



DATE: August 2, 2024
TO: Charlottesville City Council
FROM: Cultivate Charlottesville Food Justice Network
SUBJECT: Food Equity Initiative End of FY24 Report

Dear City Councilors,

Thank you for your partnership in implementing FY24 of the Food Equity Initiative (FEI), first passed by City Council on October 18, 2018. Enclosed is our end of year report packet for July 2023–June 2024. The report is organized by the objectives outlined in the Food Equity Initiative proposal. Additional elements included in this packet are the City Departments' Food Equity Action Plans, FY24 Budget to Actual, and FY25 Objectives and Budget.

Council's Food Equity Initiative partnership with Cultivate Food Justice Network has supported rigorous engagement in community-based solutions to food equity challenges. Key FY24 Food Equity Initiative accomplishments include:

1. **Community Engagement Model Advocacy** with Fifeville Neighborhood Association & 501 Cherry Avenue Working Group, Charlottesville City Parks and Recreation Department, and Climate partners to center the voice and choice of Charlottesville residents with lived experience of food and racial inequity
2. **Food Equity Initiative Policy Platform engagement** to raise awareness around key intersections, such as climate justice and neighborhood food pathways, highlighted in the Food Equity Initiative Policy Platform
3. **City staff engagement** with the Food Equity Initiative Policy Platform including 7 City departments, Charlottesville City Schools, and Charlottesville Redevelopment and Housing Authority.
4. Myriad calls for **subject expertise** and representation of City Council's Food Equity Initiative at the local, state, regional, and national level amplifying the discourse on building a healthy and just food system in our town and across the country.
5. **Continued engagement** with Community Climate Collaborative (C3) and the City of Charlottesville, the County of Albemarle, and the University of Virginia on the future Resilient Together Cohort to plan for a more climate-responsive region.
6. **Ongoing grassroots programming** including growing and distributing more than 10,000 pounds of fresh produce to 5,000 residents, 24,000 Harvest of the Month healthy school snacks to 3,000 students, 10,500 schoolyard garden experiences, a



dozen family and community volunteer workdays, and various other on the ground efforts.

We appreciate the manner in which City Council has both partnered with and supported Food Justice Network in an effort to build a food system that allows all Charlottesville residents to **thrive**. We look forward to being with you in person on Monday, August 2 at 4:00 pm. If you have any questions, prior to our presentation, please do not hesitate to reach out.

Aleen Carey
Cultivate Charlottesville Co-Executive Director
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Charlottesville Food Equity Initiative

FY25 City Council Recommendations for Action

FY25 Continued City Council Support of The Power to Grow

On – September 18, 2023, Charlottesville City Council members Mayor Juandiego Wade, Vice Mayor Lloyd Snook, Michael Payne, Brian Pinkston, and Leah Puryear respectfully listened to community members, FJN partners, and Cultivate team members share the data gleaned from community engagement and amplify the overwhelming interest in an Urban Agriculture Collective (UAC) growing space in Booker T. Washington Park. We appreciate the time the councilors dedicated to our presentation and the value added to the discussion by their thoughtful questions and comments.

As we await the results of the Parks and Recreation strategic planning process, we ask that Council keep front and center—in 2025 and beyond—the importance of space for urban agriculture in our city parks as a key vehicle for increased food equity in the city of Charlottesville.



FY25 City Council Recommendations

Recommendation #1: Charlottesville City Council recommends dedicating land in Booker T. Washington Park for an Urban Agriculture Collective farm.

Recommendation #2: Charlottesville City Council asks Parks and Recreation to prioritize a community design for this farm site in the upcoming Parks & Recreation Strategic Plan.

Recommendation #3: Charlottesville City Council renews its commitment to making Charlottesville not only a foodie town, but also a food-E(quity) place where ALL residents have access to their preferred, culturally-relevant, fresh food and can truly **thrive**.

Charlottesville Food Equity Initiative FY24 Report Table of Contents

- I. **Food Equity Initiative End of Year Report –Summary Letter**
- II. **Food Equity Initiative FY25 Recommendations to Council**
- III. **Food Equity Initiative FY24 Report Against Objectives**
- IV. **Food Equity Initiative FY24 Budget to Actual**
- V. **Food Equity Initiative FY25 Core Priorities**
- VI. **Food Equity Initiative FY25 Budget Overview**
- VII. **ATTACHMENTS**
 - A. City Department Food Equity Initiative Action Plan



- B. September 2023 Presentation to Council
- C. The Power to Grow Community Engagement Model



Charlottesville Food Equity Initiative

FY24 End-of-Year Report Against Objectives

July 2023 to June 2024

Purpose

The Charlottesville Food Equity Initiative (FEI) 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.

The 2023-2024 Food Equity Initiative work centered around expanding the deep impact of the community engagement, strategic network planning, and collaboration with key partners achieved in FY23. There was also a FJN-wide focus on the key FEI Policy Platforms: The Power to Grow, Inspire Youth Choice, Build Community Wealth, and Restore Earth & Climate.

The following information includes three sections: a report against the FEI FY24 goals, the FY24 budget to actual, and our FY25 initiatives and budget. There are several supporting attachments (listed in our cover letter table of contents).

