The New Orleans Food Policy Advisory Committee recommendations to the Economic Development Committee of the City Council in early January. Days later, the entire Council passes a resolution in support of all ten recommendations.

A task force, convened by Council President Arnie Fielkow, meets regularly to develop strategies for implementation of the recommendations. The PRC, the Food Trust, and other partners continue to educate state legislators and agencies about the opportunity to launch a financing program similar to Philadelphia’s Fresh Food Financing Initiative.

In the Fall, Steps to a Healthier LA/New Orleans gathers data to illustrate need for better access, including the development of a map showing the location of supermarkets before and after Katrina and a survey of low-income residents’ food preferences and purchase habits. Relationships are formed with the City Council, particularly with the Council President’s deputy chief of staff.

In May, the City Council authorizes the creation of a Food Policy Advisory Committee. (Partner logos shown below.)

Food Policy Advisory Committee Recommendations:

1. The City of New Orleans should adopt fresh food retailing as a priority for comprehensive neighborhood development and the City’s Office of Recovery and Development Administration should direct grants and loans to food retail projects located in target areas.
2. The City of New Orleans should reduce regulatory barriers to businesses that sell fresh food.
3. The City of New Orleans should provide tax incentives to encourage the sale of fresh food.
4. The City of New Orleans should prioritize security for supermarkets and grocery stores.
5. The City of New Orleans and the State of Louisiana should make economic development programs available to fresh food retailers.
6. The City of New Orleans and the State of Louisiana should address the need for transportation to supermarkets, grocery stores, and farmers’ markets.
7. The PRC and other agencies begin to look at best practices around the country. Food Policy Councils seem to have had success in other states and cities. Several groups begin to meet around the topic of food access in New Orleans, including Grow New Orleans and the Healthly Eating Coalition.
8. The State of Louisiana should develop a financing program that would provide grants and loans to supermarkets, smaller grocery stores, and other fresh food retailers to create vocational training opportunities in the fresh food retail sector.
9. The State of Louisiana should partner with fresh food retailers to create vocational training opportunities in the fresh food retail sector.
10. The New Orleans Food Policy Advisory Committee should serve as an ongoing, multi-stakeholder advisory body to the City Council.

Improving Access to Fresh, Healthy Food
The New Orleans Food Policy Advisory Committee