

Food Strategy in Action

Greater Dandenong Regional
Food Strategy 2014.



GREATER Dandenong

A city connected by food



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A city connected by food

Message from the Mayor

Greater Dandenong has always been a place for food. From the beginning the region featured as a key location along seasonal indigenous migration patterns – a place to camp and gather food resources. From this early beginning Greater Dandenong grew as a location for farming and the processing and sale of regional farm produce – a thriving market city and hub for the supply and sale of fresh and value-added produce.

Today some things remain constant – Dandenong stands proud as one of Australia's key locations for food production and processing. Well located on the cusp of Gippsland's verdant farmlands, fuelled by world-class skills and capabilities, serviced by exceptional logistics and distribution resources, the food future for Greater Dandenong is bright.

Today the city is a base for successful national and international food brands – many of which are household names. Our suburbs are home to a myriad of micro-food businesses that provide unique opportunities to new migrants and those with an enterprising spirit. Our city centres and urban spaces host a wonderfully rich array of cafés and restaurants that showcase the cuisine of the region – one of the most diversely multi-cultural in Australia.

It is clear that as we look across the City, food is something that connects us all. It is a driver of employment and health and a significant part of our environmental, social, and cultural identity.

Through this Food Strategy we look towards the future to embrace new and innovative ways to think and act, so that together with our businesses, institutions and residents we can reinforce and grow Greater Dandenong's position as leader for food, a Food City we can all be proud of.

Jim Memeti
Mayor



Message from the CEO

This Food Strategy plays to the strengths of the City of Greater Dandenong. It supports and connects a diverse range of communities, our unique environment, our history, our community and our business sector in positive, productive and healthy ways.

Easily accessible from right across metro Melbourne and Eastern Victoria, Greater Dandenong is transforming itself as a food production, processing and cultural destination with enormous appeal to locals, visitors and investors.

The further development of our social, cultural and environmental capital is critical. As an inclusive Strategy created after extensive consultation and co-design, this Food Strategy inspires connections and new ways of thinking.

The features within the Strategy provide a platform for activities that will create a dynamic, vibrant and socially inclusive heart to our community, cultural programs bringing benefits right across the City, and new cluster-based business initiatives offer pathways to jobs and export growth. This Strategy is about bringing together the elements of our Food System to work better together.

Rich in cultural diversity, industry and cultural values, Greater Dandenong is also a place of relatively high unemployment and under-employment is subject to the social and economic challenges associated with low school retention, high levels of humanitarian settlement, and large industries with fluctuating work forces reliant on global markets. Implementation of this Food Strategy will build our resilience and will have a significant positive impact into the future.

Pride in place however is palpable in this city, and Greater Dandenong's rise as a diverse and sophisticated urban centre with its own unique personality is being widely embraced and celebrated.

John Bennie
CEO

The features within the Strategy provide a platform for activities that will create a dynamic, vibrant and socially inclusive heart to our community, cultural programs bringing benefits right across the City, and new cluster-based business initiatives offer pathways to jobs and export growth.

Executive Summary

This Food Strategy describes many aspects of Greater Dandenong's local food economy and provides unique insights into the relationships in place along the local food value chain.

It brings together expertise from across the food sector to investigate and propose a set of actions to grow opportunity, build resilience, and increases sustainability within the Greater Dandenong local food sector into the future.

The process implemented to co-design this Food Strategy highlights a strategic role for Greater Dandenong Council as an enabler of innovation, entrepreneurship and resilience across the local food system. It is clear that this is a system-wide opportunity that requires system-wide engagement.

The aims and expected outcomes from implementation of the GD Food Strategy are multiple and will be observed right across the local food system. The strategy engages in the changing food system landscape, anticipates opportunities and challenges, grows the food network, plans for action, and leads the way for a more secure food [system] future.

The GD Food Strategy is designed to be locally relevant, pragmatic, scalable and implementable. It recommends a set of separate projects and activities that together aim to create the right conditions for economic growth and opportunity creation, while ensuring long-term access to affordable healthy food produced within the Greater Dandenong food system.

Across a set of 3 pillars (A. Food Industry, B. World Food, C. Food Health), the Strategy seeks to better connect the food production, processing, retail, consumption and waste systems so as to increase interrelationships and generate shared value from both an economic and eco-sustainability perspective.



Return On Investment

Currently Greater Dandenong is home to over **1020 registered food businesses**. This includes over **80 food manufacturers** and **750 food retailers** (including 170 Restaurants, 90 convenience stores, and almost 300 take away outlets). The restaurants alone are estimated to be serving around **50,000 meals per week**. The local food sector currently **exports \$686m** per annum and **employs over 6900 people**, many of whom are Greater Dandenong residents.

These promising figures continue to grow every day, and the future looks bright. There is ongoing evidence of increased food related business and cultural activities, and demand for food products across Greater Dandenong.

Investing in the actions recommended within this strategy will create many positive economic, social, cultural and environmental outcomes for Greater Dandenong's food sector.

