

Richmond City Food Policy Analysis and Recommendations --A Report to the Richmond Food Access and Equity Task Force

Prepared by the Institute for Public Health Innovation

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Introduction

In June 2015, the Institute for Public Health Innovation (IPHI) entered into an agreement with the Virginia Department of Health, Richmond City Health District to use its expertise and experience in food access and health equity to conduct a local food policy analysis and develop policy recommendations to promote equitable access to healthy, affordable, and culturally appropriate foods across Richmond. The recommendations offered in this report reflect the results of a thoughtful review and analysis of relevant documents, best practices, and information gathered from key stakeholders, including community members. Based on guidance provided by the Richmond Food Access and Equity Task Force, the recommendations focus on two aspects of the food access issue -- urban agriculture and healthy food retail.

Methodology

The policy analysis included:

- Review of relevant sections of the Richmond City Code
- Review of the Richmond City Comprehensive Plan, Sustainability Plan, and Strategic Plan
- Review of Richmond- and Virginia-specific documents relevant to healthy food access –
 HEAL (Healthy Eating Active Living) Cities and Towns Campaign resolution, Mayor's Food
 Policy Task Force Recommendations¹, Virginia Food Desert Task Force
 Recommendations², Virginia Food for Every Child Report³
- Phone interviews with fourteen key informants (see the interviewee list in Appendix A)
- Identification and review of best practices and model policies
- Review of the results of focus groups conducted with community members⁴
- Guidance from the Richmond Food Access and Equity Task Force, Policy Advisory Group

¹ Richmond, Virginia Food Policy Task Force. *Report and Recommendations to improve food access in the City.* 2013. Accessed at: http://www.richmondgov.com/ProjectFoodPolicyTaskForce/documents/FPTF ReportJuly2013.pdf

² Virginia Food Desert Task Force. *Food Deserts in VA.* 2014. Accessed at: https://www.alce.vt.edu/dept-news/food-desert-report.pdf

³ Waldoks R., Lang B., Treering D. (2015). *Food for Every Child: The Need for Healthy Food Financing in Virginia*. 2015. Philadelphia, PA: The Food Trust. Accessed at: http://thefoodtrust.org/uploads/media_items/virginia-mappingfinal-lowres.original.pdf

⁴ Focus group results are available from the Chronic Disease Prevention Division of the Richmond City Health Department.

Key Findings

- The problem of healthy food access in the City is a reflection of systemic inequities by race, ethnicity, wealth, and neighborhood
- Healthy food access impacts education and employment as well as health
- Successful existing efforts in Richmond can be leveraged -- community gardens and school gardens, healthy corner store initiative, and the successful efforts of organizations such as Tricycle Gardens, Shalom Farms, and Renew Richmond that work to increase access to healthy food
- Strategic coordination of existing public and private efforts is needed
- Healthy Food access is a shared responsibility among the City government and other multiple, cross-sector partners
- Existing relevant initiatives in the City's Sustainability Plan and Strategic Plan can be leveraged
- Existing resources can be enhanced by building more public-private partnerships and investigating funding and resource-sharing opportunities locally and regionally
- The Richmond City HEAL (Health Eating Active Living) and HiAP (Health in All Policies)
 resolutions can be leveraged
- Community member involvement in healthy food access discussions needs to be facilitated
- There are economic development opportunities related to healthy food access
- The Richmond City Code can be amended to promote and support urban agriculture and healthy food retail e.g., zoning restrictions can be updated (the timing is right and some work has been done)
- Policy change is needed on the state level to improve local food access in Richmond

Policy Recommendations: Urban Agriculture

Urban agriculture is a term often used to describe a wide range of food-growing practices. For the purpose of this discussion, urban agriculture refers to backyard/home gardens (small food producing spaces on private, residential properties used to grow food for personal consumption) community gardens (small-scale food-growing sites, usually serving a neighborhood, where residents grow food for personal consumption or donation), school gardens (usually small-scale food-growing sites on school property that offer educational opportunities and provide food for student consumption), and urban farms (larger scale sites, where food is grown by an organization or private enterprise and usually includes

entrepreneurial opportunities such as growing food for sale).⁵ In addition to the health benefits provided by increasing access to affordable, fresh, local foods (especially in low-income areas that have limited access) and by offering an opportunity for physical activity, urban agriculture also can have social benefits (e.g., provides opportunities for community involvement, social interaction, and health education), environmental benefits (e.g., increases plant foliage that reduces storm water runoff and air pollution, increases urban biodiversity and provides opportunities for environmental stewardship education), and economic benefits (e.g., provides local jobs, boosts property values, capitalizes on underused resources such as rooftops, vacant property and roadsides, and attracts food-related businesses).⁶

