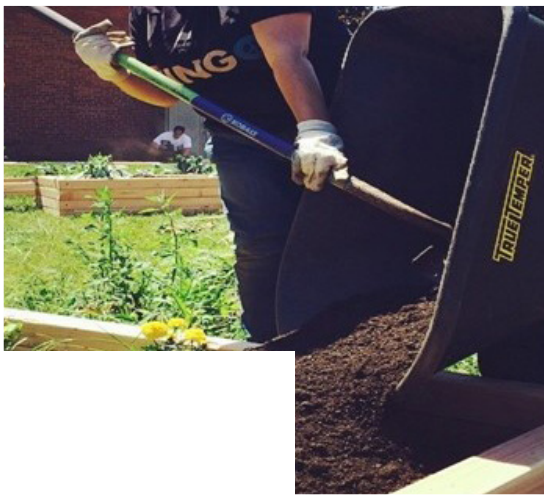

LOCAL FOOD ACTION PLAN

CITY OF COLUMBUS & FRANKLIN COUNTY, OHIO

CITY OF COLUMBUS & FRANKLIN COUNTY OHIO

LOCAL FOOD ACTION PLAN

The Local Food Action Plan was developed by the Local Food Action Plan Project Team, consisting of staff from Columbus Public Health, Franklin County Economic Development and Planning, and Local Matters.

FOR MORE INFORMATION:

Visit www.columbus.gov/LFAP to learn more about the planning process.

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THE CITY OF COLUMBUS
ANDREW J. GINTHER, MAYOR
COLUMBUS PUBLIC HEALTH

Franklin County
Where Government Works

Local Matters

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Matters
FOR ALL

INTRODUCTION

In 2010, the United States Department of Agriculture (USDA) described 275,641 Franklin County residents - or nearly 24% - as having low access to grocery stores with 72,902 of those also identified as low income.

Source: http://www.ers.usda.gov/data-products/food-access-research-atlas/go-to-the-atlas.aspx

A strong local system of food production, processing, distribution, storage, access and waste reduction contributes significantly to the well-being and resiliency of the region. The local food system affects the environment, public health, land use, economy and quality of life in our community. Residents are participating in and leading efforts to make local, healthy food more available in their neighborhoods. Both Columbus City Council and the Franklin County Board of Commissioners have a history of strong support for local food initiatives, including community garden grants, food business incubation programs and food access programs. However, there was no plan addressing the needs of the local food system in our community, hindering efforts to effectively utilize available resources and realize the full potential of efforts to increase access to healthy food, affordable food, and local food. In November 2014, rooted in the belief that all residents of Columbus and Franklin County should have access to nutritious and affordable food, Columbus City Council and the Franklin County Board of Commissioners, led by Council member Priscilla Tyson and Commissioner John O'Grady, partnered to launch the Columbus & Franklin County Local Food Action Plan. Championing a community effort to create a stronger, more sustainable local food system, City and County agencies were directed to consider how programs and decisions affect the local food system, to increase citizen access to healthy and affordable food and to advocate for neighboring cities, counties, towns, and townships to support a strong and resilient local food system. There are many different ways that "local" is defined and understood across the food system. This plan's view is that "local" means as geographically close to the community and consumer as possible.

HOW WAS THE PLAN DEVELOPED?

The Local Food Action Plan Project Team, consisting of staff from Columbus Public Health, Franklin County Economic Development and Planning and Local Matters, was formed in December 2014. A local food system planning process jointly led by economic development and planning professionals, a public health agency and a community-based not-for-profit food advocacy organization ensured that economic development, job creation, health, equity, cultural competency and social justice were intentionally considered in all phases. The planning process was designed to: address improving access to healthy food, affordable food, and local food in areas with limited access; creating linkages between consumers and producers as a long-term, economic development and public health strategy; and, ensuring that locally and sustainably grown food is prioritized and made available to all residents.

The planning process consisted of three phases: 1) Current Conditions and Visioning; 2) Policy and Program Recommendations; and 3) Plan Development. A Working Committee, consisting of 24 community partners with expertise in

As of 2014 in Franklin County, there were 87,532 people working in the food industry, earning $32,287 per year on average.

75,725 of those people worked in food retail and food services, earning $22,143 per year on average.

Source: Economic Modeling Specialists Intl. (EMSI) - Quarterly Census of Employment and Wages, County Business Patterns, Current Employment Statistics, Ohio Department of Job and Family Services, Labor Market Information Division.

varying sectors of the local food system, was engaged to help guide the Project Team's work. Public comments were solicited in each phase of the project. The process was designed to ensure local, regional, state and national best practices were considered and the plan reflects a thorough understanding of the current assets, needs and community vision for the future.

In the 2014-15 school year, 30% of pre-K and 28% of kindergarten students in Columbus City Schools had a Body Mass Index at or above the 85th percentile, putting them at increased risk for high blood pressure, type 2 diabetes and other weight-related health issues.

CULTURAL COMPETENCY AND HEALTH EQUITY

Franklin County and the City of Columbus are home to more than one million people, but not everyone has the same opportunities to be healthy. There are differences in health based on race, ethnicity, sex, neighborhood, income, education, sexual orientation and other factors. Health inequities are differences in health status and death rates across population groups that are systematic, avoidable, unfair and unjust. These differences are sustained over time and are beyond the control of individuals. To ensure that all residents have fair and equitable access to affordable food, healthy food, and local food, each of the goals in this Plan has been developed with a commitment to cultural competency, race, age, ethnicity, language, nationality, religious diversity, literacy levels and residential mobility, and these must be considered throughout implementation. To ensure equity and the cultural competency of the Local Food Action Plan's implementation, staff training with key community agencies, organizations, and groups will be undertaken annually.

WHAT WILL THIS PLAN DO?

The plan is intended to inform public policy, inspire program development, foster community collaborations, guide local funding strategies and establish the foundation for successful philanthropic and public grant applications. It provides a framework of common goals and actions that unifies residents, schools, community organizations, businesses and local government in supporting a strong local food system. The goals and recommended actions in this document represent those that have the greatest potential to have a positive impact on the food-related issues facing our community. The plan also seeks to address the consequences of significant social issues such as poverty, underemployment and unemployment that lead to inequalities in access to food. It emphasizes the economic development opportunities in the local food system as a tool for community revitalization, recognizing the urban-rural connection that underscores our interdependence with the surrounding counties. However, the plan is not a rigid set of rules for City or County government or their community partners. New opportunities and ever-changing conditions in our community will require plan users to consider new and innovative ideas that support the vision of the plan going forward.

In 2013, food waste made up nearly 13% of the material entering the Franklin County Sanitary Landfill.

Source: 2013 Waste Characterization Study of Municipal Solid Waste Entering the Franklin County Sanitary Landfill.

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ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

LOCAL FOOD ACTION PLAN LEGISLATIVE SPONSORS

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PHOTO SOURCES

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Franklin County Economic Development & Planning

Local Matters

Mid-Ohio Regional Planning Commission

The Ohio State University Extension, Franklin County

United Way of Central Ohio

Earth Day 2016 at the Franklin Park Conservatory and Botanical Gardens. Pictured (left to right): Bruce Harkey, Executive Director, Franklin Park Conservatory and Botanical Gardens; Priscilla R. Tyson, President Pro Tempore, Columbus City Council; Su Lok, Director, Corporate and Community Partnerships, The Scotts Miracle-Gro Company; Teresa C. Long, MD, MPH, Health Commissioner, Columbus Public Health; and, John O'Grady, President, Franklin County Board of Commissioners.

PLANNING PROCESS

PHASE 1: CURRENT CONDITIONS & VISIONING

Current Conditions Assessment: To better understand and describe the assets and opportunities of the local food system, the Project Team led an extensive current conditions assessment process, evaluating the local food system as five distinct sectors.

FOOD SYSTEM SECTORS

Consumers: The food system exists to provide food that individuals acquire for themselves or their families to consume. The ways in which they acquire food are varied and complex.

Producers: The producer sector is comprised of farmers, ranchers and all types of growers that produce food in the region.

Processors/Distributors: This sector includes processors who prepare food for market or create value-added products, as well as businesses that move those products from the producers and processors to commercial buyers and consumers.

Commercial and Institutional Buyers: The sector includes varying sizes of retail, wholesale and institutional food buyers, including but not limited to, restaurants, hotels, hospitals and schools.

Waste Recovery: Waste recovery includes prevention, recovery and recycling. It is intricately linked to all other sectors of the local food system.

The Project Team reviewed published data, including U.S. Census Data, USDA Agricultural Census and U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics to identify and describe social and economic conditions. The team gathered stakeholder input through extensive conversations with local food system experts and unique survey tools for each sector. Local Matters also facilitated meetings in seven Columbus neighborhoods to identify and explore neighborhood-specific goals for improving access to healthy food and nutrition education. These community-level food planning meetings were conducted in the Clintonville, Linden, Near East Side, Near South Side, Northland, Weinland Park and the West Side (Franklinton and Hilltop) neighborhoods of Columbus. Local Matters developed food planning reports for each neighborhood which are at: https://www.columbus.gov/publichealth/programs/Local-Food-Plan/Plan-Research/.

The Project Team summarized the findings of this assessment in the DRAFT Current Conditions and Visions Report and presented it to the Working Committee for feedback in September 2015. Following the meeting, the draft report was available for formal public comment in October 2015. The team used Working Committee responses and public comment to inform the policy and program recommendation phase of the planning process.

Vision and Goals: Together, the Project Team and the Working Committee used the existing assets and opportunities identified in the Current Conditions Assessment to develop a vision for the local food system. The Project Team used this common vision to further refine the goals of the Local Food Action Plan. The vision statement and goals were used to guide the development of policy and program recommendations.

PHASE 2: POLICY AND PROGRAM RECOMMENDATIONS

In addition to gathering community input and neighborhood research, Local Matters conducted a comprehensive review of regional, state and national food system plans and resources (available at www.columbus.gov/LFAP), identifying potential actions that could be applicable in our community. Additionally, the Project Team compiled local food strategies in major city and regional planning and public health reports. As a result, the Project Team identified more than 800 possible actions for consideration. Following removal of duplicate or non-specific actions, the Project Team settled on 146 potential actions that could be considered comprehensive, specific and potentially relevant to the local food system in Columbus and Franklin County.

The Project Team presented the 146 potential actions to the Working Committee in December 2015. Working Committee members were given opportunities at the meeting and through follow-up phone calls to provide additional actions. Through group discussion, prioritization activities, and online surveys with the Working Committee, the Project Team identified 35 promising actions for further review.

The Project Team conducted extensive research on each of the actions that Working Committee feedback identified as important. A summary of this research, including a description, potential partners and relevant models was compiled to create the DRAFT Policy and Program Recommendations Report. The Working Committee reviewed and discussed this research in March 2016. The document was made available for public comment via an online survey and the Franklin County Local Food Council (FCLFC) reviewed the report over the course of three full council meetings. The Project Team used feedback from the Working Committee, the FCLFC and public comments to revise the recommended actions and to develop strategies for implementation.

PHASE 3: PLAN DEVELOPMENT

A draft of the Local Food Action Plan was presented to the Working Committee and made available for public comment in July 2016. Working Committee members provided feedback at the meeting and through individual follow-up phone calls. The Project Team received public response to the draft plan through surveys, community meetings and the Franklin County Local Food Council.

All documents and reports developed throughout the planning process are available for review at www.columbus.gov/LFAP.

VISION & GOALS

WHY THESE ACTIONS?

VISION

A fair and sustainable food system that benefits our economy, our environment and all people.

GOALS

This plan seeks to:

A) Enhance coordination and communication among existing food resources and agencies.

B) Improve access to and education about healthy food, affordable food and local food.

C) Increase the role of food in economic development.

D) Prevent food-related waste.

