Enhancing Healthy Food Retail:
Models for increasing Access to Healthy Local Food in Vancouver Neighbourhoods

Top row pictures from http://friendsoftheubcfarm.wordpress.com, http://ubcfarm.ubc.ca/your-local-food-pedalers

Report for **City of Vancouver Food Policy Team**
Authored by Meredith Seeton - Greenest City Scholar
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Introduction:

Building Neighbourhood Food Access through New Models of Healthy Food Retail

Vancouver's Greenest City Action Plan includes a goal to become a global leader in urban food systems through ensuring that all residents are within a five minute walk of a basket of fresh produce.

Access to healthy food is a determinant of health, and boosting the availability of healthy local food throughout all city neighbourhoods could contribute greatly to sustainability. Along with levels of local food production and policies around processing, distribution, consumption and food waste, **healthy food retail** is one piece of the food access puzzle. Enhancing healthy food retail in Vancouver neighbourhoods can help achieve the Greenest City goal of becoming a leader in urban food systems. These initiatives can also help us achieve food access goals in the Vancouver Food System Strategy & Action Plan (draft) and the Healthy City Strategy (under development).

How do we improve access to fresh, healthy food and increase the percentage of residents who live within a five minute walk of a basket of healthy produce?

This report is the product of a Greenest City Scholar internship in the Food Policy team through the summer of 2012. The report explores a number of different healthy food retail models for getting fresh and healthy foods into neighbourhoods. It starts by exploring successful strategies from elsewhere, considers how those strategies could play out in Vancouver, and makes recommendations for ways forward.

New models of Healthy Food Retail will:

- *Increase the availability of local produce, having a positive environmental impact;*
- *Improve health outcomes;*
- *Contribute to food access equity - a matter of social justice; and*
- *Contribute to the vibrancy of Vancouver neighbourhoods.*

This report explores the following **models of food retail**, focusing mostly on the potential of a Healthy Corner Store initiative:

Part 1
Neighbourhood Food Access

Photo from frogbox.com

Food Access and the Role of the City

The City of Vancouver defines "food access" as policies, processes or programs that create the conditions for the following food security attributes to be met:

- Availability: Sufficient food for all people at all times
- Accessibility: Physical and economic access to food for all at all times
- Adequacy: Access to culturally acceptable food, which is produced and obtained in ways that do not compromise people's dignity, self-respect or human rights
- Agency: The policies and processes that enable the achievement of food security*

New food access and retail models are continuously emerging, as food entrepreneurs push the envelope and find new ways of bringing healthy and fresh food to residents.

Models for food access can be understood as falling along a continuum of food access sectors, from the emergency food sector to charity, community, and retail food sector.** The table below contains examples of where different models for food access fall along the continuum, and what the role of the City could be at the different levels:

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Further Resources:

- Vancouver Coastal Health has **Local Health Area** health information that can be used to inform food access interventions, though the boundaries do not exactly match the City of Vancouver's neighbourhood boundaries. The health authority is also moving towards putting more information on their website (www.vch.ca).
- The Public Health Services Authority created a toolkit for residents or organizations to undertake **Community Food Assessments** (www.healbc.ca). These kinds of details-rich community-led assessments could add to our picture of food access throughout the city.
- In 2011, the Public Health Services Authority published an **action framework for public institutions** including local governments, outlining areas of jurisdiction and action opportunities (www.phsa.ca).

*Definition from draft Vancouver Food System Strategy & Action Plan
** Concept from 2005 Vancouver Food System Assesssment

Food Access in Vancouver Neighbourhoods

Access is at the intersection of the geography of neighbourhood food assets, the geography of vulnerability (including factors like mobility, socio-economic status, health status, and social isolation), and other features such as the transportation network, topography, and broader walkability.

Understanding where the need for new models of food retail is greatest necessitates understanding where food access is low in the city. Different neighbourhoods have very different foodscapes, and even within neighbourhoods, walksheds contain different levels of food assets. These foodscapes have been analyzed and found to contain gaps by four recent studies and reports:

The **Metro Vancouver Food Retailer Gap Analysis** (2010)* mapped food retailers and added an 800m buffer to identify gaps in coverage where grocery stores would not be within a 10 minute walk. The study uncovered three gaps in food retail in the region that overlapped with low income dissemination areas. One of these areas is in Vancouver – in East Vancouver at Grandview Highway between Slocan and Kaslow Streets.

The **Vancouver Food System Assessment** (2005)** took a comprehensive look at the food security of Vancouverites, and identified opportunities to build food security through community-led economic development and policy. The report identified that all Vancouverites are food insecure in some ways, given that we live within an unsustainable global food system. More accute vulnerability was identified in the Grandview-Woodland, DTES/Strathcona, Renfrew-Collingwood, and Downtown neighbourhoods.

Further food access and asset mapping and analysis is being compiled for the forthcoming Vancouver Food System Strategy & Action Plan. These initiatives will add to our picture of food access in different parts of the city.

A study conducted by UBC researchers*** exploring the **distribution of food stores in BC neighbourhoods** found that neighbourhoods with higher median incomes had significantly less access to food stores. The study suggests that, in contrast to food retail in American cities, food retail may be most limited in higher income urban areas in BC, where zoning and the predominance of residential use limit food retail. This study led to significant media coverage and discussion about the existence of food deserts in the west side of Vancouver. Seniors and residents with mobility challenges do not have adequate access to food in these predominantly residential low density neighbourhoods where food retailers are not nearby. This study shows the need for more in-depth analysis of the complex dynamics of food access.

The **Food Secure Vancouver Study** (2010), undertaken by the Vancouver Food Policy Council, includes a wealth of information and is presented in a web-based format (accessible at www.foodsecurevancouver.ca). The chapter on accessibility includes various maps and data on the availability of food (food retail, farmers' markets and more), the affordability of food (from Statistics Canada's analysis of the cost of a nutritious food basket in BC), and the existence of food resources.

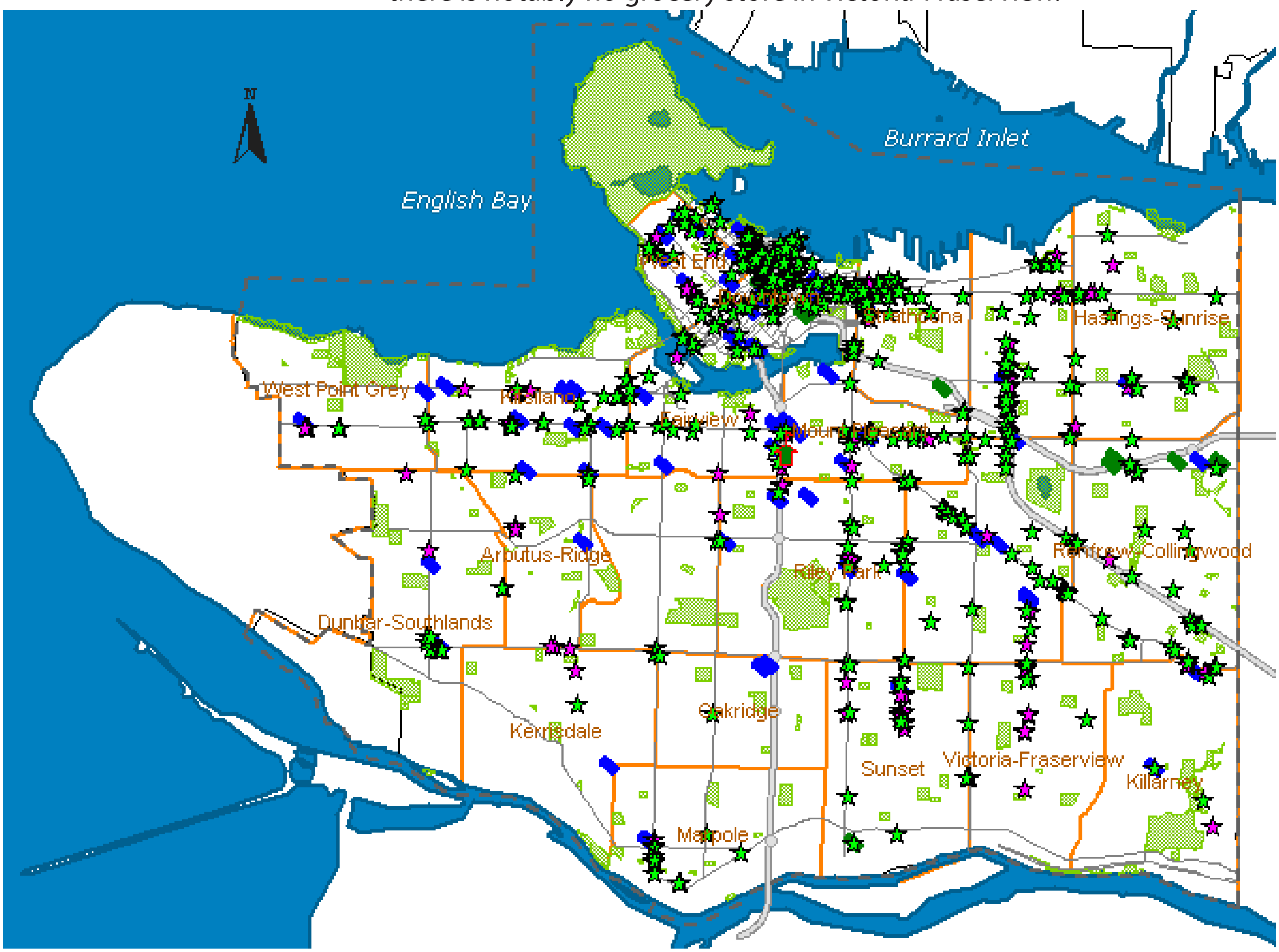
*Aderneck, Eric, and Raymond Kan (2010). Regional Food Retailer Gap Analysis. Metro Vancouver Regional Planning Advisory Committee Memorandum.

**FORC (2005). Vancouver Food System Assessment. Accessed from http://vancouver.ca/commsvcs/socialplanning/initiatives/foodpolicy/tools/pdf/vanfoodassessrpt.pdf

***Black, Jennifer, Richard Carpiano, Stuart Flemin, Nathanael Lauster (2011). Exploring the distribution of food stores in British Columbia: Associations with neighbourhood socio-demographic factors and urban form. Health & Place 961-970.

The grocery retail layers on VanMap have recently been updated, and now reflect current business license data. Food retail is broken into various categories, including convenience stores, bakeries, butcher shops, produce stores, grocery stores, and market outlets (such as Costco and other large-scale food retailers). Selecting the various layers and zooming into different neighbourhoods can allow investigation of the food retail environment. To understand whether particular food retailers sell fresh and healthy foods, ground-truthing is necessary. However, business license data does provide some insight into what is on the ground.

The screenshot below makes it clear that the downtown area is covered with convenience stores (green stars), produce stores (purple stars) are less common, and full-scale grocery stores (blue shapes) are even less common. Food retail tends to be distributed along commercial corridors, such as Broadway, Kingsway, Hastings, and north-south streets like Cambie St, Main St, Fraser St, Commercial Dr, and Victoria Dr. The west side emerges as an area with underserved pockets, and there is notably no grocery store in Victoria-Fraserview.



Screenshot from VanMap
(See Part 5 for an exploration of the food retail environment of Grandview-Woodlands in particular)

Part 2

Healthy Food Retail Models

There is an entire spectrum of food retail models geared towards boosting access to healthy foods in neighbourhoods. Urban food systems activists and entrepreneurs are continuously innovating and coming up with new variations to serve the unique needs and opportunities in communities.

Part 2 separates initiatives into community food markets, mobile produce stands, mobile farm stands, mobile grocery stores, urban farm gate sales, procurement for city facilities, and healthy corner stores. Examples of each of these models are explored in turn, and consideration is given to how they could work in Vancouver.

Community Food Markets

Community Food Markets

Community food markets (sometimes called pocket markets) are small-scale markets selling fresh local produce from fewer than ten (10) tables or booths, at which the primary producer is not necessarily present, and the produce sold is not necessarily local. Pocket markets are typically operated by non-profits and community groups. The mandate of pocket markets is to improve access to fresh healthy produce (1) for vulnerable groups; (2) in under-served parts of the city; (3) as part of employee health and wellness programs; or (4) for the general public.*

Successes from Elsewhere:

Santropol Roulant, Montreal, PQ

Santropol Roulant is a non-profit organization in Montreal, running pocket markets for the second season this summer. Produce being sold is grown at the organizations' urban farm sites. Innovative parts of their programming include their focus on vulnerable populations and bringing fresh foods into food deserts:

- At one site where markets happen weekly through the summer, they provide punchcards for low income residents whereby $20 in produce can be purchased for $10.
- At another site, in an area that is considered a food desert, they sell their produce at a 50% discount for everyone.

The organization obtains **free event permits** from the borough in order to hold the markets. The wage for a market coordinator who works 5 hours per week is covered through a grant from the borough. Other costs are reportedly minimal, and are included in the organization's garden budgets.

More information at http://santropolroulant.org/site/2012/07/07/your-friendly-neighborhood-pocket-market/

Picture from http://santropolroulant.org

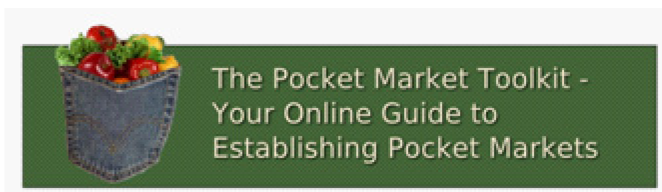
*Definition from the draft Vancouver Food Strategy & Action Plan

FoodRoots – Victoria, BC

An organization in Victoria BC is leading the way on pocket markets. FoodRoots (http://footroots.ca) is a not for profit co-op distributor of local certified organic and naturally grown produce and foods processed in the Victoria region.

FoodRoots operates with a unique model: community groups or sponsor organizations provide the location and insurance, and FoodRoots brings the market. FoodRoots is also developing a 'Mobile Market', which will include a tent, table, tablecloths, cashbox, scales, etc., and will be available to community groups and organizations through a deposit system.

FootRoots has also created an online Pocket Market Toolkit (http://foodroots.ca/pmtoolkit_index.htm) which groups can use to guide the development of their operations. The toolkit explores regulatory and operational issues. It also suggests a goal of covering the cost of staff, produce and supplies by the six week mark. FoodRoots suggests "the start up phase a market will cost about $100 to run (staff time). Depending on the type of market, most markets need a minimum of about $400-$450 in sales for them to be viable".



