

Increasing Food Retail Access in Underserved Neighborhoods-Action Plan

Mission: To reduce food insecurity by increasing food retail access in underserved areas.

Short-term (1-2 years)

Goals:

- Improve existing physical infrastructure and break down economic barriers for food purchasing.
- EBT access at every farmers' market, beginning with the markets in underserved areas.
- Direct bus routes to grocery stores from underserved neighborhoods.
- Assess walkability across major streets to grocery stores/food retail outlets.

Strategies:

- Define "food deserts" or "underserved neighborhoods," identify those areas and concentrate efforts on those areas.
- Bring EBT operations under one program, issue an RFP designed to increase access at existing and emerging markets.
- Ensure SNAP and WIC access at all food retail outlets.
- Inventory existing bus routes; develop more direct routes from underserved areas to grocery stores.

Medium-term (2-4 years)

Goals:

- Institute "Madison Public Market Approved" program designed to attract the "average" Madisonian to network of small, ethnic grocers.
- Attract additional mobile market operations.
- Fresh produce access at convenience stores and corner stores.

Strategies:

- Urge DHS to revisit WIC purchasing policy (Bridget Holcomb?).
- Incentive and/or grant program for existing small grocers (both mobile and permanent), expanding on current façade improvement grant program.
- Develop a marketing and "certification" program around the development of the Madison Public Market to educate and attract people to small grocers.
- Partner with existing entities to offer training to small, mid-sized retailers in healthy food marketing.

Long-term (4-5 years)

Goals:

- Bring new permanent retail to underserved areas.
- Reduce food insecurity in the City of Madison.

Strategies:

- Develop tax and zoning incentives to bring grocery stores to underserved neighborhoods.
- Create standards for new development projects that provide baseline healthy food access that mirrors other equity efforts in the city.
- Develop a long-term funding strategy on food retail access for both public, private, and non-profit institutions.