

# COMMUNITY SELF-ASSESSMENT

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This self-assessment was developed as part of the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency's *Local Foods, Local Places Toolkit: A Guide to Help Communities Revitalize Using Local Food Systems*. The complete toolkit is available at <https://www.epa.gov/smartgrowth/local-foods-local-places-toolkit>.

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

## 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, <sup>1</sup> a local food alliance, <sup>2</sup> or some other entity <sup>3</sup> created to foster dialogue, coordination, and partnerships to reach desired goals.	<input type="checkbox"/> Low priority <input type="checkbox"/> Aspiration <input type="checkbox"/> Needs work <input type="checkbox"/> Established	
2. A local place-based organization such as a downtown development authority, <sup>4</sup> focused on promoting community development and economic development in town centers.	<input type="checkbox"/> Low priority <input type="checkbox"/> Aspiration <input type="checkbox"/> Needs work <input type="checkbox"/> Established	
3. A community vision plan <sup>5</sup> 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.	<input type="checkbox"/> Low priority <input type="checkbox"/> Aspiration <input type="checkbox"/> Needs work <input type="checkbox"/> 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 <sup>6</sup> (e.g., an economic development office that has a mandate for agricultural economic development, <sup>7</sup> a school district or higher education institution with a policy for purchasing a percentage of foods locally, <sup>8</sup> or a farm-to-school program <sup>9</sup> ).	<input type="checkbox"/> Low priority <input type="checkbox"/> Aspiration <input type="checkbox"/> Needs work <input type="checkbox"/> Established	
5. Others (please name and describe)	<input type="checkbox"/> Low priority <input type="checkbox"/> Aspiration <input type="checkbox"/> Needs work <input type="checkbox"/> Established	

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<sup>1</sup> 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.

<sup>2</sup> 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>).

<sup>3</sup> 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<sup>®</sup>," a marketing and awareness campaign.

<sup>4</sup> 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>.

<sup>5</sup> 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>.

<sup>6</sup> 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>.

<sup>7</sup> 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.

<sup>8</sup> 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.

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

## 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. <sup>10</sup>	<input type="checkbox"/> Low priority <input type="checkbox"/> Aspiration <input type="checkbox"/> Needs work <input type="checkbox"/> Established	
2. Coordinated participation of faith-based communities such as churches, mosques, synagogues, and temples.	<input type="checkbox"/> Low priority <input type="checkbox"/> Aspiration <input type="checkbox"/> Needs work <input type="checkbox"/> Established	
3. Community ambassador programs that link local government, nonprofits, and academic institutions to communities through direct involvement and communication with neighborhood liaisons.	<input type="checkbox"/> Low priority <input type="checkbox"/> Aspiration <input type="checkbox"/> Needs work <input type="checkbox"/> Established	
4. Inclusion of SNAP/EBT <sup>11</sup> at farmers markets or other places where local food is sold.	<input type="checkbox"/> Low priority <input type="checkbox"/> Aspiration <input type="checkbox"/> Needs work <input type="checkbox"/> 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. <sup>12</sup>	<input type="checkbox"/> Low priority <input type="checkbox"/> Aspiration <input type="checkbox"/> Needs work <input type="checkbox"/> Established	
6. Programs for recently incarcerated individuals that connect them to community-building projects such as reconciliation and reentry programs. <sup>13</sup>	<input type="checkbox"/> Low priority <input type="checkbox"/> Aspiration <input type="checkbox"/> Needs work <input type="checkbox"/> Established	

Common Strategies or Actions	Status	Notes/Comments
7. Others (please name and describe)	<input type="checkbox"/> Low priority <input type="checkbox"/> Aspiration <input type="checkbox"/> Needs work <input type="checkbox"/> Established	

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<sup>10</sup> 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>).

<sup>11</sup> 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.

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

<sup>13</sup> 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>.