Richmond City Planning Documents

A recent comprehensive national survey on local governments' food-related activities reveals that "food system planning was positively correlated with food-related policies or programs reported by communities; that is, communities addressing food in their plans reported, on average, more food-related policies or programs than communities that did not have such plans."⁷

- 1. Support and work to implement the Richmond Sustainability Plan initiative to "repurpose appropriate vacant lots for urban agriculture." This initiative involves:
 - Building on existing community garden and school garden initiatives by exploring the use of vacant City-owned properties and investigating the feasibility of repurposing those properties for agricultural use
 - Reducing potential barriers for community members seeking to use non-City owned vacant lots for agricultural use such as zoning regulations, irrigation challenges and liability issues.⁸
- 2. Incorporate goals and strategies into the Richmond City Comprehensive Plan⁹ that support the use of land for urban agriculture to promote equitable access to healthy food.

⁵ Wooten, H and Ackerman A. *Seeding the City: Land Use Policies to Promote Urban Agriculture*. ChangeLab Solutions. 2012 Accessed at:

http://www.changelabsolutions.org/sites/default/files/Urban Ag SeedingTheCity FINAL (CLS 20120530) 20111021 0.pdf Hodgson, K. Investing in Healthy, Sustainable Places through Urban Agriculture. Translation Paper 5, Ed. 2, Funders' Network for Smart Growth and Livable Communities. 2011 accessed at:

http://www.fundersnetwork.org/files/learn/Investing in Urban Agriculture Final 110713.pdf; Wooten, H and Ackerman A. Seeding the City: Land Use Policies to Promote Urban Agriculture. ChangeLab Solutions. 2012 Accessed at:

http://www.changelabsolutions.org/sites/default/files/Urban Ag SeedingTheCity FINAL (CLS 20120530) 20111021 0.pdf

Goddeeris L. Local Government Support for Food Systems: Themes and Opportunities from National Data. Michigan State

⁷ Goddeeris, L. *Local Government Support for Food Systems: Themes and Opportunities from National Data*. Michigan State University Center for Regional Food Systems, Sept. 2013. Accessed at: http://foodsystems.msu.edu/uploads/files/local-govt-survey-brief.pdf

⁸ City of Richmond RVA Green: A Roadmap to Sustainability. Accessed at: http://www.richmondgov.com/Sustainability/documents/RVAGreen_ARoadmapToSustainability.pdf

⁹ The Richmond City Master Plan is currently under revision. Master Plan 2000-2010 and other relevant documents can be accessed at: http://www.richmondgov.com/planninganddevelopmentreview/PlansAndDocuments.aspx

- The Comprehensive Plan can serve as an effective guide and reference to government decision-makers as well as community advocates. Land use policies and practices related to urban agriculture and healthy food access can be included in the Comprehensive Plan either as a section pertaining to healthy food access or food systems or integrated throughout the Plan's sections, where appropriate (the Boise, ID Comprehensive Plan includes goals to promote community-based local food production in a section on environmental stewardship; the Harrison County (MS) Comprehensive Plan includes language related to increasing access to healthy food options in a section dedicated to public health; the Dane County (WI) Comprehensive Plan addresses the food system in a section dedicated to agricultural, natural, and cultural resources.)¹⁰
- Model Comprehensive Plan Language for Urban Agriculture is provided by ChangeLab Solutions in Seeding the City: Land Use Policies to Promote Urban Agriculture. The model language is designed to be tailored by individual communities to meet local needs and is written in a format that can be readily adapted.¹¹
- In 2012, the City of Seattle, WA contracted with the Puget Sound Regional Council (home to the Regional Food Policy Council) to research and recommend policies and strategies to incorporate food policy into the City's comprehensive planning process. The collaboration produced a report, Integrating Food Policy in Comprehensive Planning: Strategies and Resources for the City of Seattle. In addition to the concepts and strategies that were put forward to revise the Seattle Comprehensive Plan the report includes a broad inventory of comprehensive plan policies adopted by other jurisdictions (policy examples). 12

Zoning and Building Policies

- 3. Amend the Richmond City Code to allow commercial sales of food produced on private land allow urban producers to sell directly from their land (now prohibited in the Code).
 - This would: 1) provide urban farmers with finances to expand production; and 2) offer an incentive to grow and sell surplus to community members.