Outcomes include retail trade growth, increased food exports, new employment opportunities, additional tourism attraction, increased access to healthy food, more urban food production, and a stronger more respected brand position for Greater Dandenong as a food destination.

These outcomes will be observed over time, as a set of interrelated benefits that each can play a vital role in making Greater Dandenong 'A City Connected by Food'

Local and international forces continue to positively influence growth in the food sector. Greater Dandenong's population continues to increase as new residents choose to call the City home, bringing stronger demand for local, fresh food products and delivers stronger trade for the City's many restaurants and cafes.

The City's reputation as a destination for affordable fresh and multi-cultural food continues to find a receptive audience, with more and more Melbournians realising that great food experiences in **GrEATER Dandenong** are closer than they think.

Internationally there is steadily increasing demand for high-quality fresh and processed food products in the rising markets of Asia. Greater Dandenong is perfectly poised to take advantage of these opportunities.

With all of this positive potential, now is the right time to take action to accelerate this growth and optimise the benefits that can flow our businesses, residents and community.

This strategy identifies the necessary actions to take, yet it also acknowledges and addresses access to food to those within our community and focuses on healthier affordable food options being as accessible as possible.

Implementation of the actions outlined in this strategy would have a significant impact on increasing the figures above, and within **5 years a target of 20% increase** across those measures could be expected.

This would equate to almost **1400 more jobs** in food, an area that is often an opportunity for those entering the workforce, including those from multicultural backgrounds finding their place in this community.

This does not take into account the potential for additional staffing numbers should existing businesses employ more staff through longer opening hours and increased outdoor tables through the **"think outside the shop"** actions within this strategy.

Once implemented this Strategy could enable increases in exports in the vicinity of **\$135m** and increases in the number of business operating could see more than **15 new food manufacturers**, and **150 food retailers** (including 34 more restaurants) in Greater Dandenong **within 5 years**.

The predicted increases would also mean more than **12,000 additional meals per week** would be produced locally, and attract **80,000 more visitors** coming to Greater Dandenong to eat.

Not only does this have a return on investment for local businesses, locals employed in the sector and for Council itself through food registrations and rates income, but also the increases in economic activity have other benefits too.

There would be a significant rise in the **reputation of Greater Dandenong** as the place to go for a wonderful food experience. This recognition brings with it a sense of pride, shifts perceptions of the area, and has flow-on economic benefits into other retail and property sectors.

Not only does **food connect our city**, it enables us to celebrate together and provides employment opportunities to our residents, both now and into the future. Food has the potential to be a significant sector in our local economy into the future.



Strategy Objectives

Aims

The City of Greater Dandenong (CGD) is increasingly becoming an enabler of innovation, entrepreneurship and resilience across the local food system. The Greater Dandenong Regional Food Strategy aims to amplify this positive role, while identifying other leadership across the community that can play a vital role in making Greater Dandenong A City Connected by Food. It is clear that this is a system-wide opportunity that requires system-wide engagement.

The Strategy aims to:

1. Create the right conditions for economic growth and opportunity creation within the CGD Food System
2. Better connect the existing CGD food production, processing, retail, consumption and waste systems so as to increase interrelationships and generate shared value from both an economic and eco-sustainability perspective
3. Demonstrate, case study and propagate innovative practices and methodologies to integrate local food production and supply food within the urban (or peri-urban) context, thereby increasing positive impacts across the CGD food system.

Outcomes

The expected outcomes from implementation of the CGC Food Strategy are multiple and will be observed right across the CGD food system. The strategy engages in the changing food system landscape, anticipates opportunities and challenges, grows the food network, plans for action, and leads the way for a more secure food [system] future.

- The outcomes will include:
- Stronger, more resilient food enterprises
- Greater security and connectivity within local supply chains for healthy food
- More new businesses established with a focus on food
- Increased export of food products from CGD
- Increased visitation to CGD for food experiences by people from outside of the City
- Increased local patronage of CGD restaurants and local food outlets offering healthy food
- Increased levels of innovation within the CGD food economy
- New networks of 'food leaders' established to connect all aspects of the CGD food system
- Stronger credentials for the region as a sophisticated food processing and retail destination
- Increased opportunities for future jobs in food production, processing and retail
- Expanded opportunity for food processors (and subsequently their supply chains)
- More affordable and accessible healthy food for the local community.

Why do we need a food strategy?

A local food strategy can advance the policy and practice of the local and regional food system and expand both the opportunity for food processors, retailers (and subsequently their supply chains) and the affordability and access to healthy food for the local community.

From an economic perspective the existing and future expected employment generated by the food sector within the City of Greater Dandenong is significant. Furthermore, many food processing and food manufacturing businesses have cited strategic considerations for locating within the City of Greater Dandenong, in proximity to both Gippsland and metro Melbourne, and close to significant publicly funded research infrastructure, including the Australian Synchrotron and CSIRO. Added to this, the strategic initiatives set out within Plan Melbourne are significant and beneficial for the City of Greater Dandenong, and if harnessed effectively, could contribute substantially to the local food economy into future.

