

RESOLUTION NO.

WHEREAS, 18 percent of Travis County residents and 25.2 percent of Travis County children live in a food insecure household, which is directly tied to poverty and results in increased health care costs, lower educational success, and decreased workforce productivity; and

WHEREAS, many food insecure residents have limited access to highly nutritious foods, including fresh fruits and vegetables, and are at greater risk of chronic diseases such as diabetes, heart disease, and cancer; and

WHEREAS, the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) has proven to be a federal nutrition program that effectively lifts many persons out of poverty and has a 1.79 local economic multiplier effect; and

WHEREAS, the Women, Infants, and Children (WIC) program targets low-income, nutritionally at risk populations and provides supplemental nutritious foods, nutrition education and counseling, and screening and referrals for other health, welfare, and social services; and

WHEREAS, the Farmers' Market Nutrition Program (FMNP) is associated with WIC, and provides fresh, unprepared, locally grown fruits and vegetables to WIC participants; and

WHEREAS, in 2011, only 57 percent of eligible persons in Travis County enrolled in SNAP resulting in a loss of \$169,304,251 in federal SNAP benefits and a loss of \$303,054,609 of economic activity to Travis County that year; and

WHEREAS, direct outreach and application assistance to residents eligible for SNAP has proven to significantly increase SNAP enrollment, thereby decreasing food insecurity for these people; and

WHEREAS, in April of 2012, the Sustainable Food Policy Board (SFPB) recommended to the City Council that the City implement outreach and assistance efforts to increase participation in the SNAP program; and

WHEREAS, in February of 2013 and August of 2013, the SFPB again recommended the City Council invest funding to increase outreach and enrollment in SNAP; and

WHEREAS, students at the LBJ School of Public Affairs reported in May 2013 that throughout the U.S. farmers market incentives programs successfully generated increased purchases of fresh produce by SNAP recipients while also benefitting local farmers, including the Sustainable Food Center's Double Dollars Incentive Program; and

WHEREAS, in May of 2013, the SFPB recommended, in relation to the Economic Impact of Austin's Food Sector Report, that the City streamline regulations and permitting for farmers markets and farm stands and incentivize adoption of EBT technology to increase healthy food access for low-income families and individuals; and

WHEREAS, the Imagine Austin Comprehensive Plan and the Austin/Travis County Community Health Improvement Plan align in their goals

of increasing access to healthy foods and improving the impact of federal food and nutrition assistance programs; and

WHEREAS, on May 12, 2014, the SFPB passed a resolution recommending that the City fund a position with a partner community organization with demonstrated expertise and an established track record of facilitating SNAP outreach and enrollment to increase SNAP enrollment in Travis County, that the City partner with Travis County to jointly fund an outreach campaign to increase awareness and enrollment in SNAP, and that the City and Travis County partner with and provide resources to community organizations to facilitate the establishment of effective technology and outreach for redeeming SNAP/WIC/FMNP and provide additional incentives to all area farmers markets and farm stands; **NOW, THEREFORE**,

BE IT RESOLVED BY THE CITY COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF AUSTIN:

The City Manager is directed to prepare an item for consideration during the Fiscal Year 2014-15 budget process to fund a position with a partner community organization to facilitate SNAP outreach and enrollment, and explore the feasibility of a partnership with Travis County to fund this position and partner on other SNAP outreach efforts.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED:

The City Manager is directed to provide recommendations for how the City can facilitate the establishment of effective technology and outreach for use of

SNAP, WIC, and FMNP at various retail locations, making technology available to area farm stands, farmers markets, and creative permanent and mobile venues that sell fresh produce, including potential funding options for FY 2013-14 and FY 2014-15.

ADOPTED: _____, 2014

ATTEST: _____

Jannette S. Goodall
City Clerk