City perspective: A planner at the City of Victoria communicated that pocket markets, which first appeared in that city 3-4 years ago, were issued special event permits. Since then, Food Roots has joined the Outdoor Markets which are regulated either through particular agreements with the City for the use of public space, or through the Outdoor Market Bylaw. This latter regulation requires groups to obtain **outdoor market business licences** (see the entire bylaw at http://www.victoria.ca/assets/City~Hall/Bylaws/bylaw-93-121.pdf).

An **academic article on pocket markets** in the Metro Vancouver area* explored some of the benefits and challenges of this new food retail model:

- Benefits include providing education on local food, connecting eaters to farmers, making local food more convenient, and providing market access to new or young farmers.
- Challenges include a lack of understanding amongst the public about what a pocket market is; the challenge of addressing issues of food access in a way that is financially sustainable; and issues of logistics (storage, transportation, and personnel), site selection, and regulatory requirements.

*Evans, Terri, and Christiana Miewald (2010). "Assessing the pocket market model for growing the local food movement: A case study of Metropolitan Vancouver". *Journal of Agriculture, Food Systems, and Community Development.*

Community Food Markets in the Vancouver Region:

Community food markets have been successfully tested as a model by the Richmond Food Security Task Force, the Surrey Urban Farmers' market (which piloted a pocket market at a seniors' centre), the Coquitlam Farmers' market. The latter group runs pocket markets at SFU's campus and also at office buildings. Other acitivists and organizations are also partnering with Neighbourhood Houses and Neighbourhood Food Networks to run community food markets of different scales.

Westside Community Food Market

The Westside Community Food Markets will be in their third season this summer, and are being run by the Kitsilano Neighbourhood House and the Society Promoting Environmental Conservation (SPEC). In previous seasons the Westside Food Security Collaborative has led the markets as well. This year they are running on a weekly basis from one location in Kitsilano, selling produce from local farmers.

The Project Report from 2011 provides extensive information on the operations of the market. Below are some key issues that were identified:

- On average there were 374 people at each market. A comprehensive survey was undertaken at the markets, and results showed that 84.3% of respondents also attended other farmers' markets. This was identified as a challenge in that the markets were not necessarily reaching new people, although any increase in availability of local healthy food contributes to improving food access.
- Because they are rooted in supporting local farmers and selling high quality local fresh food, it is particularly challenging for pocket markets to achieve affordability in order to reach nutritionally vulnerable groups. The Westside Pocket Markets did run a voucher program whereby $300 in vouchers were distributed through community organizations in or near the neighbourhood. The voucher program "received plenty of positive feedback from users saying that the program allowed them to buy things they perhaps wouldn't or couldn't previously", although at the end of the season there were still 73 unredeemed coupons. The system is evolving again this season.

Picture from http://www.spec.bc.ca/westside-community-food-market/

The markets helped achieve a number of goals, including building community, building the local food movement, educating people about sustainable local and seasonal eating, supporting the local food economy ($20,000 in sales in 2011), and providing access to affordable local food for low-income individuals.

The 2011 Westside Pocket Market Project Report included details on the economics of running a pocket market. Both expenses and revenues came to $7981, and these are listed in this excerpt from the report:

The original financial projections had been to run the ten markets on a total of $5,000.00. This was to cover all expenses, including two coordinators to manage volunteers, vendors, financials, and marketing and market supervision. In reality, the Pocket Market required a lot more time than anticipated; hence, creative ways to generate more funds were needed.

Through the Pocket Market Sponsorships Program the market managed to generate $1,650 in support from local corporate sponsors. The table rental, although revised to become more affordable for vendors [1], created an additional $1,678 in revenue. The need for in-kind donations such as printing and

Donation in Kind	Amount	Value
Printing (SPEC & KNH)		$300
Market material		$500
Volunteer time	324 hours @$17/h	$5,508
Professional vol. time	100 @ $25	$2,500
Total		$8,808

Expenses	
Project coordinator x 2	$6,745
Volunteer expenses	$440.68
Printing	$499.66
Market permit	$10
Misc. expenses	$58.17
Voucher program	$227.00
Total	$7,981

Revenue	
KNH	$3,600
SPEC	$600
Corporate sponsors	$1,650
Vendor table sales	$1,678.78
Massage donations	$164
Swag sales	$11
Voucher prog. (KNH)	$227.00
Total	$7,981

Notable line items include the corporate sponsors that provided $1,650 in revenue. The voucher program was funded through the Greenest City Grant. There was notably no cost associated with the venue.

Sales were also tracked throughout the market season: "In total, the ten pocket markets generated $20,000 in sales for market vendors. At the most, the Market generated $2,500 per week. Sales per vendor varied from $50 to $650, depending on product, weather and number of market visitors" (page 6). It was noted that market sales were dependent on the weather.

Common Threads & Commentary

Most fundamentally, community food markets represent an additional food asset in neighbourhood foodscapes. Here are some other ways they fill a particular niche and provide an important contribution:

- They can occur in small spaces, where farmers' markets cannot.
- Community Food Markets provide a mid-week market option to folks who already shop at farmers' markets, and they pop up in convenient spaces and reach eaters who might not otherwise buy from local farmers.
- Community food markets can also be incubator markets for small (especially urban) farms. Farmers who don't yet have enough produce to connect with a chef or afford a booth at a full-scale farmers' market can have their produce sold at a pocket market. If spending time at the stall is too great a barrier to participation, the produce can be sold by a third party, which also adds flexibility.
- These markets can be part of employee health & wellness programs.

Community food markets can also be targeted to vulnerable populations. In practice, this has either been through location (locating for example at BC Housing Sites or Neighbourhood Houses) or through voucher systems that aim to reach low income households.

Vancouver's Regulatory Environment

Community food markets sit in a regulatory grey zone between farmers' markets, retail vending, and street vending. Relevant policy and regulations are noted briefly below:

Farmers' Market Interim Policy (under review through 2012)

When community groups or organizations approach the city about starting community food markets, it might trigger a process that involves putting the market through the regular farmers' market permitting process. In practice, fees and requirements have been waived for these groups because of an understanding that they often aim to serve vulnerable groups and they are a smaller scale than farmers' markets.

The interim farmers' market policy is currently under review and community food markets are positioned to be added as a separate category of markets.

Zoning Implications

The changes to the farmers' market policy triggered zoning amendments in multiple zones, to include farmers' markets as conditional approval uses. If community food markets are recognized in the updated farmers' market policy as a new model of food retail, zoning amendments will likely be necessary.

Street Vending

Street Vending regulations have so far not been applied to community food markets, though markets have not been allowed to operate on streets. Community food markets do not naturally fall into a particular food vending category: they don't fit under Street Food Vending, which applies to prepared foods. Mobile Food Vending applies to mobile operations. Street Vending, which allows for vending on sidewalks, is the closest match and would pertain if markets operated on sidewalks.

Health Regulations

Most of the health regulations pertaining to food vending do not apply to community food markets, because they're not vending prepared foods:

- Regulations such as the BC Food Premises Regulation 210/99, the Regional Health Protection Guideline for Mobile Food Premises, and the Guidelines for Sale of Foods at Temporary Food Markets do not apply.
- If markets opt to sell baked goods or eggs, other regulations are triggered, though most baked goods are considered Low Risk Foods.
- MarketSafe training is recommended but not required.

What the City is Doing:

Because of the passion of community food activists in Vancouver neighbourhoods, pocket markets are already happening in our city. These individuals and organizations are pushing the policy envelope and operating in the absence of a clear regulatory framework for pocket markets. They have proven that pocket markets can work, and providing a clear and supportive policy environment can only help these operations.

The City is currently reviewing the Interim Farmers' Market Policy, and making changes and additions. A major focus of these changes is incorporating community food markets as a new category, to recognize and further enable the work that is already being done by community food activists and organizations.

The following comments are suggestions for the policy development process:

- Include current community food market operators in the policy development process, to ensure that their concerns and views make their way into the policy.
- Create a Broad Definition: A challenge during the policy development process is going to be that pocket market operators are continuously evolving their operations. Some are focused on vulnerable populations while others are not. Similarly, some have farmers present while others do not. Creating a definition that is overly prescriptive will mean that more regulatory gaps will quickly emerge as new market forms do not fit the box. As such, a broad definition could allow for flexibility and stability into the future.

Picture from www.kitsilano.ca

Mobile Produce Stands:

Mobile produce stands bring fresh produce (local or not local) into neighbourhoods on push carts, carts powered by bicycles, or small trailers. While mobile produce stands are more likely to be run by for-profit small businesses, the distinction between community food markets and mobile produce stands is simply that the latter move around the neighbourhood. While community food markets can pop up in different places on different market days, mobile produce stands are designed to be mobile within a particular day of operation.

Mobile Produce Stands

There has been extensive media coverage of the Green Carts program. Some reports focus on the potential negative impacts on nearby grocery stores and the challenges the cart owners have with fines from police. A film, The Apple Pushers, explores the ethnic dimension of the uptake of the program, and the challenges vendors face.

Successes from Elsewhere:

Green Carts – New York City

New York City's Green Carts, selling raw uncut fruits and vegetables, form perhaps the most extensive network of mobile produce stands in a North American city. The program aims to increase the availability of fresh fruits and vegetables in underserved areas of New York.

The program was started in 2008, and is an initiative of the Department of Health and Mental Hygiene. The City's goal was to issue up to 1000 permits for green carts, spread throughout specific boroughs, and a 2011 update to Council included a count of 501 permits issued. The Green Cart precincts were chosen based on the results of a community health survey which identified areas where fresh fruit and vegetable consumption is low.

Picture from www.nytimes.com

Further Resources: NYC has developed a number of helpful communications tools (an FAQ sheet is included in the appendix). The City also regularly runs workshops (in different languages) about financing the purchase of carts, and the process of obtaining licences & permits.

Becoming a vendor entails covering lower start-up costs than opening a brick and mortar store, and vendors can access low interest loans. Successful vendors reportedly tend to be resourceful, able to secure a good location, and build relationships with their customers.

Permits and Policy: To operate a Green Cart, residents need to obtain both a license (for the person) and a permit (for the cart). The costs to start operating a Green Cart are $103 related to obtaining a license, and $75 for a 2 year permit ($50 renewal fee). For purchasing a cart and inventory, micro-loans are available as a result of a $1.5 million grant from a foundation.

The policy behind the Green Carts program includes an amendment to the City's Health Code. Green Carts are considered a type of mobile food non-processing unit, and are regulated as such. Local Law 9, signed by Mayor Bloomberg on March 13, 2008, establishes 1,000 permits for Green Carts.

Picture from http://www.marchefrontenac.com/

Check out this short video showing a day in the life of a Fruixi vendor (in French): http://www.firstpost.com/topic/place/montreal-fruixi-des-fruits-et-des-legumes-frais-qui-circulent-dans-video-w2Bu6lyDa5w-470-2.html

Further Resources:
Enterprising Non-Profits has created a Social Enterprise Guide (http://www.enterprisingnonprofits.ca/projects/the_guide), which could help non-profits looking to start a mobile produce stand or other project to support its operations.

Fruixi, Montreal

Fruixi takes its name from the BIXI bike share system in Montreal, providing local fresh produce for sale by bike to various boroughs in downtown Montreal. The initiative is run by Marché Solidaire Frontenac. There are six bike kiosks in parks, hospitals, and public places throughout the summer and fall, this year being the second season of the pilot program. The bike kiosks – with shelves and pop-up awnings, reportedly cost $3,500 to build and can carry a load of over 150kg.

The bike kiosks are limited to particular geographies for the pilot project phase, and they are not allowed on commercial thoroughfares. Relevant regulations include a resolution about special event programming in the public domain, and a regulation concerning peace and order in the public domain.

Common Threads & Commentary

The same challenges exist for this model of increasing food access as for others – making selling produce profitable. This initiative would also likely only be seasonal, as outdoor vending is difficult in the winter weather, and less local produce is available.

Mobile produce stands are, however, a relatively low-cost, low-investment way to bring produce into underserved communities. Creating an enabling regulatory environment could allow mobile produce vendors to emerge.

What those mobile produce vendors look like will depend on the target neighbourhood, market analysis and estimates of demand done by prospective operators. In New York, a city of over 8 million people, mobile produce vending is a profitable business for individual vendors. In Montreal, much closer to Vancouver's size, the mobile vending project is subsidized by grants and run by a non-profit.

Vancouver's Regulatory Environment

The Street Vending By-law (No. 4781) covers three types of vending:

- **Street Food Vending** covers operations such as food carts, which sell prepared foods at stationary locations. Such operations are allowed on sidewalks or the street, though the number of permits is tightly controlled (103 vendors currently) and permits have been awarded through a competitive process in the past. This policy is being reported on to Council as it is quite new.
- **Mobile Food Vending**, again focused on prepared foods, covers street food vending that is mobile. These operations can only happen on the street (not on sidewalks), and vendors must move after 60 minutes if they have had no customers. Vendors must be at least 60 meters away from other food establishments selling similar items. This program occurred as a pilot last year, and again the number of permits and location of operations are tightly controlled.

There are currently 30 vendors. Changes are being recommended and being reported on to Council. Under this program, detached trailers not allowed (self-propelled vehicles only), operations require insurance, and operators need both a business license and one permit per cart.

- General stationary **Street Vending** includes things such as selling flowers, and can happen on sidewalks or the street.

What the City Could Do

Create Enabling Policy

A subcategory for fresh produce vendors could be added to the general Street Vending category (ideally with a lower fee reflecting the low profit margins of selling fresh produce). Adding the subcategory to that group would ensure that vending could happen on sidewalks as well as streets. Such an addition might result in a model of produce vending that is less mobile.

Alternatively, mobile produce stands could be enabled by adding a subcategory for fresh produce vendors to Mobile Food Vending. Consideration could also be given to allowing these vendors in the downtown core. The number and locations for vending could be selected through food access mapping and community consultation.

Provide Program Support

The City could partner with local organizations to come up with designs and communications materials. Subsidizing the costs of building the carts could also ensure that the program takes off.

The City could play a role in pointing interested parties towards potential sources of funding. Places to look include the VanCity Enviro-Fund grants, the Vancouver Foundation, the Central City Foundation, and possibly the Heart & Stroke Foundation.

The food hub project that the City is currently collaborating on would also create opportunities for a mobile produce program: cart owners could benefit by having one location to go to stock up on local produce to vend throughout the city.

There is already interest amongst some community leaders in developing mobile produce stands of different types. Staff with the DTES Kitchen Tables project, for example, are interested in starting up mobile healthy food vending specifically tailored to the DTES community.