Activities and Progress towards Food Equity Initiative Objectives & Outcomes July 2023 – June 2024	
I. Compile and disseminate research including an analysis of food system assessments that identifies gaps and opportunities for investment, current food access efforts, and communication strategies to engage stakeholders including community members, business owners, and elected officials	
ADVOCACY ✓ Amplifying food justice across the area and the nation	Local, Regional and National Presentations on Food Equity Local <ul style="list-style-type: none">FJN City Food Equity Initiative – 7 meetings with City Departments (with 4 additional meetings before the end of calendar year 2024) Regional



	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • EPA Mid Atlantic Charlottesville High School garden visit with Regional Administrator Adam Ortiz and his team • EPA Mid Atlantic 2024 Virtual Summit <i>Empowering Communities for Environmental Equity</i> • Virginia Conservation Network – Summer Speaker Series: <i>Consumer Choices and Carbon Footprint</i> <p>National</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Partners for Places – Peer Learning Cohort • HEAL Food Alliance – White House Farm Bill Advocacy • HEAL Food Alliance – Annual Summit in Santa Fe, New Mexico • USDA Community Food Projects – Cultivate Just Food Network • National Farm to School Network Movement Meeting – Farm to School
<p>OUTREACH Communication Strategies</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ 1 press article ✓ 107 social media posts to grow food equity awareness, share knowledge & community information, and advocate & amplify for policy change ✓ 6 FJN Blasts and 4 Cultivate newsletters to 2,640 per issue ✓ 194 Food Justice Network member list ✓ 7 Community Events attended, tabled, and/or helped to plan 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Outreach Maintained robust communications strategy to engage community members across the Charlottesville area in a deeper understanding of food equity issues • Local Festivals Healthy Streets, Healthy People, Westhaven Community Day, CCS Back to School Bash, Community Climate Collaborative (C3) Party for the Planet, Children’s Festival Down by the Bog, Woven Roots Collective Seed Stories • Local News – Vinegar Hill Magazine <i>Cultivate Charlottesville Is Addressing Food Insecurity at the Roots</i>
<p>II. Establish mechanisms for community voice including both formal and informal meetings with oversight by community stakeholders and community members on programs and broader food access issues</p>	



<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ 7 youth food justice interns engaged in paid 6-week cohort ✓ 6 Virtual Food Equity Initiative community meetings with 25 organizations engaged ✓ 100+ youth advocated for Healthy School Foods ✓ 22 community members engaged in Healing in the Garden gatherings ✓ Listening Circle 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Hosted 6 Food Equity Initiative Policy Platform gatherings & 12 Food Justice Network planning team meetings for a combined 103 community members and 25 organizations • Youth Voice & Choice • 7 Youth Food Justice Interns participated in an intensive paid, 6-week program at 20 hours/week (this year marked a return to our partnership with CAYIP post pandemic with one of the 7 graduating from the CAYIP summer session) • 100+ student tastings and fresh food menu item selections. • Women's Initiative Sisters Healing Circles In the Garden – women of color gathered for two Healing in the Garden workshops in partnership with Women's Initiative Sister's Circle, City of Promise, and CRHA • The Power to Grow Listening Circle – Invited community members with lived experience in Booker T. Washington Park to speak about their memories for The Power to Grow documentary by Maupintown Media
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Food System advocacy in favor of projects to increase equity ✓ Share The Power to Grow community engagement model with multiple other organizations as a standard for equitable processes 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 501 Cherry Avenue Market – FJN members have worked with the Fifeville Neighborhood Association and the 501 Cherry Avenue Working Group to inform the community-led process for engagement around the potential new grocery • The Power to Grow – the Cultivate FJN team has attended Charlottesville Parks and Rec Department's Advisory Board meetings each month and the Master Planning meetings for both Booker T. Washington Park as well as the overall park system
III. Plan for sustainability by pursuing additional funding for long-term investment at the city, agency and community member levels	
Participation in Funders Networks	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Focus for Health – Partner Appreciation Summit • Charlottesville Area Community Foundation (CACF) – Solidarity Retreat for Nonprofit Leaders of Color
Diversified Multi-year Funding <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Batten Family Foundation – \$60,000 for 3 years ✓ Anne and Gene Worrell Foundation – \$50,000 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Cultivate secured multi-year funding from two local philanthropists whose values and varied giving priorities align with our strategic frame and will help even the percentage of grant funding and resources gleaned from other avenues



to \$120,000 for 3 years	
IV. Contribute subject matter expertise to discussions on transportation, zoning, and other planning and policy development to ensure that the City, the University of Virginia, community organizations and citizens are aware of the impact of policy on food equity	
FEI Implementation ✓ 7 City Department leads engaged around Food Equity Initiative implementation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • City Department FEI Support – Hosted meeting with 7 City departments to review the Food Equity Initiative Policy Platform and glean feedback. See enclosed action plans. • Food Equity Implementation – Specific focus on the intersection of Climate Justice and Food Justice
Advisory Roles and Food Equity Leadership ✓ Cultivate Team engaged in Local Coalitions	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Move2Health Equity – Engaged in the Food Access team • Community Input – UAC hosted weekly community markets to distribute food grown and engage in conversations on redevelopment, garden design and healthy communities, and the city comprehensive plan.
Amplify Climate Action ✓ Collaboration with partners to highlight the intersection of climate justice and food justice	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Resilient Together: Climate Resilience Cohort – Cultivate signed on as one of 5 organizations to show intent in participating in this two-phase, EPA-funded initiative that is a collaboration between the City of Charlottesville, the County of Albemarle, and the University of Virginia
Engagement with the UVA community around food justice and effective nonprofits ✓ Cultivate Team participated in presentations, discussions, focus groups, and projects related to myriad aspects of food equity in the Charlottesville community	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Associate Dean Justice, Equity, Diversity & Inclusion and Associate Professor C.L. Bohannon, UVA School of Architecture – Booker T. Washington Park Community-Informed Design • Professor Barbara Brown Wilson, UVA School of Architecture – Climate Justice in Cities • Associate Professor Gretchen Martinet, UVA Statistics Department – Applied Analytics for Business • Adjunct Professor Andreas Addison, UVA Batten School – Innovating in Food Security • Program Director Rebecca Deeds and Inaugural Faculty Director Beth Meyer, UVA Moren Sustainability Lab – Strategic Planning focus group
Community Presentations ✓ Cultivate Team shared key details about the	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Tandem Friends School – Spring Speaker Series: Careers in the food system and nonprofits • World Strides Diversity Internship Program – Community