This Plan includes 27 actions that are a response to the community's need for (1) coordination and communication with existing resources; (2) increased food access and education support; (3) identification of economic development opportunities; and, (4) attention to food waste prevention, recovery and recycling. These actions were identified in the Policy and Program Recommendations phase (Phase 2) of the planning process and were informed by over 1,000 stakeholders through the Working Committee, neighborhood planning meetings, interviews, surveys, public review periods and published data.

IMPROVE COMMUNICATION AND COORDINATION

Coordinated support is needed at the city and county-level to improve how people access food, grow food, learn about food and prevent food waste. Currently, these issues are not addressed across public departments. Many programs in our community could have a greater impact through increased collaboration. The needs in this area run the gamut from transportation improvement to advances in institutional purchasing arrangements. The actions included in this Plan to improve communication and coordination will allow neighborhood and county-wide networks to more easily access the support they need in continuing and growing local food system efforts.

INCREASE ACCESS AND EDUCATION

The Plan's research calls attention to the fact that not everyone in our community has the same opportunity to consume a healthy diet. Limited transportation options and the high cost of food limit access, particularly in neighborhoods that lack a full-service grocery store. These barriers are especially burdensome for residents with limited mobility and financial resources. Gaps in food education were also identified as a priority to be addressed, especially for those most impacted by health disparities, including low-income, African American, Hispanic and New American communities. Actions that address the expansion and improvement of existing programs will help ensure equitable access to healthy food and quality food education.

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

Actions that support economic development in the food system seek to: (1) connect local producers to processors, distributors, and commercial buyers; (2) increase the supply of healthy and locally-produced food direct to consumers, supermarkets and restaurants; and, (3) address the varying needs of food businesses, operations and food system workers in urban and rural settings.

WASTE PREVENTION, RECOVERY AND RECYCLING

Homes and direct-to-consumer food businesses such as supermarkets and restaurants generate a significant amount of food waste. Food waste prevention is the most cost-effective way to address this issue, and in this area, actions were selected to focus on consumer education efforts. Involving grocers and restaurants is vital to recovering edible food before it is wasted. Policies and infrastructure that support food donation are needed to achieve this goal. Additionally waste recycling can divert food from landfills, but it requires the most infrastructure.

LIST OF RECOMMENDED ACTIONS BY GOAL

LIST OF RECOMMENDED ACTIONS BY GOAL

GOAL A: Enhance coordination and communication among existing food resources and agencies		
A-1	Establish a Joint City and County Local Food Team and advisory group to coordinate the implementation of the Local Food Action Plan and connect to other food system initiatives.	Pg. 26
GOAL B: Improve access to and education about healthy food, affordable food, and local food		
B-1	Prioritize access to healthy and affordable food sources in transit system infrastructure and planning efforts.	Pg. 30
B-2	Expand the availability of training and tools to help small food retail locations become reliable places for healthy food, affordable food and local food.	Pg. 32
B-3	Establish a formal farmers' market management collaborative serving the City of Columbus and Franklin County.	Pg. 34
B-4	Expand consumer access to local healthy food purchasing incentives.	Pg. 36
B-5	Grow capacity and enhance viability of civic agriculture to allow more residents to grow food for themselves and their neighbors.	Pg. 38
B-6	Support grocery store and healthy food retail location and expansion in neighborhoods with low access.	Pg. 40
B-7	Identify and implement mobile strategies that bring healthy food, affordable food and local food to residents.	Pg. 42
B-8	Public and institutional buyers adopt and implement food purchasing policies to support increased purchases of healthy food and local food.	Pg. 44
B-9	Support the development of a comprehensive network of educational resources and infrastructure that connects residents with healthy food, affordable food and local food.	Pg. 46
B-10	Engage those most impacted by health disparities including low-income, African American, Hispanic, New American and other underrepresented communities in developing and implementing culturally appropriate food assistance, education, nutrition, gardening and cooking programs.	Pg. 48
B-11	Incorporate onsite nutrition education and counseling, shopping strategies and healthy food purchasing incentives at food retail.	Pg. 50
B-12	Support the expansion of nutrition and food system education in pre-K-12 curricula.	Pg. 52
GOAL C: Increase the role of food in economic development		
C-1	Create a food processing and distribution collaborative.	Pg. 56
C-2	Establish a local food supply connector position to expand market opportunities for local food.	Pg. 58
C-3	Create a consumer-producer-buyer verification process to support increased and authenticated healthy and local food purchasing.	Pg. 60
C-4	Advocate for food system workers in local and regional workforce development efforts.	Pg. 62
C-5	Study and describe the impact of wages and policies on food system workers and the affordability of food.	Pg. 64
C-6	Revise zoning codes, related permit requirements and land use plans to support and encourage agricultural and food system uses as a viable option for community revitalization.	Pg. 66
C-7	Repurpose vacant commercial, industrial and residential sites for local food system uses.	Pg. 68
C-8	Develop central food marketplaces that reflect the culture and diversity of neighborhoods.	Pg. 70
C-9	Connect new or growing small-scale neighborhood food businesses to flexible financial and technical assistance options.	Pg. 72

GOAL D: Prevent food-related waste		
D-1	Expand food waste prevention education campaigns for consumers, local governments, pre-K-12 schools and food businesses.	Pg. 76
D-2	Leverage food waste reduction resources and strategies to increase the number of residents who access training, education and equipment for effective backyard composting.	Pg. 78
D-3	Recommend changes to policies, zoning and health codes that support and encourage food waste recovery and diversion.	Pg. 80
D-4	Provide training, tools and economic incentives for new and existing food businesses to develop, adopt and implement food waste prevention plans.	Pg. 82
D-5	Build support for food waste recovery infrastructure among local leaders and large-scale food waste generators.	Pg. 84

NOTES ABOUT THE RECOMMENDED ACTIONS

As a "living document," new opportunities and changing conditions will require consideration of new and innovative ideas that support this plan's vision.

Prior to implementing these actions, the feasibility, or cost and benefit, of each action must be considered comprehensively. Each recommended action includes a "Getting Started" table to guide implementation. (See table legend below.)

GETTING STARTED *TABLE LEGEND*

CURRENT STATUS
Categorizes the current status as one of the following: • "new work" • "in process" • "in process but requires the addition of new elements"
WHO
Provides a list of organizations which are currently working in this space as identified by the Project Team and Working Committee. This list is not an exhaustive one, but is intended to help identify organizations which possess knowledge and resources that can help move this action forward.
OBJECTIVES
Describes the desired outcomes that will be achieved with successful implementation of the action.
STARTING STEPS
Identifies starting steps that interested and/or responsible agencies can take to implement the action.
POTENTIAL MEASURES
Lists potential measures that can be used to evaluate implementation and the successful achievement of the objectives related to the action.
RESOURCES
Identifies if resources for this work already exist in the community or if new resources will be required for implementation.

GOAL A INTRODUCTION: There are great efforts underway to improve our food system, but coordination and communication issues exist. Many residents don't know what resources are available and organizations can continue to improve how they work together without duplicating effort. The key improvement in this area will be a joint city and county collaboration to be responsible for coordinating the implementation of the food plan.

GOAL A: COORDINATION

GOAL A:

Enhance coordination and communication among existing food resources and agencies.

IN 5 YEARS, the successful implementation of the actions in this goal will lead to:

- A stronger more resilient local food system, through increased coordination between public, private and community stakeholders.

A-1: RECOMMENDED ACTION

Establish a Joint City and County Local Food Team and advisory group to coordinate the implementation of the Local Food Action Plan and connect to other food system initiatives.

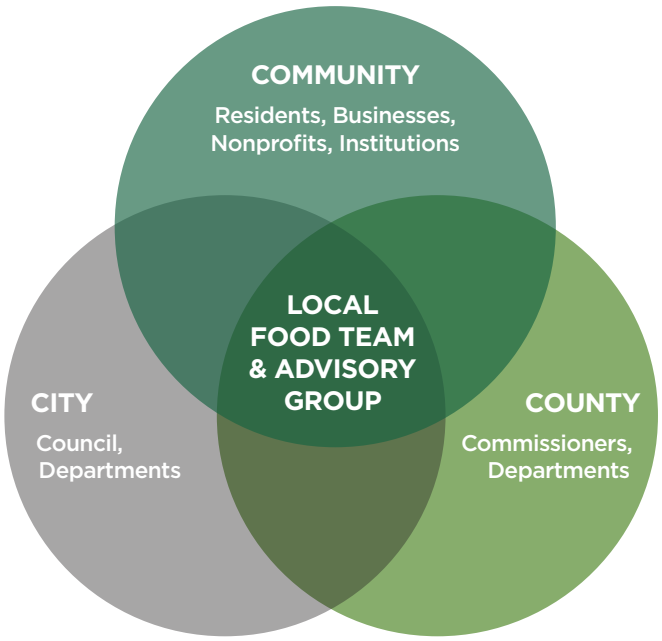
The Joint City and County Local Food Team, consisting of city and county staff, will collaborate with an appointed advisory group to implement the Local Food Action Plan and connect it to other local food system efforts. This partnership will be responsible for leveraging public and private resources, reporting to the community, coordinating funding efforts and building synergy between local food efforts and emergency feeding -- all to prevent redundancy and expand the reach of local food system efforts. The team will also establish clear and defined pathways for resident participation and ensure that implementation of the Local Food Action Plan remains connected to the community.

ADVISORY GROUP

The advisory group will connect all local food initiatives, reduce program redundancy and work with the Joint City and County Local Food Team in efforts to implement the goals and actions of the Columbus & Franklin County Local Food Action Plan.

STRUCTURE: Appointed by the City and County, the group will include influential community mobilizers and food system experts who can provide intellectual, physical, social and/or monetary capital. These experts are the leaders in our community who can open doors and increase awareness of food-related issues among decision makers in our community.

RESPONSIBILITIES: The advisory group, working with the Join City and County Local Food Team, will prioritize actions for implementation, build consensus on implementation strategies, secure investment into plan fulfillment and identify entities to lead implementation processes.



A-1: GETTING STARTED

CURRENT STATUS

New work

WHO

Columbus City Council, Columbus Public Health, Franklin County Board of Commissioners, Franklin County Economic Development and Planning, Franklin County Local Food Council

OBJECTIVES

1. The Joint City and County Local Food Team and advisory group coordinating implementation of the Local Food Action Plan
2. The Joint City and County Local Food Team coordinating with city/county departments and local policymakers involved in food-related efforts
3. The Joint City and County Local Food Team engaged in coordination of funding and resource development for local food system efforts, including a repository of past grant applications and supporting documents.
4. A system of two-way communication between stakeholders and the Joint City and County Local Food Team on implementation efforts
5. Local food efforts and the emergency food system working in synergy to support residents across the spectrum of food security
6. New and existing neighborhood food planning efforts supported and connected to other local and regional food system initiatives
7. Local Food Action Plan implementation includes annual cultural competency training opportunities for the Joint City and County Local Food Team and community partners
8. The Joint City and County Local Food Team and advisory group reporting progress annually

STARTING STEPS

- Form the Joint City and County Local Food Team
- Form the advisory group
- The Joint City and County Local Food Team identifies and convenes city and county departments involved in food-related efforts
- Develop evaluation and communication plans for implementation of the Local Food Action Plan

POTENTIAL MEASURES

- Number of food system initiatives, both community-wide and neighborhood specific, for which the Joint City and County Local Food Team provides coordinated support
- Number and type of community organizations, businesses and nonprofits engaged by the Joint City and County Local Food Team
- Number of local government agencies (or departments) engaged by the Joint City and County Local Food Team
- Evaluation plan and annual reporting for implementation of the Local Food Action Plan
- Number of stakeholders/residents included in public communications to report annually on implementation of the Local Food Action Plan
- Number of cultural competency trainings attended by the Joint City and County Local Food Team and community partners

RESOURCES

New resources required

- The Local Food Action Plan Project Team, Working Committee, and Legislative Sponsors can support the development of the Joint City and County Local Food Team and advisory group, however new resources will be required to formalize and carry out the work of the Joint City and County Local Food Team and advisory group.

