

December 11, 2014

**TO:** Chris Wilson, Assistant City Manager  
David Parrish, Assistant City Manager

**FROM:** Phil Fleischmann, CPRE, Community Recreation Services Manager  
Hanna Cockburn, AICP, Long Range and Strategic Planning Manager

**SUBJECT:** Update on City Efforts to Address Food Insecurity

This memo provides a progress update on the City's food access initiatives which have occurred since an initial memo was provided to Council as part of the IFYI on January 24, 2014. As you may recall, at that time, we outlined four (4) primary strategies which were being employed by the City to address food insecurity. These are provided below. Listed beneath each strategy are related updates or additions to what was previously provided.

- 1) Facilitate opportunities to develop public and private lands for the purpose of producing food
  - This summer, the Planning, Neighborhood Development, and Parks and Recreation Departments worked together to apply for a USDA Local Food Promotion Program (LFPP) Planning Grant. In late September, the City was notified that its grant application had been accepted and was awarded funding in the amount of \$25,000. This grant will enable the City to identify appropriate strategies for improving retail access to fresh local foods in areas identified as food deserts, for expanding existing local food business enterprises, and for creating new local food business enterprises that address identified gaps in food access. Over a one-year period, a consultant will be utilized to conduct the comprehensive analysis needed to develop specific strategies for Greensboro. Adoption of this plan will increase the likelihood that the City will be successful in its application for a USDA LFPP Implementation Grant, which the departments intend to apply for during the next grant cycle (i.e., summer 2015). If LFPP Implementation Grant funding is received, it will be used to jumpstart specific strategies identified in the LFPP Planning Grant.
  - As reflected through the multi-department approach to the LFPP Planning Grant detailed above, the City continues its search for external funding sources available to community groups, and serves as a resource for groups wishing to apply for external funding.

- 2) Providing free or low-cost educational opportunities and resource information to those interested in a variety of sustenance-related topics
  - Parks and Recreation applied for and received a \$25,000 Out-of-School Time grant from the National Recreation and Park Association (NRPA) in the spring. This funding allowed the department to bring a nationally recognized healthy eating educational program, Organ Wise Guys, to all participants in its summer day camp and playground programs. In addition, this funding was used to expand opportunities for gardening education at recreation centers.
- 3) Operate or facilitate the operation of venues for children and families to acquire healthy foods in underserved areas
  - Collaborating with the Guilford County Department of Health and Human Services Public Health Division, the Parks and Recreation Department played a key role in the development of the Mobile Oasis produce market over the course of 2014. The Mobile Oasis produce market is a traveling operation which sells produce in underserved areas at an affordable price, accepting cash as well as SNAP/EBT benefits. In addition to providing in-kind assistance in planning and marketing the Mobile Oasis, the Parks and Recreation Department applied for and received a \$5,000 Healthy Eating Equipment Grant from the Blue Cross Blue Shield of NC Foundation to support a portion of the up-fit costs associated with the Mobile Oasis. In October, the project debuted, featuring weekly stops at the Guilford County Social Services Building and at Warnersville Community Recreation Center. During its nine days of operation, the Mobile Oasis served 474 customers and sold over 1,500 pounds of produce. Discussions are underway to expand the project to additional locations next year.
  - Again this summer, free breakfast, lunch, and healthy snacks were provided to all children in the citywide summer day camp program offered at our 11 community recreation centers, as well as our 8 summer playground program locations. This year, Parks and Recreation served over 50,000 meals, 18,096 of which were provided at facilities located in an identified food desert area. Additionally, the non-profit Out of the Garden Project offered a summer camp at Folk Community Recreation Center which provided breakfast and lunch to youth, educated participants about gardening and healthy eating, and served as a food pantry location.
- 4) Provide in-kind services or resources to individuals or groups in order to address food insecurity
  - The Planning and Neighborhood Development Departments applied for a federal Promise Zone designation in November. The Promise Zone designation focuses on

job creation, increasing economic activity, improving educational opportunities, and reducing violent crime in identified areas of need. The Promise Zone includes a substantial portion of the City's identified food deserts. Designation of a Promise Zone will lend additional resources for projects that align with existing food insecurity initiatives, providing additional positive impacts in this area.

PF/HC

cc: Sue Schwartz, FAICP, Planning Director  
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