



AGENDA REPORT

TO: Jestin D. Johnson
City Administrator

FROM: Joe DeVries
Deputy City Administrator

SUBJECT: DoorDash Community Dining Credits

DATE: October 11, 2023

City Administrator Approval

Date: Oct 25, 2023

RECOMMENDATION

Staff Recommends That The City Council Adopt A Resolution Accepting And Overseeing The Distribution Of \$55,000 In Dining Credits Provided By DoorDash

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

DoorDash, an online food delivery company, has donated \$55,000 in dining credits to support Oakland's mission of combating food insecurity. This initiative aligns with our commitment to ensure that all residents have access to nutritious meals and groceries and addresses a critical need within our community. We have identified several nonprofit and community organizations, some of whom are already recipients of city funding in food distribution. By leveraging their established networks, we can efficiently distribute the dining credits to those in need.

Of the total donation, \$27,500 is immediately available for distribution. The remaining \$27,500 will become available in January 2024. This phased availability will help us effectively allocate resources to meet the pressing needs of our community.

BACKGROUND / LEGISLATIVE HISTORY

DoorDash, a community-focused organization, has donated \$55,000 in dining credits to support our battle against food insecurity within Oakland. This contribution is part of [Project DASH](#), a national initiative launched in 2018 to empower social impact organizations, including food banks and pantries. The core objective of Project DASH was to leverage the skills of Dashers and the advanced technology of DoorDash to streamline local deliveries for these organizations, ensuring that food and essential items are more conveniently accessible to their communities, all while maintaining the dignity of the recipients.

Black and Latinx communities, people with disabilities, and individuals who are not U.S. citizens rely more heavily on charitable food resources than their white counterparts, people without disabilities, and citizens. Yet, these community members face considerable barriers, from limited distribution hours to health conditions limiting mobility. These challenges often leave individuals without the sustenance they need. Coordinating with friends and family for food

pickups, arranging transportation, and finding the time to attend free grocery or meal sites can be daunting, emphasizing the urgent need for innovative solutions.

Since its inception in 2018, Project DASH has made a profound impact, delivering up to 80 million meals to those dealing with food insecurity, saving over 3 million estimated hours for recipients. This initiative has been particularly effective for adults aged 60 and older, many of whom have disabilities and relied on charitable food before home delivery became available, underscoring its critical importance.

Project DASH demonstrates the transformative potential of public-private partnerships and community collaboration in addressing food insecurity. By supporting this program, we emphasize our commitment to ensuring equitable access to healthy meals and prioritizing the well-being of our residents. Through strategic partnerships with nonprofit and community-based organizations, which have a history of receiving city funding for food distribution, we can tap into their well-established networks and operational efficiency to ensure fair distribution to those in need within our community.

ANALYSIS AND POLICY ALTERNATIVES

In distributing DoorDash dining credits to address food insecurity in Oakland, multiple cityside priorities are supported:

1. **Holistic Community Safety:** Providing access to nutritious meals has a positive impact on individuals' overall health and well-being, contributing to a safer and healthier community.
2. **Housing, Economic, and Cultural Security:** Access to food credits alleviates financial strain for low-income families while also playing a pivotal role in preserving cultural identities. Offering culturally relevant food options through these credits further ensures cultural security.
3. **Vibrant, Sustainable Infrastructure:** Collaborating with established nonprofit and community organizations for credit distribution leverages existing infrastructure, effectively addressing community needs, and promoting sustainability.
4. **Responsive, Trustworthy Government:** Partnering with reputable organizations and efficiently administering the donated credits underscores our commitment to responsible resource management. This fosters trust and confidence in the government's capacity to address community challenges.

Data from the Alameda County Food Bank reveals that Oakland has a sizable population of approximately 60,000 food-insecure residents. Some specific neighborhoods within our city grapple with food insecurity rates ranging between 19 and 22 percent. These statistics highlight the magnitude of the issue at hand and emphasize the urgency of our response.

Our recommended action is to collaborate with established nonprofit and community organizations, who possess the necessary infrastructure, expertise, and community reach to effectively serve vulnerable populations, ensuring that the DoorDash dining credits are directed to the most deserving recipients.

We Have Selected The Following Partner Organizations.