¹⁰ Neuner, K, Kelly, S. and Raja S. Planning to EAT?: Innovative Local Government Plans and Policies to Build Healthy Food Systems in the United States. 2011. Food Systems Planning and Healthy Communities Lab. University At Buffalo, The State University of New York. Accessed at: http://cccfoodpolicy.org/sites/default/files/resources/planning to eat sunybuffalo.pdf University of New York. Accessed at: http://cccfoodpolicy.org/sites/default/files/resources/planning to eat sunybuffalo.pdf City: Land Use Policies to Promote Urban Agriculture. ChangeLab Solutions. 2012 Accessed at:

http://www.changelabsolutions.org/sites/default/files/Urban Ag SeedingTheCity FINAL (CLS 20120530) 20111021 0.pdf ¹² Puget Sound Regional Council. *Integrating Food Policy in Comprehensive Planning: Strategies and Resources for the City of Seattle*. August 2012. Accessed at: http://www.psrc.org/assets/8593/FINAL_seattle_food_comp_plan_082012.pdf

- The zoning code in Kansas City, MO allows on-site sale of food grown in residential districts either "by-right" or with a special use permit depending on whether the food is from a home garden, community garden, or community supported agricultural farm.¹³
- 4. Review and amend City zoning ordinances to allow small-scale urban agriculture activities in most zoning districts (so that a special permit is not required) (e.g., activities may include production of food, animals, food waste, water conveyance, accessory structures; signage).
 - A review of Richmond City's zoning code was initiated in 2014 to begin to identify barriers and facilitators to urban agriculture. This analysis can be used as a starting point for reviewing, updating, and amending the zoning code.¹⁴
 - A Model Zoning Ordinance for Urban Agriculture is provided by ChangeLab Solutions in Seeding the City: Land Use Policies to Promote Urban Agriculture. It contains model language for municipalities to customize and adopt as amendments to existing zoning laws or as part of a comprehensive effort to update a municipality's zoning laws.¹⁵
- 5. Maximize opportunities to incorporate urban agriculture into new development (e.g., roof top and home gardens, community gardens and urban farms, where appropriate), including:
 - Amending Richmond City zoning and/or subdivision codes to encourage/require all new housing units to contain designated yard, rooftop or other shared spaces for residents to garden.
 - Amending zoning and/or building codes to encourage/require all new construction (residential, commercial, institutional, public) to incorporate green roofs and edible landscaping, and encourage the use of existing roof space for community gardens (codes should address safety concerns).
 - Philadelphia, PA offers a "Green Roofs" business tax credit for 25% of the costs incurred up to \$100,000. A structural engineer certifies eligible roofs and it must cover a minimum percentage of the roof and be maintained for at least five years.

¹³ Kansas City Plan Commission, Second Committee Substitute for Ordinance No. 100299 as Amended. 2010. Accessed at: file:///C:/Users/sdefrancesco/Downloads/100299.pdf

¹⁴ This preliminary review is unfinished and has not, as yet, been vetted by the City. It has been provided, in draft form to the Richmond Food Access and Equity Task Force.

¹⁵ Wooten, H and Ackerman A. *Seeding the City: Land Use Policies to Promote Urban Agriculture*. ChangeLab Solutions. 2012 Accessed at:

• Minneapolis, MN offers developers bonus points for incorporating green roofs and growing spaces into Planned Unit Development (PUD) proposals.

6. Provide incentives for use of private land for urban farming

- The Sacramento (CA) City Council passed a law in 2015 that allows for Urban Agriculture Incentive Zone Agreements -- voluntary contracts between the City and a property owner of vacant, unimproved, or blighted property whereby the property owner agrees to keep the property in active agricultural use for a period of five years in exchange for a property tax benefit.¹⁶
- Washington D.C.'s Urban Farming and Food Security Act of 2014 provides the owner of unimproved property who leases land for small-scale urban farming with a 50% deduction from the real property tax on the portion of land used for farming.¹⁷

