Food Innovation Districts

An Economic Gardening Tool

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Recommended citation format for this publication:

Cantrell, Patty, Kathryn Colasanti, Laura Goddeeris, Sarah Lucas, Matt McCauley, Michigan State University Urban Planning Practicum 2012. Food Innovation Districts: An Economic Gardening Tool. Northwest Michigan Council of Governments. March 2013. Available at: www.nwm.org/food-innovation-districts

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Acknowledgements

Food Innovation Districts: An Economic Gardening Tool was developed as part of a collaborative project by Regional Food Solutions, LLC; the Michigan State University Center for Regional Food Systems; and the Northwest Michigan Council of Governments. The United States Department of Agriculture (USDA) provided funding for the project with a Rural Business Enterprise Grant (RBEG).

Although the guide is written from a Michigan base, the project team and advisors believe its content is applicable across the country. The fundamentals of the examples and tools the guide presents are universal in nature, from common planning and zoning scenarios to well-known types of organizations, entrepreneurs, and policy makers involved. We hope our neighbors in the Great Lakes region and colleagues across the country will find the guide relevant to their food system and economic development aims.

The following organizations developed and directed the project:

Northwest Michigan Council of Governments
Michigan State University Center for Regional Food Systems
Regional Food Solutions, LLC

We would like to pay special recognition to the following individuals and agencies:

The dedicated group of MSU urban and regional planning practicum students who developed an initial body of research and draft of the guide:

Nicholas Dansby
Zane Grennell
Michelle Leppek
Sean McNaughton
Marlon Phillips
Kirstie Sieloff
Claire Wilke

Thanks also to Urban and Regional Planning Practicum instructors Rex LaMore and John Melcher for their oversight and support of this partnership.

An external advisory committee provided invaluable feedback on the concept, the guide and outreach opportunities. We thank all members for their time and thoughtful insights over the project year:

Andrea Brown, Michigan Association of Planning
Dan Carmody, Eastern Market Corporation
Joe Colyn, Originz, LLC
Lindsey Day Farnsworth, University of Wisconsin Center for Integrated Agricultural Systems
Marilyn Drenth, Village of Ellsworth
Jeanne Hausler, Michigan Department of Agriculture and Rural Development
Wayne Kladder, Acme Township
Donna LaCourt, Michigan Economic Development Corporation
Megan Masson-Minock, ENP & Associates
Kathy Quillinan Nothstine, National Association of Development Organizations

Jim Tischler, Michigan State Housing Development Authority
Kathryn Underwood, City of Detroit Planning Commission
Wendy Wieland, Michigan State University Product Center & Emmet County Extension

We also acknowledge the following individuals for additional comments and contributions:

John Egelhaaf, Southwest Michigan Planning Commission
Dan Kennelly, Vandewalle and Associates Inc.
Kurt Schindler, Michigan State University Extension

We are especially grateful to Michigan's USDA Rural Development team for their interest in providing local leaders across the state with practical information regarding regional food and farm business development.

Finally, we would like to recognize the very early developers of the food innovation district concept and guide. The idea took root originally in the Michigan Good Food charter at the suggestion of task force member Dan Carmody of Detroit's Eastern Market Corporation. The Charter is a policy platform developed in 2010 with input from hundreds of stakeholders around the state. The Charter includes a recommendation to establish food business districts for the synergy that occurs when entrepreneurs co-locate and collaborate. Toward this objective, a team convened at the 2011 national Making Good Food Work conference in Detroit. The team's action plan called for development of a guide to food innovation districts for local government and community leaders in Michigan.

Contents

Tables and Figures

Executive Summary

This guide is a package of how-to information and examples that can help local governments step into and benefit from the growing market and community demand for local and regional food. Specifically, it offers a process for developing food innovation districts, or business districts that support the co-location and collaboration of food businesses of different types (*Figure 1*).

FOOD INNOVATION DISTRICT

A food innovation district is a geographic concentration of food-oriented businesses, services, and community activities that local governments support through planning and economic development initiatives in order to promote a positive business environment, spur regional food system development, and increase access to local food.

Food innovation districts connect and catalyze emerging clusters of food and agriculture activity. Benefits include new jobs, healthy food options, and a 'sense of place' that regions increasingly need for success in the 21st century.

The guide zeroes in on the roles that planners, economic developers, elected officials, and community champions have in food innovation district development and steps they can take. It supports "economic gardening" efforts; that is, building local and regional business strength.

In the case of local and regional food, entrepreneurs need warehousing, processing, distribution and related facilities and services that better fit local and regional marketing opportunities. Building a healthy regional food system also involves such things as nutrition education, neighborhood retail, community engagement, and low-cost startup space.

Food innovation districts support the resource- and idea-sharing that occurs when food entrepreneurs and related initiatives work in close proximity. Activities in these districts include:

- Regional food hubs
- Business incubators
- Farm-to-table retail and restaurants
- Farmers markets
- Food festivals and other events
- Nutrition and cooking education
- Healthy food assistance
- Urban agriculture production
- Community kitchens
- Public spaces, neighborhood uses

The food innovation district concept comes out of the Michigan Good Food Charter, a statewide policy platform, which outlines steps leaders can take to achieve 20 percent Michigan food in Michigan markets by 2020 and increase citizens' access to healthy food.

The Charter is, among many similar efforts across the country, focused on realizing the local commerce, public health, and placemaking power of food grown nearby. Food innovation districts are one tool for bringing these benefits home.

Audience

The Food Innovation District Guide offers support to four groups involved. Guide sections likely to be of particular interest are highlighted below.

Elected and civic leaders
- Community considerations, input (pp. 28-30)
- Project initiation and approval (pp. 35-36)

Local and regional planners
- Planning and zoning approaches (pp. 38-45)
- Zoning Guidance (pp. 70-79)

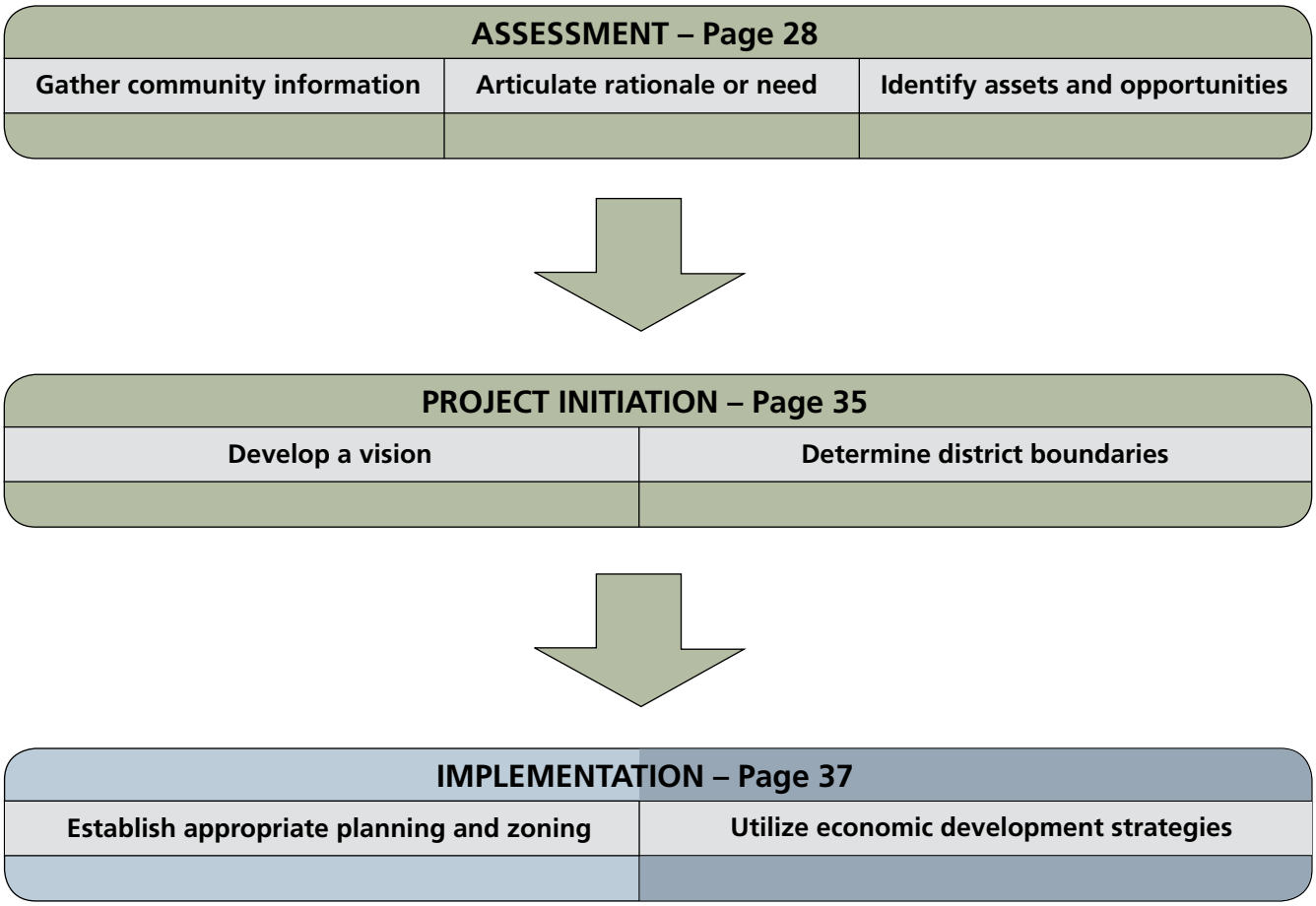
Economic developers
- Business development context (pp. 46-49)
- Applicable programs and partners (pp. 49-59)

Community champions
- Vision and goals (pp.35-36)
- Services, facilities, and amenities (pp.30-34)

The food innovation district guide walks users through the steps and considerations involved in the development process. It also presents actual examples in Michigan and nearby states that fit the food innovation district concept. (See Examples, p.17.)

Finally, a worksheet in Section 4 summarizes the development process with key questions for each juncture of assessment, initiation, and implementation.

Figure 1: Overview of Food Innovation District Development Process



INSPIRATION: Growing healthy regional food systems

It wasn't long ago that schools in Benzie County, Michigan, served Red Delicious apples imported from far away even though apple orchards in Benzie and neighboring counties produce many sweet and juicy varieties.

Similarly, the international food service company Sysco until recently supplied only Red and Golden Delicious apples to its west Michigan customers despite the diverse range of apples available from the region's orchards.

No offense to Red and Golden Delicious apples, but what happened? How and why did the schools and Sysco change?

The answer is a story of innovation and opportunity in regional food markets that is generating attention and investment across the nation.

Food innovation districts are emerging from this growing interest in the potential to build new market bridges for food from nearby farms and strengthen local commerce, quality of life, and public health in the process.

The story goes that Benzie County school officials reached out to local orchardists because they believed children, in need of healthier diets, would eat more fruit if they had fresher, tastier options than apples stored and shipped long distances.

The gamble paid off: school cafeterias started going through five times as many apples! Similarly, Sysco gained new customers and increased apple sales after it stepped out of its normal purchasing routine and began offering 12 locally produced varieties.

Communities see in this story, and many like it in their own regions, a new way to grow jobs, build health, and strengthen quality of life by supporting innovation in local and regional food markets. Food innovation districts are one way to do that.

Filling an Infrastructure Gap

The purpose of food innovation districts is to support development of the business community, markets and infrastructure that healthy regional food systems need.

Most food in the predominant food system moves from farm to plate through long and complex global supply chains.

The standardization and large volumes such supply chains require do not accommodate the emerging local and regional food sector's more diverse range of products and companies.

This leaves the sector's primarily small- and mid-size farms and food businesses without appropriate-scale storage, packaging, processing, and other facilities and services, known as "food system infrastructure."

Food innovation districts help by bringing together complementary community and entrepreneurial activities for synergistic business and infrastructure development.

Section 1
Learning

Introduction

The Food Innovation District Guide is designed to help government and community leaders seize inter-related business, public health, and placemaking opportunities with local and regional food. Produced with a Michigan focus, the process and tools the guide presents are applicable nationwide.

FOOD INNOVATION DISTRICT

A food innovation district is a geographic concentration of food-oriented businesses, services, and community activities that local governments support through planning and economic development initiatives in order to promote a positive business environment, spur regional food system development, and increase access to local food.

Examples of food innovation districts exist across the nation, both in principle and in the making. No existing legislation yet designates such districts or provides specific funding for them. But regional planners, economic developers, and other stakeholders are establishing food innovation districts and applying available resources to them. These investments are consistent with "economic gardening" efforts, which focus on growing a community's own entrepreneurs.

Why Food?

Food = jobs
Local food is a major and durable trend that is now opening employment and business opportunities from agricultural production through processing and distribution to retail outlets and waste recovery/composting.

Food = health
Expanding healthy food access and awareness is a leading strategy across the nation for reducing the critically high personal, community, and economic costs of diet-related chronic diseases.

Food = place
Food and farming are essential components of building a sense of place, a key ingredient for community success in the 21st century economy in which people and businesses put quality of life first.

Business Acceleration Zones

Food innovation districts operate a lot like business acceleration zones, which are common for sectors like technology or art-and-design.

Boston's new Innovation District on the city's waterfront, for example, has become a magnet for high-tech companies in part by making sure creative entrepreneurs have space to meet, work together, and start small.

Similarly, Detroit Eastern Market is a food innovation district, which managers describe as a "food-centric creative place." Entrepreneurs enjoy affordable startup space amid a collaborative community of vendors, independent distributors, community activity, and retail and wholesale customers.

Why Districts?

Food innovation districts are much like well-known business acceleration zones for high-tech companies. They build on business synergies that occur when related enterprises locate in close proximity; share resources, information, and ideas; and grow investment and jobs with business development support.

Well-established research on business clusters underscores the power of working in close proximity.

A business cluster is a geographic concentration of interconnected businesses, suppliers, and associated institutions in a particular field. Economic scholars have described how business clusters:

- Facilitate cooperation among complementary companies and institutions.
- Foster new business formation by reducing barriers to entry and making product and service gaps more visible.
- Reduce business costs through shared infrastructure and common expenses.
- Promote healthy competition for greater productivity and innovation.
- Increase access to experienced employees, specialized suppliers and other resources.[1]

Food innovation districts make space for creative collaboration among food and farm enterprises and related community activity.

A district's ***producer-oriented*** elements such as cold storage and loading docks, for example, also often serve ***community-oriented*** elements such as harvest gleaning programs and community kitchens. Similarly a food innovation district's ***place-oriented*** elements, such as restaurants and food-related events, benefit from and support the local food producers and community activity that districts bring together.

Healthy Regional Food Systems

The local and regional food businesses that food innovation districts support are an emerging and transformative part of the larger food and agriculture system.

LOCAL FOOD

Local food is "food produced, processed, and distributed within a particular geographic boundary that consumers associate with their own community."
USDA Economic Research Service

A Sampling of District Activities and Attributes

Producer-oriented
- Production, gardening
- Retail and farmers markets
- Washing, grading, sorting
- Packaging and promotion
- Wholesale commerce
- Loading docks and truck access
- Post-harvest storage, processing
- Business incubation facilities, service

Community-oriented
- Restaurants and eateries
- Community ovens, kitchens
- Education and nutrition outreach
- Social services
- Open space, gardens
- Harvest gleaning, food pantries

Place-oriented
- Festivals, fairs and events
- Sidewalks and bike lanes
- Benches and bike racks
- Plazas and public art
- Pedestrian scale entryways

The sector is growing, in part, out of attention to weaknesses in the current food system, such as the reliance of major population centers on long-haul trucking for basic foodstuffs and the lack of fresh produce in many urban neighborhoods and rural communities.

One of the biggest barriers, however, is the gap in distribution and related services available for moving local food to regional buyers. Most existing companies operate on a higher-volume, longer-distance model. Local food commonly moves to warehouses far away, in neighboring states for example, before returning to a farmer's grocery store in a can of juice or bag of beans.

"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."

American Planning Association, 2007

The purpose of food innovation districts is to support development of the business community, markets and infrastructure that healthy regional food systems need. Districts produce economic, public health, and placemaking benefits in addition to helping the overall food system become more robust and equitable.

Food Hubs & Districts: What's the Difference?

Food innovation districts are opportune places for an important component of local and regional food market development — regional food hubs — to locate or evolve.

In 2011 the USDA identified more than 170 food hubs operating across the country, grossing nearly $1 million in annual sales on average, with many showing double- and even triple-digit annual sales growth.[2]

The Food Enterprise Center in Viroqua, WI (p.23), counts two food hubs as tenants along with a body care products company, a harvest gleaning program that supplies regional food pantries, and plans for a winter farmers market, cooking and business classes, and events.

Bringing such entrepreneurs and initiatives together in a food innovation district generates valuable synergies. In Viroqua, the gleaning program takes seconds from the food hubs, for example, and the body care company sources herbs and other organic food-grade ingredients from farms that supply the hub.

FOOD HUB

"A business or organization that actively manages the aggregation, distribution, and marketing of source-identified food products, primarily from local and regional producers, for the purpose of strengthening producer capacity and access to wholesale, retail and institutional markets."