The Greater Dandenong Regional Food Strategy addresses:

- Food security
- Future of (food) manufacturing
- Increased export activity
- Land use planning
- Local community/lifestyle experiences
- Vital retail areas
- Visitor market and competition from other areas
- Carbon – local supply chain advantages and transport miles minimisation
- Use of recycled water, and options for underutilised land
- Healthy options for residents - access to affordable, healthy food
- Waste reduction to landfill
- Community needs (food welfare).

Trends in the Greater Dandenong Food System:

- A rise in nutrition awareness and a focus on healthy food
- Increased interest in food culture and re-localisation
- Strong ongoing demand locally grown products
- Enormous export opportunities accentuated by the rising middle class in Asia
- Innovations in food production and food manufacturing processes
- Local strengths and profile for multi-cultural and traditional foods
- Positive national outlook towards food policy in Australia.

From an economic perspective the existing and future expected employment generated by the food sector within the City of Greater Dandenong is significant.

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Source:
DAFF National
food plan
white paper
executive
summary

Food is a fundamental human need and an essential part of our daily lives. Food is more than sustenance vital for health and wellbeing-it has an important social, symbolic and economic role. Growing, preparing and sharing food is part of our family life, our culture and our society. It plays a part in our celebrations and is a source of entertainment and pleasure for many people.

Food creates employment and contributes to Australia's wealth-it is a valuable part of our nation's global trade. The foods we produce are reliant on the health of our natural resources, while the food industry also brings life and prosperity to communities across our country.

Every Australian is involved in the 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.

Australia has a strong, safe and stable food system and high levels of food security. Every year Australian farmers and fishers produce enough food to feed around 60 million people-far more than we can consume. Australia exports over half of the food it produces yet over 90 per cent of fresh produce sold here is also produced here.

Every Australian is involved in the 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.



Location, context and background

Location and Strategic Context

The City of Greater Dandenong LGA is located in the southeastern suburbs of Melbourne Metropolitan area, approximately 24km from the centre of Melbourne. In 2011, the City of Greater Dandenong was home to approximately 145000 people with an area of 129.6 square kilometres. Melbourne 2030 recognised Central Dandenong as one of the State's initial and major 'Transit Cities'. The important role of Central Dandenong in State Planning Policy is further emphasised in Plan Melbourne, which designated Central Dandenong as one of 6 'Central Activity Districts' that would fulfill 'CBD like' functions. As a result of these strategic initiatives, the focus for development has been on integrated transport interchanges, mixed-use development and higher density residential land uses.

Dandenong South has been stated as an existing 'National Employment Precinct' in the most recent State Planning instrument Plan Melbourne, which further consolidates its position as an important employment, transit and urban node within Melbourne.

Identity and Culture

Greater Dandenong is the most culturally diverse municipality in Victoria and second most culturally diverse in Australia.

Coming from 150 birth places, approximately 60 per cent of residents were born overseas. This highly multicultural society adds very attractive elements to the overall community, contributing to visitor offer and attracting more people to the retail precincts. Food is one of the unifying forces within the community - represented by diverse culinary experiences and products.

Each year Greater Dandenong welcomes around 3,300 new settlers who arrive to become residents. One quarter of new arrivals in 2012 were skilled persons with qualifications and skills that help address skills shortages in the country. During the same year, approximately 39 per cent of new residents arriving from overseas were sponsored by a family member residing in Australia. One quarter of humanitarian metro Melbourne arrivals settled in Greater Dandenong in 2012. A number of various service providers located in the municipality accommodate for the needs of the continuous inflow of new humanitarian and refugee arrivals.

Cultural diversity is a valued characteristic of the municipality and can be an economic strength, particularly in dealing with exporting and importing, as well as in generating cultural tourism. However, an inability to communicate effectively in English is a strong disadvantage in the labour market.

Dandenong South has been stated as an existing 'National Employment Precinct' in the most recent State Planning instrument Plan Melbourne, which further consolidates its position as an important employment, transit and urban node within Melbourne.



Greater Dandenong will be a place where people of all ages and backgrounds can reach their potential, gain the skills and education they need for success in life, and be part of a prosperous economy where all trade, manufacturing and business activity flourishes.



Council Plan 2013 – 2017

The City of Greater Dandenong Council Plan 2013 – 2017 sets the following Vision:

Greater Dandenong is a City of Opportunity with quality buildings, places and facilities, and where people of all ages, cultures and backgrounds can reach their potential to live secure, happy and fulfilling lives for generations to come.

Towards this vision, the Council Plan sets the following objectives:

- A City Planned for the Future
- A Thriving and Creative city
- A Healthy Community and Environment
- A City of Respect
- A Leading Council

The Strategic Objectives within the Council Plan that are of relevance to the Food Strategy are:

- Objective 2.8 Promote Greater Dandenong as a place to invest and establish a broad range of businesses.
- Objective 2.9: Establish and promote the Dandenong Market as a regional hub for shopping and activity.
- Objective 3.6: Promote the accessibility of fresh, nutritious, safe and culturally appropriate food.

