to regional issues. Work with Dane County and other municipalities to develop a regional food systems plan.	Food Policy Director, Planning, Public Health (Madison Food Policy Council)	Medium 6-24 months
Land Use Planning	5	Balance the desire for building development with the need for farmland preservation in the 2025-2028 Comp Plan update.	Planning (Plan Commission)	Long 24+ months
Land Use Planning	6	Revise the the following strategies in the City's Sustainability Plan to integrate and explicitly support agricomunity development:	Sustainability & Resilience Manager (Sustainable Madison Committee)	Short 0-6 months
Land Use Planning	6.1	Strategy 1: Agricomunity development strengthens local food systems.	Sustainability & Resilience Manager (Sustainable Madison Committee)	Short 0-6 months

DRAFT Task Force on Farmland Preservation Recommendations Implementation Matrix

Topic	#	Recommendation	Responsible Staff (BCC)	Timeframe
Land Use Planning	6.2	Strategy 3: A working farm, as a development amenity, can be a community hub of interaction and belonging centered around food.	Sustainability & Resilience Manager (Sustainable Madison Committee)	Short 0-6 months
Land Use Planning	6.3	Strategy 6: By concentrating housing in pocket neighborhoods, agricomunities facilitate interaction between residents while also providing them with access to open spaces where community food growing is prioritized.	Sustainability & Resilience Manager (Sustainable Madison Committee)	Short 0-6 months
Land Use Planning	6.4	Strategy 7: Support new development of neighborhoods that integrate food growing businesses, including working farms, market gardens, small scale plant nurseries, etc.	Sustainability & Resilience Manager (Sustainable Madison Committee)	Short 0-6 months
Land Use Planning	6.5	Strategy 8: Encourage housing developments that integrate working farms and associated business infrastructure.	Sustainability & Resilience Manager (Sustainable Madison Committee)	Short 0-6 months
Land Use Planning	6.6	Strategy 9: Agricomunities are a key component of a robust urban agriculture policy that preserves farmland as development pressure continues.	Sustainability & Resilience Manager (Sustainable Madison Committee)	Short 0-6 months
Staffing & Task Forces	1	Restore funding for the Food Policy Director position to:	Mayor & Common Council	Medium 6-24 months
Staffing & Task Forces	1.1	Inform planning processes and city reports, and be responsible for liaising with other internal and external partners to implement recommendations that support urban agriculture, food access and food waste recovery activities.	Food Policy Director (Madison Food Policy Council)	Medium 6-24 months
Staffing & Task Forces	1.2	Represent Madison as one of the 14 US signatories to the Milan Urban Food Policy Pact, which the City of Madison signed in 2018.	Food Policy Director (Madison Food Policy Council)	Medium 6-24 months
Staffing & Task Forces	1.3	Serve as the point person in the city for potential urban market growers.	Food Policy Director (Madison Food Policy Council)	Medium 6-24 months
Staffing & Task Forces	1.4	Oversee the creation of a comprehensive website that provides public information about all aspects of food policy in the city, including information about agriculture land leases and city permissions needed for urban agriculture and associated activities.	Food Policy Director (Madison Food Policy Council)	Medium 6-24 months
Staffing & Task Forces	1.5	Coordinate implementation of food-related elements of the Comp Plan.	Food Policy Director (Madison Food Policy Council)	Medium 6-24 months
Staffing & Task Forces	2	Reconvene the Integrated Pest Management Policy Task Force to complete its work.	Food Policy Director, Engineering, Public Health, Parks, Water Utility, Community Development Authority (Madison Food Policy Council)	Short 0-6 months
Land Leasing & Soil Contamination	1	Create and adopt a resolution to implement the recommendations in the Ag Leases Policy memo	Mayor & Common Council	Short 0-6 months
Land Leasing & Soil Contamination	2	Revise standard agricultural land lease language to comply with Wis. Stat. Ch. 51 and extend leases for up to 15 yrs	Economic Development, Real Estate	Short 0-6 months
Land Leasing & Soil Contamination	3	Create an inventory of city-owned lands that can be reserved for urban agriculture	Economic Development, Real Estate	Short 0-6 months

DRAFT Task Force on Farmland Preservation Recommendations Implementation Matrix

Topic	#	Recommendation	Responsible Staff (BCC)	Timeframe
Land Leasing & Soil Contamination	4	Develop and implement a transparent process for growers to become aware of and access city-owned land	Economic Development, Real Estate	Short 0-6 months
Land Leasing & Soil Contamination	4.1	Create an RFP to lease city-owned land with clear guidelines, timelines, and evaluation criteria. RFP should not be onerous for growers and should be advertised broadly, and made available in multiple languages and formats. Timing of RFP should be in September/October with decisions made by the end of the year so that growers have sufficient time to plan for upcoming season	Economic Development, Real Estate (Madison Food Policy Council)	Short 0-6 months
Land Leasing & Soil Contamination	4.2	Prioritize leasing land to farmers producing food for local markets	Economic Development, Real Estate	Short 0-6 months
Land Leasing & Soil Contamination	4.3	Provide publicly accessible evaluation of the land involved in each lease that takes into consideration location, future use, soils, slopes, and timing	Economic Development, Real Estate (Madison Food Policy Council)	Medium 6-24 months
Land Leasing & Soil Contamination	5	Continue to partner with local organizations to allow for multiple growers to utilize city-owned parcels. Sign long-term leases with farmer-oriented/conservation organization that could sublease plots to growers for producing food	Economic Development, Real Estate (Madison Food Policy Council)	Ongoing
Land Leasing & Soil Contamination	6	Consider ground leases on city-owned land to allow growers to build some equity through investment in and ownership of infrastructure.	Economic Development, Real Estate (Madison Food Policy Council)	Medium 6-24 months
Land Leasing & Soil Contamination	7	Adopt the USEPA Raised Bed Method as a required best practice for urban farming on City-owned land. Recommend, but do not require, this Best Practice Method for all growing in urban soils.	Building Inspection, various departments that own land	Medium 6-24 months
Land Leasing & Soil Contamination	8	Direct SEED grant funding each year toward new farm start-up infrastructure costs, prioritizing Black, Hmong, Indigenous, Latinx, and other historically disadvantaged or marginalized urban farmers.	Economic Development, Real Estate (Madison Food Policy Council)	Ongoing
Zoning & Land Use	1	Review current zoning ordinances and rules to identify restrictions that would prevent or prohibit urban agriculture activities being located adjacent to housing.	Building Inspection & Zoning (Madison Food Policy Council)	Medium 6-24 months
Zoning & Land Use	2	Incentivize the development of agricomunities by creating density and other bonuses for projects that both cluster housing and protect farmland for urban agriculture.	Planning (Plan Commission)	Ongoing
Zoning & Land Use	3	Amend and adopt Land Banking Policy to include the following language under section 2. Priorities for Use of Land Banked Property: "The City welcomes urban agriculture as a secondary use alongside the priorities noted above. Urban agriculture could take the form of community and market gardens, greenhouses and hoop houses, vertical farming, and similar urban agriculture initiatives."	Economic Development, Mayor, Common Council	Short 0-6 months
Zoning & Land Use	4	Define and illustrate the appropriate "code path" for building hoop houses.	Building Inspection, Zoning (Madison Food Policy Council)	Short 0-6 months