food movement building with a variety of different groups	<i>Gardening for Food Equity in Charlottesville</i>
V. Implement opportunities to highlight the City's food equity work statewide	
✓ Cultivate Team responded to requests from national organizations wanting recommendations around addressing food justice through racial equity	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Philadelphia Orchard Project – <i>Transformational Leadership in the Food System</i> • ChangeLab Solutions and Robert Wood Johnson Foundation report – Racial Justice in US Food Systems • Lindaben Foundation – Healthy School Meals Initiative
Statewide & Regional ✓ Cultivate Team engaged in Farm to School coalition	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • VA Farm to School Regional Planning Teams, Cultivate City Schoolyard Garden Program Director, Jordan Johnson, and Farm to School Coordinator, Shamera Banks



Food Equity Initiative: Ongoing Food Access

Cultivate Charlottesville Food Justice Network works to raise awareness about the role food access plays in food justice. While the focus of the Food Equity Initiative partnership with City Council is to develop and implement system-wide solutions to persistent hunger and food insecurity issues in Charlottesville, we also recognize the need for integrated approaches of direct food provisions, especially fresh, community-grown produce. This section summarizes a few of those efforts.

Activities and Progress towards Ongoing Food Access

July 2023 – June 2024

A. Community-based Food Security Infrastructure: Build an emergency food security response infrastructure that enables the Charlottesville community to effectively respond to expanding food insecurity.

Community Gardening & Food Equity Capacity Building

- ✓ more than 3,000 student garden interactions
- ✓ 15 students participated in nutrition committees at Buford, Walker, and CHS

- **Students in the Garden** – Youth are 3 times more likely to eat food that they have grown. The City Schoolyard Garden Coordinators play an important role in engaging youth through the Charlottesville public schools in hands-on garden experiences
- **Nutrition Education** – Cultivate’s Farm to School Coordinator, Shamera Banks, worked closely with upper grade students with weekly cooking classes and nutrition committees

Healthy School & Community Meals

- ✓ 20,000 Harvest of the Month fresh snacks shared with 3,200 students profiling 8 local crops
- ✓ Partnership with Tonsler League to have fresh sweet potatoes, eggs, and vegetables at the Annual Turkey giveaway
- ✓ 50 local meals distributed at community market gathering

- **Healthy Meals** – While many of the direct meal provisions that flourished during the first two years of COVID are no longer being provided, Cultivate worked with CCS and UAC partners to share fresh, healthy meals, snacks, and produce
- **Collaborating for Food Security** – when Cultivate receives fresh food donations, we integrate them into our Community Market Days and work with emergency food access partners such as The Haven and Loaves and Fishes Food Pantry to eliminate food waste and support neighbors struggling with food insecurity



Cultivate Direct food relief-community produce market

- ✓ 10,500 pounds UAC grown produce
- ✓ 35 Community Market Days
- ✓ over 350 Residents participate
- ✓ 10,000 sq ft additional growing space

- **Urban Agriculture Collective –Community Produce Market** Hosted 35 market days and distributed a total of 10,500 pounds of fresh, locally grown produce at no cost to residents at Friendship Court, South 1st Street, 6th Street, Westhaven, Midway Manor, Riverside, CATEC, and pop-up markets in partnership with PHAR in CRHA neighborhoods
- **CATEC Community Farm** -To continue to address the loss of community urban agriculture space due to necessary redevelopment in PHA and CRHA-owned neighborhoods, Cultivate UAC program maintains a production farm at CATEC. This partnership also builds on the 14-year collaboration between City Schoolyard Garden and Charlottesville City Schools to have growing spaces in our local places of learning.