The City of Greater Dandenong Local Economic & Employment Development Strategy aims to fulfill a vision:

Greater Dandenong will be a place where people of all ages and backgrounds can reach their potential, gain the skills and education they need for success in life, and be part of a prosperous economy where all trade, manufacturing and business activity flourishes.

Redevelopment and Renewal

The City of Greater Dandenong is undergoing major redevelopment including large-scale infrastructure projects: the Revitalising Central Dandenong (RCD) partnership between Greater Dandenong City Council and the State Government is providing the Central Activity District as the principal focus for major urban revitalisation projects and investment from both public and private sources.

The EastLink Freeway, the new Drum Theatre in Lonsdale Street, Metro Village 3175 residential development, Bridge link into central Dandenong, the Dandenong Market re-development, Springvale Railway station Grade Separation project, Multicultural Place (in Springvale) and the new Municipal Building and Square, are some of the developments, which are contributing to Greater Dandenong's growth.

New private sector, and additional public sector redevelopments about to commence will continue the active renewal and redevelopment of Central Dandenong and Springvale.

The Dandenong Market

The Dandenong Market is located in the heart of the city centre, and holds an historic position within the context of Dandenong as a place where producers, processors and the community come together to trade, access and enjoy food. The Dandenong Market currently attracts approximately 3 million – 4 million visitors per year, and has recently undergone re-development to enhance the food offer, upgrade facilities, and extend trading hours.

The Market is in the process of implementing a major redevelopment of its infrastructure as it develops a new Al Fresco dining area. This additional offering will significantly augment the Market's attraction as an iconic food destination, and make significant contributions to street activation through food culture.



The Green Wedge

Green Wedges are defined as “open landscapes around Melbourne's outskirts, originally set aside in the 1970s to conserve rural activities and significant natural features from Melbourne's outward growth”. A City of Greater Dandenong Green Wedge Management Plan is being developed to provide a direction for the City's part of the Green Wedge over the next 15–20 years. The study area for the plan comprises all land outside the Urban Growth Boundary within the City, covering a total of 3,741.3 hectares.

Food Economy

The output generated by the Greater Dandenong economy is estimated at \$28.692 billion. Greater Dandenong represents 5.4% of the \$527.160 billion in output generated in Greater Melbourne and 17.3% of the \$165.813 billion in output generated in Melbourne's South East.

Within the context of the overall food supply chain, the City of Greater Dandenong has a relatively small proportion (1.1%) of businesses involved in primary production listed in “Agriculture, Forestry and Fisheries”. Exports of food products from Greater dandenong for the 2012-13 financial year totalled \$686m.

However, there are a significant number of businesses that contribute to first stage and second stage food processing, appearing in Manufacturing; Transport, Postal and Warehousing; Wholesale Trade

Still more businesses operating at the ‘downstream’ end of the food supply chain as food retailers, categorised in the categories Accommodation and Food Services and Retail Trade.

Social Enterprise as an accepted business strategy is growing across the City, in support of this trend, the manufacturing and processing sector is interested in partnering with the community and health sector more, however new avenues are needed enable this to happen.

Food Jobs

City of Greater Dandenong contains approximately 6,916 jobs in the food sector.

The City of Greater Dandenong LGA clearly provides an important role within the broader food economy, as indicated by:

- 2,235 jobs contained within the Stage 2: Food Manufacturing category
- 982 jobs contained within the Stage 3: Food Wholesale category; and
- 3,415 jobs contained within the Stage 4: Food Retail, Café, Hotel & Restaurants category.

Food Health & Access

The recent 'Healthy Food Access, Supply and Demand in the City of Greater Dandenong' report exploring the extent to which the diet of residents may be influenced by geographic and economic food access issues, saturation of food retail spaces with non-essential or takeaway options, and limited consumption of fruit and vegetables found:

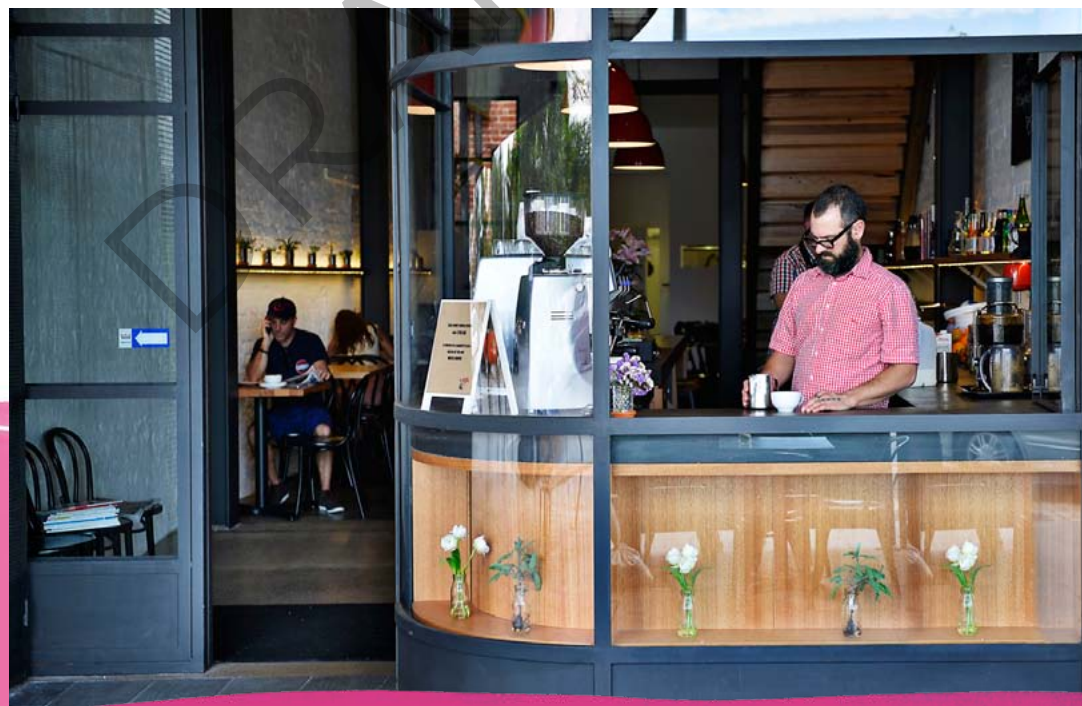
- Income, land use and geographic location are barriers to food access for many residents and workers of CGD
- CGD already has a strong history of effective emergency food relief provision that can be drawn upon to ensure the efficacy of any future actions in this terrain
- Low-income residents face acute difficulty in securing regular access to nutritious food
- While the local emergency food access sector supplies free meals, food vouchers and food parcels, it does not meet the needs of all residents
- Many residents live in 'food deserts' – where their access to healthy food is more than 400 meters away
- Greater Dandenong is saturated with food outlets that are not essential to a healthy diet.
- Community gardens exist in certain suburbs, though their current affect on food access is likely to be limited
- There is evidence of wide community interest in participating in community gardens, which exceeds their present availability
- There is growing national and international value being placed on community health outcomes from food related projects
- Planning laws and guidelines can currently reduce the capacity of community food initiatives to establish and succeed. Work is needed to facilitate urban and peri-urban agriculture and to create broader, more flexible opportunities for food based interventions, activations and production initiatives within the urban context.



Food Tourism

Recent tourism focused research (undertaken by K2 Solutions) endorses the value of food culture within the City. Those surveyed said:

- Food and dining is important. It is extremely important that food experiences are unique to that destination. They are looking for food offerings that are largely affordable and offer a variety of options as opposed to dining options that offer high-end or exclusive dining. The availability of dining options utilising the unique produce of the area was important. This presents an opportunity to leverage Greater Dandenong's unique food proposition as an entry for visitors to experience the destination.
- Took warmly to the idea of visiting Greater Dandenong for a signature food and cultural event: This presents an opportunity for the creation of an event that can assist in changing perceptions of Greater Dandenong and put Greater Dandenong on the map from a tourism perspective.
- Raising awareness of key City of Greater Dandenong experiences can increase visitation. It is important to ensure however that these experiences deliver on visitor expectations in order to maximise positive word of mouth.



Existing Food Sector Development Programs

Greater Dandenong Council currently deliver a range of programs and activities in support of the Food Sector. These programs align with the overall objectives of the Food Strategy and are seen as complimentary and beneficial undertakings. Each will be leveraged into the future to further capitalise on existing outcomes, knowledge and networks. Current program include:

1. Retailers Capacity Building Program

The City of Greater Dandenong retailer capacity building program provides an initial diagnostic review to retail businesses, four individual business mentoring sessions, plus two group training sessions. The group session topics could include marketing, technology, customer service and are determined by the priority needs of the group through the results of the initial diagnostic reviews. The program commences with a mystery shop audit and is concluded with another to observe improvements achieved and further business development opportunities. Opportunities for joint marketing of the businesses involved in the program are offered. This program aims to improve the business skills of the owners and operators.

2. Social Enterprise Network

The City of Greater Dandenong facilitates a learning network for local social enterprises to help drive improvement in connectivity (enabling joint opportunities), and increased business skills. Currently the network represents a membership base of around 15 Social Enterprises, and meets every 6-8 weeks.

3. Social Enterprise Mentoring program

Two local social enterprises have been part funded through a professional accelerated leadership program. It is expected that the learning will be spread to a broader group of social enterprises through interactions in the Social Enterprise Network.

4. Annual Business Grants Program

The City of Greater Dandenong offers an annual business grants program which is open to any qualifying business (including food or social enterprises). The aim of the program is to increase jobs and economic activity through start ups, growth (from home based to commercial) and/or relocation (into Greater Dandenong). The grant will cover up to \$8000 of eligible costs and also offers a marketing package worth in excess of \$2000 to grant recipients. The budget covers the issuing of up to 6 grants per year.

Creating the Food Strategy

City of Greater Dandenong – Community Engagement

Following from the City of Greater Dandenong's strong commitment to engaging with the community in the Council Plan 2013-2017, the City of Greater Dandenong Community Engagement Planning Framework is a practical and useful tool for Council to use to successfully engage with the community and stakeholders about key issues or decisions that Council is considering.

