



AGENDA REPORT

City Council

DATE:	July 19, 2022
TO:	Mayor Butt and Members of the City Council
FROM:	Councilmember Gayle McLaughlin
Subject:	Explore the feasibility of implementing additional farmers markets, food hubs, and/or Foodieland events on a reoccurring basis
FINANCIAL IMPACT:	While financial impact will need further study, it is known that such food events add economic benefit to cities and communities.
PREVIOUS COUNCIL ACTION:	The Richmond General Plan and its Health and Wellness Element was adopted on April 25, 2012; Health in All Policies (HiAP) Strategy and Ordinance were launched in 2014; Ordinance No. 27-15 was adopted on Dec. 15, 2015, amending Richmond Municipal Code Chapter 9.15
STATEMENT OF THE ISSUE:	Richmond should explore having more open market food events such as Farmers Markets and Foodieland events. Open market food events are known to not only advance health and wellness with access to healthy and delicious fruits, produce and other nutritious foods, but also create local jobs, community engagement, advance our local economy and help sustain the environment with local food systems rather than relying solely on food trucked long distances into our area (with all the greenhouse gas emissions that creates).
RECOMMENDED ACTION:	DIRECT staff to come back to the City Council in October of 2022 with a presentation that includes a menu of opportunities for the Council to examine for recurring open market food events in Richmond - Councilmember Gayle McLaughlin (510-620-6636).

DISCUSSION:

The City of Richmond is fully committed to achieving the highest level of health for all Richmond residents. Our Health in All Policies (HiAP) Strategy and Ordinance (launched in April 2014) reflects this commitment through an integrated effort to promote health equity in Richmond. With this strategy, the City showed its commitment to operationalize the Community Health and Wellness Element of the General Plan 2030 (approved in April 2012).

Adopting this strategy and these policies were major accomplishments and set the road ahead for how we need to better the health and wellness of our community at large.

This item focuses in particular on access to healthy food. A major part of our Health in all Policies must be nutrition and availability to healthy food for all our residents.

We are very lucky indeed to have dedicated community groups, such as Urban Tilth, growing and distributing healthy food throughout the city.

While important progress has been made by various groups to elevate the level of healthy food available to our communities, it is time the City of Richmond takes a larger step forward in the implementation of health food access that will help our local healthy food community groups and the population at large.

Various residents throughout the city have been concerned about such access and have reached out to the City Council on numerous occasions. Attempts to bring in more grocery stores to Richmond is an ongoing effort that must continue. However, while we need to continue to explore bringing in more grocery stores to the city, there are other avenues we can and must explore that will not only bring healthy food to our residents, but also bring about more community engagement. I refer to initiatives such as Farmers Markets, Food Hubs, and Foodieland events. We currently have a wonderful and well-appreciated weekly Farmers Market in Civic Center on Barrett Ave. However, one Farmer's Market is insufficient for a city the size of Richmond. The City of Berkeley, roughly the same size population as Richmond, has three (3) weekly Farmers Markets.

As stated by renowned author and chef Alice Waters: "I want to get people into the Farmers' Markets to taste and touch and have their senses opened to real food, to support the people who are taking care of the land, so we'll have a pure source of food in the future." It is really important that we advance our alternative food system to support healthier outcomes for our community.

This item asks City staff to come back to the City Council in October of 2022 with a presentation that includes a menu of opportunities for the Council to examine for recurring open market food events in Richmond. Such open markets are known to not only advance health and wellness with access to healthy and delicious fruits, produce and other nutritious foods, but also create local jobs, community engagement, advance our local economy and help sustain the environment with local food systems rather than

relying solely on food trucked long distances into our area (with all the greenhouse gas emissions that creates).

Open market events can include:

1. Additional Farmers Markets (weekly would be ideal, but even monthly and quarterly would be a good start). California Farmers Market Association provides information on start-up for new Farmers Markets in the state. As per their website, it takes about 6 months to open one:
<http://www.cafarmersmkts.com/about#about-cfma>
2. Foodieland Night Markets <https://foodielandnm.com/> Foodieland Night Markets have taken off big-time in the Bay Area and are described as foodie-inspired food and entertainment festivals.
3. A hybrid model of the above (e.g., a Farmers Market that also includes local vendors with healthy prepared foods, nutrition education, and entertainment)

There are various grant opportunities as well as toolkits for advancing local food systems. CA Dept. of Food and Agriculture (CDFA), for example, provides planning and grants. As per their website, CDFA's Farm to Community Food Hub Program will provide planning and implementation grants to mission driven food hubs throughout the state of California. See this website for more info:
<https://cafarmtofork.cdfa.ca.gov/F2CFHP.html>

It is important when City staff comes back to the City Council that they present various feasible sites as well as parking availability and best times to hold such open market events. In addition, the expectation is that staff will make sure they make recommendations that when implemented are done so with a racial equity lens in regard to the outreach to vendors, farmers and other participants.

Recently we held a Ferry Festival outside of the Craneway Pavillion which was well-attended by our community. That may be one such location for future food festivals.

The community and the City Council will benefit greatly from City staff researching these possibilities and coming back in the fall with some recommendations. This research can and should coincide with and inform the work our recently hired consultant, Appraccel, LLC., is doing in developing a Richmond Green-Blue New Deal.

DOCUMENTS ATTACHED:

None