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LOCAL FOODS, LOCAL PLACES TOOLKIT

A GUIDE TO HELP COMMUNITIES REVITALIZE USING LOCAL FOOD SYSTEMS

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Project lead and point of contact:

Melissa Kramer
Office of Sustainable Communities
U.S. Environmental Protection Agency
1200 Pennsylvania Ave. NW (MC 1807T)
Washington, DC 20460
Tel 202-564-8497
kramer.melissa@epa.gov

Reviewers:

- Chitra Kumar, EPA Office of Sustainable Communities
- John Foster, EPA Office of Sustainable Communities
- Megan Susman, EPA Office of Sustainable Communities
- Erin Okeefe, EPA Office of Sustainable Communities
- Stephanie Bertaina, EPA Office of Sustainable Communities
- Debra Tropp, U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA), Agriculture Marketing Service
- Gregory Dale, USDA Rural Development
- David Guthrie, Centers for Disease Control and Prevention
- Jason Espie, Renaissance Planning

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Cities and towns across the country are undertaking new initiatives and strengthening current programs that support development and growth of local food systems while reinvesting in downtowns and existing neighborhoods. These efforts can help communities achieve multiple goals, such as:

- Keeping money spent on food within the local economy and creating new jobs in the region.
- Diversifying the local economy and sustaining or reinvigorating a region's agricultural heritage.
- Increasing the vitality of a historic Main Street or an existing neighborhood, helping to attract reinvestment and growth to these areas.
- Revitalizing already-developed areas to reap environmental benefits.
- Reducing food insecurity and food deserts.

Nationwide, consumers are growing more interested in getting foods from producers in the same geographic region through farmers markets, community-supported agriculture, farm-to-school programs, and similar initiatives. Strong interest from communities prompted a group of federal agencies to offer assistance with a community-driven planning process that explores how to use the benefits of local foods to help revitalize downtowns and neighborhoods. The resulting Local Foods, Local Places Program helps communities create action plans that chart a course for using local foods to help meet a broad range of community goals. The program and its predecessor, Livable Communities in Appalachia, has worked with more than 80 communities since 2014.

This toolkit is meant to help communities interested in undertaking a similar process to develop their own plans for setting and achieving local food and revitalization goals. The toolkit was developed over the course of delivering the Local Foods, Local Places technical assistance and compiles best practices and lessons learned from the program. A facilitator, either from the community or hired from outside, could use this toolkit to help a community articulate its goals, engage stakeholders, and prioritize achievable actions to make progress.

The toolkit provides step-by-step instruction for planning and hosting a community workshop that produces an action plan laying out next steps for implementation. It also suggests some approaches, useful tips, and lessons in maintaining momentum, including that communities should:

- Cultivate and support champions.
- Find someone to own the plan.
- Help build relationships.

The toolkit provides detailed templates to help guide a community through the process, including:

- Community Self-Assessment
- Sample Workshop Agenda
- Potential Stakeholders
- Sample Workshop Invitation
- Materials Checklist
- Opening Presentation
- Day 2 Presentation

- Case Study Presentation
- Food System Diagramming Template
- Action Planning Table
- Funding Resources
- Other Resources

These templates can be downloaded at https://www.epa.gov/smartgrowth/local-foods-local-places-toolkit. The process as outlined in this document is flexible and adaptable to individual communities' needs and desires. As long as the end result is an action plan that reflects community members' ambitions and inspires them to action, the workshop can be considered a success.

1 INTRODUCTION

Cities and towns across the country are undertaking new initiatives and strengthening current programs that support development and growth of local food systems while reinvesting in downtowns and existing neighborhoods. These efforts can help communities achieve multiple goals:

- When people buy products grown or processed locally, they often keep money spent on food within the local economy and support creation of new jobs in the region.[1] For example, a study of the effects of farmers market sales on the West Virginia economy found that 34 farmers markets across the state together are responsible for 82 jobs (43 full-time equivalent jobs), $1,075,000 in economic output, and $653,000 in gross state product annually even after adjusting for losses in other sectors such as grocery stores.[2]
- New opportunities for local farmers, businesses, and entrepreneurs can help diversify the local economy and sustain or reinvigorate a region's agricultural heritage.
- Venues for selling local foods, such as farmers markets or food co-ops, can contribute to the vitality of a historic Main Street or an existing neighborhood, helping to attract reinvestment and growth to these areas.
- Reinvigorating already-developed areas, often returning brownfields and previously contaminated sites to productive use, benefits the environment.
- Finally, local foods can be a tool in the fight against food insecurity and food deserts. Nearly 30 million Americans live in low-income areas more than 1 mile from a supermarket.[3] A farmers market in these areas could provide access to healthy fruits and vegetables that might otherwise be out of reach.

Nationwide, consumers are growing more interested in getting foods from producers in the same geographic region. Producers have several ways to get locally grown foods to consumers:

- **Farmers markets.** The number of farmers markets in the United States has grown steadily from 1,755 in 1994 to 8,669 in 2016, a nearly fivefold increase in just over 20 years.[4]

[1] Swenson, Dave. *Investigating the Potential Economic Impacts of Local Foods for Southeast Iowa*. Leopold Center for Sustainable Agriculture at Iowa State University. 2009. https://farmtoschoolcensus.fns.usda.gov/home.
[2] Hughes, David W., Cheryl Brown, Stacy Miller, and Tom McConnell. "Evaluating the Economic Impact of Farmers' Markets Using an Opportunity Cost Framework." *Journal of Agricultural and Applied Economics* 40.1 (2008): 253-256.
[3] Ver Ploeg, Michele, et al. *Access to Affordable and Nutritious Food—Measuring and Understanding Food Deserts and Their Consequences: Report to Congress*. USDA Economic Research Service. 2009. https://www.ers.usda.gov/publications/pub-details/?pubid=42729.
[4] USDA Agricultural Marketing Service. "National Count of Farmers Market Directory Listings." 2016. https://www.ams.usda.gov/sites/default/files/media/National%20Count%20of%20Operating%20Farmers%20Markets%201994-2016.jpg.

- **Community-supported agriculture.** The first farms offering regular deliveries to consumers through a subscription or membership started in 1986,[5] and by 2012, the number had grown to 12,617 (some providing deliveries through multi-farm operations).[6] In addition, a survey of program managers indicates that between 2012 and 2014, the average number of shareholders in community-supported agriculture operations also increased.[7] However, variations and innovation in models for direct-to-consumer sales make developing a complete picture of these types of programs challenging.
- **Farm-to-school programs.** The number of schools participating in farm-to-school activities has grown from 400 in 2004[8] to 42,587 as of 2015.[9] Activities include school gardens, serving locally produced foods in school cafeterias, and sponsoring field trips to farms or orchards.

Strong interest from communities prompted a group of federal agencies to begin offering assistance to carry out a community-driven planning process that

What Is Local Food?

There is no standard geographic definition of "local" when it comes to defining a local food system. Rather, each community defines the term "local" in a way that helps community members identify food that supports particular social, economic, and/or environmental goals that will vary from place to place. Therefore, at the outset of a local food system project, it is helpful to define the geographic scale of what is "local," including the underlying goals and values that support that definition.

Often, the scale for "local" can be different for production and distribution. For example, a project's primary goal might be to support a specific county's farmers, but those farmers' best chance for success might be to sell their products to a more distant county that has a larger, higher-income population. Similarly, a farmers market initiative to bring fresh produce to a neighborhood that lacks these options might require connecting that community with producers from the larger region.

What Is a Local Place?

Place is not only a physical location—a sense of place is also conveyed by multiple factors, including community character, architectural styles, a visible sense of history, the amount of vegetation and green space, noise levels, and the level of comfort one feels walking around. Communities define what makes their local places special and cherished and then work towards preserving and expanding on those characteristics.

[5] McFadden, Steven. "Community Farms in the 21st Century: Poised for Another Wave of Growth?" Rodale Institute. http://www.newfarm.org/features/0104/csa-history/part1.shtml. Accessed Apr. 4, 2016.
[6] USDA. *Census of Agriculture*. 2012. http://www.agcensus.usda.gov/Publications/2012/Full_Report/Volume_1,_Chapter_2_US_State_Level/st99_2_043_043.pdf.
[7] USDA Agricultural Marketing Service. *Community Supported Agriculture: New Models for Changing Markets*. 2017. https://www.ams.usda.gov/publications/content/community-supported-agriculture-new-models-changing-markets.
[8] National Farm to School Network. "Federal Farm to School Policies." http://www.farmtoschool.org/policy. Accessed Apr. 4, 2016.
[9] USDA. *The Farm to School Census*. 2015. https://farmtoschoolcensus.fns.usda.gov/home.

explores how to use the benefits of local foods to help revitalize downtowns and neighborhoods. The resulting Local Foods, Local Places Program helps communities create action plans that chart a course for using local foods to help meet a broad range of community goals. The program and its predecessor, Livable Communities in Appalachia,[10] has worked with more than 80 communities since 2014. Plans that demonstrate broad support and coordination to achieve common goals have helped communities across the country get implementation funding from federal agencies, foundations, and local organizations. Throughout this document are stories and examples from the communities who participated in the federal Local Foods, Local Places process, including longer case studies about Huntington, West Virginia; North Wilkesboro, North Carolina; Walterboro, South Carolina; Ajo, Arizona; and Gloucester, Massachusetts.

This toolkit is designed to help communities interested in undertaking a similar process develop their own plans for setting and achieving local food and placemaking goals. The toolkit was developed over the course of delivering the Local Foods, Local Places technical assistance and compiles best practices and lessons learned from the program. A facilitator, either chosen from within the community or hired from outside, could use this toolkit to help a community articulate its goals, engage stakeholders, and prioritize achievable actions to make progress. Although this toolkit presents a well-tested framework for community action planning in support of local food systems and quality of life, it is not a one-size-fits-all process. Flexibility and adaptation by the facilitator are keys to success. This toolkit is intended as a starting point for stakeholders to build from and adjust the process to meet their community's specific needs.

2 Overview of the Process

A Local Foods, Local Places action planning process has three phases: planning, convening, and action (Exhibit 1). The planning phase is about preparing for a workshop through a series of meetings with a core group of stakeholders. The convening phase involves a 1.5-day intensive workshop open to the public or a list of invited participants. The action phase involves documenting the results of the workshop and moving the plan forward through a series of follow-up meetings with the initial core stakeholders and new people recruited during the workshop.

The action planning process is designed to take approximately five months but can be expanded or compressed as needed. Generally, action plans designed through this process have an implementation period of 18 to 24 months.

[10] The 2012 Livable Communities in Appalachia Program was sponsored by EPA, the U.S. Department of Agriculture, and the Appalachian Regional Commission. In 2013, the program expanded to the rest of the United States as the Local Foods, Local Places Program, with additional federal sponsors including the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, the U.S. Department of Transportation, and the Delta Regional Authority. The U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development joined as a partner in 2016.

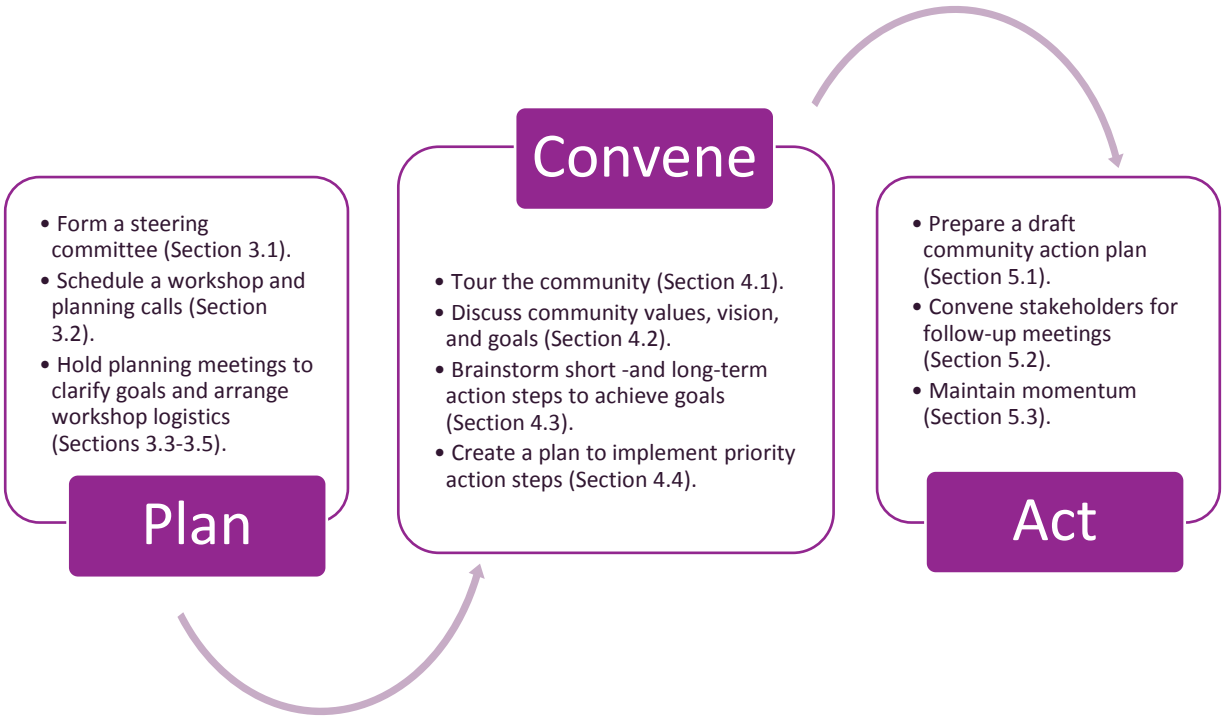


Exhibit 1. The Local Foods, Local Places action planning process involves three phases: planning, convening, and action.

3 Phase 1: Planning

The first phase of the process generally takes five to seven weeks. Planning for the workshop involves forming a steering committee and holding a series of meetings with that committee to set the workshop agenda and choose which stakeholders to invite.

3.1 Form a Steering Committee

One of the initial steps to get started is forming a steering committee—a small group of people who are committed to shepherding the planning process through from start to finish. Generally, one or more of these people continue to serve as a champion for the resulting action plan, but the process itself also often helps identify additional people who can serve this role.

The number of people on the steering committee will vary by community. Generally, at least three people representing different organizations or perspectives in the community are ideal so that the process is a group effort from the beginning and a diversity of perspectives can inform decisions. Steering committees larger than six to seven people can be more difficult to manage because of multiple schedules to coordinate and greater difficulty reaching consensus on decisions. However, many communities have had success with larger steering committees when every member is enthusiastic and committed to the process.

When identifying candidates for a steering committee, consider who has connections within the community, the ability to rally attendance and support, and perhaps most importantly, will have the

capacity and interest to move ideas toward action. Depending on the size of the community and nature and scope of the project, the steering committee might include:

- The mayor, tribal chief, or other elected official.
- The town or city manager.
- A local farmer or grower.
- The planning department head or staff member.
- The environmental department head or staff member.
- The tourism bureau head or staff member.
- The public health department head or staff member.
- The chamber of commerce or other business group representative.
- A local, state, or federal agricultural extension representative.
- A Main Street organization representative.
- A neighborhood organization representative.
- A key nonprofit organization representative.
- Other key stakeholders.

For example, in Martinsville, Virginia, the community wanted to turn a long-vacant but beloved neighborhood building into a "healthy hub" for food-related businesses that could spur economic revitalization and improve health in the city's historic African-American neighborhood. After being awarded technical assistance from the Local Foods, Local Places Program, the city's zoning administrator and community planner convened a steering committee with representatives from the regional planning district, the city-county ministerial association, the local community college, Future Farmers of America, the city-county Coalition for Health and Wellness, a community development financial institution, a local hydroponics farmer, and a local restaurateur. This broad cross section of stakeholders was able to turn out a large, diverse crowd for the workshop, ensure community buy-in to the process, and provide needed expertise.

Although a steering committee will not be able to include every stakeholder group you would like to attend the workshop, consider whether you have unintentionally excluded a critical segment of the community from the planning process. For example, steering committees should ideally reflect the community's overall demographic makeup in terms of age, race, socio-economic class, and other variables to help ensure that goals reflect the whole community and outreach plans will have the greatest chance for success. Once the steering committee is formed, planning for a workshop can begin.

3.2 Schedule a Workshop and Planning Meetings

Choosing a date for a workshop as one of the first orders of business can help determine an appropriate schedule for planning calls and keep steering committee members motivated for the upcoming work. In setting a date, communities generally consider whether there are related events that could boost workshop attendance if the schedules were coordinated, or whether there are popular community events that might create a conflict for attendees and risk low turnout.

This toolkit is structured for a 1.5-day workshop beginning with an evening session on the first day and an all-day session on the following day. Although communities can modify this schedule as the agenda is developed, tentatively penciling in a 1.5-day workshop on a particular date can help move the process forward.

Huntington, West Virginia: Local Foods Market Builds Community

In 2012, a group of Huntington residents and nonprofit organizations began discussions about opening a market to provide an economically viable outlet for local producers and improve access to healthy, local food. To organize community support and input, they used weekly "chat-n-chews," which were established by Create Huntington, a grassroots support network, to provide a place where residents interested in positive change could gather and explore ideas for improving the city. Soon a steering committee formed focused on a new market, and the committee used Facebook to gather additional input, announce events, and generate community support for the idea. In less than a year, the Wild Ramp opened, offering local producers the chance to sell on consignment. Producers set their own prices and stock their own displays, keeping 80 percent of the proceeds, with the market using the remainder to fund operations. Three paid staff members and a volunteer board of 11 people operate the market with the help of a large cadre of volunteers who collectively work about 500 hours per month.

