

**CITY OF CHARLOTTESVILLE, VIRGINIA
CITY COUNCIL AGENDA**



Agenda Date:	November 21, 2022
Action Required:	Report
Presenter:	Cultivate Charlottesville
Staff Contacts:	Misty Graves, Director of Human Services
Title:	Food Equity Initiative Annual Report FY 22 (written report)

Background

The Charlottesville Food Equity Initiative (FEI) brings together public, private, and non-profit partners working in unique and complementary ways to build a healthy and just community food system for all Charlottesville residents. The Initiative is cultivating community driven processes, resident leadership, and city partnerships to improve access to and quality of nutritious and affordable foods, addressing food equity barriers.

City Council passed the Food Equity Initiative for the first time in 2018 beginning a course of systemic efforts to reshape community health, wealth, and belonging through our food system. The Food Equity Initiative work is designed to support implementation of citywide strategies outlined in the initial FY19 proposal. These strategies align with goals established in the MAPP2Health Community Action Plan, the Local Food, Local Places Action Plan, and the specific City Departments food equity action plans. Additional focus areas include continuation and adaptation of emergency food responses due to COVID-19 and rising food insecurity, update of the Food Equity Initiative Policy Platform that summarizes the recommendations emerging from city department and community engagement conversations over the past three years, and the results of efforts to integrate community food equity priorities into the City Comprehensive Plan update.

The attached report encompasses the activities, accomplishments, and progress made during year three of the Food Equity Initiative, FY22 October 2021 - September 2022.

Discussion

According to Feeding America, food insecurity remains a prevalent issue in our city (12.4% for Charlottesville; 7.7% for Virginia). However, views of a healthy and just food system are in sight. During the third year, October 2021 – September 2022, the Food Equity Initiative as directed by the Cultivate Charlottesville Food Justice Network provides the attached information that includes a report on objectives and goals established at the inception.

Advancing systemic change requires close partnerships with city departments, community members and Food Justice Network partner organizations. With intention and sustainability, the Food Equity Initiative will continue to walk out City Council’s Vision for this community.

Alignment with City Council's Vision and Strategic Plan

The Food Equity Initiative supports City Council's "Community of Mutual Respect" vision. It contributes to Goal 2 of the Strategic Plan: a healthy and safe city and Goal 1: an inclusive community of self-sufficient residents specifically objective 1.5 intentionally address issues of race and equity.

Community Engagement

Overall, the City Council's Food Equity Initiative has leveraged community engagement, collaboration, and collective problem solving to respond to COVID-19 and to advance food equity initiatives defined as community priorities. Highlights of their engagement strategy include presentations on food equity, press articles, social media posts, and newsletters. Additionally, community engagement is evident in the number of Food Justice Network members; 189. Specifically, the Food Justice Network cultivated opportunities to elevate youth voice which included a Youth Food Justice Internship program, providing student tastings and fresh food menu item selections for school lunches, and hosting an exploration of Black girls and gardening at the urban garden at the Charlottesville Albemarle Technical Education Center. Details and data regarding instances of community engagement are included in the report.

Budgetary Impact

Charlottesville Food Equity Initiative is already included in the City's FY 2024 Proposed Budget. Should Council wish to continue support, this funding will be considered through the regular budget process for inclusion in the final FY 2024 Adopted Budget.

Recommendation

Staff recommends resolution of support that funding will continue to be in the City Manager's proposed budget for FY 24 at \$155,000.

Alternatives

N/A

Attachments

1. Cultivate Food Justice Network_Food Equity Initiative FY22 EOY Report