The DTES Kitchen Tables outreach team - picture from http://dteskitchentables.org/outreach-team

Mobile Farm Stands

Mobile Healthy Grocery Stores

Mobile Farm Stands and Grocery Stores

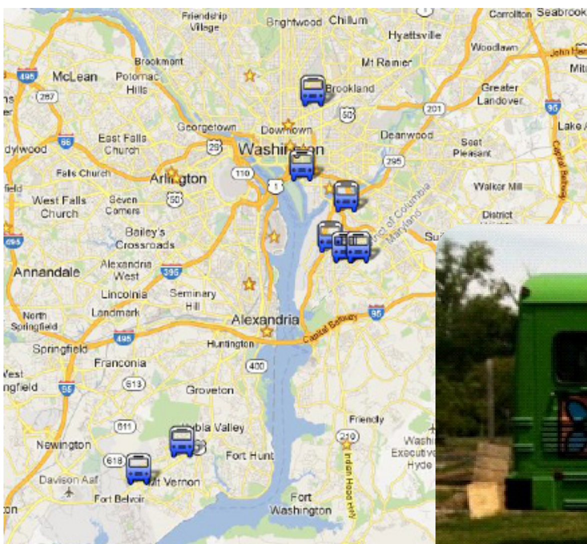
Mobile farm stands have been cropping up in cities and towns in the United States, often in the format of a converted bus selling produce from one particular farm. Sometimes these initiatives are run by food organizations on a one-off basis. Mobile farm stands sit somewhere between community food markets, which are stationary in nature, and mobile produce stands, which are generally smaller and can have a less direct link to a farm.

Mobile healthy grocery stores provide sometimes larger-scale grocery retail to underserved areas. These stores tend to stock not only fresh produce, but other groceries as well. These initiatives are less seasonal than mobile farm stands

Examples from Elsewhere

Arcadia Mobile Market, near Washington D.C

Arcadia Mobile Market brings the produce, milk, eggs and meat of the Arcadia Center for Sustainable Food and Agriculture as well as other organic farms to underserved neighbourhoods. The initiative also includes working with schools to provide nutritional education. The market accepts food assistance benefits such as SNAP, WIC, and Senior Checks, and provides a "Bonus Bucks" program to match the value of these benefits up to $10 when used at the Mobile Market (arcadiafood.org).



The route of the Arcadia Mobile Market, from http://arcadiafood.org/

Picture from http://www.huffingtonpost.com/2012/05/18/mobile-farmers-market_n_1525878.html?ref=fb&src=sp&comm_ref=false

Jordan's Mobile Farm stand – Portland, Maine

- This farm stand on a bus travels to five different seniors housing developments in South Portland and to businesses in Portland and Scarborough. The farm stand is an operation of one particular family farm (Jordan's Farm).

TMC Healthy Harvest Mobile Market, Kansas City

- This mobile grocery store, launched this summer, is run by medical centres and a local economic development corporation, and supported by grants from foundations, a city department, and the transportation authority. Nutritional education and cooking classes are also key components of the initiative.

Lane Coalition for Healthy Active Youth – Eugene-Springfield, OR

- As part of a healthy corner store initiative, Dari Marts in the Eugene-Springfield area are opening up to farmers bringing weekly mobile farm stands to their parking lots.

Freshmobile, Madison, Wis

- The mobile grocery store in Madison was started by a grocer, who stocks the truck with produce from his store and visits low income and underserved neighbourhoods.

Nashville Mobile Market, Nashville

The Nashville Mobile Market is a 28' trailer carrying basic produce, meat, dairy, and non-perishable products. It is complete with shelving and refrigeration capabilities. It has been in operation since February 2011 and is successfully sustaining a profit.

The Nashville Mobile Markets operates with a business license, insurance, state trailer registration, health department certification, as well as certification to be part of the SNAP program. The market has not had to obtain permits for street vending.

The program is notably run as a partnership between local food activists and the Vanderbuilt University. The group has started a larger organization called the National Mobile Market, which aims to bring mobile markets to other cities, and provides services to members and affiliate members.

Fresh Moves, Chicago

In Chicago, a non-profit made up of food activists is running a mobile produce stand out of a bus that moves around the West Side of the city, in neighbourhoods that are considered food deserts. The bus was donated by the Chicago Transit Authority.

Picture from http://lchay.org/projects/corner-stores/

Picture from http://www.nashvilleledger.com/editorial/Article.aspx?id=52329

Read about pop-up and mobile grocery stores in this article: http://healthland.time.com/2012/07/24/can-pop-up-grocery-stores-solve-the-problem-of-food-deserts/?xid=newsletter-healthland#ixzz22zi6cGxb

Picture from http://healthland.time.com

Mobile Good Food Market , Toronto

In Toronto, collaboration between the City of Toronto, FoodShare, United Way, the University of Toronto's Food Policy Research Initiative, and community groups, has resulted in a pilot Mobile Good Food Market in eight neighbourhoods this summer. The market is essentially a small grocery store in a truck, selling affordable fresh produce, inspired by initiatives like Fresh Moves in Chicago.

The locations, all lower income neighbourhoods outside of the downtown in areas underserved by traditional food retail, were selected through community consultation and access gap analyses.

The program will rely on the warehouse space available through an existing FoodShare program. Because of an 18-year relationship with a wholesaler and the Ontario Food Terminal, the markets will sell fruits and vegetables at wholesale prices (www.toronto.ca). The program is funded through a grant from the Ontario Centres of Excellence. A rigorous monitoring and evaluation system will include an economic feasibility study.

The City's Street Food Working Group, set up in response to the failed A La Carte program, will be reporting and possibly developing supportive regulations for the initiative soon. The current regulations include a $1,035 yearly license fee for selling produce and a food handler certificate requirement.

Common Threads & Commentary

- These initiatives are geographically flexible and enable fresh produce to be brought into underserved areas easily.
- Many of the mobile farm stand and market programs are being launched this summer. Best practices therefore have not yet emerged.
- Most are at least partially funded through grants, and often run by non-profit organizations.

Locally, a recent SFU graduate has developed a business plan for a mobile grocery store similar to the Nashville Mobile Market. His main barrier to start-up is accessing capital. He might look into acquiring seed funding to start up this initiative. The City has already been communicating and collaborating and will continue to do so if he decides to move his project forward.

Vancouver's Regulatory Environment

The Street Vending By-law is again relevant to these models of food vending. The city's current definition of a "mobile food vending unit" is specific to vehicles selling prepared foods. Prospective operators could apply for general street vending permits, but they would not be able to be mobile. The application fee is $50, and the yearly permit costs $1,052.24.

What the City Could Do

The street vending by-law could be amended to include a specific category for mobile farmstands and grocery stores. This could be developed in addition to a new category that would apply to mobile produce stands operators. These new categories could have lower permit fees, recognizing the low profit margins.

Urban Farm Gate Sales

Urban Farm Gate Sales

Urban farmers in Vancouver are pushing for enabling regulations around urban farming, to legitimize and protect their important contributions to the food system. The 2011 Vancouver Urban Farming Forum report identifies farm gate sales as an enabler for making urban farms social spaces, and suggests developing business license designations that will allow for legal sales of products from urban farming. Enabling farm gate sales would create a number of benefits:

- Having customers come to the farm fosters a greater connection between eaters and their farmers.
- Selling from the farm can be a time-saver for farmers, allowing them to side-step transporting their produce elsewhere.
- Many local urban farms sell their produce through Community Supported Agriculture systems. Small amounts of extra produce can be difficult to market, but farm gate sales offer the flexibility to sell what is available.
- Enabling farm gate sales from farms on institutional lands would open up the possibility of selling to employees and reaching a wider audience.

SoleFood Farm picture from http://1sole.wordpress.com/

Successes from Elsewhere

Urban Farming Ordinance - Seattle

In August of 2010, the Seattle's City Council made changes to the land use code that enabled a number of different urban agricultural developments, including urban farming and farm gate sales. The definition of urban farming used in Seattle includes selling from the site of the farm, thereby enabling farm gate sales. Vending can happen between 7am and 7pm, but not in rights of way.

Urban farms are permitted in residential areas as accessory uses up to the size of 4000 square feet. Above that size, administrative conditional use permits are needed. These larger farms also require farm management plans, which address and mitigate potential impacts.

Urban farms are permitted as primary or accessory uses in commercial zones and there are no size restrictions. In industrial zones, urban farms are similarly permitted as primary or accessory uses but are restricted to rooftops or the sides of buildings in some places.

Business licenses are required if the produce grown is processed on site (made into jam, for example). If the business grosses more than $12,000 per year, a Master Business License from Washington State is required.

Amendments to Zoning Code - Portland

The City of Portland is currently in the process of amending the zoning code to facilitate activities related to urban agriculture. The draft amendments to the zoning code make a distinction between community gardens and market gardens (an alternative term for urban farms), allowing more frequent on site sale from market gardens. Currently, on-site sales (farm gate sales) are considered "seasonal outdoor sales", which are regulated as a Temporary Use, and allowed twice a year, for up to five weeks each time, for a total of 70 days each year. However, the time between each sale has to be at least four times as long as the last sale. This last requirement is not conducive to weekly or bi-weekly farm stands throughout the growing season.

The new proposal allows sales in nonresidential zones to be regulated as Retail Sales and Service. There will be no limit to how many days sales can occur, no need for additional parking, and no limit on exterior display. In residential zones, sales will still be allowed 70 days per year but these days do not need to be consecutive. In all zones sales will be limited to what can be produced on site (and value-added products made from produce grown on site), which will further limit impacts.

What the City is Doing

Urban farm gate sales are already happening on an informal basis. Enabling regulations can ensure that concerns about potential neighbourhood impacts are addressed, and protection is given to farmers.

Food Policy has set up an interdepartmental Urban Farming Technical Team, with a number of objectives and a comprehensive work plan. Developing policy for urban farm gate sales is one of the items on the work plan, and will be collaboratively tackled later in 2012.

Policies could include amendments to zoning districts to allow urban farming as an accessory or conditional use. Including sale of farm products in the definition of an urban farm could enable vending at those locations. Parameters could be included in the various zoning districts to ensure that negative impacts are avoided and mitigated.

Regulations in Seattle and Portland, as well as other cities with farm sales policies such as Baltimore and Cleveland, can provide important examples to learn from. The city could follow up with these other cities to understand what has worked well and what has not, both in the process of adopting the policies and the effectiveness of the policies themselves.

Further Resources:

- The newly formed Vancouver Urban Farming Society brings together urban farmers and food systems activists from across the city. Engaging this group will be critical to ensuring regulations meet the needs of urban farmers.
- A grad student in the Faculty of Land and Food Systems at UBC is currently finalizing his master's thesis on urban farming in Vancouver. This new piece of research will provide important insights into the urban farming movement and ways to support it.

Food Procurement at City Facilities

Food Procurement at City Facilities

The City currently spends approximately $5 million on procuring food each year, about $3 million of which is spent on the 166 facilities run by the Community Services Group and the Parks Board. Accessing food at these facilities can be a central part of the diet and food security of individual residents. Shifting towards healthy local food at these facilities is therefore a key part of improving food access, especially for vulnerable groups who rely on publicly available food.

Examples from Elsewhere:

Sustainable Environmental and Ethical Procurement Policy – City of Calgary

Imagine Calgary, Calgary's long-range sustainability plan, includes a target to have 100% of the food supply from sustainable sources by 2036. The city also has an innovative and progressive set of procurement policies, including a Sustainable Environmental and Ethical Procurement Policy (SEEPP). Food was one of the four commodity areas included in the pilot project phase of implementing SEEPP.

Virtual Supermarkets in Libraries – City of Baltimore

The City of Baltimore has been putting virtual grocery stores in city facilities such as libraries and community centres. From these spots, low income residents without vehicle access can order groceries that are delivered without a delivery charge. The stores are focused in parts of the city where the option is either shopping at a corner store with limited healthy food, or taking an expensive bus ride outside of the neighbourhood to access a full-service grocery store.

Picture from www.baltimorecity.gov

What the City is Doing

The City recently retained Local Food Plus to support the development of a Local Sustainable Food Procurement Action Plan. The first step was to conduct research and write a report, submitted in May of 2012, analyzing the food procurement practices and arrangements of various City facilities, and identifying ways to change these practices in order to procure more local food. The report highlights the challenge of multiple interwoven procurement contracts, with different timelines. The report identifies that there are several conditions that need to be in place before supply chains can be shifted: a large and reliable enough supply of sustainable local food needs to be available, which might necessitate facilitating some sort of cooperative marketing, and the food infrastructure for post-harvest handling and distribution needs to be in place.

Recommendations include adopting a policy directive as well as facility-based shifts in procurement and menu options. The policy directive could be an addition to the city's Ethical Purchasing Policy. Facility-based shifts could be initially focused in the Carnegie Centre and the Evelyne Saller Centre. These initiatives and others could all be laid out in a Local and Sustainable Food Procurement Action Plan.

The shift towards local food procurement in city facilities is an initiative that will be led by the Sustainability Department at the City, with the collaboration of the Food Policy team.

Healthy Corner Stores

Healthy corner stores are businesses that stock and offer healthy food retail options throughout the city. They carry fresh produce, high quality protein, diary and ready-to-serve prepared foods. Their aim is to move away from highly processed, pre-packaged unhealthy foods often found in convenience stores. Healthy corner stores can be more tightly defined using thresholds for shelf or floor space devoted to healthy foods, or the presence of particular food items.

The Healthy Corner Store movement is a response to inadequate and inequitable healthy food access in neighbourhoods. In neighbourhoods where residents have lower incomes, mobility challenges or a lack of access to transportation, there can be heavy reliance on corner stores as a source of food. These food retailers become important drivers of food choices (or lack of choice).

Healthy corner store initiatives can also give big boosts to the local food sector, and encourage local food choices. The ecological footprint of food choices is significant, and making local food an easy option in the conventional retail scene could bring local food to a wider audience.

