

10 CARDINIA'S COMMUNITY FOOD STRATEGY 2018-26

FILE REFERENCE INT1885983

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RECOMMENDATION

That Council:

Endorses the Final Community Food Strategy and Action Plan 2018 - 26

Attachments

1 Cardinia's Community Food Strategy and Action Plan 2018-26 47 Pages

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Following extensive initial community and stakeholder engagement, *Draft Cardinia's Community Food Strategy and Action Plan 2018 - 26* was available for public exhibition during the month of September 2018. Residents and other stakeholders were encouraged to provide feedback either online, face-to-face, in writing or over the phone. Council received twenty responses. Feedback from the exhibition period has now been incorporated into the final document, which is being presented for endorsement.

BACKGROUND

The *Cardinia Community Food Strategy and Action Plan 2018 - 26* is the first of its kind for Cardinia Shire. It provides a point of integrated strategic direction and action to focus and align all of Council's existing and future work across the food system. It identifies the issues facing the municipality and sets out a plan for how we can work together internally, and with the community, to ensure future generations have access to affordable, nutritious food.

The 'food system' comprises all processes involved in feeding a community; producing, processing, packaging, transporting, marketing, consuming and disposing of food. Food is increasingly becoming more central to the work of local government with the recognition that the food system impacts significantly across many areas of Council operations including waste management and recycling, health and wellbeing, sustainability, land use planning and economic development.

Extensive community engagement over the last two years has drawn on previous work, undertaken during implementation of Healthy Together Cardinia, and has culminated in this Strategy; which outlines the community's vision for a healthy, sustainable, delicious and fair local food system. The Action Plan outlines actions that both Council, partner organisations and residents will take to achieve this vision.

Taking into consideration the challenges, opportunities, data, community consultation, existing commitment and policy context, the five strategies being addressed through the Community Food Strategy are to:

- Protect and utilise fertile land as a source of fresh food for current and future generations;

- Grow a vibrant local food economy which supports growers and enables people to access locally produced food;
- Enhance food knowledge, skills and culture within schools, workplaces, clubs and the wider community;
- Reduce and divert food waste from landfill and reuse water to grow food;
- Build capacity across the community to lead, participate in and support food system work.

Partnerships

Cardinia's Community Food Strategy and Action Plan 2018 - 26 documents the 'common agenda' for the Cardinia Food Circles Collective Impact Project. More than 20 organisations have committed to the vision and to leading or supporting actions within the Action Plan.

The committed partners include:

- Aligned Leisure
- Casey Cardinia Libraries
- Cardinia Food Network
- Cardinia Shire Council
- Conservation Volunteers Australia
- Country Women's Association (local branches)
- Healthy Eating Advisory Service Victoria
- Home Economics Victoria
- Kooweerup Regional Health Service
- Monash Health Community
- Monash University, Department of Nutrition, Dietetics and Food
- Pakenham Secondary College
- Pakenham Community Garden
- Port Phillip Water Catchment Management Authority
- Sikh Community
- South East Water
- Southern Migrant and Refugee Centre
- Stephanie Alexander Kitchen Garden Foundation
- Sustain: The Australian Food Network
- The Community Grocer
- Victorian Eco Innovation Lab
- Victorian Farmers Federation (Cardinia branch)

Proposed actions

A total of 67 actions have been proposed, of these 18 will be led by Council. To deliver the shared vision and agreed strategies, the key actions for Council include:

Action	Business Unit Lead	Timeframe
1.1.2 Review and update the Cardinia Shire Community Garden Policy and Guidelines	TBC	2019
1.1.9 Implement key actions from the Western Port Green Wedge Management Plan.	Strategic Planning	2019 - 23
1.1.10 Advocate to State Government for funding to develop	Strategic	2019 - 23

Green Wedge Management Plans for the two remaining Green Wedge areas in Cardinia Shire.	Planning	
1.1.11 Consider the role of urban agriculture within open space in the Open Space Strategy.	Active Communities	2020
1.1.12 Scope the inclusion of community orchard plantings and expansion of existing Pakenham Community Garden as part of development of new master plan for PB Ronald Reserve.	Active Communities	2020
1.1.13 Continue to participate in the Eastern Region Pest Animal Network, advocating for the development of a regional pest animal strategy to address issues including deer.	Environment and Heritage	2018 - 26
1.1.14 Advocate for healthy food systems through the Interface Councils advocacy group	CEO	2018 - 26
1.2.5 Conduct research into the location, number and proximity of food access points within Cardinia Shire. (consider proximity to children's settings, area of food desert, ratio of essential to non-essential outlets and overlay with food affordability data)	Community Strengthening	2019 - 20
1.2.10 Cardinia Cultural Centre to work with catering provider to implement Victorian Healthy Choices.	Arts	2019 - 20
1.2.12 Undertake a re-brand of active recreation centre kiosks to promote healthy choices	Active Communities	2019 - 26
1.2.13 Investigate opportunities and funding to further support the agri-food sector across Cardinia Shire	Economic Development, Tourism and Major Projects	2018 - 26
1.2.16 Consult with the Cardinia Food Network regarding the Arts and Culture Strategy including opportunities for collaboration on exhibitions and edible food plantings.	Arts	2019 - 21
1.3.2 Review recreational facilities standards to identify gaps and opportunities to enable healthy choices: kitchen facilities and drinking fountains for public use.	Active Communities	2019
1.3.15 Continue to support a regional approach to healthy food systems through the SE Regional Prevention Leadership Group and the Regional Food Network	Community Strengthening	2019 - 26
1.3.22 Review and update the Cardinia Shire Council Healthy Food and Beverage Policy	People and Culture	2019
1.4.3 Implement key actions from the Cardinia Shire Waste and Resource Recovery Strategy	Infrastructure Services	2019 - 23
1.4.5 Continue to develop feasibility and advocate for alternative water sources for local producers.	Economic Development,	2019 - 26

	Tourism and Major Projects	
1.5.8 Support Cardinia Food Network members through the Community Leadership Program	Community Strengthening	2018 - 19

Measuring success

Progress across the Action Plan will be reviewed annually as part of the yearly review process for Cardinia Shire's Liveability Plan. This annual review process will involve organisations and groups that are leading the key actions to report to the Cardinia Food Circles Steering Group on their respective actions, further embedding collaboration and the alignment of work across our network of key stakeholders.

POLICY IMPLICATIONS

The Draft Cardinia Community Food Strategy directly aligns to the 'Food' policy domain within *Cardinia Shire's Liveability Plan 2017-29*, which sits alongside and integrates with the Municipal Strategic Statement (Cardinia's Planning Scheme).

It also supports and reinforces Council's internally adopted 'Cardinia Food Security Principles' and aligns to The *Urban and Regional Food Declaration*, of which Cardinia Shire Council became a signatory in November 2017.

Council's work and role in this area is also determined by relevant Victorian policy. The *Public Health and Wellbeing Act 2008* highlights Council's role in planning for the health and wellbeing of the municipality. The Victorian Public Health and Wellbeing Plan's priority area 'Healthy eating and active living' focuses on increasing fruit and vegetable consumption and reducing consumption of discretionary food and drink.

Plan Melbourne is the Victorian Government's plan to manage growth in the city and suburbs to the year 2050. It seeks to integrate long-term land use, infrastructure and transport planning through the State and Local Planning Schemes and includes a number of policies which particularly impact the food system.

Through the Interface Group of Councils, Cardinia has played a key advocacy role to protect Melbourne's foodbowl. The most recent report: *Food for thought: Challenges and opportunities for farming in Melbourne's foodbowl* was published in July 2018

RELEVANCE TO COUNCIL PLAN

the best outcomes for the local community having regard to the long term and cumulative effects of decisions. In seeking to achieve its primary objective, a Council must promote the social, economic and environmental viability and sustainability of the municipality.

The Cardinia Community Food Strategy provides an example of integrated planning, directly supporting delivery of a number of Council objectives and strategies, which were detailed in the previous Draft Food Strategy Report.

The Community Food Strategy specifically relates to the Council Plan strategy 2.4.2 - Enhance food literacy and security within the community.

CONSULTATION/COMMUNICATION

Public exhibition of the Draft Community Food Strategy and Action Plan took place for four weeks during September 2018. A total of 20 responses were received, with detail provided in the attached summary.

