



MEMORANDUM

AGENDA ITEM # III. E

DATE: NOVEMBER 2, 2015

TO: COUNCIL MEMEBERS

FROM: STAFF

SUBJECT: HEALTHY CORNER STORE CONVERSIONS

The purpose of this memorandum is to provide information on the “Healthy Happens Here” Corner Store Conversion grant from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention and the proposed Professional Services Agreement with Florida International University. This project provides an opportunity for meaningful involvement by an interested Council Board member.

The South Florida Regional Planning Council (Council) has been approached by the Miami-Dade County Health Department (MDCHD) to increase the accessibility, availability, and affordability of healthful foods in communities, with diet-related health disparities. Council and Florida International University’s Green Family Foundation NeighborhoodHELP™ staff are partnering to develop and implement a “Healthy Happens Here” Corner Store Conversion Initiative. This program builds upon the nutritional environment assessment of 44 convenience and corner stores within targeted areas of Miami-Dade County, conducted by the project team in 2012. The conversions would enhance the ability of interested convenience store owners in Miami-Dade County to supply, display, and sell healthy food items. Incentives, marketing materials, resources, and technical assistance will be provided to participating stores. The Food Trust would serve as the technical advisor for this project since they are nation-wide experts, on healthy corner store conversions.

The Council was initially awarded a grant in 2011 from the MDCHD to assess the food environment of priority areas in Miami-Dade County; disseminate the results of the study to the community; identify and develop policies and incentives that improve healthy food access in Miami-Dade County. The Council subsequently entered into a contract with The Green Family Foundation NeighborhoodHELP at Florida International University (FIU) Herbert Wertheim College of Medicine’s Division of Policy & Community Development (HWCOD-DPCD) to assess the food environment and gauge store owners’ willingness to offer healthier food items, in corner and convenience stores in communities with limited access to fresh fruits and vegetables.



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The Miami-Dade County Health Department provides direct medical care through several clinics and promotes healthier lifestyles through various grant-funded initiatives. The MDCHD received pass-through funding from the CDC in 2010 and again in 2014 to increase physical activity and access to healthy foods. The Council is one off several organizations receiving CDC Partnerships Improving Community Health (PICH) funding thought the health department.

NeighborhoodHELP is a healthy education learning program that seeks to understand the social components of healthcare choices by creating partnership with the community and obtaining longitudinal medical histories. Interdisciplinary teams of FIU students and outreach staff are sent into communities of need, to track and monitor the health of families throughout the students' educational tenure. Each team consists of a medical student and his or her counterpart in social work, nursing, public health, and other relevant areas and works with 1-2 households.

The Food Trust is a non-profit agency located in Philadelphia, Pennsylvania dedicated to accessibility of healthy foods for all. The Food Trust is nationally recognized for working with small convenience stores to provide fresh fruits and vegetables. The Food Trust also administers nutrition education programs; facilitate youth engagement initiatives; coordinates farm to school programs; operates farmers markets; and advocates for healthy food financing.

The Council will receive \$118,000 from the Health Department to create and implement healthy corner store conversions in Miami-Dade County. FIU will be paid a fixed fee of \$35,000 based on the successful completion of project deliverables.

Recommendation

Authorize the Executive Director to enter into a Professional Service Agreement with Florida International University.