National Good Food Network Food Hub Collaboration

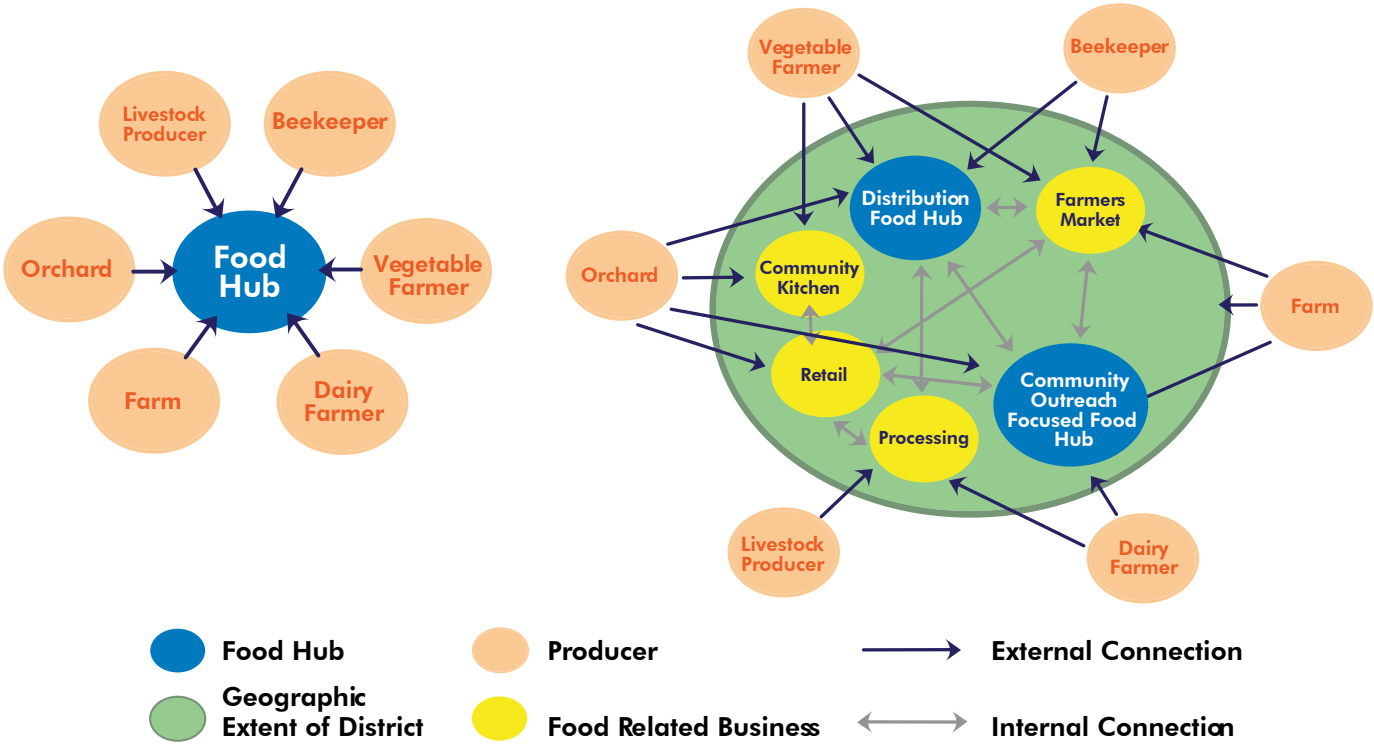


Figure 2: Food Hubs and Food Innovation Districts

Food hubs and food innovation districts might both aggregate and distribute products from nearby farms. Districts, however, are defined by a specific spatial area and include networked businesses of different types. Districts are likely to form around food hubs. Or, where food hubs do not exist, the community of food entrepreneurs and healthy living initiatives that cluster in districts will likely incubate or attract food hubs.

Community-oriented Business Zone

Food innovation districts offer unique opportunities for towns and regions to build public health and New Economy "placemaking" assets.

Food innovation districts are natural places for food retail and restaurant development; farmers markets, festivals and other attractions; and public health outreach and services, such as cooking and nutrition classes or harvest gleaning programs that move farm surpluses to families in need.

These food and farm developments also overlap with a number of related business clusters such as tourism, lifestyle and wellness, renewable energy, and the creative economy of artists and artisans (Figure 3).

Districts can include elements of these related business clusters to further strengthen the peer-to-peer networking and business-to-business collaboration that benefit all.

Such clustering provides important opportunities for product development and distribution, information sharing, workforce training, and partnering on events and promotion. It can also help districts develop an identity, or a brand, which helps draw other entrepreneurs and community initiatives along with shoppers, diners, and event-goers.

Figure 3: Cluster Convergence

A business cluster is a geographic concentration of related businesses and organizations. Scholars posit that clusters facilitate inter-business cooperation, foster new business formation, reduce business costs, encourage productivity and innovation and increase access to trained labor and specialized suppliers. This figure depicts types of businesses and organizations related to sustainable food systems. Adapted from Regional Technology Strategies Inc., Carrboro, NC, 2010.

Outcomes

Local food and farm entrepreneurs and related community initiatives can build healthy, happening places and strengthen regional economies. The time is ripe for local officials to facilitate and focus this naturally occurring, rapidly growing food and farm evolution.

Food innovation districts offer the opportunity to capitalize on this growing trend and create the potential for community benefits such as redevelopment, business growth, and public health improvements:

Redevelopment opportunities.

Food innovation districts need facilities for light industrial and commercial activities such as warehouse space, loading docks, and food processing machinery.

This provides important opportunities for communities to redevelop historic industrial or commercial areas that have experienced disinvestment or decline. Innovative food and farm business clusters also allow communities to re-invent and diversify a community's economy.

Greater chances for small and startup firms to advance and grow as employers.

Food innovation districts help with business clustering, incubation and acceleration, which promotes business growth and can create new jobs.

According to a 2006 Michigan State University Product Center report, Michigan could generate more than 23,000 new jobs per year by supporting development of agri-food businesses at a rate similar to venture establishment in other economic sectors.[3] The report notes that nearly half of the jobs could come through relatively small businesses.

More opportunity for small- and mid-scale farms in a region, which can keep farm families and their valuable farmland in business.

Food innovation districts help by attracting and catalyzing facilities and services, such as regional food hub processing and distribution.

Farms need this small- and mid-scale market infrastructure to participate effectively in expanding markets for local, regional, and specialty food. Food

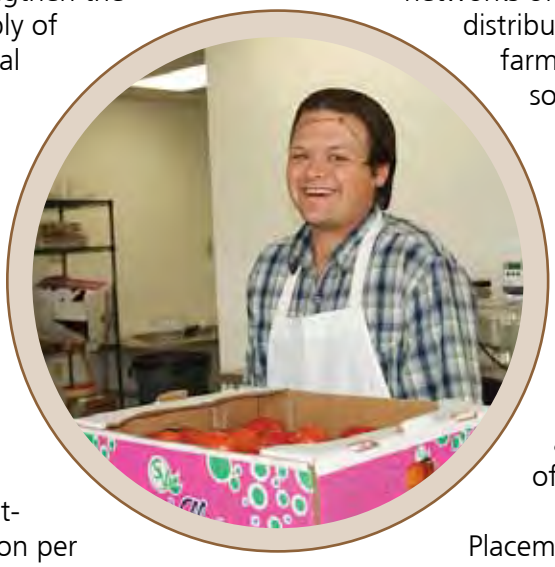
Growth Industry

- In U.S. agriculture, the direct-to-consumer marketing channel (e.g. farmers markets) now amounts to the fifth most common farm activity. (Farm Credit Council, 2011)

- Local food sales amounted to $4.8 billion in 2008 and were projected to reach $7 billion in 2011. (USDA Economic Research Service, 2011)

- The Local Food Hub in Charlottesville, VA, opened in July 2009 and ended that year with $75,000 in sales. Local Food Hub grossed $365,000 in its second year and then doubled that in 2011 with $675,000 in annual gross sales. It marketed products from 75 area farms in 2012 and projected $800,000 in gross sales.

innovation districts also strengthen the chain of businesses and supply of skilled people needed for local and regional food supplies to grow in concert with national and global supply chains, ensuring a secure and diversified food supply.



Public health improvements and greater overall community food security.

States could reduce skyrocketing health care costs ($3 billion per year in Michigan treating adult obesity alone) by supporting a population shift to healthier eating.[4]

Food innovation districts help by supporting healthy food access and awareness and by strengthening networks of entrepreneurs producing and distributing healthy food from a region's farmers to people across the socioeconomic spectrum.

Greater capacity for communities and their regions to retain and attract residents and business investment.

Food innovation districts can help regions distinguish themselves as attractive places with a high quality of life.

Placemaking benefits of food innovation districts include recreation and entertainment opportunities, community wellness advantages, distinctive regional flavors and products, and farmland and open space preservation.

Who, Where, and How

This section summarizes the stakeholders involved in food innovation district development, considerations for determining possible locations for a district, and steps in the planning and implementation process. Figure 4 (p.16) provides an overview of the food innovation district development process. A worksheet in the guide's appendix offers questions and issues to consider through the development process.

Who: Leading the District

A broad range of residents, businesses, civic leaders and other stakeholders are involved in food innovation district development. Their roles include envisioning and developing the project; determining its goals, objectives, and boundaries; formally initiating the effort; and managing the district's evolution. Below are descriptions of the four main groups involved and examples of each.

Elected and civic leaders
Whether elected or appointed, a community's officials have the job of representing public interests and leading public initiatives. They also have specific or implied authority to develop and implement policies that help communities protect and pursue their interests.

- City, township, and county boards
- Planning commissions, local and regional
- State and federal representatives

Local and regional planners
Local governments and planners can help to lay the groundwork for food innovation districts by integrating the idea in local plans and ordinances. Planners can also support new initiatives by linking them with economic development efforts, new and synergistic initiatives, and other resources.

- City, township, and county planning staff
- Regional councils of governments

Food Councils Count

Food councils explore needs and opportunities for healthy regional food system development. They operate as quasi-governmental organizations, ad-hoc committees, task forces, and regional networks.

Food councils address land use and regulatory policy issues, economic development efforts, health and wellness strategies and more.

In Michigan, a 2012 survey identified 20 local food councils in addition to the statewide Michigan Food Policy Council. The local councils covered 38 of the state's 83 counties. A national 2012 survey identified 180 food councils in the United States.

- University extension and community college specialists

Economic developers
Economic development organizations help attract resources and financial support such as grants or loans for needed improvements like infrastructure or building renovation. They also initiate and manage local and regional efforts to develop, accelerate, and attract business and industry.

- Economic development corporations
- Downtown development authorities
- Chambers of commerce
- Small business and workforce development organizations
- Community action agencies
- Private developers

Champions
Citizens, community organizations, and business associations will champion food innovation districts for the private and public benefits they can generate and support.

- Local food councils and regional networks
- Farmers and agriculture organizations
- Small business associations
- Health and wellness agencies or initiatives
- Social service agencies
- Farmers market boards
- Schools and hospitals

Where: Locating the District

Where a food innovation district ultimately locates will depend on many unique community factors as well as the size, scale, and intended activities in the district. It's important, therefore, to first engage residents and other stakeholders in establishing a vision for the district based on an assessment of needs as well as existing and potential activities and assets the community has to work with.

Section 2 of this guide reviews the assessment process, which results in a vision for the district and parameters for determining the best location for it.

A food innovation district can range from a single multi-tenant facility to several blocks in a town center or a larger township or county area covering several square miles. The unifying element is proximity. The district's businesses, services, and related community and placemaking activity are close enough for peer-to-peer networking and business-to-business opportunities to grow.

Location decisions revolve around addressing and balancing the needs of various uses and activity in a district. Common needs include:

- Access to sewer and water.
- Access to air, rail, and highway transportation.
- Connections to nearby farms.
- Presence of complementary food production or innovation activities.
- Market development opportunities with complementary uses like schools, institutions, commercial areas.
- Redevelopment or building re-use opportunities.
- Proximity to shopping or entertainment districts.
- Consistency in the desired character of the district.

"Even the most distressed American cities contain assets that give them competitive advantages in importing, storing, processing, wholesaling and delivering food in their market area. Among the advantages are a central location; transportation infrastructure… vacant buildings that can be adapted for basic manufacturing; a large workforce looking for opportunities and an abundance of able entrepreneurs."

Next Street, Karp Resources, Initiative for a Competitive Inner City, 2012

In many cases, communities may find that existing downtowns or historic commercial and industrial neighborhoods already have these needed amenities in close proximity and may be a good fit for food innovation districts. These historic business districts generally offer access to sewer, water, and other infrastructure along with opportunities for re-use or retrofits of buildings in areas that often have experienced disinvestment.

Location decisions must also balance district uses and activities with the interests and activities of neighbors in the surrounding area.

Section 3 of this guide covers planning and zoning considerations and steps involved in building food innovation districts that fit with a community's character, vision, and other land uses. The guide also provides sample zoning language (p.70) related to the types of uses involved in food innovation districts along with commentary on potential regulations.

How: Building the District

As outlined in Figure 4 (p.16), the food innovation district development process starts with assessment, visioning and initiation and then moves into implementation, which involves planning and zoning and economic development approaches. Communities will have unique interests, opportunities, and contexts to work with in this process.

One example is the Grand Traverse Commons in Traverse City, MI (see p.22). Champions there found an opportunity to add needed producer-oriented elements such as shared storage and value-added processing equipment to the ongoing mixed-use redevelopment of an historic hospital campus. In Lansing, MI, champions became involved in the city's master planning process, which ultimately included food innovation districts as a tool for growing jobs, building health, and creating a sense of place.

Along with planning and zoning guidance, section 3 offers economic development approaches, which communities may find helpful when working to develop a food innovation district based on their unique assets and opportunities.

Figure 4: Food Innovation District Development Process

ASSESSMENT

Community Information	Rationale or Need	Assets and Opportunities
Gather basic information about the community or region that the food innovation district will draw from and serve. Such data include population and demographics as well as available market information like basic food consumption and production statistics.	Input from farmers, food businesses, local residents, health professionals and more will inform the need for a food innovation district and form the rationale for it. Understanding needs and interests can help communities determine the appropriate scale, focus, and location of a potential district.	Identify existing businesses and community activities that fit as well as opportunities for building a district around them. This inventory covers: • Producer-oriented elements • Community-oriented elements • Place-oriented elements

PROJECT INITIATION

Vision	District Boundaries
It's important to have a big picture vision of what the food innovation district will accomplish and how it will operate. Based on an assessment of needs, assets, and opportunities, communities can determine the district's location and work toward developing principles, goals, and strategies.	Location will be a primary consideration for any food innovation district. Location decisions must address and balance the needs of different users and uses. Needs include access to transportation, proximity of farm suppliers, and the presence of complementary uses like restaurants, retail, and health services.

IMPLEMENTATION

Planning and Zoning	Economic Development
Planning and zoning captures the steps and tools involved in establishing food innovation districts as a strategy in the community's master plan. It also involves working out location and operational issues through public input and with land use regulations.	Supporting and attracting food innovation businesses will be paramount to success. Economic development also includes financing renovation, streetscape and other infrastructure improvements as well as district branding, promotion, and regional linkages.

Examples

This section provides a set of examples that illustrate the principles and processes involved in food innovation districts. Examples include notes on who is involved, where the districts are located, and how they evolved and operate.

Produced in Michigan, this guide uses examples from Michigan and nearby states. Readers will find, however, that the different district elements and approaches in these examples are readily apparent in their own communities and regions as well.

Site Preparation

It is important also to note that each example includes significant preliminary and behind-the-scenes work building necessary food cluster relationships, networks, and resources.

This foundation of private and public sector engagement in healthy regional food system development provides the guiding rationale and long-term commitment needed for strong food innovation districts. Such groundwork is important before making big capital investments in bricks–and-mortar facilities.

Urban, Rural, Regional

Finally, districts operate in a regional context. They can be large or small, and they exist or are taking shape in both rural and urban areas.

In fact, it's important to think strategically about food innovation districts and food hubs across a larger regional context to prioritize and optimize investments. A regional focus can identify, connect, and advance food innovation taking place in many forms and in many places, resulting in comprehensive metropolitan and micropolitan approaches.

For example, the city manager for far-north Marquette, MI, cites the importance of rural town-ships in building the flow of local farm products through a food hub that is under development in the city (p.24).

"Most things Marquette needs to prosper are outside our jurisdiction: reliable roads, the airport, also natural resources and agricultural resources," city manager Bill Vajda said. It will take local governments working together across Marquette's larger micropolitan area to make sure city restaurants as well as small rural grocers have the local meats and greens they want and need.

For links to media coverage of current and emerging food innovation districts, see www.nwm.org/food-innovation-districts

The Town of Hardwick - Caledonia County, VT

WHAT

• Hardwick, Vermont is a town of around 3,500 people that has prospered in recent years after local food and farm entrepreneurs began collaborating with the intention of building a strong local economy by supporting each other.

• New jobs, investment, local retail and other commerce are the result of the community's focus on helping its farms and related businesses grow and serve increasing consumer and commercial demand for source-identified, sustainably produced food (local, organic, specialty etc.).

WHO

• The monthly business network meeting that launched Hardwick's food and farm business innovation continues to bring established and new entrepreneurs together for everyday synergies and collaborative ventures.

• The area's strong agricultural base of farms and their working relationships provide an essential foundation. In addition to historic, multi-generation farms, this base includes "back-to-the-landers" from the 1970s and today's new farmers.

• The Center for an Agricultural Economy (CAE) is a nonprofit organization that arose from developments in Hardwick and now offers a range of regional food system and sustainable agriculture services such as the Vermont Food Venture Center, a shared use kitchen incubator; business counseling for small agricultural entrepreneurs; and related healthy food access and awareness programming such as community gardens.

• Local residents, businesses, government, and community leaders are engaged and collaborate with the business network and CAE efforts.

WHERE

• Hardwick is in northeastern Vermont's Caledonia County.

HOW

• The local cluster of farms and food businesses share information and contacts, source product from one another, and pool resources for common needs such as short-term financing. Examples include:

– A farm that markets soup it makes from the smashed squash and pumpkin byproducts of a local seed company.

– A local cheese maker with space available in its aging cave for other artisan cheese makers.

– A farm-to-table restaurant that started up with financing from local residents and businesses.

• The town's food and farm business momentum has attracted resources and investment, such as the CAE's current plan to redevelop an historic 15-acre Woodbury Granite Company site and buildings into a sustainable agriculture resource center.

More information: *www.hardwickagriculture.org*

Eastside Neighborhood - Lansing, MI

WHAT

• Lansing's Eastside Neighborhood is home to many food innovation district elements.

• Elements include urban farms on land acquired by the county's land bank along with city trails and new restaurants. The Allen Neighborhood Center operates a weekly year-round farmers market, an urban farm share program with produce from its Hunter Park Gardenhouse, youth gardening programs, an incubator kitchen and food storage, food hub services and facilities.

WHO

• The Allen Neighborhood Center and many other neighborhood and Lansing community organizations have worked collaboratively for years to build the district's foundation.

• The Ingham County Land Bank has made vacant property available for gardening, and Urbandale Farm, Flood Plain Farms, and Learning Leaves Farm have taken root.

• Local economic development officials are recognizing food's role in bringing new activity and investment to Eastside Lansing.

WHERE

• The Eastside Neighborhood is a four square-mile area east of the Grand River between downtown Lansing and the City of East Lansing.

HOW

• Community-driven initiatives supported by collaborative organizations and institutions have built Eastside Lansing's food innovation district foundation.