The Wild Ramp's building anchors the Old Central City commercial corridor. Photo source: EPA

By 2014, the Wild Ramp outgrew the space at its first location, while the city of Huntington was looking for an organization to operate a local foods market in a new 2,500-square-foot building along a historic commercial corridor in the part of town known as Old Central City. The city selected the Wild Ramp's proposal and helped pay for the move, recognizing the market would help advance the city's goals to reduce vacancies, prioritize development in existing commercial corridors, and promote commercial uses that serve residents' needs. The market brings new foot traffic to the corridor while giving neighborhood residents much-needed access to fresh, local food. The Wild Ramp was able to expand to nearly three times its original size, allowing space for a small commercial kitchen, cooking classes, agricultural workshops, sustainability programs, and other community events. Huntington used its Local Foods, Local Places workshop in 2014 to help plan for the success of the market in its new location and usher in revitalization in its new neighborhood. Coordinating several related projects helped make each a bigger success.

In the first five years of operation, more than 225 producers and artisans have earned $1.3 million from sales at the Wild Ramp. In addition, the Wild Ramp has been part of Old Central City's renaissance as a tourist destination filled with antique stores and mom and pop shops.

Source: Personal communication with Gail Patton, Executive Director, Unlimited Future, Inc., Apr. 5, 2017.

This toolkit is also structured for three 1.5-hour planning meetings scheduled approximately six, four, and two weeks before the workshop. Setting times for all of these planning meetings early on can help ensure steering committee members' calendars will be free.

3.3 Planning Meeting #1

The primary purpose of the first planning meeting is to begin a conversation about community goals while thinking of food systems and revitalization efforts in a broad, integrated sense. The self-assessment in Appendix A helps guide this conversation. The purpose of the self-assessment is to:

1. Help the steering committee conceptualize the breadth of the food system—how it is situated within other economic, community, and place-based development goals and efforts.
2. Help the steering committee determine the need for participation among various community leaders so it can generate a broad stakeholder list.
3. Provide a preliminary activity for the local steering committee to begin working together or working better together.

Community Goals

Community goals work best when they are specific enough that everyone understands what they mean and broad enough to encompass unconventional and creative approaches. For example, Passaic, New Jersey, used the following actions to help guide its planning process:

- Increase local foods accessibility and affordability.
- Increase sourcing of local, healthy foods to businesses.
- Develop resources for healthy food access and wellness.
- Strengthen place-based identity.
- Enhance and promote the Market Street area as a distinctive cultural corridor.

Steering committee members should take home a copy of the completed questionnaire and begin thinking about which of the issues or activities discussed would be good to focus the workshop around. After answering the questions, it can be helpful to go back through as a group and identify three to four top priorities among the strategies and actions to begin to think about how to focus a workshop. Most communities have many things going on, all of which could be advanced by community planning, so choosing priorities is an important part of setting a realistic agenda and positioning for success.

At the first planning meeting, it can also be helpful to discuss the community's economic, social, and historic context. Someone might volunteer to review relevant plans and related initiatives and collect specific data about the community, such as demographic information, health statistics, and food outlet locations. This information can form the basis of a short introduction to the action plan that will result from the workshop. Seek a volunteer at the first meeting who will draft this information and present it at the workshop to help set the stage for a discussion of where the community has come from, where it is now, and where it wants to go. In some cases the facilitator for the action planning process might take the lead in compiling this information.

3.4 Planning Meeting #2

The agenda for the second planning meeting should include making decisions about:

- **Workshop focus.** Use the results of the self-assessment to decide the focus of the workshop, identifying three to five specific goals around which the community will develop an action plan. Goal development is a critical part of the process and might require several rounds of revision among steering committee members before reaching agreement. Steering committee members should also remain flexible and understand that goals might be further modified at the workshop once more people weigh in.

- **Workshop agenda.** Begin drafting an agenda for the workshop. Appendix B offers a sample agenda, which includes an evening session on the first day followed by a full-day work session. Many communities find that this structure helps maximize community participation because some people will be able to attend only the evening session while others will be able to attend only the daytime session. However, communities should adjust this schedule based on what is likely to generate the greatest participation given local customs and constraints.

- **Meals.** Given the focus on local foods, many communities choose to incorporate a group meal into the agenda. This might include a dinner during the opening session and/or lunch on the second day. Communities have used meals as an opportunity for fellowship and to showcase local food offerings. For example, in Mission, South Dakota, the Rosebud Sioux Tribe served a traditional Lakota meal of buffalo soup to reinforce the workshop's focus on the Community Food Sovereignty Initiative, a program to strengthen the production, availability, and consumption of traditional and locally produced foods to stimulate economic development and address diet-related health concerns across the reservation. In some communities, local businesses or foundations have sponsored lunch for workshop participants. Connellsville, Pennsylvania, organized a dinner buffet, with many of the local restaurants providing a dish so participants could experience the diversity of food offerings. Huntington, West Virginia, requested voluntary donations from workshop participants to cover the cost of lunch catered by a new entrepreneur who operated a food truck, providing an opportunity to showcase a new local food offering to potential customers. If meals will not be provided, organizers should take this into consideration when choosing the time of the evening session. Likewise, if restaurants are not within easy walking distance of the meeting venue, organizers might want to organize a pay-your-own-way delivery so lunch does not take too long or lead to participants dropping out.

  Workshop invitee list. Generate a list of stakeholders to invite to the workshop. Some communities choose to keep the workshop closed to an invited group of people, which can be helpful if there is a strong sense of the community's goals and who needs to be part of the discussion. Most communities choose to invite the public at large, which helps make sure the identified vision and ambition reflect the community at large and helps recruit champions who will move the action plan toward implementation. Whichever path the steering committee chooses, it should plan to send individual invitations to a select group of people to help ensure the workshop achieves a critical mass of people with the knowledge, skills, and interest to make the workshop a success. Appendix C includes a list of potential stakeholders to consider while generating the list.

North Wilkesboro, North Carolina: Anchoring Downtown Redevelopment with Investments in Local Food

In an effort to create an anchor for a vibrant downtown filled with successful local businesses, North Wilkesboro decided to move the Wilkes County Farmers Market to a permanent structure in the heart of downtown and expand it with new programs and offerings under the Yadkin Valley Marketplace name.

During a public workshop in 2014 under the Livable Communities in Appalachia Program, participants identified ways to improve a future downtown market's connection with Main Street, activate the market every day of the year, and make downtown more walkable and attractive to residents. With clear goals and an action plan, North Wilkesboro was able to raise $633,000 from multiple sources for construction of a permanent structure for the market and other downtown improvements. The town celebrated the grand opening of the Yadkin Valley Marketplace at a ribbon-cutting ceremony on June 27, 2015. Aside from hosting the farmers market, the marketplace features a stage and dance floor for monthly summer concerts and houses the annual Brushy Mountain Apple Festival. The marketplace's popular events regularly draw people downtown, which has attracted several new businesses to open downtown, including a farm-to-table restaurant.

Downtown improvements included upgrades to the pedestrian alleys that connect Main Street to public parking lots and the marketplace; curb extensions to make crosswalks safer; and streetscape improvements, including flower pots, benches, planters, trees, decorative streetlights, and signage directing people to key destinations in the historic downtown.

The Yadkin Valley Marketplace attracts residents and visitors downtown. Photo source: Brooke Horn

Samuel Hinnant, North Wilkesboro's planning and community development director, said of North Wilkesboro's experience with the Livable Communities in Appalachia Program, "I think it was a fabulous program that gave substantial benefit to a small, low-income community. It really gave us a strong basis of strategic planning and thought to shape and move forward with the project. Any time you're able to get your strongest and brightest partners and stakeholders to the table it certainly brings forth a better product."

Source: Personal communication with Samuel G. Hinnant, Planning & Community Development Director, Town of North Wilkesboro, Mar. 13, 2017.

- **Workshop invitation.** The invitation for the workshop should let people know where and when to show up and provide a means to confirm their participation. Appendix D contains a sample workshop invitation as a model.
- **Outreach plan.** Deciding on a strategy to get the word out about the event. Often, a follow-up phone call after sending an invitation helps increase participation. To invite the broader community, think about places to post the invitation, newspapers and radio stations that might advertise the event, church and community bulletins that could help get the word out, and community events where announcements could reach a larger audience. Invitations should be sent as soon as possible after the second planning meeting so everyone has ample time to plan to attend, ideally at least one month before the workshop.
- **Workshop venue.** Most communities can find a free or low-cost meeting venue such as a local library, community center, school cafeteria, or church. The room should have enough chairs at tables to accommodate the number of participants you expect.

3.5 Planning Meeting #3

The agenda for the third planning meeting should include reviewing:

- **Workshop logistics**. Make sure the meeting venue will have enough tables and/or chairs for the expected number of participants. Identify the person(s) responsible for bringing any necessary supplies and equipment. Appendix E contains a materials checklist of items to have on hand for the workshop.
- **Participant list**. Discuss how responses to the invitation are going and decide whether someone needs to reach out to invited stakeholders to encourage participation. Identify who will take on this task.
- **Workshop agenda and materials**. Review the workshop agenda and materials and make any final adjustments.

4 Phase 2: Convening

The workshop is the most important part of the action planning process. Ideally, it brings together the key stakeholders interested in harnessing the benefits of a strong local food system to improve the community's quality of life, health, and economy. By jointly refining goals and creating an action plan, workshop participants strengthen existing relationships and collaborations and form new ones. This section provides guidance on facilitating each of the sessions described in the sample workshop agenda (Appendix B). The process moves the community from thinking about its big-picture vision to focusing on specific actions that will make it happen.

4.1 Community Tour

The workshop usually begins with an informal lunch at a local restaurant followed by a community tour attended by the local steering committee; the meeting facilitator(s); and any regional, state, and federal participants from outside the community who might not be familiar with the area and the locations that would be discussed at the workshop. These tours are an opportunity to showcase to outside guests the

best features of the community and areas in need of improvement. It provides an opportunity for informal conversation to help the facilitators and others in a position to help with plan implementation better understand the community's needs and goals. Communities expecting few outside guests might consider whether a community tour could still be useful. For example, if a goal of the workshop is to decide on a permanent location for a farmers market, a tour could help workshop participants better visualize options. If a goal is improving walking and biking connections between a residential neighborhood and community garden or other area, walking the route can help highlight trouble spots in need of attention. Walking tours generally work best unless key sites require covering a large geographic area. In those cases, many communities have used a city, church, or organization van so participants could stay together and benefit from group conversations along the way.

4.2 Workshop Session #1: Community Values, Vision, and Goals

The first work session is focused on the big picture. By the end, the facilitator and community should understand the local values, vision, and goals that will inform the exercises during work session 2 the following morning. A typical agenda for session 1 might last for 2.5 hours and include:

- **Opening remarks (5 minutes)**. Someone should welcome participants and discuss what led to having a workshop. Having an elected official, leader of a key city agency, or head of a lead organization open the meeting can demonstrate that leaders in the community support the effort. Participants will be motivated to engage in workshop activities if they believe the activities will lead to action.

- **Dinner (30 minutes)**. Although not necessary for a successful workshop, if the first session occurs over dinner time, organizers might want to provide a meal or refreshments, including local food when available (see Section 3.4).

- **Introductions (30 minutes).** A quick round of introductions can help facilitate informal interactions during the workshop that might lead to productive collaborations and establish how familiar the audience is likely to be with the ideas to be discussed. Ask participants to say their name, organizational affiliation (if applicable), and a sentence about why they are attending.

- **Opening presentation (15 minutes).** An opening presentation by the meeting facilitator helps ground workshop participants in a common understanding of how development of a local food system can support a range of community goals. This information provides important context for participants to think about as they discuss how to grow their local food system and how to prioritize the myriad ideas that will arise. A sample opening presentation is available at: https://www.epa.gov/smartgrowth/local-foods-local-places-toolkit.

- **Community-specific presentation(s) (15 minutes).** The most successful workshops bring together a diverse set of stakeholders who do not often meet. Having community leaders in the room allows the community to present some of the projects and initiatives that it is working on in the areas of local foods and downtown or neighborhood revitalization to generate support.

Walterboro, South Carolina: Support for Food Entrepreneurs Spurs Downtown Redevelopment

The downtown farmers market in Walterboro, South Carolina, wanted to support vendors who needed a low-cost, commercial kitchen in which they could create food products, learn how to navigate food safety and other regulatory requirements, receive small business development training, and help develop the local foods culture of the low country region. Colleton County, where Walterboro is located, secured a zero-interest, $1 million loan for a commercial kitchen from the Palmetto Rural Telephone Cooperative through the U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) Rural Economic Development Loan and Grant Program. The program provides funds to local utility sponsors, which use the money to support local projects that will create and retain jobs in rural areas. Using this loan, the county redeveloped a vacant building into the Colleton Commercial Kitchen and connected it to the Colleton Museum and Farmers Market. The kitchen offers a food-production facility that can be leased by the hour, small business training, and a retail café and market in which kitchen users can sell their products. In 2016, the Colleton Museum and Farmers Market hosted a Local Foods, Local Places workshop to explore how to ensure the facility's long-term success and take advantage of its central location to help revitalize downtown.

After two years of operation, the kitchen:

- Created 12 new businesses that sell food products in local retail outlets.
- Created 60 new jobs.
- Produced 120,000 ounces of bottled sauces and more than 18,000 bakery items.
- Certified 280 food professionals.
- Rented the facility to the public for more than 40 events.
- Prepared more than 200,000 meals for after-school and summer feeding programs.

Beyond the success of the kitchen itself, the building renovation and creation of a retail café along with street beautification and landscaping improvements have contributed to downtown's vitality and spurred redevelopment on parcels in the immediate surroundings. Several existing businesses and an apartment building have been renovated, and a new gym and law offices opened in vacant buildings nearby.

Source: Personal communication with Matt Mardell, Program Manager, Colleton County Commercial Kitchen, Mar. 31, 2017.

The Colleton Commercial Kitchen's retail café attracts a crowd for lunch.
Photo source: EPA

This is an opportunity for the participants to share stories and knowledge, which helps set the stage for planning next steps that advance ongoing work.

- **Values and visioning exercises (45 minutes).** Creating an opportunity for participants to think about and share their values and vision for their community's future gives everyone a voice in the process and helps bring out common themes among a diverse audience. The activity can energize participants and motivate them to do some of the more challenging exercises that follow to create an action plan. Organizers might plan for one of these exercises and do another if time allows.

    - **This I Believe.** In this exercise, participants are asked to jot down on a notecard how they would complete the sentence, "I believe that [insert city name]…" On the other side of the notecard, participants complete the sentence, "I believe that the local food system in [insert city name]…" Once everyone has completed writing their thoughts down, everyone stands up. Participants then share their beliefs about the city one by one, sitting down afterwards. Once everyone is seated, the room again stands and repeats the exercise—this time sharing their beliefs about the local food system. The facilitator takes notes and collects the cards from participants. If the audience is large, this exercise can be modified to focus only on the city. The intention is to have a quick, icebreaker activity that gives everyone a chance to participate and gives the facilitator meaningful insight into the community's values. In recapping this session on day 2, a word cloud can help convey the overall message and tone from the community (Exhibit 2).

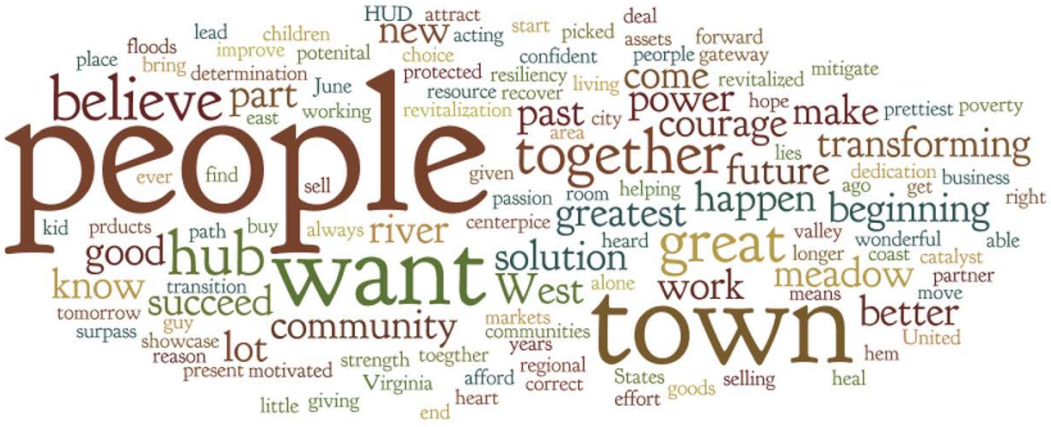


Exhibit 2. This word cloud, created at Wordle (www.wordle.net) using the results of the This I Believe exercise in Rainelle, West Virginia, shows the relative frequency of each word by its size. The graphic helped convey the overall ambitions and feeling of hope in the town.

    - **Our Community, Our Food, Our Future**. In this exercise, participants either individually or in small groups write on a notecard an aspirational headline for the front page of the local newspaper that will be published in 10 years. Participants should imagine what they would like to see happen. Who made it happen? What are the results? Once everyone has completed writing their thoughts down, participants then share their ideas with the group. The facilitator takes notes and collects the cards from participants to highlight key points in the recap for tomorrow and to include in the final action plan.

- **Identifying assets, opportunities, barriers, and challenges**. In this exercise, participants first quietly spend a few minutes taking notes on what they see as the city's main assets and opportunities and the main barriers and challenges to achieving success. After everyone has had a chance to brainstorm independently, small groups should discuss their thoughts and report out to the larger group on the most common or most significant ideas. The facilitator should capture the ideas on flip charts that can be referred to the next day during the review of goals and the action planning process. The facilitator should also use these and participants' individual notes to create a succinct summary of the key points for the final report.

Throughout all of these exercises, the facilitator should listen for commonly used words, ideas, and images, taking note of whether these are reflected in the draft goals that will be open for discussion on day 2.

- **Closing (10 minutes).** The facilitator should close by noting any common words, ideas, and themes that emerged from the group exercises and previewing the activities that will occur on day 2.