Stakeholders and community members could provide feedback on the strategy in a number of ways including:

- Online survey through Council's 'Have Your Say' page
- Face-to-face at one of the six drop-in sessions held across Pakenham, Lang Lang, Garfield and Emerald
- Cardinia Food Network meeting
- Cardinia Food Circles Steering Group meeting
- Calling, emailing or writing to the Healthy Communities Coordinator

The opportunity to provide feedback on the draft strategy was communicated through:

- Council's website 'Have Your Say' page
- Council's website - 'What's On'
- Council's website - 'News'
- Media release
- Posters at drop-in session venues
- Social media (Facebook and Instagram)
- Cardinia Food Movement Newsletter
- Direct email to everyone involved in the initial consultation and other stakeholders (e.g. food system experts)
- Network meetings

FINANCIAL AND RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS

Implementation of actions assigned to Council within the Action Plan will be undertaken within existing resources. This existing investment will be used to leverage further investment from other levels of government, partner organisations, sponsorship and philanthropists.

CONCLUSION

The Cardinia Community Food Strategy and Action Plan 2018 - 26 has now been finalised, following extensive community engagement of the last two years. The strategy directly aligns to the Council Plan, Cardinia Shire's Liveability Plan and Municipal Strategic Statement. It is the first of its kind for Cardinia Shire and positions Council as a leader in supporting and establishing community food systems that enhance the health of people, communities, the environment and our local economy.

It is recommended that Council endorses the Final *Community Food Strategy and Action Plan 2018 - 26*. Once endorsed, the document will be professionally designed to maximise communication with community members and the partners.

Food Circles



CARDINIA SHIRE COMMUNITY FOOD STRATEGY AND ACTION PLAN 2018 - 26



Prepared by:

Cardinia Shire Council

Community Strengthening Unit

in association with Sustain: The Australian Food Network

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UNDERPINNING ANY DISCUSSION OF FOOD AND AGRICULTURE ARE THE NATURAL SYSTEMS THAT SUSTAIN THE DIVERSE RANGE OF PEOPLE WHO CALL THIS PLACE HOME.

THE FIRST AND LONGEST TO DO SO ARE THE BUNURONG, BOON WURRUNG AND WURUNDJERI PEOPLE OF THE KULIN NATION, TO WHOM WE PAY OUR RESPECTS: TO THEIR ELDERS PAST, PRESENT AND FUTURE AS THE TRADITIONAL CUSTODIANS OF THIS LAND.

Contents

Acknowledgment of Country	2
Our vision	4
Introduction - we are what we eat	5
A focus on outcomes	6
What is a food system?	1
Growing a health-enhancing food system	1
A whole of community approach	2
Roles	2
How this strategy has been created	4
Policy context	5
Achieving our vision - our strategies	7
Strategy 1: protecting and utilising fertile land as a source of fresh food for current and future generations	8
Strategy 2: growing a vibrant local food economy that supports local farmers and food businesses and increases access to affordable, local and healthy food.	12
Strategy 3: enhancing food knowledge, skills and culture within schools, workplaces, clubs and the wider community.	16
Strategy 4: reducing and diverting food waste and reusing water to grow food.	20
Strategy 5: building capacity across the community to lead, participate in and support food system work.	2
Measuring success	5
Acknowledgements	5
List of partners	7
References	8
Appendix 1: Consultation summary	0

Our vision is a healthy, delicious, sustainable and fair food system for all Cardinia Shire residents.

A healthy food system

**promotes the health of people
and enhances the natural environment.**

A delicious food system

**nourishes, celebrates and enjoys
a diverse range of local food and cultures.**

A sustainable food system

**strengthens our local economy and builds the capacity
and resilience of our communities.**

A fair food system

**makes nutritious food accessible and affordable
to everyone across our communities.**

Introduction - we are what we eat

Food sits at the centre of our lives.

It shapes our health and wellbeing, influences the landscape in which we live, impacts the strength of our economy and the vibrancy of our culture.

All of us are involved in our food system, 'our farmers and fishers who draw on natural resources to produce food; our people and industries who transform, transport and sell food; and our families and communities, who grow, buy, cook and eat food.'¹

Cardinia Shire is blessed with fertile farmland, innovative farmers and food businesses, and a rich diversity of food cultures, skills and knowledge.

Although we have these key ingredients for a vibrant, strong and resilient food system, we are facing multiple challenges. Challenges that require all of us to work together.

Which is what this Community Food Strategy is all about.

It is a collective response to the challenges and opportunities we face, informed by a participatory, people-led consultation process, previous work across the region and a wide range of research.

It sets out the strategies and actions for the work all of us need to do in order to achieve our vision.

¹ DAFF 2013.

A focus on outcomes

Cardinia Shire's *Liveability Plan 2017-29* provides a clear planning framework to ensure Cardinia Shire is a liveable, resilient community where the environment flourishes and residents are healthy, included and connected.

Aligned to the *Victorian Public Health and Wellbeing Outcomes Framework* and *Plan Melbourne 2017 – 2050*, the *Liveability Plan* identifies the top seven health priorities for Cardinia Shire, and outlines the key *Liveability Policy Domains* required to drive action (see figure 1).

Food has been identified as one of the *Liveability Policy Domains* and includes the following objective and strategies:

Objective

By 2026, increase access to affordable, nutritious food.

Strategies

- Protect and utilise fertile land as a source of fresh food for current and future generations.
- Grow a vibrant local food economy which supports growers and enables people to access locally produced food

- Enhance food knowledge, skills and culture within schools, workplaces, clubs and the wider community
- Reduce and divert food waste from landfill and reuse water to grow food

Increasing access to affordable and nutritious food is one objective within the Plan, working towards the ultimate long-term outcome of *reducing obesity* within Cardinia Shire.

Obesity is a complex, wicked problem and will take coordinated action across all *Liveability Policy Domains* to successfully address.

Evidence shows that 80% of obesity prevention efforts should be focussed on addressing the food system.

The *Liveability Plan Outcomes Framework* identifies a suite of short, medium and long-term outcomes to be achieved over the 12-years of the Plan.

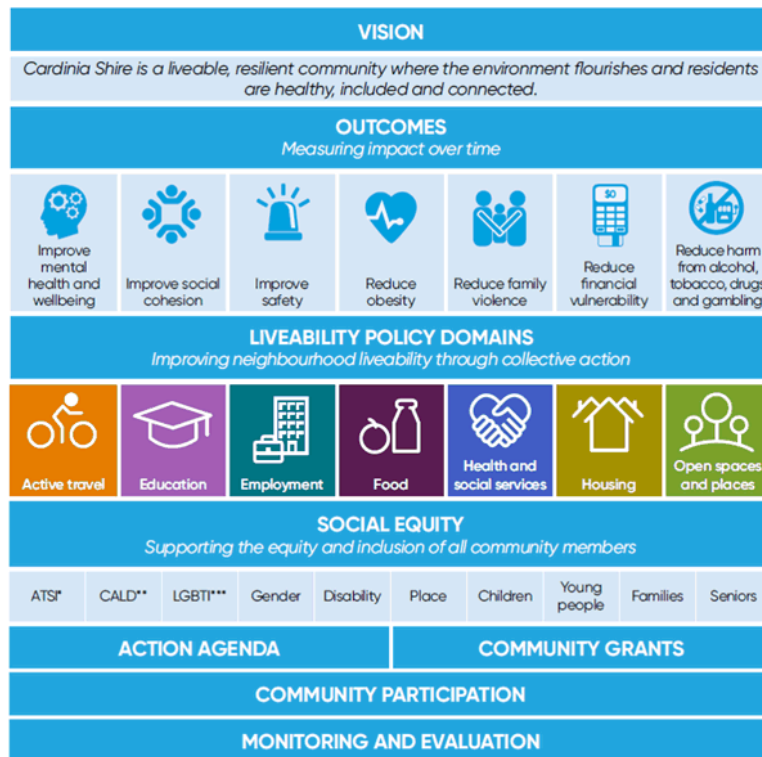


Figure 1. Cardinia Shire's Liveability Plan 2017 - 29 Framework

The outcomes that this strategy aims to achieve over the next eight years include:

Short-term outcomes

- Increased advocacy for the community food system
- New policies, strategies and plans support the community food system
- New partnerships are established and existing partnerships are strengthened to support the community food system
- New public spaces are designed and built to support the community food system
- There is an increased workforce capacity (including volunteers) to support the community food system
- New and existing funding is aligned to community food system activities.

