



MEMORANDUM

TO: Members of the Authority

FROM: Tim Sullivan
Chief Executive Officer

DATE: October 12, 2023

SUBJECT: Atlantic City Food Security Grants Pilot Program

Summary

The Members are asked to approve:

1. Creation of the Atlantic City Food Security Grants Pilot Program, a \$5,250,000 program funded from the Economic Recovery Fund (“ERF”), that will make grants for projects that will strengthen food access and food security in Atlantic City, and the waiver of applicant fees due to the availability of other sources of funding for the Authority’s administrative costs;
2. Delegation to the Chief Executive Officer to approve individual applications to the Atlantic City Food Security Grants Pilot Program in accordance with the terms set forth in this memo;
3. Delegation to the Chief Executive Officer to enter into a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) with the New Jersey Department of Health (DOH) to provide up to \$250,000 to DOH to expand the Healthy Corner Store program for stores located in Atlantic City;
4. Delegation to the Chief Executive Officer to enter into an MOU with the New Jersey Department of Community Affairs (DCA) to accept and use \$4,000,000 of the \$30,000,000 in American Rescue Plan (ARP) Coronavirus State and Local Fiscal Recovery Funds (SLFRF) appropriated for Atlantic City Initiatives in the Fiscal Year 2024 Appropriations Act (P.L. 2023, c. 74) to deposit into ERF for the Atlantic City Food Security Grants Pilot Program (“the Program”), and agree to comply with federal requirements for the use of those funds. This request includes the utilization of up to 5% of this funding to support the Authority’s administrative costs associated with operating the program, in addition to the \$4,000,000 to be utilized for grants;
5. Reallocation of \$1,500,000 in FY2022 State funding appropriated to NJEDA for Food and Agriculture Innovation from the Food Retail Innovation in Delivery Grant (FRIDG) Program back to ERF for two uses:
 - a. The Atlantic City Food Security Grants Pilot Program;
 - b. Providing funding to DOH to expand the Healthy Corner Store program for stores located in Atlantic City

6. Delegation to the Chief Executive Officer to accept up to \$10,000,000 in additional funds to be deposited into ERF for the Program from any available governmental (Federal, State or County) funding and to impose additional requirements as may be required by law as a condition of accepting, provided that the requirements are consistent with the parameters of the program; and
7. Delegation to the Chief Executive Officer to accept unencumbered gifts or unrestricted governmental (Federal, State, or County) funds to be deposited into ERF for the Program.

Background

In January 2021, Governor Phil Murphy signed the Food Desert Relief Act (FDRA), which allocated to NJEDA a total of \$240 million in tax credits over six years, and directed NJEDA to collaborate with the New Jersey Departments of Community Affairs and Agriculture to designate up to 50 Food Desert Communities (FDCs) across the state.

Alongside these other Departments, NJEDA undertook rigorous, data-driven analysis and community engagement to shape a definition of FDCs that is broader and more comprehensive than the definition used by the United States Department of Agriculture, taking into account more than 24 variables related to the food retail environment, demographics, economic factors, health factors, and community factors. The process resulted in the designation of 50 areas of the state as FDCs.

These communities are home to more than 1.5 million residents and are in every county in New Jersey. The underlying data analysis allowed the FDCs to be ranked by a Composite Food Desert Factor Score, indicating the acuity or severity of their food desert status.

