July 25, 2017 Session A: Problem solving session on Healthy Food Access in North City and North County

Breakout Group 1: How can we get healthier food options into existing stores in those areas?

**Schnucks/Big Grocery Store Related:**
Capitalizing on Double Up Food Bucks Program
- Increasing awareness of Double Up Food Bucks Program (many people working with people in the industry said that they didn’t know about the program)
- Cooking demonstrations with local foods/double up food bucks
- Highlighted stations/signage within Schnucks related to the program
- Educational involvement
- Information in the coupons/weekly flyers

“CSA”/Local Box within Schnucks
- Pre-assembled boxes with set price of local produce (ex. 15$ then they know they are receiving $15 worth of double up bucks)
  - Include a recipe card of ideas to cook with recipe
  - Seasonal education
- Order online and customize box for instore pick-up
- Good for Schnucks because it brings people to the store to pick up and are likely to purchase

Encourage grocery stores to try out ideas through pilot studies

**Corner Store/Smaller Markets**
Community Access points within neighborhoods
- Pairing system of Farmers to Local Corner Stores
  - Matching system corner store to farmer
Healthy Corner Store project
- Getting healthy foods into corner stores/ gas station for a long enough time for it to be used
- Finding out what was successful about the HCS project

Policy Mandate requiring certain percentage of healthy food based on square feet
- Connect mandate to renewal of business licenses
- Ways to increase/incentivize increased stock based on certain percentage of sales being from healthy food

Building on Mayor Slay’s Executive Order 58 to have healthy foods
- Expanding to schools/corner stores?
- This order requires healthier options to be priced cheaper 20%

**Overall Strategy to increase healthy food in existing stores**
1. Approaching current stores
2. Longer term → Getting local healthy foods to residents, behavioral changes, nutritional/cooking knowledge/education
3. Pride around local and healthy food in STL

Kourtney Kois-- North City Community Member

To-Do:
Follow up with those who were interested in more DUFB information
- Carrie Williams-- American Heart Association, Healthy Food Alliance for Early Education
- Melissa Ramel-- ramelm@stlouis-mo.gov
  - Also, suggested she might be able to pull the numbers on Healthy Corner Store project and if there was a notable change
- Jen DeRose-- Green Dining Alliance
Possibly share ideas discussed related to DUFB with Bonnie?

Breakout Group 2: How can we bring stores into areas that currently don’t have one/what are innovative models that may work?

Current models: We need to find a new model for grocery stores in low-income areas as brick and mortar typical supermarkets are not the right fit.
- There is a need to map out the models being currently used so that we can see what works and what barriers there are
- Links Market at North Hanley and Wellston Metro stops
  - Will provide mostly staple food items and toiletry products (unsure of the produce)
- City Greens - in need of community and financial support. Their model started off in a church as a kiosk and they grew into their own store - the rent and overhead admin is hurting them financially
  - Have been providing outlets for their shoppers to create their own business - one woman buys the extra produce and cooks meals to sell for her church, Dylan is selling garden beds for members to grow food and sell to the market
  - Are having trouble getting resources/grant money or getting turned down
  - They took a year to get to be self-sustaining - How do we speed up this success for other start-ups?
- United People - same model as City Greens but still in the church
- A store like Schnucks shouldn’t come in, should be local people only
- Corner stores: policy opportunity to keep owners accountable for what they’re selling?
  - Way to incentivize local people to own stores rather than outsiders who “leech” off the bad habits of the community
- Good Life Growing has seen a lot of success - what can we learn from them?

Food entrepreneurship: How can we provide opportunities and support to community champions so that the efforts are community/locally driven?
- Drug dealers have a great model, they bring the product to the people that want it. What if we could get people pushing zucchini on others?
  - Hustle in St. Louis that we should tap into
- Maybe we shouldn’t be subsidizing these projects and instead we should work within capitalism and the market?
Ideas for new models:

- Food kiosks at places like parks, libraries, bus stops, churches
- Any place needs to be multi-functioned for it to work (which is a theory why supermarkets don’t do well)
- Bike market - based off of Metro Market but more mobile - allows farmers to go to the people wherever they are instead of waiting for them to come
- How can we use existing organizations in the community to create food access?
  - Libraries, community centers, NFP. So think nontraditional partners.
- Barrier: Low population density traditional grocery stores are not going to go into an area with low population densities.
  - Food kiosk at transit centers (bus stops) and could stocked from veggies/foods from neighborhood gardens.
  - Small Markets from local gardeners in Parks.
  - Cargo Bike- suggested by Food Roots Owner (did not catch name) that might be a lower cost entry than a mobile bus like MetroBus.
- Think about low cost entries into the market. Consider nimble entrepreneurial models that allow very small scale “gardeners” to sell their food.
- Should not forget about Convenience Stores/Bodegas that already exist in some low-access communities.
- Food Education is KEY.
  - People need to know what to do with the food.
- City Greens is working but need support for overhead, administration, managing business issues (taxes, etc.).
- Good Life Growing has a food Stand at MLK and Sarah
- Map out all the different models currently in action in St. Louis. What works and what does not work? Could this be an area of information gathering and be published to inform funders of the need for additional support. Also inform communities as what could be viable in their community.

Barriers:

- Non-profits are not encouraged to do trial and error, only report on their successes and not their failures, therefore people can’t learn from the mistakes
  - “Non-profit industrial complex”
  - Not a lot of innovation within non profits
  - Non-profits need to draw ideas from for profit models
- Not enough research out there about possible models
- How do we create the demand for the food? Is it out there and we need to harness it? Or is it non-existent?
  - Entrepreneurship helps create the demand
  - Internships and mentoring are great but hard to find money for that
  - Retraining people how to cook and eat

Next steps:

- Overall hearing = we need multiple models to be successful and it needs to be community based model- one that is supported and “demanded” by the community.
- Food Innovation Grant - MFH, collaborative grant, room to fail,
- Urban Ag “T-Rex”
  - Food start up incubator