



**Charlottesville-Albemarle Metropolitan Planning Organization**  
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**Memorandum**

**TO:** CHART Committee  
**FROM:** MPO Staff  
**DATE:** November 27, 2007  
**RE:** Food System Access Presentation

Alex Linthicum, a second-year graduate student in Systems Engineering and Urban and Environmental Planning at UVA, is concluding an independent study with Professors Timothy Beatley and Tanya Denkla-Cobb titled “Quantifying Access to Local Food Systems.” Mr. Linthicum will make a Power Point presentation to the CHART Committee at its December 5<sup>th</sup> meeting about his research, and has provided the following summary of the project.

**Quantifying access to local food systems**

Returning to a local food system of small and medium-sized producers and local distribution networks is gaining popularity among environmentalists, food safety and security advocates, nutritionists, planning professionals, and ‘green’-oriented consumers. Despite the fact that local distribution systems have a significant transportation component, little literature addressing transportation issues (such as accessibility) currently exists. Furthermore, the studies, policies, and popular references that do exist suggest a wide variety of definitions of the term *local*. These same sources use relatively simple metrics to identify accessibility to local food. This study examines local food from a transportation perspective. It reviews the concept of food miles as well as several definitions of local food. It also analyzes several methods of determining accessibility to local food.