



Agenda Item Summary

File #: 23-00612

Agenda Date: 11/14/2023

Agenda Item Name:

Approval of Work Scope for Fresh Food Pathways Program Management Services

Presenter:

Sean McLendon, Economic Development & Food System Manager, 352 548 3765
Diedre Houchen, PhD, Equity & Community Outreach Manager 352 384 3195

Description:

This agenda item requests approval to advertise an RFP for a manager of a Fresh Food Pathway's Program.

Recommended Action:

Approve work scope, authorize staff to advertise the RFP, and bring recommendations back to the Board for approval.

Prior Board Motions:

At the Board's December 6, 2022, meeting, the Board approved the Fresh Food Pathways pilot project plan and the budget amendment.

Fiscal Note:

This project will utilize the balance of the budget from ARP2021x008 Emergency Food Assistance (\$212,618.12) and \$750,000 from ARP2021x016 broken out in the following manner:

052.00.0064.564.64.00 - \$183,000
052.00.0064.564.52.00 - \$107,000
052.00.0064.564.34.00 - \$80,000
052.00.0064.564.12.00 - \$380,000
052.00.0064.564.82.93 - \$212,618.12

Strategic Guide:

Social and Economic Opportunity,

Background:

The services requested by the County under this solicitation are for the Fresh Food Pathways Program Manager Services to run a community-based Pilot FOOD HUB. This pilot project will be implemented from early 2024 through 2026. Approximately \$962,000 is allocated to the pilot FOOD HUB that will serve two to six COVID-impacted communities and multiple institutional food purchasers in Alachua County.

Project Timeline: The project will be implemented over two years starting in early 2024.

Project Budget: The total project budget is approximately \$962,000. At a minimum, proposals must allocate 80% of funds to Food Hub services and a maximum of 20% to Emergency Food Assistance programming.

Since the December 2022 Board direction, staff has continued to refine its Fresh Food Pathways and Emergency Food Assistance strategies. This refinement is based on community feedback with priority neighborhoods and food system non-profits that support them. Proposals will be evaluated and returned to the Board for consideration in early 2024.

The Fresh Food Pathways request for proposal aims to support the connection between two types of communities/populations:

- Rural and urban individuals and communities who have already developed creative, long-standing, and community-rooted solutions to systemic and institutionally imposed limited access to diverse fresh food choices. These communities have faced challenges such as housing segregation, educational segregation, healthcare inequities, mortgage and housing redlining, low-wage jobs, wage stagnation, lack of rights and protections, inequitable access to public resources and public political enfranchisement, in addition to more burdensome access to fresh, healthy, nutrient-rich, culturally appropriate foods in mainstream food retail.
- Locally owned and managed, smaller-scale food and farm businesses and entrepreneurs: Despite facing food system-based challenges, they have continued to adapt and produce food for their community. These businesses face challenges connected to inequitable market forces resulting from consolidation and industrialization of processing and distribution channels and inequitable and racially based policies related to the distribution of resources and opportunities.

Project Goals:

- Increase access to local, fresh, healthy, and affordable food in communities with limited economic means and access to infrastructure, systems, health, and food options.
- Support the local food economy by connecting consumers with local farmers.
- Address the root causes of inequities in the food system by prioritizing small-scale producers.

Project Strategies:

- Provide deep and meaningful engagement for priority communities.
- Implement mobile produce markets in areas with high need and interest.
- Offer a variety of culturally appropriate fresh fruits, vegetables, herbs, and other healthy foods at affordable prices.
- Source products from local and regional farmers within a 100-mile radius of Alachua County.
- Prioritize working with small-scale farmers.
- Assist farmers in the aggregation of marketable crops and meeting the overall market needs of the Fresh Food Pathways project and other institutional food purchasers.

Project Benefits:

- Increased access to healthy food for underserved communities.
- Support for the local food economy.
- Address of the root causes of inequities in the food system.