



# Appendices

# Case Study Profiles - Victorian

## General observations

As shown in the benchmarking table, Victorian local governments are quite some distance behind their peers overseas, in terms of international best practice in comprehensive, integrated and effective policies, strategies, plans and actions to tackle food insecurity. The City of Melbourne is the only council with a dedicated food security strategy, albeit called the *Community Food Relief Plan*. Notable activities are taking place in all councils surveyed, as revealed in the four case study profiles. The City of Casey can learn from the experience of its Victorian counterparts in terms of locally-appropriate actions and initiatives, whilst also looking internationally for inspiration in terms of improving on existing policy and practice in Victoria.

## Collective Impact

Three of the four councils analysed for this benchmarking exercise have based their approaches to food system work on the collective impact methodology.<sup>3</sup> Collective Impact is defined as “a collaborative approach to addressing complex social issues, consisting of five conditions: a common agenda; continuous communication; mutually reinforcing activities; backbone support; and shared measurement”<sup>4</sup> (see Figure 3 below).



Figure 3: The five conditions of collective impact. Credit: United Way of Northern California.

<sup>3</sup> Kania, J., & Kramer, M. (2011). *Collective impact* (pp. 36-41). Beijing, China: FSG.

<sup>4</sup> Smart, J. (2017). *Collective impact: Evidence and implications for practice*. Child Family Community Australia. Available [here](#)

The councils working with collective impact are the cities of Merri-bek, Greater Bendigo, and Cardinia Shire Council. Collective impact is seen as an effective, inclusive and participatory approach to address complex, entrenched and so-called 'wicked problems', such as food insecurity and food system unsustainability. The participatory development of food strategies in Cardinia Shire and Bendigo allowed for the inclusion of voices from different socioeconomic groups and varying levels of power. Collective impact means that rather than one stakeholder carrying the weight of solving food security issues, each stakeholder is able to rely on each other, play to their strengths, motivate one another, and hold each other accountable. Additionally, as many organisations in the community are well-established and highly connected it is beneficial to support these rather than starting from scratch.

# Merri-bek City Council

## Policy and governance context

Merri-bek's vision within the [Food System Strategy Extension 2020-2024](#)<sup>5</sup> (building on the strong foundation in the [2017-2020 strategy](#)<sup>6</sup>) is to create a “sustainable, just and vibrant food system, under three strategic goals”. The ‘just’ pillar most directly addresses food security via emphasising “equal social and economic access to nutritious food”. The City of Merri-bek considers food security a key indicator of a well functioning food system. Importantly, Merri-bek has committed to applying an equity lens across the implementation of the strategy, “to ensure that all members of the [Merri-bek] community benefit from it”.

Goal 5 within the strategy addresses food security, particularly the access pillar: “*There are opportunities for everyone to access nutritious food, no matter what their economic or social situation*”, which encompasses support for growing food, effective communication around where people can access food and advocacy for broader change to address drivers of food insecurity.<sup>7</sup> The corresponding action under this goal is to “*identify ways to address the causes of food insecurity, including considering the adoption of existing successful initiatives*”.

Food security is a strategic objective within the current [Council Plan 2021-25](#)<sup>8</sup> which is integrated with the Municipal Public Health and Wellbeing Plan: “*Develop a healthy, accessible, affordable local food system that strengthens social cohesion, food security and community resilience to support residents to eat nutritious food*”. Actions relating to this include the establishment of a Northern Food Hub (discussed below). Food security is also highlighted in the [Human Rights Policy 2016-2026](#)<sup>9</sup> and the [Zero Carbon Merri-bek Climate Emergency Action Plan](#)<sup>10</sup>.

## Snapshot of food security responses in Merri-bek City Council

The City of Merri-bek acknowledges that while emergency food relief (e.g. redistributed food, food banks and soup kitchens) are vital to address hunger in times of crisis, they do not address the fundamental causes of food insecurity, notably a lack of financial and physical access to nutritious food. The strategy asserts that “*ensuring food security requires redesigning the food system and improving economic, environmental and social sustainability*”. Importantly, Merri-bek has resourced a Food Systems Officer position (at 0.8 FTE) to oversee food related programs and projects within Council, as follows:

- **Community Food Hub:** The principal approach Merri-bek is taking to address long-term food equity and security is via the establishment of a community food hub in the north of

<sup>5</sup> Moreland City Council. (2020). Moreland Food System Strategy Extension 2020-2024. Available [here](#)

<sup>6</sup> Moreland City Council. (2017). Moreland Food System Strategy 2017-2020. Available [here](#).

<sup>7</sup> Ibid.

<sup>8</sup> Moreland City Council. (2021). Council Plan 2021-2025. Available [here](#)

<sup>9</sup> Moreland City Council. (2016). Human Rights Policy 2016-2026. Available [here](#)

<sup>10</sup> Merri-bek City Council (2020). Zero Carbon Merri-bek- Climate Emergency Action Plan 2020/21-2024/25. Available [here](#).

Merri-bek which has the highest rates of food insecurity within the LGA<sup>11</sup>. This project is discussed in further detail below.

- **Grants and Funding:**
  - During COVID-19, Merri-bek Council provided \$80,000 in grants through the Inner North Community Foundation.<sup>12</sup>
  - \$10,000 in funding was allocated to Fawkner Commons to establish a low cost food box scheme: between May-Dec 2020, \$116,000 worth of fresh produce and 1525 no-cost food hampers were delivered and \$10,000 was raised through their pay-it-forward schemes.<sup>13</sup>
  - Funding was also provided to the Ecological Justice Hub to deliver online Zero Waste cooking classes in 2020, with subsidised produce for low-income participants as a way to strengthen food skills.
- **Working in partnership:** A core principle of the Merri-bek strategy is to “build on existing community strengths and initiatives and take a collective impact approach”, described on pages 16-17.
  - To strengthen existing service delivery, Merri-bek established an **Emergency Food and Material Relief Network**, with over 32 members, which has enabled better coordination and awareness of services, collaborative delivery of programs including via sharing infrastructure.
  - Community Hub funding includes support for the [Fawkner Grows/Fawkener Eats Program](#) (part of the Fawkner Food Bowl) to diversify the produce grown on the farm to reflect the needs of the local community and engage a broader cohort through community development activities on the farm.<sup>14</sup>
  - Merri-bek [website](#) has links and contact details for a range of food and material relief services in Merri-bek. While these include fruit & vegetables at reduced cost offered via the Merri Food Hub and CERES market garden, the listed services do not prioritise a cash-first approach.<sup>15</sup>
- **Affordable food markets** (not ongoing): In December 2022, Merri-bek partnered with Foodbank and Cohealth to host a pop-up free produce community market.<sup>16</sup> As well as providing up to 12 kg of produce to each attendee, the market offered the opportunity to link residents in with other food access options (such as affordable fruit and vegetable boxes), provide healthy recipes and increase awareness of programs offered by Cohealth.
- **Urban agriculture:** Taking a food systems approach, Merri-bek has numerous initiatives in place to strengthen local food production including allocating land for community food growing, support for community composting and free access to educational resources

<sup>11</sup> Merri-bek City Council. (2023). Community Food Hub Merri-bek. Available [here](#).

<sup>12</sup> Sheridan, J., Larsen, K. & Rae, J. (2020) A community food hub for Moreland's north: Feasibility assessment and community consultation report. Open Food Network. DOI: 10.6084/m9.figshare.13138646.

<sup>13</sup> Fawkner Food Bowls (n.d.). Fawkner Commons. Available [here](#)

<sup>14</sup> Fawkner Food Bowls (n.d.). Fawkner Grows, Fawkner Eats. Available [here](#)

<sup>15</sup> Merri-bek City Council (n.d.). Food access and security. Available [here](#)

<sup>16</sup> Co-Health (2022). Cohealth community market day provides food relief for 60 families in Merri-bek. Available [here](#)

and workshops via the [My Smart Garden](#) program<sup>17</sup> to improve skills and knowledge for residents to grow their own food.

### **Standout initiative: Community Food Hub**

As a key action and commitment of the 2017-24 Food System Strategy, Council has committed to the establishment of a Community Food Hub to "provide an inclusive and supportive setting for people to access nutritious food, with a particular focus on people lacking food security".