Charlottesville Food Equity Initiative

FY23 End of Year | Budget to Actual

July 2023 – June 2024

CULTIVATE CHARLOTTESVILLE FOOD JUSTICE NETWORK FOOD EQUITY INITIATIVE – FY24 BUDGET				
Account	FY24 FJN BUDGET APPROVED	FY24 FEI COUNCIL BUDGET OVERVIEW	FY24 COUNCIL ACTUAL	DETAILS
TOTAL EXPENSE	456,418	155,000	128,132	
Staff Compensation	241,403	80,000	71,824	FJN Program Director (100%), Community Engagement Program Coordinator (100%), Community Advocate Lead (75%), FJN Program Associate (100%), 2 Co-Executive Directors (33%), Finance Program Director (33%), GEO Program Director (33%)
Community Engagement	53,298	55,000	35,558	5 Community Advocates (20hrs/week/8 months) 5 Food Justice Apprentices (24hrs/week/9 months) 11 Youth Food Justice Interns (20hrs/week/2 months) Volunteer, Advocate, and Intern supplies Travel – local and regional conference
Program – Expenses	18,500	7,500	8,052	Community meetings Community advocate and intern lunches Community member gift cards and stipends
Partner Support	59,800	–	–	Community meals, meetings and outreach, community advocates, funding for community partners including Charlottesville City Schools equipment and food, Local Food Hub, International Rescue Committee New Roots, and Trinity Bread and Roses
Professional Services	55,090	6,500	6,698	Racial equity training, evaluation, bookkeeping, audit
Communications & Technology	6,360	1,000	1,000	Database management, website hosting, software management
General & Administration	22,977	5,000	5,000	Office rent and supplies, printing, and posting, insurance, etc



Charlottesville Food Equity Initiative

FY25 Core Priorities

FY25: Looking Forward

Transition is the word that best describes FY24. Both FJN and Cultivate Charlottesville are working to strengthen systems during deeply impactful changes. On the heels of network member PB&J sunsetting programming in FY23, Local Food Hub made the difficult decision to do the same in July 2024 (the organization will officially close its doors in December 2024). The integral roles both nonprofits have played in the local food system cannot be overstated and their absence invites us to adapt to changes informed by need, resources, and capacity.

Cultivate Charlottesville has two new co-executive directors after a decade of dedication from Jeanette Abi-Nader—who has moved on to a justice, equity, diversity, and inclusion role at Piedmont Housing Alliance and five years of food justice and urban agriculture influence from Richard Morris—who is running his home farm and focusing on creating art.

Aleen Carey and Ryan Thayer are stepping into leadership with confident humility. Aleen is building on a foundation of many years as a member of the Charlottesville community to deepen existing relationships and learn more from neighbors, colleagues, and area leaders. Ryan relocates to Charlottesville and Cultivate from urban agriculture work in Phoenix, Arizona and decades of community advocacy in San Francisco California.

As the new leadership works to continue progress on The Power to Grow initiative to bring space for an Urban Agriculture Collective (UAC) farm to Booker T. Washington Park in accordance with Chapter 7 of the City Comprehensive Plan, we find ourselves in a holding pattern. The City Parks and Recreation Department (in the midst of their own transitions) has undertaken a year-long strategic planning process that put a pause on the momentum of community engagement work FJN community advocates and apprentices completed last year. As we made plans to present to City Council the data and qualitative information gathered, we learned that we would have to wait until the beginning of 2025—at the earliest—to get final approval necessary to break ground.

The Power to Grow work also encompasses efforts for growing space for International Rescue Committee (IRC) New Roots farmers at Azalea park. The City has closed on a parcel of land on Old Lynchburg Road, and IRC is also closely following the Parks and Rec planning process to solidify decisions about the exact location of their future farming endeavors within the Azalea network.



FJN centers racial equity and deep commitment to community engagement to drive our work across the Food Equity Initiative. In the year ahead, Cultivate Food Justice Network will continue to collaborate with community members, the City, neighbor nonprofits, anchor institutions, and private partners to amplify the voices most affected by food inequity in Charlottesville.

FY25 Core Priorities

1. **Community Engagement** Pull together key stakeholders to advance FEI Policy Platform plank recommendations and move forward on a long-term advisory committee of residents to cultivate community decision-making for Food Justice Network initiatives.
2. **The Power to Grow** While awaiting the end of Parks and Rec strategic planning we have the opportunity to continue to engage with community members about their priorities for urban agriculture and public park space. We are partnering with local agency Maupintown Media on a film documenting the rich racial history of Booker T. Washington Park. We continue to participate in as many Parks & Rec gatherings, public input sessions, Advisory Board meetings, and stakeholder conversations as possible to amplify the data—which shows 94% of neighbors we spoke with are in favor of a UAC farm at BTWP—collected in FY23.
3. **Food Equity Initiative Policy Platform Public Education Efforts** Food Justice Network will continue to host community events to build support for and understanding of the platform planks as well as represent Charlottesville at numerous state, regional, and national spaces.
4. **City Department Food Equity Plans** Annual meetings with city departments raise awareness about the intersection of their work with food justice and support them as they aim to increase food equity through their initiatives.
5. **Partnering for a Resilient Charlottesville** With the city's comprehensive plan finalized, ensuring implementation practices are included in the City Strategic Plan and ongoing department work is a priority.
6. **REVISIT Food Equity Initiative Funding** Given the changes in the local food system and the pause on The Power to Grow, we are asking City Council to consider an extension to the FEI partnership with Food Justice Network at the end of this three-year agreement (June 2025). The additional resources will support FJN as capacity is affected by the loss of key FJN nonprofit collaborates.



