



April 19, 2022

Antonina Simeti, Chair
Food Policy Council of Buffalo & Erie County
95 Franklin Street
Buffalo, NY 14202

Re: Proposed Dollar General
Location: 897 East Eagle Street, Buffalo NY, 14210

Dear Ms. Jacob,

The Food Policy Council of Buffalo and Erie County (FPC) has reviewed the above-referenced document referred to us by the City of Buffalo Office of Strategic Planning. We recognize the ongoing work involved in implementing the City's Comprehensive Plan and Unified Development Ordinance and offer the following comments:

- The FPC's 2020 *Local Food Action Plan* encourages, "policies and programs that help ensure equitable access to healthy, affordable food through increased food availability and accessibility" and recommends that healthy options in corner- and other small stores be supported and expanded upon in all neighborhoods, but especially those with low food access. The proposed Project is located in a census tract considered to be "Low Income and Low Access at ½ Miles" by the USDA's Food Access Research Atlas. These areas are defined as low-income census tracts where a significant share of residents are more than one half-mile from a supermarket. The adjacent census tract is also considered Low Income and Low Access but residents are typically more than one mile from a supermarket. Both census tracts exhibit a significant share of residents without access to a personal vehicle.
- The City should work with the applicant/developer to ensure that healthy food options are available at the site. The Buffalo Healthy Corner Store Initiative (HCSI) is a collaboration of over two-dozen partners from private, non-profit, and public sectors to address limited healthy food access and to improve diet related behaviors in under-resourced communities. Many of these communities report a high reliance on local corner stores and neighborhood stores. These food insecure communities are more likely to have a higher rate of nutrition related diseases including hypertension, diabetes, some types of cancer, and obesity. HCSI offers a multilevel approach to engage local communities in the importance making healthier choices. To learn more about the HCSI or to participate, please contact Sheila Bass, Healthy Corner Store Initiative Coordinator, at 716-645-1912 or sab69@cornell.edu.
- Inadequate, or absent, pedestrian and cyclist amenities present a major barrier to food access in communities with low vehicle access. The City should work with the applicant/developer to ensure that pedestrian and cyclist connectivity (i.e., repair of sidewalks, installation of crosswalks, availability of bike racks) to nearby neighborhoods is considered during project review.

Members of the Council would be happy to meet with you or your staff to offer further detail, as well as to review any parts of our *Local Food Action Plan* or our work to implement it, including how best to coordinate with your planning efforts. An electronic version of the Plan can be found at erie.gov/foodactionplan.

Thank you for your thoughtful consideration.

Sincerely,

Antonina Simeti

AS: seg

cc: Sarah Gatti, Principal Planner, Erie County Department of Environment and Planning

Our mission is to advocate for an equitable and sustainable food system for the people of Buffalo and Erie County.

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