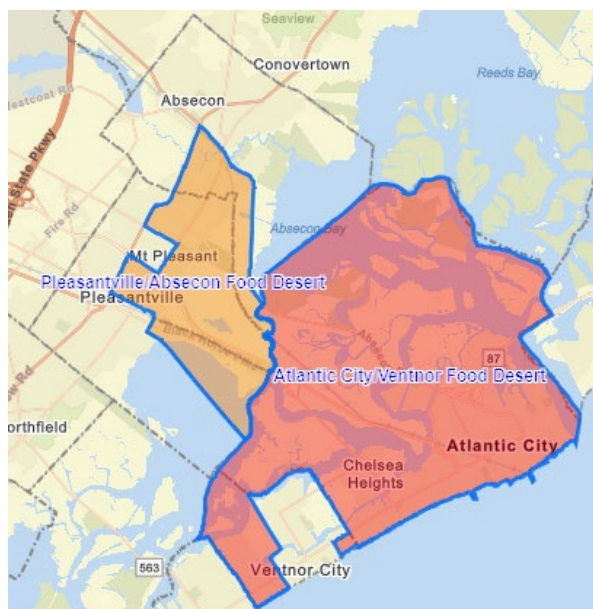
The Atlantic City/Ventnor FDC ranks second highest of all 50 FDCs in New Jersey, indicating extremely significant need. The Atlantic City/Ventnor FDC is ranked second among all 50 FDCs on three key measures: *Highest Block Group Factor Score* (95.0), *Population Weighted Average Food Desert Score* (62.6) and *Composite Food Desert Factor Score* (78.8). Notably, the Atlantic City/Ventnor FDC *Average Food Desert Low Access Score (supermarket)* is 97.4, which is higher – meaning more acute – than the FDC ranked highest in the state on composite score, which is the North, Central and South Camden/Woodlynne FDC with a score of 95.7 on that metric.¹

More than 41,000 people reside within the boundaries of the Atlantic City/Ventnor FDC, which covers the entirety of Atlantic City as well as a portion of neighboring Ventnor (See Figure 1).

One key factor in Atlantic City's Food Desert Community status is its lack of a full-service supermarket, which has been the case since IGA closed in 2006. Two recent attempts by the Casino Reinvestment Development Authority (CRDA) to facilitate development of a supermarket through a competitive Request for Proposals (RFPs) have been unsuccessful, including one as recently as September 19, 2023, when the CRDA board rejected all four proposals that had been submitted in response to the most recent RFP.

¹ Food Desert Community designations, methodology, interactive map and block-group-level data are available at <https://www.njeda.gov/food-desert-relief-program/>

Figure 1: Atlantic City/Ventnor Food Desert Community (shaded in red)



Source:

<https://njca.maps.arcgis.com/apps/webappviewer/index.html?id=cd59d206f39c40a691d6ba38598134fb>

We anticipate that NJEDA’s forthcoming Food Desert Relief Tax Credit Program, with rules approved by the Board in April 2023, will offer an important tool to develop and sustain new supermarkets in FDCs. The Food Desert Relief Tax Credit Program has two components – a Financing Gap Tax Credit for development or rehabilitation of new supermarkets in FDCs, and an Initial Operating Costs Tax Credit to support the first three years of operations for these supermarkets. Applications for both programs are expected to open by the end of 2023. In April 2023, the Board also approved the Food Desert Relief Tax Credit Auction, which offers up to \$50 million of tax credits to corporations and insurance companies for a minimum price of 85 percent of face value. The Auction opened on September 18, 2023 and is slated to close on October 18, 2023. Proceeds from the auction will be used to fund programs in accordance with FDRA to alleviate food deserts and support food security initiatives in FDCs through grants, loans, and/or technical assistance. Staff will return to the Board in the coming months for approval of new programs funded by the auction proceeds.

In the meantime, so as to start piloting initiatives to address FDCs and due to the immediate availability of SLFRF funds for Atlantic City, staff proposes this pilot program focused on Atlantic City.

As provided in 31 CFR § 35.6, “Eligible Uses,” NJEDA may use SLFRF funds to respond to the Covid-19 public health emergency or its negative economic impacts for certain enumerated eligible uses.² As applicable to the present matter, NJEDA may respond to the negative economic impacts of the Covid-19 public health emergency by using SLFRF funds to: (1) provide food assistance to individuals and households;³ and (2) create a program, service, capital

² See 31 CFR § 35.6(b).

³ See 31 CFR § 35.6(b)(3)(ii)(A)(1).

expenditure, or other assistance to disproportionately impacted households, population, or community to increase access to healthy foods.⁴

To determine eligibility for SLFRF funds, the following households and communities are presumed to be impacted or disproportionately impacted by the Covid-19 public health emergency or its negative economic impact:

Households and populations residing in a qualified census tract; households and populations receiving services provided by Tribal governments; households and populations residing in the territories; households and populations receiving services provided by territorial governments; low-income households and populations; households that qualify for Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (42 U.S.C. 601 et seq.), the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (7 U.S.C. 2011 et seq.), Free and Reduced Price School Lunch and/or Breakfast programs (42 U.S.C. 1751 et seq. and 42 U.S.C. 1773), Medicare Part D Low-income Subsidies (42 U.S.C. 1395w-114), Supplemental Security Income (42 U.S.C. 1381 et seq.), Head Start (42 U.S.C. 9831 et seq.), Early Head Start (42 U.S.C. 9831 et seq.), the Special Supplemental Nutrition Program for Women, Infants, and Children (42 U.S.C. 1786), Section 8 Vouchers (42 U.S.C. 1437f), the Low-Income Home Energy Assistance Program (42 U.S.C. 8621 et seq.), Pell Grants (20 U.S.C. 1070a), and, if SLFRF funds are to be used for services to address educational disparities, Title I eligible schools;

See 31 CFR § 35.6(b)(2)(III)(A).

In general, the households and communities within the Atlantic City/Ventnor FDC meet one or more of these criteria. As such, consistent with federal law, NJEDA may leverage SLFRF funds to provide food assistance and increase access to healthy foods to respond to the negative economic impacts of the Covid-19 public health emergency.

Staff proposes the establishment of the Program in recognition that developing and opening a new supermarket takes years, and that a supermarket is not the only path to improving access to nutritious food. Residents of Atlantic City need and deserve improved access to nutritious food much sooner than that. This memo proposes funding projects that can have an impact for Atlantic City residents' ability to access fresh, affordable, healthy food in advance of the construction of a supermarket, while simultaneously benefitting employment by helping applicants expand or increase their activities.

Atlantic City Food Security Grants Pilot Program

Applicant Eligibility: Grants will be awarded only to entities that meet the following criteria:

- Applicant is a for-profit, nonprofit or government entity that has been in existence for at least two years at the time of application;
- Applicant currently serves, in any manner, residents of the Atlantic City/Ventnor FDC;
- Applicant can demonstrate existing programming or services related to food access and/or food security, including but not limited to: food distribution, nutrition education, local agriculture, and/or food retail (such programming may be different than the food security or food access activities proposed for the grant); and
- Applicant is in good standing with the NJ Department of Labor and Workforce Development and the Department of Environmental Protection.
- Applicant is not subject to suspension or debarment in accordance with 2 CFR § 200.214 and its implementing regulations, including Executive Orders 12549 and 12689, 2 CFR part 180.

Eligible Uses: Grant funds will be awarded only to entities that indicate that they will use the grant funds to improve food access and/or food security in Atlantic City. The proposed use(s)

⁴ *See* 31 CFR § 35.6(b)(3)(ii)(A)(11)(iii)

must be accomplished within two years of execution of the grant agreement, subject to two 6-month extensions by EDA staff if the grantee is diligently pursuing the use and the delay was unforeseeable and not in the grantee's control, to the extent allowed under federal spending deadlines. Acquisition of land or buildings is not an eligible cost. All other costs that are incurred after the date of grant agreement execution are eligible, subject to the Authority's approval of the project budget and supporting documentation. For example, costs can include construction, equipment, installation, salaries and fringe, and rent.

As required by law, construction, including use of trades in construction related to installation of equipment, will be subject to state affirmative action requirements for contractors, and such work with a cost of \$2,000 or more will be subject to New Jersey prevailing wage requirements. Additionally, grantees must utilize contractors registered as a New Jersey Public Works Contractor with the Department of Labor and Workforce Development for work subject to prevailing wage.

Awards will be subject to federal Duplication of Benefits requirements and, if construction is included, to cost reasonableness analysis.

Award Size: Applicants may request a grant amount from a minimum of \$50,000 to a maximum of \$500,000. Grant funds may cover up to 100 percent of the proposed project costs. If grant funds from EDA are not requested to cover 100 percent of the proposed project costs, additional funding sources must be described in the budget and budget narrative submitted for approval. Selected applicants will enter into a grant agreement with NJEDA, and funds will be disbursed according to the following schedule:

- 50 percent of the grant will be disbursed upon execution of a grant agreement between NJEDA and the selected applicant;
- 25 percent of the grant will be disbursed upon the applicant's submission of the mid-program report, the exact timing to be determined based on the grantee's implementation plan and reflected in the grant agreement; and
- 25 percent of the grant amount will be disbursed upon the Authority's review and approval of the applicant's submission of a final report on completion of the proposed project, expected to be no later than two (2) years following the date of the grant agreement execution or September 30, 2026, whichever is earlier.