Medium-term outcome

- Increased access to affordable, nutritious food

What is a food system?

Our food system includes everything that it takes to get food on our plate, from farming, storing, processing, transporting, marketing, selling, cooking, eating and then disposing of our food waste.

Food systems are complex and there are many ways to illustrate the relationships across and between their various components, as shown below:



Figure 2. The components of our food system

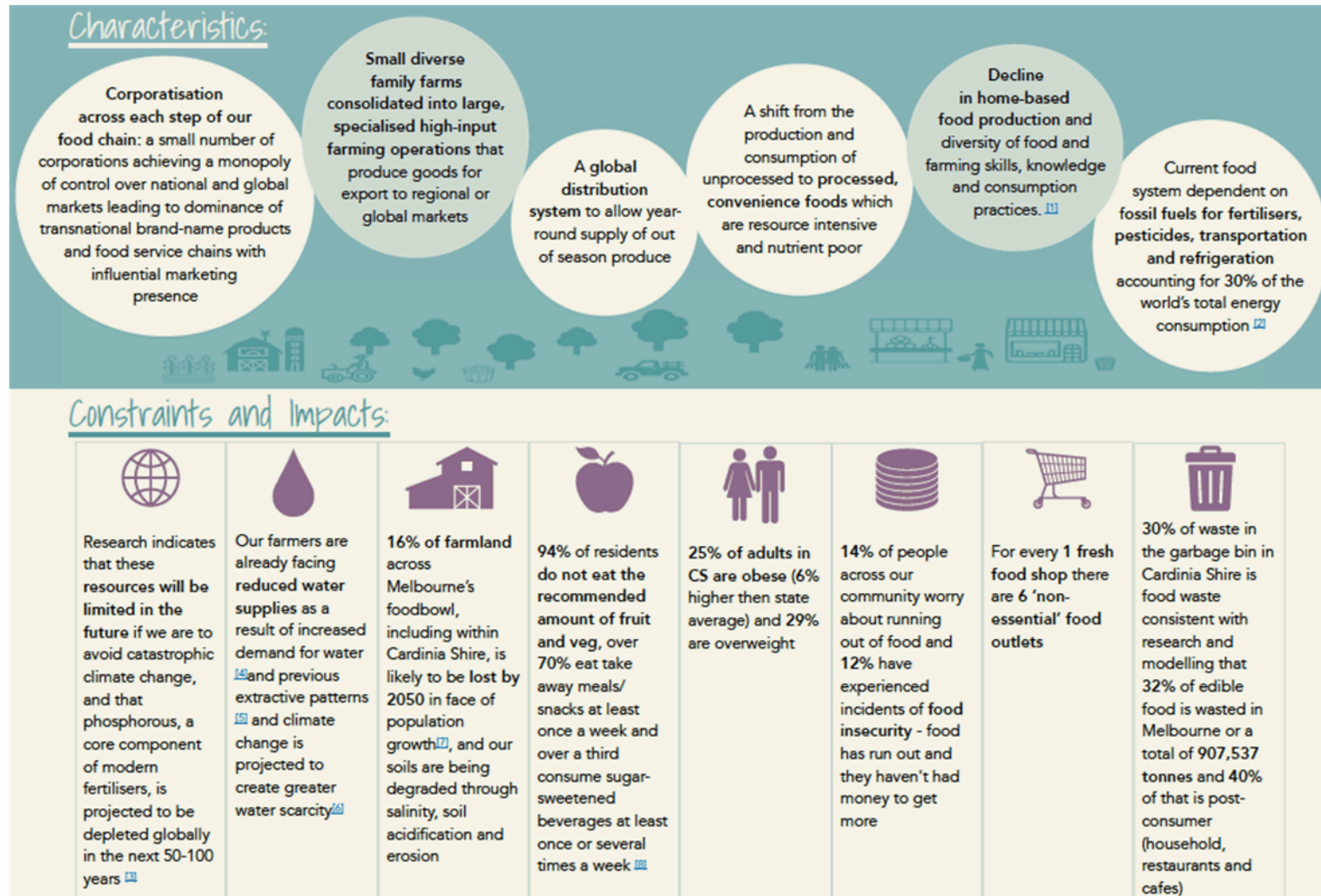
In short, our local food system is shaped by and shapes in turn, all aspects of our life from the culture that informs our food choices, to our environment that determines what can be grown, where and when; and the economic and political forces that shape which foods we can access and how.

Like the rest of Australia and the world, Cardinia is now part of a globalised food system. In earlier decades, what we bought and ate was often grown and produced locally. Now much of what we buy and eat comes from other parts of Australia and all around the world.

"I don't really know what is grown locally, I like the idea but I don't know how to source is and what is local" – local resident at Kitchen Table Talk

"Buying fresh local produce is out of reach" – local resident at Kitchen Table Talk

This dominant way of growing, distributing and buying food is termed the global corporate agri-food system, and key elements, impacts and future constraints of this system are shown on the next page.



The modern agri-food system has created a culture of 'food from nowhere'² breaking the age-long connection of people and food in many forms including physical disconnection and loss of knowledge of 'where, how and by whom foods are produced'³.

As can be seen above, this system has created an unsustainable "foodprint" for our food, with significant environmental, health and social challenges as we enter an era of unprecedented climate change, restraints of key resources, and population growth.⁴

Growing a health-enhancing food system

Concerned about these constraints and impacts, communities across Australia and the world are developing a diverse range of alternatives to the dominant global agri-food system. Defined by their values and benefits, these are commonly known as local food systems or community food systems, whilst fully recognising the influences and linkages with non-local factors.

² Bove and Dufour, 2001, p. 55.

³ Scrinis, G. 2007. P 116

⁴ Sheridan, J., Carey, R. and Candy, S. 2016.

This Community Food Strategy is focused on the food system within Cardinia Shire and what we can do to strengthen it. At the same time, our 'local' food system is shaped by many factors and relationships beyond our boundaries. These include state and national legislation and policy, climate change, and costs of inputs and labour and of course our farmers and businesses have vital trade and exchange relationships with other parts of Australia and the world.

Community Food Systems are defined as '*collaborative efforts to build more locally based, self-reliant food economies, one in which sustainable food production, processing, distribution and consumption is integrated to enhance the economic, environmental and social health of a particular place.*'⁵

They are characterised by:

- equitable access to healthy food by all community members
- a resilient, thriving local farm and food economy that connects producers and consumers, sustains our farm and food businesses and creates jobs and income across the community

⁵ Feenstra, G. 2002. .p. 100

- a culture of celebrating and valuing healthy local food, farmers and cooking and growing skills
- supportive food and agricultural policies ⁶

Research shows that *'such systems can significantly enhance the health and wellbeing of communities, improve the availability of and access to nutritious food, strengthen the local economy and revitalise urban and natural environments'*.⁷

This strategy charts a path towards a health-enhancing Cardinia community food system. It is based on a systems' understanding that in order to walk that path and reach our vision, we need to work across multiple areas to grow a thriving local food economy, enhance local food knowledge, skills and culture, and protect, utilise and sustain our farmland and other vital natural resources.

A whole of community approach

The challenges we are facing in food, farming and health across Cardinia Shire are complex and interlinked, and require a whole of community response that involves our schools, farms, businesses,

organisations, residents and local government working together towards a shared vision. To organise this collaboration across our community, we are using the framework of collective impact, a framework based on the knowledge that individual actions and efforts are limited, but when we work collectively towards a common aim we maximise our impact. That means this Community Food Strategy is a multi-stakeholder initiative, with actions being led and supported by a range of organisations and community groups, as well as Cardinia Shire Council.

Roles

Collective Impact Backbone

The backbone in collective impact oversees the coordination of all the various activities and partners involved in an initiative. The six key functions of a backbone organisation are to: guide vision and strategy, support aligned activities, establish shared measurement practices, build public will, advance policy and mobilize funding. *Sustain: The Australian Food Network* currently provides the backbone function for 'Food Circles'.

⁶ *ibid*

⁷ Heart Foundation, VEIL and VicHealth. 2011. p. 2.