**Community engagement and planning:** This approach has been informed by a comprehensive [Feasibility Study](#)<sup>18</sup> conducted in 2020, which involved a broad community consultation process of online surveys, co-design workshops and in-depth interviews, with an explicit aim to engage residents experiencing food insecurity as well as local food enterprises that might use or run a community food hub. Open Food Network (OFN) has been engaged as the backbone organisation in the food hub development.

**Collective Impact:** Merri-bek has committed to this being a community-led project with the establishment of a [Food Leadership Action Group \(FLAG\)](#)<sup>19</sup> in 2022, composed of passionate and skilled local residents, to lead this work.

**Grants and operational funding:** Council has committed significant financial support for the Community Food Hub project, allocating an operational budget of A\$95,000 (Year 1) and A\$240,000 (Year 2). Council funding is expected to reduce in future years once a hub is established and alternative funding sources are secured. A dedicated Community Food Hub [grant scheme](#)<sup>20</sup> was established to support local food projects contributing to food security. The FLAG devised criteria to evaluate applications and decide on the successful projects. In 2022, Growing Farmers and Merri Food Hub each received a Community Food Hub grant of A\$20,000 to scale up and coordinate the distribution of UA within the municipality to support "socially inclusive food security" efforts. At present, the FLAG is working on a business case for establishing a logistics hub "to overcome logistics constraints (storage, refrigeration, vehicle costs) of community and micro food hubs".<sup>21</sup>

**Collective Impact Measurement Framework (CIMF):** In line with a collective approach and commitment to developing a shared vision, OFN worked with the FLAG working group to develop the CIMF. The initial drafting of the tool is detailed [here](#).<sup>22</sup> Subsequent refinements included the design of a theory of change for the community hub (shown in Figure 4) which elucidated the key impact areas (shown below in Figure 5). Each of these impact areas have a set of indicators and guidance for how to collect the data. Given the diversity of local food

<sup>17</sup> My Smart Garden (n.d.). Home. Available [here](#)

<sup>18</sup> Sheridan, J., Larsen, K. & Rae, J. (n 2)

<sup>19</sup> Merri-bek City Council (2023). Food Leadership Action Group (FLAG). Available [here](#).

<sup>20</sup> Merri-bek City Council (2023). Community Food Hub Projects. Available [here](#).

<sup>21</sup> Merri-bek City Council. (n 19)

<sup>22</sup> Open Food Network (2022). Collective Impact: A shared measurement framework for Moreland community food enterprises & organisations. Available [here](#).

organisations in Merri-bek, it is intended that the FLAG works with local organisations to choose the appropriate indicators to demonstrate their impact. Collectively, the results aim to provide a robust evaluation of the community food hub’s impact, strengthening funding and advocacy opportunities and enabling continuous improvement.

**Next steps:** The FLAG is currently working through a business case for the logistics hub and planning for future local governance of the food hub. These pieces of work will elucidate how the community food hub will be established. Data collection with the two successful grant recipients is also underway in early 2023, to highlight the utility of the CIMF in evaluating an alternative and dignified response to local food security.

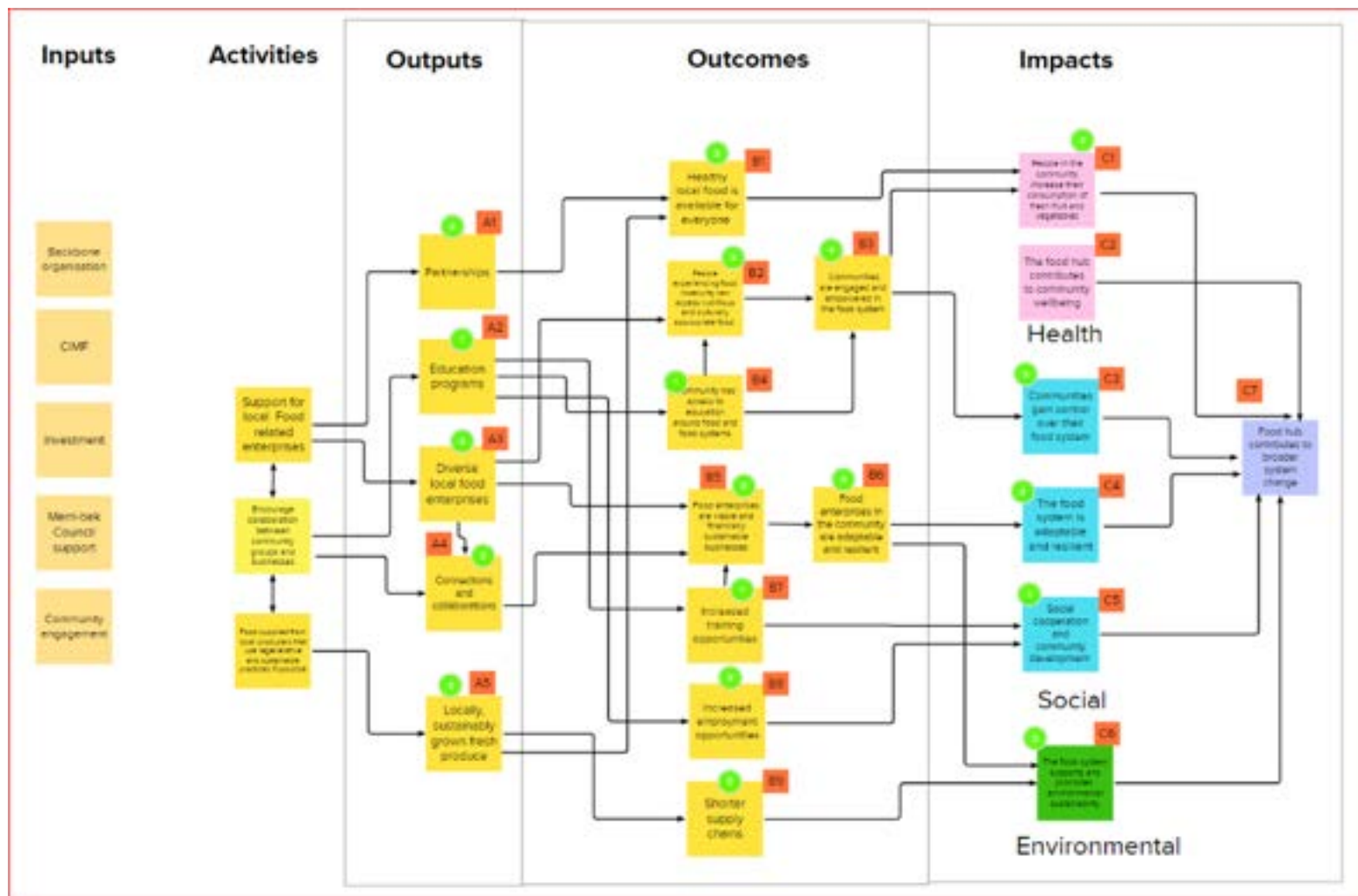


Figure 4: Theory of Change for Merri-bek Community Food Hub. Photo Credit: Open Food Network



Figure 5: Impact Areas for Merri-bek Community Food Hub. Photo Credit Open Food Network



# City of Melbourne

## Policy and governance context

The City of Melbourne (CoM) was the first local government in Australia to develop a whole-system food policy, [Food City: City of Melbourne's Food Policy](#)<sup>23</sup>, which came into effect in June 2012. Since creation of this policy, there has been a constant conversation around food insecurity in CoM, from extensive research, community consultations, to inclusion in the Future Melbourne plans. During the pandemic it became clear that food security was a growing issue leading CoM to devise a dedicated food security plan, the [Community Food Relief Plan 2021-2025](#)<sup>24</sup>, along with incorporating the food system and food security as a main priority in a number of other plans and strategies. See Figure 6 for rise in food insecurity from 2018-2021.