Comprehensive Policy Approach to Support Urban Agriculture

7. Adopt a city ordinance/develop a Plan that provides holistic, comprehensive support for urban farming

- D.C.'s Urban Farming and Food Security Act of 2014 establishes a 90% tax abatement for private land owners who use, lease, or allow their land to be used for urban agriculture; instructs the Mayor to identify 25 District-owned vacant lots for urban farming; creates a tax credit for individuals and businesses to donate locally farmed fruits and vegetables to D.C. food banks, pantries, and shelters; and provides for educational programming (including in schools) and technical assistance to farmers.¹⁸
- Homegrown Baltimore: Grow Local is an ambitious roadmap for supporting and
 expanding the production of locally grown food in Baltimore City (MD). The plan,
 adopted by the Baltimore City Planning Commission in 2013, documents the
 history, benefits, and types of urban agriculture in Baltimore; lays out current
 local urban agriculture efforts and the policies that affect them; and identifies
 challenges and provides recommendations for creating a more robust urban
 agriculture sector for the city. All types of food production, from backyard

¹⁶ Sacramento City Council, *Urban Agriculture Incentive Zone Ordinance*. August 6, 2015. Accessed at: file:///C:/Users/Susan/Downloads/OR20150024%20Adding%20Chapter%2017722%20to%20the%20Sacramento%20City%20Code%20Relating%20to%20an%20Urban%20Agriculature%20Incentive%20Zone%20(2).pdf

¹⁷ Council of the District of Columbia. D.C. *Urban Farming and Food Security Act of 2014*. Accessed at: http://dcclims1.dccouncil.us/images/00001/20140211114248.pdf
¹⁸ Ibid.

- gardening to commercial farming, are considered. Baltimore has updated its zoning and building codes among other efforts to implement the plan. ¹⁹
- The Minneapolis (MO) City Council adopted an Urban Agriculture Policy Plan in 2011 and, in 2012, passed an urban agriculture ordinance to implement the plan's recommendations. *Homegrown Minneapolis* is a citywide initiative expanding the city's ability to grow, process, distribute, eat and compost more healthy, sustainable, locally grown foods. It brings together key partners from local government, area businesses, community organizations, non-profits, and residents to build a healthy, local food system.²⁰
- In 2013, Detroit (MI), based on a study conducted by the city's Food Policy Council, adopted a comprehensive urban agriculture ordinance. The City has detailed zoning codes that focus on the production of local food and neighborhood stabilization and include community gardens, farmer's markets, food trucks, small urban growers, and local businesses.²¹

Water Access and Soil Safety

8. Make water available at low cost

- Baltimore City, as part of Homegrown Baltimore: Grow Local, has partnered with the City's Water Department to give gardeners the ability to access water for their adopted lot for a flat rate of \$120 that covers the standard garden season of March 1st through November 30th. Once the City receives a Water Access Program online application, an inspector assesses the garden for water access. If water is available, the inspector will install a device that a hose connects to; if water access is not available, the original \$120 payment is returned with information for other options.²²
- Cleveland's (OH) Food Policy Coalition and Division of Water collaborated to implement a policy recommendation in the City's Vacant Land Plan that allows gardeners/farmers to purchase seasonal unmetered access to fire hydrants, for a reduced cost, based on the garden's acreage. ²³

¹⁹ Homegrown Baltimore Plan: Grow Local. Accessed at: http://www.baltimoresustainability.org/homegrown-baltimore-plan/

 $^{{}^{20}\}textit{Homegrown Minneapolis}. Accessed at: \underline{\text{http://www.minneapolismn.gov/sustainability/homegrown/WCMS1P-140395}}; and \underline{\text{http://www.minneapolismn.gov/sustainability/homegrown/WCMS1P-130121}}$

²¹ City of Detroit *Urban Agriculture Ordinance*. http://detroitagriculture.net/wp-content/uploads/2013 Sharable UA-Ordinance.pdf and https://www.law.msu.edu/clinics/food/busdickerfact.pdf

²² Homegrown Baltimore Plan: Grow Local. Accessed at: http://www.baltimoresustainability.org/homegrown-baltimore-plan/

²³ Water Access: The City of Cleveland Opens Access to Affordable Water. Accessed at: http://cccfoodpolicy.org/sites/default/files/resources/water access policy summary.pdf

9. Improve soil safety

- As part of the Homegrown Baltimore: Grow Local initiative, the Baltimore City
 Office of Sustainability, with support and input from partners, particularly the
 Johns Hopkins Center for a Livable Future, developed a Soil Safety Policy which
 provides guidance to anyone wishing to grow food for human consumption in
 Baltimore. ²⁴
- Cities work with university extension services to test soil.