GOAL B INTRODUCTION: Ensuring that all residents have convenient, equitable access to healthy food, affordable food and local food along with the skills, resources, and ability to feed their families is essential for a healthy and prosperous community. The following actions represent a variety of solutions that have been tested in our community and around the country. These ideas can be creatively implemented to enhance cooperation between hunger relief and local food system efforts in our community. By increasing the availability and affordability of healthy food while improving the local food economy, we can make healthy food and local food more accessible for everyone.

GOAL B: ACCESS & EDUCATION

GOAL B:

Improve access to and education about healthy food, affordable food and local food.

IN 5 YEARS, the successful implementation of the actions in this goal will lead to:

- Neighborhoods with better access to healthy foods through improved transit and transit routes, and more neighborhood food retail outlets offering healthy food, affordable food and local food.
- Neighborhoods with better access to education about healthy foods through a coordinated, equitable and a culturally competent community plan for food education.

B-1: RECOMMENDED ACTION

Prioritize access to healthy and affordable food sources in transit system infrastructure and planning efforts

Transit systems connect people to places and have the potential to provide crucial connections to food retail, particularly those with healthy and affordable options such as grocery stores. Transit could be made more shopper-friendly by improving sidewalks and bus shelters and modifying vehicles to accommodate shopping carts or cold storage. Route planning could put greater emphasis on connecting residential areas with food shopping sites.

B-1: GETTING STARTED

CURRENT STATUS

In process but will require addition of new elements

WHO

Central Ohio Transit Agency (COTA), Columbus Area Commissions, Columbus Public Health's Healthy Places' Connect Columbus Health Impact Assessment (HIA) (includes local government planning departments), Mid-Ohio Regional Planning Commission, Neighborhood Organizations, U.S. Department of Transportation's (USDOT) Smart City Challenge

OBJECTIVES

1. Transit plans, including Smart City grant efforts, contain healthy and affordable food access considerations and strategies
2. Transit users have multi-modal connections to a variety of healthy and affordable food retail locations
3. Access to healthy and affordable food is prioritized in multi-modal infrastructure

STARTING STEPS

- Develop partnerships to inventory and map existing healthy and affordable food access options along routes/stops (e.g., grocery stores, farmers' markets, farm stands, Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program/Women, Infants and Children authorized retailers)
- Assess local multi-modal infrastructure efforts for opportunities to integrate consumer access to healthy and affordable food sources
- Identify best practices and models of transit system planning and infrastructure that include consumer food access

POTENTIAL MEASURES

- Number of transit routes that provide frequent and close access to healthy and affordable food sources
- Number and type of complete street infrastructure elements in proximity to residential areas and food sources
- Number of transit plans that prioritize access to healthy and affordable food sources
- Number of transit plans that include strategies and recommendations related to food access

RESOURCES

Existing resources leveraged in new ways

- Existing public agencies, including City and County Planning Departments, COTA, Mid-Ohio Regional Planning Commission and Columbus Public Health, are working to improve transportation options for consumers. Additional resources may be necessary to enhance infrastructure and integrate consumer food access into planning processes.

B-2: RECOMMENDED ACTION

Expand the availability of training and tools to help small food retail locations become reliable places for healthy food, affordable food and local food.

Training and tools for small to mid-sized retailers (e.g., convenience stores, small grocers) can help them provide healthy and affordable food to neighborhoods and support new markets for local producers. Helping retailers become Supplemental Nutritional Assistance Program (SNAP) and Women, Infants and Children (WIC) authorized ensures these locations offer a baseline variety of healthy foods which is especially important for residents living in areas without easy access to a full-service grocery store.

PROMISING PRACTICES

FRESH FOODS HERE (FFH) is a sponsored initiative of United Way of Central Ohio and a collaborative of community partners working to improve the availability of nutritious, affordable food in Columbus neighborhoods. The program partners with neighborhood corner stores to increase their inventory of healthy food and improve their store operations, while engaging with community partners and residents to encourage healthy food purchasing. Store owners that work with FFH agree to spend one year stocking, marketing and selling healthy food items to their customers. In return for participation, stores receive coaching and specialized technical assistance, free advertising and outreach on behalf of their stores, and access to earned incentives such as display materials, shelving and storage, and infrastructure and facade improvements. Stores also host cooking demonstrations and other nutrition education activities focused on engaging residents and encouraging them to shop healthy at their local store.

While FFH is a relatively new program, results have been promising. Since the 2011 pilot, FFH stores have seen an average 50% increase in the amount of healthy food sold in stores, and significant increases in the variety and quantity of healthy food available to customers. Customers who recognize the FFH brand are more likely to consider access to healthy food to be important and have more confidence in their ability to practice healthy eating habits in their neighborhood.

For more information, visit: https://liveunitedcentralohio.org/agencies-initiatives/initiatives/fresh-foods-here.

SOUTH SIDE ROOTS, a community initiative of the Mid-Ohio Foodbank located in the Reeb Avenue Center, represents a different small retail approach to increasing access to healthy foods. South Side Roots Market offers fresh produce and grocery items at an affordable price to increase access to quality food for area residents. The South Side Roots Cafe offers low cost meals with a varied payment structure. Customers can pay the full suggested price for their meal, pay the full suggested price for their meal and "pay it forward" for a neighbor to enjoy a meal, or give time in service if unable to pay the full suggested price. The Kitchen also provides meals and snacks for students at the adjoining South Side Learning & Development Center and Boys & Girls Club of Columbus. South Side Roots also serves a weekly community meal through The Kitchen once a week.

B-2: GETTING STARTED

CURRENT STATUS

In process but will require addition of new elements

WHO

City and County Building and Zoning departments, Columbus Public Health, Healthy Food for Ohio (HFFO) - Ohio Department of Job & Family Services, Finance Fund Capital Corporation, The Food Trust, Lower Lights Christian Health Center, Mid-Ohio Foodbank Roots Market at the Reeb Center, Mid-Ohio Foodbank Urban Farms of Central Ohio, Ohio Department of Health's (ODH) Creating Healthy Communities Network, Partners Achieving Community Transformation (PACT), and United Way of Central Ohio's Fresh Foods Here

OBJECTIVES

1. Small food retailers are reliable places where communities can access healthy food, affordable food and local food
2. More small food retail locations in neighborhoods are authorized SNAP and WIC retailers
3. Business tools, training and distribution models are available to help small food retailers sell healthy food, affordable food and local food while maintaining overall profitability

STARTING STEPS

- Foster relationships between existing efforts to help small food retailers stock healthy, affordable, staple foods and local producers to identify distribution sales models that are fair and equitable to producers, retailers and consumers
- Develop and distribute training and tools for small food retail locations to become SNAP and WIC authorized retailers (or regain lost SNAP and WIC authorizations)
- Engage City and County Economic Development experts, small business lenders (including Finance Fund Capital Corporation) and local food distributors to identify incentives and/or disincentives that encourage small food retailers to serve as a reliable and consistent resource for healthy food, affordable food and local food

POTENTIAL MEASURES

- Increased sales of SNAP and/or WIC eligible food products in small food retail locations
- Number of incentives (or disincentives) that encourage small food retailers to serve as a reliable and consistent resource for healthy food, affordable food and local food
- Number of small food retail locations that meet the minimum retail store eligibility USDA standards. http://www.fns.usda.gov/snap/retail-store-eligibility-usda-supplemental-nutrition-assistance-program.
- Number of SNAP authorized small food retailers that are also WIC retail locations. https://www.odh.ohio.gov/~/media/ODH/ASSETS/Files/ns/wic%20nutrition/20131001-20150930AFLv7%201EnglishBW/ohiowicauthorizedfoodslisteffectiveoctober12010throughseptember302011.pdf.

RESOURCES

Existing resources leveraged in new ways

- Resources are currently deployed to provide training, tools and incentives to help small retailers stock and sell healthy, affordable, staple foods. Existing community development, small business loans and grants may be available. Additional resources may be needed to enhance training and extend incentives to more stores. Additional funding sources may be required to develop and/or purchase business tools, materials and resources that small food retailers need.

B-3: RECOMMENDED ACTION

Establish a formal farmers' market management collaborative serving the City of Columbus and Franklin County.

Establishing a formal farmers' market management collaborative builds on existing formal and informal networks to make them more accessible to all residents, especially those living in communities that lack access to healthy and affordable food. As a collaborative, it engages all appropriate stakeholders to work together for strategic planning, joint funding and programming to increase the number of farmers' markets and markets participating in nutrition incentive programs. This work will build capacity for local producers and producer direct-to-consumer sales operations, particularly with the expansion of existing markets or growth in new markets.

B-3: GETTING STARTED

CURRENT STATUS

In process but will require addition of new elements

WHO

Columbus Public Health, Franklin County Farm Bureau, Healthy Food for Ohio (HFFO) - Ohio Department of Job & Family Services, Finance Fund Capital Corporation, The Food Trust, Ohio Department of Health's (ODH) Creating Healthy Communities Network, Ohio Farmers' Market Management Network (FMMN), and OSU Extension

OBJECTIVES

1. A community-wide plan for farmers' markets/stands
2. Increased number of producers and producer direct-to-consumer sales
3. Coordinated funding, training and tools that support farmers' market creation and expansion
4. Collective resources to aid farmers' markets and stands in SNAP payment acceptance via Electronic Benefit Transfer (EBT) and federal and state nutrition incentive program participation
5. Policy education for federal, state and local incentives and policies that increase access to healthy food, affordable food and local food for SNAP and WIC recipients

STARTING STEPS

- Collaborate with Ohio FMMN regional chapter to convene meetings with farmers' market and farm stand managers and stakeholders to assess community needs, collaboration opportunities and develop a structure for governance
- Identify relevant best practices, collaborative models, training and tools

POTENTIAL MEASURES

- Creation of a local formal farmers' market management collaborative
- Number of farmers' market/stand managers participating in the collaborative
- Number of farmers' markets/stands participating in training programs
- Number of farmers' markets per 100,000 residents
- Percentage of farmers' markets/stands accepting SNAP (EBT) and/or participating in nutrition incentive programs
- Number of shoppers at farmers' markets/stands
- Total sales at participating farmers' markets/stands
- Total EBT sales at farmers' markets/stands
- Number of producers served by the collaborative

RESOURCES

Existing resources leveraged in new ways

- Existing resources and efforts include the Veggie SNAPS network and local Ohio FMMN chapter, but additional resources may be required to establish or formalize new programs with associated staff and operating costs. Farmers' market growth remains dependent on the growth of local specialty crop producers.

B-4: RECOMMENDED ACTION

Expand consumer access to local healthy food purchasing incentives.

Nutrition incentive programs, including Veggie SNAPS and WIC, and Senior Farmers' Market Nutrition programs, help make local healthy food affordable and accessible for residents. Market vouchers, coupled with nutrition education at stores or fruit and vegetable prescription programs run by health care providers, are another option to increase access to local healthy food. Healthy food purchasing incentives support not just consumers but the overall market for local food, particularly locally grown fruits and vegetables, by increasing demand and sales.

PROMISING PRACTICES

VEGGIE SNAPS is a program developed by six central Ohio farmers' markets in 2014 to collectively work together to increase access to healthy foods among vulnerable populations in central Ohio. The pilot program, based on successful models in the Cleveland area, Michigan, Connecticut and California, provided up to $10 match per visit for Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) customers who shopped at seasonal farmers' markets. The financial incentive provided by Veggie SNAPS allowed low-income customers the opportunity to purchase nutritious, locally-grown ingredients that had previously been cost-prohibitive. Additionally, increased sales to new customers supported both growers and farmers' markets.