Application

Entities must provide to NJEDA information about their organization and their proposed project, including but not limited to:

- A detailed description of the proposed project, including its expected impact on FDC residents' food access and/or food security in Atlantic City. This description must include, at minimum, the following:
 - Description of current food security and food access needs and challenges in Atlantic City
 - Description of how the proposed project will address food access and food security in Atlantic City, particularly for SNAP and WIC recipients
 - Identification of other key stakeholders and description of how the applicant will collaborate with them;
- An implementation timeline and work plan. The work plan must include, at minimum:
 - Specific Measurable Achievable Relevant Time-bound (SMART) objectives
 - Description of each project activity

- A project timeline, including milestones and the length of time needed to implement each activity within the grant period
- Identification of appropriate staff responsible for each project activity;
- A description of the organization's capacity to undertake the proposed project, including current and past experience a) serving residents of the Atlantic City/Ventnor FDC and b) providing programming or services related to food access and food security in Atlantic City and/or other parts of New Jersey;
- A description of community engagement efforts, which can include letters of support for the proposal; and
- A line-item budget and budget narrative for the proposed project scope. The requested level of funding must be broken down by line item. Line items must be clearly explained in the budget narrative. The requested level of funding must be reasonable for proposed activities within the project timeline. If the total project cost exceeds the requested grant amount, the budget narrative must describe the sources for all other funds.

Delegation

Staff is requesting delegated authority to approve grants under the Atlantic City Food Security Grants Pilot Program. Staff will use the below criteria to determine if the application meets the requirements of the program. See Attachment B for specific scoring.

Applications will be accepted during a six-week application period. Applications will first be evaluated for completeness and eligibility. Applicants that are missing required information will be provided an opportunity to cure those deficiencies before a final completeness and eligibility review. Following this review, applications that are incomplete, including those that do not provide responses to all required questions, and those that do not meet the applicant eligibility criteria will not proceed to scoring. Scoring will be conducted by a committee of NJEDA staff.

Funding will be allocated first to the highest-scored applicant, proceeding in decreasing order of score to other applicants that meet the minimum score requirement of 50 out of 100 points, until insufficient funds remain to fully fund the next eligible application. If funding still remains after approving all qualifying applicants from the initial application period, the application period may be re-opened for additional applications during an additional six-week application window. Applications received during that window will be reviewed and scored following the same procedure.

Criteria # 1: Project Description/Statement of Work (up to 30 points) – Factors considered include:

- Applicant's understanding of Atlantic City's needs and challenges regarding food security and food access
- Potential impact of the proposed project on Atlantic City residents' food access and/or food security
- Potential impact of the proposed project on food access for recipients of federal and state nutrition benefits, including SNAP and WIC
- Potential for project to be viable, sustainable, and adaptable to other Food Desert Communities

Criteria # 2: Work Plan (up to 20 points) – Applications demonstrating a more detailed, comprehensive, feasible plan will receive higher scores. Factors considered include:

- Feasibility of work plan as proposed
- Level of detail and evidence of thorough planning

Criteria # 3: Organizational Capacity (up to 20 points) – The applicant is equipped to successfully complete the proposed plan in a timely manner. Factors considered include:

- Applicant’s experience providing programs or services related to food access and/or food security, including but not limited to food distribution, nutrition education, local agriculture, and/or food retail
- As applicable for the proposed project, applicant’s experience working effectively on collaborative, multi-stakeholder projects
- Alignment of proposed project with applicant’s overall mission or primary line of business

Criteria #4: Community Engagement (up to 20 points) – Factors considered include:

- Depth of experience serving residents of Atlantic City
- A track record of seeking and responding to feedback from stakeholders, such as community members, customers, or advocates
- Efforts to ensure programs or services promote social and economic equity
- Ability to consider and mitigate obstacles that have created challenges for food security and food access in the past

Criteria #5: Budget and Budget Narrative (up to 10 points) – Applications with a clear and justified budget and budget narrative with a clear connection to project goals will receive a higher score.

