

## Policy Guide on Community and Regional Food Planning

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### INTRODUCTION

Food is a sustaining and enduring necessity. Yet among the basic essentials for life — air, water, shelter, and food — only food has been absent over the years as a focus of serious professional planning interest. This is a puzzling omission because, as a discipline, planning marks its distinctiveness by being comprehensive in scope and attentive to the temporal dimensions and spatial interconnections among important facets of community life.

Several reasons explain why planners have paid less attention to food issues when compared with long-standing planning topics such as economic development, transportation, the environment, and housing. Among these reasons are:

1. a view that the food system — representing the flow of products from production, through processing, distribution, consumption, and the management of wastes, and associated processes — only indirectly touches on the built environment, a principal focus of planning's interest;
2. a sense that the food system isn't broken, so why fix it; and,
3. a perception that the food system meets neither of two important conditions under which planners act — i.e., dealing with public goods like air and water; and planning for services and facilities in which the private sector is unwilling to invest, such as public transit, sewers, highways, and parks.

Yet, over the last few years, interest in food system issues is clearly on the rise in the planning community. In 2005 at the APA National Planning Conference in San Francisco, a special track of sessions on food planning subjects was held for the first time in APA's history. An unexpectedly high number of 80 planners responded to the call for papers for this track. In 2006, a follow-up track of sessions took place at the San Antonio APA conference. Special journal issues devoted entirely to food planning have included the *Journal of Planning Education and Research* (Summer 2004) and *Progressive Planning* (Winter 2004). Courses on community food planning are being offered for the first time by several graduate planning programs. Another sign of progress was a white paper on food planning prepared in late 2005 and presented to the Delegates Assembly at the 2006 APA conference. Approved subsequently by the APA Legislative and Policy Committee, the white paper became the impetus for preparing this Policy Guide, which provides a vision and suggests ways for planners to become engaged in community and regional food planning.

The following are a few converging factors that explain the heightened awareness among planners that the food system is indeed significant:

- Recognition that food system activities take up a significant amount of urban and regional land
- Awareness that planners can play a role to help reduce the rising incidence of hunger on the one hand, and obesity on the other
- Understanding that the food system represents an important part of community and regional economies
- Awareness that the food Americans eat takes a considerable amount of fossil fuel energy to produce, process, transport, and dispose of
- Understanding that farmland in metropolitan areas, and therefore the capacity to produce food for local and regional markets, is being lost at a strong pace
- Understanding that pollution of ground and surface water, caused by the overuse of chemical fertilizers and pesticides in agriculture adversely affects drinking water supplies

- Awareness that access to healthy foods in low-income areas is an increasing problem for which urban agriculture can offer an important solution
- Recognition that many benefits emerge from stronger community and regional food systems

Current planning activities already affect the food system and its links with communities and regions. For example, land use planners may use growth management strategies to preserve farm and ranch land, or recommend commercial districts where restaurants and grocery stores are located, or suggest policies to encourage community gardens and other ways of growing food in communities. Economic development planners may support the revitalization of main streets with traditional mom-and-pop grocery stores, or devise strategies to attract food processing plants to industrial zones. Transportation planners may create transit routes connecting low-income neighborhoods with supermarkets, and environmental planners may provide guidance to farmers to avoid adverse impacts on lakes and rivers. This policy guide seeks to strengthen connections between traditional planning and the emerging field of community and regional food planning. As such, two overarching goals are offered for planners:

1. Help build stronger, sustainable, and more self-reliant community and regional food systems, and,
2. Suggest ways the industrial food system may interact with communities and regions to enhance benefits such as economic vitality, public health, ecological sustainability, social equity, and cultural diversity.

This Policy Guide on community and regional food planning presents seven general policies, each divided into several specific policies. For each specific policy, a number of roles planners can play are suggested. The seven general policies are:

1. Support comprehensive food planning process at the community and regional levels;
2. Support strengthening the local and regional economy by promoting local and regional food systems;
3. Support food systems that improve the health of the region's residents;
4. Support food systems that are ecologically sustainable;
5. Support food systems that are equitable and just;
6. Support food systems that preserve and sustain diverse traditional food cultures of Native American and other ethnic minority communities;
7. Support the development of state and federal legislation to facilitate community and regional food planning discussed in general policies #1 through #6.

## **FINDINGS**

How planning operates to balance the need for an efficient food system with the goals of economic vitality, public health, ecological sustainability, social equity, and cultural diversity will present a formidable challenge to planners who engage in community and regional food planning, and in planning for various community sectors such as transportation, economic development and the environment. This section covers salient facts and trends about how the food system impacts localities and regions and provides some examples of progress being made by planners.

### **1. General Effects of the Food System on Local and Regional Areas**

Today's industrial food system is a product of significant scientific and institutional advances over the previous centuries, and generally provides an abundant and safe supply of food to most people in the country. It has paralleled developments in mass production and economies of scale in other industries and is characterized by the use of significant amounts of synthetic fertilizers and pesticides, and new shipping technologies. It contributes nearly \$1 trillion to the national economy — or more than 13 percent of the GNP — and employs 17 percent of the labor force (American Farmland Trust, 2003). Food sector jobs represent close to 15 percent of the total workforce of many communities, while retail sales from food outlets such as grocery stores and eating and drinking places can be as much as a fifth of a community's total retail sales (Pothukuchi and Kaufman, 1999).

However, the food system is not without problems for communities and regions. A clear trend in all parts of the food system is greater concentration of ownership, which means that decisions affecting communities are increasingly made by absentee business owners. For example, in 2000,

the top five food retailers accounted for 43 percent of sales, up from 24 percent in 1997 (Hendrickson et al., 2001). Mergers of chain supermarkets often result in the closure of stores, thereby reducing residents' access to healthy food, and lowered tax base and employment. Another trend, vertical integration, leads to increased consolidation of different activities such as food production, processing, and distribution under the control of single entities.

Today's food system has also contributed to the increased incidence of obesity and diet-related disease; loss and erosion of diverse culinary traditions represented by First Nations and immigrant cultures; and ecological crises including extinction of species, declining aquifers, and deforestation. Government policies sometimes exacerbate these trends due to the increasing political influence of food industry giants.

While there is little doubt that the industrial food system will remain dominant, more communities and regions are acting to resolve some of these problems by developing alternative, local, and sustainable food systems. This Policy Guide offers suggestions for planners to engage in planning that both strengthens community and regional food systems and encourages the industrial food system to provide multiple benefits to local areas.

Specific trends related to the food system's impacts on localities and regions, and examples of positive actions are described below.

