

AUSTIN-TRAVIS COUNTY FOOD POLICY BOARD RECOMMENDATION

Recommendation Number: _12032021 - _____

Supporting Food Access in Travis County

July 7, 2023

WHEREAS,

The current [population of Travis County](#) is 1.3 million people, of whom over 11% live below the poverty line with a rate of 15% for children. [Families in poverty](#) are becoming concentrated near the I-35 corridor and in Eastern Travis County, where poverty rates are higher.

WHEREAS,

[Feeding America](#) calculates food insecurity in Travis County affects 12% of the total population, meaning they cannot ensure access at all times to enough food for an active, healthy life for all household members. Of those who are food insecure, 52% are above the SNAP threshold of 165% of the federal poverty level and 48% are below the SNAP threshold of 165% of the federal poverty level.

WHEREAS,

The cost of living has increased 28% between January 2015 and January 2023, according to the Bureau of Labor Statistics, Consumer Price Inflation Calculator (CPI). The high cost of living in Austin and Travis County has a direct impact on food access. As an example, some families must choose between basic needs (e.g. housing vs. food).

WHEREAS,

The annual food budget shortfall for Travis County is \$102,168,000. At the same time, in FY23 Access to Basic Supports food access and hunger prevention contracts totalled \$588,521.

WHEREAS,

The Travis County Commissioners Court annually invests in social service programs, which encompass access to basic supports (i.e., food, transportation, and legal rights and benefits) to protect vulnerable populations, promote healthy living, and invest in social and economic well-being.

WHEREAS,

The Travis County Commissioners Court is committed to affordability, accessibility, early intervention with respect to family support services, domestic violence, behavioral healthcare, housing stability, early childhood programming, and HIV services – all of which serves individuals and families who may live in poverty and be food insecure.

NOW THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that the Austin-Travis County Food Policy Board recommends that Travis County,

Invest in increasing funding for Access to Basic Supports, including funding to increase food access and to provide food access to prevent hunger and promote wellness, as well as to provide access to public benefits for eligible populations to support basic needs. In FY24, fund this investment by augmenting the

current food access funding levels of \$588,521 by an additional \$1 million to total \$1,588,521.

DRAFT