Cardinia Food Circles Governance Group

The role of the Cardinia Food Circles Governance Group is to provide governance oversight, strategic coherence and management of the detailed, day to day work of the Cardinia Food Circles project team and initiatives. The governance group is made up of key senior staff members from Cardinia Shire Council and Sustain: The Australian Food Network, as well as Cardinia Food Circles project staff.

Steering Group

The Cardinia Food Circles Steering Group is made up of key stakeholders whose work is leading or supporting key actions and activities across the wider initiative. These key partners span local and regional health organisations, education and research institutions, food network members, community organisations and local government staff. The role of the group is to guide the vision and strategy of the Cardinia Food Circles initiative, and to align work with, advocate and promote the shared vision and strategy.



The Cardinia Food Network

Formed in 2017 as part of the Cardinia Food Circles initiative, the role of this network of community food leaders, teachers, farmers, local business owners and passionate residents is to support, enable, inform and where appropriate lead food strategy actions across the community and within their circles of influence.

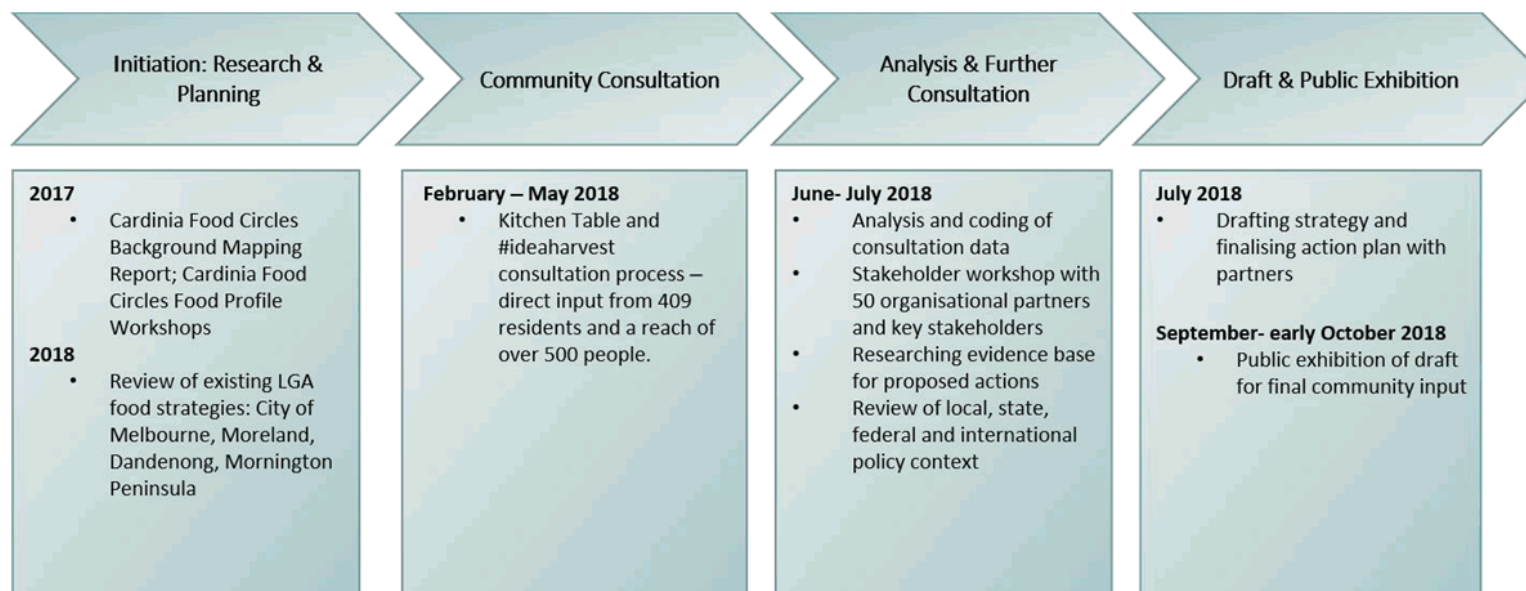
The community

Our wider community of community groups, organisations, residents, businesses and networks have the pivotal role in achieving our vision. Their engagement, support, insight and involvement will underpin many of the community food strategy actions.

How this strategy has been created

The strategy was shaped and informed by an extensive and in-depth participatory community consultation process, that reached over 500 people. Modelled on participatory people's food policy processes from other parts of the world, including Canada, the UK and Australia, this approach was centred on a series of Kitchen Table Talks (or round table consultations), led by local community members (our community food 'animators') across the Shire, to build collective and democratic ownership of the strategy.

So while this is a multi-stakeholder food strategy, with input and ownership from a range of organisations, it is also, in essence, a people's food plan, directly informed and shaped by the lived experiences, knowledge and ideas of local people who live, work and play in Cardinia Shire. Wider research and analysis of our local food system, a review of other local government area food strategies and the global, national, state and local policy context has also informed the strategy. The process is shown below:



Policy context

Cardinia Shire's Food System Strategy provides strategic direction for implementation of the 'Food' Policy Domain within *Cardinia Shire's Liveability Plan 2017-29*. This strategy sits within the context of other policies and strategies at a global, national, state and local level. Currently there is no state or federal policy platform for creating sustainable food systems at the local scale.

Global	National	State	Local
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Sustainable Development Goals formed by Member States of the United Nations: <i>SDG 02 aims to 'End hunger, achieve food security, and improve nutrition and promote sustainable agriculture'</i>. • Milan Urban Food Policy Pact 2015, signed by 174 cities across the world including Melbourne. The Pact commits signatories to <i>'work to develop sustainable food systems that are inclusive, resilient, safe and diverse'</i> • There are also a range of global networks with explicit focus on urban and regional food policy including the WHO Healthy Cities Project, 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Australia Department of Health's COAG Health Council identified an urgent need to limit the impact of unhealthy food and drinks on children. Ministers agreed to actions that limit the impact of unhealthy food and drinks on children and to consult with Ministers in other portfolios to collaboratively develop joint approaches that could be implemented in 2017. • Federal Policy, including the current government's \$4billion Agriculture White Paper and associated investments, impact our local food system in a range of ways including investment in transport and water infrastructure, the 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Victorian Public Health and Wellbeing Plan 2015-19 identifies "Healthy Eating and Active Living" as a key strategic direction • The Victorian Public Health and Wellbeing Outcomes Framework provides an approach to monitoring and reporting progress against collective efforts to achieve better health and wellbeing. • A range of other policies and plans at a State Government level directly influence our local food system including: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Plan Melbourne ○ Agriculture Victoria Strategy 2017-2027 ○ Food and Fibre Sector Strategy 2016-2025 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Cardinia Shire Council Plan • Cardinia Shire's Liveability Plan • Cardinia Planning Scheme • A number of other Council policies and plans integrate with the Community Food Strategy: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Access and Inclusion Policy ○ Arts and Culture Policy ○ Aspirational Energy Transition Plan ○ Investment Attraction Framework ○ Tourism Strategy ○ Cultural Diversity Policy ○ Food Security Principles ○ Integrated Water Management Plan

<p>100 Resilient Cities, the CITYFOOD network, the City-Region Food Systems and the C40 Food Systems Network.⁸</p>	<p>National Broadband Network and measures to strengthen drought and risk management for our primary producers.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Current policy includes \$500 million National Water Infrastructure Fund, \$2.5 billion concessional loan program for farmers and \$190 million for rural research and development. 	<p>accompanied by the Agricultural Infrastructure and Jobs Fund and Food Source Victoria Program</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Nature Strip Policy ○ Precinct Structure Plans ○ Reconciliation Action Plan ○ Waste and Resource Recovery Strategy ○ Westernport Green Wedge Management Plan
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⁸ IPES Food 2017.

Achieving our vision - our strategies

The following five strategies set the direction for achieving our vision of a healthy, delicious, sustainable and fair food system in Cardinia Shire.

Strategy 1: Protecting and utilising fertile land as a source of fresh food for current and future generations.
A fair food system

Strategy 2: Growing a vibrant local food economy which supports growers and enables people to access affordable, local and healthy food.

Strategy 3: Enhancing food knowledge, skills and culture within schools, workplaces, clubs and the wider community.

Strategy 4: Reducing and diverting food waste from landfill and reusing water to grow food.

Strategy 5: Building capacity across the community to lead, participate in and support food system work.

Levels of intervention

Given the complexity and breath of the food system and the challenges we are facing, we have to be strategic

about the interventions we make to leverage change and maximise impact.