4.3 Workshop Session #2: Action Brainstorming

The second workshop session focuses on helping participants clarify goals and discuss assets and challenges that could affect the ability to achieve those goals. While the steering committee will have done some initial thinking, this is a chance for the committee to share those initial thoughts and move towards a common vision with the broader group. A typical agenda for session 2 might include:

- **Introductions (15 minutes).** There will likely be several new faces in the crowd. Ask participants to say their name and organizational affiliation (if applicable). People who did not attend session 1 should also say a sentence about why they are attending the workshop.

- **Recap (15 minutes).** The facilitator should provide a brief recap of the previous day. It is helpful to present some of the ideas shared during the values and visioning exercises by transcribing a few onto slides or taking photos of flip chart notes, noting which of them were common themes. If there are many new participants, the facilitator might also present the opening presentation from the day before, striving to keep it as brief and lively as possible for those who will have already heard it. In addition, the facilitator should go over the agenda for the day ahead. Slides to help set the stage and provide a guide for moving through the agenda are available at: https://www.epa.gov/smartgrowth/local-foods-local-places-toolkit.

- **Case studies presentation (20 minutes).** Examples of other communities that have used local foods to help spur revitalization, improve health, and achieve better economic outcomes can be inspiring for workshop participants. Slides for several case studies are available at: https://www.epa.gov/smartgrowth/local-foods-local-places-toolkit. The facilitator might also present a short video or two showing what other communities have done[11] or might choose to

[11] EPA has created two videos showcasing the work of Corbin, Kentucky, and Williamson, West Virginia. They are available at: EPA. "Local Foods, Local Places." https://www.epa.gov/smartgrowth/local-foods-local-places. Accessed Apr. 11, 2017.

create new slides for other examples that are more familiar or locally relevant. Familiarity with the profiled community allows the facilitator to provide a richer context and answer questions. It is important to choose case studies that are relevant to the local context and specific workshop goals and that are realistic for the size and capacity of the community. Introducing ideas that participants view as unworkable can damage the facilitator's credibility in helping to chart a course forward for the community. When presenting case studies, try to illuminate the key lessons learned that might be applicable to your community. It can be helpful to try to tell the story of the community as a journalist would—addressing the why, who, what, where, when, and how details. Your audience will usually want to know those details as they consider their way forward.

- **Review and affirmation of workshop goals (50 minutes)**. A discussion of the draft goals that the steering committee developed during the workshop planning helps align expectations for the rest of the day and sets the stage for the afternoon's action planning. The facilitator should project the goals for everyone to see and provide any relevant context from earlier discussions. Workshop participants can then offer new goals or refinements to existing goals. The facilitator should discourage goals from becoming overly specific during the discussion. For example, a goal might be to increase the number of residents who regularly visit the farmers market. Some residents might suggest changing the goal to "Increase the number of residents who regularly visit the farmers market by offering places to sit, music, and cooking demonstrations." These specific suggestions are often better included as actions that can be fully explored so as to not narrow the range of ideas explored under this goal (see section 4.4). The facilitator should be flexible and consider new ideas as they are raised and engage in a discussion about priorities so as to limit the number of goals to three to five. The workshop cannot address all of the community's challenges in a two-day period, but it can help the community prioritize issues on which to focus limited energy and resources.

- **Break (20 minutes)**.

- **Food system diagramming (30 minutes).** Communities that are early in their food systems planning and communities with a lot of players who have not been well coordinated can benefit from diagramming the local food system. This exercise helps community stakeholders identify the various components and relationships of the existing food system. It shows where new components are needed and where new relationships could be formed. Appendix F provides a framework that participants could use for this exercise. The facilitator should emphasize that there is no "correct" answer to this exercise. Different groups will create different diagrams, and all are helpful to understanding the food system network.

  Participants should work in small groups, using one color to write down existing components and another color to record things that are missing or could be strengthened. This exercise might last 30 to 40 minutes, with an additional 20 minutes for report-out and discussion.

Ajo, Arizona: A Regional Food Partnership Demonstrates Value of Coordination

The small, rural community of Ajo, Arizona, in the middle of the Sonoran Desert, might seem an unlikely place for a local food system to form the basis of community revitalization. However, in 2009, the Ajo Regional Food Partnership formed, aiming to enhance residents' health, well-being, and food security. The group began virtually from zero, with nutrient-poor, contaminated soils in an area that sees little rainfall and had no recent history of agriculture.

The partnership created a widely distributed network of local food sources under the stewardship of many individuals and groups. This network includes backyard gardens, community gardens and farms, farmers markets, grocery stores, restaurants, and food pantries/banks. The hub for many of these activities is the nonprofit Ajo Center for Sustainable Agriculture's Many Hands Urban Farm and Learning Center, where the community helped create the center's gardens, orchards, and chicken coop. All of the growing areas serve as demonstration sites and growing sites for Sonoran Desert heirloom crops. The center also hosts after-school Kids at the Farm programming, where 50 children and their families grow their own food and learn about healthy food preparation.

The community gardens at the Many Hands Urban Farm and Learning Center are a gathering place and hub of the local food system.
Photo source: Renaissance Planning

In part due to the action planning at the 2015 Local Foods, Local Places workshop, the partnership's efforts increased the amount of food-producing land fourfold, from 10,000 to 40,000 square feet in just six years, while food production expanded eightfold, from 1,000 to 8,000 pounds per year. In 2016, at least 500 local families (more than one-quarter of all Ajo households) were involved with growing, selling, processing, and/or buying local foods. However, the benefits have extended far beyond food. The Authentically Ajo Farmers Market serves as a community gathering space and has incubated 70 food vendors in a town with extreme poverty and few job opportunities. The market, Many Hands Learning Center, and other gardens have been instrumental in revitalizing and greening the town while fostering hope for the future. The farmers market held in the town plaza attracts around 400 customers weekly during the height of the season and has helped increase sales for plaza businesses. In addition, the annual Ajo Food Festival attracts over 1,000 visitors, including from Phoenix and Tucson, and has become Ajo's largest community festival.

Source: Personal communication with Nina Sajovec, Executive Director, Ajo Center for Sustainable

The discussion following this activity can help reveal strengths and weaknesses and identify priorities to address during the afternoon action planning session. For example, in Corbin, Kentucky, participants began with the goal of creating an online food hub and store. After the food system diagramming exercise, they realized they needed to focus first on increasing local production, quality, and consistency. It helped them realize where they were in their food systems evolution and productively focus their energy in the short term.

- **Food system/community asset mapping (30 minutes)**. As an alternative to the food system diagramming exercise, locating the components of the local food system on local and regional maps can help reveal its strengths and weaknesses while generating ideas for potential actions that will be relevant for the afternoon's action planning exercise. Participants should work in small groups, using colored stickers to indicate the type of asset identified. The types will vary by community but often include farms, retail outlets, major food purchasers (e.g., hospitals, schools), and partner organizations. Each sticker should be numbered to create a key with the full name and any other important information. Participants can also use the maps to identify community assets and highlight areas for improvement in the neighborhood around a point of focus for the workshop. For example, participants in a Baltimore workshop mapped needed improvements in the surrounding neighborhood—such as new public art, safety patrols, and better transit connections—that could help revitalize the city's historic Avenue Market and surrounding neighborhood. This exercise can occur simultaneously with the food system diagramming exercise, with participants floating between the two options to provide input to both.

Local Foods, Local Places workshop participants in Gainesville, Missouri, mapped food system assets, using green stickers for producers and/or farms, blue for markets, red for other partners, and yellow for new potential customers.
Photo source: Renaissance Planning

- **Networking (20 minutes)**. Communities that are early in their food system planning or that have a large and complicated network of actors can benefit from an exercise to create a "who's who" directory of participants in the local food system. Participants should use 4"x 4" sticky notes to write down organizations, programs, or initiatives relevant to the local food system (one per note), including a contact person and a short description of what they do and what they might contribute. Participants should then add their notes to a set of posters where similar organizations can be grouped together into categories. The facilitator might create some potential groupings ahead of time, such as farmers or restaurant owners, while also working on the fly to create new groupings as appropriate. By brainstorming and discussing who is currently doing what, this exercise primes participants for the action planning process when they will need to identify who might take on new tasks.

- **Conclusion (10 minutes)**. Before breaking for lunch, the facilitator should quickly recap the morning's events and remind participants about the planned agenda following lunch.

4.4 Workshop Session #3: Action Planning

The third workshop session is where the action plan comes together. The focus is on brainstorming a list of action steps that could help achieve each goal developed in the morning session, agreeing on a list of top action ideas, and deciding how to implement each action. A typical agenda for session 3 might include:

- **Action brainstorming (50 minutes)**. The first activity of the third session is to brainstorm potential actions that go along with each of the goals as determined in the morning session. The facilitator should invite participants to suggest actions under each of the goals one by one. Often, people are more likely to suggest an action if the facilitator first encourages everyone to spend a few minutes jotting down their own thoughts on notecards before inviting people to share with the entire group. This exercise works best with two volunteers to help. One is a note-taker who record the actions on large Post-it notes. A second volunteer transfers the Post-it notes to a flip chart as the discussion proceeds (one sheet per goal), grouping similar ideas together as much as possible to facilitate the following action prioritization exercise. For example, if someone suggests an annual community festival and someone later suggests an annual music festival, overlapping the Post-it notes can help suggest their relationship. Such grouping can help avoid overly narrow actions that could complicate interpretation of the action prioritization results.

- **Action prioritization (15 minutes)**. To prioritize actions, arrange the flip chart paper with the grouped sticky notes around the room. Give participants 10 stickers, and ask them to place the stickers on their favorite ideas from the action brainstorming process. Participants can place multiple stickers on the same action to indicate it is a priority or place one sticker per action if they are all of equal importance.

- **Action planning (90 minutes)**. For the action planning process, participants should self-select into groups (one for each goal area), beginning with the goal they feel most closely tied to and moving among the groups to participate in as many as desired.

  The first task of each group is to look at the distribution of stickers and decide on three to five actions that group members feel best represent the priorities of all workshop participants. Groups should use their discretion to select the final actions. For example, if several ideas got relatively few votes but are very similar and have a majority of votes when combined, a group could combine them to create one action that captures the spirit of those ideas. Groups can also refine the ideas to make them clearer and more specific. For example, "install and improve gateway entrances to the farmers market through landscaping, plantings, and new signage" is more specific than simply "improve gateways." People who did not participate in the workshop should be able to understand the intention behind each action.

  After each group settles on the set of actions to prioritize, the group completes an action planning table (see Appendix G), using Post-it notes so information can be changed, reordered, and added to by others. The table includes the following columns:

- **Why is this important?** Participants should articulate why each action is important to help advance the goal. Even if the answer seems very obvious, it is a good exercise to explain clearly and succinctly the rationale for undertaking an action. If this is difficult to do, the action might not be warranted. In addition, participants often come up with reasons that might not immediately come to mind for everyone, which helps make the case for why the effort to complete the action is worthwhile.
- **How will we measure success?** Participants should describe either quantitatively or qualitatively how they will know when they have made progress or completed this action.
- **What is the time frame for completing the action?** Participants should estimate how long it will take to complete the action. Is this something that could begin right away and be completed in the next few months? Might it take six months, a year, or longer to accomplish? While it is okay to have a few truly long-term actions in the plan, in general, most actions should be targeted for completion within two years. If the community anticipates an action as taking longer than that, encourage participants to think of an intermediate goal that they could work toward. For example, if participants identify a year-round, indoor farmers market as an action but believe it is years away from reality, encourage them to discuss whether it makes sense to first work towards an interim step like expanding the farmers market season, increasing the number of market vendors and customers, or identifying a site for an indoor market. People will be more likely to make progress if there are small, doable steps identified for moving forward.
- **Who is the lead organization and person?** Identifying a lead organization and, ideally, an individual in that organization, will help ensure that someone takes ownership of the action and makes sure it advances. Often, someone in the workshop will volunteer or be willing to take on the action. However, in some cases, the most appropriate organization to take the lead might not have a representative present. In such cases, participants should also include someone who is part of developing the action plan who will take the lead in engaging the other party.
- **Who will support the lead?** Often, many individuals or organizations are willing or poised to help implement the action. Many times, these people are in the room. Getting their agreement to be listed as supporters helps to solidify their role moving forward.
- **What resources will be needed?** Participants should think about volunteer time, paid staff time, or financial resources that will be needed to complete the action. Participants should be as specific as possible, indicating either a dollar amount or whether the action will have a low, medium, or high cost. Appendix H lists funding resources that can help communities identify avenues to pursue.

Participants will be better prepared to complete this task if the facilitator first guides the group through an example like that found in Appendix I as part of a plenary discussion. People are often fatigued at this point in the day, so the facilitator should encourage people not to rush and to be as detailed and specific as possible. The completed tables are the heart of the action plan and the culmination of the workshop. As participants are working, the facilitator should move from table to table and help guide the discussion by posing questions where the group appears to be stuck or help to capture the discussion by taking notes.

Gloucester, Massachusetts: Nurturing a Culture that Supports Local Food and Local Community

Since the 1600s, Gloucester's rich maritime heritage has defined its identity and economy. The port of Gloucester is the oldest in the country, and the city has historically served as a principal hub for the New England fishing industry. However, multiple challenges threaten the local fishing industry, including low prices, catch limitations, and the seasonal nature of the industry, which are especially difficult for the smaller-scale fishing operations and boats of Gloucester's day fleet.

Gloucester has responded with a multi-pronged approach to cultivate local support for the city's seafood industry. Cape Ann Fresh Catch is a community-supported fishery in operation since 2008. Following the community-supported agriculture (CSA) model, members purchase shares at the start of the season that entitle them to weekly allotments of fresh seafood. Members get fresh, high-quality seafood, while fishermen have a reliable market for their product. Including recipes helps customers learn how to prepare lesser-known species that might otherwise be discarded, as conventional grocery outlets sell just a small number of the species that are caught.

Gloucester Harbor gives the city its distinctive character and charm.
Photo source: EPA

In addition, the city's Gloucester Fresh initiative (www.gloucesterfresh.com) aims to sustain and improve the local seafood industry. Funded by a $151,000 state Economic Seaport Council grant, the program supports exhibitions, created a branding campaign, and developed a contract with the Ninety-Nine Restaurant and Pub to serve city-branded fish at its more than 100 locations across New England. The city used the Local Foods, Local Places workshop in 2016 to strategize about how to build on these successes. In 2017, Gloucester Fresh received a $20,000 USDA Rural Business Development grant to build a demonstration kitchen that can help showcase the benefits of local, underused species. In addition, as a result of the workshop, the community decided to apply for and received a $50,000 grant from the National Endowment for the Arts' Our Town program in 2017.

The city's efforts recognize that saving the local seafood industry is about more than the local economy. The working waterfront is the foundation of the city's authentic sense of place, which could not survive the loss of the industry. More than most communities, Gloucester exemplifies how local food and local places are intertwined and mutually dependent.

Source: Personal communication with Salvatore L. Di Stefano, Senior Economic Development Director, City of Gloucester, Mar 30, 2017.

- **Report out (20 minutes).** Ask a volunteer from each group to report out to the larger group about the completed action table. The volunteer should go through what each action is, describing how the group decided on the "winning" actions. Encourage each volunteer to then talk about overarching ideas that arose during the discussion rather than reading verbatim everything on the chart. For example, did any patterns emerge, such as the same group of lead actors or funders? Did the group struggle with anything in particular? Were any major unknowns or challenges identified? Were any surprising connections or resources identified? Is this goal area relatively easy or more difficult, and why?

- **Commitments (20 minutes).** Following the action planning, ask everyone to write on a notecard at least one thing they can personally commit to in the next 100 days. Then go around the room and ask participants to share. Reassure participants that commitments don't need to be monumental or considered a game of one-upmanship. Encourage statements that are simple, earnest, and achievable. For example: "I commit to creating and launching the farmers market Facebook page," "I commit to working on the market place funding proposal," or "I commit to presenting this action to Town Council." This closing affirmation of shared goals and effort helps solidify the intentions people discussed during the workshop. Include the commitments in the workshop documentation, either anonymously or with attribution, depending on the wishes of the steering committee and participants.

- **Conclusion and next steps (15 minutes).** To wrap up the workshop, invite participants to join the steering committee for follow-up calls to review and finalize the workshop report and go over the schedule for producing the report. Thank people for their time, energy, and commitment.

5 Phase 3: Action

Following the workshop, a facilitator can help the community prepare to take action. A report summary provides a critical playbook to guide community members' work going forward. The report need not be a full documentation of every conversation and activity but should instead give a concise overview of the process to provide context for the action tables developed at the workshop. Reports of eight to 12 pages generally allow this level of detail from a 1.5-day workshop.

5.1 Prepare a Draft Community Action Plan

Effective documentation is best finalized shortly after the event, when the work and discussions are fresh in everyone's mind. A report outline might include the following sections:

I. Community Story
II. Community Engagement
III. The Local Food System in [place name]
IV. Community Values, Vision, and Goals
V. Action Planning Tables
    a. Goal 1
    b. Goal 2

c. Goal 3
d. Goal 4

VI. Next Steps and Implementation
VII. Appendix A: Local Food System Diagram and Asset/Opportunity Maps
VIII. Appendix B: Workshop Participants
IX. Appendix C: Presentation Slides
X. Appendix D: Workshop Photo Album
XI. Appendix E: Resources

Action plans from communities that participated in the federal Local Foods, Local Places Program are available on the USDA website.[12]

5.2 Convene Stakeholders for Follow-up Meetings

The steering committee should meet two to three times following the workshop to finalize the action plan and set the stage for implementation. People who attend the workshop might be interested in participating in these meetings. It is a good idea to email all participants shortly after the workshop ends to thank them for their time, let them know you will share the final report once it is completed, and invite them to participate in the follow-up calls to review draft materials. Having more community members on these calls can help maintain momentum and enthusiasm generated during the workshop and provides a broader set of people who can clarify intentions from the group work, fill in blanks where information was not completed, volunteer for different actions—particularly from goal areas they might not have directly worked on at the workshop—and generally create a sense of ownership among many people. A common action that arises during workshops is to create a committee to work on project implementation. Often, the recruitment for such a group happens naturally, as those most interested and engaged will volunteer to participate in these follow-up calls.