The framework is based on the International Association for Public Participation Spectrum, and includes the following key levels of community engagement:

- **Inform:** To provide the public with balanced and objective information to assist them in understanding the problems, alternatives and/or solutions
- **Consult:** To obtain public feedback on analysis, alternatives and/or decisions
- **Involve:** To work directly with the public throughout the process to ensure that public issues and concerns are consistently understood and considered
- **Collaborate:** To partner with the public in each aspect of the decision including development of alternatives and the identification of the preferred solution
- **Empower:** To place final decision-making in the hands of the public.

Strategy through Consultation

In keeping with the City of Greater Dandenong Community Engagement Planning Framework, the Greater Dandenong Regional Food Strategy has been developed through extensive consultation and co-design with a broad cross-section of business and community stakeholders from across the municipality.

Throughout the development of this Strategy the Project Team have engaged within the community on multiple levels to seek out existing activity, leadership, and innovation. Along with this consultation activity a design-led process has been utilised to integrate useful insights and generate innovative ideas for the future. This has been done in collaboration with many people working with and thinking about food in Greater Dandenong on a day-to-day basis.

There is already significant food-focused activity evident in Greater Dandenong. These activities span across the spheres of the food system: industry, retail, social and cultural. As such many of the desired outcomes of this Strategy exist within the community and are already creating valuable outcomes for the sector. At present, there is however a lack of cohesion and connectedness between these activities. The Food Strategy details the actions required to draw these threads together so as to strengthen burgeoning food culture on multiple levels. The Strategy aims to stimulate a greater degree of self-driven activation and innovation across the sector. This autonomous action, will illustrate that the community acknowledge the value of the GD Food Strategy. As such the growth of community-led action will be a key measure of success into the future.

Much of the material generated through this process has been published in an open source blog and shared with participants. This information then informed the development of a set of final ideas and actions that react to the key issues and opportunities identified.

In this way, the process of strategy and policy development empowers participation by embedding people within the process and sharing information with all stakeholders.



The results of the process speak for themselves – together the stakeholders have co-designed a food strategy and action plan that enunciates **progressive visions for economic and social innovation** to take place in the production, processing, distribution, consumption, celebration and sharing of Greater Dandenong's food.



The consultation, engagement and co-design process has been warmly embraced by all participants in the process, people have generously contributed their time and ideas to proactively shape the future of the Greater Dandenong regional food system.

This consultation and co-design clearly reinforces the importance of business and community leadership in bringing progressive visions for the food system to fruition.

The role of the City of Greater Dandenong has so far been:

- To enable and lead this process as a catalyst
- To research and map existing strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats
- To imagine what the future might look like.

Using co-design

Co-design is a process that can be used to enable individuals to work together to test and refine creative ideas that solve problems or address identified issues. It is a product, service, or organisation development process where design professionals empower, encourage, and guide users to develop solutions for themselves. Co-design encourages the blurring of the role between user and designer, focusing on the process by which the design objective is created.

The co-design process used for this Food Strategy allowed the people who know the Greater Dandenong regional food system best to:

- Understand existing context
- Collaboratively generate, shape, and refine a set of central ideas
- Explore ways to optimise existing activity or address gaps
- Design new food focused economic, social, cultural and health outcomes

The process of research, strategy and design is participatory and the outcomes encapsulate the shared creativity, vision and intelligence of the group.

This detailed approach to engaging and co-designing with stakeholders ensures the recommendations and action plan is fully informed by food leaders in Greater Dandenong.

The results of the process speak for themselves – together the stakeholders have co-designed a food strategy and action plan that enunciates progressive visions for economic and social innovation to take place in the production, processing, distribution, consumption, celebration and sharing of Greater Dandenong's food.

In is envisioned that the Food Strategy will inspire future policies and activities that define the City of Greater Dandenong as a leading 'City Connected by Food'.

Consultation Steps

Consultation through surveys, interviews, meetings and workshops has been used to gather important information about the existing strengths and weaknesses within the food system while also recording many of the ideas and visions held across the City for the future. Many of the people who contributed their ideas and insights during the consultation process then continued their involvement by joining together to co-design the recommended actions put forward within this document.

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See Report:
 Greater
 Dandenong
 Regional Food
 Strategy -
 Consultation,
 Context and
 Technical
 Analysis.

01 Data



Extensive data collection and quantitative analysis was undertaken to understand the broader context of the food system in the Greater Dandenong region. This built a strong rationale for the Food Strategy to be successfully implemented.

02 Planning



In-depth workshops were used to scope the development project, visioning future scenarios to assist with guiding the consultation and analyse data (both qualitative and quantitative) based on initial interviews with Council and research undertaken about local and global trends on food. Our Team planned the overall Food Strategy consultation through these workshops.

03 Internal Workshops



Facilitated workshops were conducted with key members of the Economic Development, Health and Wellbeing, Community Development, Planning, Environmental Health and Urban Design teams. Insights were gathered from key Council team members.

