

Healthy Corner Store Network



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A Healthy Corner Store is...

A partnership between store owners, communities, and organizations that can facilitate access to healthier food options in underserved communities and food deserts.



Purpose

- The purpose of the Healthy Corner Store Network is to improve the availability of healthy, quality, and affordable foods in areas with limited access (food deserts) through enhancements to existing, convenient, and local small retail outlets.



Food Access through Corner Stores

- Corner stores are common in low income communities where supermarket access is limited ¹
- Economic Development Strategy
 - The convenience store sector is a \$400 billion dollar industry ²
 - Improving nutritional quality of product mix and addressing structural, safety, and design issues are less costly than constructing a new store ³

[1] Lent, M. R., Vander Veur, S., Mallya, G., McCoy, T. A., Sanders, T. A., Lawman, H. G., ... Foster, G. D. (2015). Purchasing patterns of adults, adolescents and children in urban corner stores: Quantity, spending and nutritional characteristics. *Public Health Nutrition*, 18(9), 1706–1712.

[2] 2011. The Food Trust for Healthy Corner Stores Network. Healthy Corner Stores Issue Brief.

[3] 2008. PolicyLink. Equitable Development Toolkit - Corner Stores.

Healthy Corner Store Network



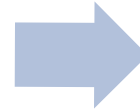
2013

- CAN DO Houston piloted the Healthy Corner Store initiative in the Sunnyside community in 2 corner stores.



2014

- Initiated an expanded and full pilot in 6 corner stores across 2 communities (Sunnyside and North Pasadena) through partnership between CAN DO Houston, the Houston Health Department, Harris County Public Health, and Healthy Living Matters.



2017

- A total of 10 healthy corner stores within this network plus at least 5 “pipeline sites” prepared for expansion in different communities.

Locations

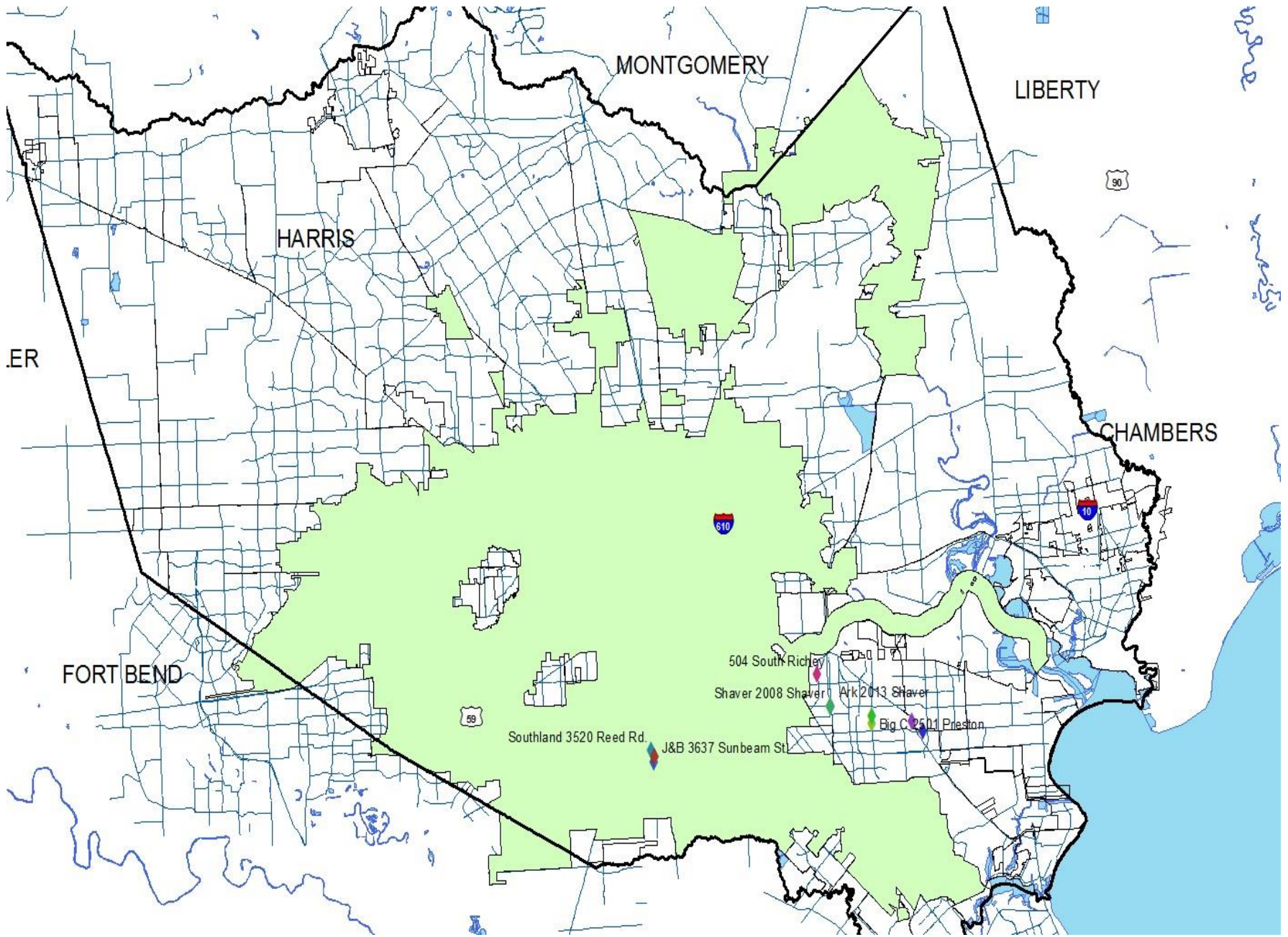
Sunnyside Healthy Corner Store Locations (3):

