The Food Security Task Force (FSTF) was established by the San Francisco Board of Supervisors and charged with making recommendations to the City to improve food security. The task force requested input from members and community stakeholders: 1) Immediate threats to food security, 2) Food security innovations during the response to COVID19, and 3) Policy recommendations to improve food security. This document summarizes the FSTF recommended response to the unprecedented need for food in San Francisco during this public health and economic crisis.

Background: Even prior to COVID19, food security in San Francisco was a pressing and widespread issue. At least 1 in 4 San Franciscans were at risk for food insecurity and its negative impacts including poor health, elevated stress, exacerbation of mental health and other chronic health conditions, and impairment to child development and academic achievement. Previous reports from the FSTF (2018, 2019) highlight San Francisco’s residents most vulnerable to food insecurity. The COVID19 pandemic has resulted in a rapid increase in food insecurity in the United States, California, and across San Francisco.

COVID19 Impact on Food Security and Community Response
Many individuals and families are newly food insecure due to unprecedented unemployment as well as the closure of organizations that previously offered food programs. The widespread impact of COVID19 has required immediate solutions to minimize hunger and support residents to safely shelter in place. Many food programs pivoted their models to support their clients’ food and household needs, and innovative models emerged from public agencies, community organizations, and newly formed spontaneous feeding groups. Food providers have been lifelines to the community, and these efforts have played a key role in supporting vulnerable populations to shelter in place and minimize the community transmission of COVID19.

With new variants of COVID19, existing health and racial disparities, and the ongoing economic impact of the pandemic, we must be even more vigilant in sustaining support for vulnerable populations—especially those at highest risk of serious illness and economic devastation from COVID19. These populations include communities experiencing health disparities and structural racism, immigrants who are undocumented, older adults, people with disabilities, and people who are unhoused. People living in congregate settings and in multigenerational households, including many children are also of concern, as well as low-wage essential workers who have been heavily impacted by COVID19.

Mayor Breed’s 2020-21 budget included $45.8 million to support food security as part of the City’s response to COVID19. This historic investment has been critical; yet the food insecurity crisis in San Francisco will require additional public and private investment. The City’s efforts on this front must be ongoing and responsive to changing needs. Food insecurity will not end with vaccination.

The City deployed an unprecedented response to the sudden and enormous increase in food insecurity due to COVID19. Yet, there are still gaps in service that must be filled now, and we need a plan to sustain food supports for as long as they are needed. Confronting rising food insecurity in San Francisco also requires ongoing coordinated food coordination, ongoing assessment of food needs and information and referral systems.

Immediate threats: Economic uncertainty and heightened racial inequities exacerbate existing food insecurity. Below is a summary of some of the most immediate threats to food security.

Economic distress
- Wealth inequality
- High rates of unemployment
- Missed work due to remote school and lack of childcare
- Expiration of enhanced federal unemployment benefits
- Increasing lack of health insurance for the unemployed
- High cost of living combined with workers earning above the income threshold for federal nutrition benefits

Community trauma
- Structural racism
- Violence, trauma, and mental health crisis
- Increased homelessness
- Suspension of Muni lines leave gaps in access to food and jobs

Inadequate government support
- Announced budget cuts at the federal, state, and local level
- Lack of ongoing comprehensive federal COVID19 relief package
- Immigrants are often not eligible for federal benefits
- Inequitable and erratic federal Farmers to Families Food Box program

Food programs face high demand, changing service environments, and unstable funding
- Limited, short-term, and unstable funding for food programs
- Closure of schools and childcare increases food insecurity among children and their families
- Uncertainty about renewal of USDA waivers that have allowed SFUSD and DCYF to serve all children in San Francisco for free
- Food service providers required to address holistic community needs in addition to food (mental health, etc.)
- Increased operating costs due to COVID19 (food, staff, facility, packaging, distribution, etc.)
- Loss of congregate dining and anticipated loss of some pop-up pantries
- Volunteer and staffing shortages, and increasing rates of staff and volunteer burnout
- Limited and underutilized public space for urban agriculture
Sustain Innovations: Of utmost importance is to proactively plan to fill the gaps that will be left after the expected rollback of emergency food supports. In the immediate response to COVID-19, innovations helped mitigate widespread hunger and should be sustained and scaled to meet the ongoing need. Examples include:

Resources (ability to purchase food)
- Direct cash benefits;
- Gift cards;
- Grocery and restaurant vouchers; Market Match
- Rapid enrollment for CalFresh/SNAP and WIC through administrative waivers;
- Pandemic EBT.

