
Addressing food access in Cincinnati

Current programs that could help finance a grocery in a low-access community

Ohio Fresh Food Finance Fund - \$3 million in Ohio budget for funding healthy food retail. Finance Fund leveraged to provide assistance to five projects throughout Ohio, including Simon's Supermarket in Euclid, OH in former. There is also the Healthy Food Financing Initiative at the Federal Level and advocacy for further funding from the Food Trust, <http://thefoodtrust.org/what-we-do/supermarkets>. Provides assistance in Land acquisition financing, construction, workforce Development.

Cincinnati Grocery Development Incentives - Oscar Bedolla, the Director of Community & Economic Development, has confirmed that the policy is current and active. <http://www.choosecincy.com/Economic-Development/Programs-Services/Incentives-Financing/Grocery-Incentives.aspx>

Cincinnati Fresh Food Financing Fund exists to provide financial assistance for healthy groceries.

USDA Local Food Promotion Program can help fund local food enterprises.

<https://www.ams.usda.gov/services/grants/lfpp>

Federal Community Development Block Grants can be used to help finance retail. See

<http://www.changelabsolutions.org/news/tools-fund-and-support-healthier-stores>.

Currently existing partners and initiatives in Cincinnati working to expand healthy food access (not necessarily through full service groceries)

Greater Cincinnati Regional Food Policy Council – supports policies that fund and incentivize healthy food availability and access for all residents in the region.

Local Initiatives Support Corporation (LISC) of Greater Cincinnati & Northern Kentucky.

http://programs.lisc.org/greater_cincinnati/ has supported farmers markets, community gardens and grocery development in targeted low-income neighborhoods.

City of Cincinnati Health Department's Creating Healthy Community works with community partners, has supported urban agriculture and community gardening initiatives.

Produce Perks, operated by Cincinnati's Health Department, provides matching funds for SNAP beneficiaries shopping at farmers market. This is only useful when/where there is a farmers market.

Mobile Markets: Healthy Harvest Mobile Market, <http://healthyharvestmobilemarket.org/>, operated by the Freestore Foodbank, has a mobile produce market serving ## spots throughout the city/region on different days/times. Findlay Market Pop-up Farm Markets in Price Hill, Evanston, and Walnut Hills. Both accept WIC, SNAP, and Produce Perks.

WeThrive! of Hamilton Co. Public Health - <http://www.watchustrive.org/> - provides resources and assistance to help communities outside of Cincinnati conduct community health assessments, adopt wellness resolutions, develop action plans, and implement sustainable health promoting initiatives.

Ideas from other regions

- Baltimore City Health Department: on-line grocery shopping with deliveries at common buildings, delivery costs covered by a grant. Accepts cash, credit, SNAP, WIC.
<https://www.baltimarket.org/virtual-supermarket/>
- USDA is piloting demonstration projects for on-line SNAP purchases -
<https://www.fns.usda.gov/snap/online-purchasing-pilot>
- Simplifying the regulatory process can serve as an incentive for healthy food retailers (for example, by streamlining or expediting the permitting process). Cities can also develop coordinated outreach strategies to help food retailers navigate regulation and better understand the government services available to them (e.g. occurred in San Francisco and Chicago)
- Healthy Corner Store Certification policy – (e.g. implemented in Philadelphia by The Food Trust and the Department of Public Health in 2012.)
- Providing financial assistance to corner stores for physical renovations and piloting healthy food inventory. (e.g. Center for Great Neighborhoods in N KY provided up to \$10k for stores to invest in refrigeration and ID inventory customers would buy. Three stores continue to sell healthy foods they saw their customers wanting. Stores were identified based on neighborhood demographics and full service grocery availability.)
- Changing regulations to allow for mobile grocery stores (e.g. occurred in Minneapolis, where previous regulations only allowed portable stores to sell pre-packaged foods near senior citizen high rise apartment buildings. Changed regulations would allow mobile grocery stores to operate in commercial, industrial or high-density residential parking lots.)
- Staple food ordinance (e.g. Minneapolis - requires licensed grocery stores (including corner stores, gas stations, dollar stores, and pharmacies) to sell a certain amount of basic food items including fruits and vegetables, whole grains, eggs, and low-fat dairy. The staple foods ordinance was originally adopted in 2008, but was amended by the Minneapolis City Council in October 2014 to set more comprehensive and clear standards for food retailers.
<http://www.minneapolismn.gov/health/living/eating/staple-foods>)
- Vendors selling only fruits and vegetables are separately classified as “peddlers” and pay a reduced permit fee (e.g. Mobile Vending Laws: Chicago)
- “Green Carts” legislation: New York Set aside 1,000 permits to vendors selling whole fruit and vegetables in underserved communities. Green Cart vendors also have preference on the city’s permit waiting list. Also included a public education campaign

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~ The mission of the Greater Cincinnati Regional Food Policy Council is to promote a healthy, equitable, and sustainable food system for all within Greater Cincinnati’s ten-county region. ~