

Healthy Food Access

OBJECTIVE: We need healthy, nutritious, and local food located equitably throughout our community so that is easy to get to, and so that all residents have food security. Residents need access to affordable, fresh, and healthy food located either in or near their neighborhoods or in schools, particularly in Black and Hispanic/Latino communities. We need to preserve farmland to protect our future food needs.

BACKGROUND: Government regulations create barriers for groups that provide creative ideas or alternatives for sourcing local food, like community gardens, market stands, food banks, and community-supported agriculture. For instance, regulations for farmers' markets are much more flexible than those for flea markets or informal food stands. Farmers markets tend to attract higher-wealth residents, while, in contrast, flea markets or informal food stands typically serve Black and Hispanic/Latino residents. This results in disparate regulation of similar uses. In addition, Black and Hispanic/Latino residents in Durham are less likely to have access to affordable and healthy grocery stores in their neighborhoods, known as food apartheid. Even when healthy food options exist, they are often not easily or safely accessible because of lacking sidewalks and bus access. As demand increases for more housing and development, the pressure to convert farmland into other uses grows, leaving less capacity for Durham to grow its own local food.

We want creative, affordable, and secure food options like food trucks, market stands, neighborhood markets, and community gardens. We want flexible and equitable regulations that allow people to safely produce, share, and sell nourishing foods, including fresh fruits and vegetables. We want intentional transportation systems that connect people to food. We want investment in Black and Hispanic/Latino farmers and gardeners to sustain a thriving local food economy. We want innovative urban farming and protections for farmland to sustain future generations.

Quotes from Durham Residents

“Mainstream grocery chains charge higher prices in Black and Hispanic/Latino communities. Opportunities to own/operate their own grocery stores would lessen the impact of food insecurity in these communities.”

“You should consider how to make healthy food accessible to those who don't have transportation or use food delivery services.”

“utilizing black farmers; funding them”

“Equitable distribution stores (grocery) and not convenient stores”

“I have to get in my car to get mustard.”

“city sponsored programs showing people how to grow their own food and incentivize growing your own food”

“Food insecurity - 1000 people visit school pantry a year. food banks available isn't enough to provide for all the families that need food.”

“We need to support Black/POC non-corporate farmers & agriculture too. Companies like Smithfield and Dominion are destroying the quality of life in black rural communities, we need to lessen our reliance on these companies and support small local farmers of color”

“Incentivizing labor unions locally. To give workers more wages and money so then they could spend money on food.”