Since the successful pilot in 2014, Veggie SNAPS has grown with support from the City of Columbus, Franklin County, Wholesome Wave and the Puffin Foundation. It is now offered to SNAP recipients at twelve central Ohio farmers' markets. Participating markets for the 2016 season included the Bexley Farmers' Market, Clintonville Farmers' Market, Columbus Public Health Farmers' Market, Dublin Farmers' Market, Fayette County Farmers' Market, Franklin Park Conservatory and Botanical Gardens Farmers' Market, Franklinton Gardens Produce Market, Nationwide Children's Farmer's Market, North Market Farmer's Market, Pearl Market, Westgate Farmers' Market, and Worthington Farmers' Market. Most markets are accessible by bus routes and represent a diversity of neighborhoods in central Ohio. SNAP participants visit the information tent at any participating market to swipe their Ohio Directions Card, debit $10 from it, and in return receive a matching $10 to shop for fresh fruits and vegetables at the market.

For more information visit: https://veggiesnaps.org.

B-4: GETTING STARTED

CURRENT STATUS

In process but will require addition of new elements

WHO

Columbus Public Health, LifeCare Alliance, Mid-Ohio Foodbank, Ohio Department of Aging, Ohio Department of Health's (ODH) Creating Healthy Communities Network, Ohio Department of Job and Family Services (ODJFS), Ohio Farmers' Market Management Network (FMMN), OSU Extension, United Way of Central Ohio's Fresh Foods Here, and Veggie SNAPS

OBJECTIVES

1. Expanded the number and type of small food retail locations where consumers can double their SNAP dollars to purchase healthy, fresh and local food
2. Widespread awareness of and access to healthy food purchasing incentives
3. Widespread availability of nutrition education at health care sites paired with market vouchers that subsidize the cost of fresh fruits and vegetables, creating a local form of a fruit and vegetable prescription program

STARTING STEPS

- Convene partners to inventory existing nutrition incentive resources and explore opportunities for new or expanded incentive programs
- Identify best practices and models of incentive programs, including produce prescription programs

POTENTIAL MEASURES

- Number and type of retail food locations providing nutrition incentive programs
- Number of nutrition incentives distributed
- Number of nutrition incentives redeemed
- Quantity of healthy, fresh and local food purchased with nutrition incentives

RESOURCES

Existing resources leveraged in new ways

- Additional funding sources will be needed to increase the capacity of existing nutrition incentive programs and to start new programs such as market vouchers.

B-5: RECOMMENDED ACTION

Grow capacity and enhance viability of civic agriculture to allow more residents to grow food for themselves and their neighbors.

Civic agriculture, both community and home food production, enables residents to grow food for themselves and their neighbors while increasing the health, social and economic well-being of the community. A coordinated network of civic agriculture can provide food system education, increase access to affordable local produce and create jobs. Collaborations between civic agriculture organizations, local government, institutional partners and neighborhood associations can establish uniform measures, standardized reporting processes, good agricultural practices, and develop funding and shared resource (e.g., water/irrigation, land tenure, volunteers, etc.) strategies to achieve long lasting support and growth of civic agriculture.

B-5: GETTING STARTED

CURRENT STATUS

In process but will require addition of new elements

WHO

Columbus Department of Development's Green Business & Urban Agriculture Strategic Plan, Columbus Land Redevelopment Office, Columbus Public Health, Franklin County Economic Development & Planning, Franklin Park Conservatory, Greater Columbus Growing Coalition, Local Matters, Mid-Ohio Foodbank Urban Farms of Central Ohio, OSU Extension, OSU Urban Gardening Entrepreneurs Motivating Sustainability (GEMS), The Central Ohio Community Improvement Corporation (COCIC), United Way of Central Ohio's Fresh Foods Here, and Urban Farmers Network

OBJECTIVES

1. Residents are safely growing food for themselves and their neighbors
2. City and county zoning and codes clearly support growing food in neighborhoods
3. The City and County are leveraging resources to support civic agriculture (e.g., long-term access to land, potable water source, etc.)
4. Coordinated local funding strategies for long-term support and growth of civic agriculture
5. Increased community-wide understanding and demand for civic agriculture in neighborhoods

STARTING STEPS

- Inventory existing civic agriculture assets and conduct a needs assessment of current resources and challenges
- Convene community partners and stakeholders to grow the capacity for civic agriculture
- Establish reasonable uniform measures and standardized reporting procedures to document and describe the benefits and needs of civic agriculture in our community
- Explore alternative ways to leverage existing resources and share common resources to minimize costs for civic agriculture

POTENTIAL MEASURES

- Number of residents and volunteers participating in civic agriculture
- Number of gardens producing food to serve more than one family
- Number of gardens participating in direct-to-consumer sales
- Volume and quantity of food produced in civic agriculture
- Estimate of where food grown at civic agriculture sites is distributed
- Rules and regulations related to civic agriculture that clearly support growing food are easily accessible to growers
- Number of coordinated local funding strategies tailored to civic agriculture
- Number of local shared resource systems in place for civic agriculture operations

RESOURCES

Existing resources leveraged in new ways

- The City of Columbus has initiated steps for this work through the Department of Development's Green Business & Urban Agriculture Strategic Plan. Current funding is not adequate to meet the needs of civic agriculture in our community. However, innovative approaches to shared resources, City and County in-kind support and reduced cost or free services have the potential to expand the reach of existing resources and better forecast financial resources required to support growth and expansion.

B-6: RECOMMENDED ACTION

Support grocery store and healthy food retail location and expansion in neighborhoods with low access.

Grocery stores and other food retailers with healthy options are key sources of healthy and affordable food for consumers. Large grocery retailers also provide job training, community services and increased economic activity which attracts other retail uses and commercial investment. New and expanded food retailers with healthy food options will increase community access to healthy and affordable food.

B-6: GETTING STARTED

CURRENT STATUS

In process but will require addition of new elements

WHO

City and County Building and Zoning departments, Columbus Public Health, Healthy Food for Ohio (HFFO) - Ohio Department of Job & Family Services, Finance Fund Capital Corporation, The Food Trust, Lower Lights Christian Health Center, Mid-Ohio Foodbank, Mid-Ohio Foodbank Roots Market at the Reeb Center, Ohio Department of Health's (ODH) Creating Healthy Communities Network, Partners Achieving Community Transformation (PACT), and United Way of Central Ohio's Fresh Foods Here

OBJECTIVES

1. New grocery stores or healthy food retailers located in or adjacent to census tracts meeting the USDA definition of "a low access community" (at least 500 people and/or at least 33 percent of the census tract's population reside more than one mile from a supermarket or large grocery store)
2. Active public-private partnership funding and assisting community backed grocery stores or healthy food retail location and/or expansion in communities identified as having low access to a supermarket or large grocery store

STARTING STEPS

- Convene public and private partners of the HFFO program to discuss current operations and opportunities
- Engage local grocery stores, non-local chains, healthy food retailers and neighborhood associations to identify opportunities for locating and expanding in communities identified as having low access to a supermarket or large grocery store

POTENTIAL MEASURES

- Number of new or expanded healthy food retail sources in or adjacent to census tracts that meet the USDA definition of low access
- Total annual loans and grants issued by the HFFO program in Columbus and Franklin County

RESOURCES

Existing resources leveraged in new ways

- Implementation can be done with some existing resources by leveraging existing public-private partnership efforts, such as the HFFO program. However, resources are still required to identify and connect eligible food retail projects with funding and resources.

B-7: RECOMMENDED ACTION

Identify and implement mobile strategies that bring healthy food, affordable food and local food to residents.

Mobile strategies provide flexible options for increasing food access in communities by distributing or selling healthy food, affordable food and local food where people live, learn, work or play. SNAP, WIC and other nutrition incentive acceptance by mobile retail models ensures widespread availability to a range of consumers.

A variety of mobile models, including but not limited to produce vans, pop-up farmers' markets and stands, grocery and produce carts, grocery delivery and healthy food trucks, have been tested in Columbus and other cities with varying degrees of success.

PROMISING PRACTICES

THE ARCADIA MOBILE MARKET is a nonprofit farm-stand-on-wheels which travels around Washington D.C. on a regular schedule to low income neighborhoods. Arcadia Mobile Market's pilot program began in 2012 with eight weekly stops during peak season, running from May 2nd-October 31. Products include fruit, eggs, milk and meats all sustainably produced from partner farms within 80 miles of the Washington D.C. area. Arcadia picked up at these farms to relieve farmers of distribution expenses.

Operating out of a retrofitted school bus and box truck, the market serves low food access areas by making educational visits to elementary and middle schools and operating a "community hub" food market. Compared to a traditional grocery shopping experience, the market is personal, featuring a compact setting where repeat customers often cross paths week after week. Mobile market EBT customers use EBT card points to make their purchases, the value of which is doubled through a bonus bucks program. Grant funding supports the cost of the market's produce and protein offerings to help ease the cost burden on customers.

For more information, visit: http://arcadiafood.org/programs/mobile-market.

B-7: GETTING STARTED

CURRENT STATUS

In process but will require addition of new elements

WHO

Abe's Kitchen, Economic Community Development Institute (ECDI) Columbus Food Fort, Great River Organics (GRO), Local Matters, Mid-Ohio Foodbank, and USDA Farm Service Agency's Farm Storage Facility Loan Program

OBJECTIVES

1. Scalable, financially-viable, mobile model(s) that bring healthy food, affordable food and local food to residents
2. Viable plan(s) that can be used to develop future mobile operations

STARTING STEPS

- Identify mobile food strategies that have been successful in similar cities
- Engage relevant stakeholders to evaluate identified mobile strategies that have the greatest potential for local success

POTENTIAL MEASURES

- Number of viable mobile operations and strategies for healthy and affordable food and local food
- Number of pilot programs
- Number of mobile food retail operations accepting SNAP, WIC and other nutrition incentives

RESOURCES

Existing resources leveraged in new ways

- Implementation can leverage existing resources and efforts, however, additional resources may be required to convene working group meetings, conduct pilot testing, and develop business plans.

B-8: RECOMMENDED ACTION

Public and institutional buyers adopt and implement food purchasing policies to support increased purchases of healthy food and local food.

Purchasing policies that support the purchase of local food by public and institutional buyers such as schools increase access to healthy food and local food for those residents who might not be able to easily obtain them where they live, work, learn or play. Purchasing policies also increase demand for local foods and support the growth and success of local food businesses and the communities in which they are located. Policies, measures and reporting can be tailored to support the needs of the institution and the residents that they serve. Successful implementation of purchasing policies depends heavily upon building the capacity of local producers to meet the demand of large-scale food buyers.

PROMISING PRACTICES

THE GOOD FOOD PURCHASING POLICY (GFPP) was created by the Los Angeles Food Policy Council (LAFPC) in 2012 to empower food service institutions to improve the regional food system through the implementation of meaningful purchasing standards. Five value categories were identified in which these purchasing standards would have an impact including: local economies, environmental sustainability, valued workforce, animal welfare, and nutrition. Institutions participating in the GFPP must meet "Good Food Purchasing Guidelines" and choose their organization's level of commitment towards Good Food goals through a tiered, points-based scoring system. It is at this point that they are awarded one to five stars based on their total score.

The GFPP followed the work of a task force established in 2009 by Mayor Antonio Villaraigosa to make food affordable, fair and sustainable. Within a year of the task force's establishment, a Good Food for All Agenda (GFFA) was released. The LAFPC was created in response to one of the report's recommendations. Task force leaders identified the procurement phase of the food system as integral to achieving GFFA recommendations, and therefore, moved ahead to develop a model template for "good food" purchasing. The City of Los Angeles and the Los Angeles Unified School District adopted the GFPP in 2012.

For more information, visit: http://goodfoodla.org/policymaking/good-food-procurement/.

