



# A Food Plan for Austin-Travis County

Austin City Council Work Session

July 16, 2024



OFFICE OF  
SUSTAINABILITY

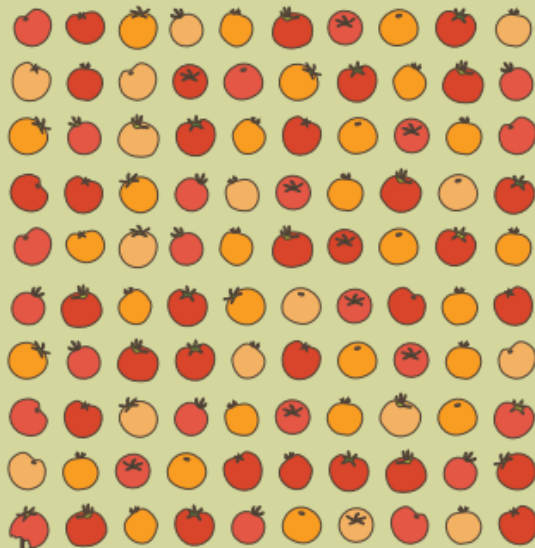
CITY OF AUSTIN

# Agenda

---

- Introductions
- What is a Food System?
- What is a Food Plan and why are we doing it?
- How did we create the Plan?
- Who participated in the Planning Process?
- Overview of Vision and Objectives
- Overview of the Goals and Strategies
- Next Steps

# Some Food for Thought



Approximately **0.06%** of food consumed in Travis County is locally produced

**1.24 million pounds** of food is wasted every day in Austin

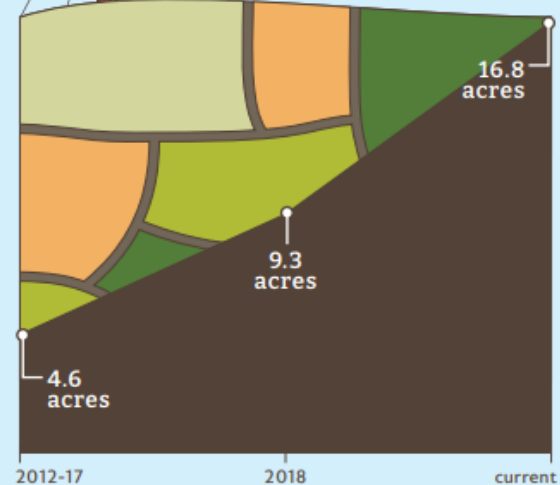
Food is responsible for **21% of all greenhouse gas emissions** created by everyone in our community



**14.4%** of people in Travis County experience **food insecurity**



**16.8 acres** of farmland are lost every day in Travis County



**Food Production:** Where our food comes from, including everything from farming to ranching

**Food Processing & Distribution:** What happens to food from where it is grown to when it reaches your plate, including how food is moved and processed.

**Food Markets & Retail:** Where food is sold, purchased, or provided cost-free.

**Food Consumption & Access:** How we eat our food, who struggles to get enough food, and what impact our consumption has on our health.

**Post-Consumption & Food Waste:** What happens to the parts of food we don't eat and the impact of food waste on the environment.

**Food Justice:** How systemic racism & colonization impact how the food system works – or doesn't work – for each member of our community.





# What is a Food Plan & why do we need one?

---

- A Food Plan sets clear **Goals and Strategies** to move toward a more equitable, sustainable & resilient food system
- The Food Plan builds on **several other initiatives** made by the County, City, and communities to tackle key food system issues
- The Food Plan **centers equity** and the lived expertise of those most impacted by the current food system



# Background and Authority

---

- In June 2021, Austin City Council directed the City Manager to initiate a planning process
- Travis County Commissioners Court approved formal participation in the plan in December 2022
- Austin Travis County Food Plan's Community Advisory Committee approved the draft Food Plan in May 2024



# Project Timeline

## Phase 0: Planning for the Plan

## Phase 1: Vision Development

## Phase 2: Goal & Strategy Development

## Phase 3: Review and Ground truthing

*September 2021 -  
January 2023*

*March - August 2023*

*September 2023 -  
February 2024*

*February -  
Summer/Fall 2024*

- Building Community Awareness 📄
- Release of State of the Food System Report 📄
- Onboarding Planning Consultant ★
- Recruitment of Community Teams 🚀
- Website launch 📊
- Listening Sessions & Tabling at events 🗨️
- Equity Grounding Workshops 🤝
- Community Circles 🤝
- Selecting Issue Area Groups 🎯
- World Cafes 🌐
- Issue Area Group Meetings 🏠
- Develop Goals and Strategies 🎯
- Review Goals and Strategies 👁️💬
- Develop a draft for the Food Plan 🖋️
- Community Review of Plan 🗣️
- Council and Commissioner Review 🗳️
- Approval 👍
- Adoption 🗳️