Post-Closing Compliance

Grantees will be required to report to NJEDA at least quarterly, including mid-program and final reports, starting at grant execution and extending through the end of the grant term. These reports must provide updates on grantees’ progress against their proposed project timeline, data and outcomes on the project’s impact (e.g. number of people served), and project costs, both cumulative and since the last report.

Among other standard defaults, NJEDA shall recapture any grant funds used for an ineligible purpose or and may recapture any grant funds for a purpose outside of any approved scope of work.

Memorandum of Understanding with Department of Health

In the Fiscal Year 2024 budget, the New Jersey Department of Health (DOH) received an appropriation of \$1,750,000 for the Healthy Corner Stores Initiative, which is part of New Jersey First Lady Tammy Murphy’s Nurture NJ initiative. The [Healthy Corner Store Initiative](#) works to improve access to healthy food and beverages in underserved communities, which often experience higher rates of chronic disease including obesity, heart disease, stroke, and diabetes. NJEDA will execute an MOU with DOH to provide up to \$250,000 to be used as additional funding for this program. Use of these funds will be aligned with the DOH Healthy Corner Stores Initiative, with the added criteria that the funds provided through this MOU would be earmarked for stores located in Atlantic City.

Funding

Funding for the Program and the MOU with DOH would come from two sources: \$4,000,000 in American Rescue Plan (ARP) Coronavirus State Fiscal Recovery Funds (SLFRF) appropriated for Atlantic City Initiatives, and \$1,500,000 shifted from FRIDG, from an FY22 appropriation of State funds for Food and Agriculture Innovation.

ARP SLFRF Funds

New Jersey's Fiscal Year 2024 Appropriations Act (P.L. 2023, c. 74) included an appropriation of \$30 million from the federal SLFRF for Atlantic City Initiatives. The New Jersey Department of Community Affairs (DCA), which is the administering agency for New Jersey's SLFRF funds, has indicated that these funds will be allocated to NJEDA. If approved, NJEDA will execute a Memorandum of Understanding with DCA to access \$4 million of the \$30 million appropriated for Atlantic City Initiatives and use those funds for the Program.

The Program aligns with the following U.S. Treasury eligible uses for SLFRF detailed on page 4 of this memo.

The deadline for obligating and expending the SLFRF funds will follow the federal deadlines, such that any extension of those deadlines will be passed on to the grantees.

Food and Agriculture Innovation

Per the Appropriations Act for Fiscal Year 2022, the Authority received \$3,500,000 in funding for the purpose of Food and Agriculture Innovation. In December 2022, the Board approved the use of \$2,600,000 of this funding for the Food Retailer Innovation in Delivery Grant (FRIDG). Staff is now requesting that the Board approve reducing the amount of funding allocated to FRIDG by \$1,500,000 and re-allocating those funds as follows: to the Program and to an MOU with DOH for up to \$250,000.

While FRIDG has received applications and interest from the supermarket industry, it is likely that demand will be below the total of \$2,500,000 allocated for grants. As described in the December 2022 FRIDG Board memorandum, if funding remains in the FRIDG program in October 2024, staff anticipated returning to the Board for approval of a new use of funds. Because of the availability of SLFRF funding specifically for Atlantic City, and Atlantic City's status as the second-highest ranked FDC in New Jersey, Atlantic City is uniquely positioned to serve as the pilot location for launching and implementing a food security grant program that could then be expanded to other high-ranking FDCs throughout the state. Staff is requesting shifting FRIDG funding earlier than anticipated to build on the availability of these resources.

Economic Recovery Fund (ERF)

The SFRF will be deposited into ERF for the purpose of the Atlantic City Food Security Grants. In addition, \$1,500,000 of the Food and Agriculture Innovation funds will be reallocated within the Economic Recovery Fund (ERF) for the Atlantic City Food Security Grants and the MOU with DOH. ERF authorizes a grant as listed under N.J.S.A § 34:1B-7.13(a)(12) for:

“a fund to provide grants or competition prizes, either directly or through a not-for-profit entity, that is consistent with economic development priorities as defined by the authority's board, where funds have been specifically allocated to the economic recovery fund for this purpose, including but not limited to an appropriation or transfer from another government entity.”