### 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. <sup>14,15</sup>	<input type="checkbox"/> Low priority <input type="checkbox"/> Aspiration <input type="checkbox"/> Needs work <input type="checkbox"/> Established	
2. Programs that help prospective farmers gain access to land. <sup>16</sup>	<input type="checkbox"/> Low priority <input type="checkbox"/> Aspiration <input type="checkbox"/> Needs work <input type="checkbox"/> 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). <sup>17</sup>	<input type="checkbox"/> Low priority <input type="checkbox"/> Aspiration <input type="checkbox"/> Needs work <input type="checkbox"/> Established	
4. Farmer networking or information-sharing programs that provide opportunities for peer-to-peer knowledge sharing. <sup>18</sup>	<input type="checkbox"/> Low priority <input type="checkbox"/> Aspiration <input type="checkbox"/> Needs work <input type="checkbox"/> Established	
5. Zoning ordinances that protect and encourage agricultural preservation <sup>19</sup> and production <sup>20</sup> in both urban and rural areas.	<input type="checkbox"/> Low priority <input type="checkbox"/> Aspiration <input type="checkbox"/> Needs work <input type="checkbox"/> Established	
6. Others (please name and describe)	<input type="checkbox"/> Low priority <input type="checkbox"/> Aspiration <input type="checkbox"/> Needs work <input type="checkbox"/> Established	

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<sup>14</sup> 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>).

<sup>15</sup> 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.

<sup>16</sup> 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/>).

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

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

<sup>19</sup> 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](http://www.maine.gov/dacf/municipalplanning/technical/farmland_ordinances.shtml). Accessed Feb. 21, 2017.

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



#### 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.	<input type="checkbox"/> Low priority <input type="checkbox"/> Aspiration <input type="checkbox"/> Needs work <input type="checkbox"/> Established	
2. Community-supported agriculture (CSA) <sup>21</sup> or community-supported fishery <sup>22</sup> 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.	<input type="checkbox"/> Low priority <input type="checkbox"/> Aspiration <input type="checkbox"/> Needs work <input type="checkbox"/> Established	
3. Established outlets such as grocery stores that sell local food and other local products. <sup>23</sup>	<input type="checkbox"/> Low priority <input type="checkbox"/> Aspiration <input type="checkbox"/> Needs work <input type="checkbox"/> Established	
4. Local food guides, directories, or websites that list producers, suppliers, restaurants, or distributors of local food and value-added products, <sup>24</sup> making it easier for people to learn about and access them. <sup>25</sup>	<input type="checkbox"/> Low priority <input type="checkbox"/> Aspiration <input type="checkbox"/> Needs work <input type="checkbox"/> Established	
5. Partnerships with local and regional aggregators and distributors that increase the number and range of markets available to local producers. <sup>26</sup>	<input type="checkbox"/> Low priority <input type="checkbox"/> Aspiration <input type="checkbox"/> Needs work <input type="checkbox"/> Established	
6. Business training for local food producers through community colleges, universities, and business incubators. <sup>27</sup>	<input type="checkbox"/> Low priority <input type="checkbox"/> Aspiration <input type="checkbox"/> Needs work <input type="checkbox"/> Established	

Common Strategies or Actions	Status	Notes/Comments
7. Others (please name and describe)	<input type="checkbox"/> Low priority <input type="checkbox"/> Aspiration <input type="checkbox"/> Needs work <input type="checkbox"/> Established	

<sup>21</sup> 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.

<sup>22</sup> 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>).

<sup>23</sup> 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>).

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

<sup>25</sup> 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>).

<sup>26</sup> 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>).

<sup>27</sup> 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>).

