

## World Café Notes – Central CA Convening – April 6th, 2017

### **Topic: Housing & Economic Development**

- What are the needs/challenges?
  - Housing – not enough availability
  - High speed railroad (people are going to be pushed out)
  - Economic Development – jobs will be available to Fresno
  - Housing – purchasing a home is not even a thought for most
  - Living in a certain zip code
  - Education needed to buy homes
  - Buildings that are under development – inventory low
  - Raising prices – neighborhood, teaching people in the communities (ex. Rent deposit), addressing communities of color being pushed out
  
- Where is the momentum in the region?
  - San Joaquin is growing. TCE funds coming in Fresno
  - Biggest challenge how are funds being used
  - How do we manage what is being done? What does affordable housing look like in rural areas?
  
- What are some local actions that can be taken to address this issue?
  - State level tie dollars 2 year zoning
  - You have to be develop up and not out
  - Communities not zoning the way they should
  - No banking in area where there is housing in general
  - Housing – catalyst for economic development
  
- What are some state/federal actions that could be valuable for this issue?
  - Policy for slum living – community residents need to speak up and need to be in the loop on the issues on housing involving residents
  - Organizational leads share the needs to community residents so they know what is going on
  - It's up to organizational leads to make sure we are engaging community residents to attend city council meetings
  - Advocacy, help residents be part of board members
  - Allies of the city – it looks different in every community
  - Residents should know who their decision makers are

- City members – sometimes don't always outreach to the people they should be reaching out to
- How stable is the funding for state level?

## **Topic: Food Recovery**

- What are the needs/challenges?
  - Liability issues around being a donator
  - Challenge in setting up the system to distribute
  - Need for different system and supply chain
  - Requirements, cost, time intensive
  - Coordination and technology
  - Central CA more large farms
- Where is the momentum in the region?
  - Merced gleaning program with volunteers and food bank (just getting going in collaboration with SNAP \$) – Merced and Mariposa
  - Schools with sharing tray for other students or distribute out (Winton)
  - Merced food Project builds garden boxes and does education (SNAP \$)
  - Merced food bank – community food boxes that are available that include perishables
  - Food To Share (Fresno Metro Ministries: <http://www.fresnometmin.org/programs/community-food-systems/29-food-to-share.html>) website-based recovering food from a variety of locations – how duplicate in other counties
  - Catered Recovery App on Fresno state campus to avoid throwing away
  - Fresno some schools doing share trays for milk (some agencies support USDA)
  - Minnesota Staple Food Ordinance – requires all stores to carry basics – trying to do something like this in Merced, doing “Farm to Store”
- What are some local actions that can be taken to address this issue?
  - Waving fees for community gardens (Merced County Planning/ Zoning dept) – make process easier
  - Get/require farmers to donate X% of crops to community
  - District and local school level discussions about milk and other food are necessary to do what's necessary to help students be fed and healthy
  - Educating people about “Good Samaritan Law” to dispel issues related to liability
  - Create incentives for those who donate
- What are some state/federal actions that could be valuable for this issue?
  - Water recovery efforts
  - Food sharing in communities

- Food recovery network (nationwide?)
- Maybe connecting with mid-size farms

## **Topic: Education and Employment**

- What are the needs/challenges?
  - Many community colleges in the region, but Stanislaus State, UC Merced, Fresno State only 4 yr options
  - Traditional ideals can mean older sibling don't go to school outside of valley
  - Can improve health professional/ doctor/ med school options – currently a gap in options
  - Many undergrad programs but very few graduate/ PhD programs– more schools vs. program options (either one, but need more local advanced degree options)
  - Takes longer to complete nursing programs out of state
  - Agriculture programs suffer brain drain – graduate and move – focus more biz/large scale
  - Broaden programs being utilized by students
  - Increase Teacher salaries to pull them here
  - Mid-high schools opportunities for Drs. Academy – support them to go to school
  - Interested in higher ed – some schools offer tech credits for job training in high school
  - Need to teach life skills and reduce stigma for vocational programs – but also need to give options equally for high and low income student populations
- Where is the momentum in the region?
  - High speed rail – increase education/employment options?
  - Access to jobs in Bay Area / LA etc. Cost of living in these cities so high-may pull young professionals back to the valley (can buy a home/\$ goes further) but can work in Bay/LA, etc. – But will they be invested in the community? Challenge proximity to family

## **Topic: Labor / Land & Resources**

- What are the needs/challenges?
  - Majority of workers worldwide/ locally are women – immigration and sexual assault, etc
  - Mechanisms for production and processing that are historically hand-picked (complicates labor process and health).
  - Responsibilities of growers to address each of these
  - Balance innovation and cost – expect products to be cheap perpetuated by market structures, food subsidies