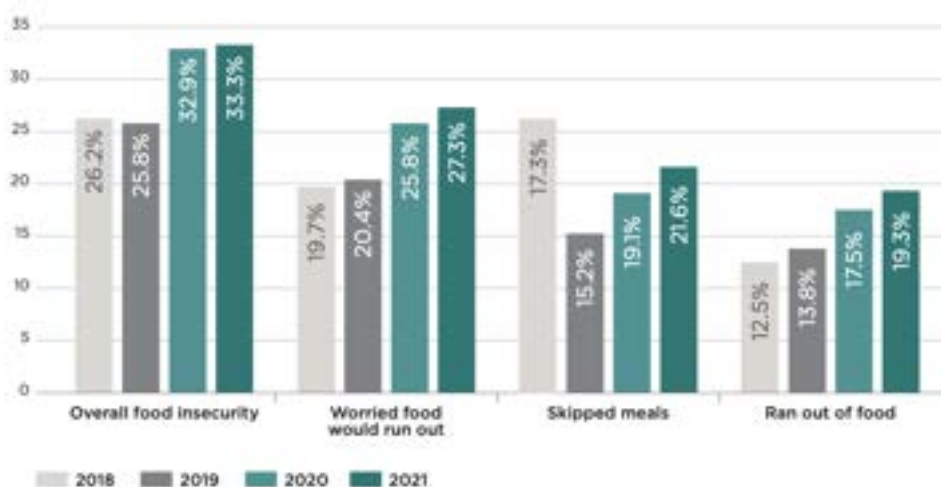


Figure 6: Food security in City of Melbourne 2018-2021. Credit City of Melbourne.

City of Melbourne have a dedicated food security plan: the [Community Food Relief Plan 2021-2025](#).<sup>25</sup> This extensive plan, which includes 17 actions, acknowledges that food relief is just the beginning, there is a strong focus and commitment to the human right to food. See Figure 7 for statistics on food insecurity in CoM. The plan is also accompanied by a strong evaluation process with first reports coming out in February 2023.

City of Melbourne have also integrated food security into the [Council Plan 2021-2025](#).<sup>26</sup> This plan has six objectives, one of which is *Access and Affordability*. In this objective, one priority is 'increased food security for everyone, especially the most vulnerable', which will be measured by a 25% reduction in food insecurity by 2025 (guided by the UN Sustainable Development Goal- Zero Hunger). The baseline will be measured from their most recent survey (2021-22)

<sup>23</sup> City of Melbourne. (2012). Food City: City of Melbourne food policy. Available [here](#).

<sup>24</sup> City Of Melbourne. (2021). Community Food Relief 2021-2025: Planning for a food secure city. Available [here](#).

<sup>25</sup> Ibid.

<sup>26</sup> City Of Melbourne. (2021). City of Melbourne City of Possibility: Council plan 2021-2025. Available [here](#).

which reported [31.7% food insecurity](#) in residents.<sup>27</sup> Additionally, major actions in this plan are: developing programs providing food relief and supporting residents and communities to grow their own food, creating more affordable housing, and investing in hubs supporting at-risk residents. The Council Plan is monitored by robust Annual Reports.<sup>28</sup> They state it is also the fourth time they have integrated the health and wellbeing priorities into the plan.

City of Melbourne's [Municipal Health and Wellbeing Action Plan 2021-2025](#)<sup>29</sup> includes food security as an independent focus area, highlighting the importance of this issue in their community. Their aim is, "access to nutritious, safe, fair and culturally appropriate food for everyone, especially the most vulnerable". The key actions are a renewal of the Queen Victoria Market Food Hall and developing and enforcing a [Food Security Action Plan](#).<sup>30</sup> They also report the development of the [Community Food Guide](#)<sup>31</sup>, support for [communal gardening](#)<sup>32</sup> and [community grants](#)<sup>33</sup> related to food security.

Unfortunately there is not a strong focus on health and wellbeing or mentions of food insecurity in their [Economic Development Strategy 2031](#)<sup>34</sup>. While CoM strives for sustainable economic growth in their ten year plan, their eight key priorities do not include social determinants of health. While the strategy is framed by the UN Sustainable Development Goals, none of the priorities in the Economic Development Strategy are guided by goals that focus on health or liveability. Whereas the Annual Report, Municipal Health and Wellbeing Plan, and Council Plan are guided by these goals.

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<sup>27</sup> City Of Melbourne. (2022). City of Melbourne annual report 2021-2022. Available [here](#).

<sup>28</sup> Ibid.

<sup>29</sup> City Of Melbourne. (2021). Health and Wellbeing Action Plan 2021-2025. Available [here](#).

<sup>30</sup> City Of Melbourne. (n 24)

<sup>31</sup> City Of Melbourne. (2022). Community food guide 2022: Supporting people in the City of Melbourne to access and grow affordable, healthy and culturally appropriate food. Available [here](#).

<sup>32</sup> City of Melbourne. (n.d.). City of Melbourne Community Garden Policy. Available [here](#).

<sup>33</sup> City of Melbourne. (n.d.). Community funding and grants. Available [here](#).

<sup>34</sup> City of Melbourne. (2021). Melbourne's Thriving Economic Future: Economic Development Strategy 2031. Available [here](#).

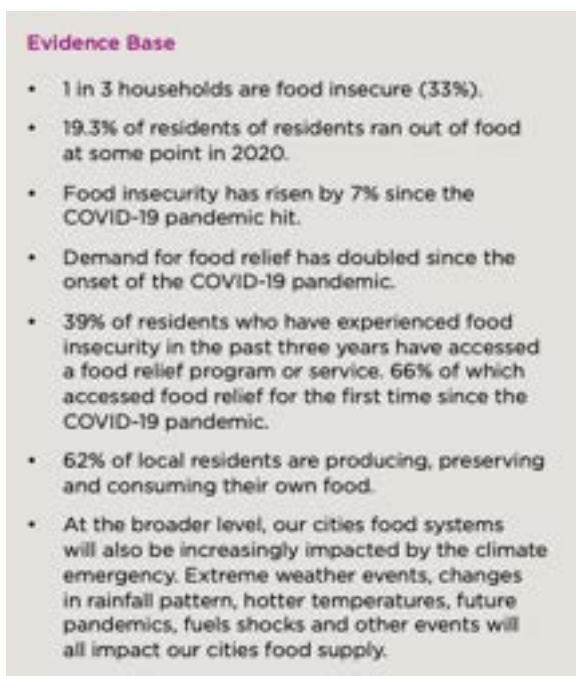


Figure 7: Statistics on food security in the City of Melbourne. Credit City of Melbourne.

### Snapshot of food security responses in City of Melbourne

- CoM uses a survey for measuring liveability, including food security in their communities: the [City of Melbourne Social Indicator Survey](#)<sup>35</sup>. This survey allows the council to have a thorough monitoring and evaluation process to assess food insecurity over time. They state in a number of their plans and strategies that this survey is what is used to inform and update their documents.
- [General financial hardship policy](#)<sup>36</sup>: This policy, enforced from 2020, allows residents and small businesses to defer, waiver, reduce or extend fines, permits, licences and fees.
- [Community Garden Policy](#)<sup>37</sup>, map and guide: This policy will help to connect interested residents with CoM to develop more community gardens, as well as secure funding. They have also developed a [guide to community gardening](#).<sup>38</sup> This guide contains extra information for street gardening, food waste, and sustainability.
- [Community food guide](#)<sup>39</sup>: The Community Food Guide is a comprehensive compilation of programs and resources in the CoM. They have also created a [live community food map](#).<sup>40</sup> This map is constantly updated with submissions from the community who use

<sup>35</sup> City of Melbourne. (n.d.). Liveability and quality of life. Available [here](#).

<sup>36</sup> City of Melbourne. (2020). General Financial Hardship Policy. Available [here](#).

<sup>37</sup> City of Melbourne. (n.d.). City of Melbourne Community Garden Policy. Available [here](#).

<sup>38</sup> City of Melbourne. (n.d.). A guide to community gardening in the City of Melbourne. A companion to the City of Melbourne community garden policy. Available [here](#).

<sup>39</sup> City Of Melbourne. (2022). Community food guide 2022: Supporting people in the City of Melbourne to access and grow affordable, healthy and culturally appropriate food. Available [here](#).

<sup>40</sup> City of Melbourne. (n.d.). Community food guide. Available [here](#).

the form attached on the guide. There are five sections of the guide that range from food relief agencies to community gardens.

- [Grants](#)<sup>41</sup>: CoM has several community grant and funding opportunities available with an accompanying framework to make sure CoM is supplying grants to a diverse group of applicants. The [Community meals subsidy program](#)<sup>42</sup> provides a subsidy for food agencies supplying meals to people 55 years or older. The [Social Enterprise](#)<sup>43</sup> grants and the [Social Investment Partnerships](#)<sup>44</sup> grants have opportunities for food-related organisations to apply for funding.