The Healthy Corner Store Movement

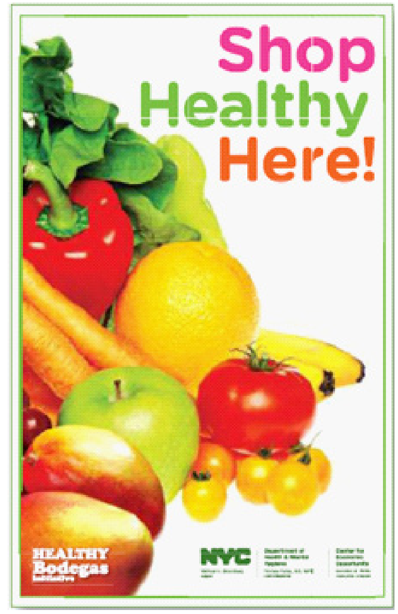
Healthy Corner Store programs are popping up in cities across North America, particularly in the United States (program exist in New York, Washington D.C., Seattle, Baltimore, Philadelphia, Chicago, Detroit, various parts of California and Louisiana and elsewhere). Part of the momentum is coming from the $400 million federal Healthy Food Financing Initiative, and is supported through Michelle Obama's Let's Move program tackling childhood obesity partly through increasing access to healthy foods. Funds through the Let's Move program have been more focused on attracting and opening new food retail outlets in underserved neighbourhoods than revamping existing stores. A wonderful resource on how to attract new stores is a 2012 report by ChangeLab Solutions. Attracting new retailers can be more challenging than working with existing retailers to gradually stock more healthy fresh foods. The Obama administration's food policy is focused broadly on improving access to healthy foods and eradicating food deserts by 2017.

In 2004, a network was formed, with the intent of sharing information across jurisdictions working on improving equitable access to healthy foods through small food retail. The Healthy Corner Stores Network now includes approximately 300 organizations and thousands of people visit the website each month (www.healthycornerstores.org).

* PHLP 2009. Healthy Corner Stores: The State of the Movement. Accessed from http://changelabsolutions.org/sites/phlpnet.org/files/HCSReport.pdf

Examples from Elsewhere:

NYC Healthy Bodegas Initiative:



Since 2005, NYC's Health Department has worked with over 500 bodegas to increase the availability of healthy foods while raising awareness of nutritional foods. The program is targeted to particular neighbourhoods based on a community health survey; the initiative is focused in Bronx, Brooklyn and Harlem neighbourhoods with high rates of obesity and diabetes. The Healthy Bodegas Initiative has a few components:

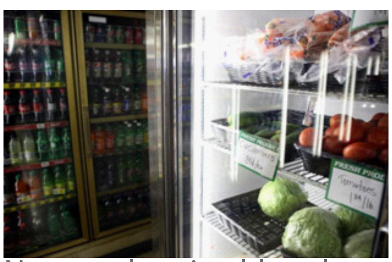
- Technical assistance: participating stores agree to carry fresh produce and certain healthier food options, and are provided technical assistance in return. Assistance includes connecting store owners with distributors and local farmers, assisting in redesigning layouts and displays, and providing information on how to price and store fresh produce.
- Social marketing: stores receive promotional materials for their healthy food options. Campaigns included 'Moooove to 1% Milk' and 'Move to Fruits & Vegetables'.
- 'Adopt a Bodega': involves the community in supporting the bodega owners as they introduce new healthy foods, ensuring that there is customer demand for the products. A clear and helpful Adopt a Bodega Toolkit facilitates that process.
- 'Star Bodegas' were identified and carry even more healthy foods. They are encouraged to offer healthy breakfasts, lunches and snacks. Cooking demonstrations and nutrition information is provided in store by a partnering non-profit organization.
- 'Farm-to-Bodega' links bodegas with farmers' markets. Feedback from participating owners has been positive, noting longer shelf life and higher popularity with customers.

Lessons learned that were identified in NYC include the need to meet store owners where they are – some are ready to carry low-sodium canned goods, while others are ready for more fresh produce. Community buy-in and support were also identified as central to the long-term success of carrying fresh produce.

Minneapolis Healthy Corner Store Program

The program in Minneapolis grew partly out of the lack of conformance with the city's **Staple Foods Ordinance**, which obliges food retailers to carry a certain amount of healthy foods. The ordinance was one piece of the puzzle in city, but moving beyond regulation to working with store owners to overcome barriers to carrying healthy foods was another important piece.

The healthy corner store initiative is part of a larger '**Homegrown Minneapolis**' initiative.



New produce in old coolers http://minnesota.publicradio.org/display/web/2010/12/20/corner-stores-produce-initiative/

The Minneapolis program started with 10 pilot stores and focuses mostly on building the capacity of corner store owners – an approach which reflects the belief that if owners are empowered with the knowledge and tools to be able to profitably sell healthy foods, they will. Program components include working with store owners to set goals, having promotional materials in the stores, and supporting owners with pricing, display and financial tracking. Strong relationships were built with store owners, starting with the development of Memoranda of Understanding (MOU) that outlined expectations and program components.

Stages in working with corner stores included partnering with high-schools and conducting visual assessments of stores, owner interviews, and customer interviews at the beginning. Participating stores were then recruited based on interest and ability to track sales. The project manager developed price lists based on communication with wholesalers. The community was engaged through taste-tasting, newspaper coverage, food demonstrations.

Minneapolis received funding from Statewide Health Improvement Program (SHIP). The state created the $47 million program in 2008 to reduce obesity and tobacco use. The city of Minneapolis received two SHIP grants totaling $2.6 million to help fund the corner store project, a program to create mini farmers' markets in low-income neighborhoods, free classes on how to can food, and other efforts to increase bicycling, walking, and gardening. So far, the city has spent about $62,500 on the corner store project.

Tips from the Minneapolis project manager included the following:

- Think about evaluation in the initial stages
- Track sales of healthy foods
- Take before & after pictures
- Try to incorporate local foods
- Build a strong relationship with store owners, and help trouble-shoot through the early stages of the program

Healthy Corners, Washington D.C.

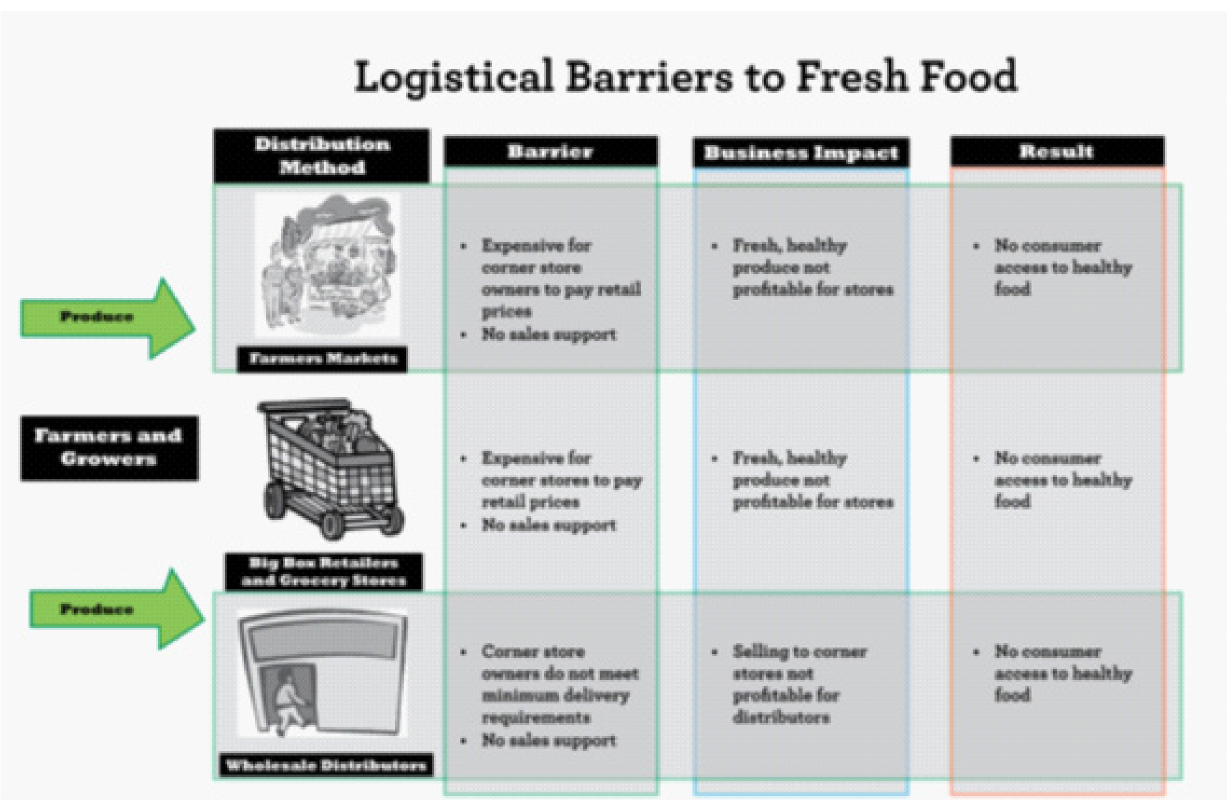
The healthy corner store program in Washington was prompted by the **FEED DC Act**, which focuses on attracting grocers to underserved areas and also working with existing small store owners to increase the amount of healthy foods for sale.

A non-profit called DC Hunger Solutions (DCHS), funded through the District's Health Department, led the Healthy Corner Store program in DC through various iterations. The most recent iteration, called Healthy Corners, is an affordable wholesale delivery service that store owners can use to order healthy foods. Healthy Corners delivers healthy foods to over 25 stores in D.C.'s poorest neighbourhoods. Foods are procured from local farmers, and the program employs graduates of a Culinary Job Training program. Store owners and customers are also provided nutrition education, marketing support and technical assistance.

Picture from www.dccentralkitchen.org

The project in D.C. is very established and there has been great documentation on the lessons learned, including detailed analysis of the corner store retail environment. Before Healthy Corners emerged as a wholesaler specifically targeted to corner stores, the program was operated through the DC Department of Small and Local Business Development, and focused on working with corner store owners to procure healthy foods through conventional channels. The graphic below, from a report called Healthy Food Retail Program Guide: An Instructional Overview of the Healthy Corners Program, as Implemented by DC Central Kitchen, shows the barriers encountered when attempting to source from conventional channels:

This great video shows the impact Healthy Corners is having on the food retail environment in underserved D.C. neighbourhoods:
http://www.dccentralkitchen.org/healthycorners/



A June 2012 **article in the Washington Post**,* focused on the program in Philadelphia, highlighted the extensive investment in healthy corner stores and questioned the basic assumptions underpinning the healthy corner store movement – that the availability of healthy food would change food choices. The article reviews the existing research and suggests there is a lack of evidence showing causation. Philadelphia's program may subsequently be particularly under the spotlight. Importantly, Philadelphia's program is coupled with the largest research project to date on the impact of introducing healthy food retail in underserved neighbourhoods – investigating the correlation between access to healthy food and healthy food choices.

Healthy Corner Store Initiative & Get Healthy Philly, Philadelphia

In 2004, a non-profit organization called The Food Trust developed the Healthy Corner Store Initiative which includes a focus on working with youth to change their snacking choices. The program is supported by Philadelphia's Department of Health through their 'Get Healthy Philly' program.

There are over 600 corner stores in the Philadelphia Healthy Corner Store Network, who have all committed to introducing healthy food options and supporting a social marketing campaign. The program takes a gradual approach. Stores are initially supported with $100 to start stocking a healthy items as well as training on procurement and merchandizing. Once stores have successfully completed the first steps in the program, they can apply for a 'mini-conversion', supported by $1000 to $5000 in funding, to develop new shelving, refrigeration, point of sales systems or other equipment or training.

Picture from http://www.thefoodtrust.org/php/programs/corner.store.campaign.php

Healthy Corner Store Program, Toronto

On the Canadian front, Toronto is also beginning to develop a healthy corner store program. The City has applied for funding from the province to undertake consumer demand research and other feasibility pieces. The approach is going to be to focus on two to three neighbourhoods and develop a deep understanding of how residents shop, what the realities are for shop owners and how the City can help store owners carry healthier items in an economically sustainable manner. Toronto's food policy planner leading this project has been collaborating with Urbane Development in New York – a community and economic development firm - learning from what has been done in that city.

* http://www.washingtonpost.com/blogs/ezra-klein/post/will-philadelphias-experiment-in-eradicating-food-deserts-work/2012/06/08/gJQAU9snNV_blog.html

Common Threads and Commentary:

Healthy corner store programs tend to include the following:

- Engaging the community
- Providing technical support to store owners
- Facilitating store conversions of various scales
- Providing social marketing materials to encourage healthy choices

Below are some best practices from programs elsewhere:

- Seek out funding and get to know the organizations and institutions that can provide resources and opportunities for store owners.
- Identify potential pioneers: through initial discussions with grocers and store owners in the neighbourhood, identify those with strong interest in participating in a program.
- Start with store assessments, and engage the community (youth in particular). Youth can also participate later in becoming health advocates, in running food demos and other activities. Engaging the community early can show corner store owners that there is demand for healthy food.
- Develop MOUs with store owners. In order to make sure the program is successful, expectations need to be explored in the initial stages of cooperation with stores. Considerations could be given to whether stores have the capacity to track sales, to allow for strong monitoring and evaluation of the program.
- Develop social marketing campaign to compliment the increased availability of healthy foods. Signage can affect the food purchasing choices of shoppers, and the more visible the program the better.
- Think about the sustainability of the initiatives, and have an exit strategy that will ensure stores are able to continue to carry produce once the program ends.

A 2009 report by assessed **the state of the Healthy Corner Store Movement**.* It took a critical look at the proliferation of pilot projects and strategized on how to ensure projects provide real benefits to store owners such that they will continue to carry healthy foods, and contribute to healthier communities. The report suggests several strategies for success:

- Share investment with corner store owners, and build the capacity of owners to stock fresh produce
- Partner with community residents
- Link to neighbourhood revitalization projects
- Use sophisticated, culturally appropriate marketing

The report also stresses the importance of developing a deep understanding of the dynamics of the corner store business sector – including the business model and the local neighbourhood dynamics.

Vancouver's Regulatory Environment

Because a Healthy Corner Store initiative would be a program rather than a policy, there are not the same types of regulatory barriers that need to be surmounted for other food access initiatives. However, if the Healthy Corner Store program moves in the direction of partnering with Neighbourhood Food Networks or local urban farmers to set up mini-markets that might be set up outside of corner stores, there would be permit implications for the use of sidewalk space. The street vending bylaw (By-Law No. 4781) specifies that using any part of the street for food vending necessitates applying to the General Manager of Engineering Services for a permit. The application fee for sidewalk occupancy is $50, and the yearly permit fee is $4.27 per square foot or a minimum of $119.71.

Operational Barriers and Opportunities

Staff Time

Most healthy corner store programs are run by non-profits or health departments within cities. In Vancouver, the Social Policy team is stretched with a variety of core functions. To run a successful program, relationships of trust need to be built with store owners, requiring a staff person with availability to meet frequently to work through challenges.