## 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. <sup>28</sup>	<input type="checkbox"/> Low priority <input type="checkbox"/> Aspiration <input type="checkbox"/> Needs work <input type="checkbox"/> Established	
2. Value-added food processing facilities for processing fruits and vegetables into consumer goods. <sup>29</sup>	<input type="checkbox"/> Low priority <input type="checkbox"/> Aspiration <input type="checkbox"/> Needs work <input type="checkbox"/> Established	
3. Processing facilities for fish, seafood, and meat and/or dairy and cheese manufacturing.	<input type="checkbox"/> Low priority <input type="checkbox"/> Aspiration <input type="checkbox"/> Needs work <input type="checkbox"/> Established	
4. Distribution and aggregation facilities to fill a logistics gap in getting locally grown products to larger markets. <sup>30</sup>	<input type="checkbox"/> Low priority <input type="checkbox"/> Aspiration <input type="checkbox"/> Needs work <input type="checkbox"/> Established	
5. Business incubators for farm-product marketers and non-farm entrepreneurs such as farm machinery repairers, crate manufacturers, and composters. <sup>31</sup>	<input type="checkbox"/> Low priority <input type="checkbox"/> Aspiration <input type="checkbox"/> Needs work <input type="checkbox"/> Established	
6. Others (please name and describe)	<input type="checkbox"/> Low priority <input type="checkbox"/> Aspiration <input type="checkbox"/> Needs work <input type="checkbox"/> Established	

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<sup>28</sup> 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>).

<sup>29</sup> 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>).

<sup>30</sup> 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>).

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

## 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 <sup>32</sup> or Health in All Policies <sup>33</sup> efforts that help foster collaboration across sectors.	<input type="checkbox"/> Low priority <input type="checkbox"/> Aspiration <input type="checkbox"/> Needs work <input type="checkbox"/> 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). <sup>34</sup>	<input type="checkbox"/> Low priority <input type="checkbox"/> Aspiration <input type="checkbox"/> Needs work <input type="checkbox"/> Established	
3. Nutrition and cooking classes at farmers markets, health centers, or other public, easily accessible locations.	<input type="checkbox"/> Low priority <input type="checkbox"/> Aspiration <input type="checkbox"/> Needs work <input type="checkbox"/> Established	
4. Sourcing healthy and/or local foods in hospitals and health education facilities. <sup>35</sup>	<input type="checkbox"/> Low priority <input type="checkbox"/> Aspiration <input type="checkbox"/> Needs work <input type="checkbox"/> Established	
5. Sourcing healthy and/or local foods in senior and child care facilities. <sup>36</sup>	<input type="checkbox"/> Low priority <input type="checkbox"/> Aspiration <input type="checkbox"/> Needs work <input type="checkbox"/> Established	
6. Farm-to-school programs that connect local farms to schools through K-12 education and food purchasing. <sup>37</sup>	<input type="checkbox"/> Low priority <input type="checkbox"/> Aspiration <input type="checkbox"/> Needs work <input type="checkbox"/> Established	
7. Community gardens incorporated into mental health service provider programs. <sup>38</sup>	<input type="checkbox"/> Low priority <input type="checkbox"/> Aspiration <input type="checkbox"/> Needs work <input type="checkbox"/> Established	

Common Strategies or Actions	Status	Notes/Comments
8. Education and place-based strategies to support active living practices such as walking and biking.	<input type="checkbox"/> Low priority <input type="checkbox"/> Aspiration <input type="checkbox"/> Needs work <input type="checkbox"/> Established	
9. Improved access to social services, health care, and healthy food.	<input type="checkbox"/> Low priority <input type="checkbox"/> Aspiration <input type="checkbox"/> Needs work <input type="checkbox"/> Established	
10. Highly visible community exercise and active events (e.g., downtown walks or runs, yoga in the park, or community dances). <sup>39</sup>	<input type="checkbox"/> Low priority <input type="checkbox"/> Aspiration <input type="checkbox"/> Needs work <input type="checkbox"/> Established	
11. Health screenings at community events such as farmers markets, school activities, and festivals.	<input type="checkbox"/> Low priority <input type="checkbox"/> Aspiration <input type="checkbox"/> Needs work <input type="checkbox"/> Established	
12. Others (please name and describe)	<input type="checkbox"/> Low priority <input type="checkbox"/> Aspiration <input type="checkbox"/> Needs work <input type="checkbox"/> Established	

<sup>32</sup> 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.