### Standout initiatives

**International students:** CoM has been very supportive of international student residents via two main innovative initiatives:

- [Our Shout](#)<sup>45</sup> : Our Shout was an initiative during the height of the pandemic that supported over 10,000 international students with \$200 food vouchers to the Queen Victoria Market.
- [The Couch](#)<sup>46</sup>: The Couch is a centre open four days a week from 6-8pm, where international students can receive a free cooked meal as well as meet their fellow students. It has a regularly updated [Facebook page](#)<sup>47</sup> with details to upcoming events and more.

### Homelessness

- [Salvation Army Hub](#)<sup>48</sup>: The Salvation Army Hub is one of two hubs for people facing homelessness, serving dinner seven days a week and breakfast and lunch meals Monday-Friday. These hubs are a part of a pilot program CoM is conducting in collaboration with existing support services.
- [Helping Out Guide](#)<sup>49</sup>: This is a guide curated by CoM to help agencies support workers, and vulnerable people find appropriate care and access to free or low-cost services.

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<sup>41</sup> City of Melbourne. (n.d.). Community funding and grants. Available [here](#).

<sup>42</sup> City of Melbourne. (n.d.). Community meals subsidy program. Available [here](#)

<sup>43</sup> City of Melbourne. (n.d.). Social enterprise grants. Available [here](#).

<sup>44</sup> City of Melbourne. (n.d.). Social investment partnerships grants. Available [here](#).

<sup>45</sup> City of Melbourne. (n.d.). 'Our Shout' food voucher program. Available [here](#).

<sup>46</sup> City of Melbourne. (n.d.). International students. Available [here](#).

<sup>47</sup> The Couch. (n.d.). The Couch International Student Centre. Available [here](#).

<sup>48</sup> The Salvation Army. (n.d.). Melbourne Project 614. Available [here](#).

<sup>49</sup> City Of Melbourne. (2022). Helping out: A guide to finding support services and agencies in Melbourne 2022-2023. Available [here](#).

# Cardinia Shire Council

## Policy and governance context

Australia has no national food plan, no best practice method to monitor food insecurity, and no way to ensure the right to food for all citizens resulting in policies and strategies that can be ineffective and often under-resourced.<sup>50</sup> Cardinia Shire Council (CSC) is one of Melbourne's 'growth area municipalities', with its population forecast to double by 2031, relative to 2016.<sup>51</sup> This suburban development encroaches on agricultural land with consequent reductions in local food production. Additionally CSC residents are facing above-state average poor health and food insecurity statistics. It is these contexts that led Cardinia and its community to develop the first community food strategy in Australia. Similarly to the City of Greater Bendigo, CSC also has no specific food security strategy. However, the Community Food Strategy Action Plan does include several food security actions.

The [Cardinia Shire Community Food Strategy 2018–2026](#)<sup>52</sup> policy vision is “a healthy, delicious, sustainable and fair food system for all Cardinia Shire residents” (p. 4). Utilising a collective impact approach (described earlier), this strategy and action plan was created in collaboration with the local council and the community—it is a community strategy. The Strategy was developed across one year incorporating a thorough community consultation process, Kitchen Table Talks, which were the basis for including community members' knowledge and lived experience into the strategy. Additionally, attempts were made to make it easier for low-income/time-poor community members such as a 'do it at home' sessions. From this collaborative process, four strategies were developed to protect and support CSC. These strategies then informed 67 actions, which can be found via [CSC's online portal](#)<sup>53</sup>, to create the eight-year action plan.

There has been little communication on the progress of the Strategy since its launch. There has been no annual report, and it is difficult to find updates on how the different stakeholders and partners are working through their actions except via their various activities listed on websites or social media. While CSC has uploaded the Strategy on their website, along with having a page dedicated to '[Food](#)'<sup>54</sup> (one of the Liveability domains), the website is not dated – making it impossible to know if it is accurate. Further, when clicking through to external links in their *Current Community Initiatives* and *Our current initiatives* some links are broken and lead to empty web pages.

<sup>50</sup> Rose, N. & Hearn, A. (2017). Food Systems and the Role of Local Government. Melbourne: SUSTAIN. Available [here](#).

<sup>51</sup> Cardinia Shire Council. (2019). Social and Affordable Housing Strategy and Action Plan 2018–25. Available [here](#)

<sup>52</sup> Cardinia Shire Council. (2018). Cardinia Shire Community Food Strategy and Action Plan 2018-2026. Available [here](#).

<sup>53</sup> Cardinia Shire Council. (2018). Food strategy and action plan. Available [here](#).

<sup>54</sup> Cardinia Shire Council. (n 58)

The Strategy sits under a larger policy, [The Liveability Plan 2017–2029](#)<sup>55</sup>, that is informed by the *Victoria Public Health and Wellbeing Act* (2008). The Liveability Plan has seven policy domains, one of which is ‘Food’ which has provided CSC with the foundation and council commitment to develop their food strategy.

### Snapshot of food security responses in Cardinia Shire Council

Sitting alongside the Strategy, is the [Cardinia Food Circles project](#)<sup>56</sup> and the [Cardinia Food Movement](#)<sup>57</sup>. CSC is a key stakeholder in both organisations.

- The Cardinia Food Circles project began in November 2016 between CSC and Sustain: The Australian Food Network to design the Cardinia Community Food Strategy. See Figure 8 for a comprehensive look at Cardinia Food Circles. The Food Circles project facilitated the Strategy, as well as formed the Cardinia Food Movement, conducted a food literacy and security survey to 200 residents, launched the [Community Grocer, a food relief agency in Pakenham](#)<sup>58</sup> and more. This forms part of the collective impact approach that sees resources, time, and money spent well between all organisations working on the project. On the [Food page](#)<sup>59</sup>, CSC explains, “Cardinia Food Circles facilitates the strategic steering committee to guide and align the delivery, and evaluation of the Cardinia Community Food Strategy”. A list of all stakeholders is available on this [page](#).
- The Cardinia Food Movement is a grass-roots accessible and easy to join movement that has a regularly updated [Facebook page](#)<sup>60</sup> and [Instagram](#)<sup>61</sup>, meetings that are open to the public, and is building a network of stakeholders across all areas of the community. The Cardinia Food Movement is the voice of the food system and food security responses in CSC.
- Online research could not find a specific departmental position for ‘food’ in CSC, but on the [Strategy webpage](#)<sup>62</sup> there is contact information for the Healthy Communities Coordinator.

<sup>55</sup> Cardinia Shire Council. (2017). Cardinia Shire's Liveability Plan 2017–29. Available [here](#).

<sup>56</sup> Cardinia Shire Council. (n.d.). Cardinia Food Circles Project. Available [here](#).

<sup>57</sup> Cardinia Food Movement (n.d.). Collaborating for Impact. Available [here](#).

<sup>58</sup> The Community Grocer. (n.d.). Our Pakenham Market. Available [here](#).

<sup>59</sup> Cardinia Shire Council. (n.d.). Food. Available [here](#).

<sup>60</sup> Cardinia Food Movement. (n.d.). Cardinia Food Movement. Available [here](#).

<sup>61</sup> Cardinia Food Movement. (n.d.). Cardinia Food Movement. Available [here](#).

<sup>62</sup> Cardinia Food Movement. (n.d.). Community Food Strategy. Available [here](#).

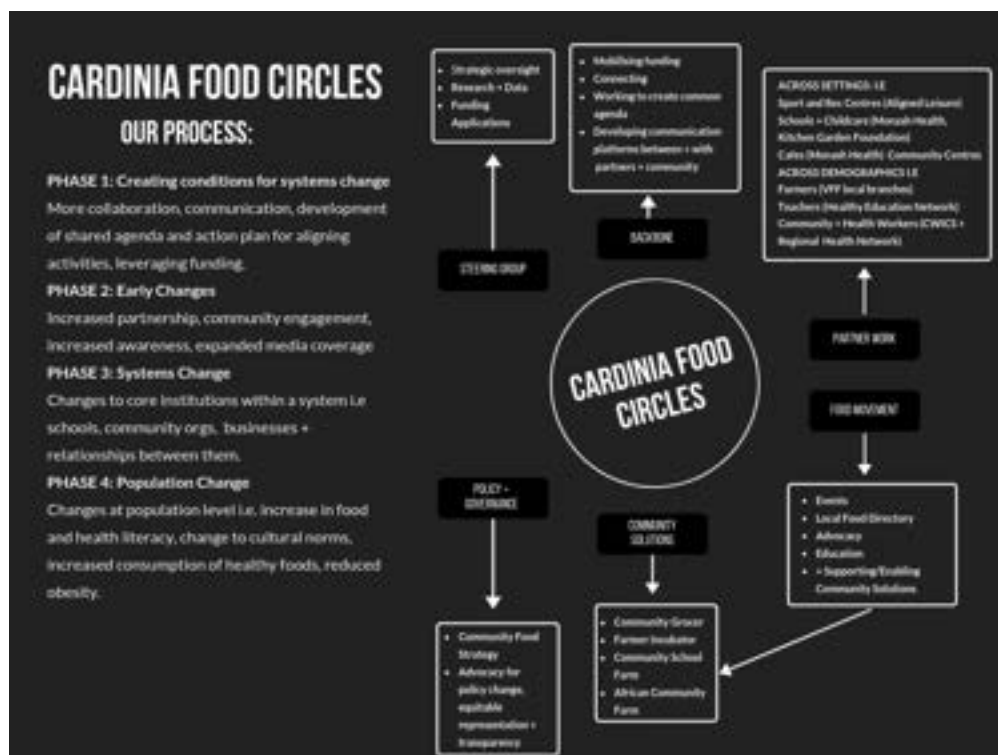


Figure 8: Cardinia Food Circles diagram. Credit Cardinia Food Movement.