If the city were to take on a healthy corner store program, it would most likely need to apply for funding to fund a project manager position. Alternatively, pitching the program idea to a non-profit and supporting the non-profit through the program development is an alternative way to support the development of a healthy corner store program.

Funding

In comparison to the United States, funding is a challenge here. In the US, there are federally-allocated funds for increasing food access. There are also numerous foundations, public pension funds being invested in community economic development, and other innovative funding opportunities. Funding is also more available because health departments are city departments, so public health dollars are controlled by municipalities.

However, funding opportunities do exist in Vancouver, through foundations, upper levels of government, and credit unions, and these opportunities are explored in the preliminary program proposal included as Part 4 of this report.

What the City Could Do

Create Policy

The City could waive the permit fee for displaying produce on the sidewalk. In addition, a number of regulations and policy incentives for developing healthier food retail could be considered:

Potential Regulations:

- A food retail index could be developed. If the index was lower than a particular level, developers of large sites could be required to build food retail into the development or pay into a food retail development fund.
- A minimum stocking level of healthy foods could be a condition of operating a grocery store. Minneapolis, for example, has a Healthy Food Ordinance that impacts all food retailers.
- A nutrition or healthy food rating could be added to the criteria used by health inspectors.
- Advertisements for unhealthy foods could be limited.
- The sale of particular unhealthy foods or ingredients could be limited.

Potential Policy Incentives:

- Ensure zoning is not a barrier to the emergence of healthy food retailers.
- Provide monetary incentives such as property tax relaxations, permit fee waivers for displaying produce on the street.
- Waive parking requirements for healthy corner stores.
- Provide density bonus for healthy retail in developments.

Careful consideration of the impacts would be needed before implementation of these policies. Policies could also be voluntary initially, as New York's ban on trans fats was before it became public policy.

(list adapted from the 2009 PHLP report Healthy Corner Stores: The State of the Movement)

Provide Program Support

The city could consider running a pilot Healthy Corner Stores program, focused in underserved neighbourhoods and targeted to the particular community. **Part 4 of this report outlines a proposal for a potential program**. Part 5 provides a more detailed look at the food retail environment in the Grandview-Woodland neighbourhood and includes some initial feedback from corner store operators on a potential program.

Part 3

Recommendations and Ways Forward

Recommendations

Establish a Complete Baseline Picture

Preliminary results from a study of food access programs in the United States by the American Planning Association (APA) show that cities in which food access programs and policies have generated success are the cities which started with strong baseline food assessments:

- The City could consider partnering with a local university to conduct a fine-grain assessment of neighbourhood food access. Although developing programs and policies opportunistically can allow for agility and quick results, establishing a strong foundational understanding and baseline can ensure policies and programs are tailored to particular contexts and address needs.
- Alternatively, the City could engage Neighbourhood Food Networks in conducting detailed food asset mapping and access analysis, to build a strong baseline understanding of the state of food access from the ground up.

'Access Fresh' Program Umbrella

Vancouver's draft Food System Strategy includes a suggestion to develop an 'Access Fresh' umbrella program, under which a number of initiatives could be piloted. Policy enabling pocket markets and mobile produce stands, support for urban farm-gate sales, a shift towards local food procurement for city facilities, as well as a healthy corner store program could all fit under the Access Fresh umbrella.

In addition to potentially streamlining a menu of food access programs and policies, putting all these initiatives under one umbrella could allow for better branding and marketability. A recognizable initiative may encourage businesses and community organizations to join the growing movement to increase healthy food access.

Further Resources:

Planning for Food Access - The American Planning Association will shortly be releasing a study of food access policies and plans from local governments in the United States. This research will provide new insights into best practices for local governments.

http://www.planning.org/research/foodaccess/index.htm

Develop a Clear Framework for Evaluation and Action

Deciding which models of healthy food retail to adopt or enable entails establishing an evaluation framework and understanding the decision-making drivers. Questions to consider include the following:

- Which policies or programs would contribute most to expanding the availability of local food?
- Which policies or programs would be the most impactful in terms of increasing healthy food access for vulnerable populations?
- Which policies or programs would contribute most to neighbourhood vibrancy?
- Which policies or programs would be easiest to move quickly on (i.e. where is the low-hanging fruit)?

If the City decides to focus on making sure healthy food is accessible to nutritionally vulnerable populations, for example, additional models of access should be examined. Initiatives such as the Good Food Box program, subsidized shares in Community Supported Agriculture box programs, and even participation in bulk buying programs, can perhaps reach vulnerable populations more effectively than other market-based initiatives. Finding ways to move beyond coupon or voucher programs for low income people is going to be important as we move towards being a city where everyone has access to food in a dignified manner.

The matrix on the following page explores the benefits of the various models of healthy food retail included in this report. The city could adapt this matrix, adding and varying the weights of different decision drivers.

Conclusion

Part 2 of this report provides an initial exploration of the possibilities for new models of healthy food retail. The City is already moving further along the road of enabling more vending, through reviewing and expanding the farmers' market policy, and convening an interdepartmental team on urban farming. A similar working group could be established for street vending, to look at the possibility of expanding categories and creating space for produce vendors of various types. Further exploration of vending models, and collaborating with cities such as Toronto who are experimenting and uncovering best practices, will ensure that the city stays on the pulse of healthy food vending. Creating as many opportunities as possible to increase access to healthy food in all Vancouver neighbourhoods will yield environmental and health benefits and lead to a more vibrant city.

Example Evaluation Matrix:

	Community Food Markets	Mobile Produce Stands	Mobile Farm Stands	Mobile Grocery Stores	Urban Farm Gate Sales	Food Procurement for City Facilities	Healthy Corner Stores
Availability of Local Food	5 - Makes local food available beyond farmers' markets	4 - Depends whether focus is local food	5 - Makes local food available beyond farmers' markets	4 - Depends whether focus is local food	5 - Provides direct access to farm-fresh food	5 - Potentially large impact	4 - Depends whether focus is local food
Access for Vulnerable Groups	4 - Can target vulnerable groups through choice of location and coupon system	4 - Can target vulnerable groups through choice of location, prioritizing affordability	3 - Can target vulnerable groups through choice of location	4 - Can target vulnerable groups through choice of location, prioritizing affordability	2 - Increases food access in residential and other areas, not necessarily focused on vulnerable groups	5 - Targeted to community members reliant on publicly available food	3 - Can target vulnerable groups through geographic focus of program, affordability challenging
Vibrancy	5 - Provide neighbourhood meeting places, make local food visible	5 - Puts healthy food in the street, makes healthy food visible	4 - Puts local food in the street, but infrequently	4 - Puts healthy food in the street, but infrequently	4 - Showcases local food but urban farms already present	3 - Not visible on the street	4 - If produce displayed outside of store
Low-Hanging Fruit	5 - Community groups already running these, policy changes underway	4 - Requires only supportive regulatory environment	4 - Requires only supportive regulatory environment	4 - Requires only supportive regulatory environment	5 - Sales already happening, interdepartmental team tackling policy	3 - Changing procurement difficult process, but city's Sustainability team tackling	2 - Program rather than policy, requires staff time & resources
Total Score	19/20	17/20	16/20	16/20	16/20	16/20	13/20

Part 4:
Healthy Corner Store Program Proposal

Why Healthy Corner Stores

Promoting Health

The Healthy Corner Store movement is a response to inadequate and inequitable healthy food access in neighbourhoods, and a recognition that inadequate access is contributing to negative health outcomes. In some neighbourhoods – especially those that are predominantly residential - the food retail environment is characterized by a lack of grocery stores. Corner stores can be the only food retailers in walking distance. In neighbourhoods where residents have lower incomes, mobility challenges or a lack of access to transportation, there can be heavy reliance on corner stores as a source of food. These food retailers become important drivers of food choices (or lack of choice), and important places for intervention and increased provision of healthy options.

Achieving Green Objectives

Healthy corner store initiatives are also poised to give big boosts to the local food sector by providing additional distribution channels to local farmers and providing local food in more places throughout the City, encouraging local food choices. The ecological footprint of food choices is significant, and making local food an easy option in the conventional retail scene could bring local food to a wider audience. Vancouver could be a leader in bringing the Healthy Corner Stores movement to the next level, incorporating local food as a central tenant in the program.

Enabling Levers:

- **The Greenest City Action Plan** includes the goal to ensure all residents are within a five-minute walk of a basket of fresh produce.
- The **Vancouver Food Strategy & Action Plan** (draft) includes a section on food access, which re-emphasizes the need to ensure healthy food is within a five minute walk of all residents.
- The **Healthy City Strategy** that is under development is set up to take a broad look at preventative measures for ensuring residents are healthy and decreasing health inequities. Access to healthy food is a key driver of health outcomes.

What is a Corner Store?

A corner store is a small shop selling a range of convenience items including food. In the City of Vancouver, a corner store, also called a Convenience Store, is classified as a 'Retail Dealer – Food' for the purposes of business licenses. This category is defined by what it does not include – corner stores do not includes shops with at least two of a bakery, butcher, delicatessen and food service (snack bar), or stores with a total floor area greater than 4,645 square meters.

What is a Healthy Corner Store?

Healthy corner stores are businesses that stock and offer healthy food retail options throughout the city. They carry fresh produce, high quality protein, diary and ready-to-serve prepared foods. Their aim is to move away from highly processed, pre-packaged unhealthy foods often found in convenience stores. Healthy corner stores can be more tightly defined using thresholds for shelf or floor space devoted to healthy foods, or the presence of particular food items.

Potential Program Components

A Healthy Corner Store program could go in a number of directions. In most cases, these programs are run by non-profits and financially supported by the City or run by health departments. In Vancouver, approaches could include partnering with a non-profit or other organization to lead the program (the Urban Farming Society, Business Improvement Associations, the Neighbourhood Food Networks, the neighbourhood houses across the City, or another group), or working with Vancouver Coastal Health to have them lead the program. The following break-down was built imagining that this as a city-led program.

Planning Stages:

1. Map and Ground-Truth Geography of Food Retail:

Map out the geography of grocery and corner stores in neighbourhoods, based on business license information displayed in VanMap. Conduct initial scans in neighbourhoods, visiting each store, to see whether fresh produce and other healthy foods are carried.

2. Conduct Store Assessments:

Once participating corner stores have been identified through the initial mapping process and scan of stores for fresh produce, involve the community in conducting inventories of the stores, to obtain a clear baseline on the extent of healthy foods available in the stores (see Appendix 2 for a discussion of food retail and store baseline assessment approaches). Baseline assessments can also inform what sort of interventions would be most appropriate for the particular community.

3. Jam on Healthy Corner Stores:

Small business owners might currently only interact with the City around issues of licensing and bylaw enforcement. To start to build trust and shift the dynamic, an event could be organized for store owners and community members as well as designers, merchandizing experts and local farmers to collaborate on the idea of a healthy corner store program. Successful events in the past, facilitated by the Vancouver Design Nerds, have led to innovative programs. The information from the store assessments could be succinctly presented and incorporated into the discussions on what sorts of supports could be provided to increase the availability of healthy foods.

Further Resources:

- In the United States, the Nutrition Environment Measures Survey for Stores (NEMS-S) has a complex store assessment procedure, whereby the shelf space devoted to healthy foods is calculated and a score out of 50 is arrived at (more info here http://www.med.upenn.edu/nems/).
- Health Canada's National Nutritious Food Basket (NNFB) is used by the Dieticians of Canada to create the Cost of Eating reports. The NNFB tool is particularly useful for understanding the affordability of healthy foods. It could be adapted to be used in store assessments as well.

4. Collaboratively build Store Action Plans/MOUs:

Using the information gathered from the store assessment and the ideas that emerged at the design jam, make a plan with each corner store owner for how they can begin to carry more healthy foods. This can include collaborating to improve the nutritional profile of foods currently offered, bringing in new foods, and bringing in new equipment for carrying more perishable healthy food items.

Supports for Store Owners:

5. Waive the fees for displaying produce on sidewalks:

Currently, store owners must pay a fee to display produce on the sidewalk. In a business where the profits on small amounts of produce are low, extra costs act as substantial barriers to carrying produce. Removing these fees would enliven the streets, putting produce in a prominent spot, and generally increase the availability of fresh produce.

6. Provide marketing materials:

It may be beneficial to include consistent branding of healthy corner store interventions, for the purposes of highlighting the work of the city but more importantly to begin to shift purchasing behavior towards healthy foods. Business Improvement Associations (BIAs) and community members could potentially be invited to submit designs for the in-store marketing of healthy foods.

7. Hold a series of workshops with store owners, on procurement and merchandizing healthy foods:

There may be hesitation amongst corner store owners to carry healthy foods and fresh produce in particular. Questions might include how to procure foods given the smaller quantities needed for the small stores, how to price items, handling of produce, display, refrigeration and more. Bringing in a procurement and merchandizing guru for a series of workshops could boost the capacity of small corner store owners and increase their confidence around carrying fresh foods.

These workshops could represent the first collaboration between the city and store owners, and the foundation for on-going support led by the project manager. Although procurement and merchandizing experts may not always be available, the project manager can visit stores and help with troubleshooting through the development phase while stores are transitioning to carrying healthier options.

8. Explore sourcing from local urban farmers:

Sourcing from local urban farmers may be a great way for corner stores to obtain small amounts of healthy local food. While sourcing through conventional channels may necessitate paying extra for splitting crates or boxes into the small quantities needed, small farmers may be very willing to provide custom assortments of produce for stores. Local produce could be for sale seasonally or on a weekly basis, or throughout the year.

Niche businesses exist whereby produce from local farmers or from the farmers' markets is biked around to customers. Delivery options could be explored for corner stores as well, further easing the challenge of carrying healthy fresh foods.

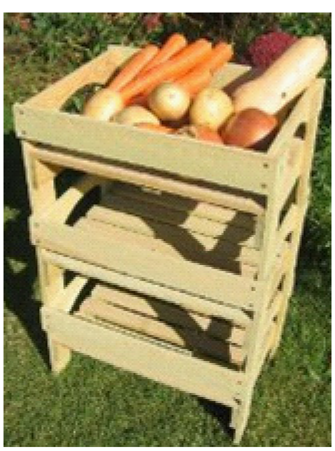
Even having corner stores be a distribution location for Community-Supported Agriculture (CSA) shares could help transition corner stores into hubs of healthy food. Excess produce could be kept on site for sale, and partnerships could develop over time.