<sup>33</sup> 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>.

<sup>34</sup> An example is Local Food Hub's Fresh Pharmacy Fruit and Veggie Prescription Program in Charlottesville, Virginia (<http://www.localfoodhub.org/fresh-pharmacy-fruit-and-veggie-prescription-program>).

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

<sup>36</sup> 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>).

<sup>37</sup> 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>).

<sup>38</sup> 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](http://www.mingomessenger.com/news/article_28519b56-fb49-11e4-af18-bb88e2801f64.html).

<sup>39</sup> 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>).

## 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. <sup>40</sup>	<input type="checkbox"/> Low priority <input type="checkbox"/> Aspiration <input type="checkbox"/> Needs work <input type="checkbox"/> Established	
2. A Main Street program or downtown association that coordinates downtown revitalization efforts. <sup>41</sup>	<input type="checkbox"/> Low priority <input type="checkbox"/> Aspiration <input type="checkbox"/> Needs work <input type="checkbox"/> Established	
3. Community events (e.g., fairs or live music) and public places (e.g., parks and plazas) in the downtown core. <sup>42</sup>	<input type="checkbox"/> Low priority <input type="checkbox"/> Aspiration <input type="checkbox"/> Needs work <input type="checkbox"/> Established	
4. Audits to identify safety, access, and comfort concerns for pedestrians and bicyclists, and an improvement plan for making infrastructure changes. <sup>43</sup>	<input type="checkbox"/> Low priority <input type="checkbox"/> Aspiration <input type="checkbox"/> Needs work <input type="checkbox"/> Established	
5. Beautification and improvement of streets and sidewalks to promote inviting pedestrian environments and increased Main Street activity. <sup>44</sup>	<input type="checkbox"/> Low priority <input type="checkbox"/> Aspiration <input type="checkbox"/> Needs work <input type="checkbox"/> 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). <sup>45</sup>	<input type="checkbox"/> Low priority <input type="checkbox"/> Aspiration <input type="checkbox"/> Needs work <input type="checkbox"/> Established	
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). <sup>46</sup>	<input type="checkbox"/> Low priority <input type="checkbox"/> Aspiration <input type="checkbox"/> Needs work <input type="checkbox"/> Established	

Common Strategies or Actions	Status	Notes/Comments
8. Public art, murals, or iconic infrastructure that builds collective identity. <sup>47</sup>	<input type="checkbox"/> Low priority <input type="checkbox"/> Aspiration <input type="checkbox"/> Needs work <input type="checkbox"/> Established	
9. Connections between downtown and nearby tourist or recreational activities such as greenways, national and state parks, and regional trails. <sup>48</sup>	<input type="checkbox"/> Low priority <input type="checkbox"/> Aspiration <input type="checkbox"/> Needs work <input type="checkbox"/> Established	
10. Signs that encourage people to visit points of interest and promote community identity. <sup>49</sup>	<input type="checkbox"/> Low priority <input type="checkbox"/> Aspiration <input type="checkbox"/> Needs work <input type="checkbox"/> Established	
11. Market or feasibility studies to assess opportunities for downtown redevelopment and specific activities.	<input type="checkbox"/> Low priority <input type="checkbox"/> Aspiration <input type="checkbox"/> Needs work <input type="checkbox"/> Established	
12. Public outreach efforts to incorporate all voices into revitalization.	<input type="checkbox"/> Low priority <input type="checkbox"/> Aspiration <input type="checkbox"/> Needs work <input type="checkbox"/> Established	
13. Special districts that encourage investment and a mix of uses downtown (e.g., historic, arts, commercial, investment, and neighborhood conservation districts). <sup>50</sup>	<input type="checkbox"/> Low priority <input type="checkbox"/> Aspiration <input type="checkbox"/> Needs work <input type="checkbox"/> Established	
14. Others (please name and describe)	<input type="checkbox"/> Low priority <input type="checkbox"/> Aspiration <input type="checkbox"/> Needs work <input type="checkbox"/> Established	

<sup>40</sup> 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](https://www.epa.gov/smartgrowth/essential-smart-growth-fixes-communities#Urban_and_Suburban_Zoning_Codes).

