

Item Title: Adopt Comprehensive Food Security Plan

Specific Action Requested:

That the Board of Commissioners adopts the Comprehensive Food Security Plan and emerging priorities for Wake County.

Item Summary:

In April 2014, Commissioner Matt Calabria convened the initial meeting of the Food Security Workgroup involving County leadership for Human Services, Cooperative Extension, Wake County Public Schools and the Wake Human Services Board. Initial efforts focused primarily on school-based strategies and set the stage for the introduction and expansion of several strategies aimed at addressing childhood hunger: Universal Free Breakfast, Expansion of the Summer Food Service Program, backpack distribution programs and with advocacy from Commissioner Jessica Holmes, school-based food pantries.

In 2015, Extension completed an initial study advancing the group's understanding of the food system and the breadth of work happening across the community to address food insecurity.

In the Spring of 2016, the County worked with a local partner, Community Food Lab and Wake County's local food policy council, the Capital Area Food Network, to host a summit engaging more than 130 individuals and organizations engaged in exploring linkages to public health, community and economic development. With support from the Food Security Workgroup, Extension requested and received \$30,000 budget allocation from the County in FY17 to work with Community Food Lab and the Capital Area Food Network, to develop a comprehensive community plan to address food security across the County.

This plan, Moving Beyond Hunger, was completed in June 2017. It is being used by the Capital Area Food Network to mobilize the community around a shared vision for this work. Members of the Food Security Workgroup served as advisors throughout the development process and continue to receive updates on the community's efforts to advance recommendations within the plan. The plan explores the compelling need facing an estimated one in seven residents across our community who find themselves food insecure; acknowledges existing organizations and efforts; establishes five overarching goals, 41 recommended actions and shared community measures to track progress.

At the November 13 Work Session, the Board also explored regional connections to food security and examined emerging opportunities aligned with the joint efforts by the Population Health Task Force and Social & Economic Vitality partners to address social determinants of health. Thus, in addition to adopting the plan, the Board is being asked to establish three related priorities for Wake County: (1) the Next GEN Farming Initiative at Triangle Land Conservancy's Walnut Hill Preserve; (2) the development of a Food Hub at Passage Home's new Community Training and Development Center on Hoke Street; (3) the exploration of an Agriculture Education Hub also at TLC's Walnut Hill Preserve.

Strategic community partners will be on hand to demonstrate support and hear discussion.

Attachments:

1. PowerPoint for February 5 Meeting
2. PowerPoint presentation from November 13, 2017 BOC Work Session
3. Hand Outs of Recommended Actions & Goals