9. Start small, with baskets or stands for less perishable fresh produce:

Investing in coolers for the more perishable fresh produce items can be a barrier for small corner store owners who have limited access to capital, and for whom large investments pose a high risk. Starting by carrying small amounts of fresh produce with longer shelf life can be a good way to bring healthy foods into the store, to begin to build the confidence of corner store owners.

If possible, the City could provide the carts in collaboration with other partners. This path also opens up opportunities to involve community members, or youth in particular. A possible partnership could happen between the City, local youth, and the Vancouver Tool Library or schools. The Tool Library offers wood working workshops, and might be interested in leading the design and creation of grocery store produce stands – potentially uniquely designed for the spaces of different stores. Youth could build the stands, guided by the Tool Library, and the City could provide the marketing information to be painted or stuck on the stands.

Imagine a produce stand on wheels, containing a few varieties of fresh produce, proudly provided to the store owner by neighbourhood youth. This first step would contribute to community development by building relationships and developing the assets of corner stores without requiring big investments by corner store owners. It would be an easy first 'win'.



Produce stand inspiration – different stores will have different space constraints. Perhaps a few models could be developed. Stands on wheels could be brought out to the store front, making healthy food as visible as possible.

10. Explore the possibility of providing loans to store owners, or subsidizing the cost of acquiring cooling equipment for carrying more perishable fresh foods.

This piece may come later in the development of the project, when funding has been acquired. A major barrier to corner stores carrying healthy foods may be the cost of equipment. Generally, the cooling equipment that stores do have is provided by the company whose products are contained within it. For example, a Coke cooler is filled with Coca-Cola products. Similarly, Bryers Ice Cream provides coolers for its products to be carried in. For owners to purchase and maintain coolers on their own, some support may be needed. A corner store owner in Strathcona recently purchased a cooler for fresh produce, which cost $3000 plus $500 for installation. This can be a very significant investment for a small store owner.

11. Troubleshoot with owners as they begin to carry fresh produce

The success of the program in enabling corner store owners to carry more fresh produce will partly depend on the ability of the project manager to keep in frequent contact with store owners and help work through logistical issues that arise.

12. Animate stores and promote the changes

Engage the community again in animating the stores and showcasing the work that has been done. Having food demos and developing recipe cards for display can both build support for the stores and further entice eaters to buy healthy.

13. Explore further incentives for selling healthy foods

Further incentives to encourage corner store owners to carry healthy foods could be explored. While jurisdictions such as the City of Minneapolis have 'Healthy Food Ordinances' obliging food retailers to carry a particular range of healthy foods, others work only with positive incentives. Opportunities such as reducing the business license for stores participating in an 'Access Fresh' program could be explored.

How to Roll Out the Project

Build Partnerships

Build partnerships and community support early:

Corner store programs in other cities often incorporate an element of community engagement, to show corner store owners that the community is interested in supporting the store.

Community partnerships can also help alleviate some of the concerns of store owners. For example, if it is clear that produce is not going to sell out while it is still fresh and vendable, where can store owners send or bring the excess produce? How could stores collaborate with each other? Could remaining produce be purchased at a lower rate by organizations such as Quest or the Food Bank to be incorporated into meals or sold at lower prices quickly before their quality declines? Community organizations such as Neighbourhood Food Networks might also be interested in participating in 'food rescuing' or reshuffling of resources.

Community engagement can also help animate and attract attention to stores that have undergone conversions. Added benefits include the nutritional education that would occur through involving the community.

Explore sourcing from local urban farmers:

As described under program component 8, partnering with urban farmers could allow flexibility in order sizes and opportunities for delivery. Developing this partnership early on could also ensure that there is a 'local' focus to the program.

Partner with universities and health officials for monitoring & evaluation:

The Healthy Corner Store movement in general is in need of detailed evaluation. Monitoring and evaluation can also of course increase the likelihood of success of the project in Vancouver.

Build Deep Understanding of the Context

- Map out the sourcing landscape & get to know the corner store retail environment. Meet with wholesalers to obtain price lists. Connect with local farmers to explore procurement.
- Bring a cultural lens to the project: different ethnicities may be overrepresented amongst the residents or amongst the corner store owners. How can we consider cultural appropriateness when thinking about healthy foods? How can we ensure that healthy foods are accessible to all?

Find the Resources

- Ensure there are staff resources: This project may be staff-intensive, especially when it comes to the stage of working with corner store owners to troubleshoot issues that arise. Ensuring that there are staff resources may entail building a project manager salary into the budget.
- Develop a budget: Develop a budget for the range of potential supports (see next page). Consider also the costs that would be involved with providing subsidies or loans for equipment to increase the capacity of store owners to carry fresh foods.
- Meet with potential funders: Connect with potential funders such as VanCity, who might be interested in supporting an initiative that intervenes in the market to create more access to healthy food (sell the idea as something that will be sustainable as it is based on simply altering the market - building the capacity of local corner store owners to carry healthy food), or the Vancouver Foundation. Consider applying to the City's Innovation fund for a staff person to be the project manager.

A Healthy Corner Stores program would contribute to a number of positive outcomes and would notably cross a number of priority areas for potential funders:

Theme	Example Funder Interested in Theme
Decreasing Health Inequities	Vancouver Coastal Health - SMART Fund, Healthy Living Program City of Vancouver (Healthy City Strategy work, community planning processes, Food Strategy & Action Plan, Greenest City Action Plan, Innovation Fund) Heart & Stroke Foundation Public Health Agency of Canada
Local Food - increasing access to healthy local food	Vancouver Foundation; Bullit Foundation Mountain Equipment Co-op; TD Environmental Funds
Local Food - creating new markets by building the capacity of store owners	VanCity Credit Union Vancouver Economic Commission
Food Access - for vulnerable groups	Federal New Horizons for Seniors
Community Development	Central City Foundation, Hastings Legacy Fund, Social Responsibility Fund (Edgewater Casino) Vancouver Foundation Neighbourhood Small Grants The Cooperators Corporate sponsorship from food sector

Preliminary Budget for Program Components:

Component	Description	Budget Items	Approximate Cost Range
Project Management	The city may decide to hire a project manager	Project manager salary/contract	\$30,000-\$50,000/yr
Healthy Corner Stores Jam	Launch event to bring together stakeholders, design community (50-75 people)	Vancouver Design Nerds facilitation, venue, food, insurance, clean-up	\$2000-\$5000
Social Marketing	Decals for produce stands, fridges, doors		\$50-\$300
Procurement & Merchandizing Workshops	Bringing in an expert to work with store owners to overcome barriers to procuring healthy foods	Merchandizing & procurement expert, venue, food	\$2000-\$5000
Produce Stands	These could be developed in partnership with the Vancouver Tool Library or schools.	Facilitators	\$300-\$1000
		Wood, paint/stain	\$100-\$500/stand x 10 pilot stores = \$1000-\$5000
Store retrofitting/ Conversion	Subsidies or loans for cooling equipment	50% subsidy or loan	50% of \$3000-\$5000 x 10 = \$150,000-\$250,000 (to be financed through a funder
Animating Stores & Promoting Healthy Choices	Engage community in running food demos, samples	Signs	\$100-\$500
		Ingredients for food demos	\$50/event x 2 events per 10 stores = \$1000

Part 5:
Food Retail Environment and Healthy Corner Store Program Potential in Grandview-Woodland

Baseline Assessment of Food Retail in Grandview-Woodland

The Grandview-Woodland community extends east to west from Clark Drive to Nanaimo and north to south from the water to Broadway. Complete with an active Neighbourhood Food Network, it tends to be a hotbeds of food activism within the city. The neighbourhood is currently engaged in an extensive community planning process. In conjunction with that process, there may be an opportunity to develop a healthy corner store program of some kind in the Grandview-Woodland neighbourhood.

In July 2012 a baseline assessment of the food retail environment in the neighbourhood was begun by the Grandview-Woodland Community Planner and the Greenest City Scholar with the Food Policy Team. The following steps were taken:

- Up-to-date **business license information** for food retail establishments was pulled for the neighbourhood.
- We **biked** through every street in Grandview-Woodlands, as well as streets within a 400 meter buffer of the neighbourhood, **stopping at every food retailer** and noting the observed category of the store (corner store, produce store, grocery store, bakery or butcher, or other), the extent of the fresh produce available, the presence or absence of bread, milk, and eggs, and the existence of cooler space. This information was compiled in an Excel spreadsheet for analysis, and mapped using MapInfo and Illustrator.

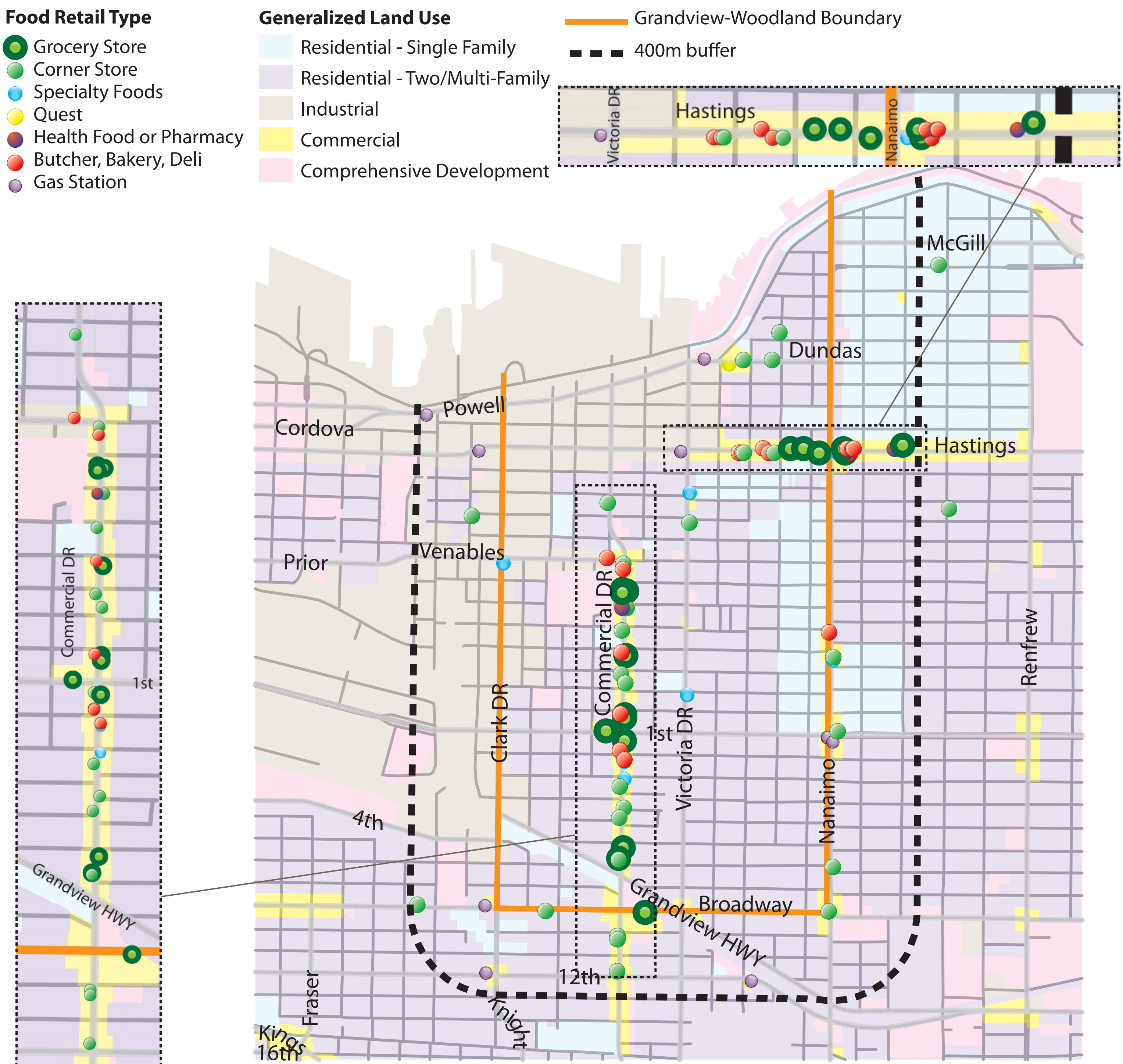
There were some notable differences between the business license information and the observed retail:

- The business license information showed 23 convenience stores, eight produce stores, and one full service grocery store, as well as 27 other food retailers.
- 10 of the stores included in the business license data were not seen in the streets. An additional 12 were not included as they were not observed to be food retailers (some were wholesalers, some dollar stores, etc.). In 12 cases the observed type of food retail store did not match the business license category (in some cases convenience stores appeared to be closer to full-scale grocery stores, and in other cases produce stores seemed closer to corner stores).

The biking exercise uncovered the following findings:

- The inventory of stores collected through the biking process showed **29 corner stores, 7 produce stores, 10 grocery stores** (many of which were listed as produce stores but also included delis and a full range of groceries), 8 gas station convenience stores, 15 bakeries, butchers and cheese shops, 9 specialty food shops, one community food retailer (Quest), two health food stores selling more than just supplements, and one pharmacy with food. These are shown on the map on the following page.
- 3 of the convenience stores carried a variety of fresh produce. 15 carried limited amounts – often one or two baskets of fruit, onions, garlic, ginger or potatoes. A further 9 carried no produce at all.

Grandview-Woodland Food Retail Environment



Discussion:

Grandview-Woodland clearly contains two prominent food corridors. Commercial Drive as well as Hastings Street offer a range of produce and small grocery stores, convenience stores, specialty food stores, and bakeries and butcher shops.

Outside of those two corridors, there are fewer food retailers. There are pockets of higher density apartments in Grandview-Woodlands, reflected in the multi-family residential zoning. In areas of industrial land use, there are workers present who might benefit from additional food retail in those areas.

