

Resolution

**Setting Forth the City of Emporia's Commitment
To Make Healthier Options Easily Accessible**

WHEREAS, the City of Emporia has the ability to affect the health of its residents; and

WHEREAS, high rates of costly chronic disease among both children and adults are correlated to environments with few or no options for healthy eating and active living; and

WHEREAS, more than half of Virginia's adults are overweight or obese and therefore at risk for many chronic conditions including diabetes, heart disease, cancer, arthritis, stroke, and hypertension; and

WHEREAS, one in three youth in Virginia is overweight or obese; and

WHEREAS, more children are being diagnosed with diseases linked to overweight and obesity previously seen only in adults, such as Type 2 diabetes and heart disease; and

WHEREAS, the current generation of children are expected to have shorter lives than their parents due to the consequences of obesity; and

WHEREAS, obesity takes a tremendous toll on the health and productivity of all Virginians; and

WHEREAS, the annual cost to Virginia – in medical bills, workers compensation and lost productivity – for overweight, obesity, and physical inactivity exceeds \$3 billion; and

WHEREAS, teens and adults who consume one or more sodas or sugar sweetened beverages per day are more likely to be overweight or obese; and

WHEREAS, supporting the health of residents and the local workforce would decrease chronic disease and health care costs and increase productivity; and

WHEREAS, the City of Emporia ranks 126 out of 133 in health outcomes and 131 out of 133 in health factors; and

WHEREAS, 34% of the adult population of the City of Emporia is obese; and

WHEREAS, 27% of the population of the City of Emporia is food insecure;

NOW, THEREFORE, LET IT BE RESOLVED that the City Council hereby recognizes that obesity is a serious public health threat to the health and wellbeing of adults, children and families in the City of Emporia, and a commitment is needed to put healthy choices within reach of all residents. While individual lifestyle changes are necessary, individual effort alone is insufficient to combat obesity's rising tide. Significant societal and environmental changes are needed to support individual efforts to make healthier choices. To that end, the City of Emporia adopts this Healthy Eating Active Living resolution:

- Facilitate the upkeep of community gardens and farmers markets to increase access to healthy food, including fresh fruits and vegetables;
- Include healthy goals and policies related to access to healthy food in the general plan update;
- Examine racial, ethnic, and socio-economic disparities in access to healthy foods and adopt strategies to remedy these inequities.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Community Health Advocacy Team (CHAT) will report back to the City Council annually regarding steps taken to implement the Resolution, additional steps planned, and any desired actions that would need to be taken by the City Council.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that Jan Harrell, Economic Development Manager, shall work with HEAL Cities & Towns Campaign Staff to explore HEAL policies and to identify those policies that are suitable for the City's unique local circumstances.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Community Health Advocacy Team (CHAT) will report back to this Council with recommendations not later than sixty days from the date of this Resolution.

Adopted: February 3, 2015

City of Emporia, Virginia

By Mary Person
Mary L. Person
Mayor

Attest:

Jessie S. Wilkins
City Clerk

Form Approved:

C. Butler Barnett
City Attorney