



Metropolitan Pima Alliance

September 15, 2015

Commissioners
City of Tucson
Planning Commission

Dear Members of the Commission:

We thank you for the opportunity to comment on the Urban Agriculture Text Amendment presented by the Department of Development Services. Additionally, we are impressed with the diligent work put forth by staff in facilitating a collaborative and streamlined process within the confines of Plan Tucson. Metropolitan Pima Alliance (MPA) is a land use advocacy organization representing 140 members involved in both commercial and residential development. MPA advocates for balanced land use policies that stimulate economic development. MPA is pleased with the articulation of this amendment and believes it is an adequate formulation of the community's sustainable vision.

As one of MPA primary purposes is to encourage and assemble reasonable and respectful discussion amongst diverse groups, we especially appreciate the collaborative spirit of this amendment and the process in which many partnerships have been created with neighbors throughout the city. While we recognize that some residents find urban agriculture to be problematic, it is imperative to consider the long-term sustainable benefits outlined in Plan Tucson, and more importantly, the equitable opportunities it provides to the community. We strongly believe that collaboration is the key to success.

MPA believes that urban agriculture plays a crucial role in our community's economic development. Introducing a new land use that legitimizes the on-site sale of excess production four times a year promotes small business, which our community so desperately needs. We strongly believe that small business is a basis of our economic foundation and represent a majority of our local business. Additionally, we feel that by not supporting this amendment the city will face unnecessary and unintentional laborious cost from the enforcement of excessive complaints. As the city is already financially constrained, this is simply not an expense worth bearing.

We are confident that the Urban Agriculture Text Amendment encompasses critical aspects that could promote the community's shared vision of sustainability and advances the economic potential of city. Again, we thank you for the opportunity to provide support to the Urban Agriculture Text Amendment and we look forward to witnessing a collaborative process to advance the community's shared values and the success of this city.

Sincerely,

Amber Smith, Executive Director
Metropolitan Pima Alliance

Metropolitan Pima Alliance

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