- **Loss of Farmland.** Although agriculture is America's dominant land use, with nearly 1 billion acres of land in agricultural use, farmland in metropolitan areas is disappearing at a rapid pace. "Urban-influenced" counties account for more than half (56 percent) the total U.S. farm production, 63 percent of dairy production, and 86 percent of fruit and vegetable production; yet these counties have annual population growth rates more than twice the national average. This rapid growth threatens our capacity to obtain fresh and local food. (American Farmland Trust, 2002).
- **Aging of Farmers.** One fourth of U.S. farmers and half of farm landlords are at least 65 years old; by comparison, about 3 percent of the U.S. labor force falls in this age group (Gale, 2002). Farmers and landlords aged 65 and over own a combined one-third of farm assets. The aging of farmers reflects the weakening of "family farm" institutions, including intergenerational transfer of farm assets. Consequences with implications for planning include the speeding up of the conversion of agricultural land and the consolidation of agricultural land into larger operations.
- **Protecting Agriculture.** Across the country communities are preparing plans to protect agriculture. A countywide plan in Marin County, California, identifies several policies to overcome challenges facing local agriculture and farmers. These include policies to protect agricultural land from sprawl, protect productive agricultural soils, support sustainable water supplies, and enhance agricultural viability.
- **Farm Bill and Local Areas.** All Titles of the Farm Bill, including nutrition programs, commodity programs, trade, conservation, and rural development, have implications for urban and rural communities and therefore for local planning. For example, as Dallas County, Iowa, urbanizes, its county soil and water conservation district and the Natural Resources Conservation Service of the USDA now work with developers to employ land conservation measures and keep soil on construction sites (USDA Natural Resources Conservation Service, no date).

## 2. Food System Links with the Economy

- **Globalization of the Food System.** Increasingly, food comes from more distant sources, with serious consequences such as the loss of older local food system infrastructure, and threats to the survival of many U.S. farms. Although the U.S. rightfully prides itself as the breadbasket of the world, in 2006 for the first time, the value of food imported into the U.S. exceeded the value of food exported from the U.S. (USDA Foreign Agricultural Service, 2006). Globalization also leads to greater consumer ignorance about the sources of food. As people know less and less of where their food comes from, how it is produced and with what impacts on communities and the environment, preservation of land and the natural and built resources upon which local agriculture depends becomes more difficult.
- **Rural Decline.** Farms between 50-500 acres and 500-1,000 acres, the largest share of "working farms" and those that fall between local and commodity markets, decreased by about 7 and 11 percent respectively between 1997 and 2002, while those over 2,000 acres have gone up nearly 5 percent. This loss of "the middle" in farming threatens rural

communities by making them more economically insecure and changes land stewardship practices handed down over generations. (Kirschenmann et al., no date).

- **Economic Impacts of Local Purchasing.** Robert Waldrop, a 2006 candidate for mayor of Oklahoma City, highlights the under-appreciated economic development possibilities of buying food directly from area farmers. Using USDA data and analyses, he identifies \$2.1 billion in economic activity in Central Oklahoma if Oklahoma County residents bought their eggs, poultry, meat, vegetables, flour, and milk and dairy products directly from farmers in the region.
- **A Local Food Purchasing Policy.** In 2006, the Woodbury County (Iowa) Board of Supervisors adopted a "Local Food Purchase Policy," mandating the purchase of locally grown organic food for department events at which food is served. This action has the potential of providing \$281,000 in annual food purchases to a local farmer-owned cooperative.

### 3. Food System Links with Health

- **Farm Policy and Health.** Federal farm policy since the 1950s has encouraged the overproduction (and therefore the driving down of prices) of a few commodities such as corn and soybeans, all with serious implications for farmers, rural and urban communities, and the health of consumers. Support for fruits and vegetables, on the other hand, has been low (Nestle, 2002). Low commodity prices have led to the heavy use by the food industry of products such as high fructose corn syrup and hydrogenated vegetable oils, which are linked with obesity and related illnesses. Processed grocery foods, frozen foods and baked goods represented over 40 percent of supermarket sales in 2000, while produce claimed only 9 percent (Schoonover and Muller, 2006).
- **Obesity.** Obesity and associated costs are a significant concern nationwide. While over 60 percent of Americans are overweight or obese, the effects of obesity are not borne equally across race and socio-economic strata, or even states and localities, thereby generating unequal burden. Similarly, many diet related diseases, such as heart disease, certain cancers, and diabetes are found to be more prevalent among minority populations. In 2000, nearly 16 percent of children and adolescents, ages 6 to 19, were classified as obese (Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, 2002.).
- **Obesity and the Built Environment.** Land use and transportation policies have been implicated in the rise of obesity through both, increased food consumption and reduced physical activity. Research suggests lower rates of obesity and overweight in neighborhoods where supermarkets offering more healthful food choices are present (Morland et al., 2006). This access is not even however: low income and minority areas contain fewer supermarkets on average; these areas also tend to have a higher density of convenience stores offering fewer healthful choices and higher prices, and fast food outlets (Morland et al., 2002). Because these communities experience lower vehicle ownership rates, problems of access are exacerbated.

### 4. Food System Links with Ecological Systems

- **Energy Consumption in the Food System.** At roughly eight calories of energy to produce one typical food calorie, today's food system is both energy-intensive and inefficient. The average food item travels at least 1500 miles. According to Thomas Starrs (2005), growing, processing and delivering the food consumed by a family of four each year requires more than 930 gallons of gasoline or about the same amount used to fuel the family's cars.
- **Water Issues in Agriculture.** Sedimentation and chemical pollutants resulting from agricultural practices continue to pose serious problems for fisheries, other wildlife, water-based recreation, and household water use. The Dead Zone in the Gulf of Mexico is one of the largest such examples of depletion of oxygen caused largely by farm runoffs. In 2005, it covered nearly 5,000 acres (National Aeronautics and Space Administration, 2004). In addition, U.S. agriculture is an especially prolific consumer of surface and ground water. For example, 38 percent of irrigation water in California and 66 percent in Texas are pumped from ground water (Pimental et al., 1997).
- **Concentrated Animal Feeding Operations (CAFOs).** CAFOs are agricultural facilities that house and feed a large number of animals in a confined area for 45 days or more during any 12 month period. In 2003, CAFOs, a small percentage of the nation's 238,000 feeding operations, produced more than half the 500 million tons of manure, according to the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, no date). Health threats from such operations include chronic and acute respiratory illnesses,

injuries, infections, and nuisances such as flies, and odor (Bowman et al., 2000). CAFOs are also implicated in spreading stronger strains of E. coli bacteria and environmental problems such as ground water contamination. An emerging and promising method to reduce odors and generate renewable energy from livestock manure in CAFOs is anaerobic digestion (Wilkie, 2005).

- **Loss of Biodiversity.** Across the country, native vegetation (forests, prairie, wetlands) which provides wildlife habitat and performs valuable ecosystem services such as flood control has been depleted or seriously threatened. In Illinois, for example, over 90 percent of all natural wetlands have been lost, the majority to agricultural production. According to noted ecologist Gary Nabhan, the U.S. has lost over 60 percent of all the heirloom crop varieties that were here at the time of Columbus's arrival to the New World; the other 40 percent remains below the radar of the food industry (Mangan, 2006).
- **Fisheries.** In fisheries across North America, the needs of consumers and the long-term sustainability of fishery populations have fallen out of balance due to over-fishing or habitat loss or degradation. Fish populations of haddock, Atlantic cod, red snapper, Pacific herring, Pacific halibut, salmon, and king crab have seen significant declines (American Fisheries Society, no date).
- **Food system wastes.** Wastes at each point of the food system use up local landfill capacity, or if incinerated, increase air pollution. One study showed that nearly 30 percent of all solid wastes are related to food consumption, with half of that being food packaging (University of Wisconsin Department of Urban and Regional Planning, 1997). Natural organic wastes may be a valuable input for agriculture if they can be separated from the waste stream. Such wastes can be fed to hogs, composted and reapplied to the land, or converted into renewable energy through anaerobic digesters.