- CSC joins the City of Greater Bendigo in actively advocating for the human right to food through the [‘Towards a Healthy, Regenerative, and Equitable Food System in Victoria: A Consensus Statement’](#)<sup>63</sup>, which calls on local and state governments to create a more equitable food system.
- All CSC libraries have a [seed library](#)<sup>64</sup> where visitors can take up to three free seed packets home to grow their own food.
- There are up to \$5,000 grants available for community organisations. For 2022-2023, [grants](#) have been received by up to three food system initiatives.<sup>65</sup>
- CSC was a part of the [Grow Together initiative](#)<sup>66</sup> by Enliven. This initiative took part in two phases from 2020-2021 and saw planter kits delivered to families and homes at-risk-of and experiencing food insecurity. Overall 900 planter kits were delivered in the hopes to build capacity to grow, harvest, and consume fresh produce at home.
- [Cardinia Leisure](#)<sup>67</sup> uses the Healthy Choices guidelines so residents can make the healthiest choices when at the facility.

<sup>63</sup> VicHealth, & the Food Systems and Food Security Working Group. (2021). *Towards a healthy, regenerative and equitable food system in Victoria: A consensus statement*. Available [here](#).

<sup>64</sup> Casey Cardinia Libraries. (n.d.). Seed library. Available [here](#).

<sup>65</sup> Cardinia Shire Council. (n.d.). Apply for a Wellbeing Support Grant. Available [here](#).

<sup>66</sup> Enliven. (n.d.). Grow Together. Available [here](#).

<sup>67</sup> Cardinia Leisure. (n.d.). Healthy Eating. Available [here](#).

- CSC website has a [comprehensive list of food and material aid organisations](#)<sup>68</sup>, programs, and community meal events. The list is not timestamped, therefore residents would need to research the organisations themselves to see if they are still operating.
- Food security responses are not just limited to food relief in CSC. On the [Reducing financial vulnerability webpage](#)<sup>69</sup>, residents can apply for rates reductions or download the [Services Supporting Cardinia Shire Directory](#)<sup>70</sup> (in 11 languages), a 24-page directory containing a non-exhaustive list of key local agencies and community organisations that provide material and financial aid.
- Pre-Covid there were many cooking programs available through the [Cardinia Community Kitchen](#)<sup>71</sup>, promoting healthy, easy, and minimal waste cooking.
- There are two more food security responses that are currently missing links or being updated: 1) Healthy Bites: this initiative was used to create healthier options in CSC; and 2) Healthy Easy Accessible Local Foods (HEAL): a program which encouraged residents in the Shire and surrounds to garden, harvest, cook seasonal produce.
- Social media platforms such as [Facebook](#)<sup>72</sup> are regularly updated and the [Cardinia Annual Report 2021-2022](#)<sup>73</sup> states that there was a 217% increase in reach on the Cardinia Food Movement page. Opportunities for collaboration and being a part of the movement are frequent on their [Instagram](#)<sup>74</sup> such as sharing easy, healthy recipes, promotion of events, updates on what the food movement is up to, promotion of the Pakenham Community Grocer; and educational posts on food ingredients.

### Standout initiatives

[The Community Grocer - Pakenham](#):<sup>75</sup> CSC (and the Cardinia Food Movement) support The Community Grocer - Pakenham. The establishment of the market and grocer was one of the key activities for the Cardinia Food Circles Project. This community organisation supports the access of fresh and affordable fruit and vegetables. Residents can order online and pick up from various locations, as well as attend a weekly market. The market also hosts workshops and is open for other community groups to set up stalls. In their overall [2022 Impact Evaluation](#) (Fitzroy and Pakenham), they report that 14% of customers were facing food insecurity, food was 24% cheaper than local stores, and 64% of customers consumed more vegetables. In their first year of operation they served over 2,000 customers<sup>76</sup>. The Community Grocer is an exemplary model for dignified food access. Residents are able to access affordable, nutritious food in a variety of locations and times and in so doing, they are able to improve their diets too.

<sup>68</sup> Cardinia Shire Council. (n.d.). Food relief programs in Cardinia Shire. Available [here](#).

<sup>69</sup> Cardinia Shire Council. (n.d.). Reducing financial vulnerability. Available [here](#).

<sup>70</sup> Cardinia Shire Council. (n.d.). Services Supporting Cardinia Shire: Family, Health and Social Services Directory [Website]. Available [here](#).

<sup>71</sup> Cardinia Food Movement (n.d.). Cardinia Community Kitchen. Available [here](#).

<sup>72</sup> Cardinia Food Movement. (n.d.). Cardinia Food Movement. Available [here](#).

<sup>73</sup> Cardinia Shire Council. (n.d.). Annual Reports. Available [here](#).

<sup>74</sup> Cardinia Food Movement. (n.d.). Cardinia Food Movement. Available [here](#).

<sup>75</sup> The Community Grocer. (n 58)

<sup>76</sup> The Community Grocer. (2022, June). Our 2022 Impact Evaluation. Available [here](#).



**[The Limebox Cafe and Food Hub](#)**<sup>77</sup>: The cafe, reopened in 2021, is a Hopeworks Community Solutions initiative, as well as being developed by CSC and the Cardinia Community Food Hub. The cafe states it fulfils many community needs by training youth, reducing food waste, and supporting local farms. On the [Cardinia Community Food Hub website](#)<sup>78</sup> it says the food hub is coming soon, with additional information: “This store is being rebuilt and temporarily only available via password. In 2022 we are currently donating in excess of one(1) metric ton of fresh produce, meat and (in-date) grocery items into the Cardinia community each week”. This cafe is a good example of dignified access to food, as well as creating employment opportunities and supporting local economies.

Coming soon- **[Ubuntu Food Hub/United African Farm](#)**<sup>79</sup>: Finally, as a part of the VicHealth \$4 million investment across 7 local organisations, is the Ubuntu Food Hub. Run by the United African farm, this food hub will increase access to affordable, fresh, and culturally appropriate food. Additionally, it will use cultural knowledge to inform its agricultural practices to empower the local community. The food hub will be a collaboration between CSC, the United African Farm, The Community Grocer, HopeWorks Community Solutions, Cardinia Food Movement, and more. There is little information for when this project will begin. Additionally, there are few updates on the United African Farm website- [this could be due to the 2022 flooding](#)<sup>80</sup>.

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<sup>77</sup> The Limebox Cafe: Your Community Cafe & Food Hub. (n.d.). Home. Available [here](#).

<sup>78</sup> Cardinia Food Hub. (n.d.). Cardinia Community Food Hub. Available [here](#).

<sup>79</sup> United African Farm. (n.d.). Home. Available [here](#).

<sup>80</sup> United African Farm. (n.d.). Home. Available [here](#).

# City of Greater Bendigo

## Policy and governance context

There is no specific *Food Security Plan* in the City of Greater Bendigo (Bendigo), therefore actions and responses to food security are informed by and sit within the context of other policies and strategies. Food security responses sit mainly within two Council plans, first the [Healthy Greater Bendigo 2020-2025 Plan](#)<sup>81</sup> (Municipal Public Health and Wellbeing Plan (MPHWP)), and secondly the [Greater Bendigo Food System Strategy 2020-2030](#)<sup>82</sup> (Strategy).

