

Title: REVIEW OF 2021 “CARTS IN PARKS” PILOT PROGRAM

Summary:

The foundation of the Carts in Parks program was two-fold:

1. Support community market opportunities for new, emerging, and established entrepreneurs. Form relationships with community organizations like the Latino Chamber of Commerce (LCC) and UJAMAA Business Network.
2. Offer vending locations in Madison Parks for City licensed food carts/trucks that needed a boost to their economic recovery due to the COVID-19 pandemic. City of Madison licensed food cart and truck operators on average have lost 69% of their revenue due to loss of sales during the COVID-19 pandemic. This part of the program allowed for daily vending in various Madison Parks and coordination of food carts/trucks at Community Group and Neighborhood Park Events, when appropriate.

Summary of the Latino Chamber of Commerce Plaza Markets

- The LCC hosted 11 markets in Penn Park. There were merchandise vendors, a veggie stand, taco stand, food trucks, bakery stand and more.
- The Sunday LCC Plaza markets included Latino musicians. The Thursday markets focused on physical and mental wellness; offering yoga and Zumba.
- The LCC Plaza markets also offered spaces for informational vendors and non-profits to hand out information.
- 60% of grant funds were used to offset the cost incurred by the LCC for the markets and to hire employees from the Penn Park neighborhood to be liaisons to promote the markets in the neighborhood as well as working during the markets themselves.
- Madison Parks waived permit fees, including vending fees for all LCC Markets.

Summary of UJAMAA events

- UJAMAA Business Network is a cooperative of multicultural owned startup businesses that offer a diverse selection of products and services, focusing on entrepreneurship as a pathway out of poverty.
- UJAMAA hosted a few community markets in several Madison Parks with vendors and entertainment.
- UJAMAA's last event of the season was coordinated with Mentoring Positives another amazing organization mentoring youth through entrepreneurship. This event was held in Worthington Park.
- Madison Parks waived permit fees, including vending for all UJAMAA markets.

Summary of the Daily Food Cart Vending program

- 15 parks used for Daily Vending
 - Some parks were used only once, as it was determined that the park was not a viable daily vending location.
- 26 food businesses signed up for Carts in Parks Daily Vending
- 11 food carts/trucks participated in the Guaranteed Sales program

- Food carts/trucks were able to schedule themselves for shifts in different Madison Parks using the When to Work app.
- Food carts/trucks were connected with city agencies, Neighborhood Resource Teams, community groups and Neighborhood Associations to vend at their park events.
- 40% of the grant money was used for the Guaranteed Sales Program to compensate food carts that didn't make a certain amount of sales during a shift in a Madison Park.
- Madison Parks waived the park vending permit fees.

Economic equity and accessibility

- The Latino Chamber of Commerce Plaza Markets helped to support Latino entrepreneurs and microbusinesses by giving them a weekly market to vend at, some infrastructure (tents, tables), and information on licensing and permits to help them navigate City of Madison and Public Health requirements.
- The UJAMAA Business Network was able to provide a few dates and locations for their coop of multicultural entrepreneurs to sell goods and promote their businesses.
- The majority of food cart operators in the City of Madison identify as people of color, women and/or immigrants.
- The Carts in Parks program focused on minority owned businesses in order to increase accessibility in Madison Parks to all.
- Assisted NRT leads with connecting food carts/trucks to events happening in NRT neighborhoods.

Looking Forward

- The Community Event team will be proposing Carts in Parks 2.0 at the January BPC meeting.
- The Community Event team would like to continue on the path of making Madison Parks more accessible to communities of color by continuing to make and grow relationships with community organizations that represent BIPOC, like LCC and UJAMAA.
- We learned a lot in 2021 about locations and times that are best for food carts and the public.
- The Community Event team found working with Planning and EDD invaluable and will be looking to collaborate with these and other City agencies in the future to determine permitting processes and fees as well as policy and ordinance changes.
- There was a learning curve regarding how these markets and daily vending impact our Operations Staff. Moving forward, they will be included in the planning process from the beginning so we know what support Madison Parks can provide and which parks are ideal for these activities.
- The Parks Vending permit and ordinance has not been updated in many years. The Carts in Parks program will help to shape recommendations for our vending policies in the future to better reflect current times.