

Tuesday, September 1, 2020

The Honorable London N. Breed, Mayor of San Francisco,
The Honorable Norman Yee, President, Board of Supervisors
The Honorable Sandra Fewer, Supervisor
The Honorable Catherine Stefani, Supervisor
The Honorable Aaron Peskin, Supervisor
The Honorable Gordon Mar, Supervisor
The Honorable Dean Preston, Supervisor
The Honorable Matt Haney, Supervisor
The Honorable Rafael Mandelman, Supervisor
The Honorable Hillary Ronen, Supervisor
The Honorable Shamann Walton, Supervisor
The Honorable Ahsha Safai, Supervisor

The [policy recommendations made on August 20](#) by the Chair of the San Francisco Food Security Task Force are a call to action. In addition to that guidance, we write to you to prioritize these additional recommendations for increasing food access for San Franciscans.

We concur with the Task Force that, in order to address the root causes of hunger experienced by San Francisco residents, *“San Francisco needs a sustained commitment to end systemic racism and address structural barriers to health including food insecurity.”*

The millions for Covid-related food security in the proposed budget demonstrates the urgency needed in this moment to prioritize how we care for San Francisco’s most vulnerable. Our coalition has identified the following road map to meet the Task Force’s recommendations and to ensure the allocation of resources in data-driven, equitable ways.

We strongly emphasize these frameworks in order to achieve equitable outcomes that directly support populations closest to risk of hunger:

- **Child-centered lens** - Keeping San Francisco affordable for families and laying the groundwork for zero child hunger in our city.
- **Racial equity lens** - Knowing the disproportionate health and economic impact of Covid-19 on Black, Latinx and immigrant communities, we must prevent anyone from experiencing further harm or racial trauma due to racism, poverty, and malnourishment.
- **Disability access** - With limited public transit service and reduced outreach due to shelter-in-place restrictions, prioritizing accommodations for physical and mental disability ensure that meal programs are reducing the impact of stress caused by physical isolation from care providers and supportive services to this specific community.
- **Proximity** - Coordinating providers to ensure food access is within 15 minute walking/biking for all residents. This minimizes the physical cost and disproportionate time burden required for meeting essential needs, and limits further community spread of Covid-19.

Analysts at Data SF and the Human Service Agencies have recently conducted an assessment of the [gaps in providing meal service to those most in need here in San Francisco](#). While certain City-funded initiatives are supporting some of the individuals identified by this gap analysis, assessments made by MegaBlack and the SF Latino Equity and Parity Coalition show that we are at a crucial moment where an expanded commitment from City officials and investment of resources can lead to long lasting, transformational change. We strongly encourage the City to center these communities by empowering their voices in how budgeted monies are allocated and building a pathway for increasing self-determination and agency.

Additionally, we believe it is vital to dedicate Data SF analysts to ongoing data collection and sharing their findings with the primary stakeholders and coordinators of Covid-related food and meal distribution. Building one clearinghouse of data can help us more quickly identify those not being served and connect them to access to food.

We strongly urge the Mayor and the Board of Supervisors to invest city resources in localized solutions, with an emphasis on empowering and scaling solutions developed in community, such as Bayview Bounty Bags, the soon to launch UN Plaza pantry spearheaded by the Tenderloin Food Security Task Force, the Mission Food Hub of the Latino Task Force, and SF New Deal.

We also strongly recommend that funding decisions prioritize workforce development and entrepreneurial opportunities for underserved populations, and increase utilization of outdoor public spaces for pop up pantries, prepared meal distribution, and community gardens. These are regenerative solutions that build local, secure food supplies and empower communities to take charge of their food sovereignty by leveraging existing, non-financial, city resources. Making city-owned land available for urban agriculture social enterprises, for example, could embolden a new generation of SF-based entrepreneurs and small businesses to generate tens of thousands of pounds of produce a year, enough to feed many San Francisco residents with nourishing food and a newfound sense of civic pride.

We are proud to partner with the City and County of San Francisco to save and improve lives of those closest to harm and look forward to hearing from your staff about actionable next steps in our collective recovery efforts.

Sincerely,