The different levels of the food system at which we can intervene are shown below, ranging from the individual right up to the public policy level:

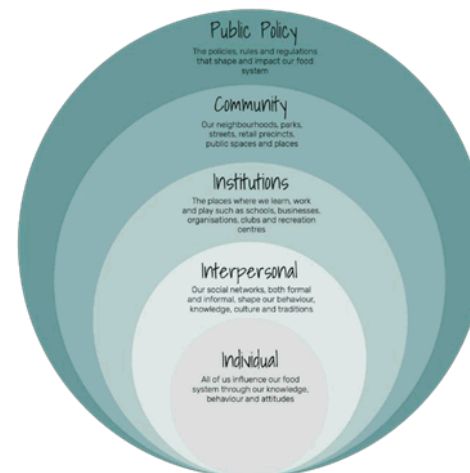


Figure 3. Socio-ecological model of health

In order to deliver our strategies, we are intervening and taking action across all of these levels, which have been informed through community and stakeholder input, as well as wider research and consultation.

Strategy 1: protecting and utilising fertile land as a source of fresh food for current and future generations

What the evidence tells us

Cardinia Shire contains some of Australia's richest agricultural soil, on which a diverse range of farm enterprises produce meat, dairy, eggs, vegetables, fruit, wine, nuts and wool⁹ and we're a key part of greater Melbourne's food bowl. Our urban areas also contain valuable food growing spaces that can be protected and activated to enable community engagement with food growing. The *Cardinia Shire Food Literacy and Food Security Survey 2018* found that 54 per cent of respondents grow both fruit and vegetables for the household, and that while 78 per cent of respondents had not been involved in a community garden, 18 per cent indicated that they would like to be in the future.

Urban and Peri-Urban Agriculture was officially recognized by the World Food Summit in 2002 and at the United Nations High Level Task Force on the Global Food Crisis in 2008, as a strategy to alleviate urban food insecurity and build cities that are more resilient to crisis.¹⁰ The Food and Agriculture Organisation have initiated a multi-disciplinary 'Food in Cities' program that is working to integrate food and agriculture as part of urban land use planning and build capacity in urban agriculture across the globe.¹¹ Further to this, Foodprint Melbourne¹² has identified priority actions to protect land in Cardinia Shire and other peri-urban areas of Melbourne including:

- Strong and consistent policy signals to provide certainty regarding protection of farmland in the green wedge and peri-urban areas
- Promoting farm viability is as important as protecting farmland and action is needed at local and state government levels
- We need to build public support and awareness to help protect our land in the long term
- Proactive management and investment is needed to protect our 'fertile fringe'

⁹ Cardinia Shire: Economic Profile from Idcommunity: <https://economy.id.com.au/cardinia/value-of-agriculture>

¹⁰ FAO. 2012.

¹¹ Ibid.

¹² Carey, R., Sheridan, J. and Larsen, K. 2018.

What the community told us:

"It's criminal that good land is being covered with housing estates"

"We need events and media announcements that acknowledge and appreciate local farmers and food producers"

"Designate food bowl areas and encourage food growing industries"

"Community gardens need more work and activation, and more needs to be done so residents take full advantage of the produce grown"

Koo Wee Rup Community Garden



Forged through a partnership with Kooweerup Secondary College, community members and Kooweerup Regional Health Service, the community garden welcomes all locals.

Coupled with the all-access space at the Men's Shed, which in of itself is a community hub for students and elders alike, the garden offers the opportunities to grow food communally and share local and traditional knowledge as well as a place to create and display outdoor art, hold community events and celebrations. The Garden works closely with local schools to ensure that young people can develop life skills in managing and utilising a kitchen garden.

What action will we take?

Action	Lead	Timeframe	Budget	Partners
1.1.1 Design and implement a campaign to increase community awareness of the importance of our farmers and farmland that builds an advocacy platform for a static UGB and to respond to planning amendments.	Cardinia Food Network	2019	N/A	VFF – Cardinia CFC Backbone
1.1.2 Review and update the Cardinia Shire Community Garden Policy and Guidelines	Cardinia Shire Council	2019	CSC - Within existing budget	CFC Backbone
1.1.3 Activate community orchards around existing public fruit tree areas e.g. Apple Tree Park, Lakeside.	Cardinia Food Network	2019	Funding to be secured	CSC – Operations PCG
1.1.4 Investigate Conservation Volunteers Australia (CVA) work readiness urban agriculture program to support community food growing initiatives	Conservation Volunteers Australia	2019	CVA	CFC Backbone
1.1.5 Scope Urban Agriculture Facilitator role to sit with Conservation Volunteers Australia	Conservation Volunteers Australia	2019	CVA	CFC Backbone KRHS
1.1.6 Develop a briefing paper on other mechanisms for farmland protection including philanthropic partnerships as an advocacy tool for partnership brokerage.	CFC Backbone	2019	N/A	
1.1.7 Deliver accessible food growing community workshops and programs	Pakenham Community Garden	2019	Pakenham Community Garden	
1.1.8 Support farmers across Cardinia Shire to access learning and develop opportunities e.g. research and development, on farm demonstration etc	Port Phillip Water Catchment Management Authority	2019 - 23	Funding to be secured	CFN CFC Backbone
1.1.9 Implement key actions from the Western Port Green Wedge Management Plan.	CSC – Strategic Planning	2019 - 23	CSC - Within existing budget	
1.1.10 Advocate to State Government for funding to develop Green Wedge Management Plans for the two remaining Green Wedge areas in Cardinia Shire	CSC – Strategic Planning	2019 - 23	CSC - Within existing budget	

1.1.11 Consider the role of urban agriculture within open space in the Open Space Strategy.	CSC – Passive Reserves	2020	CSC - Within existing budget	CFC Backbone
1.1.12 Scope the inclusion of community orchard plantings and expansion of existing Pakenham Community Garden as part of development of new master plan for PB Ronald Reserve	CSC – Passive Reserves	2020	CSC - Within existing budget	CFN PCG
1.1.13 Continue to participate in the Eastern Region Pest Animal Network, advocating for the development of a regional pest animal strategy to address issues include deer.	CSC – Environment and Heritage	2019 - 20	CSC - Within existing budget	
1.1.14 Advocate for healthy food systems through the Interface Councils partnership with Foodprint Melbourne.	CSC – CEO	2019 - 26	CSC - Within existing budget	VEIL

Strategy 2: growing a vibrant local food economy that supports local farmers and food businesses and increases access to affordable, local and healthy food.

What the evidence tells us

Cardinia Shire provides the second highest share of agricultural production value across local government areas in Melbourne's food bowl, second only to Baw Baw Shire¹³. However, for every fresh food outlet, there are six fast food outlets¹⁴ and for a family receiving government support, the cost of a healthy food basket is more than 30 percent of their income¹⁵. Research into increasing access to fresh, healthy food across a range of settings has identified key points of intervention including affordability (i.e. finding ways to make healthier food the easier, and cheaper, option) and accessibility (increasing the proportion of fresh food outlets and within existing retail outlets, increasing the presence, visibility and promotion of healthy fresh food)¹⁶.

Research also tells us that communities who live closer to healthy, affordable food retail outlets tend to have healthier eating habits and a lower risk of obesity and diet-related diseases, but also that healthy food retail stimulates economic activity¹⁷. Food security is a human right. The 1948 Universal Declaration of Human Rights includes the right of every person 'to an adequate standard of living for himself and his family, including adequate food, clothing and housing'¹⁸. The International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights 1966 was ratified by Australia in 1975, and requires that all state parties take immediate steps to guarantee the right to freedom from hunger for all persons in their jurisdiction; and to take appropriate steps towards the 'progressive realization' of the right to adequate food'.¹⁹ During consultation, challenges around healthy food affordability and access were the second and fourth most frequently cited issue and the lack of support for farming and food businesses was the fifth most cited issue. We also heard about the challenges in accessing culturally appropriate foods.

¹³ Deloitte Access Economics. 2016

¹⁴ Cardinia Shire Council. 2017. Liveability Plan. 2017-29.

¹⁵ *ibid*

¹⁶ Physical Activity Nutrition Obesity Research Group. 2016.

¹⁷ Bell et al. 2013

¹⁸ United Nations..