The agenda for the follow-up calls might include:

- **Welcome and introductions.** Although most of the people on these calls will know each other from the planning calls, any new people should be introduced and welcomed into the group.
- **Update on any progress.** Although the action plan is not yet finalized, communities do not need to (nor should they) wait for the final action plan to begin working. Usually, at least a few items were already in progress before the workshop or have begun immediately following the workshop. The facilitator should provide a few minutes for people to share progress and successes or discuss any obstacles.
- **Review draft action tables.** At least 24 hours before the first follow-up call, the facilitator should provide steering committee members with a typed version of the action tables that were completed at the workshop. While the facilitator should faithfully record the participants' intentions, he or she should include any additional information discussed at the workshop that helps provide clarity; make the language grammatically correct and concise; and spell out acronyms, full names of people and organizations, and any shorthand notations.

[12] USDA. "Local Foods, Local Places Community Action Plans." https://www.ams.usda.gov/services/local-regional/food-sector/lflp-cap. Accessed Jun. 12, 2017.

Although participants should be encouraged to review the draft action tables independently, going through each table one by one as a group is often the most effective way to ensure that they get steering committee members' full attention. Part of reviewing the action tables involves discussing implementation resources—what is needed, and who might provide it? If a community has been working on actions for some time, it can be helpful to summarize the resources assembled to date and estimate additional resources that would be necessary.

- **Next Steps.** The facilitator should set a date and time for the next follow-up call. Generally, about two weeks between follow-up calls provides enough time for people to review and comment on materials produced to date and for the facilitator to incorporate those changes and send a new draft for discussion. At the final follow-up call, the facilitator can prompt participants to say what their next steps will be so everyone ends the formal process with a personal short-term action plan that will keep momentum going.

After each follow-up call, the facilitator should send a short summary of key decision items or updates from the meeting, revised materials based on changes discussed during the calls, and information about next steps.

5.3 Maintain Momentum

Keeping the momentum going in any process takes commitment. Plans will have staying power and are more likely to result in action if the process generates energy and enthusiasm. Accomplishing short-term, tangible actions in the first 100 days after the workshop will send a signal to current and potential funders and volunteers that the community means business. This section suggests some approaches, useful tips, and lessons in maintaining momentum.

- **Cultivate and support champions.** During the process, seek to understand who the community champions are. The champion might be the person who initiated the workshop, but other key actors who make things happen on the ground could become apparent. Use the meetings and planning phase to identify these champions and find out what they need to move forward. These are the people who will likely be responsible for moving the plan from words into reality.

- **Find someone to own the plan.** Use the process to identify who among the project champions will take ownership of the plan—delegating tasks, tracking progress, and celebrating successes. The individual should make a commitment to check back in with the steering committee to see what has been accomplished since the workshop. Ideally, the person who will own the plan will revisit it periodically to check on progress in six months, a year, and beyond.

- **Help build relationships.** The process of planning a workshop helps bring together people who otherwise might not have partnered. Workshops are catalytic events, not just for plans but for establishing relationships that are beneficial beyond the technical assistance process. This relationship building is an important function of the workshop. Use the workshop activities and break time to help make connections between the community champions and regional, state, federal, or philanthropic representatives who can help move the plan forward. For example, having a representative of USDA Rural Development or the local development district at the workshop often helps strengthen relationships between the community and federal staff who are familiar with technical assistance and financial resources for communities. In some cases,

those relationships already existed, but the workshop focused attention on specific community goals and initiatives.

The process as outlined in this document is flexible and adaptable to meeting individual communities' needs and desires. As long as the end result is an action plan that reflects community members' ambitions and inspires them to action, the workshop can be considered a success. The following appendices provide detailed templates to help guide a community through the process.

- Appendix A: Community Self-Assessment
- Appendix B: Sample Workshop Agenda
- Appendix C: Potential Stakeholders
- Appendix D: Sample Workshop Invitation
- Appendix E: Materials Checklist
- Appendix F: Food System Diagramming Template
- Appendix G: Action Planning Table
- Appendix H: Funding and Technical Assistance Resources
- Appendix I: Other Resources

APPENDIX A: COMMUNITY SELF-ASSESSMENT

Completing this Local Foods, Local Places community self-assessment can help your steering committee describe the existing and aspirational elements of your local food and placemaking initiatives. It can also help an outside facilitator better prepare for and tailor the workshop to meet the community's needs. To the extent possible, this self-assessment is best completed as a group activity to spark dialogue and discussion about key issues, opportunities, and goals. Feel free to spend more time on sections that have more interest, or skip sections that have less. Do pay attention to areas of agreement or enthusiasm, as this information will be helpful to highlight during the conference calls.

WHAT THIS SELF-ASSESSMENT IS

- A conversation starter.
- A learning tool for the community steering committee to begin thinking about food systems and place-based initiatives.
- An information-gathering tool for an outside facilitator to better understand where the community is today and where it wants to go.

WHAT IT IS NOT

- A scorecard, ranking, audit, or judgment of any kind.
- A checklist of programs and projects you should or could have.
- A permanent assessment that cannot be revised.
- A repeat of questions that will be discussed during the calls or at the workshop.
- An onerous task for the community.

BENEFITS FOR THE COMMUNITY

- Helps the community conceptualize where it is with its current food system and place-based initiatives and begin to examine the scope of possibilities and interrelated activities.
- Helps generate ideas about possible stakeholders to invite to the workshop.
- Provides a preliminary activity for the steering committee to do together.

BENEFITS FOR AN OUTSIDE FACILITATOR

- Provides valuable background information on the status of the local food system and place-based initiatives.
- Helps clarify workshop goals and desired outcomes.
- Helps identify case studies and supplemental materials most pertinent for the community.

AREAS OF FOCUS

1. Leveraging Partnerships for Local Food, Place, and Economy.
2. Connecting Community.
3. Agriculture: Local Food Production.
4. Agriculture: Markets and Business Opportunity.
5. Food System Support and Ancillary Services.

6. Public Health.
7. Enlivening, Improving, and Revitalizing Places.
8. Enlivening Downtown Spaces Through Local Food.
9. Economic Development: Opportunities and Advancement.
10. Economic Development: Local and Regional Promotion and Branding

A.1 Leveraging Partnerships for Local Food, Place, and Economy

What new activities or relationships would be present in your community if you could achieve strong linkages and partnerships among agriculture, community and economic development, health, and placemaking interests?

How far along are you in achieving this vision as you have defined it? (Check one)

- ☐ Just beginning—we're not sure where to start.
- ☐ We have a plan in place, but no traction yet.
- ☐ Several programs are up and running, but we'd like to do more.
- ☐ We are where we want to be with this goal. The focus is on maintaining.

Notes/comments:

We have seen communities use the following strategies to build partnerships and coordinate efforts among sectors. Are you currently pursuing, or interested in exploring, any of these strategies?

Common Strategies or Actions	Status	Notes/Comments
1. A local food network such as a food policy council,[1] a local food alliance,[2] or some other entity[3] created to foster dialogue, coordination, and partnerships to reach desired goals.	☐ Low priority ☐ Aspiration ☐ Needs work ☐ Established	
2. A local place-based organization such as a downtown development authority,[4] focused on promoting community development and economic development in town centers.	☐ Low priority ☐ Aspiration ☐ Needs work ☐ Established	
3. A community vision plan[5] that incorporates aspirations or specific place-based projects to advance the local food system and downtown revitalization in support of economic development and better public health outcomes.	☐ Low priority ☐ Aspiration ☐ Needs work ☐ Established	
4. A comprehensive plan or other document that incorporates specific policy goals for downtown revitalization, strengthening local food activities, economic development, and/or better public health outcomes[6] (e.g., an economic development office that has a mandate for agricultural economic development,[7] a school district or higher education institution with a policy for purchasing a percentage of foods locally,[8] or a farm-to-school program[9]).	☐ Low priority ☐ Aspiration ☐ Needs work ☐ Established	
5. Others (please name and describe)	☐ Low priority ☐ Aspiration ☐ Needs work ☐ Established	

[1] Food policy councils are groups of representatives and stakeholders from multiple sectors of the food system, from production to distribution and recycling. Examples across the United States are listed at: Mark Winne. "List of Food Policy Councils in the USA." http://www.markwinne.com/list-of-food-policy-councils-in-the-usa. Accessed Feb. 21, 2017.

[2] A food alliance is a formal organization bringing together the various players in a community's food system to foster collaboration. Examples include the Greater High Point Food Alliance in North Carolina (http://www.ghpfa.org) and the Acadiana Food Alliance in Louisiana (https://www.facebook.com/AcadianaFoodAlliance).

[3] An example of another entity is the Community Involved in Sustaining Agriculture, or CISA (http://www.buylocalfood.org/about/faq), a nonprofit organization working to strengthen farms and engage the community to build the local food economy in the Pioneer Valley region of western Massachusetts. The organization started and operates "Be a Local Hero, Buy Locally Grown®," a marketing and awareness campaign.

[4] A downtown development authority is typically an organization that can raise money for dedicated purposes and acquire and/or develop land. Other organizations can serve similar functions, including a city agency with a dedicated downtown program, a business organization running a business improvement district, or a nonprofit organization with a Main Street focus. One way to fund a development authority is to have a tax increment financing (TIF) district. TIF is a financing tool that allows municipalities to promote economic development by earmarking property tax revenue from increases in assessed values toward specific purposes. For more information, see: Dye, Richard, and Merriman, David. "Tax Increment Financing: A Tool for Local Economic Development." *Land Lines*. Lincoln Institute of Land Policy. Jan. 2006. http://www.lincolninst.edu/publications/articles/tax-increment-financing.

[5] A community vision plan is a formal document that helps build consensus around common goals for the future. An example is: Food Solutions New England. *A New England Food Vision.* 2014. http://www.foodsolutionsne.org/new-england-food-vision.

[6] Seattle created a document that articulates policies to support local and affordable foods. See: Seattle Office of Sustainability & Environment. *Food Action Plan*. 2012. https://www.seattle.gov/environment/food/food-action-plan.

[7] Agriculture economic development provides farmers and other rural landowners with a wide range of services including education, resources, and grant support. For example, Oneida County, New York, has an agriculture economic development program that supports and promotes the expansion of agricultural business within the county. See: Cornell University Cooperative Extension Oneida County. "Ag Economic Development." http://cceoneida.com/agriculture/ag-economic-development. Accessed Sep. 28, 2017.

[8] An example is Appalachian State University in Boone, North Carolina. See: Appalachian State University. "Local Food." https://foodservices.appstate.edu/sustainability-local-food/local-food. Accessed Feb. 21, 2017.

[9] An example is Mississippi Sustainable Agriculture Network's FoodCorps program (http://www.mssagnet.net/farmtoschool/edible-education).

A.2 CONNECTING COMMUNITY

What new relationships and collaborations might exist in your community if you could connect local food system and economic development efforts across race, class, age, and geographic (i.e., urban/rural) boundaries?

How far along are you in building diverse relationships as you have defined them? (check one)

- ☐ Just beginning—we're not sure where to start.
- ☐ We have a plan in place, but no traction yet.
- ☐ Several programs are up and running, but we'd like to do more.
- ☐ We are where we want to be with this goal. The focus is on maintaining.

Notes/comments:

We have seen communities use the following strategies to connect various efforts across race, class, age, geography, and other boundaries. Are you currently pursuing, or interested in exploring, any of these strategies?

Common Strategies or Actions	Status	Notes/Comments
1. Community volunteer events around specific place-based projects such as vacant lot cleanup days, landscaping and beautification efforts, or community gardening programs.[10]	☐ Low priority ☐ Aspiration ☐ Needs work ☐ Established	
2. Coordinated participation of faith-based communities such as churches, mosques, synagogues, and temples.	☐ Low priority ☐ Aspiration ☐ Needs work ☐ Established	
3. Community ambassador programs that link local government, nonprofits, and academic institutions to communities through direct involvement and communication with neighborhood liaisons.	☐ Low priority ☐ Aspiration ☐ Needs work ☐ Established	
4. Inclusion of SNAP/EBT[11] at farmers markets or other places where local food is sold.	☐ Low priority ☐ Aspiration ☐ Needs work ☐ Established	
5. Involvement of youth development programs in community efforts, such as Future Farmers of America, 4-H, YMCA, Boys and Girls Clubs, and teen job-training programs.[12]	☐ Low priority ☐ Aspiration ☐ Needs work ☐ Established	
6. Programs for recently incarcerated individuals that connect them to community-building projects such as reconciliation and reentry programs.[13]	☐ Low priority ☐ Aspiration ☐ Needs work ☐ Established	

Common Strategies or Actions	Status	Notes/Comments
7. Others (please name and describe)		

[10] An example is the volunteer program at the Capital Area Food Bank's Urban Demonstration Garden in Washington, D.C. (https://www.capitalareafoodbank.org/urban-demonstration-garden-volunteering).

[11] Resources for farmers markets wishing to offer Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) Benefits and Electronic Benefit Transfer (EBT) are available at: USDA. "SNAP and Farmers Markets." https://www.fns.usda.gov/ebt/snap-and-farmers-markets. Accessed Feb. 21, 2017.

[12] An example is the youth program at Griot Arts Inc. in Clarksdale, Mississippi (http://www.griotarts.com/griot youthprogram).

[13] Examples of urban garden programs for inmates and at-risk populations are discussed in: Gilbert, Emily. "Five Urban Garden Programs that are Reaching Inmates and At-Risk Populations." Worldwatch Institute. Feb. 28, 2012. http://www.worldwatch.org/five-urban-garden-programs-are-reaching-inmates-and-risk-populations.

A.3 AGRICULTURE: LOCAL FOOD PRODUCTION

What new activities and relationships would be present if your community could support local food production such as farming, ranching, aquaculture, and/or fishing?

How far along are you in cultivating these new activities and relationships as you have defined them? (Check one)

- ☐ Just beginning—we're not sure where to start.
- ☐ We have a plan in place, but no traction yet.
- ☐ Several programs are up and running, but we'd like to do more.
- ☐ We are where we want to be with this goal. The focus is on maintaining.

Notes/comments:

We have seen communities use the following strategies to support local food production. Are you currently pursuing, or interested in exploring, any of these strategies?

Common Strategies or Actions	Status	Notes/Comments
1. Farm incubator programs that provide training and resources for prospective farmers or farmers transitioning from commodity crops to producing for local or regional sales.[14,15]	☐ Low priority ☐ Aspiration ☐ Needs work ☐ Established	
2. Programs that help prospective farmers gain access to land.[16]	☐ Low priority ☐ Aspiration ☐ Needs work ☐ Established	
3. Cooperative extension programs geared towards building the capacity of local food producers (e.g., training for season extension, marketing, and new agricultural techniques).[17]	☐ Low priority ☐ Aspiration ☐ Needs work ☐ Established	
4. Farmer networking or information-sharing programs that provide opportunities for peer-to-peer knowledge sharing.[18]	☐ Low priority ☐ Aspiration ☐ Needs work ☐ Established	
5. Zoning ordinances that protect and encourage agricultural preservation[19] and production[20] in both urban and rural areas.	☐ Low priority ☐ Aspiration ☐ Needs work ☐ Established	
6. Others (please name and describe)	☐ Low priority ☐ Aspiration ☐ Needs work ☐ Established	

[14] Examples include Glynwood, New York's Hudson Valley Farm Business Incubator (https://glynwood.org/farm-business-incubator) and the Agriculture and Land-Based Training Association in Monterey County, California (http://www.albafarmers.org).

[15] USDA has compiled resources for new farmers, including resources specifically for women in agriculture, veterans, and youth at: USDA. "New Farmers." https://newfarmers.usda.gov. Accessed Feb. 21, 2017.

[16] The National Young Farmers Coalition provides case studies to illustrate steps communities can take to increase farmer access to land (http://www.youngfarmers.org/land-access-case-studies/).

[17] An example is the Cargill Teaching Kitchen of Cornell Cooperative Extension in Tompkins County, New York (http://ccetompkins.org/food/cargill-teaching-kitchen).

[18] Examples include Farm Hack (http://farmhack.org/tools) and the Collaborative Regional Alliance for Farmer Training (http://www.craftfarmer.org).

[19] For an example, see: Maine Department of Agriculture, Conservation and Forestry. "Maine Farmland Preservation Ordinances." http://www.maine.gov/dacf/municipalplanning/technical/farmland_ordinances.shtml. Accessed Feb. 21, 2017.

[20] For an example, see: Change Lab Solutions. *Model Produce Cart Ordinance*. 2010. http://www.changelabsolutions.org/publications/model-ordinance-produce-carts.

A.4 AGRICULTURE: MARKETS AND BUSINESS OPPORTUNITY

What economic opportunities could result if local food producers were better connected with market outlets and other business opportunities?

How far along are you in creating these economic opportunities as you have defined them? (Check one)

- ☐ Just beginning—we're not sure where to start.
- ☐ We have a plan in place, but no traction yet.
- ☐ Several programs are up and running, but we'd like to do more.
- ☐ We are where we want to be with this goal. The focus is on maintaining.

Notes/comments:

We have seen communities use the following strategies to support marketing opportunities for local food producers. Are you currently pursuing, or interested in exploring, any of these strategies?