B-8: GETTING STARTED

CURRENT STATUS

In process

WHO

Central Ohio Regional Food Council, Columbus City Schools, Columbus Urban Growers Network, Franklin County Board of Health, Mid-Ohio Regional Planning Commission, OSU Dining Services, OSU Extension, and OSU Extension Farm to School

OBJECTIVES

1. Public and institutional food purchasing departments implementing policies to support the purchase of healthy and local food
2. Public and institutional buyers reporting their purchases of healthy and local food at least annually in connection with a consumer-farmer-buyer verification process (see action C-3)
3. A collaborative of public and institutional buyers providing training and tools to support other large-scale buyers in adopting and implementing policies that support the purchase of healthy and local food

STARTING STEPS

- Engage public and institutional purchasing departments to discuss barriers and solutions to purchasing healthy and local food
- Identify model purchasing policies that support public and institutional buyers in sourcing healthy and local food
- Work with stakeholders to define metrics that assess and report healthy and local food purchasing
- Engage local growers to plan for increased capacity required to meet the needs of large-scale buyers

POTENTIAL MEASURES

- Number of public and institutional purchasing policies adopted that support the purchase of healthy and local food
- Increase in the percent of food budgets that commercial buyers are spending on food produced in Franklin County and the central Ohio region
- Increased number of local producers growing to meet the needs of large-scale buyers

RESOURCES

Existing resources leveraged in new ways

- Implementation can be done with existing resources, however, additional funding sources may be required to cover cost differences from working with healthy and local food suppliers.

B-9: RECOMMENDED ACTION

Support the development of a comprehensive network of educational resources and infrastructure that connects residents with healthy food, affordable food and local food.

A comprehensive network of educational resources and related infrastructure is needed to help residents conveniently access and utilize healthy food and local food. Working together to meet the needs of the community, nutrition education efforts and resources can be more effective and reduce duplication. This network can provide a clear picture of opportunities for expansion and improvement.

B-9: GETTING STARTED

CURRENT STATUS

In process but will require addition of new elements

WHO

Mount Carmel Health System, Nationwide Children's Hospital, Primary One, OhioHealth, Ohio State University Hospitals, Children's Hunger Alliance, Franklin Park Conservatory, Local Matters, Mid-Ohio Foodbank, and OSU Extension SNAP-Ed and the Expanded Food and Nutrition Education Program (EFNEP)

OBJECTIVES

1. Access to culturally appropriate opportunities to learn how to grow, buy and prepare healthy food and local food for all residents
2. A community-wide nutrition education collaborative plans and coordinates education resources and services
3. Infrastructure is available to support implementation of nutrition education priorities identified in the neighborhood food planning process and throughout the city and county

STARTING STEPS

- Convene community partners and stakeholders to identify opportunities for collaboration, gaps in services and additional community resources needed to better serve all residents
- Conduct an inventory of existing educational resources, including curricula, educators, demonstration kitchens and learning gardens

POTENTIAL MEASURES

- Inventory of existing community food education, access programs and resources in the community
- Number of partners in nutrition education collaborative
- Number of locations providing nutrition education

RESOURCES

Existing resources leveraged in new ways

- Collaboration and coordination of services can help expand the reach of existing resources supporting nutrition education in our community and fill identified gaps.

B-10: RECOMMENDED ACTION

Engage those most impacted by health disparities, including low-income, African American, Hispanic, New American and other underrepresented communities in developing and implementing culturally appropriate food assistance, education, nutrition, gardening and cooking programs.

Engaging those most impacted by health disparities, including low-income, African American, Hispanic, New American and other underrepresented communities in the development of programs ensures that food access and education resources are culturally relevant. It also helps ensure that expansion of these resources is truly comprehensive, inclusive and equitable. Engagement also fosters an expectation that educators and policymakers will learn from these communities through open dialogue and collaboration.

PROMISING PRACTICES

THE GROWING FOOD AND JUSTICE FOR ALL INITIATIVE (GFJI) is aimed at dismantling racism and empowering low-income and communities color through sustainable and local agriculture.

Growing Food & Justice for all Initiative of

This comprehensive network views dismantling racism as a core principle which brings together social change agents from diverse sectors working to bring about new, healthy and sustainable food systems and supporting and building multicultural leadership in impoverished communities throughout the world.

The vision for this initiative is to establish a powerful network of individuals, organizations and community based entities all working toward a food secure and just world.

B-10: GETTING STARTED

CURRENT STATUS

In process, but will require addition of new elements

WHO

Mount Carmel Health System, Nationwide Children's Hospital, Primary One, OhioHealth, Ohio State University Hospitals, Columbus Public Health's Minority Health Advisory Committee (MHAC), Community Refugees and Immigration Services (CRIS), Local Matters, OSU Extension SNAP-Ed and the Expanded Food and Nutrition Education Program (EFNEP), and The Kirwan Institute for the Study of Race and Ethnicity

OBJECTIVES

1. Low-income, African American, Hispanic, New American and other underrepresented communities accessing culturally appropriate, healthy food, affordable food and local food in their communities
2. Low-income, African American, Hispanic, New American and other underrepresented communities participating in culturally appropriate food education programs within their communities
3. Low-income, African American, Hispanic, New American and other underrepresented communities engaged in planning food-related programs and infrastructure
4. Food and food-related programs are recognized as an opportunity for cultural exchange

STARTING STEPS

- Engage low-income, African American, Hispanic, New American and other underrepresented communities in efforts to increase access to healthy and affordable food in small food retail, mobile food and neighborhood food access efforts to ensure that culturally relevant foods are included in all models
- Convene meetings with low-income, African American, Hispanic, New American and other underrepresented communities and community service providers to assess the capacity of civic agriculture, native language food programming and resources, and the availability of community facilities
- Convene meetings with low-income, African American, Hispanic, New American and other underrepresented communities and community service providers to identify opportunities for increased involvement from those communities

POTENTIAL MEASURES

- Number of residents from low-income, African American, Hispanic, New American and other underrepresented communities participating in civic agriculture
- Number of residents from low-income, African American, Hispanic, New American and other underrepresented communities participating in food programming
- Number of residents from low-income, African American, Hispanic, New American and other underrepresented communities participating in food-based cultural exchange programming in their community

RESOURCES

Existing resources leveraged in new ways

- Existing efforts to provide culturally relevant food, gardening and cooking education are offered in various places throughout the community. Coordination and collaboration has the potential to expand the reach and capacity of these resources, but new resources will be required to expand these efforts community-wide.

B-11: RECOMMENDED ACTION

Incorporate onsite nutrition education and counseling, shopping strategies and healthy food purchasing incentives at food retail.

Vouchers, coupons and healthy food education help consumers buy affordable, healthy food at retail locations including grocery stores and smaller neighborhood stores. Onsite education helps inform decisions to buy healthy foods, especially when paired with coupons or vouchers redeemable for healthy products such as fruits and vegetables. Education in the form of cooking demonstrations or shopping strategies also supports consumer efforts to shop for and consume a healthy diet.

PROMISING PRACTICES

COOKING MATTERS AT THE STORE is a nationwide program to help participants learn the skills needed to purchase healthy and affordable food during a free grocery store tour. Share Our Strength, a national nonprofit, supports the program through its No Kid Hungry Campaign. The program has two curricula with Cooking Matters at the Store for Adults and Cooking Matters at the Store for WIC. During a two hour tour, participants are exposed to four key healthy and cost-effective food behaviors, including reading food labels, comparing unit prices, identifying whole grains and purchasing produce in different ways. A review of the program in 2013 by the Altarum Institute indicated 89% of families reported saving money on groceries five weeks after taking a store tour. Seventy six percent of families also reported buying more fruits and vegetables after taking the tour, while the key skill of food label reading more than doubled to 83% of participants. Cooking Matters additionally reported that 85% of WIC graduates feel they are able to identify WIC food at the grocery store, while 88% are very or completely confident in their ability to make the most out of their fruit and vegetable vouchers.

Local Matters is the lead partner for Cooking Matters at the Store in Ohio. Local Matters has trained organizations such as Kroger and SNAP-Ed to deliver this program which can stand-alone or be part of a six-week cooking series. This project has leveraged onsite health care professionals in the store pharmacy and specifically targeted stores serving communities with higher rates of diet-related chronic diseases. This education and nutrition counseling at the point of purchase supports consumers in purchasing healthy and local food. Shopping strategies and financial incentives also help improve affordability for consumers.

For more information, visit: http://cookingmatters.org/at-the-store or http://www.local-matters.org/.

B-11: GETTING STARTED

CURRENT STATUS

In process

WHO

Giant Eagle, Kroger, Local Matters, OSU SNAP-Ed, and United Way of Central Ohio's Fresh Foods Here

OBJECTIVES

1. Widespread availability of onsite healthy cooking and food education programs at food retailers
2. Increased availability and variety of healthy food, affordable food and local food at large and small food retailers
3. Self-sustaining healthy food purchasing incentives at food retailers, including vouchers, free food, coupons and/or gift cards

STARTING STEPS

- Convene meetings with community partners, stakeholders and residents to develop consumer strategies and incentives for stores to participate
- Assess local food retailers for potential interest and advertise to them
- Assess existing onsite nutrition resources and programs for expansion, particularly to small food retailers

POTENTIAL MEASURES

- Number and size of food retail locations providing onsite education and healthy food purchasing incentives
- Total sales of healthy food following implementation of new onsite programs
- Number of people participating in onsite programs and incentives

RESOURCES

Existing resources leveraged in new ways

- While existing resources for onsite nutrition education and incentives to purchase healthy foods are at capacity, engaging new partners and identifying opportunities for shared resources and collaboration to expand nutrition education and counseling resources can be explored. Additional resources will be required to provide in-store healthy food purchasing incentives.

B-12: RECOMMENDED ACTION

Support the expansion of nutrition and food system education in pre-K-12 curricula.

Integrating nutrition and food system education into curriculum such as growing fruits and vegetables or providing healthy food and local food in cafeterias, improves students' opportunity to eat healthy while fostering involvement in the local food system. New national standards outlined in the Every Student Succeeds Action Reauthorization 2015 recognize health and nutrition's importance in school curricula. These new standards provide an opportunity to inform and guide curriculum opportunities.

B-12: GETTING STARTED

CURRENT STATUS

In process

WHO

Action for Healthy Kids, Franklin County Board of Health, Franklin County Farm Bureau, Franklin Park Conservatory, Local Matters, OSU Extension Farm to School, OSU Extension SNAP-Ed and the Expanded Food and Nutrition Education Program (EFNEP), and schools and districts serving Columbus and Franklin County

OBJECTIVES

1. All pre-K-12 schools in Columbus and Franklin County have access to nutrition and food system curriculum resources that meet Ohio Department of Education requirements
2. Established best practices and strategic models for local schools to integrate nutrition and food system curricula and resources that meet Ohio Department of Education health and nutrition requirements
3. Policy education for decision makers to support nutrition and health standards that emphasize the health, economic and environmental benefits of the local food system as they interpret the Every Student Succeeds Act Reauthorization 2015

STARTING STEPS

- Inventory resources and capacity of existing pre-K-12 nutrition and food system education resources
- Engage parents, school administrators, teachers and community stakeholders to assess existing pre-K-12 nutrition and food system education resources for consistency with Ohio Department of Education's requirements and feasibility of integration into the school day
- Convene stakeholders to establish and coordinate a strategic plan to build the capacity of pre-K-12 nutrition and food system education resources to consistently meet Ohio Department of Education's requirements

POTENTIAL MEASURES

- Number of implementable nutrition and food system curricula and resources that are available for pre-K-12 schools
- Number of collaborations between schools and community nutrition and food system education providers
- Number of pre-K-12 students engaged in nutrition and food system related education activities

RESOURCES

Existing resources leveraged in new ways

- District wellness committees in Columbus City Schools and other districts throughout the county are already integrating nutrition and food system education into existing curricula and student learning goals. Enhancing coordination and collaboration between schools and community agencies and organizations that currently provide nutrition and food system education to pre-K-12 students can leverage existing resources to reach more students. Additional resources may be required to expand capacity if leveraging community and school resources together are not adequate to reach all students.