04 External Meetings



Meetings were held with diverse stakeholders to gather insights from food leaders in the manufacturing, community, health and retail sectors. These insights are essential in designing the overall strategy, as people on the ground who work in food related business and projects have a strong sense of what needs to be done.

05 Communications



Throughout the consultation ongoing communication occurred with stakeholders engaged through a project website and active blog.

06 Convivial Event



A 'Convivial Breakfast' was used as a way to bring diverse business, community and government leaders together at the Dandenong Market. The event allowed the strategy team to listen to the thoughts and opinions of food leaders.

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**See
 Recommended
 Actions**

07 Co-design Workshop



The co-design workshop was used as an opportunity to develop actionable ideas for new projects and initiatives with food leaders. The aim of co-design was, in this instance, to develop solutions with users and leaders who understand the local food system. A diverse array of food leaders attended the workshop from manufacturing, retail, health, community and government sectors.

08 Refinement and evaluation



Ideas for new projects and initiatives are tested and refined with the Food Strategy Steering Group and community Food Leaders in order to ensure maximum impact and return on investment in achieving outcomes for the manufacturing, retail, health, community and government sectors.

09 Public Comment



One approved for circulation by CGD Council the Food Strategy will be placed on display for community feedback and comment in order that the final Strategy can reflect the visions of the community for this important sector.



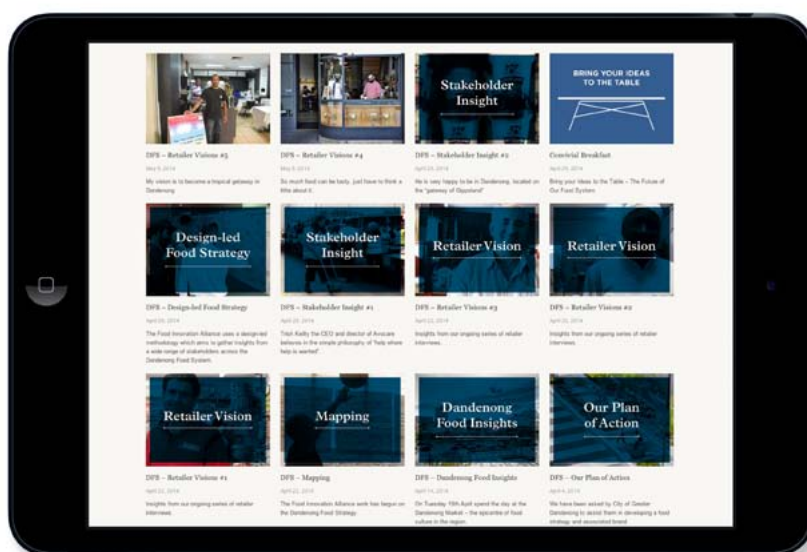
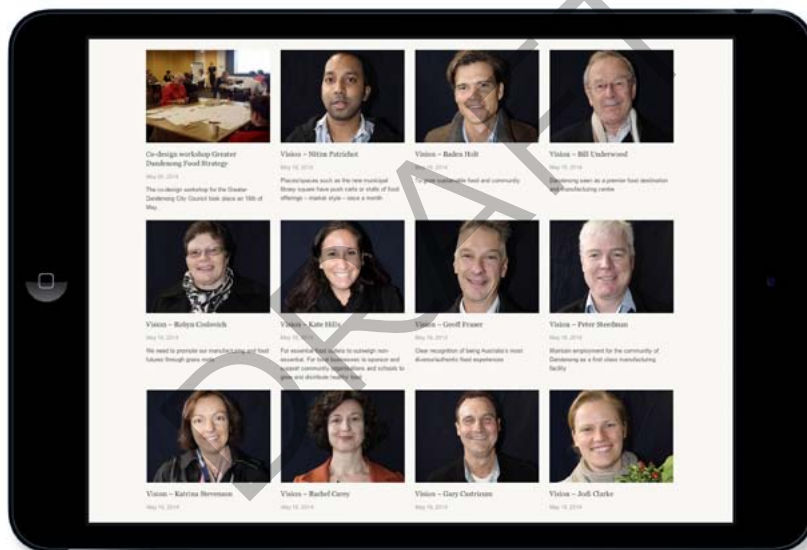
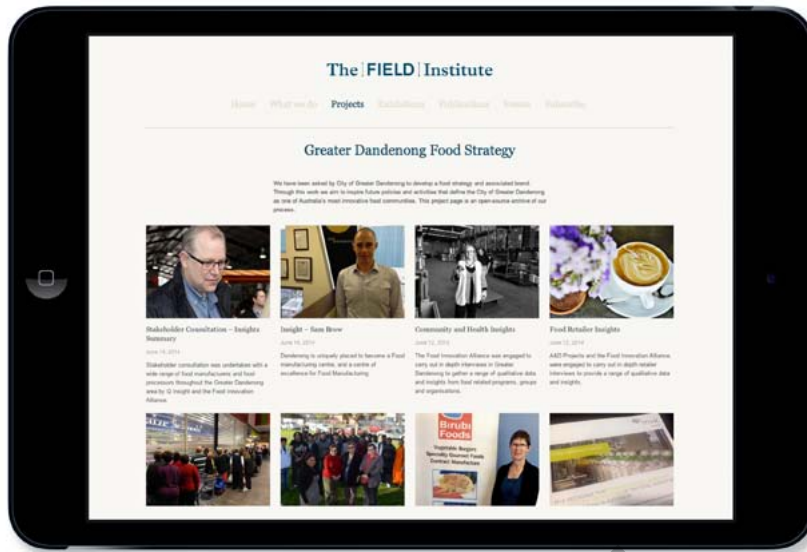
03 Internal Workshops



