



VICE MAYOR
REX
RICHARDSON

Date: February 16th, 2021

NB-16

To: Honorable Mayor Robert Garcia and Members of the City Council

From: Vice Mayor Rex Richardson, Ninth District
Councilmember Mary Zendejas, First District
Councilmember Cindy Allen, Second District

Subject: Food Security Plan

RECOMMENDATION:

Direct the City Manager to work with the Health Department to establish a Food Security Plan for communities impacted by the closures of grocery stores and make recommendations for inclusion in the inclusive economic recovery plan.

Discussion

The COVID-19 pandemic has had a significant economic impact on Long Beach residents—particularly the City’s low-income communities—leaving residents struggling to pay for necessities such as rent, food, transportation, and health care. One of the most pronounced and direct effects of this crisis is a dramatic decline in food security, defined as the ability to access adequate nutrition to sustain a healthy and active life.

In June 2020, the Council requested that the City create a Citywide Basic Needs Security Initiative, known as “BAND Together Long Beach,” to enhance the coordination and delivery of food and housing security programs. Since then, the City has worked across multi-agency, public, private, and non-profit sector lines to deliver food and housing security resources and programs to residents in need through CARES Act funding. There has also been an unprecedented community response to meeting the basic needs of neighbors, including major food distributions, Senior food delivery programs, and food pantry expansions.

The City must now look for ways to support the ongoing need for food security while also continuing to respond to the devastating ripple effects of the intensifying COVID-19 pandemic. A report from the Northwestern Institute for Policy Research found that, nationwide, food insecurity has doubled overall, and tripled among households with children as a result of the economic crisis brought on by the outbreak, hitting as many as 23% of households in Spring 2020. ^[1]



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[1] "How Much Has Food Insecurity Risen? Evidence from the Census Household Pulse Survey." June. 2020. <https://www.ipr.northwestern.edu/documents/reports/ipr-rapid-research-reports-pulse-hh-data-10-june-2020.pdf>

These ripple effects have not gone unnoticed in the City. In February 2021, The Kroger Corporation announced that it will be closing two of its Long Beach grocery stores. This announcement comes at a time when the nation is already facing unprecedented levels of unemployment; in Long Beach, nearly 200 Kroger employees, including Long Beach residents, are facing layoffs or transfers due to the closures. [2]

Grocery store employees, as essential workers, have been putting their lives on the line to support their community. These closures will not only have debilitating economic impacts on employees, but on other local residents who depended on these stores for affordable groceries. The consequences are particularly significant for nearby residents who do not own cars and often walked to these stores to shop. [2]

To offset the sudden economic and health consequences of these grocery store closures, the City should prepare an equity-informed Food Security Recovery Plan. This plan should be put in place to prevent further escalation of food insecurity in disproportionately impacted areas.

[2] "'It was a shock': Grocery workers, communities brace for impacts of Kroger store closures" Feb. 2021. <https://bpost.com/news/it-was-a-shock-grocery-workers-communities-brace-for-impacts-of-kroger-store-closures>

Fiscal Impact

Due to time constraints no fiscal analysis was conducted.

Statement of Urgency

Due to the significant impact of recent closures on food security urgency is requested.

Suggested Action

Approve recommendation.



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City of Long Beach Memorandum
Working Together to Serve

REQUEST TO ADD AGENDA ITEM

Date: February 16, 2021
To: Monique De La Garza, City Clerk
From: Vice Mayor Rex Richardson, Ninth District
Subject: **Request to Add Agenda Item to Council Agenda of February 16, 2021**

Pursuant to Municipal Code Section 2.03.070 [B], the City Councilmembers signing below request that the attached agenda item (due in the City Clerk Department by Friday, 12:00 Noon) be placed on the City Council agenda via the supplemental agenda.

The agenda title/recommendation for this item reads as follows:

Direct the City Manager to work with the Health Department to establish a Food Security Plan for communities impacted by the closures of grocery stores and make recommendations for inclusion in the inclusive economic recovery plan.

Council District	Authorizing Councilmember	Signed by
9	Rex Richardson	
1	Mary Zendejas	
2	Cindy Allen	

cc: Office of the Mayor