Within Bendigo's [Healthy Greater Bendigo 2020-2025 Plan](#), food security is the first of five outcomes under the MPHWP: *Healthy and Well: The Greater Bendigo community has good physical and mental health*. Explicitly, this outcome mentions food security in the first of six areas of action: Healthy eating, food insecurity and sustainable food systems. This area of action is supported by statistics from Bendigo Foodshare that reveal during the pandemic demand for food relief increased by 40%, and an estimate that over 10% of residents suffer from food insecurity.<sup>83</sup>

The [Greater Bendigo Food System Strategy 2020-2030](#) is a robust and long-term food system strategy, action plan and evaluation framework (based on [One Planet Living](#)<sup>84</sup> progress measures), developed through an extensive consultation process over 9 months, involving a collective impact approach engaging over 1000 stakeholders. See Figure 9 for all Strategy objectives. Food security responses fall under “*Objective one: Enable communities to access safe, affordable, nutritious and culturally appropriate food and drinks*”. This objective contains 30 actions, of which 11 are specifically related to food security.



Figure 9: Objectives from the Greater Bendigo Food System Strategy 2020-2030. Credit the City of Greater Bendigo.

Additionally, Bendigo's economic development strategy notably considers the determinants of food security. The strategy, [A stronger Greater Bendigo: Economic development strategy 2020-2030](#)<sup>85</sup>, takes a holistic approach in economic development that considers health and wellbeing

<sup>81</sup> City of Greater Bendigo. (2021). *Healthy Greater Bendigo 2021-2025*. Available [here](#).

<sup>82</sup> City of Greater Bendigo. (2020). *Greater Bendigo's Food Systems Strategy 2020-2030*. Available [here](#).

<sup>83</sup> City of Greater Bendigo. (2021). *Healthy Greater Bendigo 2021-2025*.

<sup>84</sup> BioRegional. (n.d.). *One Planet Living*. Available [here](#).

<sup>85</sup> City of Greater Bendigo (2020). *A stronger Greater Bendigo: Economic development strategy 2020-2030*. Available [here](#).

as critical to development. The plan explores what success looks like in 2030, noting, “improved health and wellbeing outcomes for residents, reduced health costs and a more liveable community” will be achieved if a transformative approach is taken.

### Snapshot of food security responses in City of Greater Bendigo

- Bendigo’s monitoring and evaluation process for the Food System strategy is thorough and systematic. Progress is measured and evaluated by Greater Bendigo’s Food System Strategy Reference Group annually. Annual reports ([2020-2021](#)<sup>86</sup>, [2021-2022](#)<sup>87</sup>) include markers for ‘what success looks like’ so Bendigo is able to hold itself accountable. The Food System Strategy Reference Group is also a way to strengthen the collective impact approach across a network of key stakeholders. See Figure 10 for progress of the Strategy in 2021-2022.

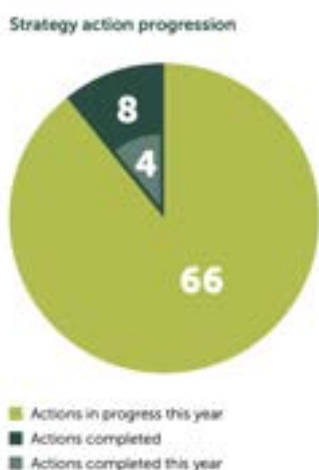


Figure 10: Action progression from the Greater Bendigo Food System Strategy 2020-2030. Credit City of Greater Bendigo.

- Bendigo actively advocates for food security and is a member of the Victorian Food Systems and Food Security Working Group who developed the [‘Towards a Healthy, Regenerative, and Equitable Food System in Victoria: A Consensus Statement’](#).<sup>88</sup> This statement utilises a ‘rights-based food system approach’ and calls on Victorian local and state governments to transition to a fairer food system.
- One action in the Food System Strategy is to promote food relief agencies, [Bendigo Foodshare](#)<sup>89</sup> being one. They provide food to 13,000 people a week, provide a safety net for residents who need this relief and also help to divert food from landfill (Figure 11). Additionally, Bendigo also has an ‘informal’ food relief network of groups and organisations that provide food relief. This network has a current spreadsheet of food relief available, accessible on the Council website, that is updated regularly (last update

<sup>86</sup> City of Greater Bendigo. (n.d.). *Greater Bendigo’s Food System Strategy annual report 2020-2021*. Available [here](#).

<sup>87</sup> City of Greater Bendigo. (n.d.). *Greater Bendigo’s Food System Strategy annual report 2021-2022*. Available [here](#).

<sup>88</sup> VicHealth, & the Food Systems and Food Security Working Group. (n 63)

<sup>89</sup> Bendigo Foodshare (n.d.). Home. Available [here](#).

December 2022).<sup>90</sup> In the past year Bendigo has supported three or more organisations with [grants](#) specifically for food security initiatives, including Bendigo Foodshare and events such as the Community Christmas Meal grants.<sup>91</sup>

- In 2019, Bendigo conducted a [census](#)<sup>92</sup> to look at food security, eating habits and health in the Council area. This compiled valuable statistics to capture the health and food security status of residents.
- Bendigo has multiple initiatives on utilisation through primary and secondary schools, such as [Jamie Oliver's Ministry of Food](#)<sup>93</sup> for online cooking classes and [Schools Kitchen Garden Project](#)<sup>94</sup> in nine schools, educating children how to grow and cook their own food.
- Local and sustainable food is important to Bendigo's food security strategy. As a UNESCO Creative City of Gastronomy<sup>95</sup>, Bendigo funds a Gastronomy Project Officer to do various activities including promoting local food. One example is the [Gastronomy Guide](#).<sup>96</sup>
- Bendigo Foodshare uses its connections in the employment sector to create [opportunities for young people to find employment](#).<sup>97</sup>
- In Bendigo, actions to create healthy food environments are underpinned by the [Healthy Food and Catering policy](#)<sup>98</sup>, [Healthy Facilities policy](#)<sup>99</sup> and the [Community Gardens policy](#)<sup>100</sup>. These policies have been created to provide healthy and sustainable food and drive positive changes in Council owned, managed, and funded facilities and help to support the health and wellbeing of residents. The Community Gardens policy will assist in the establishment of community gardens in Bendigo, as well as supporting capacity building and opportunities for land and growing.
- Unfortunately, social marketing strategies are not thorough for Bendigo, which is reflected and evaluated in their Annual Reports also. No progress has been made or started in finding effective marketing strategies or tools for food security initiatives. The Bendigo website homepage does not showcase explicit food security responses, but by clicking through internal links to [community and care](#)<sup>101</sup>, and there is a small mention on the bottom of the page for food relief, and on this page there are options for food relief and a compiled [list](#) of food relief agencies (updated December 2022) but no triage or cash-first approaches.<sup>102</sup>

<sup>90</sup> City of Greater Bendigo. (n.d.). Food relief and community meals in Greater Bendigo. Available [here](#).

<sup>91</sup> City of Greater Bendigo. (n.d.). *Successful grant applications*. Available [here](#).

<sup>92</sup> City of Greater Bendigo. (2019). *2019 Active Living Census*. Available [here](#).

<sup>93</sup> City of Greater Bendigo. (2022, April 4). *Residents learn healthy cooking skills through Jamie Oliver's Ministry of Food*. Available [here](#).

<sup>94</sup> Healthy Heart of Victoria. (n.d.). Greater Bendigo Schools Kitchen Garden Project. Available [here](#).

<sup>95</sup> UNESCO. (n.d.). Creative Cities Network: Bendigo. Available [here](#).

<sup>96</sup> Bendigo Gastronomy. (n.d.). Gastronomy Guide. Available [here](#).

<sup>97</sup> Bendigo Foodshare. (n.d.). Cafe for a day. Available [here](#).

<sup>98</sup> City of Greater Bendigo. (2022, November 1). *Healthy Food and Catering Policy*. Available [here](#).

<sup>99</sup> City of Greater Bendigo. (2022, August 31). *Healthy Facilities Policy*. Available [here](#).

<sup>100</sup> City of Greater Bendigo. (2022, November 30). *Community Gardens Policy*. Available [here](#).

<sup>101</sup> City of Greater Bendigo. (n 90)

<sup>102</sup> City of Greater Bendigo. (2022, December). Food Relief Information for Greater Bendigo. Available [here](#).