Survey of Store Owners and Managers

A second part of the baseline assessment was to engage corner store owners and workers in conversations about the challenges and opportunities around carrying more healthy foods. This was done informally throughout the mapping exercise, and a survey was conducted in person with six corner store owners and managers. More owners were approached but several did not have the time to complete the survey, and with others there was a language barrier. This last issue is something to note when designing further engagement with corner stores. Themes that emerged from the survey include the following:

- **Five of six respondents carried only limited amounts of fresh produce** (one to two baskets of fruit). All stores carried bread, canned goods, milk and eggs.
- Reasons for not carrying more produce:
  - **Spoilage** / short shelf life of produce, combined with a lack of demand
  - Stores selling produce nearby
  - Lack of **space**
  - **Price**: one person explained that because they didn't carry large amounts, they simply bought produce from other food retailers. Adding a mark-up to create a profit made produce more expensive than at the competition's.
  - Extra staff or **staff time** required to carry produce: respondents described selling produce as more labour intensive than selling packaged processed foods.
- Potential program components (store owners or managers were asked whether they would be interested in seven different potential program components):
  - The most popular support was being given a **small produce stand from the city**, with advertisement messages around making healthy food choices.
  - One of the next most popular supports was attending a **meeting with other store owners** and food sector experts to discuss the potential for carrying more healthy foods. Two notably mentioned that they already have these sorts of meetings through other organizations. Equally popular was the idea of **partnering with urban farmers** to have local produce supplied to corner stores. Store owners seemed to recognize the new customers that might be generated by bringing in local produce in particular.
  - The next group was a three-way tie between working with a **new distributor targeted to corner stores**, attending **workshops** on food procurement and merchandizing, and obtaining **subsidies or loans on cooling equipment** (though some already owned their coolers).
  - Least popular was the idea of attending workshops on **business planning**.

- An additional support store owners identified was the desire to have the city waive the fees for displaying produce on the sidewalk, especially because corner stores have space constraints.
- When asked whether they would consider participating in a healthy corner store program, two said no, two said yes, and two responded with 'maybe'. Should a healthy corner store program go forward, it would need to be very targeted to the needs of corner store owners, recognizing their time and resource constraints, and providing some real opportunities for them.
- Notably, five of six respondents rented their place rather than owning it, which might impact their interest in investing in equipment for carrying produce, although some of the renting store owners did own their cooling equipment.
- Four of six respondents identified cigarette sales as their main business, sometimes in combination with junk food or pop. One identified groceries as their main business.

Recommendations:

- Set up a networking and brainstorming gathering with corner store owners and other food sector experts, to initiate a dialogue on increasing the amount of local healthy foods in stores, and to further understand preferences for program components. Also contact the Independent Grocer Association to engage that organization in a dialogue.
- Move forward with developing a program, considering the feedback at the brainstorming event and possibly focusing initially on providing small produce stands to corner store owners (working with a small number of stores to begin with) and potentially supporting owners to stock these through working with urban farmers. To engage the community from the beginning, stands could be built by local youth in partnership with schools or an organization such as the Vancouver Tool Library.
- Explore the possibility of removing the fee for displaying produce on the sidewalk in front of storefronts. This would free up space for corner stores and ensure that fruits and vegetables have a prominent spot.

One store owner pointed out that when people purchase produce, we want choice. For milk and eggs we are willing to purchase whatever the store has in stock, but for produce, we like to choose from amongst a selection. For that reason, carrying produce in the amount that would be necessary for people to come do their grocery shopping would be space-prohibitive. Carrying enough produce for people to have the option of picking up one or two pieces of fruit as a snack requires less space.

Areas for Further Research:

- Develop the mapping further, adding buffers to the stores with produce, and taking into consideration the topography of the terrain in the neighbourhood. There are some notably hilly areas, where a 400 meter buffer might create an unrealistically large walkshed.
- Consider conducting an inventory of the unused storefronts in residential areas, and explore the potential for community food retail locations – either private food retail stores or potentially food co-operatives or urban farm produce retail locations.

Appendices

Appendix 1: NYC Green Cart FAQ Sheets
Appendix 2: Conducting Store Baseline Assessments

Appendix 1: NYC Green Cart FAQ Sheets

NYC Green Cart

What is a Green Cart?

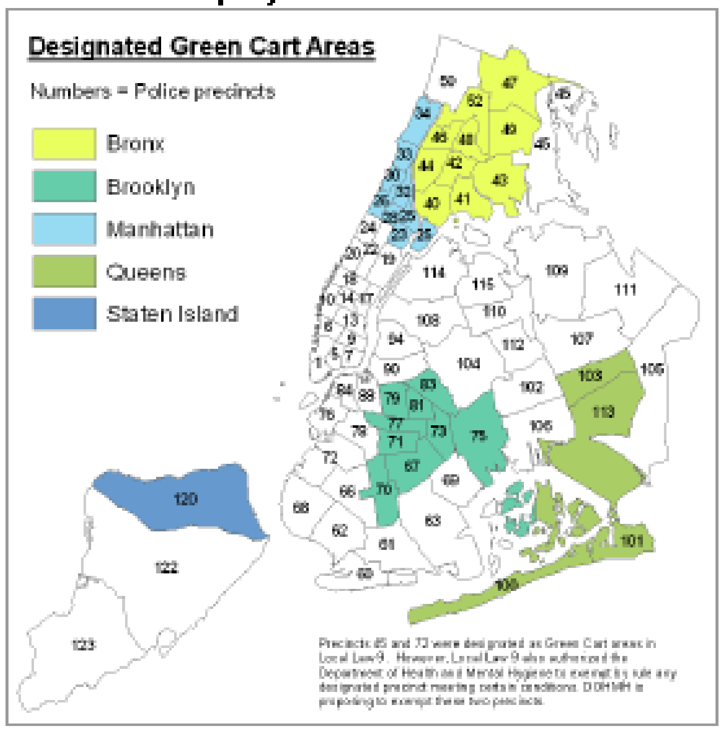
A Green Cart is a mobile food cart that offers fresh produce in certain NYC areas. Green Carts can only sell fresh fruits and vegetables and can only operate in designated areas. To operate a Green Cart you need a valid mobile food vending license and a Green Cart permit.

1. What kinds of produce can a Green Cart sell?

A Green Cart can only sell raw fruits and vegetables such as whole carrots, bananas, apples and berries. Frozen or processed produce is not allowed. For food safety reasons, Green Cart operators cannot sell cut, sliced, peeled or processed fruits or vegetables. Green Cart vendors can receive free help with buying and selling fruits and vegetables. To receive free help, please call the Karp Resources Green Cart hotline at (646) 843-1433.

2. Where can a Green Cart operate?

Each Green Cart permit allows a cart to operate in one NYC borough ONLY. Within each borough, Green Carts can operate only in certain designated areas. (*See the map.*)



3. How many Green Cart permits are available?

New York City has made available 1000 Green Cart permits: 350 for Brooklyn, 350 for the Bronx, 150 for Manhattan, 100 for Queens, and 50 for Staten Island.

4. What do I need to operate a Green Cart?

You need BOTH a license and a permit to operate a Green Cart. The license is for the *person* and the permit is for the *cart*. The license is the same license you need to operate any mobile food cart. If you do not have a license, you need to get one before you can apply for a permit.

5. How can I get a mobile food vending license?

- Call 311 and ask for "Mobile Food Vendor License Application".
- You must first attend a 2-day Food Protection Course for Mobile Vendors at the Health Department. You must register for the course in person at the Citywide Licensing Center at 42 Broadway, 5th floor, in Manhattan. The fee for this course is $53.00.
- Obtain a Certificate of Authority to Collect Sales Tax from the New York State Department of Taxation and Finance.
- After you complete the course and obtain your tax certificate, apply for a license in person at the Licensing Center.

How Can I Apply for a Green Cart Permit?

Once you have a license, the next step is to apply to be on the Green Cart permit waiting lists. All individuals who have a valid mobile food vending license are invited to apply to be on the waiting lists (*see Question 5 if you do not have a license*). If you have a valid license and are already on a mobile food vending waiting list you can still apply and will get priority (*see Question 9 for details*).

6. How can I get an application to be on the Green Cart waiting lists?

There are three ways to get a Green Cart Waiting List Application Form:

- Go to the Citywide Licensing Center (42 Broadway, 5th floor, in Manhattan)
- Call 311 and ask for "Green Cart Waiting List Application".
- Visit nyc.gov/greencarts and go to "Information About How to Apply".

7. What is the deadline to mail the waiting list application form?
Your application must be postmarked no later than the deadline listed on the Green Cart application form. You can only apply by mail.

8. What happens after I mail my waiting list application form?
The Health Department will establish a waiting list of applicants for each borough based on priority groups (see *Question 9*) and a lottery system. The Health Department will mail you a postcard with your waiting list number(s) and will send you a permit application when you are selected from one of the borough waiting lists.

9. How likely am I to get a Green Cart permit?
It depends on how many people apply. Priority for a waiting list position is based on a point system. More points are awarded to applicants who are already on other Health Department mobile food permit waiting lists, disabled U.S. veterans, disabled persons, and non-disabled United States Veterans. The applications within each priority group are randomly assigned a number on the waiting list. If you are unable to show proof of your priority group when you are notified to apply for the permit, your waiting list application will be rejected for ALL the boroughs you checked and you will have to reapply.

10. If I apply for the Green Cart waiting lists, will you remove my name from other mobile food vending permit waiting lists?
No. Green Cart permit waiting lists are separate. Submitting an application to be on a Green Cart permit waiting list will not affect your status or position on any other mobile food vending permit waiting list.

11. I see that some boroughs have more Green Cart permits than others. Will my chances be better if I choose more than one borough?
Your chance of being selected to apply for a permit depends on how many applicants there are, and what your priority group is (see *Question 9*). List all boroughs where you are willing to operate a Green Cart. If you are only willing to operate in one borough, you should list just one.

12. If I already have a mobile food vending permit, can I get a Green Cart permit too?
You can only have one permit at a time. If you apply and are selected for a Green Cart permit and you accept the Green Cart permit, you will have to forfeit your other mobile food vending permit.

What are the Costs for a Green Cart?

13. How much does it cost to apply?

- Initial Costs: In order to apply for a Green Cart permit, you need a valid mobile food vending *license*. If you do not already have a license, you need to pay $53 for the Food Protection Course for Mobile Vendors and $50 for the license, which is valid for two years. If you are offered a *permit*, the permit costs $75 and is valid for 2 years.
- Renewal Costs: It costs $50 to renew your *license* for each 2-year period, plus a $10 fee for tax clearance. It costs $50 to renew your *permit* for each 2-year period.
- All fees must be paid by check or money order at the Citywide Licensing Center. Fees for the license and permit are waived for a United States Veteran with a New York State Peddler's Certificate or his/her surviving spouse or domestic partner with this certificate.

14. What about the cart itself?
You must buy your own cart and produce. You can find an approved list of cart manufacturers at nyc.gov/greencarts under "Resources for Green Cart Vendors". The Health Department must inspect and approve your cart before you operate it. When your cart passes the inspection, the Health Department will give you a Green Cart umbrella.

15. Is help available for start-up costs?
Yes! The City has partnered with ACCION USA, a non-profit organization that provides low-interest loans for Green Cart vendors. Through ACCION, you may qualify for a loan to cover start-up equipment and inventory costs. To apply or learn more, please call (646) 833-4523 or (646) 833-4542 or visit www.accionusa.org/greencarts.

For more information, call 311 and ask for "Green Carts" or go to nyc.gov/greencarts

Other languages available: Arabic (عربي), Bengali (□□□□□), Chinese (中文), Spanish (Español), and Urdu (اردو)

Healthier Food Retail:
Beginning the Assessment Process in Your State or Community

This document was developed by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention's (CDC's) Division of Nutrition, Physical Activity, and Obesity (DNPAO). It provides public health practitioners with an overview of how to develop an assessment of their state's or community's food retail environment.

Introduction

Residents with better access to supermarkets and limited access to convenience stores may have lower levels or reduced risk of obesity,[1-3] as well as healthier diets, including higher intakes of fruits and vegetables.[4-6] Healthier foods are typically sold at supermarkets and a variety of other retail venues within a community, including, farmers' markets and specialty food stores (e.g., fruit and vegetable markets). However, there are many neighborhoods and communities without access to supermarkets,[7] with this being more likely for residents of rural, minority, and lower-income neighborhoods.[1] For residents in these areas, convenience stores and other small grocery or "corner" stores may be more common than supermarkets.[8] These stores generally stock little or no produce,[8] and what healthy food is available may have higher costs.[9,10] This may result in limited access to healthier foods, which has been associated with poor dietary quality.[11]

As a public health practitioner, you may want to implement policies or programs to improve healthier food retail in your state or community. First, it is necessary to assess the retail environment to understand the current landscape and the disparities in geographic accessibility to healthier foods. Assessments can also provide data on the quantity, pricing, and quality of healthier food within existing retail establishments. Assessment is part of a comprehensive strategy and can be tailored to address the specific questions you need answered. Once a state or community has these data, strategies can be designed that target underserved areas, addressing issues that are the largest barriers to retail access.

Data Sources for Food Retail

A variety of data sources exist that can help you understand your state or community's food retail environment. Both public and commercial data sets are available and data may be combined from multiple sources. Data sets vary by types of stores (e.g., supermarkets, corner stores, or farmers' markets) and what they can be used to measure (e.g., proximity to grocery stores or number of farmers' markets). Data sets also vary by level of data (e.g., county or sub-county units).

- County-level data: Many publicly accessible data are available at the county-level and may help states identify areas of potential need; however, counties are relatively large and diverse geographic areas that may hide community level differences.
- ZIP-code-level data: ZIP code data are sometimes publicly available. Although ZIP codes are designed for mail delivery purposes, they may be helpful for both states and communities to get a broad overview of their retail food landscape. However they are typically larger than what is traditionally considered a neighborhood.
- Block-, block group-, and tract-level data: These data have been used as proxies for neighborhoods and are designed to be homogenous. Data at this level provide fairly local level information about what retail venues may be easily accessible. The level of census data useful to you may be influenced by a variety of factors, including population density of the assessment area
- Address (Geocoded) data: These data provide a specific location for a retail store, allowing it to be placed on a map. The location may be identified by address or geographic coordinates. It is the most detailed level of data that you can use, and may need to be purchased from commercial companies.

There are some important considerations for the level of the data.

- Size of geographic unit: The larger the geographic unit, the more the data may mask differences within that unit, making it difficult to determine where the underserved populations are.
- Boundaries of geographic unit: With the exception of address or geocoded data, the boundaries of the geographic unit don't always correspond to shopping patterns. Creating buffer zones around geographic units may help approximate a more accurate shopping area. With specific locations for stores, you can create your own boundaries.
- Use for state or community assessments: If you are doing a state-level assessment, you may want to first look at county-level or other large geographic unit data. You can then map some regions or cities within the state in more detail as needed. The smaller geographic units, while desirable at a state level, may be more feasible for community or regional assessments.

Availability and Access

Availability most often refers to the physical location or proximity of food retail outlets. Sometimes the term is also used to describe the presence of healthier foods within stores. Access is a broader, more general concept that includes availability as well as the cost and quality of foods. However, you will see the words availability and access frequently used interchangeably.