Policy Recommendations: Healthy Food Retail

A healthy food retail environment encourages the purchase and consumption of fruits, vegetables, water, and other nutritious products. It is easier to make healthy food choices in a healthy food retail environment.²⁵ There is often limited access to healthy food in underserved communities. For example, low-income communities and communities of color have been found to have fewer supermarkets than wealthier, predominantly white neighborhoods. Additional barriers to accessing healthy food include higher costs of healthy food, lack of reliable transportation, lack of healthy, culturally appropriate food options and low-quality food selections.²⁶ For the purposes of this report, healthy food retail includes grocery stores, corner stores, farmers' markets, and mobile vending.

Grocery Stores

- 10. Create a package of incentives and assistance for new grocery store developments and for grocery store renovations in food deserts:
 - District of Columbia's FEED (Food, Environmental and Economic Development)
 Act:
 - creates the position of "grocery ambassador" within the Office of the Deputy Mayor for Planning & Economic Development to help grocers navigate through the bureaucratic hurdles of opening new stores;
 - o grants density bonuses and other zoning variances for grocery store developments in eligible areas; and
 - sets up a fast track permitting and review process for grocery store development in eligible areas.²⁷
 - New York City's Food Retail Expansion to Support Health (FRESH) promotes the development and expansion of grocery stores in underserved communities by

²⁴ Homegrown Baltimore Plan: Grow Local. Accessed at: http://www.baltimoresustainability.org/homegrown-baltimore-plan/

²⁵ ChangeLab Solutions. *Healthy Retail Playbook*. 2016

²⁶ Health Equity Guide. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. Accessed at: https://www.cdc.gov/nccdphp/dch/pdfs/health-equity-guide/health-equity-guide-sect-3-4.pdf

²⁷ District of Columbia. *Food, Environmental and Economic Development Act*. Accessed at: http://dcclims1.dccouncil.us/images/00001/20110105123815.pdf. "Eligible areas," according to the Act, are historically underutilized business zones as identified by the federal Small Business Act and certain D.C. census tracks (18.01, 33.01, 95.05, 95.07, 95.08). Priority is given to grocery stores located in eligible areas underserved by retail sales of healthy food. (Sec. 101(2) (A-B)).

providing zoning and financial incentives. For example, New York City's Industrial Development Agency provides the following benefits to eligible grocery store operators:

- land tax abatement;
- stabilization of building taxes;
- exemption from sales tax on material to construct, renovate or equip facilities; and
- a one-time deferral of mortgage recording tax related to the project's financing.²⁸
- Also, the NY State Energy Research and Development Authority provides energy efficiency benefits to grocery store operators and developers.²⁹

Corner Stores

11. Use business licensing process to require corner stores to stock healthy fresh and prepared foods and beverages

ChangeLab Solutions has developed a Model Licensing Ordinance for Healthy
Food Retailers to require all food stores to carry a minimum selection of healthy
food and meet other basic operating standards. Requirements and incentives
vary depending upon the size of the retailer. Incentives include expedited
processing of a food retailer license application, reduced or waived licensing
fees; participation in a loan or grant program administered by the city
government; and technical assistance for infrastructure improvements and
marketing.³⁰

12. Incentivize corner stores to stock healthy foods and beverages

- The Healthy Corner Store Initiative in Philadelphia (PA) builds relationships with store owners in low-income neighborhoods and provides a range of programs to provide training, technical assistance and infrastructure changes to increase healthy food inventory and provide consumer education in corner stores.³¹
- Corner stores who participate in the Minneapolis (MN Healthy Corner Store
 Program receive, in part, assistance with product display and store layout design,

²⁸ New York City. *Food Retail Expansion to Support Health (FRESH)*. Accessed at: http://www.nycedc.com/program/food-retail-expansion-support-health-fresh. Eligible grocery stores are those that have a minimum amount of retail space for certain food product lines, as defined by the FRESH program, and are located in communities identified as underserved by grocery stores.