## 5. Food System and Social Equity

- **Hunger and food insecurity.** Hunger and food insecurity are prevalent in the United States. The U.S. Department of Agriculture's Economic Research Service (2006) reports that in 2005, 11 percent of all U.S. households were "food insecure" because of a lack of sufficient food. Black (22.4 percent) and Hispanic (17.9 percent) households experienced food insecurity at far higher rates than the national average.
- **Emergency food assistance.** In 2003-04, requests for emergency food assistance increased by about 14 percent in the 27 cities surveyed by the U.S. Conference of Mayors (2004). About 20 percent of the demand for food went unmet. Fifty-six percent of those requesting assistance represented families with children; 34 percent of adults requesting assistance were employed.
- **Food Stamps.** In 2003, 21.2 million individuals participated in the Food Stamp Program; however, this represented only 60 percent of people eligible to receive Food Stamp benefits. The average monthly food stamp benefit was \$83.77 per person (Food Research and Action Center, no date).
- **Supermarket initiative.** Research documents lower availability of grocery supermarkets in low-income areas. In Rochester, NY, planners worked with neighborhood groups to bring a Tops Supermarket to the Upper Falls area, a neighborhood that had long gone without a grocery store. As a result of their negotiations, Tops agreed to renovate three other stores in the city, thereby increasing access to a variety of affordable and healthful food choices (Pothukuchi, 2005).
- **Vacant urban land for growing food.** Inner cities have significant amounts of vacant land that, when used for vegetable gardening by low-income residents, produce multiple health, social, and economic benefits. For example, Detroit has over 60,000 publicly owned vacant parcels, and a vibrant urban agriculture movement that can make productive use of this land, if made available by public agencies that control it (Kaufman and Bailkey, 2000). The Diggable City, a Portland State University graduate planning workshop project prepared for the City of Portland, Oregon, produced a land inventory containing specific sites of publicly owned properties to assess opportunities to expand community gardens and other forms of urban agriculture. This project has educated the community on the significance of urban land as a resource for food production and food security in the inner city (Portland State University, 2005).
- **Immigrants as food sector workers.** The food system's least desirable jobs are worked by immigrants in vegetable harvests, industrial slaughterhouses, and food processing plants. According to the U.S. Farm Bureau, immigrant labor may add up to \$9 billion to the nation's \$200 billion annual agricultural output (Keller, 2006). It is estimated that of the more than 4 million agricultural workers in the U.S., at least two-thirds are immigrants, 80

percent of whom are from Mexico. Because many are undocumented, they typically receive below-minimum wages, experience substandard living conditions, and make up a large portion of the food insecure.

## 6. Native/Ethnic Food Cultures

- **Food issues faced by Native American communities.** Native American communities are hit particularly hard by the loss of or threats to ecologies, habitats, and native food ways that included subsistence agriculture, hunting, fishing, and gathering. As Native Americans were pushed into the dominant food system, the incidence of diet-related disease rose rapidly. Diabetes-related mortality among American Indians is over twice that of the general U.S. population (231 percent). In addition, nearly one-fourth of Native American households are food insecure because of inadequate resources with which to meet daily food needs, with one out of 12 individuals so food insecure as to be classified as hungry (Bell-Sheetter 2004).
- **Native Food Planning.** The Oneida Community Integrated Food Systems, established in 1994, started with a task force to address concerns related to poverty and health on the Oneida reservation. Through their assessment of food-related needs and assets, they developed actions to support goals related to increasing employment for Native Americans; educating community members about healthy foods and diets; and producing meats, fruits, and vegetables for both, food security and increased profits.
- **Ethnic Cuisines.** Although Mexican, Italian, and Cantonese-Chinese cuisines are the most sought after dining-out ethnic choices, newer cuisines are gaining a foothold. According to an "Ethnic Cuisines" survey by the National Restaurant Association, Hunan, Mandarin and Szechwan variations of Chinese cuisines, German, French, Greek, Cajun/Creole, Japanese (including sushi), Asian Indian, Soul Food, Scandinavian, Caribbean and Spanish cuisines have been tried by more than 70 percent of the diners. Between 1981 and 1996, consumer awareness of Asian Indian cuisine jumped 74 percent (National Restaurant Association, 2000).
- **Locally Sourced Ethnic Foods.** Ethnic foods are part of the \$25 billion specialty food industry, whose sales jumped 16 percent between 2002 and 2004. Farmers across the country are finding profit in this trend. For example, some Pennsylvania and Maryland farmers are growing n'goyo and gboma — West African vegetables — Thai eggplants, Jamaican Callalou, and Halal lamb products desired by Muslim residents (Paley, 2005).

## 7. Comprehensive Food Planning and Policy

- **Food Policy Councils.** Over 35 local and state food policy councils have been established in North America in the past 10 years. Broadly representative of groups in the local and regional food system, and affiliated with either city, county, or state governments, these institutions work to strengthen local and regional food systems, among other goals.
- **Community-based Food Projects.** USDA's Community Food Projects Competitive Grants Program, now in its 10th year, is an important source of funding for food projects that serve low income communities. Currently authorized at the level of \$5 million a year, the program has been expanded to encourage more comprehensive food planning. A Farm to Cafeteria legislation was recently enacted but no money was appropriated to implement it. Programs related to the Farmers Market Nutrition Program (Farmers Market WIC) and the Senior Farmers Market Nutrition Program are also important to local communities.

## GENERAL AND SPECIFIC POLICIES

The American Planning Association, its chapters and divisions, and planners in general can use their professional knowledge, skills, and relationships to develop community and regional food planning, and advocate for state and federal policies to support it.

The seven general policies below, accompanied by specific policies and planner roles, suggest concrete ways in which food issues may be woven into current planning activities, and more systematic, comprehensive community and regional food planning may be undertaken.

This Policy Guide links to several Policy Guides previously adopted by the APA, among them sustainability, smart growth, energy, water resources management, solid and hazardous waste management, housing, and farmland preservation. In some of these Policy Guides, elements of the food system are specifically recognized. In others, even though not mentioned, they have a

place.

Some common planning themes thread through all policies and are therefore not identified separately under each general policy (unless they are especially crucial):

1. The importance of community participation in all aspects of planning;
2. The usefulness to all general policies of common planning activities in research, plan-making, plan-implementation, conflict resolution, and consensus building;
3. Recognition that all planning occurs in a political context and that political support may be garnered more easily for some issues than others;
4. The existence of tensions between and among general policies, which will require dialogue among stakeholders in particular communities and regions to resolve.