Common Strategies or Actions	Status	Notes/Comments
1. Farmers markets and other direct-to-consumer sales opportunities.	☐ Low priority ☐ Aspiration ☐ Needs work ☐ Established	
2. Community-supported agriculture (CSA)[21] or community-supported fishery[22] program, in which customers buy shares of a farm's or fishery's yield at the start of the season and receive regular distribution of seasonal products.	☐ Low priority ☐ Aspiration ☐ Needs work ☐ Established	
3. Established outlets such as grocery stores that sell local food and other local products.[23]	☐ Low priority ☐ Aspiration ☐ Needs work ☐ Established	
4. Local food guides, directories, or websites that list producers, suppliers, restaurants, or distributors of local food and value-added products,[24] making it easier for people to learn about and access them.[25]	☐ Low priority ☐ Aspiration ☐ Needs work ☐ Established	
5. Partnerships with local and regional aggregators and distributors that increase the number and range of markets available to local producers.[26]	☐ Low priority ☐ Aspiration ☐ Needs work ☐ Established	
6. Business training for local food producers through community colleges, universities, and business incubators.[27]	☐ Low priority ☐ Aspiration ☐ Needs work ☐ Established	

Common Strategies or Actions	Status	Notes/Comments
7. Others (please name and describe)	☐ Low priority ☐ Aspiration ☐ Needs work ☐ Established	

[21] A list of local community-supported agriculture programs can be found at: Local Harvest. "Community Supported Agriculture." http://www.localharvest.org/csa. Accessed Feb. 21, 2017.

[22] Examples include Cape Ann Fresh Catch in Gloucester, Massachusetts (http://www.capeannfreshcatch.org), and Core Sound Seafood in Carteret County, North Carolina (http://www.coresoundseafood.org).

[23] Examples include Kroger, which participates in several state programs that support local and regional farmers (Kroger. "Supply Chain: Our Food and Products." http://sustainability.kroger.com/supply-chain-our-food-and-products.html. Accessed Feb. 21, 2017), the Renaissance Community Cooperative in Greensboro, North Carolina (https://renaissancecoop.com), and the Highland Market in Davis, West Virginia (http://www.phffi.org/highland-market).

[24] Value-added food processing is creating a higher-value product from a raw commodity, e.g., turning strawberries into strawberry jam.

[25] Examples include GardenShare's *Local Food Guide* for St. Lawrence County, New York (http://gardenshare.org/content/local-food-guide); the Appalachian Sustainable Agriculture Project's *Appalachian Grown Local Food Guide* (http://www.appalachiangrown.org); and Local Harvest's national directory (http://www.localharvest.org).

[26] Examples include the Fifth Season Cooperative in Wisconsin (http://www.fifthseasoncoop.com) and Hub on the Hill in Essex County, New York (https://www.facebook.com/thehubonthehill).

[27] Examples include Unlimited Future, a microenterprise development center and business incubator in Huntington, West Virginia (http://www.unlimitedfuture.org), and the Colleton Commercial Kitchen in Walterboro, South Carolina (https://www.colletonkitchen.org).

A.5 Food System Support and Ancillary Services

What opportunities and activities would become available if you could create or expand processes and opportunities that add value or enhance the local food system in your community?

How far along are you in generating these opportunities as you have defined them? (Check one)

- ☐ Just beginning—we're not sure where to start.
- ☐ We have a plan in place, but no traction yet.
- ☐ Several programs are up and running, but we'd like to do more.
- ☐ We are where we want to be with this goal. The focus is on maintaining.

Notes/comments:

We have seen communities use the following strategies to enhance the capabilities of local food farms and businesses. Are you currently pursuing, or interested in exploring, any of these strategies?

Common Strategies or Actions	Status	Notes/Comments
1. Shared-use commercial kitchens for caterers and small-scale manufacturers using locally sourced ingredients.[28]	☐ Low priority ☐ Aspiration ☐ Needs work ☐ Established	
2. Value-added food processing facilities for processing fruits and vegetables into consumer goods.[29]	☐ Low priority ☐ Aspiration ☐ Needs work ☐ Established	
3. Processing facilities for fish, seafood, and meat and/or dairy and cheese manufacturing.	☐ Low priority ☐ Aspiration ☐ Needs work ☐ Established	
4. Distribution and aggregation facilities to fill a logistics gap in getting locally grown products to larger markets.[30]	☐ Low priority ☐ Aspiration ☐ Needs work ☐ Established	
5. Business incubators for farm-product marketers and non-farm entrepreneurs such as farm machinery repairers, crate manufacturers, and composters.[31]	☐ Low priority ☐ Aspiration ☐ Needs work ☐ Established	
6. Others (please name and describe)	☐ Low priority ☐ Aspiration ☐ Needs work ☐ Established	

[28] Examples include the Burgaw Incubator Kitchen in Burgaw, North Carolina (http://www.townofburgaw.com/burgaw-incubator-kitchen), and Blue Ridge Food Ventures in Candler, North Carolina (http://www.blueridgefoodventures.org).

[29] Examples include the Arkansas Food Innovation Center (http://afic.uark.edu) and The Starting Block Incubator Kitchen and Entrepreneurial Center in Hart, Michigan (http://www.startingblock.biz).

[30] Examples include the Fifth Season Cooperative in Wisconsin (http://www.fifthseasoncoop.com), and Hub on the Hill in Essex County, New York (https://www.facebook.com/thehubonthehill).

[31] An example is Unlimited Future, a microenterprise development center and business incubator in Huntington, West Virginia (http://www.unlimitedfuture.org).

A.6 PUBLIC HEALTH

What does success look like if you were to achieve better physical and mental health outcomes for people in your community?

How far along are you in meeting this goal as you have defined it?

- ☐ Just beginning—we're not sure where to start.
- ☐ We have a plan in place, but no traction yet.
- ☐ Several programs are up and running, but we'd like to do more.
- ☐ We are where we want to be with this goal. The focus is on maintaining.

Notes/comments:

We have seen communities use the following strategies to improve public health. Are you currently pursuing, or interested in exploring, any of these strategies?

Common Strategies or Actions	Status	Notes/Comments
1. Health Impact Assessment[32] or Health in All Policies[33] efforts that help foster collaboration across sectors.	☐ Low priority ☐ Aspiration ☐ Needs work ☐ Established	
2. Farmers market partnerships with local agencies, employers, and nonprofit organizations to promote healthy eating (e.g., Veggie Prescription Programs, where patients receive nutritional consultations along with coupons for local produce).[34]	☐ Low priority ☐ Aspiration ☐ Needs work ☐ Established	
3. Nutrition and cooking classes at farmers markets, health centers, or other public, easily accessible locations.	☐ Low priority ☐ Aspiration ☐ Needs work ☐ Established	
4. Sourcing healthy and/or local foods in hospitals and health education facilities.[35]	☐ Low priority ☐ Aspiration ☐ Needs work ☐ Established	
5. Sourcing healthy and/or local foods in senior and child care facilities.[36]	☐ Low priority ☐ Aspiration ☐ Needs work ☐ Established	
6. Farm-to-school programs that connect local farms to schools through K-12 education and food purchasing.[37]	☐ Low priority ☐ Aspiration ☐ Needs work ☐ Established	

Common Strategies or Actions	Status	Notes/Comments
7. Community gardens incorporated into mental health service provider programs.[38]	☐ Low priority ☐ Aspiration ☐ Needs work ☐ Established	
8. Education and place-based strategies to support active living practices such as walking and biking.	☐ Low priority ☐ Aspiration ☐ Needs work ☐ Established	
9. Improved access to social services, health care, and healthy food.	☐ Low priority ☐ Aspiration ☐ Needs work ☐ Established	
10. Highly visible community exercise and active events (e.g., downtown walks or runs, yoga in the park, or community dances).[39]	☐ Low priority ☐ Aspiration ☐ Needs work ☐ Established	
11. Health screenings at community events such as farmers markets, school activities, and festivals.	☐ Low priority ☐ Aspiration ☐ Needs work ☐ Established	
12. Others (please name and describe)	☐ Low priority ☐ Aspiration ☐ Needs work ☐ Established	

[32] A Health Impact Assessment helps evaluate the potential health effects of a plan, project, or policy before it is built or implemented. For more information, see: Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. "Health Impact Assessment." https://www.cdc.gov/healthyplaces/hia.htm. Accessed Feb 21, 2017.

[33] Health in All Policies is a collaborative approach to improving public health that embeds health considerations into decision-making processes across sectors. For more information, see: American Public Health Association. *Health in All Policies: A Guide for State and Local Government*. 2013. https://www.apha.org/topics-and-issues/health-in-all-policies.

[34] An example is Local Food Hub's Fresh Farmacy Fruit and Veggie Prescription Program in Charlottesville, Virginia (http://www.localfoodhub.org/fresh-farmacy-fruit-and-veggie-prescription-program).

[35] An example is the farm-to-hospital program of The Community Alliance with Family Farmers (http://www.caff.org/programs/fts/farm-to-hospital).

[36] An example is RiverWoods at Exeter, a nonprofit retirement community in Exeter, New Hampshire (Proulx, Melissa. "RiverWoods Joining Forces with Local Organic Farm." *Exeter Newsletter*. Jul. 26, 2013. http://www.riverwoodsrc.org/news/riverwoods-joining-forces-local-organic-farm.). See also the Wake County, North Carolina, SmartStart farm-to-childcare toolkit for resources on starting a new program (http://www.wakesmartstart.org/farm-to-child-care-toolkit).

[37] Resources on farm-to-school programs are available from USDA's Food and Nutrition Service Office of Community Food Programs (https://www.fns.usda.gov/farmtoschool/farm-school) and the National Farm to School Network (http://www.farmtoschool.org). An example is Washington, D.C.'s farm-to-school program (http://osse.dc.gov/service/farm-school-program).

[38] An example is Growing Warriors' (http://www.growingwarriors.org/home) partnership with Sustainable Williamson (West Virginia). See: Justice, Bruce. "Growing Warriors sowing seeds of healing." *Mingo Messenger*. May 16, 2016. http://www.mingomessenger.com/news/article_28519b56-fb49-11e4-af18-bb88e2801f64.html.

[39] Examples include Yoga Day in Portland, Oregon (http://internationalyogadayportland.com), and the Monument Avenue 10k in Richmond, Virginia (https://www.sportsbackers.org/events/monument-ave-10k).

A.7 Enlivening, Improving, and Revitalizing Places

What activities and programs would be present in your community if you had a vibrant and thriving downtown, Main Street, and/or neighborhood?

How far along are you in meeting this goal as you have defined it? (Check one)

- ☐ Just beginning—we're not sure where to start.
- ☐ We have a plan in place, but no traction yet.
- ☐ Several programs are up and running, but we'd like to do more.
- ☐ We are where we want to be with this goal. The focus is on maintaining.

Notes/comments:

We have seen communities use the following strategies to improve and revitalize downtowns and neighborhoods. Are you currently pursuing, or interested in exploring, any of these strategies?

Common Strategies or Actions	Status	Notes/Comments
1. Policies, codes, and incentives to create a mix of uses (e.g., housing, amenities, and employment opportunities) in downtown within walking distance of each other.[40]	☐ Low priority ☐ Aspiration ☐ Needs work ☐ Established	
2. A Main Street program or downtown association that coordinates downtown revitalization efforts.[41]	☐ Low priority ☐ Aspiration ☐ Needs work ☐ Established	
3. Community events (e.g., fairs or live music) and public places (e.g., parks and plazas) in the downtown core.[42]	☐ Low priority ☐ Aspiration ☐ Needs work ☐ Established	
4. Audits to identify safety, access, and comfort concerns for pedestrians and bicyclists, and an improvement plan for making infrastructure changes.[43]	☐ Low priority ☐ Aspiration ☐ Needs work ☐ Established	
5. Beautification and improvement of streets and sidewalks to promote inviting pedestrian environments and increased Main Street activity.[44]	☐ Low priority ☐ Aspiration ☐ Needs work ☐ Established	
6. Connecting downtown to other parts of the community with multiple routes and transportation options (e.g., safe walking paths, bike lanes, trails, and buses).[45]	☐ Low priority ☐ Aspiration ☐ Needs work ☐ Established	

Common Strategies or Actions	Status	Notes/Comments
7. Parking management policies to encourage efficient use of space and make walking safer and more pleasant (e.g., shared parking lots, parking standards, and public parking lots).[46]	☐ Low priority ☐ Aspiration ☐ Needs work ☐ Established	
8. Public art, murals, or iconic infrastructure that builds collective identity.[47]	☐ Low priority ☐ Aspiration ☐ Needs work ☐ Established	
9. Connections between downtown and nearby tourist or recreational activities such as greenways, national and state parks, and regional trails.[48]	☐ Low priority ☐ Aspiration ☐ Needs work ☐ Established	
10. Signs that encourage people to visit points of interest and promote community identity.[49]	☐ Low priority ☐ Aspiration ☐ Needs work ☐ Established	
11. Market or feasibility studies to assess opportunities for downtown redevelopment and specific activities.	☐ Low priority ☐ Aspiration ☐ Needs work ☐ Established	
12. Public outreach efforts to incorporate all voices into revitalization.	☐ Low priority ☐ Aspiration ☐ Needs work ☐ Established	
13. Special districts that encourage investment and a mix of uses downtown (e.g., historic, arts, commercial, investment, and neighborhood conservation districts).[50]	☐ Low priority ☐ Aspiration ☐ Needs work ☐ Established	
14. Others (please name and describe)	☐ Low priority ☐ Aspiration ☐ Needs work ☐ Established	

[40] For strategies villages, towns, and small cities can use to evaluate their existing policies to create healthy, environmentally resilient, and economically robust places, see: EPA. *Smart Growth Self-Assessment for Rural Communities.* 2015. https://www.epa.gov/smartgrowth/smart-growth-self-assessment-rural-communities. For larger communities, see: EPA. *Essential Smart Growth Fixes for Urban and Suburban Zoning Codes*. 2009. https://www.epa.gov/smartgrowth/essential-smart-growth-fixes-communities#Urban_and_Suburban_Zoning_Codes.

[41] An example is the Texas Downtown Association (http://www.texasdowntown.org). Main Street America (http://www.mainstreet.org) provides resources for organizations interested in creating vibrant and viable commercial districts.

[42] For an example in Corbin, Kentucky, see: MacKenzie, Annah. "A Man, a Plan, a Market: The Lighter Quicker Cheaper Transformation of a Rural Kentucky Main Street." *Project for Public Spaces Blog*. Apr. 5, 2016. https://www.pps.org/blog/corbin-ky.

[43] For resources and audit materials, see: Federal Highway Administration Pedestrian and Bicycle Information Center. "Audits." http://www.pedbikeinfo.org/planning/tools_audits.cfm. Accessed Feb. 23, 2017.

[44] An example is Beautiful RVA in Richmond, Virginia (http://www.beautifulrva.org).

[45] An example is the Tanglefoot Trail in New Albany, Mississippi (http://www.tanglefoottrail.com).

[46] For information and strategies on balancing parking needs with community goals, see: EPA. *Parking Spaces/Community Places: Finding the Balance Through Smart Growth Solutions*. 2006. https://www.epa.gov/smartgrowth/parking-spacescommunity-places.

[47] Examples include the Richmond Mural Project in Virginia (http://richmondmuralproject.squarespace.com) and IX Art Park in Charlottesville, Virginia (http://www.ixartpark.com). The Center for Creative Placemaking (https://centerforcreativeplacemaking.net) provides resources on using arts and culture as tools for community, social, and economic development.

[48] An example is the Mill Mountain Greenway (https://www.traillink.com/trail/mill-mountain-greenway/), which connects downtown Roanoke, Virginia, with Mill Mountain Park.

[49] An example is the Baker County Tourism wayfinding signs in Oregon (https://www.flickr.com/photos/basecampbaker/13969347981/).

[50] Examples include the Las Vegas Arts District (https://downtown.vegas/work/neighborhoods-districts/18b-the-las-vegas-arts-district); Bozeman, Montana's Neighborhood Conservation Overlay District (see: City of Bozeman. *Neighborhood Conservation Overlay District Report*. 2015 https://www.bozeman.net/Home/ShowDocument?id=3128); and the Business Improvement District in Fargo, North Dakota (http://downtownfargobid.com).

A.8 Enlivening Downtown Spaces Through Local Food

What activities and opportunities would be present if local food was a central feature of your downtown area?

How far along are you in incorporating local food into your downtown area as you have defined it? (Check one)

- ☐ Just beginning—we're not sure where to start.
- ☐ We have a plan in place, but no traction yet.
- ☐ Several programs are up and running, but we'd like to do more.
- ☐ We are where we want to be with this goal. The focus is on maintaining.

Notes/comments:

We have seen communities use the following strategies to integrate local food and related activities into their downtowns. Are you currently pursuing, or interested in exploring, any of these strategies?

Common Strategies or Actions	Status	Notes/Comments
1. Farmers markets located downtown and open during the week and on weekends.	☐ Low priority ☐ Aspiration ☐ Needs work ☐ Established	
2. Local food-focused public events and festivals held downtown.	☐ Low priority ☐ Aspiration ☐ Needs work ☐ Established	
3. Conversion of vacant or underused land to productive use such as for parks, community gardens, pop-up markets, or urban farms.[51]	☐ Low priority ☐ Aspiration ☐ Needs work ☐ Established	
4. Rehabilitation and/or adaptive reuse of vacant or underused public buildings into amenities such as a food pantry, community kitchen, food hub, grocery store, community center, training center, or meeting space.[52]	☐ Low priority ☐ Aspiration ☐ Needs work ☐ Established	
5. Flexible zoning to enable nonconforming uses by cultural and community nonprofits.	☐ Low priority ☐ Aspiration ☐ Needs work ☐ Established	
6. Policies to allow public lots or parks to be used as food distribution points or pop-up food markets.	☐ Low priority ☐ Aspiration ☐ Needs work ☐ Established	

Common Strategies or Actions	Status	Notes/Comments
7. Initiatives that encourage local merchants, institutions, and businesses to highlight local products as a marketing asset (e.g., "Eat Local/Buy Local" campaigns[53] or menus highlighting local produce).	☐ Low priority ☐ Aspiration ☐ Needs work ☐ Established	
8. Others (please name and describe)	☐ Low priority ☐ Aspiration ☐ Needs work ☐ Established	

[51] For examples, see: New York City Soil & Water Conservation District. *Greening Vacant Lots: Planning and Implementation Strategies*. 2012. https://www.nrdc.org/resources/greening-vacant-lots-planning-and-implementation-strategies.

[52] For an example, see: American Planning Association. "Flint Farmers' Market: Flint, Michigan." https://www.planning.org/greatplaces/spaces/2015/flintfarmersmarket.htm. Accessed Mar. 6, 2017.