Access (ability to obtain food safely and conveniently)
- Food support for the entire household;
- Culturally and religiously appropriate food;
- Higher quality food;
- Increased access points to pick up free groceries and meals;
- Increased home delivery of meals and groceries;
- Meals and water for unsheltered residents delivered to encampments;
- Meals for households isolating and quarantining;
- Meals for medically vulnerable people without kitchens living in SROs;
- Household needs such as personal protective equipment, cleaning supplies, baby formula, diapers, adult incontinence supplies.

Consumption (ability to prepare and store food)
- Programs that provided a hybrid of groceries and prepared meals to meet food needs over time;
- Localized, high quality, and culturally appropriate food from neighborhood groups, stores, and restaurants;
- Increased frequency of delivery and pickup of food to eliminate unnecessary.....
2022 Recommendations

**Process:**

- FSTF Survey (November)
- Preliminary Survey Results (FSTF Meeting December)
- Add info from presentations & public comment & finalize (December)
- Present for final feedback (January FSTF Meeting)
- Graphic design & disseminate (January)
- Meetings with City Departments (January)
  - Prepare slides
- Meetings with Major's office, BOS (February)
  - Prepare slides
2022 Recommendations

Outline:
- Intro
- Current landscape (include relevant data)
- Re-thinking Food Security
  - Equity
  - Pathways to food sovereignty
  - Community led/community input - need to improve and fund
  - Address food security as a broader perspective (cost of living, housing, employment, health care, child care, income, etc.)
- Adequate community resources, including new programing/innovations
- Barriers
- Recommendations
  - Local
  - State
  - Federal
1. Since the beginning of COVID-19, there have been changes in regards to food programs and food resources in San Francisco. What supports & resources should be maintained and/or expanded going forward?

2. Are there any barriers to food security in San Francisco that are not currently being addressed?

3. What are some opportunities for improving food security throughout San Francisco? (These opportunities can be through policy, programs (existing and new), non-food programs, etc.)

4. What can be done to better promote equity and address systemic racism in regards to food security in San Francisco?

5. How can the San Francisco Food Security Task Force support community efforts in addressing food security in San Francisco?

6. (San Francisco Food Security Task Force Members Only) If the Food Security Task Force could accomplish just 1 or 2 goals in the next year, what would they be (please be specific and measurable, if possible)
FSTF Survey

• Survey of FSTF members, stakeholders, and community

• Approximately 46 full responses (50 partial)

• Responses will inform recommendations (along with presentations, public comment, data etc.)

• Detailed and informative responses – recommend reviewing actual responses (summarized here)
## Resources

### Resources:
- Delivery
- Culturally appropriate
- Funding
- Small/local CBO connected to communities
- Restaurants
- Take away meals
- Housing + Food
- Flexibility
- Fruit and vegetable
- Food Hub (Mission Hub)
- Food Delivery Assistance (Food Runners)
- Groceries
- Pop up pantry
- Ready to eat meals
- Vouchers