Charlottesville Food Equity Initiative FY25 Budget Overview

CULTIVATE CHARLOTTESVILLE FOOD EQUITY INITIATIVE – FY25 BUDGET			
Account	FY25 PROGRAM BUDGET APPROVED	FY25 FEI COUNCIL BUDGET OVERVIEW	DETAILS
TOTAL EXPENSE	452,911	155,000	
Staff Compensation	280,244	80,000	FJN Program Director (100%), 2 FJN Program Associate (33%), 1 Co-Executive Director (33%), Finance Program Director (33%), CEO Program Director (33%)
Community Engagement	43,250	55,000	10 Youth Food Justice Interns (20hrs/week/2 months) 2 Youth Food Justice Associates (25hrs/week/2.5 months) Volunteer and intern supplies Travel – local and regional conferences
Program – Expenses	15,000	6,500	Community meetings Intern lunches Community member gift cards and stipends
Partner Support	30,000	–	Community meals, meetings and outreach, funding for community partners including Charlottesville City Schools equipment and food, International Rescue Committee New Roots, and Trinity Bread and Roses
Professional Services	55,090	7,500	Evaluation, bookkeeping, audit, fractional support
Communications & Technology	6,350	1,000	Database management, website hosting, software management
General & Administration	22,977	5,000	Office rent and supplies, printing, and posting, insurance, etc

Cultivate Charlottesville**Food Justice Network – Food Equity Initiative****City of Charlottesville Departments – Food Equity Profile****PARKS & RECREATION PROGRAMS –** Riaan Anthony and Chris Gensic**Purpose:**

1. To check in on progress toward food equity goals within the Parks and Rec Department
2. To edit and bring up to date the Parks & Recreation Food Equity Profile for our report to City Council

Timeline: In-person meeting June 25, 2024; presentation to the City August 19, 2024

I. Food Equity Vision Statement

Grassroots food production emerged as a key practice for neighborhood food access with the start of QCC Farms in 2007. More than a decade later, resident access to green space for urban farms and gardens provide food security, community gathering spaces, beautification, and a number of benefits to the environments and people engaged with them. Unfortunately, they are competing for finite space with other critical needs like improved, affordable housing as well as general development pressure.

Food Equity Initiative Policy Platform – Plank Alignment**#1 Justice & Fairness |****#2 Power to Grow
Justice****| #6 Restore Earth & Climate**

II. Parks & Recreation Food Equity Goals

- Cultivate food equity within the urban environmental sustainability space by promoting and preserving permanent land for green infrastructure dedicated to achieving community food security for low-income residents
- Create a more equitable processes for acquiring and accessing land/garden rental space
- Promote awareness and utilization of edible trails

III. Food Equity Parks & Recreation Recommendations for Action

1. Integrate food equity practices such as urban agriculture, edible landscaping, native plantings, wild edibles, and water conservation into the Parks & Recreation Strategic Master Plan that aligns with our landscape native plant policies and trail safety.
2. Utilize a community based-approach that leverages public and private partnerships as well as resident leadership in conducting an urban agriculture land availability assessment.
3. Update public land policy to aim for a percentage of land to be reserved by the city for urban agriculture and affordable food markets for low wealth communities (in alignment with the **City Comprehensive Plan chapter Environment, Climate, and Food Equity**).
4. Hire an Urban Ag Director to review, clarify, and simplify the process of garden space rentals for community organizations, and low wealth community members to grow food on city land, as well as coordinate efforts with private landowners who may donate land for community food security purposes.

IV. Food Equity Parks & Recreation FY24 Accomplishments

1. Purchased land for IRC New Roots Farm near existing Azalea Park
2. Moved Wednesday Farmers Market from Meade Avenue to Pen Park in response to feedback from community members and vendors (this was initially a temporary solution but may become permanent based on community voice) If the new location becomes permanent, collaboration with CAT will be needed to ensure access for those who utilize the transit system
3. The Rives garden plots are the most recent to be completely overhauled (Parks and Rec Advisory Board will look at the guidelines for plots in response to feedback about the process to acquire plots in 2024)
4. Worked with City Market to make allow EBT utilization

VI. Food Equity Supporting Partners

- Cultivate Charlottesville: City Schoolyard Garden, Urban Agriculture Collective, Food Justice Network
- International Rescue Committee New Roots
- Neighborhood Development Services
- CATEC
- USDA
- Hunters for the Hungry

Cultivate Charlottesville**Food Justice Network – Food Equity Initiative****City of Charlottesville Departments – Food Equity Profile****PARKS & RECREATION AFTER SCHOOL & MEALS – Riaan Anthony****Purpose:**

1. To check in on progress toward food equity goals within the Parks and Rec Department
2. To edit and bring up to date the Parks & Recreation Food Equity Profile for our report to City Council

Timeline: In-person meeting June 25, 2024

I. Food Equity Vision Statement

After school feeding programs are underfunded and not reaching all eligible participants because there are not enough staff members and resources to supply for all eligible children. The reimbursement processes for after school feeding programs and summer feeding programs are different, and food for both is lacking in nutritional value and standards. These factors are putting a greater burden on our City to promote and protect community food security assets. Increasing the funding, staff, and standards for after-school and summer feeding programs will create a more efficient, far reaching system of food security for Charlottesville youth and children.

Food Equity Initiative Policy Platform – Plank Alignment

#1 Justice & Fairness | #3 The Right to Good Food | #4 RInspire
Youth Choice

II. Parks & Recreation Food Equity Goals

- Intentionally integrate food equity practices within all appropriate Parks & Rec programs.
- Redesign standards, funding, and protocols for after school feeding programs in order to increase participation and capacity to serve a larger portion of the youth community facing food insecurity.
- Increase access to nutritious food and meals while developing financial sustainability for program longevity.