GOAL C INTRODUCTION: Food is an essential part of a thriving community. The development of grocery stores, restaurants and food production, processing and distribution operations attracts more businesses, grows the local food industry and provides jobs. People working in the food system also benefit from supportive programs to improve the viability of their industries. Actions in this goal will lead to economic success in the local food system and growth of local food businesses.

GOAL C: ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

GOAL C:

Increase the role of food in economic development.

IN 5 YEARS, the successful implementation of the actions in this goal will lead to:

- A stronger market for food businesses through an enhanced local food supply chain that connects producers, processors, distributors and buyers.
- Residents in our community have more employment and job training opportunities through new and expanded local food businesses.
- Revitalized communities through the development of centralized neighborhood food marketplaces and the redevelopment of vacant spaces.

C-1: RECOMMENDED ACTION

Create a food processing and distribution collaborative.

A food processing and distribution collaborative will strengthen relationships between local food processors and local distributors, particularly small and mid-sized operations. The collaborative will work to initiate strategic planning and funding to develop processing and distribution resources locally. Work would include growing local food processing and distribution businesses, particularly start-ups and small-scale operations, by helping them navigate regulations and obtain certifications. Work would include identifying and partnering with existing operations such as food production sites that are suited for transitioning to value added food processing and distribution.

C-1: GETTING STARTED

CURRENT STATUS

In process but will require addition of new elements

WHO

Economic Community Development Institute (ECDI) Columbus, Mid-Ohio Regional Planning Commission, Ohio Department of Agriculture, and The Commissary

OBJECTIVES

1. Formalized collaboration between local food processors and local distributors, particularly small and mid-sized operations, with strategic planning and funding
2. Revenue generating, self-sustaining and locally-invested food processing and distribution operations working with local producers and distributors
3. Recurring meetings between regulatory agencies and food processors and distributors to discuss regulation updates and assessment
4. Navigation programs and resources for food processing and distribution-related regulations and certification
5. Community and neighborhood involvement and representation through food processing and distribution businesses development, employment and operations
6. Widespread availability of locally produced and processed produce, meat and dairy at retail purchasing locations and institutions (e.g., pre-K-12, colleges, universities, public agencies)
7. Coordination between the Joint City and County Local Food Team, advisory group, food processing and distribution collaborative, and local food supply connector position (See actions A-1 and C-2.)

STARTING STEPS

- Identify potential public, private and nonprofit entities interested in joining a collaborative
- Convene meetings with existing local food processors and distributors to discuss the potential format of a collaborative and its role
- Convene (or expand existing) meetings between regulatory agencies and food processors and distributors to discuss regulatory and certification concerns

POTENTIAL MEASURES

- A formal food processing and distribution collaborative
- Number of partners/members in the collaborative
- Number of initiatives supported by the collaborative
- Number of commercial and institutional buyers purchasing food from local food processors and distributors supported by the collaborative
- Number of programs or resources that help processors and distributors navigate regulations, certification, and permitting requirements
- Number of new or expanded food processing and/or distribution operations
- Number of local suppliers for local food processing and distribution operations
- Number of community residents employed and/or providing products for partners in the collaborative

RESOURCES

Existing resources leveraged in new ways

- Implementation can be done with some existing resources, particularly with current efforts by local food processors and distributors. However, additional resources may be required to establish or formalize new programs and reach out to parties not currently involved.

C-2: RECOMMENDED ACTION

Establish a local food supply connector position to expand market opportunities for local food.

A neutral local food supply connector forms relationships with individuals and entities in the local food system. Through an understanding of the various perspectives and needs, the position fosters and facilitates relationships among local producers, processors, distributors and commercial buyers, expanding market opportunities for local food businesses. These increased connections and working relationships will stimulate the overall growth of the local food industry. As a neutral entity, the position could make unbiased recommendations to both public and private entities that are necessary to strengthen the local food system and support local food businesses.

C-2: GETTING STARTED

CURRENT STATUS

New work

WHO

To be determined

OBJECTIVES

1. Local producer understanding of commercial buyer requirements
2. Values based transactions between local producers and purchasers
3. Involvement of producers throughout Franklin County and beyond in aggregation and distribution operations
4. Community and neighborhood involvement and representation through local food businesses' development, employment and products
5. Widespread purchase agreements and transactions between local food businesses, particularly small and mid-sized, and commercial and institutional buyers
6. Local producers and/or processors, particularly small and mid-sized, connected with distributors and purchasers in stable, long-term relationships
7. Evaluation of opportunities for local food businesses' expansion
8. Identify gaps and bottlenecks in the local and regional food system
9. Strategically located food aggregation and distribution operations, accessible to small-scale businesses, and using cooperative business models (i.e., shared labor, equipment, storage and/or revenue generating processing operations) where appropriate
10. Coordination between the Joint City and County Local Food Team, advisory group, food processing and distribution collaborative, and local food supply connector position (See actions A-1 and C-1.)

STARTING STEPS

- Identify successful models and best practices
- Meet with local producers, processors, distributors and commercial buyers to understand needs and assets this position could target
- Convene public and private partners to discuss goals, job description and oversight for the position, and identify necessary commercial and institutional partners
- Work with the Joint City and County Local Food Team and advisory group to consider individuals or entities to serve in this role and potential funding methods
- Identify viable models of local food aggregation and distribution operations

POTENTIAL MEASURES

- A formal position, with appropriate oversight in place, responsible for linking local producers, processors and distributors with each other and with commercial and institutional buyers
- Number of food system cross-sector relationships and/or purchase agreements formed as a result of the position
- Number of local food business expansions
- Number of neighborhood associations and community organizations involved in the development and operation of new or expanded local food businesses
- Number, type and location of food aggregation and distribution operations

RESOURCES

New resources required

- Implementation requires new resources, whether through funding and/or planning to create this position as there is currently no recognized position like this available locally.

C-3: RECOMMENDED ACTION

Create a consumer-producer-buyer verification process to support increased and authenticated healthy and local food purchasing.

A consumer-producer-buyer verification process creates a way to determine and communicate where food is coming from and how much of it is sourced locally when it is sold at grocery stores, restaurants and other purchasing locations. It ensures accountability for all those involved in the local food industry, encouraging increased production and purchasing of local food. Consumers will know where the food they eat and buy comes from. Producers will receive proper and consistent recognition at locations they supply. Buyers will maintain their identity and marketing when selling local food.

C-3: GETTING STARTED

CURRENT STATUS

In process but will require addition of new elements

WHO

Great River Organics (GRO), and Slow Food Columbus

OBJECTIVES

1. Reporting and authenticating mechanism to verify healthy and local food purchasing by restaurants, institutions and public agencies
2. Governing board that establishes and manages verification standards and reporting
3. Marketing campaign to educate consumers and buyers about the status and availability of authenticated healthy and local food

STARTING STEPS

- Identify best practices related to verifying and reporting healthy and local food purchasing
- Identify restaurants, institutions and public agencies with the capacity to utilize healthy and local food
- Convene representatives of producers, restaurants, institutions and public agencies to establish a verification and reporting process of healthy and local food purchasing
- Identify model marketing campaigns for supporting healthy and local food procurement (e.g., 10% Farm to Fork-Building North Carolina's Local Food Economy, Slow Food NYC-Snail of Approval Program)

POTENTIAL MEASURES

- Number of farmers, restaurants, institutions and public agencies participating
- Creation of a consumer-farmer-buyer governing board
- Establishment of a marketing campaign
- Annual reports with data on compliance
- Percentage increase in purchase of healthy and local food by restaurants, institutions and public agencies
- Number of purchase agreements that include provisions for healthy and local food

RESOURCES

New resources required

- While development can occur with existing resources and engagement with public/private agencies, and consumer and farmer efforts, implementation requires additional resources to help support the authentication process, reporting procedures, marketing and governing board.

C-4: RECOMMENDED ACTION

Advocate for food system workers in local and regional workforce development efforts.

Businesses depend on well-trained and accessible workers for sustainability and growth. The food industry includes middle-skill jobs that need to be filled. Middle-skill jobs typically do not require a 4 year degree but a high school diploma and some post-secondary education or training. Food system workers in low-wage jobs possess important basic employment skills that can help them enter career pathways programs for middle-skill jobs in other food system sectors and other industries. Recognizing specific needs and opportunities for food system workers in local career pathways programs ensures they have a viable way to acquire the skills local businesses require and earn higher incomes.

C-4: GETTING STARTED

CURRENT STATUS

In process but will require addition of new elements

WHO

Central Ohio Compact, Central Ohio Worker Center, Central Ohio Workforce Investment Corporation (COWIC), Community Economic Development Corporation of Ohio (CEDCO), Culinary Arts Programs with Columbus City Schools (CCS), Columbus State Community College (CSCC), Columbus Culinary Institute, Economic Community Development Institute (ECDI) Columbus, Franklin County PeopleWorks (training and workforce development), Godman Guild, and JP Morgan Chase's New Skills at Work

OBJECTIVES

1. Food system workers in entry-level, low-wage jobs have a career pathway to middle-skill jobs in the food system
2. Strong partnerships exist among food system employers, educational institutions, vocational/technical schools, workforce programs, economic development activities, the food processing and distribution collaborative, and local food supply connector position to help retain and attract talent to the area and fill in-demand jobs in the food system (See Actions C-1 and C-2)

STARTING STEPS

- Participate in collaboratives with local employers, agencies, education providers and funders who are engaged in the development of local career pathways programs for middle-skill jobs to advocate for inclusion of food sector pathways and resources

POTENTIAL MEASURES

- Number of career pathways programs for food system workers
- Number of local employers, agencies, education providers and funders participating in career pathways for food system workers
- Number of workers participating in career pathways for food system workers
- Average annual income of local food system jobs

RESOURCES

Existing resources leveraged in new ways

- Implementation can leverage existing resources and efforts, however, additional involvement from public-private-nonprofit partnerships is necessary to collect data, identify models and make recommendations.

C-5: RECOMMENDED ACTION

Study and describe the impact of wages and policies on food system workers and the affordability of food.

This study will assess the benefits of wage increases and other policies for food system workers while considering costs such as potential increase in food costs, reduction in public benefits and access to health care. Many workers in the local food system, from production to retail, do not earn a wage that allows them to purchase the quantity and quality of food required to support a healthy diet for themselves and their families. Local economic data clearly demonstrates that low wages and underemployment are problems in the food system, but what remains unclear is how policies to address these issues (e.g., wage increases, overtime, full-time vs. part-time) will affect food system workers and the cost of food.

C-5: GETTING STARTED

CURRENT STATUS

New work

WHO

Central Ohio Worker Center, and The Kirwan Institute for the Study of Race and Ethnicity

OBJECTIVES

1. Reported impact of current wages and related policies on food system workers and their families
2. Reported impact of food system worker wage changes on the affordability of food
3. Impact of employment policies, wages and underemployment on food system workers included in local and regional economic analysis and in state and federal advocacy efforts

STARTING STEPS

- Convene relevant public, private and nonprofit organizations, institutions and agencies to assess the impact of wage changes and employment policies on food system workers and their families
- Identify models to use in studying the benefits and costs of wage changes and other employment policies for food system workers
- Identify models to use in studying the effects of wage changes and related policies on the affordability of food

POTENTIAL MEASURES

- Number of organizations engaged in assessing the impact of wage and related policy changes
- Diversity of organizations engaged (e.g., food system sectors, advocacy organizations, businesses, public agencies, representation of marginalized groups)
- Number of local, state and national decision makers informed of findings

RESOURCES

Existing resources leveraged in new ways

- Implementation can leverage existing resources and efforts, however, additional involvement from public-private-nonprofit partnerships is necessary to collect data, identify models and make recommendations.

