



Department of Planning & Community & Economic Development
ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT DIVISION

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Office of Business Resources
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Memo: Healthy Retail Access Program Work Group Funding Recommendation – *Dane County Farmers Market*

Date: Thursday, June 15, 2023

To: Madison Food Policy Council Members

From: George Reistad, *Business Development Specialist* and Members of the Healthy Retail Access Program Work Group

Members of the Madison Food Policy Council,

The Healthy Retail Access Program (HRAP) Work Group met with Dane County Farmers Market (DCFM) leadership, Jamie Bugel and Rachel Figueroa, on Thursday, June 15, 2023 to discuss DCFM's proposal seeking \$7,500 in Healthy Retail Access Program (HRAP) funding to support the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program Electronic Benefits Transfer (SNAP-EBT) operations at their markets during the 2023-2024 season.

The total HRAP funding request from DCFM is \$7,500. The total project cost for their EBT operations is \$26,997. This represents a roughly 28/72 total cost-share between the City and DCFM respectively.

HRAP funding would be used by DCFM to support SNAP-EBT operations at their market locations. The funding would be mainly used to support costs related to staffing and Customer Relationship Management (CRM) systems, which allows the market to serve SNAP-EBT clients efficiently.

In recent years, due to the economic pressures of both COVID-19 and rising inflation, SNAP-EBT and Double Dollars distributions and redemptions have risen dramatically at the DCFM (as well as other participating markets). As a result, the need for additional capacity to manage SNAP-EBT functions has also increased, which logically increases the costs of operating the program at the market. From 2020 to 2022, SNAP-EBT distributions at the DCFM increased by over 400%. In that same time period, Double Dollars distributions increased by over 532%. These are huge increases in demand over a short period of time and represent a major shock to DCFM's SNAP-EBT programmatic budget.

Because of the above, members of the Healthy Retail Access Program Work Group believe that DCFM is filling a crucial community need and providing access to fresh, local food for demonstrably low-income residents who are using SNAP-EBT benefits at the market. Work Group members recommend that the requested \$7,500 in HRAP funding be awarded to the Dane County Farmers Market to support their ability to serve SNAP-EBT customers and process SNAP-EBT transactions.

Sincerely,

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