• Financing for the Allen Neighborhood Center's new kitchen incubator, storage facilities, year-round market, and food hub functions comes largely from community and family foundations, the Michigan Economic Development Corporation's Farm to Food Program, and a Michigan Department of Agriculture Regional and Rural Development Food System grant.

More information: allenneighborhoodcenter.org

Detroit Eastern Market - Detroit, MI

WHAT

• Detroit Eastern Market is a 240-acre district with a six-acre core market area.

• It is home to restaurants and shops and dozens of independent food processors and distributors along with twice-weekly retail farmers markets (year-round Saturdays and seasonal Tuesdays) and a weekday seasonal wholesale produce market.

WHO

• The non-profit Detroit Eastern Market Corporation (EMC) manages Eastern Market's retail and wholesale markets and is responsible for the larger district's development.

• The City of Detroit owns Eastern Market's assets, and city leaders serve on the EMC board, which represents vendors and merchants as well as government and community interests.

WHERE

• The Eastern Market district is located in a section of central Detroit known as Midtown.

HOW

• Initiatives include the EMC's:

– Linking of farmers with Detroit Public Schools and with new healthy food outlets in city neighborhoods (e.g. mobile markets, farm stands).

– Development of a value-added processing facility for market "seconds."

– Partnering with the Greening of Detroit, which operates a 3-acre urban agriculture demonstration project at Eastern Market near a school and a planned recreational trail.

– Convening of the Detroit Ag and Food Business Cluster Network.

• With the city's planning department, Eastern Market is updating zoning and developing design guidelines to help the district further develop as a "healthy metropolitan food hub" and "food-centric creative place" with a priority on space for smaller, startup value-added food makers.

• Grant funding includes support from the Michigan Economic Development Corporation and the Michigan Department of Agriculture and Rural Development.

More information: www.detroiteasternmarket.com

Chicago's South Side - Chicago, IL

WHAT

• Green Healthy Neighborhood Land Use Plan

• The community-based plan addresses historic disinvestment by building on innovative neighborhood developments, including urban agriculture and "local food economy" activity.

WHO

• The City of Chicago's Department of Housing and Economic Development is working with the Chicago Metropolitan Agency for Planning to put the citizen-led plan into policy and action.

• The Local Initiatives Support Corporation (LISC Chicago) has worked with neighborhood residents and businesses over the years to address quality of life.

• Two neighborhood organizations providing essential leadership and resources for the plan are Teamwork Englewood and the Washington Park Consortium.

WHERE

• A 12-square-mile area on the south side of Chicago covering the following neighborhoods: Greater Englewood; the southern half of New City, Woodlawn, and Washington Park; and parts of Fuller Park, Grand Boulevard, and Greater Grand Crossing.

HOW

• The Green Healthy Neighborhoods plan builds on:

– LISC Chicago's work in south side neighborhoods with Quality of Life Plans.

– Food and agriculture developments in the neighborhoods.

– Complementary projects just outside the project's boundaries such as The Plant, a vertical farm and green business incubator in an old meatpacking facility.

• Implementation steps include:

– City-funded preparation of ground for new urban farmers along a 3-mile stretch of abandoned railroad, creating a linear park and urban agriculture destination.

– Planning for fresh and healthy food retail and related commerce near transit stops in the neighborhoods.

– Connecting vocational and business development efforts with emerging artisan and niche manufacturers, including food retail, processing, and distribution.

More information:
www.cmap.illinois.gov/ghn-chicago

Grand Traverse Regional Market - Traverse City, MI

WHAT

• The Grand Traverse Regional Market is a planned addition to the larger mixed-use Village at Grand Traverse Commons development, which already includes food innovation district elements (artisan food businesses, retail, restaurants, events, a farmers market and more).

• The Grand Traverse Regional Market will add producer-oriented elements (local food storage, processing, and marketing; leased office and production space and a year-round farmers market). Plans also include teaching and charcuterie kitchens, a green roof, an aquaponics operation and more.

WHO

• Three key organizations head up the Grand Traverse Regional Market steering committee: Michigan State University Extension, the Traverse Bay Economic Development Corporation, and the Northwest Michigan Council of Governments.

• The Northwest Michigan Food and Farming Network's early advocacy and the region's Grand Vision development plan provided the initial conceptual framework for the market.

• The Minervini Group is the developer of the Village at Grand Traverse Commons. They are engaged with and supportive of the project, which fits their overall vision for a mixed-use, local economy at the Commons.

WHERE

• The Grand Traverse Commons is a 63-acre campus on the west side of Traverse City's downtown area. It is the largest historic brownfield redevelopment project in the nation.

HOW

• State and local funding sources supported a 2012 feasibility study by Market Ventures Inc.

• Local and philanthropic funding supported earlier research and organizing.

• In 2012, the Michigan Department of Agriculture and Rural Development awarded funding for the new producer-oriented infrastructure elements.

More information:
thegrandvision.org/food-farming-network

Food Enterprise Center - Viroqua, WI

WHAT

• The Food Enterprise Center is a multi-tenant facility for food and wellness related businesses, which includes such community and placemaking elements as business training, a winter farmers market, community kitchen use, and market gardening.

WHO

• The Vernon County Economic Development Association (VEDA) developed and manages the Center. Initial tenants include:

– Fifth Season Produce Cooperative, which markets products from area farm and food entrepreneurs and has located one of its three distribution hubs at the Center.

– Keewadin Organics, which also acts as a food hub, marketing produce from 100 area farms (up from 40 since expanding into the Center).

– LuSa Organics, which markets body care products it makes from organic food ingredients.

WHERE

• The Food Enterprise Center is the redevelopment of a 100,000 square-foot abandoned industrial building on the edge of rural Viroqua's downtown district (pop. 4,400).

• The Center is situated next door to a shopping center anchored by Wal-Mart and along three state highways that converge in Viroqua.

HOW

• A 2010 community food assessment identified needs for mid-scale food processing, distribution and related infrastructure.

• VEDA financed the project with:

–A $2 million Economic Development Administration grant

– A $2.3 million disaster bond secured with projected tax increment financing revenue

– $300,000 of private investment

More information: veda-wi.org

Marquette Food Cooperative and Hub - Marquette, MI

WHAT

• A food hub serving the Upper Peninsula of Michigan is part of the expansion of the Marquette Food Cooperative to a larger space in downtown Marquette, MI.

• The expansion includes a teaching kitchen and locates the co-op close to community gardens, a farmers market, a recreational trail and other food innovation district elements.

WHO

• The Marquette Food Cooperative plays a leading role in a number of local and regional food and farm initiatives.

• The City of Marquette and Marquette Downtown Development Authority are active supporters.

• The project is part of the U.P. Local Food Exchange, which also includes an online marketplace and coordination among planned hubs on the east and west ends of the Upper Peninsula.

WHERE

• The co-op's new location is on the west side of downtown Marquette. The co-op's prior location helped spur business development and placemaking on the city's east side.

HOW

• The City of Marquette established a Commercial Rehabilitation District (CRD) that abates property tax for five years on the new store's improvements and triggered state funding for the project.

• Earlier zoning updates by the city provide for a greater mix of food business uses downtown.

• A new local food chapter in Marquette County's master plan encourages rural engagement.

More information: marquettefood.coop

Grand Rapids Downtown Market - Grand Rapids, MI

WHAT

• The Grand Rapids Downtown Market is a mixed-use facility combining food production, retailing and restaurants; an outdoor seasonal farmers market; produce distribution; commercial leasehold space; food and health education; and events.

• Adjacent commercial and industrial property is prime territory for further food innovation district development.

WHO

• The Grand Rapids Downtown Market Board oversees the market and CEO in charge of operations.

• The business group Grand Action provided initial leadership and feasibility study funding.

• The Grand Rapids Downtown Development Authority provided land for the market and funding assistance.

WHERE

• The Grand Rapids Downtown Market is located on the southern edge of downtown along the U.S. 131 freeway.

HOW

• Sources and uses of funds for the market include state Brownfield Redevelopment tax credits and federal New Market tax credits.

• The DDA used Tax Increment Financing on the market property for streetscape improvements.

• City zoning updates are supportive by allowing for a wider mix of light industrial food manufacturing along with retail and residential.

More information:
www.downtownmarketgr.com

Section 2
Assessment and Project Initiation

Conducting the Assessment

Assessment of needs and assets is an essential part of developing a clear vision for what a food innovation district should do and where in the community it best fits. An assessment can also build a strong case for funding and other support by showing existing food innovation district assets while outlining opportunities and challenges.

This section reviews the steps involved in identifying the community a food innovation district serves, establishing the rationale for a food innovation district, and taking inventory of existing assets and opportunities. The section concludes with information about initiating a district with a clear vision and defined boundaries.

The three main steps of an assessment are:

- Gather basic information about the community area from which the district will draw entrepreneurs, customers and other users.
- Establish the rationale for the district based on an assessment of need.
- Identify assets and opportunities that can direct the district's development and where it is located.

Project Resource: Food Innovation District Development Worksheet

This guide includes a worksheet to help you carry out the three main steps of assessment, project initiation and implementation. (See pp.62-69.) The worksheet provides a step by step outline of questions to answer and considerations to note in working towards a food innovation district, as well as a place to record information on your project.

Community Information

As part of the assessment process, it makes sense to describe the community that the food innovation district will draw from and serve.

This step involves understanding the area from which the district would most likely draw agricultural production and other food and farm products and entrepreneurs. In addition, it's useful to indicate where consumer and community traffic would come from: shoppers, diners, event-goers, social service clients, students, etc.

Some basic information communities should gather about the district's service area, or foodshed, for the purposes of food innovation district development include:

- Population data
- Demographic data (age, income, ethnicity, etc.)
- Agricultural production data
- Food consumption data

See worksheet Step 1

A primary source of population and demographic data is the U.S. Census. Local governments have usually already extracted and analyzed relevant municipal, county, and regional population and demographic information from the census. Summaries and analyses of Census data are often available in local master plans and accompanying studies.

Agricultural production data typically comes from the federal Census of Agriculture, conducted every five years. Local food councils as well as agriculture organizations and agencies (e.g. state departments of agriculture) usually have these numbers as well as additional production information and insights.

A primary source of food consumption data is the USDA Economic Research Service Food Consumption Data System. This national database allows the volume of different foods consumed in a given area to be estimated. Again, local food councils or stakeholders, such as local and state health and wellness organizations, may already

have this data in hand and can provide additional insights about variations in local food consumption and related information such as health statistics.

Some communities may choose to conduct a more detailed food system assessment of community information along with relevant needs, assets and opportunities. Many examples and models exist for such assessments, which local food councils and other champions across the country have conducted. (See Section 4 p.83.)

Rationale or Need

Food innovation district champions such as local food councils are good groups to start with for gathering information and perspective about healthy regional food system needs and the rationale for a food innovation district.

Many potential users of food innovation districts — farmers, chefs, school food service buyers, nutrition educators, doctors, etc. — are already involved with such councils or other efforts to build local food opportunities and address healthy food needs. These potential district users are important to tap for input regardless of whether a community already has a council representing healthy regional food system interests.

Emerging economic and public health trends in an area can make the case for building or supporting a food innovation district. Examples include an increasing concentration of food-related businesses in an area or a regional shift to more local food production and processing along with strong demand for more fresh produce in schools and neighborhood stores. Local interest in greater access to local food, combined with the need to reinvent industries and jobs, may compel communities to develop food innovation districts.

See worksheet Step 2

Institutional Demand

Big buyers are using their purchasing power to advance local and regional food systems. Food innovation districts can help entrepreneurs grow with this demand. For example:

- As of December 2012, 115 of Michigan's nearly 145 hospitals had committed to source 20 percent of their food from local sources by 2020 through the Michigan Hospital Association's Healthy Food Hospitals initiative.

- In 2012, the Traverse City (MI) Area Chamber of Commerce pledged to shift 20 percent of its spending on food for events to local sources. It also committed to work with the region's event planning industry to do the same with an estimated $1 billion in food purchases.

- In a 2009 survey of Michigan school food service directors, 41 percent reported participating in farm to school, up from 11 percent in 2004.

For communities just beginning to investigate food innovation district potential, a needs assessment may occur as part of a wider visioning or planning process, such as during development of the community master plan. The food innovation district needs assessment may build the case for a food-focused chapter of the master plan, and/or for goals related to food system planning, such as a goal to develop food innovation districts.

Another approach is to conduct a dedicated series of community meetings to gather public input on regional food system needs along with efforts to collect relevant data and examples. Investing time and money into a more detailed food system assessment is not necessary but does provide a more comprehensive base of information from which to work.

Any stakeholder or groups of stakeholders can conduct the assessment, but it's important to have public input and review along the way to ensure the process is credible and relevant.

Assets and Opportunities

An important step toward developing a food innovation district is to take an inventory of current and potential assets and opportunities.

For example, identification of a school's interest in freezing local fruit for winter use could become part of a food innovation district plan to provide for shared commercial freezer space. This addresses the schools' and farmers' needs and could be valuable for other food and farm businesses as well.

Similarly, the assessment of assets and opportunities could surface the fact that several farms as well as a small produce distributor are in need of a central affordable warehouse space. The food innovation district plan could then call for making facilities available to support the growth of these businesses and their markets.

See worksheet Step 3

Three main groups of elements commonly come together in food innovation districts and, through peer-to-peer networking and business-to-business relationships, produce inter-related business, public health, and placemaking benefits:

- **Producer-oriented** elements such as storage, distribution, processing, and other services needed to move produce from farms to consumers.

- **Community-oriented** elements, which link food businesses with the public, such as education and local food purchasing programs or community open space.

- **Place-oriented** elements, such as restaurants and events, which relate to the placemaking value of activity in food innovation districts.

Projects that identify and connect elements in each of the categories — producer, community, and place — are likely to have the best chances of accomplishing desired business, community health, and placemaking outcomes. It is the clustering of complementary uses that increases the potential of food innovation districts to stimulate peer-to-peer networking and business-to-business relationships that can result in new products, joint marketing, and the like.

A demonstration urban agriculture plot at a food innovation district, for example, is an important educational part of building awareness and engagement with food production, which is part of building a healthy regional food system. It also benefits retail and restaurant businesses by bringing people to the district and may supply them with ingredients and products.

Examples and descriptions of different producer-, community-, and place-oriented elements follow. It's a starter list of businesses and activities that show up in food innovation districts and which a community can build upon and network together if they already exist or plan for if not.

Producer-oriented elements

Space and resources for moving local farm products to consumers form the backbone of a potential food innovation district. Wholesaling, storage, distribution, and processing activities are necessary components in a local or regional food system, but are often lacking at the scale that mid-size food and farm entrepreneurs need to supply emerging local markets.

Regional food hubs often combine many of these activities into one entity that provides needed services and facilities. They also exist as independent businesses or initiatives that often co-locate and collaborate in food innovation districts. Attracting these facilities and services to a food innovation district or making them available can reduce costs and build opportunities for local food and farm businesses.

• **Wholesale Facility** — Wholesale facilities such as warehouse space and loading docks are needed for aggregating and distributing quantities of merchandise to retailers, individuals, companies, or other wholesalers. Wholesale facilities can include warehouses or storage facilities, retail space, or transportation terminals. Regional food hubs are one type of entity that provides such facilities for groups of local and regional food businesses that hubs also often support with technical assistance and marketing.

• **Food Retail** — Retail establishments are commercial outlets where consumers purchase food-related items. Retail can include local bakeries, butcher shops, and so on. Some may include space

Neighborhood Meat Processing

David Pearlstein converted his residential garage into a USDA-inspected meat processing facility. He now operates his successful wholesale sausage making business, Link Lab Artisan Meats, right in his neighborhood. Valuable technical assistance for converting his garage into a federally inspected meat processing facility came from USDA's Small Plant Help Desk.

Excerpted from the Know Your Farmer, Know Your Food Compass (www.usda.gov/kyfcompass), courtesy of USDA.

for production as well, such as further processing of meats into sausage, fruit into juice, etc.

• **Coordination/Assistance** — Coordination involves the presence of organizations and others working with local farms and food businesses to connect to consumers, markets and each other for product, business, and regional food system development. Such coordination also involves needed education for producers or technical business assistance for accelerating development of local and regional food entrepreneurs (e.g. linking new product makers with package design resources at universities or finding process engineers who can help a group design or retrofit bottling facilities and equipment).

• **Distribution Network** — In a distribution network, individuals have access to aggregation and distribution services for moving local food-related goods to market. The distribution network may involve farmers sharing equipment and routes, or it could be one entity, such as a food hub, managing aggregation and distribution. Food hubs often also provide coordination and technical assistance.

• **Shared Storage Facility** — Multiple producers may bring goods to a shared facility, which may include refrigeration or climate-controlled rooms that permit producers to store their produce or cured meats etc. until they are ready for further processing or distribution. Sharing facilities can lighten the financial burden of building and operating an individually owned storage facility. A shared storage facility may be part of a wholesale facility.

• **Processing Facility** — Processing facilities transform raw product into a finished or more usable product. Needs range from minimal processing (washing, boxing, chopping) to further processing (canning, curing, freezing) into new, value-added products such as beef jerky or granola bars. Such processing could be available in a shared-use community or business incubator kitchen. A third-party private label processor may also provide services for food and farm entrepreneurs, particularly as they outgrow smaller incubator kitchen facilities. Providing space for incubator kitchen clients to graduate into their own production facilities is an important food innovation district function. Districts can provide incentives for real estate developers, for example, to renovate buildings so they suit this kind of entrepreneur's needs.

• **Marketing Service** — Marketing services help district entrepreneurs advertise their products. They can also promote the district itself. Numerous entities — including private, nonprofit, and public organizations — can provide marketing services that serve individual businesses as well as develop a common identity for those in the food innovation district. Food hubs can also provide a common brand for the local food and farm products that they aggregate and distribute.

• **Farm to Institution** — Through farm to school or farm to institution programs, farmers sell their products to schools, hospitals, large employers, or other institutions that have made organizational commitments to providing quality food options to employees and clients as well as to invest purchasing power in the local food economy. Because schools and large institutions like hospitals have a large amount of buying power, these partnerships can help secure a stable flow of income for food producers.

Community-Oriented Elements

Community-oriented elements help to engage the public in the food innovation district. They support food innovation district businesses and activities by providing a stable customer base and a sense of place that attracts people, entrepreneurs, and investment. Community-oriented elements also contribute to the community as a whole by providing opportunities for education, entertainment, networking, and other activities.

