



SUSTAINABLE FOOD POLICY BOARD

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July 14, 2014

Philip Huang, MD, MPH
Medical Director and Health Authority
Austin/Travis County Health and Human Services
RBJ Health Center
15 Waller Street
Austin, Texas 78702

Dear Dr. Huang:

The purpose of this letter is to offer the support of the Austin/Travis County Sustainable Food Policy Board for the City of Austin Health and Human Services Department application for the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention *Partnerships to Improve Community Health* (PICH) grant funds.

With the efforts undertaken and the dedicated, ongoing involvement of the Chronic Disease Prevention and Control Coalition, the Community Health Improvement Plan, and the City of Austin's *Imagine Austin Comprehensive Plan*, HHSD is well positioned to continue to move forward to implement evidence-based, best practices strategies as required for the PICH funds.

The mission of the Austin/Travis County Sustainable Food Policy Board is to advise both the Austin City Council and the Travis County Commissioners' Court to improve the availability of safe, nutritious, locally and sustainably-grown food at reasonable prices for all residents, particularly those in need. The scope of the board's charge is far-reaching, encompassing the assessment and strengthening of Austin and Travis County food systems as well as the accessibility and affordability of fresh food and the effectiveness of outreach and education. In short, the board advises policymakers about two intersecting areas – a sustainable local food system and food access and wellness.

The board is also charged with exploring new means for the City and County to improve the local food economy - the availability, sustainability, accessibility and quality of food and our environment - and with assisting City and County departments in the coordination of their efforts

We are interested in partnering with HHSD on strategies that:

- increase access and affordability of healthy foods and beverages in local food retail stores;
- increase availability of healthy menu options in local restaurants;
- increase opportunities for local food producers to sell their produce to participants and eligible participants of supplemental nutrition assistance programs (like SNAP and WIC) at farmers markets and farm stands;
- increase access to and affordability of fresh fruits and vegetables for low-income residents.



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Related to these strategies, the Austin/Travis County Sustainable Food Policy Board has successfully:

- assisted in drafting language for the City of Austin's 30 year comprehensive plan (Imagine Austin) supporting local sustainable food systems;
- assisted in the passing of a City of Austin Urban Farm Ordinance;
- assisted in the passing of a City of Austin Farmers Market amendment which decreased the regulatory burden on local farmers to sell healthy food.

We are committed to making Austin a healthier city and would be honored to collaborate with the Chronic Disease Prevention and Control Program and Coalition to implement the *Partnerships to Improve Community Health* grant.

In partnership to make Austin a healthier city,

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Hildreth England". The signature is written in a cursive style and is positioned to the left of a vertical line.

Hildreth England, RD LD
Vice Chair
Austin/Travis County Sustainable Food Policy Board