[53] Examples include the 30 Mile Meal Project in Athens, Ohio (https://30milemeal.wordpress.com), the Vermont Fresh Network (http://www.vermontfresh.net), and the Virginia Cooperative Extension's Buy Fresh, Buy Local program (http://virginiafarmtotable.org/food/buy-fresh-buy-local-in-virginia).

A.9 Economic Development: Opportunities and Advancement

What activities or programs would indicate success in creating economic opportunities, training, or job promotion in your community?

How far along are you in creating the opportunities for success and advancement as you have defined them? (Check one)

- ☐ Just beginning—we're not sure where to start.
- ☐ We have a plan in place, but no traction yet.
- ☐ Several programs are up and running, but we'd like to do more.
- ☐ We are where we want to be with this goal. The focus is on maintaining.

Notes/comments:

We have seen communities use the following strategies to leverage, improve, or advance local economic opportunities. Are you currently pursuing, or interested in exploring, any of these strategies?

Common Strategies or Actions	Status	Notes/Comments
1. A business incubator programmatically linked with local schools, community colleges, and universities.[54]	☐ Low priority ☐ Aspiration ☐ Needs work ☐ Established	
2. Youth job-training programs, especially for those at risk or from economically disadvantaged areas.[55]	☐ Low priority ☐ Aspiration ☐ Needs work ☐ Established	
3. Collaboration with farmers market vendors to open full-time shops in vacant areas downtown.	☐ Low priority ☐ Aspiration ☐ Needs work ☐ Established	
4. Local hiring requirements for publicly funded projects.	☐ Low priority ☐ Aspiration ☐ Needs work ☐ Established	
5. Developing a local merchant promotion program such as "Eat Local/Buy Local" or "Shop Downtown" campaigns.	☐ Low priority ☐ Aspiration ☐ Needs work ☐ Established	
6. Partnerships with local arts centers to help artisans at the farmers market scale up their businesses.	☐ Low priority ☐ Aspiration ☐ Needs work ☐ Established	

Common Strategies or Actions	Status	Notes/Comments
7. Partnerships with local employers, economic development organizations, or nonprofits to leverage support, training, or job-placement programs.	☐ Low priority ☐ Aspiration ☐ Needs work ☐ Established	
8. Local business, producer, or farmer cooperatives.[56]	☐ Low priority ☐ Aspiration ☐ Needs work ☐ Established	
9. Healthy corner store programs that facilitate the sale of fresh produce at convenience stores.[57]	☐ Low priority ☐ Aspiration ☐ Needs work ☐ Established	
10. Others (please name and describe)	☐ Low priority ☐ Aspiration ☐ Needs work ☐ Established	

[54] Examples include the Evergreen Cooperatives of Cleveland (http://www.evgoh.com) and The Idea Village in New Orleans (http://www.ideavillage.org).
[55] An example is the Youth with Faces culinary program in Dallas (http://www.youthwithfaces.org/our-work/how-we-help/culinary-program).
[56] An example is the Farmers Market Cooperative of East Liberty in Pittsburgh (http://www.farmersmarketcooperativeofeastliberty.com).
[57] An example is Tricycle Gardens' Healthy Corner Store Initiative in Richmond, Virginia (http://tricycleurbanag.org/eat/).

A.10 Economic Development: Local and Regional Promotion and Branding

What new partnerships and outcomes would be present if your community implemented a marketing and promotion program celebrating its unique values, assets, or opportunities?

How far along are you in implementing a promotion program as you have defined it? (Check one)

- ☐ Just beginning—we're not sure where to start.
- ☐ We have a plan in place, but no traction yet.
- ☐ Several programs are up and running, but we'd like to do more.
- ☐ We are where we want to be with this goal. The focus is on maintaining.

Notes/comments:

We have seen communities use the following strategies to promote their unique assets and opportunities for greater economic and community development. Are you currently pursuing, or interested in exploring, any of these strategies?

Common Strategies or Actions	Status	Notes/Comments
1. Webpage and an actively curated social media presence.[58]	☐ Low priority ☐ Aspiration ☐ Needs work ☐ Established	
2. "Eat Local, Buy Local" campaign or "Shop Downtown" campaign.[59]	☐ Low priority ☐ Aspiration ☐ Needs work ☐ Established	
3. Local food guides, directories, or websites[60] that list producers, suppliers, restaurants, or distributors of local food and value-added products, making it easier for people to learn about and access them.	☐ Low priority ☐ Aspiration ☐ Needs work ☐ Established	
4. Coordinating and leveraging state and regional economic development and tourism marketing resources.	☐ Low priority ☐ Aspiration ☐ Needs work ☐ Established	
5. Developing a brand for your community's produce or key assets, unique features, or geographic area and incorporating that brand into private and public marketing efforts.[61]	☐ Low priority ☐ Aspiration ☐ Needs work ☐ Established	
6. Activities to create, promote, or strengthen tourism assets in your community.[62]	☐ Low priority ☐ Aspiration ☐ Needs work ☐ Established	

Common Strategies or Actions	Status	Notes/Comments
7. Others (please name and describe)	☐ Low priority ☐ Aspiration ☐ Needs work ☐ Established	

[58] Multiple website hosting and development platforms allow people to build and customize their own websites. Alternatively, project or program account can be created on social media sites like Facebook or Twitter.
[59] See section A.8 for more resources on "Eat Local, Buy Local" campaigns.
[60] An example is the Kentucky Department of Agriculture's Kentucky Proud program (http://www.kyproud.com).
[61] An example is the Appalachian Grown certification program from the Appalachian Sustainable Agriculture Project (http://asapconnections.org/tools-for-farmers/appalachian-grown-certification).
[62] An example is the Fields of Gold Farm Trail in Virginia's Shenandoah Valley (http://www.fieldsofgold.org).

APPENDIX B: SAMPLE WORKSHOP AGENDA

When	What	Where	Description
Day 1 **1:30-** **3:30 PM**	**Community Tour** *optional*	[Insert meeting point and cell phone number for late comers.]	The purpose of the tour is to allow workshop participants to visualize the key sites that will likely be discussed at the workshop and understand the physical connections between them.
Day 1 **6:30 –** **9:00 PM**	**SESSION ONE Community Values, Vision, and Goals** *"Where are we now?"*	[Insert location]	The purpose of this session is to (1) introduce the role local food can play in strengthening the community's downtown, economic outlook, and health; and (2) reveal the community values, vision, and goals. It sets the stage for the following day's work to prioritize and develop an action plan to: • [Insert workshop goal 1]. • [Insert workshop goal 2]. • [Insert workshop goal 3]. • [Insert workshop goal 4]. • [Insert workshop goal 5].
Day 2 **9:00 AM** **– Noon**	**SESSION TWO Strategies to Strengthen the Local Food System and Local Place** *"Where do we want to be?"*	[Insert location]	The purpose of this session is to explore strategies for accomplishing the goals and vision discussed the previous night. This will involve a presentation with case study examples, an exercise to help the community identify all of the components of its local food system, and an exercise that will allow the community to identify where it would like to apply specific strategies. The session ends with a brainstorming session on actions to prep for the afternoon session.
Day 2 **Noon –** **1:30 PM**	**Lunch Break**	[Insert location]	[Insert details of lunch. If lunch will be provided, insert instructions for attendees to RSVP.]
Day 2 **1:30 –** **5:00 PM**	**SESSION THREE Action Plan** *"How can we make it happen?"*	[Insert location]	The purpose of this session is to identify specific actions for achieving each goal, timelines, milestones, financial and human resources, and responsible parties. The outcome of this work session is a set of completed action planning tables.

APPENDIX C: POTENTIAL STAKEHOLDERS

Stakeholders to consider inviting to the workshop might include:

Local/regional government

- Mayor
- City/county commissioners or council members
- City/county manager or administrator
- Planning department/commission
- Regional planning organization
- Regional economic development district commission
- Tourism department
- Public health department
- Environment/sustainability department
- Workforce development department
- Parks and recreation department
- Economic development department
- Procurement department

State government

- State legislators
- Department of transportation
- Department of health
- Department of environment
- Department of agriculture

Community groups

- Chamber of commerce
- Civic clubs (e.g., Rotary, Kiwanis)
- Food banks
- Faith-based organizations
- Farmworker advocates (e.g., Student Action for Farmworkers)
- Local land trust
- Community/school garden groups
- Main Street organizations
- Business improvement districts

Local food groups

- Farmers market managers
- Food hubs and aggregators
- Produce marketing groups

Farmers

- Farmers market vendors
- Non-participating farmers
- Farming associations
- Future Farmers of America/4-H

Agricultural service providers

- Cooperative Extension and/or Advisory Board
- Farm Service Agency and/or Advisory Board
- Soil and Water Conservation District and/or Advisory Board
- Natural Resources Conservation Service
- Master gardeners

Institutions

- Hospitals
- Local high schools
- Colleges and universities
- Nursing homes and retirement facilities

Funders

- Community foundations
- Farm credit agencies/banks
- Local philanthropic organizations
- Community development finance institutions

Local businesses

- Restaurants and caterers
- Grocery stores
- Hardware and home improvement stores
- Planners, architects, and landscape architects
- Downtown businesses

Media

- Television stations
- Radio stations
- Newspapers
- Local bloggers

APPENDIX D: SAMPLE WORKSHOP INVITATION

You are invited to a series of

Local Foods, Local Places Community Planning Events

Tuesday June 16th, 6:30–8:30 PM and
Wednesday, June 17th, 9:00 AM-12:00 PM & 1:30-5:00 PM
The TAUNY Center—53 Main Street, Canton

Who: Stakeholders and community leaders such as you, interested in making Canton a more livable, healthy, vibrant, and engaged community through the building and strengthening your local food economy. Participants include representatives from community agencies, organizations, elected officials, residents, and facilitators from Renaissance Planning Group.

What: A participatory planning process on local foods and community livability in Canton, including group work sessions and networking that will result in an action plan. The 1.5-day process will include the following topics:

I. Sharing information about the projects currently underway to revitalize downtown Canton and grow the local food system.
II. Identifying the strengths and weaknesses of the Canton local food system and other aspects of community life.
III. Revitalizing downtown through expansion of the local food network.
IV. Connecting the local food network with pedestrian trails and other transportation facilities.
V. Generating consensus on goals that could be accomplished within the next two years.

Background: In 2014, a group of residents and business owners in the Village of Canton got together and decided to develop an action plan that leverages the budding success of the local food scene to help revitalize downtown Canton and maximize its economic potential. A team of expert facilitators will join local stakeholders like you in a 1.5-day workshop to develop an action plan to better tie together the resources we have, identify the major missing pieces, and bridge gaps. We will work to prioritize next steps and identify roles, responsibilities, and resources to move forward. Your participation and knowledge of Canton's local food system, culture, and economy are necessary to help make this event a success.

Website for RSVP: [INSERT LINK]

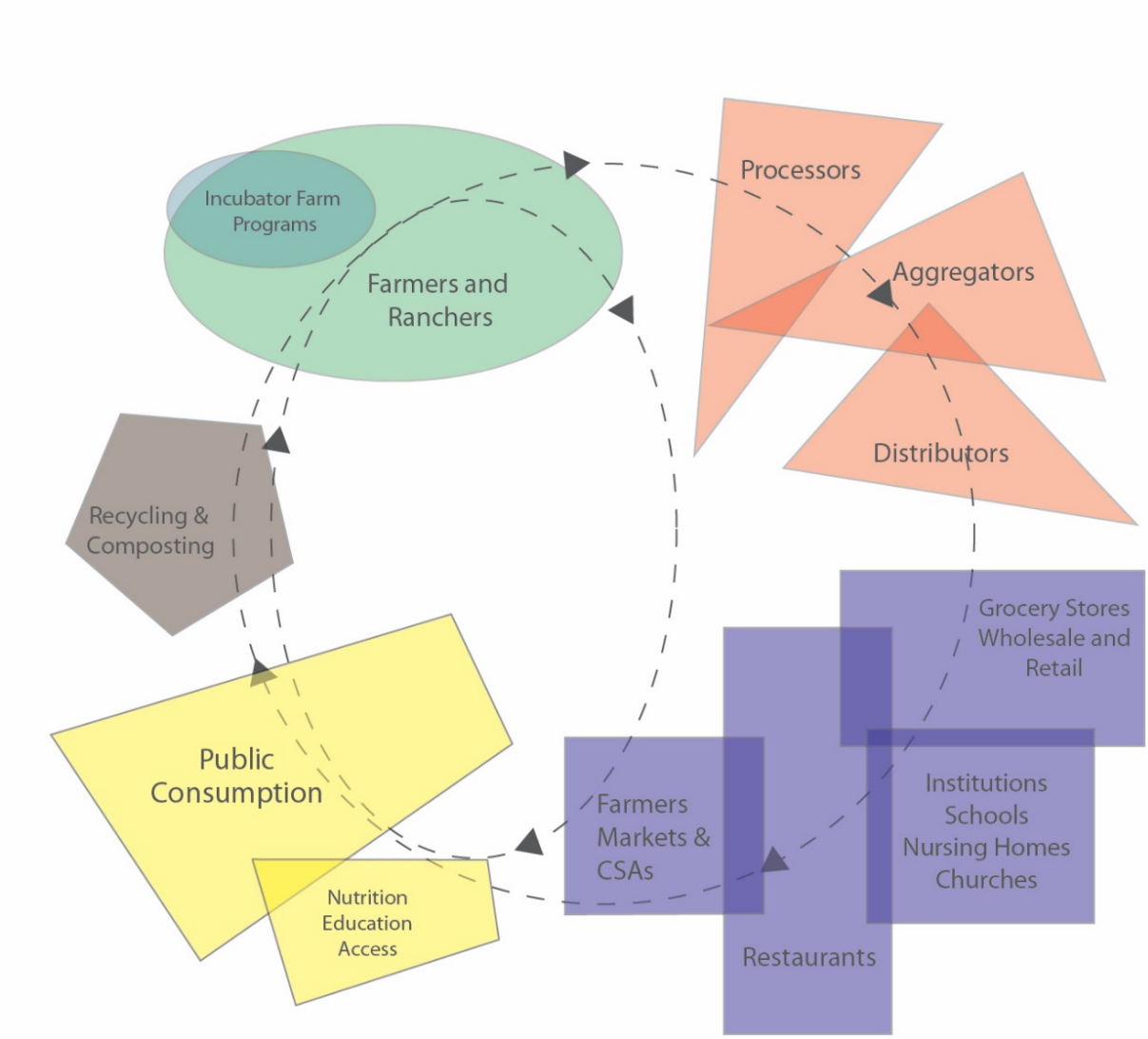
For more information contact: [insert contact information]

APPENDIX E: MATERIALS CHECKLIST

Item	Number	Responsible Party
Agenda (handouts)	50	
Sign-in sheets for registration	Space for 50 names	
Meeting signs (welcome and/or directional)	2-4	
Name tags	50	
Markers	24	
Pens	24	
Dot stickers (1/4" any colors)	1 sheet per table	
Post-it notes (4" pad)	1 pad per table	
Index cards	100	
Masking tape	1 roll	
Flip charts	2	
Easels (for flip charts)	2	
Tables (for sign in and small groups)	About 1 per five anticipated attendees	
Chairs	Depends on expected attendance	
Digital camera	1	
Projector	1	
Projection screen or light, blank wall	1	
Public address system (optional; preferable for large audiences)	1	
Laptop (for presentations)	1	
Extension cord/power strip	1	
Context maps/exercise posters	1 per 10 expected attendees	

APPENDIX F: FOOD SYSTEM DIAGRAMMING TEMPLATE

The diagram below illustrates how elements of a local food system are connected. The smaller dashed oval on the left shows a common local food system where a market, community supported agriculture program (CSA), and/or educational programs connect farmers with consumers. However, this model does not serve institutional buyers (such as hospitals and colleges) or restaurants well. The larger circle shows a more advanced local food system where an organization such as a local food hub helps connect local farmers with institutional and restaurant buyers. The local food hub helps serve these buyers by aggregating produce, processing it (through freezing, chopping, packaging, etc.), and finally distributing it.



Print the diagram on large, poster-sized papers that a group of people can work together on. After briefly introducing workshop participants to these concepts, invite them to work in small groups to list by name the specific actors in the local food system and draw connections between them. Use one color for existing components and another color for things that are missing or could be strengthened. Solid lines depict existing relationships, while dotted lines depict relationships that do not yet exist or could be strengthened. This exercise can form the basis for beginning a discussion in the community about food value chains—a business model in which all participants in a food supply chain work together under an agreed-upon set of business practices that advance particular social and/or environmental values. Consumers seeking greater transparency in how their food is produced and wanting to support businesses with particular characteristics can drive increased profitability for all parties involved in a food value chain.[13]

[13] USDA has developed educational materials about food value chains available at: USDA. "Food Value Chains: Creating Shared Value to Enhance Marketing Success." https://www.ams.usda.gov/services/local-regional/food-value-chain. Accessed May 25, 2017.

APPENDIX G: ACTION PLANNING TABLE

At the workshop, participants should break into groups to complete an action planning table for each goal like the following example from Passaic, New Jersey. Print a blank table (found following the example) on large, poster-sized paper so a small group of people can work together to complete it.