### **General Policy #1**

**The American Planning Association, its Chapters and Divisions, and planners support a comprehensive food planning process at the community and regional levels.**

**Specific Policy #1A.** Planners support the creation of local and regional food planning mechanisms that integrate major local planning functions (such as land use, economic development, transportation, environment, parks and recreation, public safety, health and human services, and agricultural preservation).

#### *Reason to support*

Multiple and complex links exist among food system activities and between food and planning activities such as land use, transportation, and economic development planning. Community concerns about health, economic development, ecological sustainability, social equity, and cultural diversity are also intricately linked to food system issues and to each other. Achieving community-food objectives will require collaborations between groups representing diverse interests such as anti-hunger, nutrition, farming, and environmental issues; span separate government agencies; and include multiple levels of government in dialogues.

Planners could play the following roles:

1. Advocate for, and build support in communities and regions for a more comprehensive approach to food planning, such as through local and/or regional food policy councils or coalitions.
2. Undertake periodic assessments of community/regional food issues, including broad community participation, and develop recommendations for actions.
3. Integrate recommendations emerging from community and regional food planning into comprehensive plans and supporting ordinances, strategic plans, economic development plans, environmental plans, neighborhood or area plans, and plans for specific agencies such as transportation and parks and recreation.
4. Assist nonprofit agencies and public-private-nonprofit partnerships engaged in anti-hunger, nutrition, and agriculture activities by sharing data for planning, implementing, and evaluating programs.

**Specific Policy #1B. Planners support the development of plans for building local food reserves and related activities to prepare for emergencies.**

#### *Reason to support*

Because of the important roles planners play in recommending proposals for the future of their communities, they have the skills and knowledge to also contribute to planning for emergencies and crises — natural or man-made. Due to recent concerns of homeland security and natural disasters such as Hurricane Katrina, and potential threats associated with bioterrorism, climate change, disruptions in transportation systems, and pandemics such as the avian flu, communities around the country are undertaking emergency preparedness plans to protect the health of community residents, meet basic needs, and prepare for post-emergency operations. Maintaining food security at household, community, and regional levels during the crisis and recovering food systems in a sustainable manner soon thereafter are central goals of such preparedness.

Planners could play the following roles:

1. Assist in assessing the community and region's potential food needs during emergencies of different kinds (such as a major earthquake, hurricane, terrorist attack, or the spread of contagious disease) and the capacity of current food sources and distribution systems in the community and region.
2. Partner with appropriate public agency and private stakeholder groups to develop appropriate plans to build sufficient local and regional food reserves for emergencies, including related communications, logistics, and transportation infrastructure, and to restore food system integrity and operation after the emergency.
3. Coordinate with other agencies in the implementation of public outreach and education campaigns to inform the community about food related emergency preparedness.

## **General Policy #2**

**The American Planning Association, its Chapters and Divisions, and planners support strengthening the local and regional economy by promoting community and regional food systems.**

**Specific Policy #2A.** Planners support integrating food system elements into urban, rural, and regional economic development plans.

### *Reason to support*

The food sector is a significant, yet under-appreciated part of local and regional economies. The lack of awareness of the economic significance of the food sector is partly due to the sector's fragmentation and the absence of an overall food planning agency or food department in government. Incorporating food issues into economic development analyses and plans assures that the important economic contributions that the food sector makes to communities and regions are preserved and enhanced.

Planners could play the following roles:

1. Support preparation of area-wide economic development plans that incorporate food production, processing, wholesale, retail, and waste management activities as well as consideration of the impacts these activities have on the local and regional economy in terms of jobs, tax and sales revenues, and multiplier effects.
2. Support efforts to raise public awareness of the importance of the food sector to the local and regional economy.

**Specific Policy #2B.** Planners support developing land use planning policies, economic development programs, land taxation, and development regulations to enhance the viability of agriculture in the region (as identified in the APA Agricultural Land Preservation Policy Guide).

### *Reason to support*

In an era of globalization of agricultural commodities, economic viability at the local and regional levels is enhanced by promoting agriculture and food processing for local consumption. In addition to economic viability, planners can help achieve other benefits by taking a comprehensive view of the multiple functions served by rural landscapes adjacent to suburban and urban population centers. They can promote profitable agricultural enterprise farms that preserve resources for future generations while providing significant public goods in the form of beautiful working landscapes, ecological stewardship, and greater awareness and appreciation of the area's agriculture among the general population.

Planners could play the following roles:

1. Conduct assessments of prime agricultural lands that will be affected by current and projected development trends.
2. Analyze factors that support or constrain the viability of agriculture in the region such as high property taxes, access to markets, high cost of capital, and land use regulations that restrict farmers' ability to earn additional income through agri-tourism or farm stands. Special attention in this category may be given to "agriculture of the middle," i.e. farms that fall in between local and commodity markets.
3. Develop or modify policies, regulations, and other tools such as agricultural land preservation zoning, purchase of development rights, transfer of development rights, and partnerships with land



trusts, to protect prime agricultural land.

4. Partner with organizations that promote better understanding of farm life for urban dwellers to reduce the urban/rural divide.

**Specific Policy #2C.** Planners support developing appropriate land use, economic development, transportation and comprehensive planning policies and regulations to promote local and regional markets for foods produced in the region.

*Reason to support*

Planners can help open up more area-wide markets for farmers in the region. Expanding markets for local farmers and processors would not only help them survive economically and preserve unique regional agricultural and food traditions, but also reduce the pressures on some farmers to sell their land for urban development engendered by sprawl. Efforts to combat sprawl would benefit significantly from initiatives to enhance local markets for locally produced and processed foods.

Planners could play the following roles:

1. Develop land use and transportation plans, modify development regulations, and help prepare economic incentive programs to provide accessible and well-serviced sites and other development assistance for year round public markets, farmers' markets, small-scale processing facilities, and distribution centers for foods produced in the region.
2. Prepare comprehensive and neighborhood plans that recognize community gardens and other forms of urban agriculture, farm/garden stands, and farmers' markets as desirable civic uses in neighborhoods, and provide sufficient space, infrastructure, and inter-modal transportation access for such uses. Ensure that zoning barriers to these activities are addressed or removed.
3. Through plans, state and federal agricultural policies and funding, and development regulations, support food production for local consumption, direct marketing by farmers, agri-food tourism, and niche marketing of specialized agricultural products such as wines, cheeses, and cherries.
4. Assemble and implement business enhancement and related incentives to help public institutions such as schools, hospitals, colleges, and government agencies, and private food outlets such as grocery stores and restaurants source foods produced in the region.

**Specific Policy #2D.** Planners support developing food system inventories, economic and market analyses, and evaluation techniques to better understand the economic impact and future potential of local and regional agriculture, food processing, food wholesaling, food retailing and food waste management activities.