III. Food Equity Parks & Recreation Recommendations for Action

1. Build partnership with Charlottesville City Schools to assist in updating policy to raise the local standards for food served at after school and summer meal programs and to increase education around food and nutrition.
2. Increase feeding program staff and establish staff procedures to increase the safety and wellbeing of workers while expanding the capacity of the meal programs to increase participation.
3. Develop new sources of sustainable funding, in order to streamline summer and after school meal programs at the same reimbursement model and increase student participation to decrease hunger out of school.
4. Support the creation and implementation of an evaluation and outreach plan to establish goals of meal programs, track progress, and expand program participation through a marketing strategy.

V. Food Equity Parks & Recreation FY24 Action Items

1. IRC New Roots growers have dedicated tables at City Market in an effort to promote community wealth building and maintain alignment with city regulations
2. The In-depth Master Plan process will finish in early 2025 and will include small plans for Tonsler, Booker T. Washington, Court Square, and Market Street Parks

VI. Food Equity Supporting Partners

- Charlottesville City Schools
- Blue Ridge Area Food Bank
- Piedmont Housing Alliance
- Charlottesville Redevelopment Housing Authority
- Cultivate Youth Food Justice Interns

Cultivate Charlottesville**Food Justice Network – Food Equity Initiative****City of Charlottesville Departments – Food Equity Profile****Office of Sustainability**¹ Kristel Riddervold, Emily Irvine, Gabe Sherzada**Purpose:**

1. To check in on progress toward food equity goals within the Office of Sustainability
2. To edit and bring up to date the Office of Sustainable Food Equity Profile for our report to City Council

I. Food Equity Vision Statement

As Charlottesville redevelops and looks to the future, it is necessary for the City to understand how low-income and vulnerable communities connect with food. Preserving and strengthening these connections through protection of urban agriculture is critical to building climate resilience in our community.

Food Equity Initiative Policy Platform – Plank Alignment**#1 Justice & Fairness |****#6 Restore Earth & Climate Justice****II. Office of Sustainability Programs**

- Increase the presence and participation of community voices in climate protection conversations, especially those from marginalized and/or vulnerable communities.
- Make climate action programs (e.g. home weatherization) as well as resources to enhance community resilience equitably accessible to all residents regardless of race or income.
- Collaborate with partners to cultivate a deeper understanding of the

¹ Formerly Public Works Climate Protection in 2023

importance of food equity to community resilience.

- Cultivate a shared understanding of our community climate challenges and work across a diverse coalition of voices to co-design strategies for climate adaptation and resilience.

III. Food Equity Office of Sustainability Recommendations for Action

- Collaborate with partners to ensure progress on key actions related to food equity in the City's Climate Action Plan.
- Prioritize food equity and access in climate adaptation and resilience planning; develop specific strategies to enhance and sustain our local food systems.
- Continued collaboration in the Just Food, Just Climate project which aims to increase sustainable urban agriculture space in the City of Charlottesville's public land in a way that enhances climate protections and prioritizes grassroots community leadership, specifically for BIPOC growers.
- Research and work to advance residential, business, and institutional composting opportunities, with a priority on Charlottesville City Schools.
- Utilize a community-based approach that leverages public and private organizations as well as resident leadership in understanding how community needs connect with the City's environmental priorities.
- Cultivate deeper partnerships with Charlottesville Food Justice Network Partners in order to develop food equity practices and frameworks for advancing climate protection for local food system resilience.

IV. Food Equity Office of Sustainability FY24 Accomplishments

- Collaborative climate adaptation and resilience planning effort in partnership with Albemarle County and The University of Virginia. **The *Resilient Together* project was pushed back because of the EPA's timeline and is now full steam ahead.**
- Community Engagement **open house**
- Participation in local events such as **Westhaven Community Day**

- **Urban Forest Management** strategic planning process—funded by the USDA—is in first phase

V. Food Equity Supporting Partners

- Community Climate Collaborative
- UVA Equity Center
- Charlottesville Food Justice Network
- Black Bear Composting

Cultivate Charlottesville**Food Justice Network – Food Equity Initiative****City of Charlottesville Departments – Food Equity Profile****Neighborhood Development Services – James Freas****Purpose:**

1. To check in on progress toward food equity goals within the Neighborhood Department Services folks
2. To edit and bring up to date the Neighborhood Development Services Food Equity Profile for our report to City Council on August 19, 2024

Timeline: In-person meeting July 18, 2024

I. Food Equity Vision Statement

The City's zoning codes and comprehensive plan are points of leverage in the development process. In order to achieve equitable food access during development, we must strive to include food equity practices explicitly in the city's comprehensive plan and zoning codes where it hasn't been considered before. By actively evaluating and planning for equitable food resources, the city will begin to address food security issues especially affecting low-resourced communities and people of color in Charlottesville.

Food Equity Initiative Policy Platform – Plank Alignment**#1 Justice & Fairness |****#2 The Power to Grow |****#3 The Right to Good
Food****II. Neighborhood Development Services Goals**

- Map existing food resources to understand gaps in service and increase food access points in needed areas.
- Utilize NDS tools, such as zoning, to bring more local resources to the people. For example, make it possible for a local, affordable, grocer with fresh produce to open within the city circle.
- Continue to leverage opportunities to cultivate deeper support for minority business owners within the Charlottesville food economy by building more partnerships with organizations.
- Continue to incorporate food equity goals into local planning and policy work, including the city's upcoming strategic plan.

