Johns Hopkins University WIC
Community Partnership for Healthy Mothers and Children

Purpose:
- Reduce chronic disease prevalence
- Focus on risk factors of poor nutrition and limited access

Policy, Systems, and Environmental strategies and *twin approach*
- **Population-strategies**
  - Baltimore and Maryland residents
- **Targeted interventions**
  - WIC participants
  - WIC eligible but not participating residents

This presentation will focus on population strategies
Step 1: We Need A Coalition

What We Did

Strengthened an existing multi sectored coalition with the complementary goal: Increase access to healthy and affordable food in food deserts

Partnered with The Baltimore Food Action Commission (Food Pac), a collaboration between the Baltimore City Departments of Planning and Health, Office of Sustainability, and Baltimore Development Corporation

Members: organizations focused on hunger; policy; retail; advocacy; farming/gardening; nutrition education; research; transportation; faith community; education; and health

But …. Where is WIC??
The Work Of Food PAC

LET’S GET IN ON THE ACTION!
Food PAC
Four Broad Strategies

1) Economic and Neighborhood Development
   Ex: Food Environment mapping

2) Government Relations and Labor
   Ex: Personal Property Tax Credit

3) Public Safety Operations and Affairs
   Ex: Food Desert Retail Transportation Strategy

4) Health, Human Services, and Youth
   Ex: Food Desert Healthy Corner Stores
Economic and Neighborhood Development
Food Environment Map
BFPI and The JH Center for a Livable Future

Purposes
- Draw attention to food access patterns in Baltimore
- Assist with policy development and implementation
- Identify where need for improved access to healthy food is concentrated

Overlays
- Emergency food outlets, government nutrition programs; food banks, stores that accept food stamps/WIC; schools offering free/reduced and summer meals

Used to develop Food Desert Retail Strategy to address healthy food access challenges/ barriers in Baltimore
2015 Baltimore City Food Environment

- **Food Desert**
- **Supermarkets**

**Alternative Healthy Food Retail**
- Public Markets
- Virtual Supermarkets

**Neighborhood Boundaries**
- **Major Parks**

A Food Desert is an area where: 1) The distance to a supermarket or supermarket alternative is more than ¼ mile, 2) The median household income is at or below 185% of the Federal Poverty Level, 3) Over 30% of households have no vehicle available, and 4) The average Healthy Food Availability Index score for all food stores is low.
Economic And Neighborhood Development
Food Environment Map

What We Did

Provided data to develop an overlay of City WIC clinic locations

Provided data to develop an overlay of City WIC vendors

Expanded WIC outreach activities

Located a WIC clinic within identified resource poor and limited food access neighborhood
**Food Desert:**
- 20% of Baltimorians live in a Food Desert

**Tax credit:** approved by City Council 2015, Mayor signed 2016
- 10-year, 80% credit against personal property tax for markets locating in or making significant improvements

**Qualifications**
- Food Desert location
- $\geq 150,000$ or $25$ per sq.ft expended on new personal property
- $\geq 500$ sq.ft. dedicated to fruit/vegetables
- $\geq 500$ sq.ft dedicated to other perishable goods
Attended City Council meetings

Provided written and vocal support in the community

Facilitated student involvement in the legislative process

Provided community education
Majority of Baltimoreans prefer to shop at full-service supermarkets.

Transportation strategy next necessary step to bring people to food and food to people.

Coalition provided Maryland Transit Authority guidance on how to address a new bus plan’s impact on food deserts.

Recommendations included: outfitting bus stops and busses for ease of grocery transport; partnering with ride sharing companies, shuttles, and mobile markets.
Public Safety Operations and Affairs
Food Desert Retail Transportation Strategy

What We Did

Provided data of City WIC clinic locations and WIC vendors

Supported and facilitated location of a farm truck convenient to WIC participants

Provided information about the special needs of families and parents traveling with children
Health, Human Services, and Youth
Example: Healthy Corner Stores (Baltimarket)

Approximately 660 Baltimore Corner Stores
- small stores selling a limited range of groceries and household goods
- mainly inner city residential areas
- more accessible to residents than larger full service markets

Baltimarket works with a subset of corner stores
- stocking/selling fruits, vegetables, whole grains, low-fat dairy, healthy snacks/drinks
- providing technical assistance, loans, grants, mentorship and supply chain development
- training Youth Neighborhood Food Advocates to promote healthy food options in the community
Healthy Corner Stores

What We Did

Provided information to corner stores to educate them on how to qualify as a WIC vendor.

Sat on the Healthy Corner Stores Task Force to provide guidance on recruiting and retaining Corner Store participants and Youth Neighborhood Food Advocates.

Provided data about WIC participants’ preferences for fruits and vegetables.
Summary

A Critical Lesson Learned

Linkages will advance the goals of the WIC Program

Partners enable both parties to achieve jointly which neither can accomplish alone

Prospective partners are “out there” and can expand the traditional WIC reach. Think outside the box!

JH WIC benefited from the existence of a previously convened coalition of approximately 60 diverse partners

However, establishing a partnership with even one other partner can advance and extend WIC’s work and impact
Conclusion
Get WIC at the Table!
Johns Hopkins University WIC
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A “multitude” of students