<sup>41</sup> 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.

<sup>42</sup> 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>.

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

<sup>44</sup> An example is Beautiful RVA in Richmond, Virginia (<http://www.beautifulrva.org>).

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



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<sup>46</sup> 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>.

<sup>47</sup> 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.

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

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

<sup>50</sup> 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>).

## 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.	<input type="checkbox"/> Low priority <input type="checkbox"/> Aspiration <input type="checkbox"/> Needs work <input type="checkbox"/> Established	
2. Local food-focused public events and festivals held downtown.	<input type="checkbox"/> Low priority <input type="checkbox"/> Aspiration <input type="checkbox"/> Needs work <input type="checkbox"/> Established	
3. Conversion of vacant or underused land to productive use such as for parks, community gardens, pop-up markets, or urban farms. <sup>51</sup>	<input type="checkbox"/> Low priority <input type="checkbox"/> Aspiration <input type="checkbox"/> Needs work <input type="checkbox"/> 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. <sup>52</sup>	<input type="checkbox"/> Low priority <input type="checkbox"/> Aspiration <input type="checkbox"/> Needs work <input type="checkbox"/> Established	
5. Flexible zoning to enable nonconforming uses by cultural and community nonprofits.	<input type="checkbox"/> Low priority <input type="checkbox"/> Aspiration <input type="checkbox"/> Needs work <input type="checkbox"/> Established	
6. Policies to allow public lots or parks to be used as food distribution points or pop-up food markets.	<input type="checkbox"/> Low priority <input type="checkbox"/> Aspiration <input type="checkbox"/> Needs work <input type="checkbox"/> 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 <sup>53</sup> or menus highlighting local produce).	<input type="checkbox"/> Low priority <input type="checkbox"/> Aspiration <input type="checkbox"/> Needs work <input type="checkbox"/> Established	
8. Others (please name and describe)	<input type="checkbox"/> Low priority <input type="checkbox"/> Aspiration <input type="checkbox"/> Needs work <input type="checkbox"/> Established	

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<sup>51</sup> 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>.

<sup>52</sup> 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.

<sup>53</sup> 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>).

## 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. <sup>54</sup>	<input type="checkbox"/> Low priority <input type="checkbox"/> Aspiration <input type="checkbox"/> Needs work <input type="checkbox"/> Established	
2. Youth job-training programs, especially for those at risk or from economically disadvantaged areas. <sup>55</sup>	<input type="checkbox"/> Low priority <input type="checkbox"/> Aspiration <input type="checkbox"/> Needs work <input type="checkbox"/> Established	
3. Collaboration with farmers market vendors to open full-time shops in vacant areas downtown.	<input type="checkbox"/> Low priority <input type="checkbox"/> Aspiration <input type="checkbox"/> Needs work <input type="checkbox"/> Established	
4. Local hiring requirements for publicly funded projects.	<input type="checkbox"/> Low priority <input type="checkbox"/> Aspiration <input type="checkbox"/> Needs work <input type="checkbox"/> Established	
5. Developing a local merchant promotion program such as “Eat Local/Buy Local” or “Shop Downtown” campaigns.	<input type="checkbox"/> Low priority <input type="checkbox"/> Aspiration <input type="checkbox"/> Needs work <input type="checkbox"/> Established	
6. Partnerships with local arts centers to help artisans at the farmers market scale up their businesses.	<input type="checkbox"/> Low priority <input type="checkbox"/> Aspiration <input type="checkbox"/> Needs work <input type="checkbox"/> Established	
7. Partnerships with local employers, economic development organizations, or nonprofits to leverage support, training, or job-placement programs.	<input type="checkbox"/> Low priority <input type="checkbox"/> Aspiration <input type="checkbox"/> Needs work <input type="checkbox"/> Established	