Governor Murphy’s economic plan, “The State of Innovation: Building a Stronger and Fairer Economy in New Jersey” identifies several economic development priorities, including “investing in communities to build world-class cities, towns, and infrastructure statewide.” The Atlantic City Food Security Grant Program and the MOU with DOH are both encompassed by this priority, as they seeks to improve the quality of life in Atlantic City by increasing food access and food security, a basic need that for years has not been fully met in Atlantic City.

Request for Delegation

Delegation to the Authority’s Chief Executive Officer is requested of the Board of the Authority for the following items:

1. To approve grants of up to \$500,000 in accordance with the Program parameters as set out in this memo and attached program specifications.
2. To enter into an MOU with DOH to provide up to \$250,000 to DOH to expand the Healthy Corner Store program for stores located in Atlantic City.
3. To enter into an MOU with DCA to accept and use \$4,000,000 in ARP SLFRF to deposit into ERF for the Program. These funds will come from the \$30 million appropriated for Atlantic City Initiatives in the Fiscal Year 2024 Appropriations Act.
4. To accept up to \$10,000,000 in additional funds to be deposited into ERF for the Program from any available governmental funding (Federal, State, or County) and to impose additional requirements as may be required by law as a condition of accepting, provided that the requirements are consistent with the parameters of the program. This may include executing or amending an MOU with DCA for additional SLFRF funding.
5. To accept unencumbered gifts or unrestricted governmental funds (Federal, State, or County) to be deposited into ERF for the Program.

Recommendation

The Members are asked to approve:

1. The Atlantic City Food Security Grants Pilot Program, a \$5,250,000 program funded from the Economic Recovery Fund (“ERF”), that will make grants for projects that will strengthen food security and food access in Atlantic City, and the waiver of applicant fees due to the availability of other sources of funding for the Authority’s administrative costs;
2. Delegation to the Chief Executive Officer to approve individual applications to the Atlantic City Food Security Grants Pilot program in accordance with the terms set forth in this memo;
3. Delegation to the Chief Executive Officer to enter into a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) with the New Jersey Department of Health (DOH) to provide up to \$250,000 to DOH to expand the Healthy Corner Store program for applicants located in Atlantic City;
4. Delegation to the Chief Executive Officer to enter into an MOU with the New Jersey Department of Community Affairs (DCA) to accept and use \$4,000,000 of the \$30,000,000 in American Rescue Plan (ARP) Coronavirus State Fiscal Recovery Funds

(SLFRF) appropriated for Atlantic City Initiatives in the Fiscal Year 2024 Appropriations Act (P.L. 2023, c. 74) to deposit into ERF for the Atlantic City Food Security Grants Pilot Program (“the Program”), and agree to comply with federal requirements for the use of those funds;

5. Reallocation of \$1,500,000 in FY2022 State funding appropriated to NJEDA for Food and Agriculture Innovation from the Food Retail Innovation in Delivery Grant (FRIDG) Program back to ERF for two uses:
 - a. The Atlantic City Food Security Grants Pilot Program; and
 - b. Providing funding to DOH to expand the Healthy Corner Store program for applicants located in Atlantic City.
6. Delegation to the Chief Executive Officer to accept up to \$10,000,000 in additional funds to be deposited into ERF for the Program from any available governmental (Federal, State or County) funding and to impose additional requirements as may be required by law as a condition of accepting, provided that the requirements are consistent with the parameters of the program; and
7. Delegation to the Chief Executive Officer to accept unencumbered gifts or unrestricted governmental (Federal, State, or County) funds to be deposited into ERF for the Program.



Tim Sullivan, CEO

Prepared by: Tara Colton, EVP, Economic Security
Riley Edwards, Team Lead, Economic Security Projects

Attachments:

Appendix A—Examples of Potential Projects

Appendix B—Scoring Detail

Appendix A: Examples of Potential Projects

Projects must increase access to food in Atlantic City, which may be accomplished in a number of ways. The below is a non-exhaustive list of potential projects to inspire creativity among potential applicants. Applicants may propose projects not captured by this list of examples. All applications will be scored using the criteria in this memo.

