

**CITY OF CHARLOTTESVILLE, VIRGINIA
CITY COUNCIL AGENDA**



Agenda Date:	September 18, 2023
Action Required:	None
Presenter:	Jeannette Abi-Nader, Cultivate Charlottesville Co-Executive Director, Quentia Taylor, Food Justice Network Program Director
Staff Contacts:	Misty Graves, Director of Human Services
Title:	Report from Cultivate Charlottesville on City Food Equity Initiative

Background

The Food Equity Initiative (FEI), first passed by City Council on October 18, 2018 brings together public, private, and non-profit partners working in unique and complementary ways to build a healthy and just community food system for all Charlottesville residents. The Initiative is cultivating community-driven processes, resident leadership, and city partnerships to improve access to and quality of nutritious and affordable foods, addressing food equity barriers.

Discussion

The 2022-2023 Food Equity Initiative work focused on building a foundation for our second, three-year partnership with council through intensive community engagement, racial equity capacity and strategy building across organizations, and implementation support for citywide food equity action plans. Additional focus areas this year include a) engaging with three community cohorts across food justice issues to heighten resident decision making, b) reporting on progress towards specific goals of the Food Equity Initiative Policy Platform through the FJN partners, c) integrating community priorities at the intersections of food justice with climate justice and zoning, and d) evaluating to reinvigorate Network structures for greater impact.

The attached report includes three sections: a report on the FEI FY23 Goals, the FY23 Budget to Actual, and our FY24 Initiatives and Budget. Key FY23 Food Equity Initiative accomplishments include:

1. Community Engagement Cohorts of 21 grassroots residents ages 14 -67 with a combined engagement of over 6,600 of paid advocacy hours.
2. Food Equity Initiative Policy Platform engagement across numerous community events with over 192 individuals and 34 organizations.
3. City staff engagement with the Food Equity Initiative Policy Platform includes nine City departments, Charlottesville City Schools, and Charlottesville Redevelopment and Housing Authority.

4. Ongoing Food Justice Network racial equity capacity building investing in new strategic direction for infrastructure support of over 26 partner organizations as well as Cultivate internal practices.
5. Selection for and funding for our Power to Grow Initiative community engaged design effort to develop and advance urban agriculture in low-wealth neighborhoods with nearly \$500,000.
6. Contribution of subject expertise and representation of City Council's Food Equity Initiative at 25 presentations and 23 partner coalitions, amplifying the discourse on building a healthy and just food system.
7. Collaboration with Community Climate Collaborative and City Climate Action plan to provide recommendations on the intersection of climate justice and food justice.
8. Ongoing grassroots programming including growing and distributing 13,422 pounds of fresh produce to 645 residents, 20,000 healthy school snacks to 3,200 students, 7,200 schoolyard garden experiences, and other on the ground efforts.

Alignment with City Council's Vision and Strategic Plan

The Food Equity Initiative supports City Council's "Community of Mutual Respect" vision. It contributes to Goal 2 of the Strategic Plan: a healthy and safe city and Goal 1: an inclusive community of self-sufficient residents specifically objective 1.5 intentionally address issues of race and equity.

Community Engagement

The Food Equity Initiative prioritizes community engagement efforts with diverse stakeholders including City residents, non-profits, and local government departments. Details of the robust community engagement activities are included in the key accomplishments listed in the Discussion section of this memo.

Budgetary Impact

Charlottesville Food Equity Initiative is already included in the City's FY 2025 Proposed Budget. Should Council wish to continue support, this funding will be considered through the regular budget process for inclusion in the final FY 2025 Adopted Budget.

Recommendation

Staff recommends resolution of support that funding will continue to be in the City Manager's proposed budget for FY 25 at \$155,000. There are also three specific recommendations by Cultivate Charlottesville for Council included in this report.

Alternatives

N/A

Attachments

1. Food Equity Initiative FY23 Report Packet
2. Food Equity Initiative FY23 Report ADDENDUM_POWER TO GROW