*Reason to support*

More accurate metrics are needed to guide community and regional food-related economic development planning in a comprehensive manner, and in a way that considers direct and indirect impacts. The censuses of agriculture and retail and wholesale trades, national surveys, and many forms of local food assessments are used to understand the relationships between the food system and the other sectors of the economy. Differing data-gathering conventions in these categories can make it difficult to measure relationships accurately. Planners can help to bring different data together and provide comprehensive analyses at community and regional levels on a variety of indicators needed to inform food-related economic development planning.

Planners could play the following roles:

1. Support studies that consider the impact on the area-wide economy of locally oriented food production and distribution activities such as farmer's markets, food co-operatives, community supported agriculture farms, local food processing facilities, community gardens, public markets, niche farming enterprises, and other locally sourced food businesses.
2. Undertake studies assessing trends in farm consolidation, including underlying factors, to inform plans to support "agriculture of the middle."
3. Contribute to the preparation of regional food resource guides that identify organizations and businesses that are involved in local and regional food production, processing, and retailing, the better to educate the public and build links between local producers and local consumers.

**Specific Policy #2E.** Planners support initiatives in marketing, technical, and business development assistance for small-scale and women and minority-owned farm, food-processing and food retail enterprises.

### *Reason to support*

A vibrant local economy supports a range of enterprises run by a diverse group of owners and managers. New and transitioning small-scale farm and food enterprises can benefit from programs that provide production training, build marketing connections, teach business and financial planning, and provide other business services. Community organizations exist in many areas to provide these training and assistance programs.

Planners could play the following roles:

1. Collaborate with agricultural and related agencies and other organizations that provide training, technical assistance, and capital to small-scale businesses and businesses owned by women and minorities engaged in farming, food processing, and food retailing operations.
2. Assist efforts to help regional farmers diversify their products, and produce and market organic and other high-value products desired by consumers.
3. Support the development of community kitchens and related infrastructure, food business incubator facilities, and entrepreneurial urban agriculture projects.

### **General Policy #3**

**The American Planning Association, its Chapters and Divisions, and planners support food systems that improve the health of the region's residents.**

**Specific Policy #3A.** Planners support and help develop policies, plans, and regulations in land use, transportation, economic development, and urban design so as to increase access to food sources that offer affordable and culturally appropriate healthful foods. especially for low income households in urban and rural areas.

### *Reason to support*

Research suggests that households' proximity to supermarkets is correlated with positive dietary health. Planning can facilitate the availability of and convenient access to retail grocery outlets. Besides grocery stores, mom-and-pop corner stores, farmers markets, farm stands, ethnic markets, and community vegetable gardens can offer access to healthful foods at low-cost to low-income and ethnic and racial minority households. On the other hand, it should be recognized that sometimes planning decisions can have unintended negative impacts on the development, operation, or use of neighborhood-oriented grocery stores and other food sources that offer healthy, affordable foods; such decisions should be avoided.

Planners could play the following roles:

1. Encourage mixed-use neighborhood design and redevelopment to include small and mid-size grocery stores (e.g., 3,000 to 20,000 square feet), seasonal farmers markets, community-based and government nutrition programs, and open space and related infrastructure for community vegetable gardens to allow residents to grow their own food.
2. Develop area plans and design schemes in ways that encourage safe and convenient pedestrian, bike, transit connections between neighborhoods and the food sources described above.
3. Support transit programs that improve connections between low-mobility neighborhoods on the one hand, and supermarkets, community gardens, food assistance programs such as food pantries and soup kitchens, and health and social service providers on the other, with a view to reducing travel time and enhancing safe and convenient use.
4. On publicly owned lands, such as schoolyards, parks and greenways, and tax-foreclosed properties, support the development of vegetable gardens, edible landscaping, and related infrastructure, and the formation of partnerships with community-based nonprofits serving low-income residents for garden related programs.

**Specific Policy #3B.** Planners develop and support policies, plans, and regulations in land use, transportation, economic development, and urban design to encourage the availability of healthy types of foods associated with reduced risk of or occurrence of obesity and poor nutrition leading to diet-related diseases like diabetes and heart disease (especially in and near schools and other predominantly youth-centered environments.)

### *Reason to support*

Low-income, particularly African American and Hispanic, neighborhoods often have a higher density of convenience stores selling junk food, liquor stores, and fast food outlets relative to full service grocery stores that offer a variety of healthy products. This is correlated with higher rates of diet-related disease and mortality in these communities. Youth in disadvantaged neighborhoods are especially vulnerable to the disproportionate availability of such foods.

Planners could play the following roles

1. Assess and map the availability of fast food restaurants in low income neighborhoods relative to the availability of grocery stores offering healthier food options.
2. Explore the feasibility of zoning changes to limit the development of fast food outlets within a specified radius of schools (say, one-half mile) and other youth-centered facilities such as the local YMCA and YWCA and boys and girls clubs.
3. Explore the possible use of sign controls to prevent billboards that market low nutrient/high calorie foods fast foods and other negative food marketing within a specified radius of schools and other youth-centered facilities.

**Specific Policy #3C.** Planners support, through appropriate land use and zoning, transportation, urban design, and research tools, community-based organizations that develop demand for healthful foods, especially in low-income communities.

*Reason to support*

Activities to promote healthy diets have to address both the supply and demand side of healthy eating. Although supplying healthful foods tends to require greater attention to physical infrastructure and logistics of food product flows, supply and household demand are also closely linked. In neighborhoods lacking healthful options, households often adapt by depending more heavily on fast food outlets and convenience stores located there. Although planners may have few direct roles to play in increasing household demand for better quality foods, their activities in land use, transportation, and community assessment make them important partners to nutrition and health education groups.

Planners could play the following roles:

1. Undertake neighborhood studies related to the siting of health and social service facilities (that may offer food stamps and other nutrition programs) near retail grocery outlets offering nutritious foods.
2. Support the development of temporary farm stands, urban agriculture projects, and community vegetable gardens on school, park, and community center sites, and near public agency offices and nonprofit providers offering health, human and social services.
3. Promote the provision of community gardens, urban agriculture projects, and community kitchens in multifamily and low-income housing projects.
4. Assist programs that encourage youth to consume healthy foods that they are involved in producing, such as through edible schoolyards, after school gardening and snack programs, and food preparation classes.
5. Assemble and implement business-enhancement incentives to encourage partnerships between convenience stores and neighborhood-based nonprofits that encourage stores to offer healthful foods on the one hand, and educate the community to adopt healthy diets, on the other.

**Specific Policy #3D.** Planners support, through land use decisions, environmental monitoring, ecological mitigation, and policies related to working conditions of farm and food workers, food safety practices that ensure consumer health.

*Reason to support*

Recent food contamination scares related to spinach and peanut butter have revealed the possible pathways between land use patterns, agricultural operations, sanitary living and working conditions for farm workers, and food safety practices within processing plants, markets, and stores on the one hand and food safety outcomes and related human health on the other. For example, runoffs from concentrated animal operations have been found to taint spinach with strains of E coli bacteria that proved deadly when raw spinach was consumed. Similarly, the use of sub-clinical doses of antibiotics to speed up animal growth has implications for human health in the form of more powerful and antibiotic-resistant bacteria. Finally, the quality of environments and working conditions for farm and food workers, and specifically, the availability of sanitary facilities near farms, are also an important factor for food safety. A further example relates to the

high speed of meat processing conveyer belts that creates a higher risk of injury to workers and of fecal material entering the meat, both of which pose significant implications for food safety.