## Standout initiatives

**Specialised staff:** Staff from Bendigo were successful in creating a role that would oversee food system work and the creation of the Greater Bendigo's Food System Strategy 2020-2030.<sup>103</sup> The Food Systems Officer position will be funded for 10 years and will assist in the implementation of actions from the Strategy. Carrad et al. (2022) explain that, “employing a dedicated food system officer is a strong indicator of joined-up thinking and internal support for food systems, and can reduce the tendency for LGs to work in departmental silos by improving cross-organisational communication” (p. 10).<sup>104</sup> Additionally, Bendigo also employs a Gastronomy Project Officer to oversee and promote local and sustainable food in the region.

**Collective impact:** Similar to Merri-bek Council and Cardinia Shire Council, Bendigo also utilised a collective impact approach. Bendigo consulted with local organisations and community groups in the consultation phase when creating the Plans and Strategies. This collective impact approach saw over 1,000 community members and groups provide input to assist with creating actions.<sup>105</sup>

**The Bendigo Community Food Hub**<sup>106</sup>: Notably, to support Bendigo Foodshare, Council will lease land to build and create a ‘Food Warehouse’ that will assist in food insecurity measures and actions. The upcoming Food Hub, planned to be completed in 2023, will be a dignified response to food security that will see community members access healthy, affordable and local food<sup>107</sup>. This food hub has been in the making since 2015 and was the result of extensive community consultation<sup>108</sup>. The Food Hub is one of the seven Healthy Food Hubs that are being established in regional and urban fringe areas in Victoria funded by VicHealth's Future Healthy Food Hubs initiatives and are the first round of VicHealth's Move the Dial initiatives.



Figure 11: Bendigo Foodshare impact 2021-2022. Credit: City of Greater Bendigo.

<sup>103</sup> Carrad, A., Turner, L., Rose, N., Charlton, K.E., Reeve, B. (2022). Food System Innovation and Policy at the Local Level: A report on City of Greater Bendigo's involvement in food system governance [Report]. Available [here](#).

<sup>104</sup> Ibid.

<sup>105</sup> City of Greater Bendigo. (n 82)

<sup>106</sup> VicHealth (2022, August 17). Say hello to our 7 Future Healthy Food Hubs partners! Available [here](#).

<sup>107</sup> Bendigo Foodshare (n.d.). Bendigo Foodshare new warehouse. Available [here](#).

<sup>108</sup> City of Greater Bendigo. (2015). Greater Bendigo Food Hub: A feasibility study for the establishment of a regional food hub in Bendigo. Available [here](#).



# CASE STUDY: GLASGOW, SCOTLAND



## Policy context

The City of Glasgow benefits from a national policy context that is highly oriented towards a rights-based, approach to food security, prioritising cash-first and dignified responses. In 2018, Glasgow City Council (GCC) launched a Food Inequality Inquiry to better understand the experience and extent of food security in the city, which culminated in a commitment to establishing a city-wide food plan.

Development of the Glasgow City Food Plan 2021-2031 plan was led by the Glasgow Food Policy Partnership, with Council acting as a partner. Food poverty is an explicit theme in the plan. A strength of Glasgow's approach is the development of a robust monitoring and reporting framework, alongside an annual report gathering feedback from GFPP partners on the barriers and enablers of plan implementation

## Food Security responses in Glasgow (NB: this is not a full list)

- **Cash-first approach:** GCC coordinates distribution of the Scottish Welfare Fund, a discretionary scheme providing crisis grants, with funds received within 24 hours.
- **Living Wage Campaign:** GCC was the first council in Scotland to introduce a living wage in 2009. In 2020 there were 400+ employers signed up to Glasgow's Living Wage with 89,000+ employees benefitting
- **Free School Meals**
- **Community Food Pantries and Fridges:** The Scottish Pantry Network currently operates six food pantries in Glasgow, which function like a normal shop without limited or restricted hours. Memberships are open to all community members and do not require customers to qualify for the service; for a £2.50 membership, customers can purchase £10 - £15 worth of quality food. Alternative independent and charity-affiliated pantries have also emerged in Glasgow in recent years
- **Capacity building in food poverty for local service staff:** Across 2019/2020, 250 staff from local health services received training in poverty/ food security/ support services with similar sessions held with 323 council early learning staff.

## Standout initiative

Glasgow City Food Plan 2021-2031 has foregrounded the importance of actions to "build robust referral pathways and strong communication routes" and "ensure that all frontline staff in the city have an understanding of 'poverty'...[and] are confident in the referral pathways to advice first and cash first support" (p.15).

This includes support for a 'Worrying about money' leaflet which provides clear communication on what supports are available, including contact details of key local providers in Glasgow. While the leaflet was not a council document, Glasgow's Food Plan 2021-2031 incorporates commitments to ensure roll-out of advice and cash first approaches across agencies alongside evaluation of the leaflet's impact.

**Worrying about money?**

Support is available in Glasgow

**Step 1: What's the problem?**

**I suddenly have no money**

- Lost job or reduced hours
- Money stopped
- Lost money
- Unexpected expense
- Disaster (e.g. flood or fire)
- Relationship breakdown
- Sanctioned (see option 1)

See options 1 2 3

**My money doesn't stretch far enough**

- Deciding between food, fuel, and mobile credit
- Low income
- Zero hours contract
- Statutory Sick Pay too low
- Facing redundancy
- Not sure if eligible for support
- Change of circumstance

See options 1 2

**I have debt**

- Rent or Council Tax
- Gas and electricity
- Payday loans
- Over-travels or family
- Benefit repayments

See option 1

**I am waiting on a benefit payment or advance**

- New claim for benefit
- Payment delayed
- Waiting for decision

See options 1 2

**Three steps to find options and places to get help**



## Policy Context

Brighton & Hove is a longstanding leader in food policy, having had a local food strategy in place since 2006. Food is now integrated into over eight major local policy documents. Action on food poverty is integrated into the Food Strategy Action Plan 2018-2023, developed in partnership with the Brighton & Hove Food Partnership (BHFP). The plan's 200 actions are organised into 9 pillars, one being food poverty. Further to this, all 200 actions within the plan were “looked at through the lens of food inequality”, and actions were assigned to over 100 partners, including 26 separate BHCC departments.

## OUR APPROACH



## Food Security responses in Brighton & Hove (NB: this is not a full list)

- **Preventative approach:** Brighton & Hove's Food Strategy takes a preventative approach to tackle food poverty, with actions targeting underlying drivers of food poverty (e.g. income, insecure housing, financial insecurity) with food banks acknowledged as a last resort option
- **Local Discretionary Social Fund (LDSF)** provides residents experiencing hardship with vouchers (within 1 day) to help purchase groceries, as well as fuel and other essential items.
- **Strong communications** with a service directory map
- **Community Kitchen** which operates as a social enterprise, with revenue from paid masterclasses, events, grants and donations covering the community cooking sessions.
- **Shared Meals** as a means of social support: 1,265 shared meals take place every day, or almost half a million a year.
- **Emergency Food Network (EFN):** Established in 2013, the EFN has grown to a network of 44 food banks, social supermarkets and meals projects that provide emergency food within Brighton & Hove, enabling organisations to collaborate effectively via learning from each other's experiences, sharing challenges and developing joint solutions, alongside annual monitoring and evaluation reports.
- Other initiatives include **Free School Meal programs**, actively supporting local food production, and distribution of healthy home meal kits.

## Standout Initiative:

### Affordable Food Network

The Affordable Food Network (AFN) involves a pilot of seven affordable food outlets, which provide affordable, fresh, local food to residents in disadvantaged neighbourhoods. To strengthen resilience and support local farmers, food is sourced from local farms employing sustainable agricultural practices as well as donations from the city's surplus food network and food businesses, and wholesale purchase of food BHFP to supplement volumes where needed. Residents pay a small membership fee to access food from the AFN, with 658 customers reached each week.

Improving access to healthy sustainable food for those experiencing ongoing food insecurity





## Policy Context

Community Food Centres Canada (CFCC) is a not-for-profit organisation, not a local government initiative. CFCC was started by Nick Saul at The Stop in 2012 after he became disillusioned with food banks and emergency food relief. Saul wanted to create a strategy that fed people with dignity.

In 2019 Canada released a national food policy, *The Food Policy for Canada*. The aspiration of the policy is that: "all people in Canada are able to access a sufficient amount of safe, nutritious, and culturally diverse food. Canada's food system is resilient and innovative, sustains our environment and supports our economy". It is not clear where CFCC lies in The Food Policy for Canada, but in their most recent financial statement (2021-2022)<sup>153</sup>, CFCC received over \$20M in funding from the national government.