# Co-creating the plan

- **Planning Team:** Coordinating and managing all moving parts
  - Includes:
    - City of Austin staff
    - Travis County staff
    - Consultant Team
    - Equity Consultants
    - Austin-Travis Food Policy Board
    - Executive Leadership Team (City and County Department Directors)
- **Community Advisory Committee:** Advisory body overseeing the planning process
- **Issue Area Groups:** Developing goals and strategies for the plan
- **Community Food Ambassadors:** Connecting the plan to our communities
- **Broader community feedback:** Provide input at different stages of the plan



# Community Advisory Committee



## CHAIRS

**Nitza Cuevas**

Good Work Austin

**Mina Davis**

Valley of Hope

**Larry Franklin**

Black Lives Veggies

## MEMBERS

- Ali Ishaq
- Dr. Larry Wallace Jr
- Isabel Agbassi
- Jennifer DeAtley
- Robert Allen
- Sasha Rose
- Thu Nguyen
- Elizabeth Dorantes
- Elysa Hammond
- Finegan Ferreboeuf
- Joshua Collier
- Juliet Morgan
- Karen Magid
- Lucia Sewing Cole
- Pilar Rendon
- Socorro Carrasco
- Stephanie Cerda
- Sydney Corbin
- Yvette Lopez



# Participating City Departments

---

- Austin Public Health
- Austin Public Library
- Austin Resource Recovery
- Austin Water
- Development Services
- Economic Development
- Equity Office
- Homeland Security and Emergency Management
- Housing and Planning
- Intergovernmental Relations
- Parks and Recreation
- Purchasing Office
- Transportation and Public Works
- Watershed Protection



# Participating County Departments

- Agrilife Extension
- Emergency Management
- Health and Human Services
- Intergovernmental Relations
- Innovative Justice and Program Analysis
- Juvenile Probation
- Planning & Budget Office
- Transportation & Natural Resources

# Some of the organizations represented in the planning process



# Community Engagement



1,399

Participants were involved in the Community Advisory Committee, Community Food Ambassadors, Issue Area Group workshops and other formal food plan meetings.

2,226

Additional participants are estimated to have been involved in tabling events and presentations

3,625

Total people are estimated to have participated in food plan engagement.



# Major Themes

---



Through all the comments received in our engagement, regardless of the aligned issue area, **two themes** were consistently spoken about by community members across all attended events:



1

## Access to food and affordability

59% of all comments  
(1,647 total comments)

2

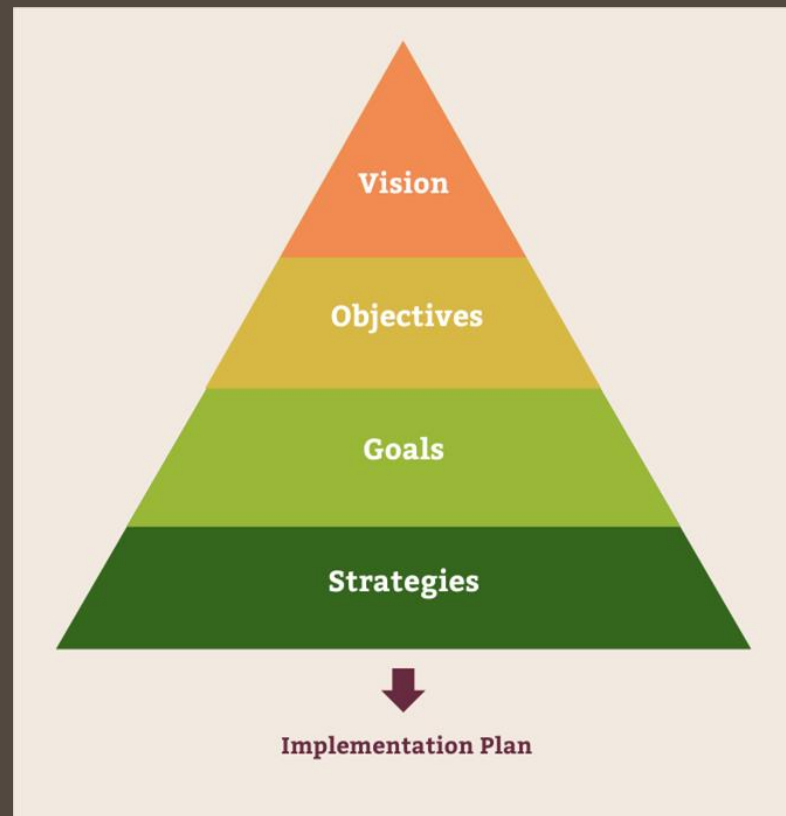
## Local food production and agriculture