C-6: RECOMMENDED ACTION

Revise zoning codes, related permit requirements and land use plans to support and encourage agricultural and food system uses as a viable option for community revitalization.

Local food system land uses integrated with mixed residential and commercial development support economic investment in neighborhoods and increase the availability of locally produced, processed and distributed food for consumers. Examples of local food system land uses include food production, civic agriculture, retail food sales, farmers' markets, farm stands, food aggregation, storage, and distribution, and food manufacturing. Although the City of Columbus and Franklin County are experiencing greater prosperity than many cities that have embraced local food system land uses as a community priority, there are areas within the city and county where food system land uses can be a highest and best use and contribute to community revitalization. The role of food in economic development throughout the city and county could increase through revising zoning codes, land use plans and permitting processes to support and encourage local food system uses, and identifying where those strategies have the greatest potential for positive impact.

PROMISING PRACTICES

THE CITY OF COLUMBUS GREEN BUSINESS AND URBAN AGRICULTURE STRATEGIC PLAN includes two components. The first is a review of City rules, regulations, codes, policies and procedures that impact urban agriculture. The second is a market study and business plan focused on the potential for developing, attracting and growing green businesses and activities within core urban areas with a high volume of vacant parcels. The goal of the of the plan is to help transform the City's blighted neighborhoods by using sustainably focused activities and business as an engine for economic growth. Coordinated by the City of Columbus Department of Development, the consultant team is comprised of MKSK, MORPC, ACEnet, Development Strategies, Graydon Land Use Strategies and OSU Extension. The planning process was launched in March 2016 and is projected to take approximately nine months. Project deliverables will include: Market Growth Strategies & Business Support Plan; Model Development Concepts (site plans and perspective renderings); Policy Modifications; and, Stakeholder & Public Meeting Summaries. To ensure effective intra-departmental coordination and communication, Columbus Public Health staff that served on the Local Food Action Plan Project Team also served on the Working Committee for the Green Business and Urban Agriculture Strategic Plan. Key personnel from the Department of Development provided monthly updates on the planning process to the Local Food Action Plan Project Team.

C-6: GETTING STARTED

CURRENT STATUS

In process but will require addition of new elements

WHO

Columbus Department of Development's Green Business & Urban Agriculture Strategic Plan, Columbus Public Health-"Starting a Food Business Guide" (2013), Franklin County Economic Development and Planning-Franklin County Zoning Resolution updates regarding agriculture uses on lots sized less than 5 acres, and OSU Extension

OBJECTIVES

1. Zoning codes explicitly address and support agricultural and food system uses and identify areas where these uses may be the highest and best use
2. Accessible and plain language is used to communicate zoning codes to the community
3. Food businesses can easily navigate the permit process for agriculture and food system uses
4. Local food system growth and resilience is included in new land use and community plans and updates to existing plans

STARTING STEPS

- Identify best practices, locally and nationally, where zoning, permitting and land use planning supports and encourages local food system uses
- Advocate for and participate in reviews of zoning, permitting and land use planning processes to identify opportunities where local food system land uses can be included
- Identify training, tools and resources that food businesses need to help them efficiently and effectively navigate zoning and permit processes

POTENTIAL MEASURES

- Number of zoning code amendments related to agricultural uses and food businesses
- Number of land use and community plans including strategies and recommendations that support the local food system
- Number of permits issued for agricultural and food system uses
- Development of training, tools and resources for food businesses

RESOURCES

Existing resources leveraged in new ways

- The Green Business and Urban Agriculture Strategic Plan, which is in process, will present a comprehensive model for this work that can be used as a model for other municipalities. Additional resources may be required to develop and provide assistance through training and tools.

C-7: RECOMMENDED ACTION

Repurpose vacant commercial, industrial and residential sites for local food system uses.

Food system uses present an opportunity to turn vacant and abandoned properties into productive community assets. Whether they are for-profit or not-for-profit, food businesses provide jobs, workforce development, food access and education to the communities where they are located. They also have been shown to attract further investment in an area and contribute to the overall local economy. A broad array of food system uses -- civic agriculture, farmers' markets, grocery stores, food processing and food distribution centers -- can rehabilitate blighted and nuisance properties and build the local food economy. Rehabilitation efforts could leverage public-private partnerships like those occurring with community gardens on vacant City and County lots and the "Parcels to Places" project.

PROMISING PRACTICES

PARCELS TO PLACES is a pilot project funded by the Ohio Capital Corporation for Housing (OCCH), the City of Columbus Land Redevelopment Office and the Columbus Foundation in partnership with the Affordable Housing Trust (AHT) and the Neighborhood Design Center (NDC) to facilitate vacant lot redevelopment in the City of Columbus. As a competition, participants submit project proposals with drawings, a budget and an operation plan which are judged in two different rounds. The NDC provides design assistance to applicants who pass the first round. An advisory panel reviews all proposals making it to the final round and can award up to $30,000 to implement the final proposal.

For more information, visit: http://www.parcelstoplaces.com/competition.html.

C-7: GETTING STARTED

CURRENT STATUS

In process but will require addition of new elements

WHO

Columbus Department of Development's Green Business & Urban Agriculture Strategic Plan, Columbus Land Redevelopment Office, Healthy Food for Ohio (HFFO)-Ohio Department of Job & Family Services, Finance Fund Capital Corporation (FCAP), The Food Trust, "Parcels to Places"-Ohio Capital Corporation for Housing (OCCH), Affordable Housing Trust for Columbus and Franklin County, Neighborhood Design Center, The Columbus Foundation, and The Central Ohio Community Improvement Corporation (COCIC)

OBJECTIVES

1. Land redevelopment plans and programs for vacant commercial and residential lots offering long-term land tenure for a variety of food system uses, including but not limited to civic agriculture, grocery stores, farmers' markets, food processing and food distribution where these uses have the greatest potential for positive impact and are desirable to the community
2. Public-private partnerships that provide funding for vacant commercial and residential land redevelopment involving local food system uses

STARTING STEPS

- Convene food system and redevelopment stakeholders
- Identify local and national best practices where land redevelopment efforts support and encourage local food system uses for vacant and abandoned residential and commercial properties
- Engage communities, including those where food system land uses have been identified as a priority (Weinland Park, Linden, Franklinton, OSU East PACT, Southside) and those which have not yet established their vision for local food, to identify food system redevelopment opportunities within neighborhoods

POTENTIAL MEASURES

- Number of development plans and initiatives for vacant and abandoned commercial buildings and residential lots that identify food system businesses as priority uses for redevelopment
- Number of commercial buildings or residential lots repurposed for food system uses
- Number of neighborhood residents and organizations involved in redevelopment proposals and projects through meetings, presentations or workshops

RESOURCES

Existing resources leveraged in new ways

- Implementation can leverage existing resources and efforts, however, additional funding sources may be required to construct and retrofit buildings, and rehabilitate and redevelop vacant lots.

C-8: RECOMMENDED ACTION

Develop central food marketplaces that reflect the culture and diversity of neighborhoods.

Central food marketplaces, places in neighborhoods where markets or public sales of food occur, provide an opportunity for residents to celebrate the past, present and future of their diverse food and culture. Food marketplaces bring resources that build and educate communities, increase consumer interest in local food, grow local food tourism, and offer economic opportunities that can be specifically tailored to engage New American communities. The structure, coordination and management of central food marketplaces will be determined by the needs and preferences of the neighborhood where it is located. Food marketplaces should be developed with the goals of building community, providing access to healthy food, affordable food and local food while celebrating the cultural diversity of all residents.

C-8: GETTING STARTED

CURRENT STATUS

New work

WHO

To be determined

OBJECTIVES

1. Central food marketplaces in neighborhoods where food offerings reflect the diversity of the community
2. Engagement of New American communities in central food marketplaces as both vendors and consumers
3. Recognition of central food marketplaces as local food tourism destinations

STARTING STEPS

- Convene stakeholders including food system, economic development departments, area commissions and agencies serving New American populations to assess cultural barriers and identify models for the development of central food marketplaces
- Engage New American communities to identify food-related business opportunities, including but not limited to food production, food sales and food processing
- Consult local visitor organizations to explore opportunities to grow local food tourism

POTENTIAL MEASURES

- Number of central food marketplaces in neighborhoods
- Number of neighborhood residents shopping at central food marketplaces
- Number of neighborhood residents working in central food marketplaces
- Number of New American vendors at central food marketplaces
- Number of customers outside of Franklin County visiting/purchasing at central food marketplaces

RESOURCES

New resources required

- Implementation can leverage existing resources, organizations and efforts, however, additional resources may be required to create new marketplaces or expand existing marketplace infrastructure, services and operations.

C-9: RECOMMENDED ACTION

Connect new or growing small-scale neighborhood food businesses to flexible financial and technical assistance options.

Neighborhood food businesses -- including urban farming, cafes, markets, and food processing and distribution operations -- create destinations in neighborhoods that attract residents and visitors to a community. They also provide opportunities for community engagement, education, training, employment and future economic investment in the area.

Connecting small-scale neighborhood food businesses, particularly new or growing ones, with flexible financial and technical assistance increases their likelihood of success. New or growing small-scale businesses need an array of funding options coupled with training and tools, especially with first-time business owners. Food businesses include those producing, processing, distributing and selling food in a variety of ways.

C-9: GETTING STARTED

CURRENT STATUS

In process but will require addition of new elements

WHO

Columbus SCORE, Community Economic Development Corporation of Ohio (CEDCO), Economic Community Development Institute (ECDI), Columbus Food Fort, Kiva Columbus, OSU Extension, Slow Money, The Commissary, and USDA Farm Service Agency's Microloans Program

OBJECTIVES

1. More small-scale neighborhood food businesses are starting and/or expanding into investment ready businesses
2. Technical assistance resources (e.g., loans, business development services) are available to small-scale neighborhood food businesses, including those owned by New Americans
3. Small-scale neighborhood food businesses are understanding and using locally available funding and technical assistance programs that support business development and expansion

STARTING STEPS

- Convene meetings with neighborhood food businesses, public agencies, private and nonprofit organizations to network and discuss social impact investment opportunities, loan programs, technical assistance services, and potential strategies and partnerships
- Identify existing loan, technical assistance and business development services that can support small-scale neighborhood food businesses
- Document unmet lending and technical assistance needs of small-scale neighborhood food businesses

POTENTIAL MEASURES

- Number of small-scale neighborhood food business start-ups
- Number of small-scale neighborhood food business expansions
- Number of small-scale neighborhood food businesses using locally available lending programs
- Number of small-scale neighborhood food businesses using locally available technical assistance programs and resources

RESOURCES

Existing resources leveraged in new ways

- Implementation can leverage existing resources and programs, however, additional funding sources may be required to create new partnerships, funding tools and programs.

GOAL D INTRODUCTION: Food waste is a critical issue in the food system and it is not widely understood. The most current research outlines the enormous impact that prevention, recovery and recycling efforts can have and the opportunity for businesses and consumers to lead the way with some of the most effective interventions. This focus area aims to bring the pertinent issues to light and significantly reduce food waste in our community.

GOAL D: FOOD-RELATED WASTE

GOAL D:

Prevent food-related waste.

IN 5 YEARS, the successful implementation of the actions in this goal will lead to:

- A reduction in the amount of food waste entering the Franklin County Sanitary Landfill through increased consumer education, household composting, technical assistance to food businesses and regulatory updates that support food waste diversion.

D-1: RECOMMENDED ACTION

Expand food waste prevention education campaigns for consumers, local governments, pre-K-12 schools and food businesses.

Preventing wasted food and its packaging from entering the waste stream will provide the greatest financial and environmental impact in our community. Local government can join the efforts of the Ohio Environmental Protection Agency and Solid Waste Authority of Central Ohio to increase public awareness and interest in food waste prevention. An important part of awareness and prevention efforts is to address the misconceptions associated with "unattractive" or "imperfect" appearance, particularly with fruits and vegetables. New collaborations and resource sharing can make messages more widely accessible, fostering widespread demand for food waste prevention actions in homes and food businesses.

