

MOTION

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

GOOD FOOD ZONE

One in three low-income residents in Los Angeles struggle to access healthy food in their neighborhood. Food access disparities impact Angelenos' health, life expectancy, academic performance and job productivity. These disparities are most prolific in communities of color, such as South Los Angeles-- where there are few grocery stores, high rates of obesity, and nutrition-related chronic disease and the life expectancy is 12 years less than that of West Los Angeles residents. More than any other social factor, poverty is associated with disparities in food access and related health inequities. Strategies for building healthy communities in Los Angeles require more economic opportunities for low-income Angelenos.

Close to 20% of Los Angeles County jobs are in the food sector-- including production, processing, manufacturing, distribution, retail and service. With few barriers to entry, business ownership in the food sector is accessible to a diverse array of Angelenos regardless of their ethnic background, education level, skill set, language of preference, or citizenship status. Investments in food-centered community economic development can be a critical way to combat the wealth gap and advance a Good Food economy which provides healthy food, jobs, and economic opportunities for historically impacted communities.

In 2015, the City of Los Angeles adopted its PLAN for a Healthy Los Angeles which recommends establishing Healthy Food Zones that prioritize financial incentives, land-use provisions and tax benefits to healthy food businesses locating in low-income areas and communities of color. The Mayor's 2019 Sustainable City pLAN Refresh includes recommendations to establish Good Food Zones in low-income communities throughout the City to support public and private investments in sustainable food entrepreneurs and businesses across the supply chain.

In 2018, census tracts in the City of Los Angeles, including portions of South LA, were certified by the U.S Department of Treasury as Qualified Opportunity Zones where private investments are encouraged through tax incentives. The City of Los Angeles also acquired two Federally Designated Promise Zones where priority consideration for federal investments are given to low-income communities such as South LA.

Given existing planning priorities to incentivize equitable, healthy and sustainable food development, as well as the City's recently expanded capacity to support public and private investments in historically impacted communities, it is appropriate to explore the feasibility of simultaneously advancing both goals through food-centered community economic development strategies.

I THEREFORE MOVE that the Chief Legislative Analyst, with assistance of the Economic and Workforce Development Department and any other department as necessary, be instructed to report to the Economic Development Committee on strategies for including food-centered community economic development initiatives in the existing and emerging economic development incentive programs, and assess the feasibility of piloting a Good Food Zone in South Los Angeles.

PRESENTED BY: 
CURREN D. PRICE, JR
Councilmember, 9th District

SECONDED BY: 



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