- J&B Food Market, 3637 Sunbeam Street, Houston, TX, 77051
- Southland Food Mart, 3520 Reed Road, Houston, TX, 77051
- Texas Market Place, 9505 Scott Street, Houston, TX, 77051

Pasadena Healthy Corner Store Locations (7):

- MC Food Store, 504 Richey Street, Pasadena, TX, 77506
- Shaver Food Mart, 2008 Shaver Street, Pasadena, TX, 77502
- Ark Food Store, 2013 Shaver Street, Pasadena, TX, 77502
- BIG C, 2501 Preston Rd, Pasadena, TX, 77503
- Fuel Express Red Bluff, 5010 Red Bluff Road, Pasadena, TX, 77503
- Fuel Express Spencer Hwy, 7339 Spencer Hwy, Pasadena, TX, 77505
- Jack's Grocery, 2743 Preston Ave, Pasadena, TX, 77503





Objectives



- ↑ Increase local access to healthy food options
- ↑ Increase inventory and variety of affordable and fresh produce in corner stores
- ↑ Increase sales of healthier items in corner stores
- ↑ Increase customer awareness and purchase of healthier options
- ↑ Increase store owner knowledge of marketing and fresh produce handling

Houston's Unique & Strategic Approach

- ✓ **Capacity Building** – Support structural capacity of stores
- ✓ **Partnership** – Facilitate various strategic partnerships (residents, store owners, local farmers, government, schools, health professionals, etc.)
- ✓ **Health Education and Food Demonstrations** – Increase demand plus community's knowledge and skill to select healthy food options
- ✓ **Marketing and Promotions** – Culturally noticeable brand and marketing materials; quarterly promotions to incentive the purchase of healthier options
- ✓ **Engagement** – Informed by community; outreach efforts; engage local youth and nearby schools
- ✓ **Decision Prompts** – Strategically positioned healthy food options and signage
- ✓ **Technical Assistance** – Provide technical assistance and resources to owners

Healthy Corner Store Network

Partners

“Backbone” Collaboration

- CAN DO Houston
- Houston Health Department
- Go Healthy Houston
- Harris County Public Health
- Healthy Living Matters

Numerous Partners

- Community Members and Organizations
- Urban Farmer
- Blue Cross and Blue Shield of Texas
- Urban Harvest
- Houston Food Bank
- Prairie View A&M Extension
- American Heart Association
- Texas Medical Center Health Policy Institute
- Texas A&M School of Public Health
- Baylor College of Medicine
- Texas Southern University
- HDEART Consortium
- ...and many more!