Planners could play the following roles:

1. Support land use decisions, environmental monitoring, and ecological mitigation that prevents potential contamination of agriculture and food products through water runoffs from animal operations, provides sanitary living and working conditions for farm and food workers, and otherwise promotes food safety. In supporting these decisions, additional barriers and costs that potentially may be imposed on especially small and limited resource farmers and ranchers may need to be considered and addressed.
2. Support agricultural and food practices that affirmatively and proactively address worker health and safety in ways that also advance food safety.
3. Assess the possible food safety implications of older buildings housing food markets, grocery stores, and food processing operations, with a view to supporting goals related to food safety and business viability, and consider providing incentives to businesses to enhance food safety.

#### **General Policy #4**

**The American Planning Association, its Chapters and Divisions, and planners support food systems that are ecologically sustainable.**

**Specific Policy #4A.** Planners support the creation of community and regional food systems linking production, processing, distribution, consumption, and waste management to facilitate, to the extent possible, reliance on a region's resources to meet local food needs.

##### *Reason to support*

A core principle of sustainability involves meeting basic human needs, such as food, shelter, and water, via renewable sources as spatially proximate to their consumption as possible. Communities that rely on distant food sources are rendered vulnerable to the vagaries of market decisions, transportation infrastructure, and energy prices over which they have little control. Additional benefits to greater regional self-reliance in food include cutbacks in emissions of greenhouse gases from transporting food products; protection of local agriculture; and a greater likelihood that residents' greater connection to their region as a source of sustenance will lead them to care more about the region's resources, protect them, and balance appropriately the priorities for development versus conservation of regional agriculture.

Planners could play the following roles:

1. Encourage conservation of regional agricultural land, open space, and wilderness resources for agriculture and food systems (as identified in the APA Agricultural Land Preservation Policy Guide).
2. Support the creation of marketing networks to bring together farmers, processors, and purchasers of locally grown and produced foods.
3. Support, as relevant with the use of planning tools, the integration in food production and distribution of sustainability principles and practices, which promote clean air, water, healthy soils, and healthy habitats and ecosystems.
4. Provide incentives and special zoning provisions to integrate locally supported agriculture (e.g., community gardens, urban agriculture, small farms) into existing settlements and new areas of residential development.

**Specific Policy #4B.** Planners support food system activities that minimize energy use and waste, and encourage the use of local and renewable energy resources.

##### *Reason to support*

The historic low cost of fossil fuel has led to the development of highly inefficient agriculture and food system practices. As petroleum prices rise, the costs to consumers increase, critically affecting low-income households' efforts to be food-secure. Excessive dependence on a fossil-fuel based economy also has significant implications for homeland security; on the other hand, promoting local and renewable energy resources can enhance security as well as the regional economy.

Planners could play the following roles:

1. Develop regional plans and policies that strengthen markets for the region's food producers so as to reduce long-distance transportation of agricultural products and processed foods.
2. Assist in conducting energy audits to assess amounts and sources of energy used in the region for the production, distribution, and consumption of food. This inventory can identify existing uses of local and sustainable energy resources as well as the potential for expansion in this area.
3. Support as relevant with planning tools, efforts to assess the capacity of regional agriculture for meeting potential energy demands versus regional food needs.
4. Assess the impact of food waste disposal on area landfills and explore possibilities related to recycling food wastes through composting and bio-fuel development.

**Specific Policy #4C.** Planners support efforts to assess and mitigate the negative environmental and ecological effects caused by and affecting food system activities.

*Reason to support*

Conventional agriculture, fisheries, and other food system activities create considerable amounts of air and water pollution, loss of topsoil, and extinction of species including those central to the cultural traditions of many ethnic groups and Native Americans. Water pollution from other sources such as mining operations and industrial discharge into waterways, etc., can also affect food systems, through, for example, increased mercury concentrations in fish, fish kills, and loss of habitat. Planners involved in environmental assessment and mitigation activities could look more closely at how food system activities create or are affected by negative environmental impacts. These environmental impacts can also have human health implications, which need special attention. Fisheries play an especially important role in subsistence and commercial food systems and need special consideration to balance human needs with the long term sustainability of the fisheries. Fisheries, like most food-ecosystem linkages described in this policy guide, need greater development in future food planning policy.

Planners could play the following roles:

1. In collaboration with other professionals, explore pathways through which the food system impacts the region's natural environment, fisheries and other wildlife habitats, and ecology, and the impacts of pollution on food systems. This analysis can inform plans to sustain ecologies including those upon which our food system depends, and to minimize harm to them.
2. Assist in assessing the sources of lake and river pollution and eutrophication, and considering ways to reduce such pollution.
3. Assist in assessing solid waste streams at different points of the community's food system (production, wholesale, retail, consumer, etc.) and considering ways to reduce, reuse, and recycle wastes.
4. Support efforts to reduce and mitigate negative air quality impacts in food system activities, including those contributed by farm activities and the long-distance transportation of food from farm to fork.
5. Support strategies to increase the adoption of water and soil conservation practices in agriculture.

**General Policy #5**

**The American Planning Association, its Chapters and Divisions, and planners support food systems that are socially equitable and just.**

**Specific Policy #5A.** Planners employ land use, transportation, and other planning tools to increase spatial access to programs and facilities that help reduce hunger and food insecurity for residents in impoverished urban and rural communities.

*Reason to support*

Hunger and food insecurity affect impoverished households in urban and rural communities across the country. Land use, transportation and other policies planners recommend, and regulations they implement, could inadvertently increase the incidence of hunger and food insecurity in low-income neighborhoods. However, planners are also uniquely positioned to help improve low-income people's access to programs and facilities that enhance food security.

Planners could play the following roles:

1. Provide data and mapping support to community and regional food assessments, including the incidence of food insecurity and location of diverse food assets.
2. Develop plans and redevelopment proposals for food insecure areas with sites and incentives for community gardens, entrepreneurial urban agriculture projects, farmers markets, neighborhood grocery stores, and food assistance programs.
3. Investigate the use of appropriate brownfield sites in low-income areas for food production.
4. Develop transportation, community development, and other plans and policies to provide convenient and safe access for low-income households to grocery stores, community gardens, and food assistance providers.
5. Encourage business district revitalization efforts to include support for convenience store sales of fresh foods.

**Specific Policy #5B.** In partnership with community-based organizations, planners support the creation of programs to enhance food-related economic opportunities for low-income residents.

*Reason to support*

Food-related enterprises are among the most common type of small business development and a way for many households to supplement income and achieve economic stability. In the past decade, community-based food projects have sprung up in some low-income urban and rural areas to provide economic opportunities for residents there. Among these are urban agriculture projects on vacant lots where some of the produce grown is sold at farmers markets and to restaurants; food business incubation in community kitchens to create value-added products like salsa and salad dressing; and assistance with opening food kiosks and catering operations. Planners can assist these efforts through land use, zoning, facility location, and support of related community development activities.