III. Food Equity Office of Neighborhood Development Services

Recommendations for Action

- ☐ Collaborate with Parks & Rec to include in the City Comprehensive Plan strategic investment in preserving green space for food security purposes.
- ☐ Continue to utilize a community-based approach that leverages public and private partnerships as well as resident leadership in conducting a bike and pedestrian pathway assessment and prioritization, especially transformation and walkability to key food resources.
- ☐ Update zoning ordinances to encourage units to establish home gardens and edible landscapes on residential properties, as well as local food resources, by streamlining processes.
- ☐ Amend the city's Comprehensive Plan and zoning ordinance to include definitions of and actions to advance food equity and healthy affordable housing.

IV. Food Equity Neighborhood Development Services FY24

Accomplishments and Upcoming Projects

- Adopted new zoning ordinance that went into effect in December 2023
- 8 more driver positions for CAT have been added
- Small area plan for the Preston corridor, Rose Hill, and 10th and Page

- Update all environmental ordinances—housing, climate action, environmental—there is not currently a green building ordinance
- Redevelopment of South First Street phase one is complete & South First Street with phase 2 is in the design process.

V. Food Equity Supporting Partners

- Cville Plans Together
- Public Works
- Cultivate Charlottesville Urban Agriculture Collective
- International Rescue Committee New Roots
- Charlottesville Food Justice Network
- City of Charlottesville Parks and Rec
- Piedmont Housing Alliance
- Charlottesville Redevelopment Housing Authority

Cultivate Charlottesville**Food Justice Network – Food Equity Initiative****City of Charlottesville Departments – Food Equity Profile****Charlottesville Area Transit – Ben Chambers****Purpose:**

1. To check in on progress toward food equity goals within the Transportation/NDS Department
2. To edit and bring up to date the Transportation/NDS Food Equity Profile for our report to City Council

Timeline: In person meeting June 27, 2024; Presentation to the City August 19, 2024

I. Food Equity Vision Statement

In Charlottesville, 27% of those utilizing public transportation are at or below the federal poverty line and 28% are of a minority population (CAT). While Charlottesville Area Transit is increasing its capacity to address the population and employment density growth, routes are not yet designed based on consumer demand (CAT). Charlottesville residents have expressed interest in alternate transportation routes (City). As a provider of mass transit, it is CAT's goal to serve the needs of the entire city. Understanding that we serve as a lifeline to low-income neighborhoods and public housing, CAT continually seeks to improve service in these areas

Food Equity Initiative Policy Platform – Plank Alignment**#1 Justice & Fairness | #3 The Right to Good Food****II. Charlottesville Area Transit Goals**

- Increasing community input in transportation plans in order to eliminate barriers for transit especially among low-income populations.
- Increasing general utilization and participation in Charlottesville transportation services including among youth, elderly, and low-income populations.
- Build and develop routes with intentionality, including giving consideration to specific stops (grocery stores, gardens, parks, and resources such as GoodWill) and associated challenges such as distance to stop.

III. Food Equity Office of Charlottesville Area Transit Recommendations for Action

1. Adapt/change routes to include specific spaces including grocery stores, food access markets, parks, and specific sites (ex. GoodWill), etc. that have already been identified as points of interest.
2. Raise funds to ensure free rides extend beyond the current 2026 plan. If unsuccessful work to establish a new travel bus pass at free or subsidized rates for low-income residents that qualify for SNAP/ WIC.
3. Revamp the CAT feedback process to include and increase community input through diverse frameworks including, a formal application or submission of comments online as well as informal avenues such as community-based events or town halls.
4. Increase ride analysis of food access routes including trip duration, distance to walk to stop (especially from BRAFB and other pantries), comfort, and safety.

V. Food Equity Charlottesville-Albemarle transit FY24 Accomplishments

- ROUTE 8:
 - Loops through 3 grocery stores in Charlottesville
 - Social awareness for excessive bag storage on bus routes
 - Community engagement needed to reach more Charlottesville community members

- There are still plans to increase the reach of MicroCAT to the Charlottesville
- Developed a position to evaluate bike and pedestrian programs by how well they are reaching people and collect community feedback.
 - Hired Transportation Planning Manager – Ben Chambers
 - Hired a Bike Ped Coordinator – Tommy Safranek
 - Safe Routes to School – Kyle Rodlend
- Tommy Safranek
 - Loop de Ville
 - Held Neighborhood Walk in January through Vinegar Hill with more than 100 participants
 - Community Engagement Coordinator
 - In May: Held a bike orientated event every day with Charlottesville City Schools and other after-school programs
 - City Sidewalk Designer
- CAT is in the works to start a E-Bike distribution System to provide a \$500 discount off electric bikes in the area to boost transportation throughout the city. They are also working to add ADA Small Car Scooters to be auctioned off to residents during the Fall of 2024

VI. Food Equity Supporting Partners

- Neighborhood Development Services
- Parks & Recreation
- Human Services
- Loaves and Fishes
- Cultivate Charlottesville Food Justice Network



FOOD JUSTICE NETWORK 2024 FOCUS: FOOD EQUITY INITIATIVE POLICY PLATFORM



Over the course of 2024, The Food Justice Network Large Group will take an in-depth look at each of the planks of the Food Equity Initiative. **We want to hear from you! How is your work aligning with or advancing the goals of each area?**

Join us at our bi-monthly meetings as we take a deep dive into each advocacy area. Our goal is to highlight our collective progress toward an equitable food system and gain insight on where we want to grow!