Farm Businesses for Vets

Beginning farmer and rancher programs are proliferating across the country, such as the Veterans Sustainable Agriculture Training program in southern California. Decorated Marine sergeant Colin Archipley started the program, which supports veterans in launching their own agricultural enterprises.

Excerpted from the Know Your Farmer, Know Your Food Compass (www.usda.gov/kyfcompass), courtesy of USDA.

• **Educational Programming** — Education in a food innovation district refers primarily to providing information and training related to healthy diets, lifestyles, and food preparation. It can also extend to business and workforce skill development. Educational programming can include cooking classes, nutrition classes, community gardening, vocational training, and business plan assistance.

• **Community Supported Agriculture (CSA)** — Community supported agriculture is the business model in which a farm produces vegetables or other products for a group of members or subscribers who pay in advance for their share of the harvest, sometimes including options to barter and volunteer on the farm. CSAs provide farms with guaranteed income while members have access to fresh, locally produced food. CSA farms might utilize a food innovation district as a drop-off location and/or community education and meeting place. Market gardens located in a food innovation district may also offer a CSA program.

• **Community Gardens** – Community gardens provide shared space for area residents to grow their own food.

• **Community/Incubator Kitchen** — Community kitchens provide licensed food preparation space for rent to small-scale processors, producers, caterers and others. Community kitchens are also places where people network, share ideas, and innovate. Larger more commercial versions, which include business development assistance, are called incubator kitchens.

• **Connection to Low-Income Individuals/ Families** — Food innovation districts might involve efforts to promote social justice, racial equity, and the health and food security of vulnerable populations. Examples include youth activities that empower children to become food producers and business owners as well as initiatives that increase access to healthy food, employment opportunities, health services and more. Specific activities may include incentives for purchasing local foods with food assistance benefits, food sector job training, and harvest gleaning programs that supply food pantries.

Place-Oriented Elements

An inventory of place-oriented elements can help the community consider the potential food

innovation district in a wider context. These elements consider whether policy support exists for a food innovation district, whether opportunities exist to connect the food innovation district with uses outside its boundaries, and whether surrounding uses complement and enhance innovative food-related uses.

Multi-County Coalition

In northeast Iowa, local farmers, agribusiness owners, Main Street businesses, community development specialists and consumers first gathered in 2007 to discuss how they could build a healthier and more economically vibrant community. They established the Northeast Iowa Food and Fitness Initiative, which quickly expanded to six counties with more than 100 producer members and 50 others working together.

Excerpted from the Know Your Farmer, Know Your Food Compass (www.usda.gov/kyfcompass), courtesy of USDA.

• **Policy-Supported** — An area that supports food innovation districts through policy will greatly aid food innovation district development. Examples include special events for the public hosted by the local government, community food system planning efforts, supportive zoning regulations, and financial assistance such as regional food business incentives.

• **Placemaking** — Placemaking involves efforts to transform community spaces into aesthetically, socially, and economically vital places. Examples of placemaking especially relevant to food innovation districts include provisions for bikes and pedestrians in traffic flow, known as "complete streets," and zoning that allows for a dynamic mix of people and activities in neighborhoods such as eateries, personal and business services, and community gardens along with residences. Placemaking builds on a community's existing unique assets, such as historic character, recreation opportunities, population diversity, or natural resources, to create high-quality places to live, work, and play.

• **Café/Eatery** — Food or drink establishments within a food innovation district might include local goods in a majority of the menu. Many of these businesses refer to their cuisine as "farm to fork." These establishments range from upscale restaurants to everyday diners and coffee shops.

• **Events/Agritourism** — "Agritourism" and local food-related events and entertainment can distinguish communities and regions that are supportive of local and regional food system development. Food innovation districts can incorporate and benefit from festivals, workshops, and other community and tourist attractions.

• **Local Food Identity** — A local food identity can be developed through coordinated efforts to advance the local and regional food sector alongside promoting the community as a place where people enjoy regional foods. A local food identity comes from marketing and enhancing the local feel and flavor of a place, which also contributes to placemaking efforts.

Initiating the District

The assessment process provides background information and insight needed to initiate a district with a clear, guiding vision. The initiation step also involves working toward a location that fits the district's rationale and priorities. It is also crucial to develop a realistic budget and timeline for the district early on. District costs and development timelines can vary widely based on many factors so it's important to consider the extent of public and private investment needed and whether building up quickly or unfolding slowly over time will be more appropriate and realistic.

Vision

The community's vision for a food innovation district takes the perspectives of all the stakeholders involved, considers particular needs and opportunities, and zeroes in on what is most important to accomplish.

See worksheet Step 4

The vision will involve principles that emerge from community input such as the expectation that businesses in the district use local and environmentally sustainable foods or that the district provides neighborhood job training and employment opportunities.

The vision will also point to district goals, such as providing hospitals and schools with a certain percentage of local food, or increasing the number of skilled farmers and food business employees by making vocational training available through the food innovation district.

The vision will also help the community prioritize activities, which then steers location decisions toward places that provide the right kind of retail or light-industrial facilities, neighborhood connections, or access to transportation.

District Expectations

A community likely will expect businesses and organizations located in a food innovation district to use and promote local foods. This expectation fits the intent and purpose of districts.

Including specific purchasing criteria, however, can be tricky because the current availability of local food varies greatly and enforcement of such policies is complicated. Nevertheless communities often find reasonable ways to accomplish their objectives.

For example, commercial zoning in a historic district often allows for most eateries except those with out-of-character drive-through facilities.

Similarly regional tourist destinations often require retailers to devote a certain amount of floor space to goods made within a certain geographic area. This step supports regional identity and local artisan economies.

One community may envision a tightly focused ethnic neighborhood food innovation district that helps, for example, small tortilla and other food businesses expand production. Such a district may focus on renovating nearby vacant buildings while also adding community food attractions (festivals, health fairs, and urban agriculture activity) to the mixed-use commercial and residential area.

Another may envision a major distribution hub and public retail and wholesale market in an industrial area on the edge of town to build local food opportunities and revitalize an older commercial corridor.

District Boundaries

As prime places for food innovation district development become apparent, organizers must decide where the district will start and stop. Defined boundaries are especially necessary for the subsequent implementation steps of planning, zoning and economic development.

District boundaries determine, for example, eligibility for business incentives or building design requirements; the boundaries clarify who benefits and who must comply.

See worksheet Step 5

Complementary programs already in place may influence district boundaries, such as areas of a city already designated for tax increment financing opportunities or brownfield redevelopment. Resources available through such economic development programs may be necessary for a food innovation district to flourish.

Similarly, zoning rules that exist in a certain area may be advantageous for district development. In other cases they may spur the need to amend zoning to accommodate the desired mix of retail, commercial, light industrial, or even residential and agricultural uses in a food innovation district.

Planning and zoning considerations and economic development investments are the implementation steps that follow a community's assessment process and the vision development and location selection that initiate the food innovation district project.

Section 3 of the toolkit discusses planning and zoning considerations and approaches, starting with the value of including regional food system development and food innovation districts as priorities in a community's master plan.

The latter half of Section 3 reviews economic development approaches and tools for supporting clusters of food and farm enterprises and activities in food innovation districts as well as the associated local and regional food system development.

Section 3
Implementation

Planning and Zoning

This section covers planning and zoning considerations and approaches related to food innovation districts.

See worksheet Step 6

Planning and zoning refers to the set of local government activities and regulations related to uses of land in a community. Planning establishes the community's vision for its future and presents priority approaches for getting there. Zoning puts the plan into operation. It designates different zoning districts for different uses or mixes of uses. Zoning ordinances then spell out all the requirements involved in a zone district to accomplish the desired character and function.

Food innovation districts will contain a myriad of food-related uses, from restaurants and retail to wholesale activities, residential living, and urban agriculture. The potential mix is broad enough that a community may need to amend existing zoning to allow for the combination of potential district uses to occur in the same area. Similarly, the community's master plan may not yet mention food system development as a priority, which is helpful for gaining support, momentum and funding for food innovation districts. On the other hand, some communities may want to set specific criteria for the types or extent of activities occurring in a food innovation district, in order for the district to remain true to the vision established (see "District Expectations" p.35).

This section covers a number of planning and zoning approaches that can reduce potential conflicts while also helping to direct or encourage the development of these uses. Zoning approaches include overlay zones or new zoning districts and using planned unit development techniques to provide flexibility for food innovation district uses. Additionally the use of design or development standards with zoning can minimize potentially negative effects certain uses could have on surrounding property and people.

Design Lansing

Food system goals and language in Lansing's new master plan give that city a solid basis for potential food innovation district development.

The local Food Systems Work Group became engaged in the process and introduced city leaders and consultants to a range of issues and opportunities involved in regional food system development.

Lansing's master plan now specifically calls for such food innovation elements as urban agriculture job training for youth and development of food business districts and distribution hubs to support clusters of food and agriculture entrepreneurs.

Planning Steps

To develop and support food innovation districts, it's important for communities to include food system goals in their master plan, which provides a vision and guide for the future of the community.

A master plan is a guiding document that spells out what the community wants its future to look like. The plan projects a community vision for 5, 10, and 20 years down the road. It outlines how the community will realize that future and who is responsible for implementing different aspects of the plan.

A clear master plan intention around different types of development is also important from a legal standpoint: Michigan law requires zoning to reflect master planning. While a master plan gives a community a clear picture of its values and future, zoning gives the vision its backbone by providing legally enforceable regulations to put the plan's goals in place. By referencing the master plan, zoning goals and policies also carry more legitimacy. By including food innovation districts in the master plan, a community validates the tool and may begin zoning for it.

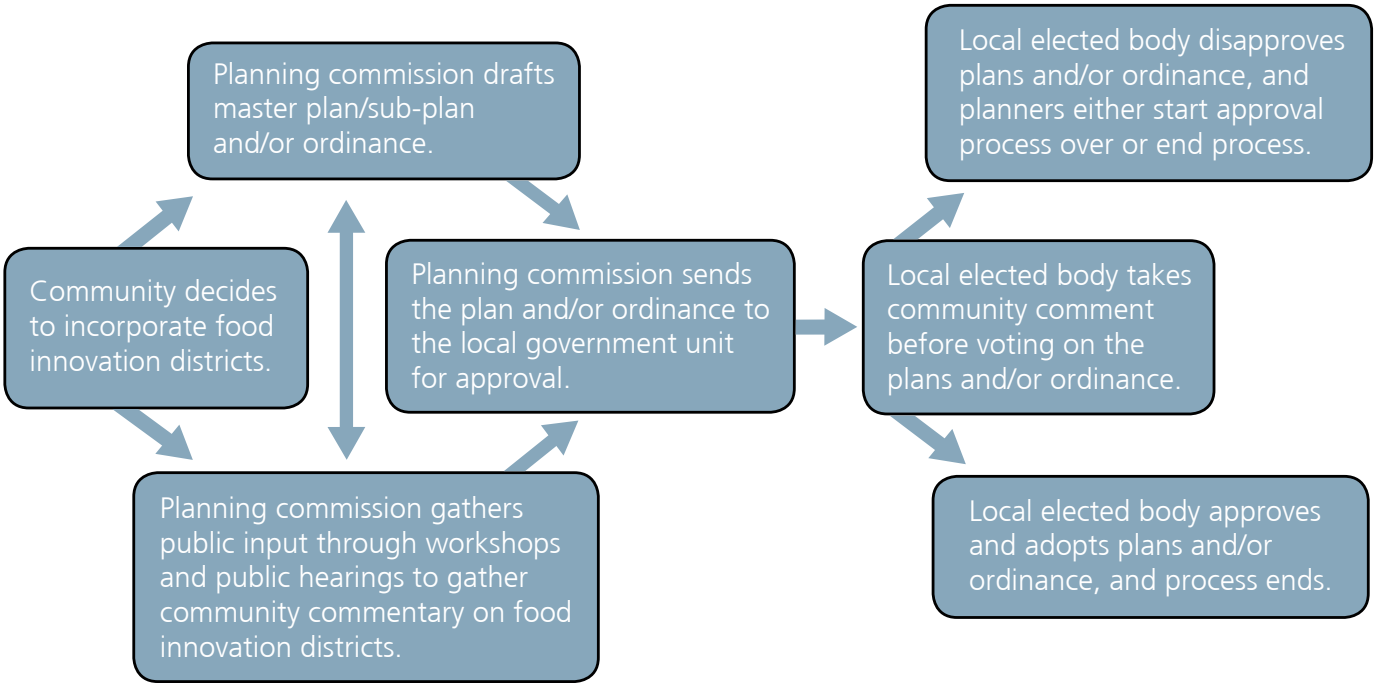
Planning and Zoning Process

Planning and zoning for food innovation districts may start with the master plan, which communities update periodically. It could also begin with a group of community and commercial stakeholders approaching local government with ideas for a particular set of vacant properties.

No matter the departure point, local government and community members must discuss their vision for the area, how the district could help accomplish the vision, and whether the proposed type and scale of food uses work with surrounding areas. In addition to general public input and review, it's essential to have all stakeholders at the table to ensure that the district develops in a way that works for the farmers, food processors, community organizations, neighbors, and others it is intended to connect and support.

Figure 5: Planning Approval Process

The planning and zoning approval process for a food innovation district starts with a review of how a proposed district fits with the community's master plan and proceeds through public input opportunities, actual drafting of new planning and/or zoning language, public review, and finally local government approval.



Sub-Area Plans

As part of their master plans, communities can also consider creating sub-area plans or plan elements. Sub-area plans use a more focused lens, zooming into one area or one aspect of community development. Local residents and officials can use sub-area plans for food just as they commonly use sub-area plans to focus in on affordable housing and environmental quality goals.

Sub-area plans go through the same review process as a master plan. They use a combination of goals, policies, and objectives to communicate the vision for individual subject areas in accordance with the master plan.

A sub-area plan may be especially useful for food innovation district planning because it provides a customized plan for the district while serving as an outlet for community brainstorming and consensus. It provides a process for discussing many details of a food innovation district, including geographical boundaries, the vision for the district, goals and policies, desired uses, where such uses will take place, who will be responsible for the district, and more, such as street design, integration into the surrounding area, and hours of operation.

Zoning Steps and Approaches

In some communities, underlying zoning may already be flexible enough to accommodate the broad scope of food innovation district uses because the community has already decided to allow for a mix of development in the area. In Grand Rapids, for example, recent zoning changes to reflect a new master plan makes it easier for light food processing to develop alongside residences, retail, and activities like community gardens in an area next to the new Grand Rapids Downtown Market. This underlying zoning flexibility is opportune for broadening the food innovation district from the new Downtown Market to include vacant commercial and industrial property around it.

Local Food Chapter

In 2012 Marquette County launched a process for developing a local food chapter in its master plan. It is effectively a sub-area plan for the subject area of food.

The chapter will introduce townships in the county to ideas and approaches for developing the region's food system and help link their rural efforts with a significant amount of food innovation activity, including a pending regional food hub in the city of Marquette, the region's trade center.

In other cases, where zoning conflicts exist, planning and zoning conversations and related approval processes must take place to integrate food-related uses into the community's plans and ordinances.

Identifying Uses for Zoning

If certain desired food-related uses are not included in the food innovation district focus area, the community may consider amending existing zoning to allow these uses in applicable zoning districts. Table 1 summarizes uses that food innovation districts will commonly involve.

Table 1: Food Innovation District Uses and Zoning Districts

Characteristic uses	May be regulated, defined as:	Common zoning districts
Aggregation and distribution	Wholesale, storage, distribution	Industrial, Commercial
Business management services, marketing	Professional services, business services	Commercial, Office Districts
Community kitchen	Community facilities	Commercial, Residential
Education	Community facilities	Commercial, Residential
Food production (i.e., community gardens, market gardens, farms)	Agriculture, community gardens	Agricultural, Residential
Processing	Processing, food processing	Industrial, Agricultural
Research and development (e.g. kitchen incubators)	Research facilities	Industrial, Commercial, Residential
Restaurant	Retail	Commercial
Retail/consumer sales/markets	Retail, specialty shops, farm markets	Commercial, Agricultural, Residential

New Zones

To fully focus food innovation district development in a certain way, communities may consider an entirely new zoning classification. Such a step can be complicated and costly, but it can also provide a clean and clear start to a desired form of development versus tinkering with existing zoning that may never really suit the situation.

One model is the Green Zone Planned Development District in Michigan's Williamstown Township. The township's Green Zone basically starts from scratch with a bottom line commitment to developing a corridor along the Grand River in a way that protects and enhances natural resources while inviting a mix of uses. Food innovation districts could benefit from such an approach, particularly if the community has a strong vision for what it wants to accomplish with the district and momentum for making it happen.

Overlay Zones

One-way to achieve added flexibility within a specified district or across several districts is through the use of overlay zoning. An overlay zone can add flexibility, restrictions, or incentives to underlying land uses.

Communities can use the included overlay zoning guidance to develop their own overlay zone or for shaping other zoning methods around food

A New Green Zone

Williamstown Township, MI, has established a unique Green Zone Planned Development District for the area of the township along the Grand River.

The zone prioritizes "conservation of natural areas through compact design; preservation and use of native vegetation in landscaping; permeable paving; clearing and grading to minimize site disturbance; more narrow driving lanes; integrating bio-retention swales in parking lots, and similar measures."

Green Zone Planned Development District, Williamston Township Zoning Ordinance: www.williamstowntownship.com/planning/notices/GreenDevDist25May2011-3.pdf

innovation district characteristics.

An overlay zone can apply to single or multiple districts. Its purpose is to add food innovation district uses and standards without creating the need to change each underlying zone or rezone properties. Like a contact lens, it adds focus to land use zoning that is already in place.

Once the community has identified the proposed boundaries of the food innovation district, it could use a food innovation district overlay zone to add more uses to those portions of the industrial, commercial, and residential areas that the proposed district spans. For example, an overlay zone could make way for retail, services and restaurants to locate next to, and take advantage of, a food distribution center located in a zone that may have only allowed industrial uses in the past. See Table 2 for examples of how an overlay zone might add activities to a variety of zoning districts.

While overlay zones can be useful for adding flexibility to a neighborhood, local governments use them more often with design guidelines to promote a unified look or design in a neighborhood or district. Overlay zones with design guidelines could be used with food innovation districts to create a cohesive development pattern in addition to allowing for a greater mix of uses.