52% of all comments  
(1,452 total comments)

# Food Plan Structure

---

- **Vision:** Describes and articulates our shared aim – the kind of future we agree we would like to move toward together.
- **Objectives:** What the goals and strategies of the food plan aim to achieve.
- **Goal:** A specific target or desired end result to meet one or more objectives.
- **Strategy:** A specific action to achieve one or more goals.



# Food Plan Vision










*We envision a just, accessible, and culturally diverse food system, built by undoing inequities, that supports and sustains inclusive, thriving communities, healthy ecosystems, and solutions to climate change where everyone can reach their full potential now and for generations to come.*





# Food Plan Objectives

	<p>Sustain and restore living ecosystems, including air, soil, water, and biodiversity.</p>
	<p>Invest in an equitable local food economy and workforce, including strengthening local food production, agriculture, processing &amp; distribution, and food recovery.</p>
	<p>Improve emergency food distribution preparedness and response.</p>
	<p>Strengthen food supply chains to support community health and nutrition, the well-being of workers, the environment, and animal welfare.</p>
	<p>Support health and eradicate food insecurity through equitable access to nutritious and culturally relevant food.</p>
	<p>Act as a climate solution, considering the food system from field to fork and beyond.</p>
	<p>Build collective community power and coordination to strengthen the local food justice movement towards the fundamental human right to food.</p>

What's included  
in the Plan?

---

9

Goals

62

Strategies





## 1: LAND

Expand community food production, preserve agricultural lands, and increase the amount of farmland dedicated to regenerative food production long-term in Austin Travis County.

12 STRATEGIES



## 2: OWNERSHIP

Increase access to and stewardship of land for regenerative food production by increasing the number of Austin/Travis County farms that are owned by economically disadvantaged farmers and ranchers.

7 STRATEGIES



## 3: LIVELIHOODS

Improve farm worker and food worker livelihoods by ensuring a safety net, defining career pathways, expanding training opportunities, and strengthening opportunities for advancement for workers across the local food system.

7 STRATEGIES



## 4: PREPAREDNESS

Establish and fund a resilient, inclusive, and accessible emergency food provision system that ensures all community members, regardless of cultural background or medical needs, have access to safe, nutritious, and culturally appropriate food during disasters and emergencies.

7 STRATEGIES



## 5: INSTITUTIONS

Create more resilient and sustainable local supply chains through the adoption of values-aligned distribution and purchasing frameworks and increase in the percentage of institutional menus sourced locally.

4 STRATEGIES



## 6: ACCESS

Expand access to nutritious and culturally relevant food in food distribution programs and food retail locations for residents of Austin/Travis County experiencing food insecurity or facing barriers to food access (proximity, mobility, income, and availability) with priority investment in areas of Austin/Travis County experiencing high rates of food insecurity.

11 STRATEGIES



## 7: FOOD RECOVERY

Increase the diversion of surplus food and non-edible food waste from the landfill to support a circular food economy, improve soil health, and reduce climate impact.

7 STRATEGIES



## 8: PRO-CLIMATE, PRO-HEALTH FOODS

Raise awareness of the benefits of foods that nourish our bodies and reduce the overall environmental impact of our food system while addressing barriers to access.

4 STRATEGIES



## 9: EMPOWER

Develop community education, empowerment, and infrastructure to support effective implementation of the food plan as measured by increased funding, data collection, partnerships, and community participation in a local food system network.

5 STRATEGIES

# Next Steps

- **August 8: Travis County Commissioners Court Work Session with voting item to follow later in August**
- **August 29: Request for Council Action to Adopt the Plan on the agenda at the City Council meeting**



---

# Thank you!

**EDWIN MARTY**

*Food Policy Manager*  
Office of Sustainability

**RACHEL COFF**

*Planning Manager*  
Research & Planning Division  
Travis County Health & Human Services



OFFICE OF  
**SUSTAINABILITY**

CITY OF AUSTIN