



CITY OF CONCORD
New Hampshire's Main Street™
Community Development Department
Planning Division

REPORT TO CITY COUNCIL

TO: Mayor and City Council
FROM: Kearsten O'Brien, Senior Planner
DATE: May 20, 2026
RE: Amendment to the Sunfox Farm Agricultural Lease

Recommendation

Accept this report and authorize the City Manager to amend the agricultural lease for Sunfox Farm LLC for one year to allow:

- Limited public and vendor parking during the annual sunflower festival (August 8-16, 2026);
- The addition of Fall Corn and Pumpkin events (October 1-31, 2026) as recommended by the Conservation Commission; and
- To increase the lease payment amount by the Northeast Region CPI.

Background

The City Council previously reviewed a request by Sunfox Farm to add additional events and allow parking on the agricultural fields at Gully Hill Road for the events. Council provided recommendations for the lease amendment contingent on final review by the Conservation Commission, including negotiating an increased lease payment. The request was to allow parking on the fields during the annual sunflower festival and to add additional Fall corn and pumpkin events during weekends (Thursday-Sunday) throughout the month of October, and small farm-to-table dinners (maximum of 10 dinners August – October) with parking on site for all events. The City Council previously approved a 1-year lease amendment to allow parking on the fields for the August 2025 Sunflower Festival only.

Discussion

Upon review of the proposal and additional information prepared by Sunfox Farm, the Conservation Commission recommended the following amendments to the lease:

- Allow up to a four-acre parking area located directly adjacent to the northern boundary of the property in a location approved by the Fire Department to be utilized by attendees and vendors for the Sunflower festival (August 8-16, 2026) and Corn and Pumpkin events (weekends throughout the month of October, 2026);

- Add a provision to the lease to increase the lease payment by the Northeast Region CIP, currently at 4%; and
- This expanded use be for a one-year trial.

The Conservation Commission will review the outcome of this expanded events and parking before determining whether to recommend future additional lease amendments, or to permanently allow public parking on the leased land. It should also be noted that, in accordance with the current lease, the Sunflower Festival and Fall Corn and Pumpkin events will require an event permit. Proceeds from event permits and vendor fees from past Sunflower Festivals has netted approximately \$4,314/year. It is expected that approval of these requests would increase permit revenue to the City for the added October events.