

**FRAMEWORK FOR ENGAGING
MADISON FOOD POLICY COUNCIL -DANE COUNTY FOOD COUNCIL
TO ADDRESS THE CORONAVIRUS PANDEMIC
MAY 6, 2020 (MFPC) and May 27, 2020 (DCFC)**

Mayor Rhodes-Conway attended the May 6 Madison Food Policy Council meeting to provide an overview of the emergency food response in the city to date and describe the “relief and recovery” policy approach she’s proposing going forward. County Executive Joe Parisi did the same at the May 27 meeting of the Dane County Food Council. This document identifies some of the fundamental issues that will need to be addressed, and proposes some ideas for restructuring the MFPC and DCFC to support the community’s immediate food access needs during the pandemic and build more resilient food systems for the future.

Assumptions:

- The Madison Food Policy Council and Dane County Food Council are well positioned to do this work.
- Prioritize strategies the City and County have control over, e.g. growing produce on publicly-owned lands, and re-purposing existing funding for food programs.
- Analyze potential strategies using racial equity and social justice, sustainability and resilience tools to maximize community engagement and evaluate effectiveness.

Opportunities: This crisis has created many challenges in the food system, both locally and across the globe. As policies and systems align to address the most urgent areas of concern, there will be opportunities to identify programs that meet multiple needs, and ways to improve the local food system in the medium and long term.

Approaches: Identify opportunities to collaborate, to support community partners (e.g. local farmers) and to maximize the effectiveness of city resources.

Timeline & Scale: Could the City and County stand up a relief program by June 1? Consider how/whether to engage other regional partners for both immediate and longer-term collaboration.

Current Structure of MFPC-DCFC: Determine which elements could effectively address these issues and whether others could be placed “on hiatus” for now.

**Denotes those that could continue to support pandemic response work on an ad hoc basis.*

Current City Work Groups and County Work Teams include:

- | | |
|---|---|
| 1. Community Engagement (City) | 5. Pollinator Protection & Integrated Pest Management |
| 2. Food Waste & Recovery * (Joint) | Policy Review Task Force (City) |
| 3. Healthy Retail Access * (City) | 6. SEED Grants * (City) & PIE Grants (County) |
| 4. Healthy Marketing & Procurement (City) | 7. Urban Agriculture * (Joint) |
| | 8. Equity and Access (County) |

Regular Business Reports have included updates from:

- | | |
|---------------------------------|--------------------------------|
| 1. Community Gardens * | 4. MMSD (schools) * |
| 2. IPM Policy Review Task Force | 5. Public Health * |
| 3. Dane County Food Council * | 6. Public Market * |
| | 7. Madison Food Policy Council |

New Work Groups

Food Relief:

Increasing numbers of households are food insecure. How do we meet the immediate needs and find creative ways to repurpose parts of the food system to meet these needs in the mid- and long-term?

- Map the emergency food system and any gaps
- Identify ways to increase access (pick-up, delivery, transportation, etc)
- Identify ways to divert recoverable food
- Explore ways to employ food-based businesses to meet emergency food needs
- Explore external funding opportunities
- Other goals?

Pandemic Food Access:

How does our community access healthy food in a healthy way?

- Work with Public Health and Economic Development on how food retail systems work in a pandemic situation:
 - Farmers Markets
 - Grocers
 - Restaurants
 - Delivery services
 - Etc.
- How do SNAP and WIC recipients access the food they need?
- How do we deal with disruptions in the supply chain?
- Other goals?

Food Systems Recovery & Resilience:

What can we do now, as part of recovery, to create a stronger, more resilient food system in the long term?

- Focus on mid- to long-term solutions
- Focus on food enterprise economic recovery
- Match food entrepreneurs with institutions that have facilities
- Identify strategic infrastructural investments
- Explore external funding opportunities
- Other goals?

Regional Agriculture and Food Sovereignty:

How do we increase food cultivation locally?

- Identify publicly-owned land with potential for cultivation
- Encourage creation of backyard garden support network/program
- Support and work to expand pantry gardens
- Develop and support farm partnerships
- Facilitate harvests for donation
- Other goals?

Logistics

- Work Groups set their own meeting schedule
- Members and chairs may need training on the city's virtual meeting system
- Food Council staff will need to notice all meetings and ensure that agendas and minutes are posted
- Each work group will develop a 1-page purpose & scope document
- Each work group can propose re-purposing City HRAP funding to meet emerging needs
- All work groups will utilize equity and sustainability tools to analyze proposals/policies
- Other?