District Design and Form-Based Zoning

Design guidelines help ensure that an area looks and feels the way the community envisions. With food innovation districts, the general intent is for community members and activities to integrate

Zoning Guidance

Section 4: Tools and Resources includes overlay zoning guidance for food innovation districts (p.70). A team of Michigan State University Urban Planning Practicum students in 2012 helped develop this language, which offers thoughts on how to regulate the diverse uses included in a food innovation district.

The zoning guidance suggests allowing a number of uses by right, while regulating more intense activities by defining them as special uses with conditions that minimize negative effects of the use.

A case study utilizing the zoning guidance — The Village of Kalkaska Implementation Study — is available online at www.nwm.org/food-innovation-districts.

Table 2: Zoning District Uses and Overlay Additions

Zoning district	Uses permitted under existing zoning	Uses added by overlay district
Industrial	Wholesaling Processing Manufacturing Storage facilities Distribution Research and development	Retail Personal service Business service Restaurants Entertainment Community garden Community kitchen Farmers market Multi-family residential
Commercial	Retail Personal service Business service Restaurants Entertainment Government	Minor agricultural or food processing Community garden Community kitchen Farmers market Multi-family residential
Residential	Hotels, motels, cabins, bed-and-breakfasts Single-family residential Two-family residential Multi-family residential Schools Accessory uses	Community garden Community kitchen Community garden Farmers market Home occupations or cottage industries

with commercial and light industrial uses that also serve regional food business development needs. Guidelines for walkability, landscaping, or architectural elements can help encourage a comfortable and attractive mix of this range of uses.

Design guidelines, which can be for specific uses or whole districts, also can support efforts to brand a food innovation district. A requirement for edible landscaping, for example, could add a fun touch of food visibility and recognition to a district.

Form-based zoning offers another approach to unified design. Form-based zoning regulates the physical design of a building or site to a greater extent than its use.

Communities often use form-based zoning codes when working towards the preservation of a neighborhood's existing character or toward developing a new, distinctive shopping area, for example. They may require certain architectural elements or regulate the placement of a building in relation to surrounding buildings and streets. Local governments can use form-based regulations for a single neighborhood (i.e. historic district), or they can use them community-wide. Overlay zoning may also include form-based zoning elements.

Eastern Market Rezoning

Detroit Eastern Market is working with city planners to rezone the 240-acre district so that it retains its core function as a food business development center while also welcoming new retail, residential and community activity.

The rezoning is necessary for the district to remain inviting for an increasing number of smaller retail businesses, residences, and pedestrian uses while also serving the local and regional food system's growth.

In addition to zoning updates, the project involves design guidelines that will help ensure future development fits the district's historic character and nature as a community gathering spot.

The form based code in this case may focus more on the development's desired architectural character, pedestrian-scale entryways, and traffic flow rather than the activities – such as fish filet packaging or retail sales – that occur inside the building. They focus primarily on building design or the form of a development so it fits the community's vision for the area.

For example, form-based zoning could make way for food innovation district uses in a community's waterfront redevelopment. The form-based zoning code in this case may focus on the development's desired pedestrian-scale entryways and traffic flow rather than what happens in each building, such as fish filet packaging, as long as it meets certain safety requirements etc.

Planned Unit Developments and Business Parks

Another way to develop a cohesive food innovation district is through the use of Planned Unit Development (PUD) zoning. A PUD is a zoning approach that allows for flexibility in development, with approval tied to a specific proposal.

This flexibility is an important advantage for communities and developers that are working to develop or redevelop larger-scale, mixed-use neighborhoods. One way that communities throughout the country have used the PUD process is in development of new business, office, or industrial clusters.

PUDs can include a single type of use such as a new residential development or industrial park. Or, they can include a mix of uses such as new homes along with retail elements and office space.

With a PUD designation, food innovation district developers could have more design freedom when pulling together different elements such as a processing facility, distribution center, and urban agriculture operation.

For example, local government may adjust existing requirements such as restrictions on uses, minimum lot sizes, building setback distances, height standards, or the density of development (density

Eco-Industrial Food Example

The Plant, a vertical urban farm and food business center on the south side of Chicago, is designed as a net zero energy facility; that is, it fulfills its own energy needs and will sell energy back to power companies once fully operational.

The Plant does this with an anaerobic digester that uses organic waste from tenants and neighboring businesses.

The system will produce heat, electricity, and cooling for The Plant's large-scale, indoor aquaponics farm as well as many other artisanal and green businesses projected to employ 125 people.

relates to the number of homes allowed per acre or offices per building, for example).

In exchange for such PUD flexibility, local governments could require developers to devote a certain square footage of buildings to low-income users or startup businesses, for example. Other considerations relevant to food innovation districts could include that a certain percentage of property uses are local food business related.

Eco-industrial parks build further on the PUD idea. Communities develop them specifically to reward and attract businesses that conserve and creatively re-use resources, such as water, waste, and energy.

The Energy Park in St. Paul, MN, is one example. There, a recirculating hot water system helps 11 businesses on the 218-acre site reduce their energy use, which the related local ordinance also requires them to do.

Economic Development

This section reviews economic development strategies and tools for food innovation district development. The section first looks at food innovation districts in the context of broader strategies for growing jobs and investment in a region. The bulk of the section then examines available programs and other approaches that communities are using or could apply to food innovation districts.

See worksheet Step 7

Food Innovation Generates Jobs

Like all economic development activities, food innovation districts generate jobs in three ways:

- Directly: Jobs with enterprises in the districts, such as food hubs.
- Indirectly: At enterprises that benefit from activity in the districts.
- Induced: Jobs that grow from new spending that those direct and indirect jobs generate.

Some examples:

- U.S.: A national survey of food hubs, which commonly anchor districts, found they average seven full-time direct jobs and five part-time.
- Traverse City, MI: A district's planned shared-use kitchen, year-round market, and cold storage and office spaces are expected to generate nearly 90 jobs over five years.
- Grand Rapids, MI: The Downtown Market slated to open in 2013 is projected to employ 270 directly and stimulate 1,271 jobs in the region.

Strategic Context

It's useful to place food innovation district development in the context of other strategies communities are using to strengthen local and regional economies. Doing so can help with project coordination as well as provide links to resources, partners and opportunities. Funding in some cases may be contingent upon demonstrating how a project advances a certain approach to economic development.

Economic Gardening

Food innovation districts fit an approach to business and industry development called "economic gardening." The idea, as proven and practiced around the country, is to "grow your own;" that is, to build a supportive environment for existing and emerging businesses, which strengthens economic foundations and produces durable jobs and investment.

Economic gardening is much different than the more commonly practiced approach of "economic hunting." Proponents include Michigan Governor Rick Snyder, whose administration has prioritized the economic gardening approach in its work to "re-invent Michigan."

The food innovation district is an economic gardening tool that can help emerging local and regional food entrepreneurs increase their market capacity and competitiveness. Districts can also support broader economic gardening efforts by improving the overall business environment in two significant ways:

• **Health and wellness**. Services and facilities that come together in districts can support the growth of farm to school programs, farmers markets, nutrition education, corner store development and the like. These activities are increasingly part of local, state, and federal health and wellness

strategies for reducing the personal, business, and community costs of chronic diseases related to unhealthy dietary patterns.

• **Placemaking**. Local food and associated fresh flavors, neighborliness, farmland, and regional identity are part of enriching the entire live-work-play spectrum that is fundamental to competitiveness in the 21st century's New Economy. It lends a "taste of place" to a community's work to build a "sense of place," which is increasingly worth more to existing and prospective residents and employers than the last century's attractions of cheap land and labor. Placemaking efforts are also increasingly necessary for communities to show when competing for funding. In Michigan, for example, placemaking has become an economic development priority and part of the state's Pure Michigan branding strategy.

Local Food Cluster

The regional food cluster near Ann Arbor, MI, includes several developments that point to a food innovation district in the making.

Sitting within just a few miles of each other, and close to a recreational trail connecting city and country, are:

- The Tilian Farm Business Development Center, which provides low-cost land tenure to startup farmers as well as access to common equipment and business development support.
- The Food Gatherers food bank, which aggregates and distributes millions of pounds of donated and purchased food to people in need in the region.
- The Washtenaw County Food Hub, an emerging project that will provide destination retail and smaller-scale food processing and distribution.

Synergies among these organizations as well as connections to many other food and farm developments in the area can advance regional food system development in southeast Michigan.

Business Clusters

With limited time and money, communities find they can help many businesses grow at the same time by identifying and supporting business clusters. Food innovation districts help generate the benefits of business clustering for the local and regional food sector, which is an emerging and transformative part of the larger food system.

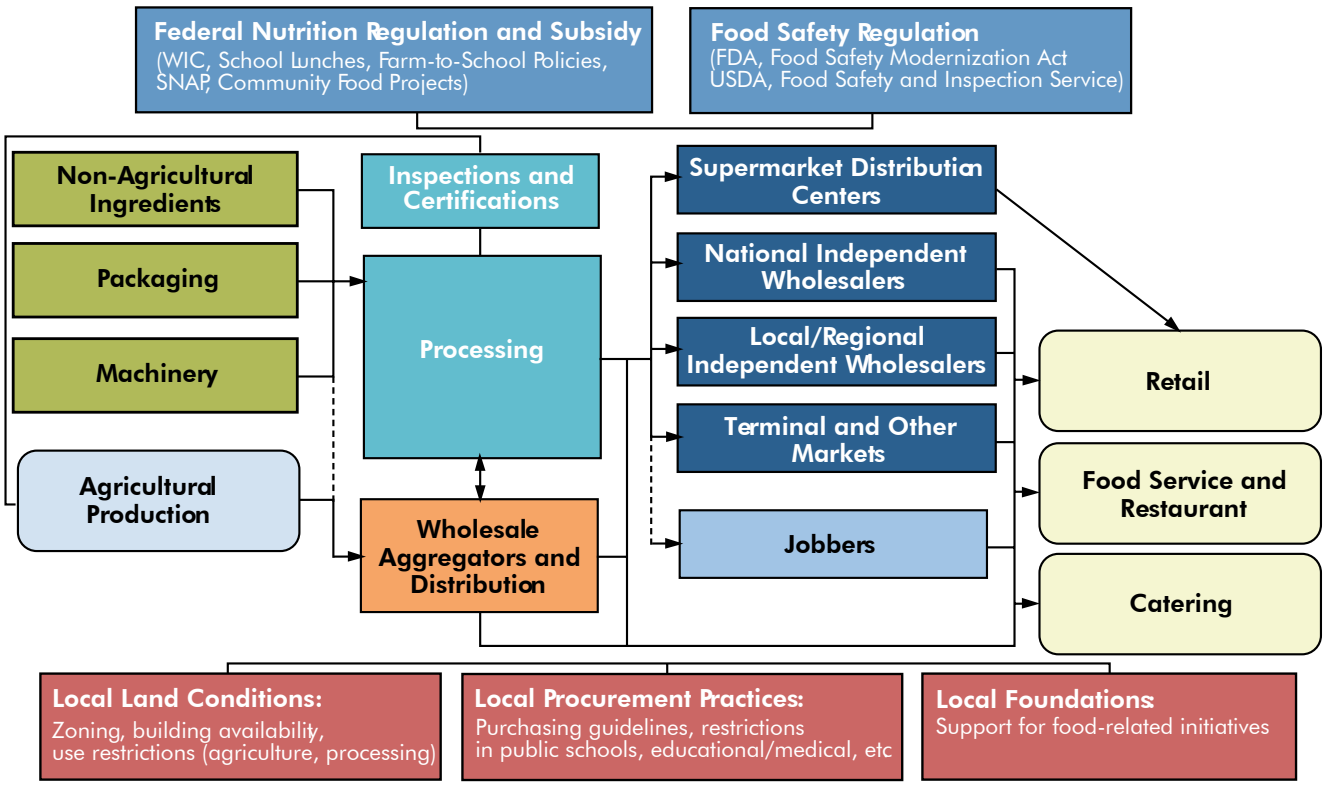
Clustering helps enterprises thrive because entrepreneurs find it beneficial to be close to competitors and collaborators. Benefits range from pools of skilled workers to opportunities for smaller companies to go after bigger deals by partnering with peers that they come to know and trust because of their proximity.

Clusters are common, and – like banking in the world's financial capitals – they form naturally. They also grow strong with a little foresight and investment by local and regional leaders, such as high-tech business clusters in California's Silicon Valley and Boston's new waterfront Innovation District.

Business clusters involve not only individual companies but also many of the resources, institutions, suppliers, and customers that form the cluster's eco-system.

Figure 6: Food Cluster Overview

A typical food cluster includes farmers, fisheries, packagers, distributors, and food buyers as well as regulators, educators, and policymakers such as local food councils and lawmakers working toward statewide food system goals. Food innovation districts help these cluster components come together and connect for healthy regional food system development.



Adapted from "Designing an Inner City Food Cluster Strategy." Initiative for a Competitive Inner City. Presentation given at Northeastern University, February 1, 2012. Available at: www.icic.org/ee_uploads/pdf/FoodClusterStrategy1.pdf

The unique dynamic of food innovation districts helps the local and regional food cluster emerge. Districts are both a destination for consumers and community as well as a staging ground for food and farm entrepreneurs.

As discussed in Section 2, districts are home to a mix of producer-oriented, community-oriented, and place-oriented uses that attract and connect people and build the capacity of entrepreneurs. They gather customers and community activity into the district. They also provide the space, support, and peers that can help businesses scale up (or out) to new customers and markets.

Growth Opportunities

All sizes and stages of food and farm enterprises can benefit from services, facilities, and opportunities at food innovation districts. In the burgeoning local and regional food sector, districts serve three particular business needs and opportunities:

• **Incubation** — Moving enterprises from idea to startup and commercialization. For example, a local juice maker that graduates from a test kitchen to a sidewalk café.

• **Growth** — Providing access to equipment, facilities, services, and technical assistance that enterprises need to expand in a sustainable way. For example, low-rent space with loading docks that the same juice maker soon needs for bottling and regional wholesale.

• **Value Chain** — Connecting supply chain partners around ensuring and delivering products that fit consumer and community values such as fresh taste, nutrition and local commerce. Such a values-based supply chain of enterprises, called a "value chain," helps the juice maker above get the special ingredients it needs to differentiate its product.

Applicable Programs and Approaches

Communities can apply resources available from a number of existing programs to food innovation district development. Existing government and quasi-government agencies, such as downtown development authorities, economic development corporations, land banks, and community action agencies are in prime position to access these resources and put them to use.

Example programs and strategies available to directly support or inform communities working towards the creation of food innovation districts include:

- Real estate development tools such as tax increment financing and business improvement districts.

- Placemaking supports such as the Michigan Main Street program and branding programs that help communities attract people, entrepreneurs and investment.

- Business and workforce development programs operated by local and state organizations, including efforts to build networks of entrepreneurs and connect local suppliers and buyers.

- "Community Development Block Grants," which communities can use for a variety of placemaking- and economic development-related activities.

- Other federal programs, such as those offered through USDA Rural Development and the U.S. Department of Commerce's Economic Development Administration.

- New approaches specific to this sector, such as the Michigan Department of Agriculture and Rural Development's new Value Added/Regional Food System Grant Program.

At the same time, other programs provide food for thought for future initiatives.

- Brownfield Redevelopment funding, for example, is a program that has been instrumental in projects such as the Grand Rapids Downtown Market (see p.25). Budget cuts in states like Michigan, however, have made Brownfield funding less available.

- The former Michigan Smart Zone program provides a model for developing regional networks of districts.

Real Estate Development

Grants, loans, and tax incentives all play a role in development of real estate for food innovation districts, whether property acquisition or building improvements.

Tax increment financing, business improvement districts, renaissance zones, USDA Rural Development programs, and opportunities through the U.S. Department of Commerce Economic Development Administration can all help communities prepare for food innovation districts.

They provide funding, incentives, and other resources for infrastructure, building rehabilitation, and public improvements such as sidewalks, streetscapes, or parking.

Tax Increment Financing Authority

The idea behind tax increment financing is to encourage development of declining or vacant property that produces little if any tax revenue for the community. Tax increment financing (TIF) authorities often finance investments in public facilities and infrastructure, such as streets and plazas, to encourage additional development of properties within a designated TIF district. Local authorities repay the financing with tax revenue increases that the developments generate.

Local Banks Back Viroqua

Wisconsin's Vernon County Economic Development Association (VEDA) used tax increment financing to accomplish half of the nearly $5 million needed to renovate and outfit an abandoned industrial building into a food enterprise center.

The process involved VEDA director Sue Noble working with the City of Viroqua to extend TIF district boundaries. She then recruited five local banks to secure the $2.3 million bond that TIF revenues would repay.

"This whole project demonstrates the value of an economic development organization," Ms. Noble said. "We can access things like TIF revenues and bonds, and we can negotiate with banks and put together partnerships that benefit growing businesses … A business cannot go out on its own and do that."

Michigan statute enables entities such as downtown development authorities (DDAs), local development finance authorities (LDFAs) and corridor improvement authorities to act as tax increment financing authorities.

A community can finance (through bonds or general fund revenue) public improvements in a TIF district that the DDA establishes with approval from the local unit of government. As taxable values increase as a result of the improvements and added investment, the community can "capture" and use any increase in taxes to repay that financing. For instance, a property's taxable value may be $10,000 —its "base value"— at the time the TIF is established. Within ten years, after improvements to enhance the downtown area and additional investment occur, the same property may be worth $50,000.

With TIF, the community can tax the difference between the current and anticipated future property value, and divert those funds—the "tax increment"—to the TIF district for improvements that will make the anticipated property value increase real. The local government and any other taxing authority in the community continue to receive taxes calculated on the base value of the property until the TIF district expires or the local government terminates it.

Downtown Development Authority

Downtown development authorities (DDAs) can play a big role in everything from property development to promotion.

Michigan statute enables cities, villages, and townships with downtown areas that are zoned and used principally for business to establish DDAs. DDAs can use tax increment financing and other financing tools such as special assessments, millages, revenue bonds, and donations or grants to fund public improvements in downtowns.

DDA-funded improvements include streetscapes, transportation improvements, enhancements to public spaces, and façade improvement programs. These improvements often spur new investment in the community. DDAs can also help in developing

Big DDA Role in Grand Rapids

Grand Rapids will, in 2013, celebrate the opening of a major year-round public food market at the southern edge of its downtown area.