²⁹ Ihid

³⁰ ChangeLab Solutions. *Licensing for Lettuce: A Guide to the Model Licensing Ordinance for Healthy Food Retailers*. Accessed at: http://www.changelabsolutions.org/sites/default/files/Licensing for Lettuce FINAL 20130212 0.pdf

³¹ The Food Trust. *Healthy Corner Store Initiative*. Accessed at: http://thefoodtrust.org/uploads/media items/healthy-corner-store-overview.original.pdf

training on proper produce handling to maximize shelf life, \$200 stipend to use on their first order from a healthy food wholesaler, promotion and coordination of kick-off events to introduce the improvements to community residents, and information on loan opportunities and other business development resources.³²

Mobile Vending and Farmers' Markets

- 13. Provide incentives for healthy mobile vending and for farmers' markets/farm stands to locate where they are accessible to populations in need (e.g., at bus transit system sites; outside Department of Social Services building on high traffic days; outside workforce development center, in food deserts):
 - Provide an easier, less expensive permitting process
 - Provide free advertising
 - Provide micro-loans or start-up funding
 - New York City's "Green Cart Initiative" provides micro-loans and technical assistance as well as branding and marketing assistance to mobile food cart owners who offer fresh produce in neighborhoods with limited access to healthy foods (grant funded).³³
 - o Kansas City's (MO) Park and Recreation Department has an incentive package for mobile food vendors who carry healthy food -- incentives depend on the percentage of foods that adhere to nutrition guidelines 50% of items comply with specific nutrition guidelines, the vendor gets a reduction in permit cost; if 75% of items comply, the vendors can sell in three parks. Vendors must sell healthy food at no more than 10% over the price of non-healthy foods.³⁴

Transportation

14. Plan and provide incentives for transportation that improves food access for residents living in food deserts

Document need and preferred routes among community residents;

³² Minneapolis Healthy Corner Store Program. Accessed at: http://www.health.state.mn.us/divs/oshii/docs/Mpls Healthy Corner Store.pdf

³³ New York City Green Cart Initiative was launched in 2008 by the Mayor's Office of Food Policy and the New York City Department of Health and Mental Hygiene in partnership with the Laurie M. Tisch Illumination Fund. Accessed at: http://www1.nyc.gov/site/doh/health/health-topics/green-carts.pageand https://sipa.columbia.edu/news-center/article/study-nyc-green-carts-expand-access-to-fresh-produce-in-low-income-neighborhoods

³⁴ Neuner, K, Kelly, S. and Raja S. *Planning to EAT?: Innovative Local Government Plans and Policies to Build Healthy Food Systems in the United States*. 2011. Food Systems Planning and Healthy Communities Lab. University At Buffalo, The State University of New York. Accessed at: http://cccfoodpolicy.org/sites/default/files/resources/planning_to_eat_sunybuffalo.pdf

- Provide financial incentives or site design considerations for new grocery stores to be located along public transit routes;
- Establish a walkability standard (e.g. ½ mile) for access to retailers of fresh produce;
- Include improvements to pedestrian and bicycle connectivity to grocery stores in the Comprehensive Plan, transportation master plans, and bicycle and pedestrian master plans.³⁵

Successful Community Programs in Richmond

15. Consider ways (including supportive policies; public-private partnerships and investments) to leverage and expand the reach of existing non-profit programs that successfully increase access to healthy food. These programs include, for example:

Tricycle Gardens:

 Grows and distributes fresh produce to participating corner stores, providing refrigeration and marketing tools and offering food skills education to help families learn skills to buy and prepare healthful, delicious meals on a limited budget.

Renew Richmond:

- Creates urban gardens that produce tons of organic fruits and vegetables for community organizations and residents.
- Runs educational programs centered on health and wellness, fun ways to cook, entrepreneurial skills, and green jobs training.
- Distributes home-grown fruits and vegetables through farm stands.

Shalom Farms:

- As a 6-acre sustainable farm, it serves as an agricultural learning lab for visitors and volunteers of all backgrounds and abilities.
- Youth-Run Farm Stand Program offers youth a chance to provide access to affordable healthy food in their own neighborhoods.
- Prescription Produce Plan provides weekly prescriptions of healthy food in lowincome communities.
- Partners with afterschool programs, food banks, community kitchens and other to distribute fresh produce to nutrition programs in the greater Richmond area.

