

MAKE A HEALTHY CORNER STORE & ENCOURAGE HEALTHY EATING

City of St. Louis Sustainable Neighborhood Initiative



Health food signage in the upgraded corner store

DESCRIPTION

By encouraging stores to improve their food and service offerings to be more healthy and local, they encourage and enable healthier eating habits in the most accessible places for residents. Stores can also be places to introduce new food varieties, share tips, offer classes, or provide helpful resources to educate buyers about healthy eating. Upgrades can be made to both the inside of the store. Inside can include new shelves, marketing of healthy food, and the layout of the shop. Exterior improvements can include signage, lighting, accessibility, and general building improvements.

NEIGHBORHOOD BENEFITS

Environmental

- Residents walking and biking for short trips instead of driving long distances to get fresh food

Social

- Increased overall health because of better access to healthy food options
- Decreased rates of obesity, diabetes, and heart disease
- Healthier children and adults will live longer
- Flexibility to meet unique tastes and preferences of residents
- Increased sense of place and neighborhood identity with unique stores

Economic

- Growth of new customers and more business from existing customers
- Support for community gardens, local farms, and farmers
- Support for local independent businesses keeps money in the local economy



Upgraded D&F Grocery Store in Dutchtown, St. Louis



Fresh Produce in an upgraded corner store

RELATED TOOLS

When paired with other tools, upgrading your local corner store and teaching healthy eating habits can contribute to a greater and more holistic, sustainable neighborhood. Think about access to fresh, healthy food options, local prosperity, and healthy vibrant communities. Try combining these various strategies with:

- **Establish a Community Garden or Local Food Installation**
- **Start a Shop Local or Green Business Campaign**

EXAMPLES

Manchester Market in the Grove, St. Louis, MO

The updated market puts fresh meat and produce in a more visible and accessible place near the front.

D&F Grocery in Dutchtown, St. Louis, MO

New name and products improved image of store and neighborhood.

Carrie's Corner Market, St. Louis, MO

Improves ADA accessibility and educational material for customers.



Upgraded Manchester Market in the Grove

GET STARTED

1. **Collaborate** If you are a corner store owner and are interested in upgrading your store, approach the team at the St. Louis Healthy Corner Store Project to get started. This organization is a joint program of the University of Missouri Extension, City of St. Louis Departments of Health and Public Safety, and the St. Louis Development Corporation.
2. **Contact** If you are a neighborhood resident that sees the need for an upgrade to your local corner store, approach the store owner and talk about the possibility of participating in the St. Louis Healthy Corner Store Project. If more support is needed, work with your neighborhood association.
3. **Learn** Review the [St. Louis Healthy Corner Store Resource Guide](#), the [Healthy Corner Stores Network](#), [PolicyLink](#), and [Market Makeovers](#).
4. **Plan** The [Market Makeovers](#) website offers great information about what to do before, during, and after your market makeover, including tips on finding funding, building community support, and marketing.
5. **Seek Funding** Funding for your project can come from various sources, including grant funding, monies from your neighborhood association, or from private investors. Some sources to consider are [United Way of St. Louis](#), [Missouri Foundation for Health](#), [St. Louis Department of Health](#), [City Greens](#), [Robert Wood Johnson Foundation Local Funding Partnerships](#), [US Department of Agriculture](#), and the [US Department of Housing and Urban Development](#).
6. **Partner** Consider the benefits of partnering with a local school or university to get help redesigning and rebuilding a part of your store with shelves or awnings, designing new marketing materials, a marketing campaign, signage for new products, creating a budget and funding plan, or creating partnerships with local gardens and farms.

OPPORTUNITIES

1. **Educate** Educational programs to accompany your new food choices can vary depending on your resources. You can offer guided tours of your store, speak about healthy eating and healthy food choices at neighborhood or local school meetings, participate with children in the neighborhood to promote and teach about healthy food, offer recipe booklets that use fresh and healthy ingredients, or create a sample section so customers can try fresh produce or healthy recipes. There are many organizations that support health food education that you may be able to partner with including [Small Changes for Health](#), [STL Food Factory](#), [HELP-SLPS](#), [Trailnet](#), local churches, schools, and restaurants.
2. **Go Local** Healthy markets can be supported by nearby community gardens, food cooperatives, and local farmers markets. Store owners can feature weekly specials from gardens or markets while also involving the farmers or sellers to create recipes or cooking classes for the items on sale.



Samples of healthy foods at a corner store

RELATED SUSTAINABILITY PLAN CATEGORIES

This tool supports the following goals and strategies:

Urban Character, Vitality & Ecology

Strategies J4-Preserve neighborhood residential areas, and commercial and mixed uses on corners and major urban corridors.

Empowerment, Diversity & Equity

Strategies: C10-Ensure youth and families have access to healthy food; F4-Ensure equal distribution of healthy food options.

Health, Well-being & Safety

Strategies: C1-Eliminate food deserts and improve access to fresh produce; C2-Connect Food growers with food eaters; C5-Make farmers markets and other local food access systems readily available to everyone; C6-Make healthy food options the most convenient choice; C7-provide education on nutrition.

Prosperity, Opportunity & Employment

Strategies: B2-Encourage small scale redevelopment with economic incentives; C3-Focus on small business as a key part of the City and global economy.

For the most current examples, updated tools, and information, visit the City's Sustainable Neighborhood Initiative website:

SUSTAINABLENEIGHBORHOOD.NET