GOAL 5: *Enhance and promote the Market Street area as a distinctive cultural corridor*

Specific action ***Actions should contribute to success of the goal and be SMART: Specific, Measureable, Achievable, Relevant, and have a Time frame***	**Why is this important?** ***How will it help achieve the goal?***	**How will we measure success?** ***How will you know when the action is completed? How will you track progress along the way?***	**Time frame** ***When should work on this begin? How long should it take?***	**Lead role** ***Who is the primary responsible organization and/or person?***	**Supporting cast** ***Who else can help?***	**Costs and resources** ***What are possible funding sources? What organizations might provide human resources?***
Establish a branding and/or organizational committee for the Market Street area	• Ensures efforts have effect on community • Provides a jump start	• Minutes from a meeting • # of people going to meetings • local business representa-tion	Short: • 1 month: call for interest • 2 months: have first meeting	• Passaic Enterprise Zone Development Corporation: puts call out for interest • Need to identify lead community stakeholder	• Business owners • Mayor and/or elected officials • Residents • Mi Casa es Puebla • Developers in neighborhood	• Staff time from lead organizations and supporting cast • Volunteer time from other members • Commitment/ ownership from restaurant owners
Explore getting outdoor seating • **Do ordinances need changing?** • **Who (which restaurants) are interested?** • **Where is there space?**	• Adds visibility and attracts more people • Adds vitality • Increases the time customers stay and the amount they spend • Expands clientele	• # of outdoor seats • # of restaurants w/ outdoor seating • # of customers using seating • Restaurant earnings	• Long: coincide with completion of streetscape for wider sidewalks • Short: assign project lead at first committee meeting	Branding Committee	• City engineer • Rest of committee • Restaurant owners • City Zoning Department and Business Admin Department • Streetscape design firm	• Funding for construction, furniture, and new staff Sources: • Restaurant owners • City of Passaic • HUD Community Development Block Grant program • HUD Section 108 Loan Guarantee program • Local Banks, UCEDC for loans

Specific action ***Actions should contribute to success of the goal and be SMART: Specific, Measureable, Achievable, Relevant, and have a Time frame***	**Why is this important?** ***How will it help achieve the goal?***	**How will we measure success?** ***How will you know when the action is completed? How will you track progress along the way?***	**Time frame** ***When should work on this begin? How long should it take?***	**Lead role** ***Who is the primary responsible organization and/or person?***	**Supporting cast** ***Who else can help?***	**Costs and resources** ***What are possible funding sources? What organizations might provide human resources?***
Improve neighborhood cleanliness • **Regular trash pick-ups** • **New paint jobs** • **Address code violations** **Set up Clean & Green program to clean regularly**	• People don't want to go to restaurants if the neighborhood looks dirty • People associate cleanliness with safety • Creates more upscale image	• Amount of trash on routine observation • Regular cleaning program in place to enhance current street sweeping program	• Short: assign project lead at first committee meeting • Medium: set up a plan and decide course of action (i.e. whether to do formal program or something informal)	Branding Committee	• Passaic Enterprise Zone Development Corporation • Business/restaurant owners • Private developers in neighborhood • Jobs training program staff • Downtown Merchants Association?	Funding to hire staff, run program from: • Job training program funds • Restaurant owners and businesses • City • Youth Summer Program interns
Create branded events, e.g. restaurant night, food festival, Cinco de Mayo festival, senior week, jazz night, chef cook-off	• Brings new attention & vitality to the area • Increases food traffic, sales	• Have new event • # of attendees • If a 2nd Annual event happens…	In one year: have an event	Branding Committee	• Entire community • Business owners • Residents • City - Policing, traffic control, permitting, code department	• City staff time • Funding for marketing materials and permit fees raised from sponsorships from local banks, realty companies, developers, etc.

GOAL:

Specific action ***Actions should contribute to success of the goal and be SMART: Specific, Measureable, Achievable, Relevant, and have a Time frame***	**Why is this important?** ***How will it help achieve the goal?***	**How will we measure success?** ***How will you know when the action is completed? How will you track progress along the way?***	**Time frame** ***When should work on this begin? How long should it take?***	**Lead role** ***Who is the primary responsible organization and/or person?***	**Supporting cast** ***Who else can help?***	**Costs and resources** ***What are possible funding sources? What organizations might provide human resources?***

APPENDIX H: FUNDING AND TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE RESOURCES

Cities and towns can strengthen their local food systems through a variety of federal, state, local, and philanthropic projects and programs. USDA and other federal agencies help support local food systems by working with producers, engaging with communities, financing local processing and distribution, or helping retailers develop local food connections. Below are some of the resources available.

USDA AGRICULTURAL MARKETING SERVICE

Farmers Market Promotion Program

The program aims to increase domestic consumption of and access to locally and regionally produced agricultural products, and to develop new market opportunities for farm and ranch operations serving local markets. This program can support the development, improvement, and expansion of farmers markets, agritourism activities, and other direct producer-to-consumer market opportunities. Grant awards range from $50,000 to $250,000 for capacity-building projects and $250,000 to $500,000 for community development, training, and technical assistance projects.

- https://www.ams.usda.gov/services/grants/fmpp

Local Food Promotion Program

The program offers grant funds with a 25 percent match to support the development and expansion of local and regional food business enterprises to increase domestic consumption of, and access to, locally and regionally produced agricultural products, and to develop new market opportunities for farm and ranch operations serving local markets. Planning grants fund the planning stages of establishing or expanding a local and regional food business enterprise. Activities can include but are not limited to market research, feasibility studies, and business planning. Implementation grants help establish, improve, or expand local and regional food business enterprises. Activities can include but are not limited to training and technical assistance for the business enterprise and/or for producers working with the business enterprise; outreach and marketing to buyers and consumers; and non-construction infrastructure improvements to business enterprise facilities or information technology systems.

- https://www.ams.usda.gov/services/grants/lfpp

Organic Certification Cost Share Programs

Two Organic Certification Cost Share Programs help certified organic operations defray the costs associated with organic certification. Organic operations can be reimbursed for 75 percent of their certification costs up to $750.

- https://www.ams.usda.gov/services/grants/occsp

USDA RURAL DEVELOPMENT

Community Facilities Direct Loan and Grant Program

This program provides funding to develop essential community facilities in rural areas with no more than 20,000 residents. Funds can be used to purchase, construct, and/or improve local food system facilities such as community gardens, food pantries, community kitchens, food banks, food hubs, and

greenhouses. The program offers grants of up to 75 percent of eligible project costs, low-interest loans, and loan guarantees.

- http://www.rd.usda.gov/programs-services/community-facilities-direct-loan-grant-program

Economic Impact Initiative Grant Program

Funding for essential community facilities is also available through this program for communities with extreme unemployment and severe economic depression.

- http://www.rd.usda.gov/programs-services/economic-impact-initiative-grants

Rural Business Development Grants

These grants fund technical assistance, training, and other activities leading to the development or expansion of small businesses in rural areas with no more than 50,000 residents. Generally, grants range from $10,000 up to $500,000 and do not require cost sharing. The program can support activities such as training and technical assistance; acquisition or development of land; construction or renovation of buildings, equipment, roads, and utilities; capitalization of revolving loan funds; rural transportation improvements; feasibility studies and business plans; and rural business incubators.

- http://www.rd.usda.gov/programs-services/rural-business-development-grants

Value-Added Producer Grants

These grants help agricultural producers with the processing and marketing of value-added products. The program aims to generate new products, create and expand marketing opportunities, and increase producer income. Planning grants of up to $75,000 can be used for activities such as conducting feasibility studies and developing business plans for processing and marketing a value-added product. Working capital grants of up to $250,000 can be used for processing costs, marketing and advertising expenses, and some inventory and salary expenses. The grants require matching funds of 50 percent of total project costs.

- http://www.rd.usda.gov/programs-services/value-added-producer-grants

USDA National Institute of Food and Agriculture

Beginning Farmer and Rancher Development Program

This program provides grants to collaborative partnerships of public or private entities for education, mentoring, and technical assistance initiatives for beginning farmers or ranchers.

- https://nifa.usda.gov/program/beginning-farmer-and-rancher-development-program-bfrdp

Community Food Projects Competitive Grant Program

This program helps private nonprofit entities fight food insecurity by funding community food projects that help promote the self-sufficiency of low-income communities. Community food projects are designed to increase food security in communities by bringing the whole food system together to assess strengths, establish linkages, and create systems that improve the self-reliance of community members over their food needs. Preferred projects develop linkages between two or more sectors of the food system, support the development of entrepreneurial projects, develop innovative linkages between the for-profit and nonprofit food sectors, encourage long-term planning activities, and build long-term

capacity of communities to address the food and agricultural problems of communities. Grants range from $10,000 to $400,000 and require a dollar-for-dollar match in resources.

- https://nifa.usda.gov/program/community-food-projects-competitive-grant-program-cfpcgp

Food Insecurity Nutrition Incentive Grant Program

This program supports projects to increase the purchase of fruits and vegetables among low-income consumers participating in the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program by providing incentives at the point of purchase. It funds pilot projects at up to $100,000 over one year; multi-year, community-based projects at up to $500,000 over no more than four years; and multi-year, large-scale projects of more than $500,000 over no more than four years. USDA gives priority to projects that provide locally or regionally produced fruits and vegetables.

- https://nifa.usda.gov/program/food-insecurity-nutrition-incentive-fini-grant-program

USDA Natural Resources Conservation Service

Environmental Quality Incentives Program

The program provides financial and technical assistance to agricultural producers to plan and implement conservation practices that improve soil, water, plant, animal, air, and related natural resources on agricultural land. Producers are eligible for payments totaling up to $450,000 for completed high tunnel systems that can extend the growing season for high-value crops in an environmentally safe manner. The program can also provide up to $20,000 per year for organic producers and those transitioning to organic to address natural resource concerns and meet requirements for the National Organic Program.

- http://www.nrcs.usda.gov/wps/portal/nrcs/main/national/programs/financial/eqip/

USDA Farm Service Agency

Farm Storage Facility Loan Program

This program provides low-interest financing so producers can build or upgrade permanent facilities to store commodities. Eligible facilities include cold storage facilities for fruits, vegetables, dairy, and meat products. Producers may borrow up to $500,000.

- http://www.fsa.usda.gov/programs-and-services/price-support/facility-loans/farm-storage/index

Microloan Program

The Microloan Program helps finance small, beginning, niche, and non-traditional farm operations; farms participating in direct marketing and sales such as farmers markets; and farms using hydroponic, aquaponic, organic, and vertical growing methods. Eligible uses of funds include to make a down payment on a farm; build, repair, or improve farm buildings; purchase hoop houses, tools, and equipment; gain GAP (Good Agricultural Practices), GHP (Good Handling Practices), and organic certification; and market and distribute agricultural products. The maximum loan amount is $50,000.

- http://www.fsa.usda.gov/programs-and-services/farm-loan-programs/microloans/index

USDA Food and Nutrition Service

Farm to School Grant Program

These grants support farm-to-school programs that improve access to local foods in schools.

- Support service grants of $65,000 to $100,000 help state and local agencies, Indian tribal organizations, agricultural producers, and nonprofit entities develop and provide support services to farm-to-school initiatives.
- Implementation grants of $65,000 to $100,000 help schools or school districts scale or further develop existing farm-to-school initiatives.
- Planning grants of $20,000 to $45,000 help schools or school districts just getting started on farm-to-school activities organize and structure their efforts for maximum impact by embedding known best practices into early design considerations.
- Training grants of $15,000 to $50,000 help state and local agencies, Indian tribal organizations, agricultural producers, and nonprofit entities support trainings that strengthen farm-to-school supply chains or provide technical assistance in local procurement, food safety, culinary education, and/or integration of an agriculture-based curriculum.

➢ http://www.fns.usda.gov/farmtoschool/farm-school-grant-program

Senior Farmers' Market Nutrition Program

This program, similar to the WIC Farmers' Market Nutrition Program, awards grants to state agencies and Indian Tribal organizations to provide low-income seniors with coupons for fruits and vegetables at farmers markets. The state agencies provide nutrition education to participants and authorize farmers markets to accept the benefits. For a list of state program contacts, visit:

➢ http://www.fns.usda.gov/sfmnp/sfmnp-contacts

Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP)

SNAP offers nutrition assistance to low-income individuals and families. Benefits can be used to purchase many of the foods sold at farmers markets, including fruits and vegetables, dairy products, breads and cereals, and meat and poultry. The Food and Nutrition Service works with state agencies, nutrition educators, and neighborhood and faith-based organizations to help that those eligible for nutrition assistance access benefits. The Food and Nutrition Service also has resources for farmers markets and retailers interested in accepting SNAP benefits.

➢ http://www.fns.usda.gov/snap/supplemental-nutrition-assistance-program-snap

WIC Farmers' Market Nutrition Program

The program is associated with the Special Supplemental Nutrition Program for Women, Infants and Children, popularly known as WIC. It awards grants to state agencies and Indian Tribal organizations to provide coupons for fresh, unprepared, locally grown fruits and vegetables to WIC participants for use at farmers markets. The state agencies provide nutrition education to participants and authorize farmers markets to accept the benefits. For a list of state program contacts, visit:

➢ http://www.fns.usda.gov/fmnp/fmnp-contacts

U.S. Environmental Protection Agency

Brownfields Area-Wide Planning Program

This program provides grants to develop an area-wide plan for assessing, cleaning up, and reusing brownfield sites. Plans focus on a specific project area, such as a neighborhood, downtown district, commercial corridor, old industrial corridor, waterfront, or city block affected by a single large or multiple brownfield sites.

- https://www.epa.gov/brownfields/types-brownfields-grant-funding#tab-5

Brownfields Assessment Grants

Assessment grants provide funding to inventory, characterize, assess, and conduct planning and community involvement related to sites potentially contaminated by hazardous substances, pollutants, contaminants, or petroleum. The maximum grant amount is $350,000.

- https://www.epa.gov/brownfields/types-brownfields-grant-funding

Brownfields Cleanup Grants

Cleanup grants provide funding to carry out cleanup activities at sites contaminated by hazardous substances, pollutants, contaminants, or petroleum. The maximum grant amount is $200,000 per site. Awardees must contribute 20 percent of the amount of funding provided by EPA, although waivers of this requirement are available. An applicant must own the site for which it is requesting funding at time of application.

- https://www.epa.gov/brownfields/types-brownfields-grant-funding

Environmental Justice Collaborative Problem-Solving Cooperative Agreement Program

This program provides financial assistance to organizations for projects that address local environmental and/or public health issues in their communities using EPA's Environmental Justice Collaborative Problem-Solving Model. The program helps recipients build collaborative partnerships to help them understand and address environmental and public health concerns in their communities.

- https://www.epa.gov/environmental-justice/environmental-justice-collaborative-problem-solving-cooperative-agreement-0

Environmental Justice Small Grants

This grant program supports and empowers communities working on solutions to local environmental and public health issues. The program is designed to help communities understand and address exposure to multiple environmental harms and risks and funds projects up to $30,000. Previously funded projects include Educating South Florida's Residents on Hydroponic Urban Gardening; Promoting Sustainable Agriculture and Healthy Food Production in Athens, Georgia; Creating Safe Soil for Healthy Gardening; and Promoting Urban Agriculture and Food Sustainability in Brooklyn, New York.

- https://www.epa.gov/environmentaljustice/environmental-justice-small-grants-program

Targeted Brownfields Assessments

This program helps states, tribes, and municipalities minimize the uncertainties of contamination often associated with brownfields. This program supplements other efforts under the Brownfields Program to promote the cleanup and redevelopment of brownfields. Services include site assessments, cleanup

options and cost estimates, and community outreach. Services are for an average of $100,000. The sites for this program are selected locally, once a year. Applicants should currently have redevelopment plans for the contaminated property.

- https://www.epa.gov/brownfields/targeted-brownfields-assessments-tba

Technical Assistance to Brownfields Communities Program

This program funds three organizations who—with their extensive team of subgrantees, contractors, partners, and other network contacts—provide technical assistance to communities and other stakeholders. The program helps communities tackle the challenge of assessing, cleaning up, and preparing brownfield sites for redevelopment, especially underserved, rural, small and otherwise distressed communities.

- https://www.epa.gov/brownfields/epas-technical-assistance-brownfields-tab-communities-program-providing-technical

Urban Waters Small Grants

This grant program helps protect and restore urban waters, improve water quality, and support community revitalization and other local priorities. Projects address local water quality issues related to urban runoff pollution, provide additional community benefits, actively engage underserved communities, and foster partnerships. The grants are competed and awarded every two years, with individual award amounts of up to $60,000.

- https://www.epa.gov/urbanwaters/urban-waters-small-grants

OTHERS

National Endowment for the Arts Our Town Grant Program

Our Town supports creative placemaking projects that integrate arts and culture into community revitalization work—placing arts at the table with land use, transportation, economic development, education, housing, infrastructure, and public safety strategies. Projects require a partnership between a nonprofit organization and a local government entity, with one of the partners being a cultural organization. Matching grants range from $25,000 to $200,000. In 2016, the American Dance Institute and the village of Catskill, New York, received an Our Town grant to renovate a former lumberyard and associated buildings into a permanent home for the institute's artist residency, which will include a theater, artist housing, and an open interior courtyard for performances, visual arts displays, and the local farmers market.

- https://www.arts.gov/grants-organizations/our-town/introduction

Surface Transportation Block Grant Program Transportation Alternative Set Aside

This program provides set-aside funding for programs and projects defined as transportation alternatives (including on- and off-road pedestrian and bicycle facilities, infrastructure projects for improving non-driver access to public transportation and enhanced mobility, community improvement activities such as historic preservation and vegetation management, and environmental mitigation related to stormwater and habitat connectivity); recreational trail projects; safe routes to school projects; and projects for planning, designing, or constructing boulevards and other roadways largely in the right-of-way of former divided highways. Funds are allocated to state departments of

transportation, which select projects through a competitive process. Local governments, school districts, and nonprofit organizations responsible for the administration of local transportation safety programs are among the entities eligible to apply for funding.

- http://www.fhwa.dot.gov/environment/transportation_alternatives/guidance/guidance_2016.cfm

Private Grant Funding

While funding programs of individual foundations can change from year to year, these resources are good starting points to look for philanthropic and other private support:

Aetna Foundation

The Aetna Foundation funds community groups that are advancing healthy eating and active living in homes, schools, and neighborhoods. A major part of this effort is connecting people of limited means with fresh fruits and vegetables through community gardens, urban farms, and farmers markets.

- https://www.aetna-foundation.org/grants-partnerships/health-eating-living.html

American Community Gardening Association

The American Community Gardening Association offers a list of grant opportunities for community gardens and other related projects.