The market is located on property that the DDA owns. The DDA also secured financing for streetscape improvements in the area with future tax revenues from the property, which is in the city's tax increment financing district.

The Grand Rapids Downtown Market is expected to spur investments in and increase the value of adjacent vacant and underused commercial and industrial property.

organized downtown marketing efforts, events, and activities.

Land Bank

Land banks focus on the conversion of vacant, abandoned properties into productive use. The nonprofit entities, both governmental and nongovernmental, have been emerging across the country since about 1999 as a way to move delinquent properties back into market circulation and onto the tax rolls. Enabling legislation in Michigan, for example, makes it easier for land banks to acquire and build banks of delinquent properties.

Land Banks and Food

The Kalamazoo Land Bank in southwest Michigan has been working diligently since 2009 to acquire and improve delinquent properties in the central part of the city, including vacant lots for community gardens.

Director Kelley Clarke said the Kalamazoo Land Bank could be a valuable partner to potential food innovation district developers in identifying, acquiring, and managing property.

She said land banks would benefit from a list of desired district amenities, such as loading docks or retail frontage, which the land bank can refer to as it encounters tax-delinquent properties.

Land banks may also work early on with champions to think strategically about district needs and how to acquire delinquent properties and finance redevelopment.

Land banks manage or sell the properties they acquire. Management strategies include Adopt-a-Lot programs by which neighbors maintain vacant lots and often use them for community gardens. Management also includes maintaining buildings and holding properties so they are safer and less harmful to property value while potential new uses develop.

Land banks also identify the most marketable properties and invest in fixing them up for sale. Such investments have helped bring downtown commercial properties and residential neighborhoods back to life.

For food innovation districts, land banks offer expertise in acquiring and managing property as well as leadership in working with multiple stakeholders to advance redevelopment projects. They also can facilitate land donations such as from delinquent property owners. They are potential partners in food innovation district development for their knowledge and skill with converting delinquent properties to new uses.

Business Improvement District

Most states have statutes that allow local governments to finance the maintenance, security and operation of designated business and shopping districts. In Michigan, the Business Improvement District (BID) and Principal Shopping District (PSD) statutes enable cities, villages and urban townships to collect revenues from properties in the districts, levy special assessments or issue bonds based on these revenues.

Another option in Michigan is a Business Improvement Zone (BIZ). Private property owners of parcels in a zone self-finance activities and projects that they outline in a zone plan. Improvements made by and within a BID or BIZ – such as streetscapes, building renovation, and pedestrian amenities – can help create a more usable, attractive space, thereby attracting additional businesses and investment.

Mexicantown Pays Own Way

The Southwest Detroit Business Association used the business improvement district tool to develop its Mexicantown district.

Mexicantown is a successful commercial corridor serving the area's Latino community and attracting others with its culture and distinctive products, including foods such as freshly made tortillas and artisan-made empanadas.

Through its business improvement district, revenues from Mexicantown property owners financed building, street, and other improvements that benefitted all.

Renaissance Zones and Other Tax Incentives

Tax incentive strategies involve local and/or state government giving up some or all of expected tax revenue from a given business investment in order to attract that business investment. It is challenging to use tax incentives today because local governments already find it difficult to cover basic services in the current economic climate of declining revenues.

Nevertheless, some tax incentives are still available and communities still use them.

One type of tax incentive in Michigan is the Renaissance Zone, created under Public Act 376 of 1996 to stimulate economic growth in certain communities. Businesses and residences located in renaissance zones are virtually free of all state and local property taxes as well as state income taxes for the duration of the zone designation (15 years).

Local Tax Credits

Components of a food innovation district are emerging in Marquette, MI, thanks in part to a Commercial Rehabilitation District (CRD) the city set up to support a natural food store's expansion.

The CRD freezes tax increases on property improvements for five years, a financial boost that has helped the Marquette Food Cooperative leverage other financing.

The co-op's expansion is expected to trigger needed redevelopment on the west side of Marquette's downtown. The co-op's local food purchases, as well as a regional food hub that is part of the new store, will help area food and farm businesses increase sales.

Another Michigan tool is the Commercial Rehabilitation District (CRD) by which local governments can approve tax abatements for a period of one to ten years. The CRD freezes taxes

on the property at the pre-improvement taxable value through the CRD term.

Michigan has also established an Agricultural Processing Renaissance Zone (APRZ) program to stimulate investments in innovative food and agricultural processing facilities. Governments and businesses interested in using the tax incentive apply jointly to state government for the designation.

To date, APRZ designations have gone to particular companies rather than to districts of multiple companies – i.e. food innovation districts – that cluster entrepreneurs for peer-to-peer networking and business-to-business opportunities. The Michigan Food Policy Council and the Michigan Good Food Charter have put forward recommendations to establish such zones for smaller businesses and food system enterprise networks, or value chains.

Placemaking

One of the most powerful ways for Michigan communities to retain and attract household and business investment is to become places where people want to be. That means streets that are welcoming and safe for people as well as cars. It means business activity that integrates community activity rather than segregating commerce into drive-by zones.

Placemaking is a multi-faceted approach to the planning, design, and management of communities and neighborhoods. It uses and improves existing community assets to make a place more usable, vibrant, and attractive. Placemaking is particularly relevant for food innovation districts, which are business-focused areas that benefit from connectivity with people and place and which can bring people and place together through food.

The Michigan State Housing and Development Authority is leading a statewide initiative to integrate placemaking into all of Michigan's community and economic development investments, including grants and other programs local governments use.

Placemaking at the Commons

The Village at Grand Traverse Commons is a major mixed-use redevelopment project at a historic hospital campus on the northwestern edge of Traverse City, MI. Food innovation district elements are a significant part of the Common's successful placemaking efforts.

Specialty food and beverage businesses, restaurants, a farmers market, festivals, community gardens, and other attractions have made it a popular place for local residents and visitors and for residents of the Common's renovated Victorian buildings.

A new project to add facilities for local food producers (storage, processing, etc.) will help the region's local, regional, and specialty food sector grow.

The initiative aims to significantly improve the quality of key places in Michigan communities, as well as elevate placemaking as Michigan's new way of thinking about, and reshaping, existing development programs.[5]

The Northwest Michigan Council of Governments' Community Placemaking Guidebook[6] explains that placemaking is associated with a wide range of community improvement strategies and initiatives, including:

• Targeting urban and rural investments to support improvements and expansion of natural asset-based economies for recreational and other values.

• Expanding the affordability and type of housing and transportation choices.

• Preserving the scenic beauty of a place.

• Increasing the visibility and connectivity of public art.

• Marketing local products to attract tourists.

• Providing broadband connection in all public places.

• Implementing "smart growth" practices that allow for appropriate growth that mitigates the negative impacts of sprawl to maintain the identity of communities.

Branding is a placemaking strategy particularly relevant to food innovation districts. Branding helps build and communicate the identity of the place. It also can help the district connect with targeted audiences.

For example, the branding focus could be on attracting entrepreneurs to the district such as food product makers that could use the services and facilities the community makes available there. Branding could also focus on attracting homeownership investment in an area, which the food innovation district is helping to make more and more family friendly with farmers markets in walking distance and edible gardens in parks.

Branding can also build the regional identity of the community and of the products and businesses in food innovation districts. If a region is known for certain foods or wants to be known for its food, it can promote the tastes of its place with branding. The community could also make this regional branding available to farmers and food entrepreneurs who could use it in their own marketing. Pure Michigan is a statewide branding effort that many food and agricultural businesses are beginning to use. Food innovation districts in Michigan could consider linking with Pure Michigan or developing their own regional flavor themes.

Michigan Main Street

One of the placemaking programs available nationally is called Main Street, operated by the National Historic Trust. States operate Main Street programs in conjunction with the national effort. The Main Street programs take a four-point approach:

• **Design** — Community teams that organize with Main Street assistance focus on the physical look and feel of a Main Street district and work to ensure that that the design of property improvements fits.

• **Promotion** — Community teams develop strategies for marketing their Main Street assets.

• **Organization** —Main Street helps communities build their capacity for such work through a governing board and committees.

• **Economic restructuring** — Communities focus on ways to support their existing economic base while also expanding and diversifying it.

These four points are critical to the development and operation of a food innovation district. Local

food and related businesses are also among the assets that Michigan Main Street communities promote and can further develop through food innovation districts in or near a downtown area.

Main Street Kitchen Incubator

The Michigan Main Street organization in the city of Niles, in far southwest Michigan, celebrated in 2012 the opening of a food business incubator in its downtown district.

The purpose of the food business incubator, according to program manager Lisa Croteau, is to start businesses, particularly businesses that will sell products in Niles and help build its reputation as a "foodie" place.

But not only that, Ms. Croteau explains that the food business incubator is also the start of a larger initiative of the Niles Main Street Economic Restructuring committee.

Its aim is to help develop the region's food system, including facilities that area farmers need to move their products to buyers. The goal is a downtown market building that can help build wholesale traffic while also attracting more food attention and investment to downtown Niles.

Community Development Block Grants

The Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) program, funded by the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD), supports a range of activities to help communities build businesses and other assets. Local units of government may receive these funds directly as entitlement communities or may apply to state government agencies that administer CDBG funds.

Each year, Michigan receives approximately $30 million in federal CDBG funds, which go out, on a competitive basis, to eligible counties, cities, villages, and townships, usually with populations under 50,000, for economic development, community development, and housing projects, including placemaking aspects.

Michigan Farm to Food Grants

With Community Development Block Grant funds, the Michigan Economic Development Corporation (MEDC) in 2010 and 2011 offered assistance related to food innovation district development through its Farm to Food and Downtown Infrastructure Grant programs. The MEDC expects to offer the grants again in 2013.

For example, the Allen Neighborhood Center, which serves Lansing, Michigan's Eastside neighborhood, received an MEDC Farm to Food grant. It supports a year-round farmers market that is part of food hub and related facilities the Allen Neighborhood Center is building to link rural farmers and urban food buyers, from residents to restaurants and hospitals.

CDBG funding can support a range of activities involved in development of food innovation districts, such as regional branding, façade and other building improvements, and planning.

The state of Michigan can also direct CDBG funding to particular purposes. In 2011, for example, the Michigan Economic Development Corporation offered grants through a special CDBG Farm to Food program designed to assist communities seeking to construct, rehabilitate, acquire, expand or improve a facility for the support of a three to four season farmers market.

Business and Workforce Development

Local and state agencies commonly operate business development as well as workforce development programs that communities can use to support the growth of farms and other enterprises in local and regional food markets. Quasi-government and nonprofit organizations as well as universities are often partners in such efforts.

The Michigan Small Business and Technology Development Center (SBTDC), for example, operates a statewide network of offices with business counselors available to help startup and growing businesses. The SBTDC partners with chambers of commerce, economic development corporations, councils of governments and others, such as retired business professionals serving in a nationwide network called SCORE.[7]

The Michigan SBTDC has also partnered with an effort at Michigan State University called the Product Center, which provides enterprise development support to food and farm businesses across the state. The MSU Product Center and Michigan SBTDC employ and share "innovation counselors" who devote their efforts to new food and farm businesses.

Other business and workforce development agencies are also increasingly tailoring some of their business and workforce development assistance to the emerging local and regional food cluster.

In 2011, Detroit's Eastern Market Corporation, along with state and city government partners, launched the Detroit Ag and Food Business Cluster Network to build regional food system opportunities. The goal is to spur collaboration on everything from product to workforce development and address common business issues, whether local regulatory snags or regional marketing opportunities. Many of the businesses and matchmaking opportunities are centered at Eastern Market, a food innovation district near downtown Detroit.

Another objective of the Detroit Ag and Food Business Cluster Network is to match local food and agricultural businesses with major Midtown institutions: Henry Ford Health System, Wayne State University, and Detroit Medical Center. Midtown's "Big Three" have committed to increasing the amount of money they spend with Detroit companies for food, supplies, and waste management.

Similarly, regional agencies in northwest Lower Michigan in 2012 joined economic and workforce development forces to launch the Ag and Food System Sector Alliance of Northwest Michigan. Activity ranges from face-to-face business networking to events that address particular issues, such as the need to build bankers' familiarity and engagement with local agriculture. The Alliance is among those involved in food innovation district

development at the Grand Traverse Commons in Traverse City, MI.

Federal Programs

Federal agencies with programs applicable to food innovation districts include the U.S. Department of Agriculture, U.S. Department of Commerce, U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development, and the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services. USDA's Agricultural Marketing Service provides a concise list of relevant programs from these agencies in its 2012 "Regional Food Hub Resource Guide."[8]

USDA's various agencies are home to several programs that apply to food innovation district development. Available grants and loans cover such food innovation district related investments as farmers market structures, community kitchens, and business incubators.

The City of Gladwin, MI, for example, in 2010 received funding to construct a permanent farmers market pavilion. Such structures can serve as valuable components of food innovation districts. Another example is Agricultural Marketing Service funding for a farm business incubator in the Ann Arbor area through the agency's Farmers Market Promotion Program.

Similarly, the U.S. Department of Commerce's Economic Development Administration provides grants and loans that can support food innovation districts. The EDA awarded, for example, the Vernon Economic Development Association in southwestern Wisconsin $2 million for renovation of a 100,000 square-foot industrial building on the edge of rural Viroqua that is now a business development center for food and wellness enterprises, including a regional food hub moving meats, dairy products, fruits, vegetables, and value-added food products to hospitals, schools and other major buyers.

Know Your Farmer

The U.S. Department of Agriculture has developed a new way for farmers, communities and others to find financing, technical assistance and other programs that relate to local and regional food system development.

The USDA's "Know Your Farmer, Know Your Food" website includes a list of applicable grants, loans, and other support as well as a national collection of example projects that have received funding.

Access the online portal at:
www.usda.gov/wps/portal/usda/usdahome?navid=KNOWYOURFARMER

State Programs

In 2012 the state legislature in Michigan appropriated nearly $2 million for a new grant program designed to support food hub development as well as help the state's farmers add value to their crops, such as wine from grapes and ice cream from milk. The Michigan Department of Agriculture and Natural Resources, which administers the program, announced the first round of grant awards in this new program in late 2012.

Many other states have value-added product and food system development programs. In addition to grants and loans, states have begun to establish food system development as a priority and direct state agencies to invest in it. The Illinois Food, Farms, and Jobs Act of 2007, for example, directs state agencies to purchase 20 percent local (Illinois) food by 2020 and allows them to choose Illinois vendors over lower-cost bids. The Act also calls for development of a plan to help Illinois farmers and related businesses in the state build the distribution and other supply chain linkages needed to succeed. The legislation provides the basis for future programs to support business development.

Many states also have state-level food policy councils in addition to local and regional councils. The Michigan Food Policy Council, for example, convenes state agencies and community and industry leaders to solve problems and prioritize investments in food system development. It has adopted goals in the citizen-led Michigan Good Food Charter to guide its work.

Past Programs: Food for Thought

A number of other programs provide ideas for future policy development for food innovation districts.

One past program in Michigan that has particular relevance for food innovation district development is the Michigan SmartZones program. SmartZones are technology business incubation and acceleration districts that bring entrepreneurs together for business clustering benefits. They also put entrepreneurs in close proximity with university researchers and others that can provide important support.

Applying the SmartZone approach to regional food system development, the focus would be on incubating food and farm businesses and accelerating business-to-business activity, such as development of distribution and processing infrastructure, across a region. Such regional food and agriculture SmartZones would support micropolitan and metropolitan food system strategies and possibly link and support food innovation districts in a region's rural to urban spectrum.

Section 4
Tools and Resources

Food Innovation District Development Worksheet

Note: This worksheet is included here as a reference. While you can print these pages and complete them by hand, for greater flexibility and additional writing space, please see the worksheet template in Microsoft Word format at www.nwm.org/food-innovation-districts.

ASSESSMENT

Step 1. Community Information

An initial step in the food innovation district assessment is to gather basic information about the community or region that the food innovation district will draw from and serve.

What are the characteristics of the community or region in question?	Physical and ecological notes (transportation, growing areas …) Social and economic notes (personal income, commercial activity …)	**Considerations** A regional food system involves physical, economic, social and ecological relationships that make up a natural community or "place." Try to identify the key elements of these relationships, which create the context for a food innovation district.
What is the population of the community/ region? What are key demographics?		
What information is available on food production in the community/region (farmers, crops, sales, trends)?		
What information is available on food consumption in the community/ region (totals, sales, trends)?		
Opportunities and challenges:		
Comments and conclusions:		

Step 2. Rationale or Need Assessment

Stakeholders, business needs, community interest, or other motivational factors can drive the creation of a food innovation district. Understanding the needs and interest surrounding development can help communities determine the appropriate scale, extent, and location.

	Circle Yes/No		Considerations
Is there an emerging food business cluster in the community?	**Yes**	If yes, identify focus and rough geographic boundaries:	Even if food businesses don't exist in close proximity to each other, there may be opportunities to network or connect existing businesses.
	No	If no, identify or summarize existing food businesses:	
What are the food business needs (missing supply chain components, labor or technical assistance needs)?			Consider regional food business needs and gaps in existing regional food infrastructure in the context of your community's assets.
Is there strong community interest in building or enhancing the local food system?	**Yes**	If yes, identify any community plans, surveys, or other information identifying community goals or interest surrounding the local food system:	Community support is an important element in building a successful district. There are many ways to gauge support or interest, such as surveys or planning documents.
	No	If no, identify any local concerns relative to enhancing the local food system:	
Have food systems been discussed or included in the community's master plan?	**Yes**	If yes, identify recommended goals or actions:	Food system goals that are included in a local master plan can provide important leverage in grant applications or other proposals.
	No	If no, identify other local plans or policies that address local or regional food systems:	
Opportunities and challenges:			
Comments and conclusions:			

Step 3. Identify Assets and Opportunities

It is important to build on current infrastructure and activities and therefore to identify any existing elements related to a food innovation district in your community/region. Understanding these can help define the focus, vision, and opportunities for further planning and development.

