



City of San Antonio

Agenda Memorandum

File Number:19-3532

Agenda Item Number: 4

Agenda Date: 4/25/2019

In Control: Community Health and Equity Committee

DEPARTMENT: Health

DEPARTMENT HEAD: Jennifer Herriott, MPH

COUNCIL DISTRICTS IMPACTED: Citywide

SUBJECT:

A briefing on food deserts and urban farming in San Antonio as well as an update on the Healthy Corner Stores Initiative

SUMMARY:

Members of the Food Policy Council of San Antonio will provide a presentation on food deserts and how San Antonio can utilize urban agriculture strategies to improve a healthy food environment for residents. They will also provide an update on the Healthy Corner Stores Initiative.

BACKGROUND INFORMATION:

The Food Policy Council of San Antonio (FPCSA) was formed by the San Antonio Metropolitan Health District, under the Communities Putting Prevention to Work (CPPW) grant from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention and the Department of Health and Human Services in 2010. The FPCSA was designated a 501(c)(3) in 2013 and is dedicated to addressing the root causes of an unhealthy food system. It currently serves as a stakeholder forum to support a healthy, sustainable and just local food system; gathers and disseminates information for all who work toward that goal in the San Antonio area; and advocates for policy improvements relating to food.

Obesity is an epidemic in Bexar County with 36% of adults classified as obese and an additional 35% classified as overweight, making a combined total of 71% of adults classified as either overweight or obese. In addition, 11% of adults in San Antonio/Bexar County have been diagnosed with diabetes. (2015 Texas

Behavioral Risk Factor Surveillance System Survey) One of the contributing factors to chronic diseases like diabetes and obesity is poverty in part due to food insecurity. In Bexar County, food insecurity is often a result of residents living in a food desert, an urban area in which it is difficult to buy affordable or good-quality fresh fruits, vegetables, and other healthful whole foods.

The FPCSA will discuss the comprehensive view of food deserts and how San Antonio can utilize urban agriculture strategies to improve a healthy food environment for the residents of San Antonio.

Through a contract with San Antonio Metropolitan Health District (Metro Health), the University of Incarnate Word - School of Osteopathic Medicine (UIWSOM) is currently working to recruit, select, and obtain commitment from five corner stores to participate in a pilot program to sell healthy foods at a recommended and reduced price. As a partner in this initiative's pilot with Council District 3, Metro Health, and UIWSOM, the Food Policy Council will also provide an update on the progress of the Healthy Corner Stores Initiative and its pilot.

ISSUE:

With the support of Metro Health, the Food Policy Council of San Antonio would like the opportunity to brief the Community Health and Equity Committee on local efforts to address food deserts and innovative strategies to increase urban agriculture in San Antonio as well as provide an update on the Healthy Corner Stores Initiative.

ALTERNATIVES:

This item is for briefing purposes only.

FISCAL IMPACT:

There is no fiscal impact at this time.

RECOMMENDATION:

This item is for briefing purposes only.