

# KEY FINDINGS & RECOMMENDATIONS

This Bayshore community food assessment produced five key findings and associated recommendations for improving food access and food security in the Bayshore. These findings, as well as the report as a whole, are intended to be shared with Bayshore residents, other key stakeholders, and city and county government agencies. Bayshore residents are invested in their neighborhood and will continue to strive to make a positive impact in the community. It is our hope that the assessment will be a useful tool in support of those efforts.

1	Key Finding	Recommendation
	The Bayshore community is an evolving neighborhood with a strong sense of community identity and rich history where people from different cultures live alongside each other	Explore options to foster a resident-led Community Advisory Board to help elevate Bayshore residents' ideas and priorities to local leaders and real estate developers. This advisory board would be organized and coordinated by local residents and could serve as a way for the community to respond to the current and future development of Bayshore.

The current increase in development and investment in housing presents an important opportunity to strengthen the local economy and create sustainable business investment within Bayshore. The formation of a Community Advisory Board, made up of people from the community, could facilitate community engagement and prioritize community ideas in planning future developments in the Bayshore. This voluntary advisory board should be structured in ways that residents' views and opinions about the Bayshore's development can be shared with decision makers at different levels. Furthermore, the advisory board can also inform local policies that will shape food access and other services in the Bayshore community. Ultimately, the advisory board will help ensure that development unfolds in a manner that is aligned with community interests and needs.

### Community Advisory Board

A Community Advisory Board (CAB) is a collective group of community members and organization representatives that provide community information and assistance to an institutional initiative team.



2	Key Finding	Recommendation
	Due to geographic isolation and lack of grocery stores, the majority of residents purchase groceries outside of the Bayshore.	Explore options for a new grocery store or food co-operative that is informed by the needs and wants of community members.

A co-operative (commonly referred to as a co-op) can be a socially and economically sustainable approach to incorporating a grocery store into a neighborhood with poor access to healthy food. A co-op is a type of food store that is characterized by cooperative and democratic decision-making, where members have a voice in the types and price of products sold at the store.<sup>1</sup> Co-ops are directly owned by its employees (worker’s co-op) and/or members (member’s co-op), who pay a nominal fee to join. The purpose of a co-op is to effectively and equitably serve its members; any surplus profit from a co-op is re-invested into the store, and therefore the community. Food co-ops are an effective way to bring healthy, affordable produce to a community while promoting community wealth and independence.<sup>2</sup> Often, co-ops source food products from local farmers or vendors, which helps support the local and regional economy.

The Mandela Co-op in Oakland, CA is a successful full-service grocery store owned, governed, and operated by its members. The co-op contributes to the local economy by sourcing from local farmers, creates employment opportunities for its neighborhood, and provides access to healthy, affordable foods.<sup>3</sup> In 2019, the co-op celebrated a decade of serving West Oakland and has announced plans to expand.

Grocery stores in the neighborhood could consider expanding access to SNAP and WIC benefits to help more low-income residents, particularly families with young children, to meet their health and nutritional needs.

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<sup>1</sup> Berge S., Caldwell W., Mount P. (2016). Governance of Nine Ontario Food Co-operatives. *Annals of Public and Cooperative Economics*, 87(3), 457-474.

<sup>2</sup> Halliday L., & Foster, M. (2020). A Tale of Two Co-ops in Two Cities. *Journal of Agriculture, Food Systems, and Community Development*, 9(2), 239-254.

<sup>3</sup> About the Co-op. Retrieved on July 25, 2020 from <https://www.mandelagrocery.coop/aboutco-op>.

3	Key Finding	Recommendation
	The COVID-19 pandemic has negatively affected food access and increased food insecurity in the Bayshore community.	Increase circulation of information about resources available to the Bayshore neighborhood and target individuals who are most vulnerable to food insecurity during COVID-19 pandemic, such as older adults, people with disabilities, families with children, and residents whose primary language is not English.

Several interviewees stated they would like to see a list of resources available in the neighborhood and mentioned this would be particularly useful during COVID-19. A comprehensive pamphlet containing a list of resources for food, housing, legal, disabilities, and childcare assistance should be circulated and updated on a regular basis and made available in languages other than English. In future crises, this pamphlet can serve as a comprehensive resource for individuals who are seeking assistance during difficult times. The distribution of these pamphlets, both printed and shared through online media, should prioritize residents who are not already well connected to resources through local organizations such as Midway Village, Peninsula Family Service, or the Bayshore School.