¹⁹ Committee on Economic, Cultural and Social Rights, 1999

What the community told us:

"local farmers don't have local outlets for their food"

"money and power dictate what goes where. There is no support for the small guy i.e. small farms and food businesses"

"Currently members of our community have to travel to Dandenong or Springvale to access food that are specific to our cultures"

"healthy food is not affordable"

The Community Grocer



The Community Grocer run weekly affordable fresh produce markets with a vision to support healthy connected communities. The Pakenham Community Grocer commenced in March 2018 and is one of 6 markets that the Community Grocer coordinates, in collaboration with local volunteers, that sell fresh fruits and vegetables at prices which are on average 50% lower than those found in the major supermarkets.

What action will we take?

Action	Lead	Timeframe	Budget	Partners
1.2.1. Conduct a healthy food basket audit to update Cardinia Shire food affordability data.	Monash University	2019	N/A	CSC – Social and Community Planning
1.2.2 Continue to develop and enhance the viability of the Community Grocer Pakenham and develop local procurement of diverse cultural foods including from KRHS Community Garden.	The Community Grocer	2019	CSC - Within existing budget	KRHS CFN
1.2.3 Establish a Cardinia Food Hub working group to identify a site, funding and partnerships	CFC Backbone	2019	N/A	
1.2.4 Secure funding, develop and launch a local food directory.	Cardinia Food Network	2019 -20	Funding to be secured	CFC Backbone
1.2.5 Conduct research into the location, number and proximity of food access points within Cardinia Shire. (consider proximity to children's settings, area of food desert, ratio of essential to non-essential outlets and overlay with food affordability data)	CSC – Social and Community Planning	2019 - 20	CSC - Within existing budget	
1.2.6 Scope funding, design and partners for new farmer training and enterprise incubation model at the Guru Nanak Dabar site, 30 Officer Road	Sikh Community	2019 - 20	Funding to be secured	CFC Backbone, CVA, CFN
1.2.7 Scope viability and funding for a multi-site/mobile The Community Grocer model.	The Community Grocer	2019 - 20	CSC - Within existing budget	KRHS CFN
1.2.8 Investigate partnership opportunities for Libraries to become local produce access points. e.g. with Community Grocer	Casey Cardinia Libraries	2019 - 20	N/A	CFN
1.2.9 Investigate best platform and partners to form and support a family farm and food business network within Cardinia Shire	Cardinia Food Network	2019 - 20	N/A	CFC Backbone
1.2.10 Cardinia Cultural Centre to work with catering provider to implement Victorian Healthy Choices.	CSC – Arts	2019 - 20	CSC - Within existing budget	MHC HEAS CFN

1.2.11 Scope framework, partners and funding for a Systematic Land Capability Assessment to assess and map agricultural land across the Shire as an advocacy and management tool for farmland protection.	CFC Backbone	2019 - 20	Funding to be secured	
1.2.12 Undertake a re-brand of active recreation centre kiosks to promote healthy choices	CSC – Leisure Facilities and Active Reserves	2019 - 26	Funding to be secured	MHC
1.2.13 Investigate opportunities and funding to further support the agri-food sector across Cardinia Shire	CSC - Economic Development, Tourism and Major Projects	2019 - 26	CSC - Within existing budget	CFC Backbone
1.2.14 Continue to support local businesses to participate in the Healthy Bites program.	Monash Health Community	2019 - 26	IHP funding	CFN
1.2.15 Investigate opportunities to couple emergency food relief provision with preventative interventions, working towards Community Food Centre models.	CFC Backbone	2020	N/A	
1.2.16 Consult with the Cardinia Food Network regarding the Arts and Culture Strategy including opportunities for collaboration on exhibitions and edible food plantings	CSC – Arts	2020 - 21	N/A	CFN

Strategy 3: enhancing food knowledge, skills and culture within schools, workplaces, clubs and the wider community.

What the evidence tells us

The *Cardinia Shire Food Literacy and Food Security Survey 2018* identified significant gaps in food knowledge and confidence across respondents²⁰. The settings where communities work, live, learn and play are key points of influence in enabling healthier food cultures across age groups and demographics²¹.

Recent benchmarking of Australian federal and state policy identified significant gaps in enabling healthy food environments and culture, particularly around a lack of regulations to reduce exposure of children to marketing of unhealthy food and an urgent need for pricing mechanisms to make unhealthy foods, especially sugary drinks, less affordable than healthy options²².

A wide range of research shows that our cultural 'norms' and values defining what is socially acceptable, desirable and appropriate to eat and feed others may be as or more important than physical environmental factors' in shaping our eating choices, and therefore our health²³

During consultation, disconnection from our local farmers and food and the loss of food knowledge, skills and culture were the first and third most frequently cited issues community members told us.

²⁰ *Cardinia Food Literacy and Household Food Security Survey 2018 – Preliminary findings.*

²¹ Baric L. 1993. 114-120; NSW Centre for Public Health Nutrition. 2005

²² Australian Prevention Partnership Centre and Deakin University. 2017.

²³ Friel, S., Hattersley, L. and Ford, L. 2015. P. 9

What the community told us:

"mum works until 7pm. She doesn't have enough time to cook, let alone grow food"

"our kids have little appreciation of how and where food is grown"

"Communities can assist schools in maintaining their gardens"

"there are no healthy options at school for lunch orders...lunch comes from the milkbar"

Achievement Program – Healthy Eating and Oral Health



The Achievement Program recognises early years services (kindergartens, long day care, family day care) that are creating a 'health promoting' setting for children to learn. In order to receive recognition for the healthy eating and oral health benchmark, a range of criteria must be met including: a healthy eating policy, opportunities to learn about food and healthy eating are embedded into the curriculum, consumption of fruit, vegetables and healthy food is promoted in line with Australian Guidelines and children are involved in healthy food experiences including growing, cooking and shopping. Currently 29 (40%) early years services in Cardinia Shire are working towards or have been recognised for creating healthy eating environments.

What action will we take?

Action	Lead	Timeframe	Budget	Partners
1.3.1 Conduct an audit and create list of public kitchen spaces for community use and hire	Cardinia Food Network	2019	N/A	CFC Backbone
1.3.2 Review recreational facilities standards to identify gaps and opportunities to enable healthy choices: kitchen facilities and drinking fountains for public use.	CSC – Leisure Facilities and Active Reserves	2019	CSC - Within existing budget	MHC
1.3.3 Implement the Pakenham Community School Farm Project	Pakenham Secondary College	2019	State Gov – Pick My Project	CFC Backbone SAKGF CVA
1.3.4 Implement the ‘Creating Bridges’ Sikh Community Kitchen Project	Sikh Community	2019	State Gov – Pick My Project	
1.3.5 Identify the schools developing Food Studies curriculum and engage them in the Healthy Schools Network	SAKGF	2019	N/A	MHC HEV
1.3.6 Pilot the Healthy Sporting Clubs Program in Cardinia Shire.	Monash Health Community	2019 - 20	IHP funding	CSC – Active Reserves
1.3.7 Identify and support a secondary school and early learning centre to pilot pleasurable food education.	SAKGF	2019 - 20	SAKGF	MHC
1.3.8 Investigate a pilot Green Gym program at potential sites including Cardinia Life	CVA	2019 - 20	CVA	MHC CFC Backbone
1.3.9 Deliver ‘LIFE’ program in Cardinia Shire through identifying and connecting with local groups and potential host sites.	SMRC	2019 - 20	SMRC	CFN
1.3.10 Continue to deliver food and healthy eating education programs including Kids in the Kitchen, Community Garden programs with Kooweerup Kindergarten and Childcare, fruit tree planting and education, recipe and harvest guides.	KRHS	2019 - 23	KRHS	
1.3.11 Support early learning centres and schools to meet the healthy eating benchmark of the Achievement Program through ongoing development and support of a schools’ network, including digital communication platform	Monash Health Community	2019 - 26	IHP funding	CFC Backbone CVA SAKGF

