



Let's Go Better: Urban Agriculture

October 26th, 2021



**NEIGHBORHOOD
DEVELOPMENT**



City of Boston
Food Access

Reminder

- Please keep your mics muted.
- We will be recording this meeting, so if you do not want your face to be recorded feel free to turn off the camera.
- If you have questions please use the chat.



Our agenda today

- Background information
- Overview of topics
- Discussion and shaping of recommendations
- Open comments



Food Access Plan to Recover - American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA) 2021-2024

The American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA) is an economic stimulus bill signed by President Joe Biden on March 11, 2021 to speed up the United States' recovery from the economic and health effects of the COVID-19 pandemic and the ongoing recession.

Our goal for today: Discuss and further shape actionable urban agriculture funding recommendations highlighted by farmers, growers, and CBOs to be presented to the Mayor's Office and the Equitable Recovery Taskforce.

Our Road map: Mayor's Food Access Agenda 2021

Our guiding principles:

Dignity, Agency, and Equity.

Our Philosophy: Transparency and inclusivity

Overall timeline:

- **Sep 13th:** CBO's Meeting
- **End of September:** Gather feedback from CBOs, plan agenda and outreach strategy for the community meetings in October.
- **Week October 18:** 2 community meetings
- **October 22nd:** Meeting with Farmers' Markets
- **October 28th:** Meeting with growers and farmers in Boston



Food Access Emergency & Recovery Investments Updates

Emergency Investment: ~\$27 million

- Youth Meal Sites (City): **\$300,000**
- Adults Meal Sites (CARES Act): **\$500,000**
- Emergency Feeding program: (CARES Act): **\$5 million**
- Food Access Local Supply (CARES Act): **1.3 million**
- Boston Resiliency Fund: **\$19.88 million**
- Miscellaneous: staff capacity, outreach, support, transportation (OFA) :**\$250,00**
- Farmers Market Coupons (CARES Act): Over \$650

American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA)

Recovery Investments: **\$2.5 million**

- \$2.2 million in grant funding to 39 local, non-profit organizations through the Food Sovereignty and Community Grants programs.
 - 95% POC/Other Minority Led
 - 57% Women Led
- \$300,000 will be used for:
 - Food resources ChatBot: Connect residents with safety net and emergency programs.
 - Food Donation platform: Connect with surplus food and reduce waste
 - Citywide outreach & education campaign



Urban Agriculture Conversation Timeline

- Summer 2021: Interviews with 9 stakeholders
 - The Trustees
 - The Food Project
 - Eastie Farm
 - NUBIA
 - UFI
 - City Sprouts
 - Gardens for Charlestown
 - Food Forest Coalition
 - Charlestown Sprouts
- September 30th: Meeting with 20+ CBOs
- October 28th; Meeting with Farmers and Growers



Additional Context

Resources that are currently available

- Land (usually paired with capital funding) through DND
- Capital funding-only grants through the DND and MDAR
- Capital funding coming soon through Mayor's Youth Council
- Technical assistance with navigating City land disposition

Framing of Discussion

- What are the equity considerations we should consider with distribution of resources?
- How can we make investments responsive, impactful and sustainable?



Capacity Building Topics

- Technical assistance: access to translational services, soil services, educational workshops, site design, fundraising
- Funding for labor for expansion projects or volunteers (ex. garden coordinators, volunteer coordinator)
- Equipment, tools, soil, compost
- Continue/expand OFA raised bed program
- Increased funds for new site development
- Resources for home and community gardeners such as seed kits, garden & cooking education, tools



Increase in avenues for sales/distribution

- Aggregate CSAs
- Expanded leveraging of HIP/SNAP - Farm shares
- Incentives for farmers to be part of local Farmers' Markets
- Distribution logistics support - corner stores, co-ops, food pantries, food waste
 - Could include cooperative buying and deliveries etc



Non-traditional growing sites

- Particular investments/connections in rooftop gardening
- Particular investments/connections shipping container farms/hydroponic farms
- School and/or community center gardens





THANK YOU

If have questions or would like to talk more about today's topics
Contact us at food@boston.gov



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