

## Partners for Places Project Lessons Report

**Project Name:** *Mobile Food Market for Low-Income Community*

- **Year Complete:** 2013
- **Local Government:** City of Chattanooga, TN
- **Local Foundation:** Community Foundation of Greater Chattanooga / Benwood Foundation

### **Project Purpose**

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To integrate a mobile market system/pilot of delivering fresh and locally-grown produce to low-income families.

### **Key Lessons Learned**

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*Lessons learned about tools and tactics through the project that other sustainability directors could use to advance their work.*

Building an assets based community was a good tool to use for engaging the local community. The tool was broad in scope but was able to be used to narrow the focus to a single topic or issue. The Community Healthy Living Index was another tool used to engage community members to assess their own environment and create a plan of action to address specific needs, opportunities and strengths.

*Lessons for developing a collaborative process between a local government sustainability director and local place-based foundation(s).*

Well-developed planning, communication, strong letters of support, well researched project and community support are key components for any collaborative effort. Working with government officials required understanding of political climate, priority focus areas, and financial strength of each party. Clear articulation of the responsibilities and expectations of each party, and a designated coordinator to hold all parties accountable helped tremendously.

### **Additional Information and Resources**

Approximately 3 million people in the United States live in a “food desert” – a geographical area, generally with a low-income population, which lacks convenient access to grocery stores or supermarkets and limited access to fresh food – so The Mobile Food Market has taken the opportunity to address this.

The Chattanooga Mobile Food Market continues to maintain a thriving presence in the Chattanooga area, as it partners with local grocery stores and community centers to provide healthy nutrition options to isolated communities. Access more information on the mobile food market [here](#) and [here](#).