Planners could play the following roles:

1. Develop area-wide and neighborhood plans with appropriate sites for facilities (such as community kitchens) and spaces (such as for entrepreneurial community gardens) that support food-related entrepreneurial development for low-income households.
2. Assemble in partnership with other public agencies and community-based organizations, economic development programs and incentives for food-related enterprise development, job creation, and workforce development.

**Specific Policy #5C.** Planners encourage and support food production on the grounds of public agencies and institutions while providing employment to low income workers and distributing products to cafeterias and area food assistance sites.

*Reason to support*

Public institutions such as universities, schools, hospitals, and correctional facilities have public missions and often collaborate and coordinate with local public agencies related to land, infrastructure, and utility issues. They are generally located on large sites with vacant land suitable for growing food, and spend money on landscaping, grounds keeping and management. Some of this money can be put to productive use in growing food for their on-site cafeterias while also providing healthy food and employment related benefits for lower-income residents.

Planners could play the following roles:

1. Develop assessments of land on institutional properties suitable for cultivation and support food production activities on these sites.
2. Explore ways in which these institutions can be linked with community-based organizations in producing food on their sites to provide job opportunities and healthy food for school cafeterias and low-income residents — e.g., programs such as "plant-a-row" that add fresh produce to food assistance provided by Second Harvest Food Banks.
3. Provide site planning, design, and other relevant assistance to these institutions to facilitate food production and distribution.

**Specific Policy #5D.** Planners support resolving issues of rural poverty through land use, transportation, economic development planning and appropriate regulatory measures.

*Reason to support*

Many farm and food sector jobs in rural areas are characterized by poor working conditions, high

rates of occupational hazards, rapid turnover, and low rates of union representation. Migrant farm workers and immigrant employees of slaughterhouse and meat packing facilities located in rural communities are most subject to these difficulties. In addition, the increasing number of farm closures can cause farmers to slip into poverty. Planners can recommend policies in land use, transportation, economic development, and social services to improve the quality of life of impoverished rural households.

Planners could play the following roles:

1. Assist the region's farm and food worker organizations in rural food and community assessment and improvement efforts.
2. Undertake assessments of possible links between farm and food workers' work conditions and planning-related decisions (e.g., distance between housing, schools, and work sites, and availability of transportation options).
3. Prepare comprehensive and rural community plans to address the spatial, social and economic needs of low-income rural residents.
4. Explore the development community policies for "fair trade" purchasing by public agencies to ensure that public expenditures in food procurement are fair and equitable to producers and communities in other countries.

### **General Policy #6**

**The American Planning Association, its Chapters and Divisions, and planners support food systems that preserve and sustain diverse traditional food cultures of Native American and other ethnic minority communities.**

**Specific Policy #6A.** Planners support community food assessment and planning to preserve and strengthen traditional native and ethnic food cultures (e.g., fisheries in Louisiana and Alaska and desert foodscapes in New Mexico and Arizona).

#### *Reason to support*

Native American and other ethnic minority communities contribute to the nation's diversity of local food traditions which are important to the identity and economic vitality of a region, and the nutritional health of its residents. Unfortunately, recent Native American history has included forced relocations of tribes and dependence on non-native foods (including lard, refined flour, and sugar) leading to a disconnection with traditional food sources and an erosion of traditional food practices that are at the heart of native community life and rituals. The health implications of this history are significant: diabetes and diet-related illnesses are at epidemic proportions in many Native American communities. To a smaller extent, these patterns of dietary health and cultural loss are also familiar in many immigrant communities.

Planners could play the following roles:

1. Assist and support locally based efforts by Native American and other ethnic minority communities, to identify and document community and ecological assets and cultural traditions that are tied to food production, preparation, and consumption (e.g. salmon runs, wild rice and nut-gathering, agricultural fairs, and ethnic and cultural festivals).
2. Support locally based efforts to identify challenges and needs faced by members of Native American and ethnic minority groups in consuming healthful diets.
3. Support locally based efforts to prepare action plans to build on existing assets and cultural traditions that nourish Native and ethnic minority food cultures and to mitigate challenges to them.
4. Assist efforts to develop ongoing community participation mechanisms in food assessments and related planning in First Nations and in communities with a significant Native American or other minority ethnic cultures.

**Specific Policy #6B.** With the participation and collaboration of communities to be served, planners support the development of plans to preserve and restore the natural environment and biodiversity in the region, to revitalize traditional and ethnic food systems that depend on the regional ecology.

#### *Reason to support*

In many cases, local food systems and diets have been lost or impacted due to environmental

degradation, habitat destruction or development (e.g. the Onondaga Lake whitefish, Chesapeake Bay blue crab). Restoration of indigenous and traditional food systems has been shown by research to be linked to improved health of residents and benefits to the local economy. Healthy food systems are important for all regions and must be supported in order to ensure food safety and security, sustainable development, public health and nutrition, and sound environmental management.

Planners could play the following roles:

1. Support efforts by and within Native American and other ethnic minority communities to identify and document indigenous and ethnic food systems that have been degraded or are threatened.
2. Support local efforts to restore or protect native, indigenous, or ethnic food systems.
3. Consider the impact of proposed changes in land-use and other plans on the ability of Native American and ethnic minority communities to sustain food production systems and support the coordination of planning efforts to enhance such systems in the future.

**Specific Policy #6C.** Planners support integrating traditional food systems and related cultural issues into community and regional planning efforts — including comprehensive and economic development plans — and other governance activities.

*Reason to support*

Diverse local and traditional food practices contribute to a sense of place and help achieve economic, environmental, and health goals of communities. Efforts to integrate traditional methods of food production (such as farming in Amish communities, Navajo shepherding, food gathering, and fisheries) into a multi-functional working landscape require sensitivity to a spectrum of traditions of distinct cultural groups. Additionally, they require effective communication and collaboration across groups in the region and dispute resolution mechanisms. To the extent possible, land use and economic development policies should support the right of farmers, hunters, and food gatherers to practice their occupation in accordance with their religious and cultural norms.

Planners could play the following roles:

1. Support planning that builds on and celebrates the diverse cultural, agricultural, and dietary traditions present in the region.
2. Work with tribal governments and state agencies to address land and resource management issues so as to strengthen Native American food systems including farming, hunting, gathering and fishing and nutritious diets.
3. Work collaboratively to establish mechanisms in the region to minimize and resolve conflicts between tribal governments, other local governments, and state and federal agencies and among different minority groups in communities, so as to facilitate Native and other ethnic minority communities' efforts to sustain their food systems.

**General Policy #7**

**The American Planning Association, its Chapters and Divisions, and planners support the development of state and federal legislation that facilitates community and regional food planning, including addressing existing barriers.**

**Specific Policy #7A.** APA, its Chapters and Divisions support developing and advocating for programs in the federal Farm Bill to facilitate community and regional food planning discussed in General Policies #1 through #6.