- https://communitygarden.org/resources/funding-opportunities/

Farmers Market Coalition

The Farmers Market Coalition website includes funding resources for farmers markets and other community food projects.

- https://farmersmarketcoalition.org/education/funding-opportunities/

Food Co-op Initiative

The Food Co-op initiative provides seed grants of up to $10,000 for retail food co-ops. The grant money must be matched in equal dollars by locally raised funds. Funding has been used to help offset the cost of feasibility and marketing studies, hiring a project manager, and supporting owner/member recruitment and investment projects.

- http://www.fci.coop/seed-grants/

Healthy Food Access Portal

The Healthy Food Access portal was created by PolicyLink, The Food Trust, and Reinvestment Fund to better support communities seeking to launch healthy food retail projects. The portal has a funding section including grants, loans, and incentives suited for healthy food projects.

- http://www.healthyfoodaccess.org/funding

Kresge Foundation

Kresge Foundation's Developing Healthy Places focus area offers programs and grants to promote health equity among people in low-income neighborhoods and foster improved health for entire communities. In 2015, Kresge offered planning grants under the initiative "Fresh, Local & Equitable: Food as a Creative Platform for Neighborhood Revitalization," which "seeks to help create a sense of

place in communities where culinary ventures are integrated into community life, creating synergies that exceed the sum of their parts."

- http://kresge.org/programs/health/developing-healthy-places

Robert Wood Johnson Foundation

The Robert Wood Johnson Foundation supports research and programs to help build a national culture of health. Projects that link local foods assets such as community gardens and farmers markets with recreation and alternative transportation projects that seek to improve access to healthy foods could fit with the foundation's giving. The foundation has programs that help to transform local environments in ways that remove health barriers and make it easier for people to lead healthier lives.

- http://www.rwjf.org/en/our-focus-areas/topics/built-environment-and-health.html

The foundation also has programs to increase the ability to provide more free fresh produce in low-income communities, raise public awareness about food insecurity, and encourage healthier eating.

- http://www.rwjf.org/en/library/collections/healthy-food-access.html

W.K Kellogg Foundation

The W.K. Kellogg Foundation helps communities transform school food systems, improve community access to good food, and create environments for active living. The foundation accepts grant applications from organizations and institutions throughout the year.

- http://wkkf.org/what-we-do/healthy-kids/food-and-community

APPENDIX I: OTHER RESOURCES

Additional resources available are grouped into the following categories:

I. Bicycle and Pedestrian Connectivity
II. Community Gardens
III. Community Kitchens
IV. Farm to School
V. Farmers Markets
VI. Food Co-ops
VII. Food Hubs
VIII. Food Waste
IX. Healthy Living
X. Smart Growth and Placemaking
XI. Urban Agriculture
XII. General

I. BICYCLE AND PEDESTRIAN CONNECTIVITY

Case Studies in Delivering Safe, Comfortable and Connected Pedestrian and Bicycle Networks
This 2015 Federal Highway Administration document provides an overview of pedestrian and bicycle network principles and highlights examples from communities across the country.

- https://www.fhwa.dot.gov/environment/bicycle_pedestrian/publications/network_report/

Guidebook for Developing Pedestrian and Bicycle Performance Measures
This 2016 Federal Highway Administration document helps communities develop performance measures that can fully integrate pedestrian and bicycle planning in ongoing performance management activities.

- http://www.fhwa.dot.gov/environment/bicycle_pedestrian/publications/performance_measures_guidebook

Small Town and Rural Multimodal Networks
This 2016 Federal Highway Administration document helps small towns and rural communities support safe, accessible, comfortable, and active travel for people of all ages and abilities. It provides a bridge between existing guidance on bicycle and pedestrian design and rural practice, encourages innovation in the development of safe and appealing networks for bicycling and walking, and shows examples of project implementation.

- https://www.fhwa.dot.gov/environment/bicycle_pedestrian/publications/small_towns/fhwahep17024_lg.pdf

II. Community Gardens

Cultivating Community Gardens

The Local Government Commission created a fact sheet on the role of local government in supporting community gardens, including case studies, best management practices, resources, and tools for policy-makers.

- https://www.lgc.org/community-gardens/

Elder-Accessible Gardening: A Community Building Option for Brownfields Redevelopment

This 2011 EPA document provides a tip sheet for starting a community garden accessible to people of all age groups and physical activity levels. It includes guidance on starting a garden on a brownfield property.

- https://www.epa.gov/brownfields/brownfields-elder-accessible-gardening

Garden Organizer Toolkit

The Vermont Community Garden Network provides tools to help organizers, managers, coordinators, and supporters of community-based gardens, including resources for starting, organizing, and learning in community-based gardens.

- http://vcgn.org/garden-organizer-toolkit/

III. Community Kitchens

Commercial Kitchen Guide

The Minnesota Institute for Sustainable Agriculture published a guide that provides information on policies and regulations for those looking to open or operate in a community commercial kitchen.

- http://www.misa.umn.edu/publications/commercialkitchenguide

Culinary Incubator Map

CulinaryIncubator.com is a nonprofit website to help small food businesses locate commercial kitchens. It includes an interactive map with descriptions of commercial kitchens across the United States.

- http://www.culinaryincubator.com/maps.php

IV. Farm to School

Farm to School Resources

The National Farm to School Network has compiled resources for communities working to bring local food sourcing, school gardens, and food and agriculture education into schools and early care and education settings.

- http://www.farmtoschool.org/resources

The USDA Farm to School Planning Toolkit

The USDA Food and Nutrition Service created a guide of questions to consider and helpful resources to reference when starting or growing a farm-to-school program. It is designed for use by schools, school districts, and community partners.

- https://www.fns.usda.gov/sites/default/files/f2s/F2S-Planning-Kit.pdf

V. FARMERS MARKETS

Local and Regional *Market News*

USDA Market News works with state departments of agriculture and local and regional food systems to provide prices, volume, and other information on agricultural commodities sold at local and regional markets throughout the United States.

- https://www.ams.usda.gov/market-news/local-regional-food

Market Makeover: 25 Best Practices for Farmers' Markets

This report from the Appalachian Sustainable Agriculture Project provides guidance for making market improvements and dealing with common issues in the areas of management, regulations, risk management, food safety, improving vendor sales, and marketing.

- http://asapconnections.org/downloads/market-makeover-25-best-practices-for-farmers-markets.pdf

National Farmers Market Directory

The USDA Agricultural Marketing Service maintains a directory of information about farmers markets, including locations, directions, operating times, product offerings, and accepted forms of payment.

- https://www.ams.usda.gov/local-food-directories/farmersmarkets

National Farmers Market Managers Survey

Nearly 1,400 farmers market managers responded to this national survey that the USDA Agricultural Marketing Service conducted in 2014.

- https://www.ams.usda.gov/file/2014-farmers-market-managers-survey-summary-report-final-july-24-2015pdf

Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) at Farmers Markets: A How-To Handbook

This 2010 report from the USDA Agricultural Marketing Service, USDA Food and Nutrition Service, and Project for Public Spaces, Inc. describes how to accept SNAP benefits at farmers markets, including what equipment is required, how to install electronic benefit transfer (EBT) systems, and how to make SNAP EBT succeed at farmers markets.

- https://www.ams.usda.gov/sites/default/files/media/SNAPat%20Farmers%20Markets%20Handbook.pdf

Sharing the Harvest: A Guide to Bridging the Divide between Farmers Markets and Low-Income Shoppers

This 2012 report from the Appalachian Sustainable Agriculture Project provides tips and tools to improve the accessibility of local markets and increase consumption of healthy local produce.

- http://asapconnections.org/downloads/asap-farmers-market-access-guide.pdf

Understanding the Link Between Farmers' Market Size and Management Organization
This 2007 report by the Oregon State University Extension Service examines common management tools and structures for farmers markets of different sizes to guide strategic planning and resource allocation for new markets and for established markets confronting growth or other significant changes.

- https://catalog.extension.oregonstate.edu/sr1082

VI. Food Co-ops

Capital Campaign Workbook
The Food Co-op Initiative's 2016 workbook helps consumer-owned food co-ops design and implement successful capital campaigns that effectively engage their owners and meet their capital needs.

- http://www.foodcoopinitiative.coop/sites/default/files/Capital%20Campaign%20Workbook%20Food%20Co-op%20Initiative%20March%202016.pdf

How to Start a Food Co-op Manual
The Cooperative Grocers' Information Network created a guide in 2010 that provides an overview of the basic steps and procedures for starting a food co-op.

- http://www.cooperativegrocer.coop/library/start-a-food-coop

VII. Food Hubs

Findings of the 2013 National Food Hub Survey
This document by the Michigan State University Center for Regional Food Systems in cooperation with the Wallace Center at Winrock International details the scope and scale of food hub activities, their challenges, and their regional influence based on a survey of more than 100 food hubs across the country.

- http://www.wallacecenter.org/resourcelibrary/state-of-the-food-hub-2013-national-survey-results

Food Hub Business Assessment Toolkit
This 2014 toolkit by Wholesome Wave provides tools to assess a food hub's readiness for investment, including a framework for assessing the strengths and weaknesses of food hubs, and data on business models and strategies, impact potential, market overview, marketing and sales, operations, organization and management, risk mitigation, technology and systems, and finance.

- http://www.wholesomewave.org/wp-content/uploads/2014/08/HFCI-Food-Hub-Business-Assessment-Toolkit.pdf

Moving Food Along the Value Chain: Innovations in Regional Food Distribution
This 2012 report from the USDA Agricultural Marketing Service shares lessons learned and best practices from eight producer networks and their partners distributing locally or regionally grown food to retail and food service customers.

- https://www.ams.usda.gov/sites/default/files/media/Moving%20Food%20Along%20the%20Value%20Chain%20Innovations%20in%20Regional%20Food%20Distribution.pdf

Regional Food Hub Resource Guide

This 2012 report from the USDA Agricultural Marketing Service examines the role of food hubs in regional food systems and compiles information on the resources available to support them.

- https://www.ams.usda.gov/sites/default/files/media/Regional%20Food%20Hub%20Resource%20Guide.pdf

VIII. Food Waste

Food Recovery Challenge

As part of EPA's Food Recovery Challenge, organizations pledge to improve their sustainable food management practices and report their results. Food Recovery Challenge participants and endorsers include groups such as grocers, educational institutions, restaurants, faith organizations, sports and entertainment venues, and hospitality businesses. Participants can reduce their environmental footprint, help their community, receive recognition, and get free technical assistance.

- https://www.epa.gov/sustainable-management-food/food-recovery-challenge-frc

Tools for Preventing and Diverting Wasted Food

EPA offers a variety of wasted-food assessment tools to suit a food service establishment's specific circumstances. Several of the tools are described below.

- https://www.epa.gov/sustainable-management-food/tools-preventing-and-diverting-wasted-food

A Guide to Conducting and Analyzing a Food Waste Assessment

Retail, food service, and other food management establishments can use EPA's 2014 guidebook to learn how to take a "snapshot in time" of their wasted food by either manually sorting through materials in a garbage sample or visually observing and estimating waste.

- https://www.epa.gov/sustainable-management-food/tools-preventing-and-diverting-wasted-food#assessguide

Toolkit for Reducing Wasted Food and Packaging

This 2014 toolkit is designed to help food service establishments and commercial kitchens save money by reducing wasted food and packaging with suggested strategies, templates, and case studies. It includes a tool to track the daily amount, type of, and reason for wasted food and packaging. Users enter information into a spreadsheet, which automatically creates graphs and data summaries to help identify patterns of waste generation. Based on these patterns, a business can make strategic changes to its operation to maximize waste reductions and cost savings.

- https://www.epa.gov/sustainable-management-food/tools-preventing-and-diverting-wasted-food#packaging

IX. Healthy Living

Community Health Online Resource Center

The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention created this database of webinars, model policies, toolkits, guides, fact sheets, and other practical materials to help implement changes to prevent disease

and promote healthy living. Content areas include healthy and safe physical environments and healthy eating.

- https://www.cdc.gov/nccdphp/dch/online-resource/

Healthy Food Environment Resources

The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention's Healthy Food Environment website offers links to resources on zoning, land use planning, and transportation planning to improve access to healthy food; farmland protection; food policy councils; retail food stores; community gardens; farmers markets; farm-to-institution programs; and community food assessments.

- http://www.cdc.gov/healthyplaces/healthtopics/healthyfood_environment.htm

Making the Business Case for Prevention Video Series

This series from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention shows how healthy living initiatives can help businesses increase profits, bring in more customers, and build goodwill. The series includes videos about healthy food programs, city planning, and community partnerships.

- https://www.cdc.gov/nccdphp/dch/multimedia/videos.htm

X. Smart Growth and Placemaking

The Built Environment: An Assessment Tool and Manual

The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention's 2015 assessment tool helps communities measure the core features and qualities of the built environment that affect health, including walkability, bikeability, and access to grocery stores, convenience stores, and farmers markets.

- https://www.cdc.gov/nccdphp/dch/built-environment-assessment/

Growing Food Connections

This website from the American Planning Association provides planning and policy briefs and other resources to help increase food security in vulnerable areas, strengthen the sustainability and economic resilience of urban and rural communities, and support farms engaged in local and regional food systems that use sustainable practices.

- https://www.planning.org/research/foodconnections/

Smart Growth

EPA's smart growth website provides publications, tools, and other information on a range of development and conservation strategies that help protect our health and natural environment and make our communities more attractive, economically stronger, and more diverse.

- https://www.epa.gov/smartgrowth

XI. Urban Agriculture

Aquaponics Business Plan User Guide

This 2016 EPA document is modeled after the Urban Farm Business Plan Handbook (see below) and provides an outline and guidance for the development of a business plan for an aquaponic farm.

- https://www.epa.gov/land-revitalization/aquaponics-business-plan-user-guide

Brownfields and Community Supported Agriculture

EPA's Brownfields program provides information on community supported and urban agriculture projects on brownfield properties.

- https://www.epa.gov/brownfields/brownfields-and-community-supported-agriculture

Brownfields and Urban Agriculture: Interim Guidelines for Safe Gardening Practices

This EPA document is a condensation of the input of 60 experts from academia, state, and local government, and the nonprofit sector who gathered in Chicago on October 21 and 22, 2010 to outline the range of issues which need to be addressed in order to safely grow food on former brownfields sites.

- https://www.epa.gov/brownfields/brownfields-and-urban-agriculture-interim-guidelines-safe-gardening-practices

How Does Your Garden Grow? Brownfields Redevelopment and Local Agriculture

This 2009 EPA document provides some insight on how best grow safe food during brownfields redevelopment.

- https://www.epa.gov/brownfields/how-does-your-garden-grow-brownfields-redevelopment-and-local-agriculture

Industrial Properties Renewed Through Agriculture: Reusing Land to Support Agriculture and Food Systems

This 2010 EPA document discusses reusing industrial brownfields that might serve a wide variety of agriculture-related reuses, including important public health considerations as well as environmental and planning and zoning considerations.

- https://www.epa.gov/brownfields/brownfields-industrial-properties-renewed-through-agriculture

Steps to Create a Community Garden or Expand Urban Agriculture

EPA's Brownfields Program offers information on how to create a community garden or expand urban agriculture, particularly in areas that might be at risk from potential contaminants.

- https://www.epa.gov/brownfields/steps-create-community-garden-or-expand-urban-agriculture

Urban Agriculture Toolkit

This 2016 toolkit from USDA lays out the common operational elements that most urban farmers must consider as they start or grow their operations. It also contains a section on resources for developing indoor growing operations, such as aquaponic facilities. For each element, the toolkit identifies technical and financial resources from federal, state, and local partners.

- https://www.usda.gov/sites/default/files/documents/urban-agriculture-toolkit.pdf

Urban Farm Business Plan Handbook

This 2011 document from EPA, the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development, and the U.S. Department of Transportation provides guidance for developing a business plan for the startup and operation of nonprofit and for-profit urban farms.

- https://www.epa.gov/brownfields/urban-farm-business-plan-handbook

The associated Urban Farm Business Plan Worksheets provide a framework in which to compile and organize the information needed to draft a business plan.

- https://www.epa.gov/brownfields/urban-farm-business-plan-worksheets

XII. GENERAL

Auditing and Accreditation Programs

The USDA Agricultural Marketing Service provides voluntary audit and accreditation programs that let producers and suppliers of agricultural products assure customers of their ability to provide consistent quality products or services. The programs are paid through hourly user fees.

- https://www.ams.usda.gov/services/auditing

Community Food Systems Resources

USDA's Community Food Systems website compiles resources for farm-to-school programs.

- http://www.fns.usda.gov/farmtoschool/farm-school-resources

The Economics of Local Food Systems: A Toolkit to Guide Community Discussions, Assessments and Choices

This 2016 toolkit produced by the USDA Agriculture Marketing Service helps guide and enhance the capacity of local organizations to make more deliberate and credible measurements of local and regional economic activity and other ancillary benefits.

- https://www.rd.usda.gov/files/ILAMSToolkit.pdf

Food Value Chains: Creating Shared Value to Enhance Marketing Success

This 2014 report by the USDA Agricultural Marketing Service provides guidance on how food value chains are initiated and structured, how they function, and the benefits they provide to participants.

- https://www.ams.usda.gov/services/local-regional/food-value-chain

Pesticide Environmental Stewardship Program

EPA's Pesticide Environmental Stewardship Program is a voluntary membership program that promotes the adoption of innovative, alternative pest control practices such as integrated pest management. It publicly recognizes members who have demonstrated their commitment to environmental stewardship and made progress in reducing pesticide risk. Members can receive technical support for transitioning to lower-risk pest management practices and developing integrated pest management strategies.

- https://www.epa.gov/pesp

Wholesale Markets and Facility Design

The USDA Wholesale Markets and Facility Design Team provides technical assistance on the construction or remodeling of wholesale markets, farmers markets, public markets, and food hubs.

- https://www.ams.usda.gov/services/local-regional/facility-design