## Food Security responses by CFCC (NB: this is not a full list)

Currently there are 15 Community Food Centres across Canada. They are all guided by four principles: Build, Share, Innovate, Advocate. Each of these principles form their food security responses.

**Build:** They build the Community Food Centres which are funded through different revenues (government, donations, philanthropy). These centres are the location where communities access free or low-cost food options, putting them at the centre of CFCC method. Each Centre has community meals and access to low-cost or free food, community gardens, conducts the food security programs as seen below, advocates to the government in their local communities, and participates in CFCC training.

**Share:** Sharing involves collaborative work between CFCC and their Good Food Organisation Partners. To become a Partner the organisation must have CFCC's Good Food Principles embedded in their philosophy, and CFCC supports the partners with training, workshops, grants and more.

**Innovate:** CFCC have three main innovative food security programs, FoodFit, Market Greens and Mind Your Food (more below)

**Advocate:** This principle is about advocating for a better food system; CFCC has called it their 'poverty action unit'. They write submissions to government and do large research projects, such as their Beyond Hunger report.

## BY THE NUMBERS

**FIFTEEN** community markets  
(12 new + 3 continuing) |  IN **6** PROVINCES AND **1** TERRITORY

**15** Places offering **Greens Prescriptions** - vouchers for fresh produce for those managing chronic, diet-related illnesses

**2** which are located on-reserve | **NINE** which are Indigenous, Black, or People of Colour-led organizations

**ONE** of which is Francophone-serving



## Standout Initiative:

Community Food Centre's are spread across Canada and are central to the mission of CFCC. Each Centre has multiple programs ranging from growing food, sharing free meals and food, and education programs as below.

**FoodFit:** This program is an initiative that uses physical exercise, social interaction and food education to improve health and wellness for low-income clients.

**Market Greens:** Market Greens uses 'food-based healthcare' as preventative care. This program provides fruits and vegetables 'prescriptions'.

**Mind Your Food:** This equity and inclusion program is aimed at youth in Indigenous, migrant, and low-income communities. It promotes food and nutrition education, builds community, and celebrates cultural diversity.





## CASE STUDY: Belo-Horizonte, Brazil



### Standout Initiative:

#### Low-cost restaurants

Starting with one restaurant, now Belo-Horizonte has four low-cost restaurants placed around the city. These restaurants are an alternative option to emergency food relief agencies. Importantly, they provide affordable meals to anyone in a dignified way- they are a universal option for all of the community rather than just those who are food insecure. 10,000 meals are made daily with a typical meal costing about 50 cents.

### Policy Context

Belo-Horizonte is the capital city of the state of Minas Gerais in Brazil. In 1993, Belo-Horizonte developed their food security policy which is still in place today and has become a world standard for reducing food insecurity. They are known as the city who ended hunger. Belo-Horizonte uses prevention strategies to reduce food insecurity - such as embedding the human right to food in law and governance mechanisms. Food sovereignty is central to this policy, a movement that seeks control of the food system and the development of policies and regulations with citizens rather than corporations and government.

Belo-Horizonte's success paved the way for more food security policies across the country. Brazil's national food security strategy, Zero Hunger (Fome Zero), was founded in 2002 by then president (and now current) Luiz Inacio "Lula" da Silva. A Constitutional Amendment in February 2010 includes food as a human right. This is supported by Law No.11.346 developed in 2006 that assists in regulating the national system developed to guarantee food security.

### Food Security responses in Belo-Horizonte

(NB: this is not a full list)

Food security responses in Belo-Horizonte are managed by the Municipal Secretariat for Food and Nutrition Security, along with being funded by 2% of the City's annual budget.

The *International Panel of Experts on Sustainable Food Systems* describe the six 'workstreams' as seen in the top-left diagram.

- **Food and nutritional assistance:** There is a daily school meals program for youth and food banks where food is provided cost-free. This food also is also distributed to hospitals, aged care facilities, shelters, and other charities.
- **Regulation of food markets** such as low-cost food stores supporting local producers and farmers. These food markets help both farmers and consumers. Small farmers have infrastructure throughout the city to sell food themselves which excludes the middle man and keeps prices fair for all.
- There is a **strong focus on urban agriculture**, as well as growing food on a larger scale. There are community and school gardens, and in the city itself there are over 100 food growing gardens.
- **Educational programs** contain online resources and specific sites for learning about food security and policy mechanisms.
- There are **programs to find employment opportunities** made available through food security initiatives, as well as low-cost, accessible courses.



## CASE STUDY: City of Boston, USA



### Policy Context

The City of Boston benefits from long-standing mayoral support for city-wide action on food security and social equity, strengthened by the longstanding advocacy and civic engagement of a passionate, idealistic, educated and young citizenry. In 2010, the former Mayor established an Office of Food Initiatives, which was then changed to an Office for Food Access in 2016, before being split into two separate departments in 2021: an Office for Food Justice (OFJ) focused on food access and GrowBoston to support food production. The OFJ takes an “intersectional approach to food security that embeds social, racial, economic, and environmental justice in all of its work”. This policy is underpinned by social equity and a right to food approach, as employed in Belo-Horizonte, articulating that “food is a right, not a privilege” (p.4) with bold ambition to “end food insecurity by 2030”.

**AFFORDABLE**  
Our stores offer a variety of quality fresh produce, staples and prepared foods priced right for low-income shoppers

**DIGNITY**  
We empower people to eat well with the power of their own dollars, offering a helping hand rather than a handout through a dignified retail exchange

**SUPPLIERS**  
85+ growers and suppliers provide discounts and donations to help drive down our cost of goods sold

**HEALTHY**  
We only sell food with healthy levels of sodium and sugar, including “grab ‘n go” meals priced to compete with fast food

**OUR INNOVATIVE & SCALABLE SOLUTION**

**ACCESSIBLE**  
We are there when our customers need us: our stores are located near public transit and open seven days a week, and we offer free online ordering and delivery

**COMMUNITY INVESTMENT**  
We hire local residents and pay \$16 starting hourly wage, keeping dollars circulating in local communities

**PARTNERSHIPS**  
We work with 70+ community organisations to spread the word about Daily Table and support better diets

**INNOVATIVE**  
Daily Table’s store sales plus the generosity of donors fund our mission. This innovative solution means that every funding dollar is matched with two dollars of revenue.

### Food Security responses in Boston (NB: this is not a full list)

- **Measuring community food security:** City of Boston collects data on household food insecurity every 2 years via the Boston Behavioural Risk Factor Surveillance System survey, which integrates three questions on food security
- **Free School Meals:** The BOSFoodLove program aims to decrease food insecurity among Boston students and families by increasing uptake of free breakfast and lunch programs in schools, establishing programs where students can get food outside of meal times.
- **Boston Summer Eats:** provides nutritious breakfast and lunch meals at no cost to young people 18 and under, to address the food gap that can occur during school holidays.
- **Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP):** The SNAP program provides money for food to supplement resident’s grocery budgets, with funds deposited monthly on a card. SNAP also incentivises healthy choices via the Healthy Incentives Program (HIP), which doubles the value of each SNAP-dollar if spent on fruits and vegetables at farmers markets, mobile stands and through CSA programs.
- **Affordable Supermarkets:** Daily Table is a non-profit organisation operating three affordable supermarkets in low-income areas in Boston, sourcing donated, discounted or rescued food (only if high quality). It operates as a membership scheme, with 70% of operating expenses covered from sales revenue.
- **Urban Farming:** City of Boston has a dedicated urban agriculture department called GrowBoston, with three staff and an annual budget of approximately USD\$2 million to support residents to grow their own food through technical support, land provision and grant funding.

### Standout Initiative: Communications

The City of Boston is committed to ensuring that residents can access the supports available to them via several strategies, and this forms as a key part of their Food Access Plan. In 2021, the City of Boston launched a ‘Food Resources Chatbot’ to centralise sources of food resources information and reduce digital and language barriers for residents. The SMS service is available 24/7 and in eight different languages. The OFJ webpage contains links to an open-access folder to outreach materials published in many languages, explaining the different social programs, such as the SNAP, Farmers Market vouchers and Rental Relief Fund. A kiosk is now established at City Hall so that residents can easily apply for SNAP and cash assistance programs, check their eligibility and have their questions answered.