



Annual Internal Review

This report covers the time period of 7/1/2016 to 6/30/2017

Austin-Travis County Food Policy Board

(Official Name of Board or Commission)

The Board/Commission mission statement (per the City Code) **is:** The Board shall serve as an advisory body to the City Council and Travis County Commissioner's Court concerning the need to improve the availability of safe, nutritious, locally, and sustainably-grown food at reasonable prices for all residents, particularly those in need, by coordinating the relevant activities of city government, as well as non-profit organizations, and food and farming businesses.

- 1. Describe the board's actions supporting their mission during the previous calendar year. Address all elements of the board's mission statement as provided in the relevant sections of the City Code.**

In response to City Council Resolution 20160303-020, the board's Healthy Food Access working group met to provide recommendations for the *Austin Healthy Food Access Initiative: Improving Access to Good and Affordable Food*. These six recommendations provided the basis for \$700,000 (\$400,000 ongoing, and \$300,000 one-time funding) to support food access in the FY 17 city council budget. The Healthy Food Access Working Group brought a proposed recommendation to the full board that was approved May 22, 2017.

Recommendation 20170522-2.a recommends that the Austin City Council support the following:

- The creation of a school food access fund available for school districts in the City of Austin to provide innovative delivery models r programs to address food security among school-aged children;
- A study of healthy food access within the City of Austin and Travis County, including metrics to determine how economic, health, housing

and transportation disparities affect a person's access to nutritious foods, The study should make recommendation on most impactful options in the economic, health, housing and transportation sectors to improved equitable, nutritious food access.

The Food and Climate Working Group was with the purpose of creating a Food and Climate Report to address the carbon footprint of Austin's food system. The group consists of Board Members Karen Magid, Sandra Evans and Adrienne Haschke and community members and is working in close collaboration with the Austin Office of Sustainability. The first meeting was in January 2017 and the group has since held multiple meetings to prepare a draft Food and Climate Report which includes the Office of Sustainability's calculation of greenhouse gas emissions associated with food consumption in Austin as well as a list of actions to mitigate and sequester emissions and build resilience. The initial findings and actions were introduced to the Joint Sustainability Committee at the May 24th meeting. Moving forward, the Food and Climate working group and Office of Sustainability will finalize their report language and list of actions for review and approval by the FPB, JSC and ultimately adoption by the Austin City Council.

The Farmland Preservation and Access Working Group held regular monthly meetings with strong citizen participation, averaging about 10-15 attendees per meeting, representing a diverse array of public, private and community based organizations ranging from private land-owners to City and County staff, and including land preservation, food, farming and community advocates. Many strategies and resources were explored resulting in a recommendation to the SFPB (unanimously approved) in support of the Fair Property Taxes for Farmers bill in Texas' 86th Legislative Session. One of the WG's main priorities in this time was the performance of a Regional Food System Study to better understand the current state of local food production and the market for local food. Several options for the creation of this study were explored, including the potential of a recommendation for the City of Austin to fund such a study. Eventually the WG decided that the first phase of the study would be handled by Texas Center for Local Food as part of their existing work with the USDA's FoodLINC Program. The WG heard a report from Texas Ag. Land. Trust on how agricultural conservation easements are being used to preserve farmland in Texas and the co-chairs of the WG also heard from and began to explore the possibility of partnering with American Farmland Trust on farmland conservation efforts in Central Texas. The year ended with renewed commitment to this working group objectives, especially through reducing the cost of land and services for farms, despite increasing development pressures and through partnership with farmland conservation organizations.

The Codes and Ordinances Working Group has been tracking the CodeNEXT process and making recommendations that support the Austin-Travis County Food Policy Board mission.

The Food Recovery Working Group formed in January 2017 with the purpose of identifying, supporting and promoting solutions for using previously wasted food to feed Austin’s people, animals, and soil. The working group brought a proposed recommendation to the full board that was approved May 22, 2017.

Recommendation 20170522-2.a recommends that the Austin City Council support funding to decrease food waste and increase food recovery through existing and new initiatives as well as private, innovative competitions.

2. Determine if the board’s actions throughout the year comply with the mission statement.

All of the board’s actions have supported its mission statement. Working groups have looked at various aspects of the food system, and made recommendations—both budgetary and policy—to improve food access.

3. List the board’s goals and objectives for the new calendar year.

(Make sure the goals and objectives fall within the mission statement of the board/commission.)

2017 Board Purpose: “The purpose of the Austin/Travis County Sustainable Food Policy Board is to address health disparities, increase local sustainable food production, and end food injustice through advocacy and research-based policy. We strive to ensure the community has a voice in policy decisions that support a healthy, thriving, and resilient community-based food system in Austin and Travis County.”

2017 Board Goals:

- More participation in 2017 leading to a thriving Board
- Training options for Board members in (but not limited to) A/TC policies and procedures, Texas Open Meetings Act, Robert’s Rules and Meeting format, technology options available to Board members, and the state of the food shed in Central Texas
- Monitoring and advancing (within limits and decorum) of our recommended policies and budgetary items
- Continue working on City and County policies to support healthy, local, sustainable food
- Lend support to Working Groups and individual Board members to encourage regular outreach to and engagement of Council members, Commissioners, stakeholders, and the public at large to promote the mission of the Austin-Travis County Food Policy Board
- Work with Code Next to promote the policy space and options needed for a vibrant community-based food system
- Begin work with departments and stakeholders on “Tip Sheets” for working in and with the various parts of the local food system

- Promote the work of the Food Policy Board Working Groups

2017 Working Groups:

Farmland Preservation and Access: *Develop policies and procedures to preserve existing farmland and to increase access of new farmland to aspiring and seasoned farmers alike from diverse backgrounds, diverse communities, and diverse skillsets.*

Codes and Ordinances: *Work to ensure a comprehensive yet accessible set of codes, ordinances, policies, rules, and billing throughout Austin and Travis County to stimulate a thriving community-based food system.*

Healthy Food Security and Access: *Use the tools of advocacy and research--based policy to encourage greater access of healthy food and education options in traditional and nontraditional venues and work towards a secure food future for all.*

Budget and Policy: *Collaborate with the Austin City Council, the Travis County Commissioners' Court, and their staff to monitor and advance budgetary and policy items related to the goals of the Sustainable Food Policy Board.*

- **Institutional Purchasing:** *Develops policies and procedures to improve institutional food purchasing.*
- **Food Recovery:** *Identifies, supports, and promotes solutions for using previously wasted food to feed Austin's people, animals, and soil.*
- **Food and Climate:** *Works to quantify the carbon footprint of food and agriculture activities in Austin/Travis County to provide solutions to mitigate associated greenhouse gas emissions, sequester atmospheric carbon, and build a resilient food system for all Austin residents.*