	Circle Yes/No		Considerations
Is there a food hub in the intended community/ region of the food innovation district?	**Yes**	If yes, identify location and describe:	Food hubs can be an important part of a district, but are not a necessary element. If no food hub exists in the district, consider linking to food hubs or distribution networks in nearby regions.
	No	If no, identify and describe any food hubs under development or in neighboring regions:	
Producer-Oriented Elements		**Describe current, planned or desired activity for each area:**	If these uses exist but are not currently used for food systems, consider opportunities for adaptive reuse or redevelopment.
Wholesale facility	**Yes**		
	No		
Food retail	**Yes**		
	No		
Coordination / assistance	**Yes**		
	No		
Distribution network	**Yes**		
	No		
Shared storage facility	**Yes**		
	No		
Processing facility	**Yes**		
	No		
Marketing service	**Yes**		
	No		
Farm to institution programs	**Yes**		
	No		

Step 3. Identify Assets and Opportunities Continued

	Circle Yes/No		Considerations
Community-Oriented Elements		**Describe current, planned or desired activity for each area:**	
Educational programming	**Yes** / **No**		Many community programs may exist without linkages to the local food system. Explore possible connections with education, health, and social programs to food producers and businesses to increase access to fresh local food while building businesses.
Community supported agriculture	**Yes** / **No**		
Community gardens	**Yes** / **No**		
Community / incubator kitchen	**Yes** / **No**		
Connection to low-income individuals / families	**Yes** / **No**		
Place-Oriented Elements		**Describe current, planned or desired activity for each area:**	
Supportive policy	**Yes** / **No**		
Placemaking	**Yes** / **No**		
Café / eatery	**Yes** / **No**		
Events / agritourism	**Yes** / **No**		
Local food identity	**Yes** / **No**		
Does a food policy network exist in the community or region?	**Yes**	If yes, identify network and potential opportunities to connect:	Consider attending or linking to existing food networks. Or, if none exist, explore the creation of a local food network. Invite food businesses, nonprofits, local governments, and other stakeholders.
	No	If no, identify food system stakeholders (producers, businesses, nonprofits, institutions, etc.):	
Opportunities and challenges:			
Comments and conclusions:			

PROJECT INITIATION

Step 4. Vision

It is important to have a "big picture" idea of how the food innovation district will operate. Based on the needs assessment, community goals, and existing assets identified in Step 2, work toward a vision and general goals for the district. Will it be primarily focused on processing or distribution, or will there be a strong community component? Will the district be tied to other community initiatives, such as redevelopment or historic preservation efforts? Will there be connections with other, ongoing food system efforts? Consider these questions in the context of a public conversation, with input from a variety of stakeholders.

		Circle Yes/No		Considerations
Will the district have elements that are:	**Producer-oriented?**	**Yes**	Identify or summarize anchor uses and complementary uses:	If activities in all three categories are not expected in the district, consider linkages to other types of activities outside the district.
		No		
	Consumer-oriented?	**Yes**		
		No		
	Community-oriented?	**Yes**		
		No		
Will the food innovation district be part of a larger community initiative?		**Yes**	If yes, identify initiative and potential connection:	Linking the district to ongoing community initiatives can help create momentum and opportunities.
		No		
Will the food innovation district be connected to regional initiatives?		**Yes**	If yes, identify related regional initiative(s):	If the proposed district is lacking key components, consider connections with regional initiatives. Gaps in or needs of regional food innovation efforts may provide opportunities.
		No		
What are the main goals of the district?		List goals:		
What is the vision of the district?		State vision:		

Step 5. Defining the District Boundaries

Location will be a primary consideration of any food innovation district. When considering potential districts, it will be important to balance the needs of uses that are expected to occur in the district. Needs may include infrastructure or transportation availability, nearby farms, and presence of complementary uses. Consider the following questions when defining district boundaries.

	Circle Yes/No		Considerations
Where are the most important assets for the proposed district?	Summarize identified assets:		While it's advantageous for most uses to be located in close proximity to each other, food innovation districts can also be connected across locations. That is, consumer-oriented uses may be located in a shopping district, while production and distribution activities may be located across town in a light industrial district.
Is the necessary infrastructure (sewer, water, broadband, wireless) available?	**Yes**	If yes, identify type and capacity:	Depending on the main focus of the district, infrastructure or transportation availability may be a key factor in where the district is located.
	No	If no, identify any plans to expand or enhance infrastructure:	
Are there geographic areas where tax increment financing (TIF) or other financial incentives are available?	**Yes**	If yes, identify areas and the incentives available:	TIF districts, often located or available in downtowns, brownfields, or designated corridors, provide important financing options for public improvements that may be needed in a food innovation district. Incentives are also covered in Step 7, "Business Attraction and Economic Development."
	No	If no, identify any areas that could be eligible:	
Are there geographic areas designated in the master plan that are appropriate for a food innovation district?	**Yes**	If yes, identify areas and how they are described in the master plan:	Consider the community's long-range vision for land uses and development when planning a food innovation district. Is the proposed district compatible with the master plan?
	No	If no, identify how the overall master plan relates to the creation of a food innovation district:	
Opportunities and challenges:			
Comments and conclusions:			

IMPLEMENTATION

Step 6. Planning and Zoning

Planning and zoning can help direct or encourage the development of a food innovation district and may be necessary for the desired uses to be able to legally locate in the same area.

	Circle Yes/No		Considerations
Does the local master plan address the local or regional food system?	**Yes**	If yes, summarize goals or recommendations relative to the local or regional food system:	Many communities regularly review and update their master plans. Determine the review and update timeline for the local master plan in order to identify opportunities to address food system issues.
	No	If no, identify any plans to amend or update the master plan:	
Are desired food innovation district uses permitted by zoning within the boundaries of the proposed district?	**Yes**	If yes, identify the district types where this is true:	If most uses are allowed by existing zoning regulations, consider filling in the gaps by amending the zoning district to allow additional uses. If the district is covered by multiple zoning categories, consider zoning updates or amendments, such as an overlay district, to allow and regulate additional uses. See Zoning Guidance p.70.
	No	If no, identify desired uses that are not permitted by zoning and identify any plans to amend or update zoning:	
Opportunities and challenges:			
Comments and conclusions:			

Step 7. Business Attraction and Economic Development

Supporting and attracting food innovation businesses will be paramount in the success of a food innovation district. Economic development considerations include financing mechanisms that support public improvements, tax credit programs for new and existing businesses, and grant opportunities.

	Circle Yes/No		Considerations
Have there been any market or feasibility studies conducted for the community?	**Yes**	If yes, summarize findings related to food businesses:	Market studies can help make the case for entrepreneurs or existing businesses to locate within the food innovation district.
	No	If no, summarize what is known about the local economy related to food businesses:	
Are relevant promotional or marketing services provided by any local organizations?	**Yes**	If yes, identify type and provider:	Organizations such as chambers of commerce or downtown development authorities (DDAs) can provide business services and marketing support to new or existing businesses.
	No	If no, identify marketing needs:	
Are low-interest loans, tax incentives, or other financial incentive programs available to new and existing businesses?	**Yes**	If yes, identify programs:	Financial incentives available through downtown development authorities, corridor improvement authorities, economic development corporations, or brownfield authorities may include tax increment financing, revolving loan funds, and other programs. Other organizations or local/regional/state governments may provide funding for building façade improvements, site cleanup, new infrastructure, or other improvements through grants or tax credits.
	No	If no, identify any plans to establish incentives:	
Is there local staff capacity to engage in business recruitment, attraction, grant writing, or other economic development activities?	**Yes**	If yes, identify organization(s) with staff capacity:	Staff is essential in coordinating district activities, particularly for economic development activities. If staff capacity is limited, consider partnerships with other organizations or grant-funded staff positions.
	No	If no, identify potential partners:	
Opportunities and challenges:			
Comments and conclusions:			

Food Innovation District Overlay – Zoning Guidance

A food innovation district is a geographic concentration of food-oriented businesses, services, and community activities that local governments support through planning and economic development initiatives in order to promote a positive business environment, spur regional food system development, and increase access to local food. Zoning forms one of the critical supports for food innovation districts. Appropriate zoning can reduce barriers to their creation while encouraging the concentration of food innovation uses in a given geographical area.

One way to zone for the many complementary uses that form a food innovation district is through overlay zoning. Because food innovation districts often straddle the divide between commercial and industrial uses, overlay zoning offers a way to gather these uses across districts, with regulations to ensure that they are appropriate for surrounding land uses. This document is intended to provide initial guidance in zoning for food innovation districts, identifying and defining common uses and considerations in the application of an overlay ordinance.

It's important to note that each locality will have its own priorities, goals, needs, and issues to address; and local ordinances and development review policies vary widely across jurisdictions. Food innovation districts may fit communities' zoning ordinances in different contexts. As such, rather than provide "one size fits all" ordinance language, this guidance is intended to provide some baseline considerations in zoning for food innovation districts.

While the guidance is designed for overlay districts, many of these considerations can be used in applying the concept of food innovation districts to existing districts or to new zoning districts. It is strongly advised that local governments examine their development review process to determine whether and how food innovation districts may best be implemented. Additionally, the community should follow normal legal review when borrowing language from this document.

Purpose and Intent

Any new zoning amendment, either for a district or for an overlay, should identify the purpose of the ordinance or district. The purpose should reflect the community's vision and objectives related to the food innovation district. Some purposes that may be considered:

- Where the economic benefits of food innovation districts are a primary goal, the purpose statement may refer to the anticipated economic benefits of localizing goods and services, and of aggregating food-related uses by intensity, in order to enable such uses to be integrated in a given area of the community.

- Depending on the location and services or utilities currently available, the purpose statement may also address anticipated needs and impacts resulting from these activities, such as increased demand for utilities, and the anticipated impact of the overlay on addressing these needs or impacts.

- In some cases, food innovation districts may already exist, or may be forming. In these situations, the

purpose statement may identify these areas and note unique qualities that require special treatment, or locations where special approaches to development may be warranted. The purpose statement may note that the district is intended to protect these areas from incompatible development or to establish development standards which will ensure that new developments will not adversely affect surrounding areas.

Area Affected

The food innovation district overlay zone should be identified by the community through a description and/or reference to a zoning map amendment. The description of the area affected may occur within the article specific to the food innovation districts overlay, or within a section of the ordinance that generally identifies districts and boundaries. The area affected will also be included on the community's official zoning map.

Dimensional Requirements

While overlay zone dimensional requirements – such as lot size, setbacks, height restrictions, and other dimensional requirements – can default to the underlying zoning, local practitioners may want to closely examine existing lot sizes, setbacks, and other development patterns in the district area to determine if these are appropriate for food innovation district activities or for the intended character of the overlay district. The community should carefully examine needs and anticipated impacts, along with existing requirements for uses in other districts, to establish these requirements.

Definitions

All new terms or uses used in the overlay district must be defined in the ordinance. The text for food innovation district definitions should be added to the section of the existing zoning ordinance where definitions are found. In some ordinances, definitions specific to overlay zones might be contained within the article for the overlay zoning district; if this is the case, it may be appropriate to include them in the food innovation district overlay article.

Following are examples of definitions currently found in U.S. municipal zoning ordinances for uses that may be considered as part of a food innovation district. Some uses may already be included in a community's ordinance, and others may be new uses that haven't yet been considered. In either case, communities should examine definitions currently in their ordinances to determine whether additional definitions, or revisions to existing definitions, are needed and to ensure that new definitions do not contravene existing definitions or are otherwise incompatible.

For Michigan and other Right to Farm states, agriculture-related definitions may need to follow the definitions used in a state Right to Farm law. Notes on where this may apply are provided for several of the definitions that follow.

Agricultural processing, major. Activities involving a variety of operations on crops or livestock which may generate dust, noise, odors, pollutants, or visual impacts that extend beyond the property lines. These uses

include, but are not limited to, slaughterhouses, mills, refineries, canneries, and milk processing plants.

Agricultural processing, minor. Activities which are not major agricultural processing and which involve a variety of operations after harvest of crops to prepare them for market, or further processing and packaging at a distance from the agricultural area. Included activities are cleaning, milling, pulping, drying, roasting, hulling, storing, packaging, selling, and other similar activities. Also included are the facilities or buildings related to such activities.

Aquaculture. The cultivation of aquatic animals, in a recirculating environment to produce whole fish that are distributed to retailers, restaurants, and consumers.

Aquaponics. The combination of aquaculture and hydroponics to grow crops and fish together in a recirculating system without any discharge or exchange of water.

Coldframe. An unheated outdoor structure consisting of a wooden or concrete frame and a top of glass or clear plastic, used for protecting seedlings and plants from the cold.

Community kitchen. A facility licensed as a food manufacturer that may be used by licensed businesses for commercial purpose. A community kitchen may also be an unlicensed kitchen that is used by community members for cooking non-commercial or exempt foods or for cooking classes and/or other related activities.

Community Supported Agriculture (CSA). An urban farm that produces farm products for a group of farm members or subscribers who pay in advance for their share of the harvest.

- **CSA distribution site.** A specific location on a site, either inside or outside a building, where CSA members pick up their share of the CSA harvest, including parking areas.

Distribution center. A use where goods are received and/or stored for delivery to the ultimate customer at remote locations.

Farm, urban. An establishment where food or ornamental crops are grown and processed to be sold or donated on the same lot or off-site that includes, but is not limited to, outdoor growing operations, indoor growing operations, vertical farms, aquaponics, aquaculture, and rooftop farms, but does not include live-stock.

Farm products. Fruits, vegetables, mushrooms, grains, herbs, legumes, nuts, shell eggs, honey or other bee products, flowers, nursery stock, livestock food products (including meat, milk, yogurt, cheese, and other dairy products) and seafood. OR the same as defined in the Right to Farm Act, Michigan Common Law 286.471 et seq.

Farm stand. A temporary building or structure, not to exceed a gross floor area of 500 square feet, used for the retail sales of agricultural products produced on the property.

Farmers market. An outdoor market open to the public, operated by a governmental agency, a nonprofit corporation, or one or more producers, offering for sale at retail home-grown vegetables, produce, or other farm products, occurring in a pre-designated area, where the vendors are generally individuals who have

raised the vegetables or have taken the same on consignment for retail sale. OR the same as defined in the Generally Accepted Agricultural Management Practices (GAAMP) for Farm Markets, adopted pursuant to the Right to Farm Act Michigan Common Law 286.471 et seq.

Food research and development facility. Research, development, and testing laboratories that do not involve the mass manufacture, fabrication, processing, or sale of food products.

Food storage, bulk. The holding or stockpiling on land of food products where such storage constitutes 40 percent of the developed site area and storage area is at least one acre, and where at least three of the following criteria are met by the storage activity: (1) in a bulk form or in bulk containers; (2) under protective cover to the essential exclusion of others of the same space due to special fixtures or exposed to the elements; (3) in sufficient numbers, quantities, or spatial allocation of the site to determine and rank such uses as the principal use of the site; (4) the major function is the collection and/or distribution of the material and/or products rather than processing; and (5) the presence of fixed bulk containers or visible stockpiles for a substantial period of a year.

Gardens. A planned space, set aside for the display, cultivation, and enjoyment of plants including vegetables, flowers, and fruits for private/personal use.

- **Garden, community**. Gardens operated with a primary purpose of providing space for members of the community to grow plants for food, beautification, education, and recreation for personal use. Sales, processing, and storage of plants or plant products are prohibited on site.

- **Gardens, market.** Gardens operated with a primary purpose of growing plants for sale or donation that are smaller in scale than an urban farm.

COMMENTARY: *Community gardens are typically not-for-profit operations run by community groups or nonprofits. Market gardens, on the other hand, are operated with the purpose of growing food for sale. They are generally less intensive agricultural operations than urban farms though specific size delineations between market gardens and urban farms can vary by community.*

Greenhouse. A building made of glass, plastic, or fiberglass in which plants are cultivated.

Hoophouse. A structure made of PVC piping or other material covered with translucent plastic, constructed in a "half round" or "hoop" shape, for the purposes of growing plants.

Local/regional food items. Food raised, produced, or distributed within the state or less than 400 miles from its source (110th Congress, 2008, Public Law 110-234 section).

COMMENTARY: *This definition relies on adopted federal law; however, there are many different approaches used to define "local" or "regional" food. Some communities may restrict the definition of "local" food to include only that food grown or produced within the county; some may use the term "local" food to mean any food grown within a set radius from the community, such as food grown within 100 miles of the community; and others may include any food produced within the state. The definition used will depend on the community's goals for their own local or regional food system.*

Restaurant. A structure in which the principal use is the preparation and sale of food and beverages.

Retail sales establishment, food. Any establishment selling food or beverages for consumption off-premises either immediately or with further preparation. Such establishments may include, but not be limited to, supermarket, grocery store, bakery, candy store, butcher, delicatessen, convenience store, and similar establishments. Gross floor area of the food retail sales establishment shall not exceed 50,000 square feet.

COMMENTARY: *Ideally, food innovation districts will occur at a neighborhood scale that reinforces the community's sense of place while providing outlets and opportunities for local and regional food entrepreneurs. Size maximums on retail stores discourage larger "big-box" retail outlets from occurring in the district. The community may want to review this requirement in the context of their goals and development needs.*

Service establishment. Any establishment whose primary activity is the provision of assistance, as opposed to products, to individuals, business, industry, government, and other enterprises.

Social service agency. A facility operated by an organization which provides services such as training, counseling, health, or the distribution of food or clothing. This term includes, but is not limited to, a facility offering life skills training and housing services.

Value added farm product. Any product processed by a producer from a farm product, such as baked goods, jams and jellies, canned vegetables, dried fruit, syrups, salsas, salad dressings, flours, coffee, smoked or canned meats or fish, sausages, or prepared foods.

Warehouse. Facilities characterized by extensive warehousing, frequent heavy trucking activity, open storage of material, or nuisances such as dust, noise, and odors, but not involved in manufacturing or production.

Permitted Uses

Many food innovation-related uses are likely to be permitted under most communities' existing regulations governing commercial and industrial uses. The following list provides a sampling of land uses that a community may want to allow in both commercial and industrial districts, in order to encourage a mix of uses that will support a food innovation district. Communities should use their own ordinance as a starting point and can add or extract uses as appropriate to the goals of the district.

Because the intent is for food innovation districts to occur in commercial and/or industrial areas, many uses may be permitted by right with the understanding that uses and impacts are largely consistent with and appropriate for a commercial or industrial neighborhood. In residential districts, or in areas adjacent to residential uses or neighborhoods, additional regulations may be useful in reducing the noise, traffic, and other impacts of commercial operations, such as farmers markets. For instance, limited hours of operation may reduce noise and other impacts to surrounding land uses.

Following are uses that may be considered for addition to the overlay district or to a new food innovation district, with some considerations relative to regulations.

Community kitchens.

Food research and development facilities.