³⁵ Ringstrom E. and Born B. *Food Access Policy and Planning Guide*. 2011. University of Washington Northwest Center for Livable Communities. Accessed at:

 $[\]frac{\text{http://www.nyc.gov/html/ddc/downloads/pdf/ActiveDesignWebinar/King\%20County\%20Food\%20Access\%20Guide.pdf?epicontent=GENERIC}{\text{content}}$

Overarching Recommendations

16. Create and fund a Food Policy Council

Food issues are often parceled out to various agencies and various private sector organizations "which limits the potential for coordination and for government to address broad goals such as improving access to healthy foods." North American Food Policy Council 36

A funded Richmond City Food Policy Council could:

- Take the lead in assessing, discussing and planning how policies can be created, changed or removed to improve food access (e.g., work to implement these policy recommendations);
- o Include government agencies, non-profit partners, community members; and
- Build consensus regarding goals and "what success looks like" in order to increase effectiveness and create a comprehensive, coordinated, deliberate strategy to address the food access issue holistically, building on existing efforts.
- D.C.'s Food Policy Council and Director Establishment Act of 2014 established the
 position of Food Policy Director in the Office of Planning "to promote food policy
 in the District, attract new participants to the local food economy, assist
 individuals already participating in the local food economy, and achieve the food
 goals identified in the Sustainable DC plan." It also "established a Food Policy
 Council to identify regulatory burdens on the local food economy, collect and
 analyze data on the food economy and food equity, promote positive food
 policies, and guide organizations and individuals involved in the food economy."³⁷

17. Discuss and advocate for urban agriculture and healthy food retail recommendations in the context of the Richmond Strategic Plan.

- Relevant focus areas from the City of Richmond, VA Amended Biennial Fiscal Plan 2015: Strategic Management and Performance include:
 - Unique, Healthy and Inclusive Neighborhoods and Communities
 - o Economic Growth
 - Education and Workforce Development
 - Sustainability and the Natural Environment³⁸

³⁶ Hendrickson MK and Porth M. *Urban Agriculture – Best Practices and Possibilities*. University of Missouri Extension. 2012. Accessed at: http://extension.missouri.edu/foodsystems/documents/urbanagreport 072012.pdf

³⁷ DC Office of Planning. Accessed at: http://planning.dc.gov/page/food-policy

³⁸ City of Richmond, VA Amended Biennial Fiscal Plan 2015: Strategic Management and Performance. Accessed at: http://www.richmondgov.com/budget/documents/StrategicPlan&FocusAreas.pdf

18. Leverage the City of Richmond's commitment to HEAL (Healthy Eating Active Living) Cities and Towns Campaign and HiAP (Health in All Policies) Resolutions

- Richmond HEAL (Healthy Eating Active Living) Resolution-2014 (in part):
 - Attract/promote Healthy Food Retail (Corner/Grocery Stores) by providing density bonuses or economic incentives and establishing zoning ordinances to limit the concentration of food establishments designated as unhealthy and review existing ordinances to identify and remove barriers to the establishment of healthy food options in food deserts and under-resourced neighborhoods.
- Health in All Policies (HiAP) Resolution 2015 (in part):
 - It is the intent of the City to apply a health in all policies lens and fair and just principles and practices to City actions and endeavors...in order to eliminate health disparities and promote optimal health and quality of life for all residents.

19. Support State Policy Change

- Continue support of the VA Grocery Investment Fund, a healthy food financing initiative that would provide flexible loan and grant financing for grocery store development and other healthy food retail.
- Advocate for changes that will allow the City of Richmond to use more creativity in financing grocery stores.
- Advocate for changes to how WIC is administered in Virginia so that farmers' markets and more stores (especially corner stores) can become WIC vendors.

Next Steps

These "next steps" or action items, related to implementation of the policy recommendations provided above, are offered to the Richmond Food Access and Equity Task Force in terms of those that might be moved forward more immediately and those that might be worked on in the near future. Action items that are "short-term" reflect the existence of current opportunities that can be leveraged by the Richmond Food Access and Equity Task Force to begin moving forward. The "long-term" action items are those that may require the Task Force to engage in more detailed deliberation and planning (e.g., identify potential partners and existing opportunities to build upon).

