

Week 29: How can you, as district supervisor, get more grocery stores into District 11?

Michael Lai

I live next to the Safeway on Mission Street, but large parts of District 11 (Lakeview/OMI, Outer Mission, Crocker Amazon, Excelsior near McLaren) are food deserts. I would use all of my creativity and fundraising/business experience to bring more grocery stores to D11!

District 11 has a demand problem — from a chain grocery store's perspective they are likely to pick another San Francisco location with more sales and parking. Short term, I would leverage all of my business, finance and negotiating experience to pitch grocers and make it easy for them, providing incentives like favorable lease conditions, organizing to collect neighbor signatures, streamlining permits and proactively pitching grocery stores to make an ROI case for parcels in District 11 (for example, the old Pacific Super lot which I've heard may be stalled on a climbing gym could be perfect.) Other spots may include small lots on Broad/Randolph once they are rezoned.

Long term, more foot traffic for grocery stores requires upzoning and building more mixed use commercial and residential on Geneva/Broad/Randolph, etc. But it's not just big grocers, it's supporting more neighborhood grocers like El Chico, and exploring other ways to bring healthy food, like the first farmer's market to Excelsior and to Lakeview/OMI.