



# LA'S URBAN AGRICULTURE POLICY LANDSCAPE

---

*July 21, 2017*

Breanna Hawkins -Los Angeles Food Policy Council



LOS ANGELES  
FOOD POLICY  
COUNCIL

# Mission

The Los Angeles Food Policy Council is a collective impact organization, working to make Southern California a **Good Food** region for everyone.



LOS ANGELES  
FOOD POLICY  
COUNCIL

# The Growing Future of Urban Agriculture in LA

## State Policy

- Community Food Producers Act
- Cottage Food Law
- Urban Agriculture Incentive Zones
- Neighborhood Food Act

## Local Policy

- Plan for a Healthy LA
- Sustainability pLAN
- Parkway Ordinance
- Bee Keeping Ordinance
- Community Plans
- Fruit & Flowers Freedom Act



# Other Relevant Policy: LA City Parkway Ordinance



- Passed in 2015
- No longer need a permit to plant fruits and vegetables on the parkways - that strip of city-owned land between the sidewalk and the street.
- Fruit trees, however, will still require a permit.

# Other Relevant Policy: Beekeeping Ordinance

- Passed in 2015
- Beekeeping now allowed in single-family residential zoned properties (RA, RE, RS, R1), also in A1, A2, MR1
- There are stipulations:
  - Hives would have to be five feet away from where neighbors' yards begin
  - 20 feet away from streets or sidewalks
  - Only one hive per 2,500 square feet of lot space
  - Water source B
  - Beekeepers register with the city



# Urban Agriculture Working Group



# Urban Agriculture Incentive Zones (UAIZ): Paving the way for urban food production

- “Urban agriculture conservation bill”
- Allows local jurisdictions (County, City) to designate an Urban Agriculture Incentive Zone
- In this zone, private owners of vacant land in urban areas can receive a tax break IF he/she allows land to be used for commercial & non-commercial agricultural use for at least 5 years
- Eligible properties would be assessed at the average statewide irrigated agricultural lands rate (~\$12,500/acre), in most cases lower than urban market value



# Key Components of UAIZ

## Eligible parcels

- 0.10 to 3 acres
- Local zoning laws must allow agricultural use
- Free of dwellings unless connected to agricultural use
  - e.g. hoop/greenhouses, toolshed, produce stands and instructional space
- Entire property must be dedicated to commercial or non-commercial agricultural or animal husbandry use

## Length of time: 5 years minimum

- The reduced tax assessment is proportional to the size of the parcel.
- Cancellations? Property owner must pay back tax benefit received



# Impact? It's Too Early to Tell... But there is potential!

## POTENTIAL IMPACT:

- **8,675** AB 551 eligible parcels in LA City alone
- Currently **1,310** urban agricultural sites in County of LA
- **57,000** eligible vacant parcels in LA County

## EXPECTED BENEFITS:

- Increase in healthy food access
- Creation of local jobs through urban farming enterprises
- Transformation of vacant lots
- Reduce blight and illegal dumping
- Potential increase in property values of surrounding areas
- Tax incentive for property owners



# Challenges and Opportunities in Urban Agriculture Incentive Zone Implementation

## • CHALLENGES

- Apprehension from property owners and growers due to temporary nature
- Hard to get ahold of property owners
- Limited match-making capacity
- Policy sunsets at state level in 2019, but bill to extend to 2029

## • OPPORTUNITIES

- LA County covering application / administrative costs until 2018
- Local cities motivated to adopt policy: LA City application avail Aug 6th
- LAFPC support for match-making



# Emergent Ag Priorities

Water!

Economic  
Opportunities

Public Space

Composting  
Infrastructure

Urban Ag in  
Public  
Housing

# LACGC DAY OF ACTION

## PRESERVE AND PROTECT COMMUNITY GARDENS

The 289% water rate hike must be addressed. Join us at LA City Hall to tell your leaders why.

Where: Meet on the South Lawn steps facing 1st Street between Main and Spring.

When: Friday, July 28th  
at 8:30AM- 1PM

LOS ANGELES COMMUNITY  
GARDEN COUNCIL