1.3.12 Continue to support Neighbourhood Houses and community centres to achieve the healthy eating benchmark of the achievement program.	Monash Health Community	2019 - 26	IHP funding	
1.3.13 Continue to implement Healthy Choices in sport and recreation centres	Aligned Leisure	2019 - 26	AL	MHC
1.3.14 Actively engage with state and national advocacy platforms and campaigns e.g. Parents Voice to build local engagement and momentum	Cardinia Food Network	2019 - 26	N/A	CFC Backbone
1.3.15 Continue to support a regional approach to healthy food systems through the SE Regional Prevention Leadership Group and the Regional Food Network	CSC – Social and Community Planning	2019 - 26	CSC - Within existing budget	
1.3.16 Design and deliver local food celebration event/s, (integrating with existing community events where feasible)	Cardinia Food Network	2019 - 26	Funding to be secured	VFF CFC Backbone
1.3.17 Collaborate with the Cardinia Food Network to embed food knowledge, skills and culture learning opportunities within Adult Workshop Programs and Displays.	CCL	2019 - 26	CCL	CFN
1.3.18 Establish a local Community Kitchen program with trained facilitators and deliver community kitchen programs across multiple sites	CWA local branches Cardinia Food Network	2020 - 21	Funding to be secured	CFC Backbone CCL
1.3.19 Scope, secure funding and partnerships for design and implementation of a shire-wide social marketing campaign aimed at increasing fruit and veg consumption	CFC Backbone	2020 - 21	Funding to be secured	MHC
1.3.20 Investigate site, funding and partners to replicate SMRC 'The Hive Model' in Cardinia: horticulture and hospitality training and enterprise development	SMRC	2021	Funding to be secured	Cardinia Food Network
1.3.21 Implement the Cardinia Food Literacy and Food Security Survey to measure progress against the 2018 baseline.	CFC Backbone	2022	Within existing budget	MU CSC – Social and Community Planning
1.3.22 Review and update the Cardinia Shire Council Healthy Food and Beverage Policy	CSC – People and Culture	2019	Within existing budget	Monash Health, CSC – Social and Community Planning

Strategy 4: reducing and diverting food waste and reusing water to grow food.

What the evidence tells us

High levels of food waste undermine food security²⁴ but also have a significant environmental footprint, ranking global food waste alongside the top green house gas emission nations would see food as the third highest emitter, sitting behind the USA and China²⁵.

The irrigation water used globally to grow food that is wasted would be enough for the domestic needs (at 200 litres per person per day) of 9 billion people - the number expected on the planet by 2050²⁶. 32 per cent of the average household bin in Cardinia Shire is food waste²⁷ and Cardinia Shire faces significant challenges to our water supply as we move further into an era of climate change with drying and warming expected across southern Australia, reducing the capacity of our farmers to produce food²⁸. Current groundwater allocations across the shire 'exceed sustainable levels and no further licences are being allocated'²⁹.

There is work being done to explore the feasibility of connecting our farmland with recycled water sources as has been done through the Werribee Irrigation District³⁰. Research shows that public perception of the use of recycled water is a critical issue, and that public information and marketing are necessary to ensure public support so that negative perceptions don't impact the uptake, use and viability including of farming businesses³¹.

During consultation, food waste was the ninth most frequently cited issue, and water access for farmers featured prominently in our producer interviews and discussions.

²⁴ Sheridan, J., Carey, R. and Candy, S. 2016, p. 45

²⁵ FAO 2013

²⁶ Stuart, T. 2009

²⁷ Cardinia Shire Council. 2017. Waste and Resource Recovery Strategy p. 35

²⁸ Sheridan, J., Carey, R. and Candy, S. 2016, p.24

²⁹ Cardinia Shire Council. 2015. Integrated Water Management Plan, p. 38

³⁰ Sheridan, J., Carey, R. and Candy, S. 2016, p. 27

³¹ Dolnicar, Hurlimann and Grun. 2011.

What the community told us:

"it's close to impossible for a young person to start farming on a small scale. There are no water licences being issued"

"We have a lack of water to grow our crops"

"Water licences are not available to farmers – why can't we use recycled water"

"We're not sure what to do about food waste except use leftovers where we can"

Cardinia Shire Waste and Resource Recovery Strategy



Cardinia Shire Council's Waste and Resource Recovery Strategy 2017-2026 provides a comprehensive roadmap for reducing and diverting food waste through increasing resource recovery services, advocacy and education.

What action will we take?

Action	Lead	Timeframe	Budget	Partners
1.4.1 Advocate to ensure the scoping process for the Recycled Water-Use Strategy reflects the needs of a diverse user group and provides target water users (food producers) with information about the distribution of recycled water as well as considers concerns re public perception/impact on market demand.	Cardinia Food Network	2019	N/A	VFF Cardinia branch
1.4.2 Design, construct and develop Community Compost Hub and support other interested sites identified through the consultation (KRHS, Beaconsfield)	Pakenham Community Garden	2019	CSC – successful Community Wellbeing Support Grant	CFN
1.4.3 Implement key actions from the Cardinia Shire Waste and Resource Recovery Strategy	CSC – Waste Management Services	2019 - 23	CSC – within existing budget	
1.4.4 Promote compost rebate opportunities and wider campaigns and initiatives across network platforms	Cardinia Food Network	2019 - 23	N/A	CFC Backbone CSC – Waste Management Services
1.4.5 Continue to develop feasibility and advocate for alternative water sources for local producers	CSC – Economic development	2019 -26	CSC – within existing budget	CFN SEW

Strategy 5: building capacity across the community to lead, participate in and support food system work.

What the evidence tells us

Research and analysis of governance and power structures across our complex global food system have identified an urgent need for more participatory consultation, planning and decision making to ensure socio-ecological, health and economic equity³². This work has led to increasing recognition of the importance of food citizenship and food sovereignty, to expand the capacity of 'citizens' to shape and inform policies and decisions that directly impact their lives, livelihoods and health³³.

Wide analysis of successful contemporary and historical food system initiatives to address health, economic and ecological challenges found that a key part of each success was a focus on involving 'citizens in particular places putting their creative energies together to come up with their own solutions' socially, politically and economically³⁴

Research into more participatory policy processes has found a range of advantages for both citizens and governments alike including: education (from and to each other), the building of trust and strategic alliances and better policy and implementation decisions³⁵

³²Pimbert, M. 2010.

³³ Weiler, M et al. 2015.

³⁴ Feenstra, G. 2001. P.101.

³⁵ Irvin & Stansbury, 2004, p. 56.

What the community told us:

"we need more grower and business networks and collaboration. We need to work together"

"it's hard to have a voice, feel gagged when attending Council meetings, restricted by process and protocols"

"we all need to be involved and share our passion to see change"

"members of our community are unaware of projects, issues and events happening around food"

Cardinia Food Network



The Cardinia Food Network is a collective of farmers, businesses, passionate local health workers, school teachers and local community members who came together through the Cardinia Food Circles project.

The network provides a platform for networking, collaboration, capacity building and mutual support across a diverse range of community members and sectors across our local food system.

What action will we take?

Action	Lead	Timeframe	Budget	Partners
1.5.1 Identify research and support work that can be conducted by local tertiary students to leverage resources & build knowledge, capacity and interest in food system issues	CFC backbone	2018 - 26	Within existing budget	
1.5.2 Develop strategic research partnerships and programs to build capacity in Collective Impact and developmental evaluation	CFC backbone	2018 - 26	Within existing budget	CSC – Social and Community Planning
1.5.3 Ensure continuous communication with partners and stakeholders through the Cardinia Food Movement website, social media and newsletter	CFC backbone	2018 - 26	Within existing budget	CSC – Social and Community Planning
1.5.4 Mobile funding through grant applications, partners and advocacy to state and federal governments	CFC backbone	2018 - 26	Within existing budget	CSC – Social and Community Planning
1.5.5 Continue to build and develop the Strategic Steering Group of the Cardinia Food Circles Initiative, strengthening partnerships, local ownership and collective impact knowledge	CFC backbone	2018 - 26	Within existing budget	
1.5.6 Deliver annual Cardinia Food Forums as the mechanism to guide vision and strategy, support aligned activities and establish shared measurement.	CFC backbone	2018 - 26	Within existing budget	CFN
1.5.7 Build capacity of Cardinia Food Network members to understand food system issues, in leadership, advocacy and to become an incorporated group.	CFC backbone	2018 - 20	Within existing budget	
1.5.8 Support Cardinia Food Network members through the Community Leadership Program	CSC – Community Development	2018 - 19	CSC - Within existing budget	CFN
1.5.9 Explore subsidised training opportunities through the Neighbourhood House Network for food network members and associates	CFC backbone	2019 - 20	N/A	CSC – Community Development

Measuring success

The Action Plan for the Cardinia Community Food Strategy identifies key interventions for the next eight years across five strategic areas. The detailed action plan is attached as a separate document along with outcomes, measures and a long-term outcomes framework. Progress across the Action Plan will be reviewed annually as part of the yearly review process for Cardinia Shire's Liveability Plan. This annual review process will involve organisations and groups that are leading the key actions to report to the Cardinia Food Circles Steering Group on their respective actions, further embedding collaboration and the alignment of work across our network of key stakeholders.

