



Peoria City/County  
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### FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE ###

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## **Local Foods, Local Places Program Assisting with the creation of community-based food system plan in Peoria.**

PEORIA - Peoria is one of 15 communities selected to participate in Local Foods, Local Places (LFLP), a federal initiative that helps communities reinvest in existing neighborhoods and improve quality of life as they develop the local food economy.

Through LFLP, a team of agricultural, environmental, public health and economic development experts will work directly with the City of Peoria and other community members and organizations to develop a local food system action plan.

To gather input and direction for this plan, the LFLP team is holding a community workshop on May 22 and 23. During the workshop, participants will work collectively to envision a “community wellness hub” to improve access to food and nutrition resources in the Southside Neighborhood, connect neighborhood voices to development plans for more equitable outcomes, and provide business development and employment pathways for local ag community and food service industry to thrive.

“This technical assistance will provide vital support in coalescing and structuring the extant efforts in the neighborhood that are working toward collaborative, community-forward solutions in the healthy food and wellness spheres,” said Ross Black, Community Development Director for the City of Peoria.

Black serves alongside multiple local partners on the LFLP steering committee. The steering committee consists of representatives of the Southside Community United for Change (SCUC), OSF, The Well Farm, Peoria City/County Health Department, The Regional Fresh Food Council, and the Greater Peoria Economic Development Council. This group has worked with federal and state partners to coordinate the upcoming workshop.

Martha Ross, LFLP steering committee member and President of SCUC, a group of Southside neighborhood leaders, said, “The history of the South Side speaks for itself. Some of the biggest players throughout the City the country were raised on the South Side, and we are excited to bring investment into the community. Given the resources, the neighborhood would love to see more forward momentum and take the initiative to make the change we want to see, because we live here—we don’t want to leave here.”

Before the workshop, participants can tour 1312 SW Adams St.—a potential site for a “community wellness hub” development—where the LFLP steering committee is organizing a pop-up demonstration of food and health related services such as a food hub, a commercial kitchen, health services, financial services, and more.

For more information about Local Foods, Local Places visit <https://www.epa.gov/smartgrowth/local-foods-local-places>

For media inquiries and more information about the workshop, including registration, contact Sara Maillacheruvu at 309-494-8634 or by email at [smailacheruvu@peoriagov.org](mailto:smailacheruvu@peoriagov.org)

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