



## **Annual Internal Review**

**This report covers the time period of 1/1/2012 to 12/31/2012**

(This report is due in the first quarter of each calendar year for the previous year.)

### **Austin/Travis County Sustainable Food Policy Board** (Official Name of Board or Commission)

**The Board/Commission mission statement (per the City Code) is:**

The Board shall serve as an advisory body to the City Council and Travis County Commissioner's Court concerning the need to improve the availability of safe, nutritious, locally, and sustainably-grown food at reasonable prices for all residents, particularly those in need, by coordinating the relevant activities of city government, as well as non-profit organizations, and food and farming businesses.

**1. Describe the board's actions supporting their mission during the previous calendar year. Address all elements of the board's mission statement as provided in the relevant sections of the City Code.**

*(Reference all reports, recommendations, letters or resolutions presented to the City Council on mission-specific issues. If some of the elements of the mission statement were not acted on by the board in the past year, the report should explain why no action was taken.)*

The Sustainable Food Policy Board (SFPB) underwent an annual work planning process in March 2012 the timing of which was in line with when the board was fully seated and began work in March, 2009. Beginning in January 2013 the board will go to a calendar year work planning process.

The following are outcomes of the work plan the board put into place, as well as a continuation of the activities from the previous year's work plan. Priority objectives and working groups were established as outlined in #2 below to work toward the board's far-reaching mission. The thirteen-member volunteer board focused attention on food security this year, as exemplified through recommendations related to Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program access and collaboration with the regional Community Action Network (CAN) to establish a Food Security working group. Other activities synched with City

planning processes such as the 30-year Comprehensive Plan (Imagine Austin) and the Solid Waste Master Plan.

The following are all available via the Board's web presence here:

<http://www.austintexas.gov/page/sfpb-resources>

### **Recommendations and Letters of Support**

Imagine Austin Recommendations Letter to Planning Commissioners - In summary: Austin must prioritize the creation of a just and community-based regional food system by further increasing the visibility of food and farming in key section of the plan and ensuring that specific criteria and indicators are added to the filters included for allocating staff and resources.

[http://www.austintexas.gov/sites/default/files/files/Health/SustainableFood/ia\\_rec\\_letter.pdf](http://www.austintexas.gov/sites/default/files/files/Health/SustainableFood/ia_rec_letter.pdf)

Imagine Austin Approval Letter to Mayor and Council - In summary - This letter thanked the Mayor and Council for their consideration and implementation of many of the recommendations of the SFPB.

[http://www.austintexas.gov/sites/default/files/files/Health/SustainableFood/ia\\_approval\\_letter.pdf](http://www.austintexas.gov/sites/default/files/files/Health/SustainableFood/ia_approval_letter.pdf)

SNAP-Related Recommendations Letter to Mayor and Council - In summary: The SFPB recommends that the city council take action by asking city staff to implement an effective outreach and assistance effort to increase participation in the SNAP program as well as expand incentives to use SNAP benefits at local farmers markets, benefitting our local economy.

[http://www.austintexas.gov/sites/default/files/files/Health/SustainableFood/snap\\_rec\\_letter.pdf](http://www.austintexas.gov/sites/default/files/files/Health/SustainableFood/snap_rec_letter.pdf)

Economic Analysis Recommendation Letter to Mayor and Council with Resources - In summary: SFPB recommends that the City of Austin conduct an economic assessment of the local food system in coordination with Travis County. This will establish a baseline from which to evaluate our city's efforts to enact sound policies that strengthen our food production, processing, distribution, consumption and waste recovery sectors.

[http://www.austintexas.gov/sites/default/files/files/Health/SustainableFood/econ\\_analysis\\_recs.pdf](http://www.austintexas.gov/sites/default/files/files/Health/SustainableFood/econ_analysis_recs.pdf)

Food Recovery Recommendation Letter to Mayor and Council with Resources - In summary: SFPB recommends that Council take actions to ensure that the City of Austin staff facilitate a stakeholder process to develop strategies, actions, logistics and, if appropriate, policies that would lead to the implementation of the USDA/EPA Food Recovery Hierarchy both internally and throughout Austin and Travis County.

[http://www.austintexas.gov/sites/default/files/files/Health/SustainableFood/food\\_recovery\\_recs10-23-2012.pdf](http://www.austintexas.gov/sites/default/files/files/Health/SustainableFood/food_recovery_recs10-23-2012.pdf)

Austin Food Week Proclamation - Proclamation from Mayor Leffingwell recognizing October 21-27, 2012 as food week and urging citizens to participate in Food Week events.

<http://www.austintexas.gov/sites/default/files/files/Health/SustainableFood/austinfoodweekproc.pdf>

### **Board-Related Resolutions, Ordinances, & Proclamations**

#### Resolution No. 20121213-097 Food Waste Recovery Resolution

The city manager is directed to request all relevant City Departments, particularly Austin Resource Recovery and Health and Human Services Department, to participate in a stakeholder process to establish a strong coalition around food waste prevention and recovery goals and metrics. This will include awareness, education and actions appropriate to help Austin become a national leader in food recovery.

#### Resolution No. 20120802-072: Economic Impact Analysis of Urban Agriculture and Local Food System

The City Manager is directed to conduct an economic impact analysis of urban agriculture and the local food system (covering all stages: food production, processing, distribution, consumption, and waste) in the City of Austin. The study shall evaluate at a minimum:

- the impact on local economic activity, specifically addressing the local multiplier effect of keeping more dollars circulating in the localeconomy,
- the effect of the overall local food system on local business development and job creation,
- the sustainable aspects of a diverse local food system that embraces innovative low-resource intensive urban agriculture techniques, and best practices and new initiatives from other cities.

