



CITY OF SANTA BARBARA

PARKS AND RECREATION COMMISSION REPORT

AGENDA DATE: March 22, 2017

TO: Parks and Recreation Commission

FROM: Recreation Division, Parks and Recreation Department

SUBJECT: Recognition of Food Distribution Volunteers

RECOMMENDATION: That the Commission receive a presentation regarding the Food Distribution program and recognize program volunteers for their commitment to serving our community through the food distribution program held at three City of Santa Barbara locations.

DISCUSSION:

In 1997, the Parks and Recreation Department (Department) approached the Foodbank of Santa Barbara County and discussed the possibility of a developing a program that would provide free food to families at locations within the City of Santa Barbara. Later that year, the Department hosted the first food distribution event at the Lower Westside Center and more than 400 individuals were served.

Since 1997, the Food Distribution program has grown to 13 food distribution events per month at three City of Santa Barbara locations – Parque de Los Niños, the Franklin Neighborhood Center, and the Westside Neighborhood Center. Through these distributions, residents are provided with fresh, local produce and canned and packaged goods that are donated to the Foodbank from local grocery stores, farms and individuals through their food programs. During the first six months of Fiscal Year 2017, more than 45,000 pounds of food was distributed to local residents.

The success and growth of the program has been possible with the support of many generous community volunteers. In Fiscal Year 2016 alone, volunteers donated 1,500 hours to support food distribution events. Volunteers assist City staff with set up, breakdown, cleaning, distribution of food, translation and program outreach. A number of volunteers have been active for more than 15 years and rarely miss a distribution. Through rain or shine, volunteers are committed to serving program participants and assisting the City with the implementation of the program. They are dedicated to serving their fellow residents and improving our communities through health and nutrition.

It is with great gratitude that the Parks and Recreation Department recognizes the volunteers of the Department's Food Distribution program for their time and dedication.

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