Leveraging Public Assets to Increase Healthy Food Access in Montgomery County

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Assumptions

Four Ideas

Food & Agriculture White Paper

2015 Speakers Series

Farm to Table Strategy

Pilot a New Food Access Innovation(s)

Left: Residents gather with County Executive Ike Leggett, Sanford Slavin, and friends, for the inaugural spring planting of a new garden at Halpine Hamlet, a Montgomery Housing Partnership property in Rockville.

Photos: Montgomery County Office of the County Executive
Assumptions

Public assets are more than parks, roads, schools, etc. - they also include knowledge and information.

Good food is essential to good health.

Local/regional food systems planning necessary to build more resilient communities
## Assumptions

There are tremendous opportunities to use a food systems perspective to transform places.

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**Assumptions**

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Left: Image developed by Kimberly Hodgson. From: Funders’ Network for Smart Growth and Livable Communities [Investing In Healthy, Sustainable Places Through Urban Agriculture](http://www.montgomeryplanning.org/)
Food & Agriculture White Paper

Gather data
- Completed plans, studies, recent legislation, key presentations
- Lists of stakeholders (many!) and available data

Consider inventory of County government support for the local food system to illuminate existing investments

Above left: CSA pick-up at Rocklands Farm. Bottom left: Farmer expo at Farm Bureau Fall 2013 Farm to Table Dinner. Photos: Cristina Frey, Montgomery County resident and Food Council member
“The scope of Montgomery County’s farm productivity results in some interesting facts, County farms produce...

• Enough milk to provide residents 1/3 cup of milk daily;
• Enough beef for each resident to have 13 pounds per year;
• Enough grain for every resident to have 1-1/2 slices of bread per day;
• Enough vegetables to supply each resident with 13 pounds per year;
• Enough peaches and apples to supply each resident with 2 pounds per year.”

p. 21, Preservation of Agriculture & Rural Open Space Functional Master Plan. Approved & Adopted 1980
Note: Maps that follow are from the April 2013 Montgomery County Food Council meeting presentation.
Food & Agriculture White Paper

Analyze themes and key questions including:

• History, missing perspectives, outstanding but relevant recommendations

• How do local access challenges manifest themselves?

• What issues need to considered in a State or regional context?

Left: Learning, working, and having a meal at the Button Farm Living History Center in Germantown.
Photos: Button Living History Center
2015 Speaker Series: Food

Identify topics from white paper findings and feedback received

Include diverse perspectives and speakers

Above: Volunteers at work prepping and freezing fresh organic produce for Farm to Freezer in 2013. Photos: Cheryl Kollin, Full Plate Ventures
Farm to Table Strategy

Consider a strategic plan with:

- Discrete, measurable goals
- Clear strategies around public assets which also consider equity
- Recommendations for the roles that different stakeholders can play in implementation
- Provisions for relating to neighboring or regional plans

Above: Potential sources of inspiration for a farm to table strategy from Vermont and from Virginia.
Pilot a New Food Access Innovation(s)

Leverage a public asset to:

- Lure and/or develop a unique business or needed service at a strategic location

- Create a new form of community garden, a public orchard, etc.

- Demonstrate some other functional design intervention

The 2012 Takoma/Langley Crossroads Plan calls for redevelopment of Takoma Park Recreation Center pictured above. Potential site for an interim and/or permanent pilot of a new garden typology? Public orchard or edible landscaping?
Leveraging a Public Asset at a Strategic Location

Belo Horizonte, Brazil

- Profitable private markets on public land
- Offer healthy, fresh food at affordable prices
- Located throughout the city, including at four major transit nodes
How would you like to see Montgomery County build on its public assets to improve healthy food access for all, including those that may need it most?

Acknowledgements

Above: Edible landscaping in Dupont Circle in the planter strip and public ROW