

PARTICIPANTS' WRITTEN COMMENTS
Urban Agriculture Public Meeting / July 23, 2014
City of Tucson

The following written comments and questions were received from participants at the July 23, 2014, Public Meeting on the City's effort underway to revise zoning regulations on community gardens, farmers markets, small urban animals, and urban farms. Participants were asked to specify which category each of their comments pertained to, or to specify "other." Please note when a category was not specified, or there were multiple comments on one comment card, staff made a judgment about how to categorize comments.

Transcribed by Office of Integrated Planning staff.

SMALL FARM ANIMALS

- S
i varios vecinos tienen animales en mi vecindario y huertas y nadie se queja podriamos recolectar firmas de todos. Los vecinos para poder tener como prueba para la ciudad que todos estamos de acuerdo en tener animales. Espero me puedan responder en la proxima Junta.

[Staff English translation: If several neighbors have animals in my neighborhood and gardens and nobody complains, can we gather signatures from the neighbors to give to the City that they have no problems with the animals and that the noise isn't a bother. Waiting for a response at the next meeting.]
- Animals on private property that are properly maintained must be left AS IS!

URBAN FARMS

- Why the City of Tucson wants to control our own sources of food by limiting us with the production of our own food? Who is going to be benefitted with all this regulations or restriction? Thanks.
- What can the city do to encourage households to grow their own food in backyard gardens? I suggest allowing urban farmers to register their gardens in return for a concrete benefit such as "free water" in June because July is traditionally the highest revenue month of the year. The free water in June would be negligible in considering the cost of growing your own food.

FARMERS' MARKETS

- Cut off at 5 pm for market is not appropriate, that's when the sun begins to cool.
- El tiangis is different than a farmers market. Our people have engaged in transactions for over one thousands in the Americas

COMMUNITY GARDENS

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[None of the comments received appeared to be specifically about "community gardens."]

OTHER

- Free-market capitalism means free-market, anytime and anyplace. Stop regulating the market. It's unpatriotic.
- Tucson's lifeline was and is still agriculture. There are ranches in Tucson where people still proudly celebrate their heritage and cultural and traditional ties with Mother Earth and each other. These people are multicultural and insist in continuing to exercise their lifestyle and innate rights to live freely and enjoy a fulfilling quality of life. In particular, the South West side of Tucson where our barrios are.
- Consider creating a manure/compost market (rather than legislating animals by output) -> it's a resource that results.
- Focus on public health; food deserts and ability to create sustainable communities -> consider large families/ community networks, affordability, etc.
- Try to avoid language that replicates the right-wing immigration discourse of coyotes and disease.
- When considering lot size, consider land devoted to structures / house and not only lot itself – average home size varies greatly by neighborhood when lot size is similar.

Urban Agriculture Community Meeting
July 23, 2014 / 5:30 p.m. – 7:00 p.m.
El Pueblo Regional Center, Senior Center Building

Flip Chart Notes

The following notes were recorded on flip charts by staff from the City of Tucson Office of Integrated Planning Community (OIP) and the Community Food Bank of Southern Arizona, both of which assisted City Planning and Development Services Department staff in preparing for and conducting this public meeting. The notes were transcribed by OIP staff. This meeting was conducted bilingually; notes were taken largely in English.

- Are these regulations only being enforced in Tucson, or are these federal regulations?
- Does HOA code override City of Tucson Code?
- Why are the proposed regulations stricter in regards to # of chickens?
- Why the regulations for farmers markets when they have existed safely without regulations for 100s of years?
- Why the concern about combining the sale of fruits/vegetables with other types of products?
- Why are the same regulations applied to everyone regardless of type of property or economic status? For example, # of chickens might be insufficient for a large family in one household.
- Limits on home food production is a barrier for poorer Tucsonans to be healthy and live well.
- Are these regulations just for the City of Tucson?
- What are the ways that people can ask for support if the approved regulations do not support Tucson families and residents?
- Hours proposed for farmers' markets in residential areas are too restrictive; lots of people get out of work after 5pm. Also heat can be an issue before 5 p.m.
- Don't limit farmers' markets to two day. If people are earning money from the farmers' markets -- two days won't allow them to earn a living.
- New codes appear to restrict large animals as drafted.
- Hope you have learned tonight what people are interested in -- how we live; what we do culturally; and what we have done historically.
- Create food producing system – focus on that.
- Even if my rooster doesn't crow, I am still breaking the law.
- Why are we making it harder for the Food Bank to do their job; that is, feed people?
- Not looking at needs of south side – which are different than the needs of other parts of the city.

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- (Missed question about Code Enforcement.)
- Need to put everything in context. Need to be creative. Everybody composts; different ways; too much control stifles creativity.
- City encouraging small lots – but then restricting ability to grow food by lot size.
- Heard argument that garage sales bring “bad elements.” There is a difference between people who do garage sales professionally and those trying to promote good food sharing.
- Everyone knows that nuisance laws exist. They’re okay; we don’t need more.
- Missing element of the City empowerment. City needs a mission statement that says City supports growing your own food
- Zoning codes written in 1950s when urban agriculture was thought of as a commercial enterprise.
- Should look at public as a resource.
- This is a cultural thing; it’s how we feed our families; it’s a necessity. Hope staff takes that away with them tonight.
- Give us a break on water to grow food like you give businesses breaks to come here – and pollute and other things.
- Try to get your hands on next draft; let’s organize.
- City doesn’t come to our neighborhoods whether we have too many chickens or no power or pot holes.
- City seems to be catering too HOAs. Lots of people aren’t here tonight because they have to raise their families.
- Should be looking at water harvesting for watering; need to learn how to do urban agriculture better.
- Why isn’t The Bridges a large urban agriculture space rather than the location of Wal-Mart & Costco? Teach our folks what we can do and help us do it better.
- Los reglamentos nunca son iguales. Estarian regulando todos los vecindarios.
[*Staff English Translation:* Regulations are never the same. They would be regulating all neighborhoods.]
- La ciudad debe tener en cuenta la cultura de la ciudad de Tucson.
[*Staff English Translation:* The City needs to take into account culture in Tucson.]