- Establishing and/or operating a mobile grocery store or mobile produce market
- Purchasing equipment, such as cold storage equipment, for small retailers, community-based organizations, food banks, health care providers and/or emergency food providers
- Technical assistance and/or equipment to increase opportunities for Atlantic City residents to utilize nutrition benefits (e.g. Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program, Special Supplemental Nutrition Program for Women, Infants, and Children, Senior Farmers Market Nutrition Program, etc.), such as at a farmers market, small or mid-sized food retailer, or through digital literacy training and assistance with online ordering for grocery delivery
- Increasing access to locally-grown produce for Atlantic City residents, including but not limited to expanding operation of a farmers market within Atlantic City, establishing or strengthening relationships between farmers and retailers, or establishing or expanding produce delivery
- Working with restaurants in Atlantic City or Atlantic County to purchase meals that are provided at no cost to Atlantic City residents
- Expanding services that provide food at no cost to Atlantic City residents in need including increased operating costs associated with that expansion
- Accelerating existing planning and implementation efforts to broaden food access opportunities in Atlantic City

Appendix B: Scoring Detail

Criteria # 1: Project Description/Statement of Work (up to 30 points)

Factors considered include:

- Applicant’s understanding of Atlantic City’s needs and challenges regarding food security and food access
- Potential impact of the proposed project on Atlantic City residents’ access to fresh, affordable, healthy foods, in particular fresh fruits and vegetables, recognizing that residents need access to both perishable and non-perishable foods
- Potential impact of the proposed project on food access for recipients of federal and state nutrition benefits, including SNAP and WIC
- Potential for project to be viable, sustainable, and adaptable to other Food Desert Communities

Criteria # 1 will be measured using the scale below:

- 1 - 15 points – Project description demonstrates minimal understanding of or potential impact on food security and food access in Atlantic City
- 16 - 22 points – Project description demonstrates moderate understanding of or potential impact on food security and food access in Atlantic City
- 23 - 30 points – Project description demonstrates superior understanding of or potential impact on food security and food access in Atlantic City

Criteria # 2: Work Plan (up to 20 points) –Applications demonstrating a more detailed, comprehensive, feasible plan will receive higher scores Factors considered include:

- Feasibility of work plan as proposed
- Level of detail and evidence of thorough planning

Criteria # 2 will be measured using the scale below:

- 1 - 10 points – Work plan includes minimal detail on project activities, objectives, timeline and/or staffing
- 11 -15 points – Work plan includes moderate detail on project activities, objectives, timeline and/or staffing
- 16 – 20 points – Work plan includes superior detail on project activities, objectives, timeline and/or staffing

Criteria # 3: Organizational Capacity (up to 20 points) – The applicant is equipped to successfully complete the proposed plan in a timely manner. Factors considered include:

- Applicant’s experience providing programs or services related to food access and/or food security, including but not limited to: food distribution, nutrition education, local agriculture, and/or food retail
- As applicable for the proposed project, applicant’s experience working effectively on collaborative, multi-stakeholder projects
- Alignment of proposed project with applicant’s overall mission or core business

Criteria #3 will be measured using the scale below:

- 1 -10 points – Applicant demonstrates minimal capacity and experience related to the proposed project

- 11 -15 points – Applicant demonstrates moderate capacity and experience related to the proposed project
- 16 – 20 points – Applicant demonstrates superior capacity and experience related to the proposed project

Criteria #4: Community Engagement (up to 20 points) – Factors considered include:

- Depth of experience serving residents of Atlantic City
- A track record of seeking and responding to feedback from stakeholders, such as community members, customers, or advocates
- Efforts to ensure programs or services promote social and economic equity
- Ability to consider and mitigate obstacles that have created challenges for food security and food access in the past

Criteria #4 will be measured using the scale below:

- 1 -10 points – Application demonstrates minimal level of community engagement
- 11 -15 points – Application demonstrates moderate level of community engagement
- 16 - 20 points – Application demonstrates superior level of community engagement

Criteria #5: Budget and Budget Narrative (up to 10 points)

Criteria #5 will be measured using the scale below:

- 1 - 4 points – Budget and budget narrative show minimal level of detail, connection to project goals, clarity of justification/explanation, and reasonableness
- 5 - 7 points – Budget and budget narrative show moderate level of detail, connection to project goals, clarity of justification/explanation, and reasonableness
- 8 - 10 points – Budget and budget narrative show superior level of detail, connection to project goals, clarity of justification/explanation, and reasonableness