[http://www.austintexas.gov/sites/default/files/files/Health/SustainableFood/local\\_food\\_system\\_econ\\_assessment.pdf](http://www.austintexas.gov/sites/default/files/files/Health/SustainableFood/local_food_system_econ_assessment.pdf)

## **2. Determine if the board's actions throughout the year comply with the mission statement.**

*(If any of the board's actions were outside the scope of the mission statement, the report should explain the non-compliance issues.)*

The following positions the board's goals, objectives and working groups within the scope of the mission (mandate).

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

#### Goals, Objectives and Working Groups (WG):

##### 1. equitable access to healthy food - *goal*;

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.- *objective*

Food Security WG -Assess current efforts in Austin/Travis County and identify relevant stakeholders to: identify, inform, and connect assessment and planning efforts related to food security in Austin and Travis County; identify critical issues, needs and gaps; identify public policy priorities and barriers

2. consumption of local, fresh, and quality sustainably-produced food - *goal*;  
Review best practices, current efforts and policies that support getting nutritious and local fresh food to all residents – emphasizing those with difficulty accessing it. - *objective*

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. - *objective*

a. Central Texas Food Assistance Programs WG-Increase participation in, and impact of, federal food and nutrition programs such as SNAP, WIC, CACFP, Summer Food Program, etc.

b. Healthy, Local, Sustainable Food in City/County Venues WG-Group's charge: To make policy recommendations to the Sustainable Food Policy Board pertaining to healthy, local, sustainable food served at and procured for City of Austin and Travis County sponsored events and property.

3. culture of good food as a right - *goal*;

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 - *objective*

a. City/County Bond Issues WG - Monitor/assess any city/county bond creation projects to ensure that, wherever possible, City/County SFPB objectives from Imagine Austin are included in a clear and comprehensive manner.

4. robust and just local food system; - *goal*

Assess potential resource recovery for farmers and residents inherent in the wastage/surplus of food in Austin/Travis County. - *objective*

Foster local capacity to help implement food systems-related recommendations and plans.- *objective*

a. Retail Capacity Building WG - 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. Increasing Distribution/Processing of Local Meats WG -Recommend new policies to increase local, sustainable meat processing and distribution by: identify barriers local, sustainable farmers have for processing their livestock and distributing meat locally; research best practices; seek to quantify health benefits and economic opportunities of growing this sector; and recommend new policies

- c. Affordable Water for Sustainable Farms WG- Convene stakeholders to: identify existing barriers to affordable water for sustainable farmers serving the city/county research best practices seek to quantify health benefits and economic opportunities of securing this resource and recommend new water policy
- d. Food Surplus and Salvage WG – to create policies that eliminate the concept and practice of food waste.

**3. List the board’s goals and objectives for the new calendar year.**

*(Make sure the goals and objectives fall within the mission statement of the board/commission.)*

**SFPB 2013 Work Plan**

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

**[Working Groups (WG) by Goals/Objectives]**

**Recommend policies that facilitate:**

**1. equitable access to healthy food;**

- 1.1 *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]*
- 1.2 *Remove zoning and other barriers (ex permits) to the development of small grocery stores and other alternative retail outlets (including farmers markets, mobile veggie carts, etc.) in residential areas [Increase # of alternative retail outlets across city/county]*

**a. Food Security WG**-Assess current efforts in Austin/Travis County and identify relevant stakeholders to: 1) *identify, inform, and connect assessment and planning* efforts relates to food security in Austin and Travis County, 2) identify critical issues, needs and gaps and 3) identify public policy priorities and barriers.

**b. Retail Capacity Building WG** - Identify specific city codes, permits, variances, policies, programs, and/or procedures that will facilitate the creation and success of 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. Bring recommendations to SFPB.

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

- 2.1 *Review best practices, current efforts and policies that support getting nutritious and local fresh food to all residents – emphasizing those with difficulty accessing it.*
- 2.2 *Remove zoning and policy barriers and create incentives to improve and rebuild local food production, processing, and distribution systems appropriate to location and scale.*
- 2.3 *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.*

**a. Healthy, Local, Sustainable Food in City/County Venues WG**-Group’s charge: To make policy recommendations to the Sustainable Food Policy Board pertaining to healthy, local,

sustainable food served at and procured for City of Austin and Travis County sponsored events and property.

**b. Code Coordination and Metrics WG** - This working group will look closely into any code barriers that current exist in order to have a more sustainable local and regional food system in the City of Austin. Group will define main metrics at a City and County level in coordination with Sustainability office. These will be the base for any future code barriers found. Work with Planning department in any further code barriers in order to help eliminate Food Deserts.

### **3. culture of good food as a right;**

*3.2 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 and support social marketing efforts around local (central Texas) food culture based on best practices*

*3.3 support social marketing efforts around local (central Texas) food culture based on best practices*

**a. Code Coordination and Metrics WG** - Monitor/assess any city/county bond creation projects to ensure that, wherever possible, City/County SFPB objectives from Imagine Austin are included in a clear and comprehensive manner.

**b. Data Tracking and Collating WG** - 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.

**c. Community Engagement and Outreach WG** - establishment of a user-friendly and effective process for engaging the community in ongoing dialogue and work activities related to the mandate of the SFPB

**d. 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;**

*4.4 Foster local capacity to help implement food systems-related recommendations and plans.*

**a. Code Coordination and Metrics WG** (see details at 2 above)

**b. Retail Capacity Building WG** - Identify specific city codes, permits, variances, policies, programs, and/or procedures that will facilitate the creation and success of 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. Bring recommendations to SFPB.

**c. Distribution/Processing of Local Meats WG** - 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) seeking to quantify health benefits and economic opportunities of growing this sector; and 4) recommending new policies

**d. Affordable Water for Sustainable Farms WG** - 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 policies.