Common Strategies or Actions	Status	Notes/Comments
8. Local business, producer, or farmer cooperatives. <sup>56</sup>	<input type="checkbox"/> Low priority <input type="checkbox"/> Aspiration <input type="checkbox"/> Needs work <input type="checkbox"/> Established	
9. Healthy corner store programs that facilitate the sale of fresh produce at convenience stores. <sup>57</sup>	<input type="checkbox"/> Low priority <input type="checkbox"/> Aspiration <input type="checkbox"/> Needs work <input type="checkbox"/> Established	
10. Others (please name and describe)	<input type="checkbox"/> Low priority <input type="checkbox"/> Aspiration <input type="checkbox"/> Needs work <input type="checkbox"/> Established	

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<sup>54</sup> Examples include the Evergreen Cooperatives of Cleveland (<http://www.evgo.com>) and The Idea Village in New Orleans (<http://www.ideavillage.org>).

<sup>55</sup> An example is the Youth with Faces culinary program in Dallas (<http://www.youthwithfaces.org/our-work/how-we-help/culinary-program>).

<sup>56</sup> An example is the Farmers Market Cooperative of East Liberty in Pittsburgh (<http://www.farmersmarketcooperativeofeastliberty.com>).

<sup>57</sup> An example is Tricycle Gardens' Healthy Corner Store Initiative in Richmond, Virginia (<http://tricycleurbanag.org/eat/>).

## 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. <sup>58</sup>	<input type="checkbox"/> Low priority <input type="checkbox"/> Aspiration <input type="checkbox"/> Needs work <input type="checkbox"/> Established	
2. “Eat Local, Buy Local” campaign or “Shop Downtown” campaign. <sup>59</sup>	<input type="checkbox"/> Low priority <input type="checkbox"/> Aspiration <input type="checkbox"/> Needs work <input type="checkbox"/> Established	
3. Local food guides, directories, or websites <sup>60</sup> 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.	<input type="checkbox"/> Low priority <input type="checkbox"/> Aspiration <input type="checkbox"/> Needs work <input type="checkbox"/> Established	
4. Coordinating and leveraging state and regional economic development and tourism marketing resources.	<input type="checkbox"/> Low priority <input type="checkbox"/> Aspiration <input type="checkbox"/> Needs work <input type="checkbox"/> 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. <sup>61</sup>	<input type="checkbox"/> Low priority <input type="checkbox"/> Aspiration <input type="checkbox"/> Needs work <input type="checkbox"/> Established	
6. Activities to create, promote, or strengthen tourism assets in your community. <sup>62</sup>	<input type="checkbox"/> Low priority <input type="checkbox"/> Aspiration <input type="checkbox"/> Needs work <input type="checkbox"/> Established	
7. Others (please name and describe)	<input type="checkbox"/> Low priority <input type="checkbox"/> Aspiration <input type="checkbox"/> Needs work <input type="checkbox"/> Established	

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<sup>58</sup> 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.

<sup>59</sup> See section A.8 for more resources on “Eat Local, Buy Local” campaigns.

<sup>60</sup> An example is the Kentucky Department of Agriculture’s Kentucky Proud program (<http://www.kyproud.com>).

<sup>61</sup> An example is the Appalachian Grown certification program from the Appalachian Sustainable Agriculture Project (<http://asapconnections.org/tools-for-farmers/appalachian-grown-certification>).

<sup>62</sup> An example is the Fields of Gold Farm Trail in Virginia’s Shenandoah Valley (<http://www.fieldsofgold.org>).