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- The businesses and organisations who hosted Kitchen Table Conversations or Idea Harvest Events including: Beaconsfield Baptist Church, Beaconhills College, Pakenham Secondary College, Lakeside College, Community College Gippsland, Bridgewood Primary School, Victorian Farmers Federation (Cardinia Branch), Country Women's Association (Officer Branch), O.My Restaurant, Bam Bam Italian, Living Learning Pakenham, Emerald Community House, Koo Wee Rup Regional Health, Nourish Natural Health, Cardinia Life, Lang Lang Community Centre, Cockatoo Community Hall, Cockatoo Senior Citizens, Cardinia Combined Churches Caring (4Cs), Outlook

Community Centre, Cockatoo Neighbourhood House, Pakenham Girl Guides, Shanangolden Village, Pakenham Hills Primary School and Upper Beaconsfield Community Centre.

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- The many Cardinia Shire Council officers who provided their time, expertise and advice throughout the entire process.

List of partner organisations and groups

AL	Aligned Leisure	MU	Monash University – Department of Nutrition, Dietetics and Food
CCL	Casey Cardinia Libraries	PSC	Pakenham Secondary College
CFC	Cardinia Food Circles Backbone (Sustain: The Australian Food Network)	PCG	Pakenham Community Garden
CFN	Cardinia Food Network	PPWCMA	Port Phillip Water Catchment Management Authority
CSC	Cardinia Shire Council	SEW	South East Water
CVA	Conservation Volunteers Australia	SAKGF	Stephanie Alexander Kitchen Garden Foundation
CWA	Country Women's Association	SK	Sikh Community
HEAS	Healthy Eating Advisory Service	SMRC	Southern Migrant and Refugee Centre
HEV	Home Economics Victoria	TCG	The Community Grocer
KRHS	Kooweerup Regional Health Service	VEIL	Victorian Eco Innovation Lab
MHC	Monash Health Community (IHP – Integrated Health Promotion)	VFF	Victorian Farmers Federation

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Appendix 1: Consultation summary

From February to May 2018 the Cardinia Food Movement embarked on a consultation process across Cardinia Shire to discuss and document challenges and solutions for our food, farming and health with local residents, families, community groups, schools and businesses.

OUR TEAM OF 10 COMMUNITY FOOD ANIMATORS REACHED:

	500+	local residents and collected direct input and ideas from 421 people through:
	30	Kitchen Table conversation events.
	1	Shire wide Idea Harvest campaign covering
	10	community markets and events and
	3	digital forums for people to share their ideas
	19	interviews with local food and farming businesses

WE HELD EVENTS AT:

- Community Centres
- Restaurants
- VFF and CWA meetings
- Girl Guides
- Libraries
- Neighbourhood Houses
- Private Residences
- Retirement Villages
- Primary Schools
- Secondary Schools
- Mens Sheds
- Community Gardens
- Food Relief Centre



- Pakenham
- Cockatoo
- Beaconsfield
- Officer
- Koo Wee Rup
- Lang Lang
- Pakenham Hills
- Avonsleigh
- Nar Nar Goon
- Upper Beaconsfield
- Mary Knoll

Methodology

Kitchen Table Talks

- Thirty Kitchen Table Talks (KTTs) were held across Cardinia Shire, attended by 272 people.
- These KTTs were between 1 - 2.5 hour discussions in which participants worked their way through a series of questions and themes related to our local food system.
- A 'Community Food Animator' facilitated each KTT. Ten local community members were recruited, trained and supported as 'animators' to lead these conversations across the shire.
- A volunteer scribe or Cardinia Food Circles team member documented each KTT.

In order to make participating in the consultation process more accessible for busy working families and time poor residents, the Food Circles project team and animators worked to develop a 'do it at home' option – the #ideaharvest campaign.

#Idea Harvest Campaign

- 1500 #ideaharvest postcard packs were distributed across Cardinia Shire.
- The postcard packs contained three questions for discussion, healthy recipes featuring local ingredients and instructions for hosting a conversation, documenting and sharing the main ideas generated by posting a photo to social media.
- Animators and the team also ran community market and event 'pop ups' to 'harvest ideas' in person, and conducted 10 interviews with local farm and food businesses and food relief providers.
- The campaign received direct input from 137 people.

The reports generated from each Kitchen Table Talk, along with the ideas and information gathered through the #Ideaharvest campaign were then analysed and coded across the main themes to identify the key issues, challenges, ideas and solutions put forward by the community.

What We Heard: Challenges

The top 10 concerns in order of what we heard the most



What We Heard: Strengths and Solutions

The top 10 solutions in order of what we heard the most

The infographic features a central white circle containing a numbered list of 10 solutions. This central circle is surrounded by 10 purple speech bubbles, each containing a community suggestion. The background is a teal color.

Community Feedback (Speech Bubbles):

- 'Pick a community space and turn it into a food hub - for growing and swapping fresh food but also to run a food coop to bulk order what cannot be grown. A cafe and gardening classes could help fund staff to run the facilities'
- 'Review the red tape. Make it easier for small businesses to be small businesses'
- 'School programs supporting gardening and healthy eating need to influence the student's home environment and connect with'
- 'Stop school canteens and tuck shops from selling sweets'
- 'Make farmers as cool as footballers'
- 'How about some more whole food, local food fast food outlets. Fast food doesn't have to mean junk food. More variety in food outlets including restaurants can only be a good thing for everybody'
- 'Designate "food bowl" areas and encourage food growing industries, providing employment as well'
- 'I'd love to see a communal composter machine in the community for business and locals to use. The compost could then be used in local gardening programs'
- 'Develop a plan for residents on how to establish a vegetable garden with minimal cost - using recycled water, making your own compost, sharing seeds, education on what to plant, how and when'
- 'Put a policy in place to protect soil'
- 'Find ways to engage people with cooking lessons/skills with emphasis on low cost but healthy meals'
- 'How about an uber waste (compost and packaging) collection service'

Top 10 Solutions (Central Circle):

1. Public Awareness and Education:
 - a) to reconnect with local food and farms
 - b) promote healthy eating, cooking, growing
2. Greater support and incentives for local food and farming businesses
3. Food Hubs and other direct distribution models that make it easier for the local population and businesses to buy local produce, and easier for farmers to sell it.
4. Support, enable, resource and educate: urban, public, community food growing
5. School cooking, gardening and farm programs with parent and community involvement
6. Increase access to healthy food especially healthy fast food and canteens, but also through coops, urban food growing and food swaps
7. Cooking/Preserving/Nutrition classes accessible for families, parents and children
8. Set aside and protect land for farming
9. Advocacy work to make big changes we want to see in protecting our land and promoting access to healthy fresh food
10. Composting initiatives and education to help households and businesses reduce food waste

The voices of children

The consultation process for this strategy worked deliberately to include the voices of children and young people. Kitchen Table Talks and #ideaharvest events were held at Beaconhills College, Community College Gippsland, Lakeside College, Pakenham Secondary College, Bridgewood Primary School, Pakenham Hills Primary School and Pakenham Girl Guides as well as PAVE Fun Fest and the Puffing Billy Toy Library Fair.

An insight into these conversations is provided through the quotes below:

- *'Make farmers as cool as footballers!'*
- *'For a young person in Officer, we need a place where we can buy fresh food – there is none'.*
- *'Gives us healthy food at school'.*
- *'It's hard to get food from our culture locally, we have to travel to get it'.*
- *'Food education should be made compulsory at school for all'.*
- *'Healthy food doesn't have to taste bad. Have healthy food that tastes good in the canteen'.*
- *'Schools should have more field trips to farms'.*
- *'We need to stop wasting food'.*
- *'Implement a sugar tax – like the smoking tax'.*
- *'We need a social media directory or platform that educates the community on local produce and where to find it'.*
- *'We need a food culture – need to all share our food cultures'.*
- *'We'd like to see more families cooking together'.*