FEBRUARY 28

Food Equity & Justice

**Advancing Systemic Change and
Collective Movements**



APRIL 24

The Power to Grow

**Advancing Affordable Housing & Urban
Agriculture**



JUNE 26

The Right to Good Food

**Advancing Transportation &
Neighborhood Food Pathways**



AUGUST 28

Inspire Youth Choice

Advancing Healthy School Foods



OCTOBER 23

Build Community Wealth

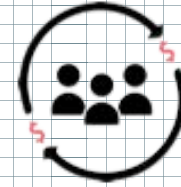
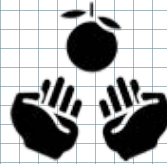
**Advancing Neighborhood Food Access
& Markets**



DECEMBER 11

Restore Earth and Climate

**Advancing Environmental and
Climate Justice**



Where are we now?



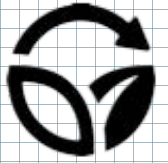
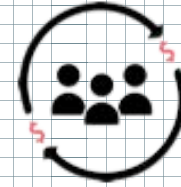
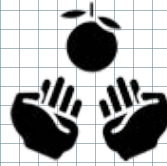
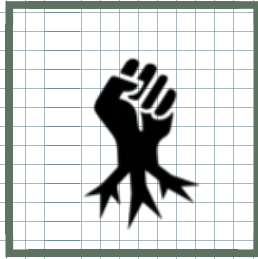
ADVANCING SYSTEMIC CHANGE & COLLECTIVE MOVEMENTS



SPRING 2023

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FOOD JUSTICE NETWORK Large Group Meetings 2024 FOCUS: FOOD EQUITY INITIATIVE POLICY PLATFORM

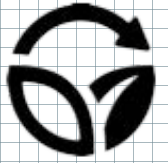
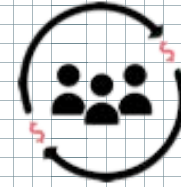
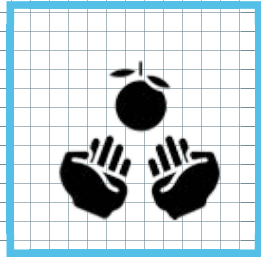


APRIL 24 FOCUS:

Where are we now?

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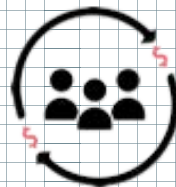
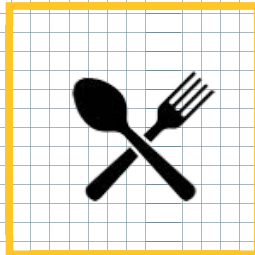
FOOD JUSTICE NETWORK Large Group Meetings 2024 FOCUS: FOOD EQUITY INITIATIVE POLICY PLATFORM



JUNE 26 FOCUS:

Where are we now?

This image shows a single sheet of white paper with ten horizontal blue dashed lines, typical of primary-ruled notebook paper. The lines are evenly spaced and extend across the width of the page. There are no margins, text, or other markings on the paper.



AUGUST 28 FOCUS:

Where are we now?



INSPIRE YOUTH CHOICE

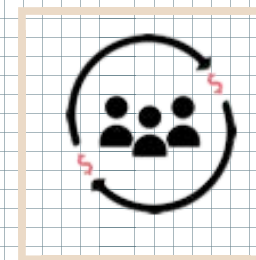
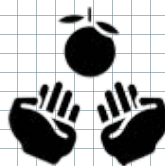
ADVANCING HEALTHY SCHOOL FOOD



In order to ensure food equity across the city and provide all students the fuel they need to be successful learners, healthy school food options and infrastructure, informed by youth leadership, must be understood in the context of equity building and elevated with continued momentum. School nutrition programs are not a business but a service to build equity and health among Charlottesville youth.



SPRING 2021

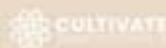


OCTOBER 23 FOCUS:

Where are we now?



In order to build community wealth, invest in the expansion of local businesses owned by people of color that are located in, support, and employ low-wealth communities. Build a stairway for Charlottesville youth and residents to move from nonprofit community programs to food system-related employment through collaboration with city departments to secure funding in communities affected by systemic racism.





Food Justice Network Presentation to City Council September 18, 2023



The Power to Grow Community Engagement Model



CULTIVATE
CHARLOTTESVILLE

Cultivate Charlottesville Food Justice Network enlisted UVA School of Medicine professor in Public Health Sciences Dr. Jeanita Richardson to train community advocates, apprentices, and staff on culturally-informed engagement practices. Advocates and apprentices then led the development of a plan to have conversations with their families, neighbors, and friends who live in areas near Booker T. Washington Park. Through surveys, listening circles, and community events, the advocates and apprentices learned from more than 350 residents about their feelings regarding urban agriculture and food access in Charlottesville.

The success of The Power to Grow Community Engagement Model has made an impact beyond the urban agriculture space to include current efforts to prioritize community voice in choice in the potential grocery at 501 Cherry Avenue.

