

# Charlottesville Food Equity Initiative

## Looking Forward | Objectives

| Existing Food System   | Emerging Food System  |
|--|---|
| Prioritizes mass production  | <b>Prioritizes health and equity</b>  |
| Food is not seen as the business of cities                                   | <b>Food is seen as a strategic vehicle for meeting city goals</b>   |
| Founded on access to cheap fossil fuels                                      | <b>Environmental protection is a cornerstone of food production, processing, and distribution</b>         |
| Market forces determine location of food stores                              | <b>Neighborhoods are planned with food access in mind</b>   |
| Food pricing unconnected to nutritional benefit                              | <b>Food pricing favors healthy choices</b>  |
| Food issues carved up into separate government departments and jurisdictions | <b>Food solutions come from collaborative partnerships within and among governments and civil society</b> |

Table 1: City of Toronto Food Strategy, 2010

### Purpose

The Charlottesville Food Equity Initiative (FEI) brings together public, private, and non-profit partners working in unique and complementary ways to build a healthy and just community food system for all Charlottesville residents. The Initiative is cultivating community driven processes, resident leadership, and city partnerships to improve access to and quality of nutritious and affordable foods, addressing food equity barriers.

\*Throughout our organization and in this document, we are specifically focused on engaging the voices of community members that have direct experience with food insecurity and who have typically been excluded from decision-making and conversation.

### Goals

1. Increase food access and equity for Charlottesville community members facing food insecurity through systemic change to barriers
2. Increase collaboration and impact of diverse stakeholders engaged in building community food equity
3. Increase systemic strategies and advocate for policy change to address community health disparities across race and economics
4. Increase knowledge and implementation of food equity practices by food systems organizations and the Charlottesville community at large
5. Increase community participation in food equity planning and implementation, especially for community members experiencing food insecurity
6. Provide opportunities for leadership and employment among young adults and community advocates to address food equity issues

## Activities and Outcomes: October 2022 – September 2023

- A. **Compile and disseminate research** including an analysis of food system assessments that identifies gaps and opportunities for investment across the six planks of the Food Equity Initiative Policy Platform and communication strategies to engage stakeholders including community members, food system organizations, business owners, city staff, and elected officials.

**Outcome 1:** By December 2022, create an interactive map that tracks urban agriculture spaces in Charlottesville and intersects with the City Comprehensive Plan land use map to cultivate an analysis of land use practices across race, economics, neighborhood, etc.

**Outcome 2:** By December 2022, integrate research on city based food equity funds across the country with local planning efforts (MAPP2Health Equity, Local Food Local Places, City Comprehensive Plan) to develop recommendations and strategies for a Charlottesville Food Equity Fund.

**Outcome 3:** By May 2023, conduct and disseminate research focused on equitable food access markets in Charlottesville that outlines core strategies for increasing affordable, healthy food options for Charlottesville residents and invests in community wealth building.

- B. **Establish mechanisms for community voice** including both formal and informal meetings with oversight by community stakeholders and community members on programs and broader food access issues.

**Outcome 1:** By December 2022, launch an interactive community design process for urban agriculture spaces in Charlottesville to inform the upcoming citywide parks and recreation strategic plan.

**Outcome 2:** By September 2023, host a series of community events engaging over 500 community members and stakeholders in visioning and defining of Charlottesville food justice and for continued engagement in Food Equity Initiative Policy Platform priority implementation.

**Outcome 3:** By September 2023, employ 10-15 youth food justice interns and 5-10 community advocates to elevate community input and priorities while also building community wealth.

- C. **Act as a centralizing stakeholder** for food system organizations across the city while centering racial equity, community voice, and engaged decision-making.

**Outcome 1:** By September 2023, ongoing facilitation of the Food Justice Network as a central convener for food system organizations and advocates working to build a healthy and just food system in Charlottesville while advancing racial equity.

**Outcome 2:** By September 2023, provide ongoing backbone facilitation and expertise for networks such as the Governor’s Nutrition Security Coalition Hunger Action Coalition, the Virginia Healthy Coalition Action Team, and other similar networks.

**Outcome 3:** By December 2022, further community, nonprofit, and city understanding of and commitment to the intersection of racial equity and food justice through ongoing networking and capacity building.

- D. **Contribute subject matter expertise** to discussions on school reconfiguration, transportation, zoning, affordable housing, food markets, parks, and other planning and policy development to ensure that the City, the University of Virginia, community organizations and community members are aware of the impact of policy on food equity.

**Outcome 1:** By September 2023, Cultivate Charlottesville Food Justice Network will continue to work closely with the local planning processes including: the City’s Comprehensive Plan, Parks & Recreation Strategic Plan, City Climate Action Plan, and City Strategic Plan guided by recommendations from the Food Equity Initiative Policy Platform.

**Outcome 2:** By September 2023, Cultivate Charlottesville Food Justice Network, with input from communities facing food insecurity and city departments, will continue to modify, track progress, and provide support for implementation of the Food Equity Initiative Policy Platform recommendations.

**Outcome 3:** By September 2023, Cultivate Charlottesville Food Justice Network will develop and implement learning exchanges, such as representation on advisory councils and presentations at conferences, to extend Charlottesville’s food equity reach to statewide, regional, and national partners.

- E. **Plan for sustainability** of Food Equity Initiative Policy Platform priorities by pursuing additional funding for long-term investment at the public, private, nonprofit, and community member levels.

**Outcome 1:** By December 2022, secure a multi-year funding match of \$155,000 to support the Food Equity Initiative.

**Outcome 2:** By September 2023, present a diversified multi-year funding plan to City Council for the Food Equity Fund and/or other opportunities to invest in building a healthy and just food system in Charlottesville.