Remember, when data sets show you the availability of stores or where they exist, it does not necessarily reflect whether healthier foods are also present (available), affordable, and of good quality at the identified locations. Assumptions are often made about access to healthier food based on knowledge and surveys of different types of stores. Practitioners or researchers may use assessment tools such as direct observation of various types of retail venues or in-store inventory audits in order to more fully understand healthier food retail access in a state or community. More information on these tools is provided later in this document.

Public Data Sets

Public use data sets may be used by anyone and are available free of charge. Below are a few examples of public data sets that can be used to assess general food retail.

- » **Name: United States Department of Agriculture Food Atlas**. **Web site:** http://www.ers.usda.gov/foodatlas/. **Level of data:** County-level. **Type of retail included:** Supermarkets or large grocery stores; supercenters or club stores; convenience stores; farmers' markets. **Description:** The Atlas provides food environment indicators to examine factors related to food choices and diet quality. It also provides an overview of a community's ability to access healthy food. USDA Food Atlas has 168 indicators that are related to the food environment, including indicators on health and well-being, and community characteristics. Regarding retail, the Food Atlas provides indicators in the areas of access and proximity to grocery stores, availability of food stores, and local foods.
- » **Name: County Health Rankings**. **Web site:** http://www.countyhealthrankings.org/. **Level of data:** County-level. **Type of retail included:** Healthy food outlets, defined as all grocery stores as well as produce stands or farmers' markets. **Description:** This database ranks each county within the 50 states according to its health outcomes and the multiple health factors that determine a county's health. The county health rankings have an indicator under the "built environment" section called access to healthy food.
- » **Name: Policy Map, from The Reinvestment Fund**. **Web site:** http://www.policymap.com/. **Level of data:** Block group-level data. **Type of retail included:** Supermarkets. **Description:** Policy Map offers on-line mapping capabilities based on more than 10,000 indicators related to demographics, real estate, city crime rates, health, schools, housing affordability, employment, energy, and public investments. They have data available from a supermarket study on food access; a subset of this data is available for free. A subscription is required for detailed information.
- » **Name: United States Census Bureau's County and ZIP Code Business Patterns data**. **Web site:** http://www.census.gov/econ/cbp/index.html. **Level of data:** ZIP code-level, County-level, and Metropolitan and Micropolitan Statistical Areas. **Type of retail included:** Various business establishments, as defined by the North American Industry Classification System. **Description:** The US Census Business Patterns data provides the number of establishments, number of employees, and payroll data by industry, according to the 2007 North American Industry Classification System. These data can be used to track which ZIP codes, metropolitan areas, and counties have retailers located within their boundaries.
- » **Name: Agriculture Marketing Service (AMS), United States Department of Agriculture**. **Web site:** http://apps.ams.usda.gov/FarmersMarkets/. **Level of data:** Geocoded data available. **Type of retail included:** Farmers' markets. **Description:** This is based on AMS's most current listing of farmers' markets throughout the United States. A national map and a spreadsheet of the geographic coordinates of farmers' market locations in the United States are provided.

Commercial Data Sets

Commercial data directories can be purchased to identify the address and geographic coordinates of various types of retail stores, including food stores. References to some commonly-used commercial datasets, including those below, are found in published literature.[7,12,13]

- Dun & Bradstreet, Inc.
- InfoUSA, Inc.
- National Establishment Time Series
- TD Linx

The provision of information about commercial data sources is for informational purposes only. It does not imply that CDC endorses any particular product over another or that CDC guarantees the quality of these products.

Considerations When Using Food Retail Data Sets

Public and commercial data sets are important for understanding the food retail environment. However, they have several limitations that should be kept in mind.

- Commercial datasets may be prohibitively expensive depending on the size of the area being studied.
- Commercial datasets are proprietary; therefore, companies provide only general information on how the data were collected and verified.
- Public and commercial datasets can have a time lag from when the data were collected and when you obtain or use the data.
- Public and commercial datasets can have data validity concerns, including issues with accurate geocoding and overcounting and undercounting of what stores actually exist.[14,15] Misclassification of store types also can occur.

Combining several of the datasets from different companies or public data sources improves accuracy[14] but can be labor intensive and costly. For these reasons, it may be more feasible to collaborate with a partner who has purchased these data already. While they will not be able to give you the data, they may be able to work with you on projects or analyze the data sets for you.

Defining Underserved

A food desert has been defined as an "area in the United States with limited access to affordable and nutritious food, particularly such an area composed of predominantly lower income neighborhoods and communities."[17] When using data for an assessment, you will need to define the specific parameters to designate an area as underserved or low-access. Examples can be found in the 2009 USDA Congressional Report on food deserts[7]; at http://www.policymap.com in their data from The Reinvestment Fund's Supermarket Study of Low Access Areas; or on the USDA Food Deserts Web site with the definition developed by USDA, Department of Treasury and Department of Health and Human Services at http://apps.ams.usda.gov/fooddeserts/foodDeserts.aspx. Generally, the definition of underserved can vary significantly depending on the context of the area being assessed. Common definitions may use one or more of the following variables:

- Distance to the nearest supermarket or grocery store.
  - » Underserved often defined as greater than one mile urban or greater than ten miles rural.
- Low-income or poverty status.
- Household vehicle ownership.
- Race/ethnicity.

Depending on your state or community's context, you will need to decide with your stakeholders the best variables to use for defining your underserved or low-access communities.

Direct Observation of Store Locations

To address data validity concerns, you may want to capture the most accurate and up-to-date view of locations of stores and include other venues not typically included in public or commercial data such as mobile vending. Validated instruments and methods have been developed for systematic direct observation or on-site verification of what stores actually exist.[14,15]

Other Sources for Data

Other sources you may want to consider are

- State or local departments of health or agriculture: States and communities may collect food store data to comply with food safety regulations or inform decisions in their locales. Be sure to check with your state or local departments of health or agriculture to see if they have data sets available.

- Offices for Women, Infants and Children (WIC) Program and Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP): Data on these stores can provide an indication of where low-income residents have retail access. With recent changes to the WIC minimum stocking requirements, WIC-approved stores are now required to carry a certain amount of healthier foods.[16] Your state's offices for WIC and SNAP benefits may have listings of all WIC- and SNAP-approved stores. If those are not available, the federal SNAP Web site has a retail locator program that maps out the closest SNAP-approved stores to a given address (http://www.fns.usda.gov/snap/), and the USDA Food Atlas (mentioned above) includes measures of WIC and SNAP stores available at the county level.
- USDA Food Desert Web site: The USDA has a Web site discussing food deserts and their identification. Included on this page is a list of census tracts which are considered a food desert per the definition they provide. Available at http://apps.ams.usda.gov/fooddeserts/foodDeserts.aspx.
- National Collaborative on Childhood Obesity Research (NCCOR) Catalog of Surveillance Systems: A web tool that provides a catalog of existing surveillance systems that contain data relevant to childhood obesity research, including local, state, and national systems. Includes information on some of the commercial datasets listed above, as well as other systems that might help your assessment. Available at http://www.nccor.org/.

Geographic Information System (GIS) Mapping

When starting your assessment, mapping retail availability is often the first step. GIS mapping is a tool to use to accomplish this. GIS is a system that can manage, analyze, and represent data that are linked to location (geocoded data). For assessment of healthier food retail, GIS can be used to map the locations of a variety of food retail options. The resulting GIS maps can be used either as a first step to help states or communities identify, visualize, and track potentially underserved areas, a tool to optimize placement of new resources to support healthy eating, or a tool to inform decision makers where intervention is necessary.

Working with Partners

To create GIS maps, many state and local public health practitioners will need to work with partners with mapping expertise. Let your mapping expert know the purpose of your assessment so that they can better compile the data you need. They also may have access to the geocoded data sets necessary for mapping. Here are some places to look for GIS expertise:

- City or county planning offices
- Universities, particularly the urban planning or agriculture departments
- The state departments of health or agriculture

If you are unable to find partners in your state or region, you can contact your CDC project officer for help in identifying an appropriate person to assist you.

Software

There are many types of software available that help geocode data, develop and create maps, or both. ESRI's ArcGIS is one of the most common softwares and has both geocoding and mapping capabilities. Other common software are EpiInfo, SAS, Instant Atlas, or MapInfo.

Map Features

When developing your data analysis plan and maps, there are a few considerations you need to think through or your GIS partner will walk you through.

- Geographic Boundaries: You will need to determine what geographic areas are important for your assessment and are to be displayed on your map. Important considerations are what level of detail is scientifically based and what is important for your stakeholders to see. Displaying data at the census block group- or tract-level can potentially show the most differences in access to retail, and can potentially provide the most scientifically-based information from which to take action. Or, you may want your map to display differences in access by ZIP codes or congressional districts, depending on what will resonate the most with your stakeholders. Your project may also benefit by a combination; such as, showing variations in access across the whole state by county, and then mapping some regions or cities within the state in more detail.

- Geographic Features: You will also need to consider what geographic features (i.e., lakes, parks, interstates, mountain ranges) you would like on the maps. GIS offers many features that can be added in to your maps to best represent your state or region. You should determine the level of detail you need on your map to make your assessment and to help your stakeholders easily identify geographic locations.

Assessments of In-store Availability, Cost, and Quality

To better understand whether retail stores contribute good quality healthier foods at affordable prices to geographical areas, a more in-depth assessment can be conducted. The following assessments and tools are examples of ways to look at in-store availability, cost, and quality of healthier foods in your area. These are most feasible at the community-level.

- Market basket audits: These audits measure the food available within a store, and can also evaluate cost and quality of the food. Two examples are:
  - » *Nutrition Environment Measures Survey for Stores*: The measures in this survey include type and location of food outlets, availability of healthier and less-healthy options, and pricing. Available at http://www.med.upenn.edu/nems/.
  - » *USDA Economic Research Service Food Store Survey Instrument*: This instrument is part of the Community Food Security Assessment Toolkit. It assesses the availability and affordability of food in retail outlets. Available at http://www.ers.usda.gov/Publications/EFAN02013/.
- Linear shelf space: This method measures the actual space used on shelves for various types of food in stores.[5]
- Store owner survey or interview: In addition to objective assessments of store availability of healthier foods, other helpful information can be obtained directly from store owners. Store owners can be asked about the products they carry, their customers, and other questions. If they are willing, reviewing the store's supply inventories, such as looking at purchasing records, can provide details on a store's supply of healthier foods.
  - » A sample store owner interview guide can be found at the Healthy Eating Research Corner Store Working Group Web site, from the Creating Healthy Corner Stores Program in Washington, D.C. Available at http://healthycornerstores.org/resources/surveys/.

Other resources that can provide ideas for measuring various aspects of food retail access can be found in a review article[18] and these other resources.

- NCCOR Measures Registry. Available at http://www.nccor.org.
- Measures of the Food Environment provided by the National Cancer Institute (NCI). Available at https://riskfactor.cancer.gov/mfe/.
- Healthy Corner Stores Network Resources page. Available at http://healthycornerstores.org/resources/tools-resources/.

Comprehensive Food Environment Assessments

Assessing the food retail environment may provide one piece of a more comprehensive community food environment assessment. A more comprehensive study could include factors such as food production and distribution systems, transportation systems, food security, consumer perceptions, and state and local policies. Two resources that provide more detailed information on assessing the retail environment as well as many other food environment factors are:

- The *USDA Community Food Security Assessment Toolkit*: This report provides a toolkit of standardized measurement tools for assessing various aspects of community food security. Available at http://www.ers.usda.gov/Publications/EFAN02013/.
- *What's Cooking in Your Food System? A Guide to Community Food Assessment*: This guide is aimed at informing and supporting the development of Community Food Assessments as a tool for increasing community food security and creating positive change. Available at http://foodsecurity.org/pub/whats_cooking.pdf.

Methodological Considerations

As you embark on your assessment, keep in mind that your work could add to the growing knowledge base in this area. Also, remember that measurement that aims to be reliable and valid can provide stronger data and lead to more appropriate decision making. Use sound methods for testing and document your methodology well. Use reliable and valid tools when available, or include reliability and validity testing as part of any tools that you develop specific for your state or community. Information on reliability and validity testing of instruments is available on both the NCCOR Measures Registry and NCI Measures of the Food Environment web pages mentioned above.

State and Community Examples

Several states and communities have undertaken assessments of their food retail environment and reported their findings. Some examples with publicly available documents are provided below.

The assessments in Illinois, Louisiana, and New York City were facilitated by The Food Trust at http://www.thefoodtrust.org/. The Food Trust is a nonprofit organization that developed a comprehensive approach to increasing availability of healthier food in Pennsylvania, a framework they have implemented in other states.[19]

- Illinois – Map of underserved supermarket areas throughout Illinois as well as their state assessment report are available.
  - » Map: Available at http://www.thefoodtrust.org/php/programs/super.market.campaign.php#illinois.
  - » Report: *Stimulating Supermarket Development in Illinois: Healthier People, Healthier Communities, and a Healthier Economy*. Available at http://www.commerce.state.il.us/NR/rdonlyres/1C40652A-90FD-4606-823A-68B786463273/0/ilreport.pdf.
- Louisiana – A thorough report on the state's assessment of their food retail environment.
  - » Report: *Retail Study Group: Recommendations for a Louisiana Healthy Food Retail Financing Program*. Available at http://prc.tulane.edu/uploads/Report_Healthy_Food_Retail_Study_Group_final_27Feb2009.pdf.
- Washington – The report describes opportunities to improve access to healthy foods in Washington State, and includes maps of farmers' market and grocery store availability across the state.
  - » Report: *Opportunities for Increasing Access to Healthy Foods in Washington*. Available at http://depts.washington.edu/waaction/tools/featured_resources/access_report.html.
- New York City, New York: Findings from their city assessment are available in this report, which includes several maps of variables indicating greatest needs in terms of supermarket access.
  - » Report: *The Need for More Supermarkets in New York*. Available at http://www.thefoodtrust.org/php/programs/super.market.campaign.php#newyork.
- Baltimore, Maryland: The city of Baltimore has a Food Policy Task Force that issued a final report of recommendations that includes research on the food retail environment.
  - » Report: *Baltimore City Food Policy Task Force Final Report and Recommendations*. Available at http://cleanergreenerbaltimore.org/uploads/files/Baltimore%20City%20Food%20Policy%20Task%20Force%20Report.pdf.

Need assistance?

Contact your state's CDC project officer, who can facilitate requests for technical assistance or tailored guidance.

Need more information?

Visit the CDC DNPAO website to learn more information about the division and our funded state programs: http://www.cdc.gov/obesity/

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