4	Key Finding	Recommendation
	For those without private cars, public transportation is the main transportation method Bayshore residents use to access food.	Maintain current transit routes, which are crucial to food access in the Bayshore. Adding additional routes, transit stops, or more frequent services will also help improve food access in the future. In addition, explore routes that link passengers to other essential services such as ethnic food markets, hospitals, pharmacies, and/or banks. When planning new routes, consider adding an additional stop closer to Midway Village.

This recommendation recognizes Bayshore’s geographic isolation and addresses difficulties accessing public transportation, and consequently key food resources, that residents reported. For example, interviewees residing at Midway Village would like to have a bus closer to the community center to reduce the physical challenge of carrying groceries up a steep hill after getting off the bus at the Bayshore bus stop on Geneva Avenue. Most transit stops are located on Geneva Avenue and average 0.5 miles from Midway Village. The only public transit route that runs through the Bayshore Neighborhood beyond Geneva Avenue is the Bayshore Shuttle, which only operates on weekdays and runs every 1.5 to 2 hours. One interviewee mentioned that having service that is more frequent and weekend operations would be beneficial for the community. The COVID-19 pandemic has led to a reduction in available public transit options, and these services will hopefully be restored to connect residents to services outside the neighborhood.

5	Key Finding	Recommendation
	The Bayshore community would like additional food resources that incorporate youth empowerment, community design, and provide affordable fresh fruits and vegetables.	Explore options for establishing a farmers' market and/or community garden within the Bayshore. These programs should be led and informed by community members with assistance from other public or non-profit entities.

A key takeaway from the interviews was that most participants support the establishment of a farmers' market and/or community garden as public spaces where residents can come together and access fresh produce. Several interviewees reported already having home gardens and they would like to see and contribute to a community garden.

The Collective Roots Gardening Program run by Fresh Approach is a community garden in East Palo Alto that offers many resources, such as hands-on workshops in organic gardening, seed lending, tool loaning, and assistance with becoming a certified producer in San Mateo County.<sup>4</sup> Fresh Approach also runs the East Palo Alto Community Farmers Market, which sources fresh fruits and vegetables from local farmers and sells produce from the community garden. The market operates every Wednesday during the summer season and accepts CalFresh/EBT, FMNP WIC, and FMNP Seniors benefits.

A farmers' market can also improve access to healthy fruits and vegetables. Interviewees were concerned about the viability of a farmers' market, particularly if there was insufficient promotion/advertising. To address these concerns, interviewees suggested holding a farmers' market at Midway Village and distributing flyers to the neighborhood and surrounding communities. To help create an affordable and accessible farmers' market, the Bayshore's farmers' market should accept SNAP, WIC (Women, Infants and Children), and SFMNP (Senior's Farmers Market Nutrition Program) benefits.

The Market Match dollar-for-dollar match program at 13 farmers' markets in Santa Clara County, allows CalFresh users to earn an additional ten dollars per day to purchase additional fresh produce when they buy fruits and vegetables. This has not only increased the amount of produce purchased by customers by 74%, but also doubled revenue from CalFresh at farmers' markets.<sup>5</sup>

<sup>4</sup> Collective Roots Gardening Program. Fresh Approach. Retrieved Aug. 15, 2020 from <https://www.freshapproach.org/collectiveroots/>.

<sup>5</sup> Diekmann, L., Gray, L., Hucheson, J., Meehan, M., & Osland, T. (2020). *Small Farms, Big Potential: Growing a Local Resilient Food System* (pp. 56-57, Rep.). Santa Clara County, CA: Food System Alliance. Retrieved August 1st, 2020. [https://static1.squarespace.com/static/55fb5d35e4b0c8599268bb30/t/5e333e84765dfa24257a99d9/1580416665312/FSA\\_Report\\_Final\\_for\\_web.pdf](https://static1.squarespace.com/static/55fb5d35e4b0c8599268bb30/t/5e333e84765dfa24257a99d9/1580416665312/FSA_Report_Final_for_web.pdf)