

Austin-Travis County Sustainable Food Policy Board

MANDATE: Evaluate and monitor residents' access to an affordable, diversified local-food supply and recommend measures to improve food security and nutrition.

SFPB Work Groups recommend policies that facilitate:

1. equitable access to healthy food;

Identify and map food deserts and provide incentives and support for grocery stores of different scales, farmers markets, food carts and other mobile vendors to locate and thrive in underserved communities. [Rid area of food deserts]

- a. Food Security**-Assess current efforts in Austin/Travis County and identify relevant stakeholders to: 1) identify, inform, and connect assessment and planning efforts related to food security in Austin and Travis County; 2) identify critical issues, needs and gaps; and 3) identify relevant public policy priorities and barriers.
- b. Data Tracking and Collating** - Develop and begin the process of collecting and reporting data regarding the availability, price and quality of food throughout Austin and Travis County, food security and the nutritional status of city and county residents. Data from existing working groups regarding food security, food assistance programs, community gardening and agriculture, among other topics shall be collected and collated through this working group.

2. consumption of local, fresh, and quality sustainably-produced food;

Review best practices, current efforts and policies that support getting nutritious and local fresh food to all residents – emphasizing those with difficulty accessing it. Create local fresh food initiatives in institutions (e.g. schools, colleges, universities, hospitals, nursing homes, city and county departments/venues) and through encouraging food service purchasing policies that prioritize locally-sourced, nutritious, and sustainable foods.

3. culture of good food as a right;

Coordinate with the sustainability office, other city and county staff, and local/regional environmental groups to ensure that the issues involved with supporting a sustainable local food system are incorporated in any relevant plans, initiatives, or activities

- a. Community Engagement and Outreach Work Group** Establishment of a user-friendly and effective process for engaging the community in ongoing work group activities related to the mandate of the SFPB.
- b. Buy Local Food Campaign** support social marketing efforts around local (central Texas) food culture based on best practices.

4. robust and just local food system;

Assess potential resource recovery for farmers and residents inherent in the wastage/surplus of food in Austin/Travis County. Foster local capacity to help implement food systems-related recommendations and plans.

- a. Retail Capacity Building Work Group** -Build capacity of local food retail businesses to source and sell locally and/or sustainably produced foods in areas with limited access. Identify specific city and/or county codes, permits, variances, policies, programs, and/or procedures that will facilitate the creation and success of new (or existing) local food retail businesses (e.g. compact urban groceries, cafes, food trailers, green carts, coops), particularly those that source locally and/or sustainably produced foods and locate in areas with limited access. The working group will then make suggestions to SFPB to recommend to relevant policy
- b. Distribution/Processing of Local Meats Work Group** -Recommend new policies to increase local, sustainable meat processing and distribution by: 1) identifying barriers local, sustainable farmers have for processing their livestock and distributing meat locally; 2) researching best practices; 3) quantifying health benefits and economic opportunities of growing this sector; and 4) recommending new policies.
- c. Affordable Water for Sustainable Farms**- Convene stakeholders to: 1) identify existing barriers to affordable water for sustainable farmers serving the city/county; 2) research best practices; 3) seek to quantify health benefits and economic opportunities of securing this resource; and 4) recommend new water policy.
- d. Code Coordination and Metrics.** This working group will look closely into any code barriers that currently exist in order to support a more sustainable local and regional food system in the City of Austin.