Evidence Value

Providing incentives to food retailers, financial or non-financial, is a CDC recommended strategy to promote the availability of affordable healthy food.



Improving the product mix at existing small stores is less complex and costly than constructing a new store, and can enhance access to healthy food by building on existing and potential community resources.

-PolicyLink (2008)

Outcomes

INVENTORY CHANGES

- The Healthy Corner Store Network (HCSN) increases the inventory and variety of fresh, affordable produce plus other healthier food options (snacks, beverages, etc.)

INCREASED SALES OF FRESH PRODUCE

- The HCSN increases sales of healthier food options.

ATTRACTIVENESS & VISIBILITY

- HCSN marketing, displays, and promotions of healthy items improves customer awareness.



Community Feedback

Customer Participation in Food Demonstrations & General Feedback?

59% of customers participated in a food demonstration

- Many purchased items to prepare the recipes at home
- Most frequent comments about food demonstrations were “I really enjoyed that sample!” and “Good healthy alternative”

When asked their thoughts about the program, customers commented that:

“I like having access to food from my apartment”

“I love the fresh products for good prices. I take my grandchildren to buy fruits here”



Community Feedback

Did Customers notice HCS displays?

On average, 58% of customers stated that they noticed the HCS Displays (increase from 30% to 70%; 2014-2016)

- Of those, over 50% subsequently purchased HCS items while in the store
- Popular HCS items purchased while in the store included:

Bananas	Onions
Plums	Potatoes
Apples	Granola Bars
- Those respondents who did not purchase HCS items noted that they had come into the store for something else



Outcomes

INCREASE IN CONSUMER DEMAND FOR HEALTHY ITEMS

- The Healthy Corner Store Network (HCSN) impacts customer purchases and perceptions of healthy foods

FOOD PROCUREMENT

- The HCSN connects store owners with convenient and affordable local vendor options for fresh fruits, vegetables, snacks and other healthy products

STORE OWNER ENGAGEMENT

- The HCSN increases store owner knowledge of marketing and handling of fresh produce, as well as commitment



Store Owner Feedback

What Did Store Owners/Store Personnel Think About HCS?

HCS has a positive impact on the corner stores

- “[our customers] are happy that we carry healthy foods now”
- “people double think about buying [either] chips or a healthy option”

According to store managers, the most popular items were:

Plums	Apples
Bananas	Potatoes
Oranges	Fruit cups



OVERVIEW

EAT FRESH, FEEL GREAT!



↑ 10
Healthy
corner
stores

50% of
those who
observe
healthy
items go on
to purchase

70+
in-store
food
demos

↑
Increased
profit
margins:
20 - 75%

70%
increased
awareness
of labeled
items

↑
Increased
purchase of
healthy
options

↑
Increased
value to
local small
businesses

Next Steps

- Point-of-Sale (POS) Systems for Evaluation
- Expansion of the Healthy Corner Store Network*
- Food Procurement System
- More Strategic Partnerships*
- Community Outreach & Marketing*
- Policy Development*



Houston Health Department (HHD)

- HHD and Go Healthy Houston provided grant support to facilitate pilot across 3 corner stores in Sunnyside

- Continued HHD staff support
 - Participation in on-site nutrition education and food demonstrations
 - Development of marketing materials
 - Provision of fresh produce from City gardens to support quarterly promotions (customer incentives)

- Facilitate communication, assistance, and involvement across relevant City Departments

Opportunities through the City of Houston

- Establish a Healthy Corner Store Program in the City of Houston

- City funding for a Healthy Corner Store Program
 - \$1 million for store improvements and infrastructure
 - A minimum of \$200,000 per year for programming costs (depending on store size and status)
 - At least 50 participating corner stores within 4 years

- Houston Health Department as location for program
 - Public accountability of City's investment
 - Staff plus involvement with programming and evaluation
 - Partnerships for content expertise, implementation, and standards development

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