

OFFERED BY COUNCILORS GABRIELA COLETTA ZAPATA, JULIA MEJIA,
RUTHZEE LOUIJEUNE, FITZGERALD, FLYNN, MURPHY, PEPÉN, SANTANA,
WEBER AND WORRELL



CITY OF BOSTON IN CITY COUNCIL

ORDER FOR A HEARING TO DISCUSS FOOD ACCESS,
SUSTAINABILITY, AND THE NEED FOR A FOOD HUB IN
EAST BOSTON

WHEREAS, East Boston is considered both an environmental justice community and a low-income, low-food access community by the U.S. Department of Agriculture. In Massachusetts today, 1 in 3 Hispanic/Latinx families with children are food insecure and in East Boston, 59% of residents are Hispanic/Latinx and 21% of the community's population are children. In short, East Boston faces numerous challenges related to accessing and affording healthy and sustainable food; *and*

WHEREAS, However, it's important to note that there is a range of existing community food assets that aim to address food access issues in the neighborhood. For example, though there is only one large-scale grocery store in East Boston (Shaw's), there are many corner stores and mini-marts that offer food items for purchase, as well as a seasonal farmers market that sells local produce; *and*

WHEREAS, Additionally, there are numerous food pantries, soup kitchens, and mobile market locations in East Boston that provide free meals and groceries to the community. To provide examples, Maverick Landing Community Services distributes healthy groceries to residents and has a robust food rescue program, East Boston Community Soup Kitchen offers both a hot meal and groceries on a weekly basis, and the Sacred Heart Parish hosts a free monthly community dinner. Finally, Eastie Farm, an urban agriculture organization, provides a subsidized community-supported agriculture (CSA) program; *and*

WHEREAS, In other parts of Boston, food insecurity has been addressed through creative solutions. These models could serve as inspiration for future actions to lower the disproportionately high food insecurity rates in East Boston. Some examples include the Dorchester Food Co-op, a community and worker-owned health & local food store, Daily Table, a non-profit, low-cost grocery store chain, and the Office of Food Justice's future Food Rescue Hub in Roxbury; *and*

WHEREAS, Boston needs to collect more information to fully understand the food access landscape in East Boston. Then, the city can craft a corresponding plan to fill the remaining gaps and address food insecurity and environmental justice issues in this neighborhood through a food hub or other similar solution; **NOW, THEREFORE BE IT**

OFFERED BY COUNCILORS GABRIELA COLETTA ZAPATA AND JULIA MEJIA

ORDERED: That the appropriate committee of the Boston City Council hold a hearing to discuss food access, sustainability, and the need for a food hub in East Boston and that the Office of Food Justice, relevant stakeholders, and the public be invited to testify.

Filed on: January 8, 2025