- Meal and grocery *delivery* (especially for those with impairments, families with young children, older adults)
- Take-away/ready-made meals -- especially continuing this flexibility for congregate meal programs
- Support smaller and local organizations that can respond to the unique needs of their community
- Meals prepared by restaurants
- Culturally relevant and quality food.
- Increase city investment, grants, and funding for food supports (beyond just one year)
- Flexibility and loosening of requirements that made it easier for individuals to utilize services and organizations to provide services (example: CACFP food sent home with family, XX)
- More ....
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<tr>
<th>Barriers:</th>
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<tr>
<td>Lack of transportation</td>
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<td>Lack of kitchen facilities &amp; storage</td>
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<td>Not enough food for the whole household (including multi-generational)</td>
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<td>Cultural appropriateness of food, staff, services</td>
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<td>High food costs</td>
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<tr>
<td>Lines/waits/waitlists</td>
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<tr>
<td>Food desert: lack of access to fresh healthy food and/or grocery stores</td>
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<td>Families/individual don't qualify (income restrictions)</td>
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<td>High housing costs</td>
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<tr>
<td>Language barriers</td>
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<tr>
<td>Need for choice, options</td>
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<tr>
<td>Ready to eat meals that are healthy and appealing</td>
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<tr>
<td>Technology</td>
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<tr>
<td>Under resourced</td>
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<tr>
<td>Unhoused need food supports</td>
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## Opportunities

### Opportunities: Services & Funding

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<th>Services &amp; Funding</th>
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<tr>
<td>Housing, Housing + Food</td>
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<tr>
<td>Basic guaranteed income/grants to individuals</td>
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<td>Child care, tax credits, health care</td>
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<td>Cal-Fresh outreach strategies - especially for students, non-english speakers, and seniors</td>
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<td>Co-locating food with services like medical care; Food + healthcare</td>
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<td>Food Empowerment Markets/co-ops</td>
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<td>Funding per meal (nonprofit vs private sector, traditional and new) - ensure equal</td>
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<td>Healthy retail/corner stores</td>
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<td>Infrastructure and technology improvements for nonprofits, schools, clinics</td>
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<td>Gardens - like Food Corps; urban agriculture</td>
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<td>Good food procurement</td>
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<td>Fund solutions that meet specific community needs</td>
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### Opportunities: Structure

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<td>Coordinate/ eliminate silos</td>
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<td>Create an Office of Food Policy with a mandate beyond just ending hunger (whole system approach)</td>
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<td>Food justice - entailing relationships among retailers, restaurants, food providers and the community</td>
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<tr>
<td>Centralized intake system for older adults</td>
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Promote Equity & Address Systemic Racism

• Input/Decisions
  • Invest in community led solutions and networks; let community groups recommend/determine the food their clients receive
  • Create seats at the table for people with lived experience
  • Create council comprised of marginalized communities

• Funding/Pay
  • More resources for low income clients, people of color.
  • Support increased funding to large organizations to improve quality and equity
  • Pay folks for their time in participating in collaboratives; compensate community members who are vital to the distribution of food at pantry sites.
  • Don’t only use cost when evaluating programs or amount of food distributed

• Culturally relevant food and services
Promote Equity & Address Systemic Racism

- Address
  - Role of discrimination in food security
  - Changing white dominate culture in organizations and in "normal business" (resource these efforts)
  - Racial tensions at food pantry sites

- CBOs in communities
  - Invest in CBOs; utilize CBO infrastructure; continuous engagement with grassroots CBOs
  - Support orgs lead by people who need food services; and/or who hire and serve low-income people of color.

- Collaboration
  - Support cross neighborhood relationships and networks; develop new community partnerships
Promote Equity & Address Systemic Racism

- FSTF
  - Review input for reauthorization and Propose framework and public body that will advance more equitable solutions and food security
  - Promote inclusion by changing the venue/structure of task force meetings
  - Create linkages with Office of Racial Equity
  - Increase diversity in Food Security Task Force leadership roles
  - FSTF membership should include people with the lived experience of being food insecure
  - The Taskforce should discuss and learn about how white supremacy has impacted food access and health in the US.

- Language and language translation in outreach materials and meetings (live interpretation)

- Services
  - Bring nutritious, culturally appropriate food supports to accessible locations that can shift the dynamic in food swamps,
  - Delivery, no scratch cooking, (overlap with resources survey results)
  - Rather than breaking up the system, the system should be funded and supported to change to provide more choice and person centered support.