1. **Mercy Brown Bag Program** – Located in the Fruitvale district, the Mercy Brown Bag Program has a rich history spanning over four decades. Their primary mission is to provide assistance to older adults with limited resources who face food insecurity across Alameda County, as seniors represent a rapidly growing segment of the homeless population in both the United States and California. Notably, over 90% of their recipients are people of color, and over 50% are women. In June 2023, they served 3,271 adults in Oakland with 5,487 bags of groceries. These credits will provide a lifeline to many seniors who rely on fixed incomes and face the challenges of rising food costs. The DoorDash dining credits will enable between 200 and 250 Oakland seniors to supplement their provisions, particularly during the holidays, when the need is even more acute.
2. **Good Hope Resource Center** – Located in the Seminary area, this center operates under the sponsorship of the Good Hope Missionary Baptist Church and boasts a history spanning nearly five decades. They have been pivotal in the welfare of the community, providing services such as daycare, food distribution, and holiday initiatives. During the pandemic, the center distributed food boxes provided by the Alameda County Food Bank, which included fresh vegetables, milk, eggs, meat, and other wholesome foods. For almost half a century, they have distributed turkeys to the community during the holidays, ensuring that disadvantaged families, senior citizens, and people with disabilities have access to nourishing meals.
The DoorDash dining credits will empower between 200 and 250 Oakland families served by the Good Hope Resource Center to enhance their holiday celebrations by purchasing additional ingredients such as fresh produce, canned goods, bread, dairy, and more. This extra support will undoubtedly make their holiday feasts more special and complete.
3. **Center for Independent Living** – This organization is dedicated to advocating for and providing services to individuals with diverse disabilities, benefitting approximately 120 Oakland residents.. They serve a broad spectrum of individuals facing various challenges, including non-ambulatory or reduced mobility, visual and hearing impairments, cognitive, psychiatric, and neurological disabilities, chronic illnesses, and reduced capacity due to aging.
Given the unique needs of their community members, particularly in accessing food, the DoorDash dining credits will be instrumental in supporting those with mobility issues. Furthermore, DoorDash has demonstrated its commitment to accessibility by ensuring that their app is inclusive, incorporating features such as screen readers and providing telephone customer service support. These accessibility measures are particularly valuable for our community members with disabilities, making DoorDash an accessible and supportive option for those who need it most."

All three of the partner organizations selected have members within the community who can benefit significantly from this support in the form of \$27,500 in DoorDash dining credits, particularly during the holiday season. These partnerships not only provide a crucial opportunity to ensure that members of our community receive the support they require during a time of the year when a helping hand is especially meaningful, but they also underscore our trust in the expertise of these organizations for the fair and effective distribution of these vital resources."

In January 2024, another \$27,500 in credits will be issued, and we are actively collaborating with city departments and other contacts to identify additional organizations whose members could benefit from these credits, with a commitment to equitable distribution.

FISCAL IMPACT

There will be no fiscal impact on the city.

PUBLIC OUTREACH / INTEREST

We reached out to several community partners in the area of food distribution and nonprofit organizations that have been recipients of the Sugar-Sweetened Beverage Tax Community Grants. Their valuable insights and expertise contributed significantly to the development of this policy action.

COORDINATION

We actively collaborated with the Disability Services Division and the Aging Services Division within the Department of Human Services, drawing on their insight and expertise to address food insecurity and enhance community well-being.

Additionally, our affiliation with the Sugar Sweetened Beverage Advisory Board presents opportunities to explore the broader implications of this initiative. Our alignment with their mission to encourage healthier beverage consumption not only addresses food insecurity but also positively contributes to public health.

PAST PERFORMANCE, EVALUATION AND FOLLOW-UP

To maintain accountability and measure the impact of this initiative, we will conduct regular evaluations. Each partner organization will be required to provide reports on the number of credits used, including the number of individuals served and the types of services provided. We will closely monitor the distribution process, gather feedback from partner organizations, and assess the overall success of the program. These evaluations will inform future decisions and ensure the dining credits are utilized optimally.

SUSTAINABLE OPPORTUNITIES

Economic: Partnering with nonprofits and community-based organizations promotes economic resilience within our community. It allows us to support those organizations that empower local residents and contribute to economic growth.

Environmental: By addressing food insecurity and providing nutritious alternatives, we indirectly reduce the demand for single-use packaging and waste associated with unhealthy

food consumption. This promotes environmental sustainability by decreasing plastic waste and its impact on our local environment.

Race & Equity: This distribution strategy aims to ensure equity by reaching underserved communities.

ACTION REQUESTED OF THE CITY COUNCIL

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For questions regarding this report, please contact Michael Akanji, City Administrator Analyst, at 238-6454.

Respectfully submitted,



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