



BOARD/COMMISSION RECOMMENDATION

Austin/Travis County Sustainable Food Policy Board

Recommendation Number: (20150309-4.A.1): Board name and size change

March 9th, 2015

Dear Mayor and Council Members,

The future of a just, equitable, and sustainable food system in Austin owes its success to the involvement of many different communities. It is critical that representation on the City of Austin/Travis County Sustainable Food Policy Board (SFPB) reflect the diverse and vibrant communities that make up Austin and Travis County.

At the March 9th meeting, the SFPB voted unanimously on the recommendations below, which revise the current name of the board and council member appointment model. We believe these changes will allow us to more effectively engage and serve all Austin/Travis County citizens through appropriate community representation, and support the City of Austin Boards and Commissions Transition Taskforce (BCTT) recommendations.

According to [D4. 2-1-170 of the the B&C Transition Taskforce Report \(p. 16\)](#): the BCTT recommended the following name and appointment model for the SFPB:

- “Sustainable Food Policy Commission”
- “The Commission would continue with its current 13 members with 6 nominated by Travis County and 7 by the City Council. The 7 Council representatives could be nominated by a committee of the Council.”

Recommendation 1:

The SFPB recommends that name be changed to **“City of Austin/Travis County Food Policy Commission.”** We believe this name more accurately reflects the breadth of our charge and the geographic representation of our members, and keeps with SFPB goals to advise City *and* County policymakers in two intersecting areas – a sustainable local food system *and* equitable food access and wellness.

Recommendation 2:

The SFPB recommends that its **membership be comprised of ten (10) City Council appointees, one Mayoral appointee, and six (6) Travis County Commissioner appointees, for a total of**

seventeen (17) members. We believe this appointment model best reflects the diverse communities and areas of expertise that SFPB members must represent, and supports the City of Austin’s transition to geographic district representation.

The board feels it is similarly critical that these individual district and county appointees be community leaders serving neighborhoods defined as food deserts, and are experts or active practitioners in the following: community engagement, public health, farming/urban agriculture, higher education (with a research background in health and nutrition), non-profits serving the low-income community, food distribution, food recovery, public policy, nutrition and dietetics, and urban planning.

We believe these recommendations support the [City of Austin boards and commission goals](#) “to enable citizens to participate in Austin's government processes...[and] shape and influence public policy, because they lend a more diverse viewpoint for the City Council to consider.”

The members of the City of Austin/Travis County Sustainable Food Policy Board look forward to continuing to assist city /county policymakers, staff, and community stakeholders in supporting local food systems planning and food-related policymaking to achieve a livable, vibrant and socially equitable community.

Sincerely,



Ronda Rutledge
Board Member
City of Austin/Travis County Sustainable Food Policy Board

Date of Approval: 03/09/2015

Record of the vote: Unanimous (10 – 0)