- Research and development facilities are typically allowed in industrial districts. Communities can consider limiting the type of facilities to those focused on food research and development in order to encourage the business-to-business synergies characteristic of a district.

- "Nuisance" impacts such as odor, dust, smoke, gas, noise, radiation, or vibration associated with higher-impact activities or uses may be regulated by other sections of the zoning ordinance or by other community regulations. Because the food innovation district is intended to bridge a number of uses, including both commercial and light industrial activities, communities may want to consider regulations that reduce the impacts of research and development activities on neighboring land uses, if these impacts aren't addressed elsewhere.

Farmers market.

- Farmers markets are defined and protected by the Michigan Right to Farm Act (RTFA). Be sure to consider the RTFA definition and restrictions in any regulations relative to farmers markets.

- Considerations for farmers markets include requiring that all farmers markets and their vendors receive all required operating and health permits and that these permits or copies are in the possession of the farmers market operator on the site of the farmers market during hours of operation.

- Sales at farmers markets are typically restricted to products grown or produced locally. Ratios and allowances related to the types of products sold at farmers markets may vary widely based on community needs and goals.

- Depending on the underlying zoning district and adjacent neighborhoods, it may be helpful to limit hours of operation. In residential neighborhoods, or in areas adjacent to residential neighborhoods, limited hours of operation may minimize the impacts of noise and activity.

Food retail sales establishments.

- Some communities limit the overall size of food retail establishments to ensure that the scale of the establishment is appropriate with the neighborhood. For food innovation districts at the neighborhood scale, a lower size threshold – for instance, not to exceed 8,000 square feet – could be considered a "by-right" use, while a larger retail establishment could be subject to special use permit procedures.

Garden, community.

- Community gardens are typically used by residents for growing plants and flowers for personal use; however, in some cases, gardeners may want to sell some excess produce. If the community expects or wants sales to occur at the garden site, it may be helpful to limit sales as a temporary accessory use, while specifying that sales are limited to produce or products grown at the garden. Allowed time periods for sales will vary according to community needs and goals.

Garden, market.

- Depending on the location of the district, communities may wish to consider restrictions on the scale of mechanized equipment used at the market garden. Some communities require that equipment be "household scale," or similar in scale to equipment designed for household use. However, during the initial preparation of the land, heavy equipment may be used to prepare the land during specified hours.

- Because the primary use is intended to be production, rather than retail sales, consider regulating sales of produce as a temporary, rather than permanent use. Allowed time periods for sales will vary according to community needs and goals. Additionally, consider limiting the sale of products to food or value-added products grown or produced at the garden.

- Identify whether animals are prohibited or allowed. In urban areas, livestock is often prohibited.

Greenhouse.

Minor agricultural processing.

- "Nuisance" impacts such as odor, dust, smoke, gas, noise, radiation, or vibration associated with higher-impact activities or uses may be regulated by other sections of the zoning ordinance or by other community regulations, such as a nuisance ordinance. Because the food innovation district is intended to bridge a number of uses, including both commercial and light industrial activities, communities may want to consider regulations that reduce the impacts of traditional "industrial" or "light industrial" activities such as food processing on neighboring land uses, if these impacts aren't addressed elsewhere. Screening or enclosing activities may also help minimize impacts for lower-impact industrial uses.

Restaurants.

- Depending on the goal and design of the food innovation district, the community may want to consider regulations that would restrict drive-through restaurants, in order to try to encourage a more walkable neighborhood.

Service establishments.

Social service agencies.

Urban agriculture uses.

- Urban agriculture uses include community supported agriculture; market gardens; community gar dens; and urban farms. Urban agriculture uses can enhance the mix of district land uses to include food production and may be appropriate uses for a food innovation district that includes a significant amount of undeveloped acreage, or is located on the fringe of an urban area. However, it is im portant for Michigan communities to be aware of the impacts of Michigan Right to Farm Act considerations when considering these uses for inclusion in food innovation district regulations.

COMMENTARY: *The Michigan Right to Farm Act (RTFA), Public Act 93 of 1981, was passed with the intent of protecting farmers from nuisance lawsuits. Under RTFA, farmers that follow the Generally Accepted Agricultural Management Practices (GAAMP) cannot be sued for the noise, dust, odor, etc. emanating from their farm, so long as this "nuisance" is the result of normal operations under the umbrella of the GAAMPs. In 2000, the law was amended to prohibit local units of government from creating stricter standards than those included in RTFA. In practice, this means that local governments are prohibited from passing any resolutions, ordinances, or other actions that would conflict with the Michigan RTFA or GAAMPs.*

There are some exceptions to this prohibition. Municipalities with populations over 100,000 are exempt from some provisions related to zoning if existing farms are designated as legal nonconforming uses. Also, if "adverse effects on the environment or public health will exist within the local unit of government" because of RTFA provisions, the local unit of government can submit an alternative proposed ordinance to the Michigan Department of Agriculture and Rural Development for consideration.

The urban agriculture uses, as well as several other uses, described here may fall under the scope of the RTFA. While these uses are considered to be appropriate for food innovation districts, additional consideration should be given to the RTFA; and Michigan communities should consult with legal counsel to determine which urban agriculture uses should be regulated, and if so, how.

For additional information on the Michigan Right to Farm Act, see Norris et al. (available at http://msulawreview.org/PDFS/2011-2/Norris.pdf). Please note that right to farm act legislation, and implications for local zoning, vary by state. Users of this guidance outside of Michigan should be aware of right to farm implications for urban agriculture uses in their state.

Accessory Uses

Depending on the character of the food innovation district, accessory buildings or uses within the district might include farm stands, hoop houses, and cold frames. These are all agricultural uses with RTFA implications, and should be considered in the context of RTFA (see commentary above).

Special Uses

In some cases, due to noise, traffic, or other impacts, a special use approval procedure may be appropriate. Special use permits require compliance with specific standards and an additional layer of review to ensure that negative effects of more intensive land uses are minimized or controlled. Zoning ordinances typically include a given set of procedures for the application of these review procedures or standards. Any uses permitted in a food innovation overlay district as a special use would be subject to that section of the ordinance that addresses special use permit approvals.

Some uses that may have impacts that could benefit from additional review include:

Agricultural processing, major.

Community supported agriculture.

• Depending on location, particularly in rural areas or in communities with large areas of undeveloped acreage, community supported agriculture (CSA) may be an appropriate use to permit by right; however, in dense commercial/industrial areas or in areas adjacent to residential neighborhoods, it may be more appropriate to authorize CSAs via the special use permit process in order to mitigate any impacts from machinery, irrigation, etc. Please note that CSAs fall under the purview of the RTFA, and any regulations addressing this use should be considered in the context of RTFA implications.

• Distribution of CSA products may be regulated separately or as part of the CSA. Consider limiting the products distributed or sold at a CSA distribution site to those grown at the CSA. Additionally, for value-added products sold at any CSA distribution site, the community may require that certain percentages of the primary ingredient be locally- or regionally-produced, or grown at the CSA site.

• Hours of operation may be useful depending on the location of the CSA or the underlying zoning district. In residential neighborhoods, or in areas adjacent to residential neighborhoods, hours of operation may reduce noise and other impacts to surrounding land uses.

Distribution centers.

Food retail stores.

• Ideally, food innovation districts will occur at a neighborhood scale that reinforces the community's sense of place while providing outlets and opportunities for local and regional food entrepreneurs. Size maximums on retail stores discourage larger "big-box" retail outlets from occurring in the district. The community may want to review this requirement in the context of their goals and development needs.

Urban agriculture uses.

• Depending on location, particularly in rural areas or in communities with large areas of undeveloped acreage, community supported agriculture and/or urban farms may be appropriate uses to permit by right; however, in dense commercial/industrial areas or in areas adjacent to residential neighborhoods, it may be more appropriate to authorize urban farms via the special use permit process, in order to mitigate any impacts from machinery, irrigation, etc. Please note that CSAs fall under the purview of the RTFA, and any regulations addressing this use should be considered in the context of RTFA implications.

Warehouse.

Site Development Standards

As an overlay, food innovation district regulations will generally refer back to zoning requirements for the underlying district, which can include parking, landscaping, signage, lighting, and other site development standards. In some cases, these elements may be regulated in specific chapters or sections of the zoning ordinance. The overlay may simply reference these chapters. However, in some cases it may be appropriate to consider parking, landscaping, and other site development standards specific to the food innovation overlay district, in order to ensure that the goals and needs of the district and surrounding uses are met.

Design Standards

Whether food innovation districts are regulated as an overlay district, part of an existing zoning district, or as a new zoning district, they will ideally form a cohesive neighborhood that reinforces or builds the community's sense of place. In the interest of promoting that sense of place, design guidelines or the use of form-based zoning may be valuable. However, design guidelines and form-based code are very specific to a particular place, community goals, and needs of the district; and the usage or development of design guidelines should be carefully considered in the context both of the existing ordinance and community goals.

Sources:
Much of the example zoning language provided in this document has been gathered from existing zoning ordinances. Ordinances consulted include:

- Lake Elsinore, CA
- Jefferson County, CO
- Clearwater, FL
- Atlanta, GA
- Hawaii County, HI
- Champaign, IL
- North Liberty, IA
- Fort Wayne, IN
- Ford County, KS
- Baton Rouge, LA
- Gorham, ME
- Frederick, MD
- Somerville, MA
- Acme Township, MI
- Ann Arbor Township, MI
- Emmet County, MI
- Frankfort, MI
- Leelanau Township, MI
- Peninsula Township, MI
- Traverse City, MI
- Minneapolis, MN
- Cleveland, OH
- Prince William County, VA
- Island County, WA
- Renton, WA
- Milwaukee, WI

Resources

Funding and Financing

Green for Greens: Finding Public Financing for Healthy Food Retail
ChangeLab Solutions, 2012
changelabsolutions.org/publications/green-for-greens

Guide to Federal Funding for Local and Regional Food Systems
National Sustainable Agriculture Coalition, 2010
sustainableagriculture.net/wp-content/uploads/2010/06/6.18-FINAL-Food-System-Funding-Guide2.pdf

Healthy Food Financing Initiative
U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, Office of Community Services
www.acf.hhs.gov/programs/ocs/resource/healthy-food-financing-initiative-0

Philanthropic Resources
Grant making and other philanthropic support for healthy regional food systems is a growing area of focus for corporate and community foundations across the country.

- The Council on Foundations is a gateway to finding philanthropic organizations interested in particular communities, regions, and issues: www.cof.org

- State associations of community foundations are resources for local and state contacts, such as the Council of Michigan Foundations: www.michiganfoundations.org

- Funders are also forming groups focused on healthy food system development such as the national Sustainable Agriculture and Food System Funders organization: www.safsf.org and the Convergence Partnership: Healthy People, Healthy Places: www.convergencepartnership.org

Business and Infrastructure Development

Food Hub Center
The Food Hub Center is a technical assistance and networking portal at the Wallace Center's National Good Food Network, which also offers webinars and other resources for market-based food system change.
www.ngfn.org/resources/food-hubs

MainStreet.org
The national Main Street organization at the National Trust for Historic Preservation is a leading resource for placemaking strategies including farmers markets and other downtown amenities.
www.preservationnation.org/main-street/

Market Forces: Creating jobs through public investment in local and regional food systems
Union of Concerned Scientists, 2011
www.ucsusa.org/assets/documents/food_and_agriculture/market-forces-report.pdf

Michigan Food Hub Learning and Innovation Network
Michigan State University Center for Regional Food Systems operates the Michigan Food Hub Learning and Innovation Network in partnership with the Michigan Department of Agriculture and Rural Development.
foodsystems.msu.edu/activities/food-hub-network

Project for Public Spaces
Project for Public Spaces works with communities across the country to develop a range of placemaking amenities, including public markets and regional food-related infrastructure. Specific resources related to public markets and local economic development are available at
www.pps.org/reference-categories/public-markets-local-economies

Regional Food Hub Resource Guide
USDA Agricultural Marketing Service, 2012
This guide to the food hub development and practice around the United States includes a list of federal funding resources at the U.S. departments of agriculture, commerce, health and human services, housing and urban development, and treasury.
www.usda.gov/wps/portal/usda/usdahome?contentid=2012/04/0127.xml

Strategic Plans for Healthy Regional Food System Development
Example state-based plans for regional food system development:

- Michigan Good Food Charter: michiganfood.org
- Local Food, Farms, and Jobs: Growing the Illinois Economy: foodfarmsjobs.org
- From Farm to Fork: A Guide to Building North Carolina's Sustainable Food Economy: www.cefs.ncsu.edu/resources/stateactionguide2010.pdf
- Iowa Local Food and Farm Plan: www.leopold.iastate.edu/sites/default/files/pubs-and-papers/2011-01-iowa-local-food-and-farm-plan.pdf
- The Farm-to-Table Strategic Plan of The Vermont Sustainable Jobs Fund: www.vsjf.org/project-details/5/farm-to-plate-initiative

University Extension
Extension offices through the nation's land grant universities are increasingly offering leadership and assistance for healthy regional food system development, such as the Community Food Systems group of extension educators at Michigan State University: msue.anr.msu.edu/topic/info/community_food_systems

USDA Know Your Farmer, Know Your Food Compass
The Compass maps USDA-funded food system projects around the country and provides information and links to grant programs and other resources.
www.usda.gov/wps/portal/usda/usdahome?navid=KYF_COMPASS

Policy

Centers for Disease Control and Prevention
Food policy and programming resources
www.cdc.gov/healthyplaces/healthtopics/healthyfood/foodpolicy.htm

Food Policy Councils: Lessons Learned
Alethea Harper, Annie Shattuck, Erik Holt-Gimenez, Alison Alkon and Frances Lambrick
Food First, Community Food Security Coalition, 2009
www.foodsecurity.org/pubs.html#fpc

Good Laws, Good Food: Putting Local Food Policy to Work For Our Communities
Harvard Food Law and Policy Clinic with the Community Food Security Coalition, July 2012
www.law.harvard.edu/academics/clinical/lsc/documents/FINAL_LOCAL_TOOLKIT2.pdf

National Association of State Departments of Agriculture
www.nasda.org

National Conference of State Legislatures
Healthy communities resources (food systems, healthy eating, physical activity)
www.ncsl.org/issues-research/health/healthy-communities-food-systems-healthy-eating.aspx

National Sustainable Agriculture Coalition
Issue area: Marketing, food systems, and rural development
sustainableagriculture.net/our-work/mktg-rd

Planning

American Planning Association
Food systems resources: www.planning.org/resources/ontheradar/food

Backyard Chickens
National listing and forum on local ordinances
www.backyardchickens.com/atype/3/Laws

Food System Planning: Municipal Implementation Toolkit
Delaware Valley Regional Planning Commission, 2010
www.dvrpc.org/reports/MIT018.pdf

Planning to Eat? Innovative Local Government Plans and Policies to Build Healthy Food Systems in the United States
Food Systems Planning and Healthy Communities Lab, University at Buffalo, The State University of New York, 2011
cccfoodpolicy.org/sites/default/files/resources/planning_to_eat_sunybuffalo.pdf

Urban Agriculture: A 16-City Review of Urban Agriculture Practices
Emory Law, Turner Environmental Law Clinic, 2011
www.law.emory.edu/fileadmin/turner/Urban_Agriculture_Report_FINAL.pdf

Urban Agriculture: Growing Healthy, Sustainable Places
Kimberley Hodgson, Marcia Caton Campbell, Martin Bailkey
American Planning Association Planning Advisory Service, 2011
www.planning.org/apastore/Search/Default.aspx?p=4146&a=1003

Food System Assessment Examples and Guides

A Food Systems Assessment for Oakland, CA: Toward a Sustainable Food Plan
Serena Unger, Heather Wooten
Oakland Mayor's Office of Sustainability and University of California, Berkeley, Department of City and Regional Planning, 2006
clerkwebsvr1.oaklandnet.com/attachments/14033.pdf

Cabarrus County Food System Assessment
Sidney Cruze, Jennifer Curtis
Center for Environmental Farming Systems
www.cefs.ncsu.edu/whatwedo/foodsystems/cabarruscountyfoodassessment.pdf

Guide to Developing a Community Food Profile
C.S. Mott Group for Sustainable Food Systems at Michigan State University
foodsystems.msu.edu/resources/developing-cfp

What's Cooking in Your Food System? A Guide to Community Food Assessment
Kami Pothukuchi, Hugh Joseph, Hannah Burton, Andy Fisher
Kai Siedenburg, Kami Pothukuchi (Ed.s)
Community Food Security Coalition, 2002
www.foodsecurity.org/CFAguide-whatscookin.pdf

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[2] "USDA Unveils New Food Hub Resource Guide to Expand Market Opportunities for Farmers and Ranchers." USDA Office of Communications; 2012. www.usda.gov/wps/portal/usda/usdahome?contentid=2012/04/0127.xml

[3] Peterson HC, Knudson WA, Abate G. The Economic Impact and Potential of Michigan's Agri-Food System: Michigan State University Product Center for Agriculture and Natural Resources; 2006. productcenter.msu.edu/uploads/files/Economic%20Impact%20of%20Michigan%20Agri-Food%20Final%20010906.pdf

[4] Healthy Kids Healthy Michigan coalition. www.healthykidshealthymich.com

[5] More information is available at www.miplace.org

[6] Northwest Michigan Council of Governments. Northern Michigan Community Placemaking Guidebook: Creating Vibrant Places in Northwest Lower Michigan; 2012. www.nwm.org/userfiles/filemanager/831/

[7] SCORE (formerly Service Corps of Retired Executives) is a nonprofit association utilizing volunteer mentors to provide free and low-cost services to small businesses in the U.S. More information is available at www.score.org

[8] Barham, J., Tropp, D., Enterline, K., Farbman, J., Fisk, J., & Kiraly, S. Regional Food Hub Resource Guide. U.S. Dept. of Agriculture, Agricultural Marketing Service. Washington, DC; 2012. http://dx.doi.org/10.9752/MS046.04-2012

MSU CENTER *for* REGIONAL FOOD SYSTEMS

foodsystems.msu.edu

A program of

Northwest Michigan Council of Governments

Let Our Resources Work For You.

www.nwm.org

Regional Food Solutions

regionalfoodsolutions.com

April 2013

www.thegrandvision.org

www.michiganfood.org

Concepts, tools, and resources outlined in Food Innovation Districts: An Economic Gardening Tool support the goals and principles of the Grand Vision and the Michigan Good Food Charter.