

**TO:** Nan Fey, Madison Food Policy Council Chair  
Claire Mance, Community Engagement Work Group Chair  
George Reistad, Food Policy Director

**FROM:** Healthy Retail Access Work Group

**DATE:** November 5, 2018

**RE:** Progress Report & Work Plan Request

Per your request, the following is a Healthy Retail Access Work Group progress report and update organized by your guiding questions.

**1. Background: What is the general issue you're focused on, or the mission of the group? Why are you working on this? Please include any key materials or documents, e.g. council resolution, handouts, reports etc.**

The Healthy Retail Access Work Group was created around 2013 with the dual aim of (1) increasing the availability of healthy affordable food in low food access areas in Madison and (2) helping small and medium-sized independent food retailers acquire the funding necessary to improve their healthy food offerings and make them accessible to residents with food access challenges. The Work Group's most significant accomplishment was the creation of the Healthy Food Access Program (HRAP). Additional information about the Program can be found at the following link:

<https://www.cityofmadison.com/mayor/priorities/food/healthy-food-retail-underserved-neighborhoods/healthy-retail-access-program>

**2. Accomplishments: What has been done since 2016? Since 2012?**

**Accomplishments**

- Disbursed over \$340,000 to six food access projects since 2016
- Partnered with staff members from Planning and Economic Development to develop a data-driven map of low food access areas in Madison to guide program implementation (~2013-2016)
- With financial support from the American Heart Association (AHA), obtained an external evaluation of the Healthy Retail Access Program by The Food Trust, an organization nationally renowned for its work on healthy food financing initiatives (2017-2018)
- Developed RFP for a feasibility study of a food terminal cross-dock in metro Madison in response to opportunities associated with the redevelopment of the Oscar Mayer site and documented need for improved distribution infrastructure for Madison area wholesale buyers, especially small and independent food retailers (2018)

**3. Current Projects/Key Issues: What are you actively working on? Do you have a work plan?**

- **Updating HRAP.** With guidance from our staff team (Michael Miller, City of Madison Business Specialist, Nick Heckman, Madison/Dane County of Public Health Food Security Policy Analyst, and George Reistad, City of Madison Food Policy Director), we are utilizing The Food

Trust's analysis and recommendations to improve the Program by modifying the application, eligibility requirements, funding allocation and technical assistance protocol with the goal of establishing a more effective program based on best practice examples from across the country. Another issue central to these changes is whether and to what extent the program should expand its focus to include organizations that address emergency food security rather than just retail-based food access issues. This shift in orientation reflects both changes that have taken place in the food access and security policy landscape since the Program was first conceived as well as observations based on approximately five years of Program administration.

- **Overseeing Food Terminal/Cross-dock Feasibility Study Proposal Review Process.** A subset of Work Group members is serving on the proposal review panel for the food terminal/cross-dock facility, which expects to select a finalist by year end 2018.
  - **HRAP Application Review.** We continue to review HRAP applications on a rolling basis.
  - We have no formal Work Plan at this time.
- 4. Participants: Please note any Madison Food Policy Council members, city staff, alders, etc. you may be working with, and describe key relationships with community partners.**

Please refer to staff team members listed above in #3. Additional partners include retailers, such as Willy Street Co-op and Luna's Market, and organizations such as the Latino Chambers of Commerce and the American Heart Association. Work Group members who do not sit on the Madison Food Policy Council include District 20 Alder Mathew Phair and AHA Community Advocacy Director Ben Van Pelt. Food Policy Council members Satya Rhodes-Conway and Rebecca Kemble (District 18 Alder) have been active partners in advancing the resolution and RFP process for the food terminal/cross-dock feasibility study.

- 5. Next Steps: What are your next goals? What is the timeframe for those goals? What does the group expect to need help with in the next 6 -12 months?**

At present, our two major goals for the next 6-12 months are (1) to update the Healthy Retail Access Program to address evaluation feedback and to better respond to Madison residents' food access and food security challenges by working with retail and nonprofit partners, and (2) to continue to work with our partners on City staff to select and collaborate with consultants to conduct the food terminal/cross-dock feasibility study. Our staff team is taking the lead on developing recommendations for implementing program updates per recent Work Group discussions. We anticipate that the updates will be complete in 6 months or less. We anticipate selecting consultants for the feasibility study by the end of 2018. Their scope of work should be complete by fall/winter 2019. We have appropriate support from City staff at this time.

- 6. Website Presence: What would you like the city's website to say about your work. What materials would you like to be linked there?**

We are satisfied with our web presence, as currently reflected by the HRAP web page.