- Human elements get left out of national conversation – mechanized com prod. Vs. human, fresh, hand picked
  - As costs go up can push growers to favor machine production
  - Land/resources ties into these power dynamics; also face disconnect – language barriers etc between growers and workers
  - Need farmer on our side to push CA agenda broadly- look for win-win
  - Valley supply chain – food leaves; local lack access – structures focused on export system vs to keep it here
  - Immigration / fear some people in power don't want to have these conversations
  - Food system set up large farmers exploring; very local farms less in between ex. Schools have volume needs to high for local farms so keeps challenge going; keeps things separated
  - Agriculture corps; multi-million \$ corps ship elsewhere using limited local water, communities struggle – strain resources, employment pool
  - Labor standards -501b's limited-give back through building a park vs improving standards
  - Limited land available for co-ops – need to know how; etc
  - Labor; No access to harvest they pick
  - Incentive for labor rights not enough –must be forced
  - Consumer role and power; in central valley less disposable income
  - Need to build awareness among consumers to ID companies with bad practices
  - Representation of demographics in our work – use black and brown bodies for \$ but no outreach to those people and they lack political power
- Where is the momentum in the region?
    - Labels/ and labor standards into organics certification etc. to ID produce that is made using good labor standards. Options out there but complex (pit farmers against e/o; cost with certification) etc
    - Role of conscious capitalism – some movement in California
    - Role of/leverage with end consumers vs corporations
    - Driscoll's boycott, films re: food system raising awareness
    - Sac-repurpose vacant lots (tax incentives for land owners) for community gardens. Maybe push down here? Has been successful
    - Locally lifted some water use restrictions for community gardens
- What are some local actions that can be taken to address this issue?
    - Fresno state has 1-2 acres of land with no organic farming
    - Educate people about connection to our food –awareness is key – extend to politicians as well
    - ID pockets for change – schools, non-profits, etc to allow people to connect to own food

- Need to include longer term goals we share – at times disconnect at grassroots level with lofty justice goals. Staying in balance with CDC rules and funding can be hard – need organic off the bat?
  - Flexible \$/ purse strings can be hard to find
  - Repurpose “ugly” defective fruits/veggies
  - Hubs for innovation around social entrepreneurship – but can’t bring in tech / biz without community too
  - Something like farmers market and open air markets, co-ops, etc
  - Land/resources-establish co-ops in food deserts – farmers markets etc
  - Public Health starting to reach out more to labor groups, UFW – more successful with younger leaders on both sides
- What are some state/federal actions that could be valuable for this issue?
    - Food subsidies – farm bill prioritizing low market prices for unhealthy options- heavily lobbied – makes it hard to change
    - Corporate pressure up
    - Ag link a great resource – need more like that, region/state wide
    - Office of farm to fork to emerge in a more solid manner – hope to down the line connect people across state (farmers etc)

## **Topic: Food Insecurity**

- What are the needs/challenges?
  - No access to healthy foods and produce
  - Central Valley food basket of the world
  - Expensive, affordability, transportation is a big issue – key
  - Addressing – people enrolling to CalFresh challenge of making money stretch
  - Fresno State Farmers market – expensive
  - Bring more access to healthy food and 7-11 across the street
  - Requirements have changed to qualify for EBT
  - Infrastructure having a local grocery store in areas where needed
  - Need grocery stores in areas that need fresh produce
  - Food stable ordinance – milk, fruits, veggies
  - Rural environments- transportation forced to shop where you can and when you can
  - Fast food environment-people don’t know how to prepare healthy foods
  - Education and poverty root cause
  - Unhealthy food is food insecurity
  
- Where is the momentum in the region?
  - Local action – how do we create an incentive to bring in a retailer with good quality food, create an environment where grocery stores can bring in good produce in food desert areas

- Big questions- where does the money come in?
- Neighborhoods are getting forgotten and business owners are going up north, leaving areas where there is poverty
- Farmers markets and schools with EBT
- Farmers markets – EBT, but not in communities that need them
- Market match – to look at different reimbursements – can transition to grocery stores
- Bringing in farmers markets on campus
- Mobile vending in areas that need them before bringing in grocery stores. Building a base
- Market co-ops run by community
  
- What are some local actions that can be taken to address this issue?
  - Poverty – root cause of food insecurity – how do address to keep food in the central valley (the food)
  - Large farmers selling to small grocery stores, they lose profit, then selling to other countries
  - How to have small farms sell to local grocery stores
  - Local food bank working strategy “food insecurity is not always hunger”
  - Inability to access to healthy food
  - Build awareness in our neighborhood
  
- What are some state/federal actions that could be valuable for this issue?
  - Eligible for CalFresh
  - Advocacy of what is needed
  - WIC vouchers - \$5 coupon checks – vendors have to be certified
  - How do we make sure there is enough resources that are needed
  - Market match – WIC
  - Continue to advocate at levels
  - Figure out the benefit of multi-stakeholders of our end goal that we want. Be strategic about how can get what we want