*Reason to support*

All titles of the Farm Bill affect local areas and therefore what planners can accomplish by engaging in community and regional food planning. For example, the continued availability of food stamps and farmers market nutrition program benefits is important for impoverished households as well as to the vitality of grocery stores and farmers markets. Similarly, rural development programs can help develop value-added food enterprises, renewable energy systems, land use management, and air and water quality enhancement. The Farm Bill also includes many provisions that favor, intentionally or not, larger agribusinesses over smaller farm operations in



the distribution of subsidies, design of regulations, and other requirements that impose greater burden on the latter. To achieve the goals of community and regional food planning, many of these provisions will need to be re-oriented. In the end, federal (and state) support is indispensable to communities and regions' ability to plan for food under normal and emergent circumstances and further the goals of food planning identified in this Policy Guide.

APA, its Chapters, and Divisions could play the following roles:

1. Analyze how different titles of the Farm Bill affect communities and regions, pose barriers to achieving goals of community and regional food planning, and in particular, how they may affect planners' ability to implement actions recommended in General Policies #1 through #6.
2. In collaboration with other organizations advocating for policies relevant for economic development, public health, sustainable agriculture and food systems, and social justice, develop and advocate for proposals in the Farm Bill to facilitate actions described under General Policies #1 through #6.
3. Develop and disseminate timely action-guides and alerts for APA and chapter membership to build support for the legislative platform advocated by APA.

**Specific Policy #7B.** APA, its Chapters and Divisions support the development and advocacy of policies and programs outside of the federal Farm Bill to further General Policies #1 through #6.

*Reason to support*

The food system is complex and intricately linked with other systems such as health, energy, education, economy, environmental protection, and housing. Although the Farm Bill might be a first, seemingly intuitive target of policy advocacy efforts to further objectives suggested in this Policy Guide, effective community and regional food planning may also need to be supported through other federal legislation. For example, programs in the next Transportation Bill could conceivably support small farmers' needs to bring product to markets, increase transit access of urban and rural households to grocery supermarkets, and renewable and sustainable biofuel development. Legislation related to the functions administered by the Departments of Education or Health and Social Services might help supply more fresh foods from local farms in all schools, or support the development of farmers markets in public health and social service institutions. As an advocate of good planning at the national level, APA can help to direct attention to areas of federal legislation that could support and foster community and regional food planning.

APA, its Chapters, and Divisions could play the following roles:

1. For each general policy statement in this guide, identify and research significant upcoming federal legislative opportunities, rule-making, or appropriations activities that affect that policy, and planners' ability to implement suggested actions under that policy. For example, programs in the Transportation Bill could be targeted as applying to General Policy #2 (economic vitality), #3 (health) or #5 (social equity).
2. In collaboration with other organizations, develop and advocate for proposals related to legislation, appropriations, or rule-making, to further actions described under policy statements #1 through #6.
3. Develop and disseminate timely action-guides and alerts for APA membership to build support for the proposals advocated by APA.

**Specific Policy 7C.** APA Chapters support the development and advocacy of state policies and programs to further General Policies #1 through #6.

*Reason to support*

These reasons are similar to those stated in Specific Policies #7A and #7B, but within the arena of state legislation. State policies, regulations, and programs can provide important resources or pose significant constraints to achieve objectives sought under this Policy Guide. Additionally, states have arguably a greater ability than federal agencies to design and implement policies that support community and regional food planning, such as those that discourage the conversion of productive farmland, ease regulatory burdens on small and moderate farms, and encourage the development of regional food infrastructure.

APA Chapters could play the following roles:

1. Roles similar to those in Specific Policies #7A and #7B as indicated above, but at the state level

2. Chapters could document related activities to enable the broader APA membership to draw lessons from their successes and challenges, and to inform federal policy advocacy.

**Specific Policy #7D.** APA Chapters support the development of and participation in state food policy councils that provide a comprehensive and systematic focus on statewide food issues and needed actions.

*Reason to support*

Comprehensive and systematic food planning at the state level could provide a significant impetus to General Policy #1 and others in this Policy Guide. In ways that are currently nonexistent except for a handful of states such as Connecticut, Iowa, California, and Michigan, state food policy councils provide a way for stakeholders in public, for-profit, and nonprofit sectors to come together to discuss community and regional food concerns, share information, and recommend policies and actions to achieve goals identified in this Policy Guide.

APA Chapters could play the following roles:

1. Conduct research on existing state food policy councils and assess the feasibility of a state food policy council if currently non-existent, including its structure, decision processes, constituents, and relationship to government agencies and legislative bodies.
2. Provide maps, information, and analysis on particular planning issues linking food system and local areas to food policy councils.
3. Develop policy and programmatic recommendations related to those proposed in this Policy Guide for the consideration of and action by state food policy councils to consider.

**Specific Policy #7E.** APA Chapters and Divisions support the development of federal policies related to international trade, humanitarian aid, development assistance, and other categories of international involvement in ways that promote sustainable and self-reliant solutions to hunger and food insecurity experienced in other countries.

*Reason to support*

Across the world, populations in impoverished countries continue to experience hunger and food insecurity at high rates. Half of the global population — nearly 3 billion people — lives on less than two dollars a day, an important indicator of poverty. In an increasingly interdependent world, it is not only incumbent upon wealthier countries to act responsibly to end hunger and food insecurity across the globe, it is also important to redress the adverse impacts of agriculture trade policies on the ability of poor urban and rural households to subsist. Most of the world's farmers are small-scale farmers; they also tend to have inadequate or precarious access to food themselves. Yet foreign aid for agriculture and rural development has continued to decline over the last three decades. Solutions to hunger and poverty in impoverished countries need to include investments in agriculture, education, health, and essential public goods.

APA Chapters and Divisions could play the following roles:

- Support U.S. international policies related to trade, humanitarian assistance, economic and social development, and conflict resolution affecting impoverished countries, in ways that sustainably increase local capacity for food security and food self-reliance.
- Support U.S. policies and programs for international development that encourage investments in local agriculture, education, health, and essential public goods such as roads, clean water, and electricity.
- Support multi-national non-governmental organizations that increase community capacity in sustainable agriculture and food systems in poor countries, increase food security across the globe while promoting social justice and ecological sustainability, and create learning exchanges between grassroots groups in more and less industrialized parts of the world.
- Support U.S. humanitarian food aid in ways that minimize adverse impacts to agricultural markets in surrounding regions, and especially prevent dumping of excess U.S. agricultural product in these regions.

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## **APA POLICY GUIDES RELEVANT TO COMMUNITY AND REGIONAL FOOD PLANNING**

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**Policy Guide on Solid and Hazardous Waste Management** (2002)

**Policy Guide on Water Resources Management** (2002)

**Policy Guide on Smart Growth** (2002)

**Policy Guide on Planning for Sustainability (2000)**

**Policy Guide on Agricultural Land Preservation (1999)**

**Policy Guide on Endangered Species and Habitat Protection (1999)**

**Policy Guide on Neighborhood Collaborative Planning (1998)**

**Policy Guide on Surface Transportation (1997)**

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