PROMISING PRACTICES

THE NEW NATIONAL CAMPAIGN WWW.SAVETHEFOOD.COM was recently unveiled by the Natural Resources Defense Council and The Ad Council. The campaign consists of public service ads (PSAs), including TV, online video, poster and out-of-home assets that encourage Americans to "Save The Food" by showcasing the wondrous life cycle of food and the loss of resources when it goes unconsumed. All PSAs drive to the campaign's website SaveTheFood.com where Americans can learn how simple lifestyle changes like making shopping lists, freezing food and using leftovers can help "Save the Food" and significantly reduce the 20 pounds of food individuals throw away each month. The Ad Council is actively seeking partners interested in using and sharing its educational resources. Collaborators incur the cost of printing materials and paying for advertising space, but there is no cost for using the art and files.

For more information, visit: http://savethefood.com/.

D-1: GETTING STARTED

CURRENT STATUS

In process but will require addition of new elements

WHO

Columbus 2020, Columbus Department of Public Service, Columbus Department of Development's Green Business & Urban Agriculture Strategic Plan, Columbus GreenSpot, Mid-Ohio Foodbank, Minority and Neighborhood Health Advisory Committees, Franklin County Economic Development and Planning, Neighborhood Associations, Ohio Grocers Association, Ohio Restaurant Association, Ohio State Food Waste Collaborative, Schools and Districts serving Columbus and Franklin County, Solid Waste Authority of Central Ohio, and USEPA's Food Recovery Challenge

OBJECTIVES

1. Widespread, accessible and relevant food waste prevention education campaigns tailored to each food system sector and linked with community and neighborhood efforts (See action D-2.)
2. Consumers, local governments, local food businesses and pre-K-12 schools are actively promoting food waste prevention education campaigns

STARTING STEPS

- Identify existing food waste prevention educational resources and programs
- Assess gaps, needs and opportunities for further community education
- Engage consumers and local food businesses to implement a locally relevant large-scale food waste prevention education campaign
- Incorporate household food waste prevention tips into the Columbus GreenSpot website

POTENTIAL MEASURES

- Implementation of a locally relevant, community-wide food waste prevention education campaign
- Volume of food waste entering the Franklin County Sanitary Landfill
- Number of local food system stakeholders involved in food waste prevention education
- Number of GreenSpot members reached with food waste prevention communications

RESOURCES

Existing resources leveraged in new ways

- The Ohio Environmental Protection Agency, The Ohio State University and the Solid Waste Authority of Central Ohio facilitate community collaborations, lead education campaigns and provide a variety of educational resources. Public agencies can leverage this ongoing work and engage local food businesses and food system stakeholders in planning and disseminating food waste prevention education.

D-2: RECOMMENDED ACTION

Leverage food waste reduction resources and strategies to increase the number of residents who access training, education and equipment for effective backyard composting.

Leveraging existing efforts to teach and incentivize residential composting can grow food waste reduction in ways that are not dependent on significant infrastructure enhancements. The Franklin Soil and Water Conservation District, in partnership with Columbus, Franklin County and other municipalities, currently provides workshop training and rebates on rain barrels and compost bins. Residents also may purchase "closed in" compost bins at local retailers such as hardware stores and apply for reimbursement. Public-private partnerships could assess these existing efforts for expansion and work with neighborhood and community organizations to implement new and expanded programs.

D-2: GETTING STARTED

CURRENT STATUS

In process but will require addition of new elements

WHO

Franklin Soil & Water Conservation District's Community Backyard Conservation Program, Ohio State Food Waste Collaborative, Solid Waste Authority of Central Ohio, and The Ohio State University Extension Master Gardener Volunteer Program

OBJECTIVES

1. Increasing public awareness of the benefits of effective residential composting and available training and rebate programs (See action D-1.)
2. Widespread proper use of compost bins in residential areas

STARTING STEPS

- Engage the Franklin Soil & Conservation District Community Backyard Conservation Program to identify current capacity and resources needed to expand reach
- Identify opportunities to connect and leverage food waste reduction education and resources to enhance public awareness and participation in the Backyard Conservation Program
- Consider other types of programs and public-private partnerships to complement existing backyard conservation programs, including OSU Extension Master Gardener programs to provide education on the use of compost in backyard gardening

POTENTIAL MEASURES

- Number of education resources for the public (newsletters, workshops, etc.)
- Number of participants in existing Backyard Conservation Program
- Number of participants in OSU Extension Master Gardener trainings

RESOURCES

Existing resources leveraged in new ways

- Implementation can be accomplished by leveraging existing programs and resources, however, additional resources may be required to cover increased training, rebate offerings and advertising.

D-3: RECOMMENDED ACTION

Recommend changes to policies, zoning and health codes that support and encourage food waste recovery and diversion.

Policies, zoning and health codes that encourage and support food donation and food waste recovery methods such as composting are needed at the commercial and residential scale to grow the capacity for local food waste prevention efforts. Public awareness and understanding of policies, zoning and health codes that encourage and support recovery and recycling will build the demand for local food waste prevention efforts. Public agencies and food system stakeholder commitment is needed to inform policy decisions and to develop a comprehensive communication plan.

D-3: GETTING STARTED

CURRENT STATUS

In process but will require addition of new elements

WHO

Columbus Department of Development's Green Business & Urban Agriculture Strategic Plan, Ohio Environmental Protection Agency, Ohio State Food Waste Collaborative, and the Solid Waste Authority of Central Ohio

OBJECTIVES

1. Food businesses understand the opportunities, protections and incentives afforded them by existing federal, state and local laws, rules and ordinances to donate edible food
2. City and County zoning codes related to composting and similar methods, including animal waste, for households and community gardens are consistent with other relevant regulations and reflect best practices and industry standards

STARTING STEPS

- Utilize existing opportunities and trainings to communicate the protections and incentives that federal, state and local laws, rules and ordinances provide for donating edible food
- Review existing codes in relation to the Ohio Environmental Protection Agency's "Urban Agriculture, Composting and Zoning" report, update as required and communicate
- Identify areas or parcels that meet zoning requirements for potential composting or other alternative organic waste transfer or processing facilities

POTENTIAL MEASURES

- Adopted comprehensive amendments to the City of Columbus Zoning Code and Franklin County Zoning Resolution related to food waste recovery land uses (e.g., composting, etc.)
- Number of land use and community plans including strategies and recommendations that support food waste prevention and diversion
- Number of food business that receive training and education regarding existing protections and incentives for donation of edible food

RESOURCES

Existing resources leveraged in new ways

- Implementation can be accomplished with some existing resources, such as existing trainings for food businesses, and internal changes to zoning regulations, permit procedures and land use plans. Collaboration with emerging food waste prevention and recovery projects at The Ohio State University may present additional opportunities to leverage community resources for greater impact.

D-4: RECOMMENDED ACTION

Provide training, tools and economic incentives for new and existing food businesses to develop, adopt and implement food waste prevention plans.

Food waste prevention plans help businesses identify and implement strategies to prevent, recover and recycle food waste. Technical assistance can help food businesses explore best practices--such as serving smaller plates, purchasing imperfect produce, tray-less dining, food donation and waste tracking and analytics -- that improve their bottom line while reducing the amount of food waste entering the landfill. Incentive models can encourage food business to develop the resources and infrastructure needed to support future waste prevention efforts.

D-4: GETTING STARTED

CURRENT STATUS

New work

WHO

Columbus Department of Development, Columbus Public Health, Community Plates, DNO Produce, Ecotopia, Franklin County Board of Health, Franklin County Economic Development and Planning, HandsOn Central Ohio, Mid-Ohio Foodbank, Ohio Environmental Protection Agency (OEPA), Ohio Grocer Association, Ohio Restaurant Association, Ohio State Food Waste Collaborative, Solid Waste Authority of Central Ohio, and USDA U.S. Food Waste Challenge

OBJECTIVES

1. Food businesses developing and implementing food waste prevention plans

STARTING STEPS

- Develop technical assistance models and resources to help food businesses implement food waste reduction plans
- Engage food businesses and nonprofits to identify incentives and/or disincentives that will encourage more food businesses to implement food waste reduction plans
- Engage licensing and permitting process agencies for food businesses and identify opportunities to include education and best practice recommendations for food waste reduction
- Encourage businesses to use the Ohio Materials Marketplace (by the Ohio Environmental Protection Agency and deploying in Fall 2016) to offer foods for donation or scraps for composting, animal feed or other processing
- Encourage businesses to participate in the EPA's Food Recovery Challenge for tracking their food waste reduction efforts
- Build support among stakeholders for large-scale food waste prevention and diversion
- Explore opportunities to include food waste and diversion metrics in the creation of a consumer-buyer-producer verification process (See action C-3.)

POTENTIAL MEASURES

- Number of food businesses participating in technical assistance and/or incentive programs
- Implementation of incentives and/or disincentives that encourage food businesses to implement a food waste reduction plan
- Number of food businesses adopting and implementing food waste reduction plans
- Number of participants in the Ohio Materials Marketplace (available from the Ohio Environmental Protection Agency)
- Number of local participants in the EPA's Food Recovery Challenge (Participants are listed on the EPA website.)
- Food waste and diversion metrics included in the consumer-buyer-producer verification process (See action C-3.)

RESOURCES

New resources required

- Integration of education and best practices can be developed in existing programs but technical assistance and incentives will require new resources. Community Recycling grants or Environmental Education grants from the Ohio Environmental Protection Agency could help fund some of these efforts.

D-5: RECOMMENDED ACTION

Build support for food waste recovery infrastructure among local leaders and large-scale food waste generators.

Developing the future of food waste recovery infrastructure requires convening local leaders and food businesses to learn about and discuss current models of food waste recovery infrastructure and food waste reduction efforts.

Whether participating in or hosting these discussions, local governments in Franklin County can actively grow support for current and future food waste recovery infrastructure.

D-5: GETTING STARTED

CURRENT STATUS

In process but will require addition of new elements

WHO

Columbus Department of Public Service, Mid-Ohio Regional Planning Commission, Ohio Environmental Protection Agency, Ohio Grocer Association, Ohio Restaurant Association, Ohio State Food Waste Collaborative, OSU Extension, and Solid Waste Authority of Central Ohio (SWACO)

OBJECTIVES

1. Local leaders and large-scale food waste generators are actively engaged in efforts to identify and develop food waste recovery options in the City of Columbus and Franklin County
2. Identify food waste recovery options, understand regulatory barriers and educate stakeholders

STARTING STEPS

- Conduct an inventory of current food waste recovery options both active and in development
- Conduct presentations, workshops, and training sessions to connect large-scale food waste generators with current, local and innovative practices, opportunities and infrastructure
- Identify options not currently available but with the potential for implementation
- Participate in local strategic planning for food waste processing infrastructure enhancements that will support both large-scale food waste generators and future efforts to provide household food waste diversion practices
- Assist with grant applications, including serving as sponsors for Ohio Environmental Protection Agency recycling grants

POTENTIAL MEASURES

- Number of public agencies, local leaders and large-scale food waste generators engaged
- Number of grant applications submitted
- Number of training opportunities offered and number of attendees

RESOURCES

Existing resources leveraged in new ways

- Various efforts in both the public and private sectors are already underway.

THE FUTURE OF THE PLAN

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The Joint City and County Local Food Team and the advisory group will be the coordinating entities for this plan. The Project Team, including members from Columbus Public Health, Local Matters and Franklin County Economic Development and Planning will provide transitional support to the Joint City and County Local Food Team. The Joint City and County Local Food Team and advisory group will issue annual progress reports.

The strength of this plan will be determined by the involvement and collaboration of all communities, stakeholders, food businesses, nonprofits and public agencies in the City of Columbus, Franklin County and the region.

NOTES

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National Institute of Food and Agriculture