Short-term

The Richmond Food Access and Equity Task Force can:

- 1- Engage the Richmond Department of Planning in a discussion about:
 - a. the best way to work together to integrate strategies for healthy food access (e.g., healthy food retail, urban agriculture) into the current Comprehensive Plan revision process; and
 - b. the feasibility of updating the existing 2014 review of zoning ordinances with respect to urban agriculture.
- 2- Continue to engage community residents in the work of the Task Force/Food Policy Council (in-follow up to the recent community conversations held on food policy and equity), by helping to build their policy knowledge-base and their capacity to make their voices heard.
- 3- Meet with City staff charged with implementing the Richmond City HEAL and HiAP efforts to share these recommendations and discuss opportunities for collaborative efforts.
- 4- Present these recommendations and the findings of the food policy analysis, the focus groups, and community conversations to the Richmond City Council; engage Councilmembers in a discussion as to the continuing work of the Richmond Food Access and Equity Task Force and the feasibility of prioritizing and implementing the policy recommendations in the short- and long-term.
- 5- Consider the idea of proposing to the Richmond City Council that the Task Force become the Richmond City Food Policy and Equity Council. The Council could officially be created by a City resolution and could, in part, be charged with guiding the implementation of these recommendations and would receive continued funding.

Long-term

The Richmond Food Access and Equity Task Force can:

- 1- Engage relevant city agencies (e.g., public works, transit authority, planning) and community residents in a discussion to consider feasible, effective ways to make public transportation a reliable, affordable way to access healthy food.
- 2- Consider ways (e.g., through supportive policies, public-private investments and partnerships) to leverage and increase the reach of successful non-profit programs that improve access to healthy food (e.g., Tricycle Gardens, Shalom Farms, Renew Richmond).

Appendices

Appendix A

List of Key Informants:

- Andreas Addison City Innovator, Richmond City Government
- Melissa Assalone Campaign Manager, American Heart Association
- Dominic Barrett Executive Director, Shalom Farms
- Anne Darby Regional Planner, formerly Co-Chair of Mayor's Food Policy Taskforce
- Vicki Gamble Community Garden Coordinator, Richmond City Parks and Recreation
- John Lewis -- Director, Renew Richmond
- Cynthia Newbille Member, Richmond City Council
- Jim Scanlon Managing Member, Jim's Local Market
- Sally Schwitters Director, Tricycle Gardens
- Miraim Stiefel No Kid Hungry Program Associate, Virginia Department of Health
- Elizabeth Theriault -- Chronic Disease Prevention Supervisor, Richmond City Health Department
- James Wallace -- Fresh Food Advisor, Community Investments and Impact,
 Virginia Community Capital, Inc.
- Thaddeus Williamson-- Director, Office of Community Wealth Building
- Alicia Zatcoff -- Richmond City Sustainability Coordinator

Appendix B

The following resources supplement the resources referenced in the report:

ChangeLab Solutions Licensing and Zoning: Tools for Public Health. 2012 Accessed at: http://www.changelabsolutions.org/sites/default/files/Licensing&Zoning FINAL 2012070
3.pdf

ChangeLab Solutions. Champions for Change. Taking Stock: Creating Healthy Changes at Grocery Stores and Small Markets. Accessed at:

http://www.changelabsolutions.org/sites/default/files/Taking%20Stock CX3 CDPH FINA L 20140410.pdf

ChangeLab Solutions. *Dig, Eat, and Be Healthy: A Guide to Growing Food on Public Property*. Accessed at:

http://www.changelabsolutions.org/sites/default/files/Dig Eat and Be Happy FINAL 20 130610 0.pdf

ChangeLab Solutions. *Putting Business to Work: Incentive Policies for the Private Sector.*Accessed at:

http://www.changelabsolutions.org/sites/default/files/documents/Incentives FINAL 201 20514.pdf

ChangeLab Solutions. *Getting to Grocery: Tools for Attracting Healthy Food Retail to Underserved Neighborhoods*. 2012.

http://www.changelabsolutions.org/sites/default/files/documents/Getting to Grocery F INAL 20120514.pdf

Design for Health. *Planning Information Sheet: Promoting Food Access with Comprehensive Panning and Ordinances*. Version 2.0. 2007. Accessed at: http://designforhealth.net/wp-content/uploads/2012/12/BCBS_ISFood_090107.pdf

PolicyLink. *Growing Urban Agriculture: Equitable Strategies and Policies for Improving Access to Healthy Food and Revitalizing Communities.* 2012. Accessed at: http://www.policylink.org/sites/default/files/URBAN_AG_FULLREPORT.PDF

Public Health Law Center. *Access to Healthy Food: Challenges and Opportunities*. 2012. Accessed at:

http://publichealthlawcenter.org/sites/default/files/resources/PHLC%20Access%20to%20 Healthy%20Food%20-%20Challenges%20and%20Opportunities%202012.pdf