04 External Meetings




05 Communications



06 Convivial Event



BRING YOUR IDEAS TO THE TABLE




The Future of Our Food System

The City of Greater Dandenong invites you to a special event to join other Food Leaders from our city for a **Convivial Breakfast**. This memorable breakfast will inform the early development of an innovative and action focused Food Strategy for Greater Dandenong. Working together local leaders from the food manufacturing, retail, health, education and government sectors can put Greater Dandenong on the map as a diverse, innovative and healthy food city.

<p>Where Market Square at Dandenong Market</p> <p>Date Tuesday 6 May 2014</p> <p>Time 9am - 10.30am</p>	<p>On the day</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Special guest speakers - Excellent locally sourced breakfast - Share your ideas - Networking and connectivity <p>RSVP Emily at emily.b.brodie@gmail.com</p>
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THE FOOD INNOVATION ALLIANCE



GREATER DANDENONG
City of Opportunity



07 Co-design Workshop



CO-DESIGN BRINGS IDEAS TO LIFE



Creating the future of our Food System

The City of Greater Dandenong invites you to join other **Food Leaders** from our city to contribute your ideas and insights as part of a facilitated co-design workshop that aims to catalyse new initiatives that add value across the food system.

Using the design process we will test and refine some of the key ideas emerging from the City of Greater Dandenong Food Strategy consultation. During the workshop we will generate 'rapid prototypes', concepts and visualisations of future networks, policies, projects and initiatives.

This memorable workshop will add considerable local insight towards the development of an innovative and action focused Food Strategy for Greater Dandenong.

Working together we can put Greater Dandenong on the map as a diverse, innovative and healthy food city.

Where	Meeting Room 2.7 Level 2 / New Civic Centre (plaza level)	On the day	- Excellent locally sourced lunch - Share and refine your ideas - Networking and connectivity
Address	225 Lonsdale Street Dandenong	Date	Friday 16 May 2014
Date	Friday 16 May 2014	Time	12pm - 4pm
Time	12pm - 4pm	RSVP Ewan at:	ewan@fieldinstitute.co

THE FOOD
INNOVATION
ALLIANCE



GREATER
DANDENONG
City of Opportunity

THE FOOD
INNOVATION
ALLIANCE

FOOD
LEADERS

IDEAS

CO-DESIGN
WORKSHOP

07 Co-design Workshop – 5 Food Ideas

5 IDEAS TO CREATE ECONOMIC, CULTURAL & ACCESS IMPACTS.



#2 THINK OUTSIDE THE SHOP

How might we create a service/system design for a new 'fleet' of mobile food businesses?



- How do we activate the streetscape of CoGD with food activity?
- Can we broaden retailer business by taking the retailer (and food) to where the people are?
- Could we target factories, festivals, & key public events?
- Do we need to create special times / places for street food?
- How do we recruit leading traders to sub-lease and operate (what is the operator model)?
- Could we link via the supply chain to localised production (peri-urban, Gippsland, homegrown)
- Where would food prep be done? (community kitchens and food hubs)
- Is this about trucks, street vendors, kiosks, trolleys?
- Could this disrupt traditional supply system to create new value for producer, retailer and consumer



#4 WORLD FOOD CAPITAL OF AUSTRALIA

Could we create a year-round cultural program around food that builds Economic, Cultural and Access potential?



- How can we draw maximum value from CoGD multi-cultural food strengths?
- Could we generate a 12-month program of activity around food & culture focused on activating public space?
- Can we create place-based opportunities to shift brand perception with night-time street programs?
- Can we create major outdoor activity to unlock a 'culture of activation'?
- How do we re-educate traders and consumers alike through safe, engaging events around food?
- Could we build in education offerings around production, prep & waste?
- Could we build links to CoGD traders and regional farmers?
- Could we collaborate with mobile food traders?
- Can we create opportunities for micro-business to retail?



#1 FOOD INNOVATION NETWORK



How might we create a collaboration, promotion and education platform that builds capacity across the production and processing sectors?



- How do we promote innovation, R&D and high value-add products from CoGD?
- Can we create a practical business network for leaders across food production, processing, supply and policy?
- Could we offer ongoing programs that help leverage competitive advantage, target new markets, innovate and grow?
- Could programs be curated to include regular networking events and access to government and trade programs?
- Can this be enabled by CoGD but rely on industry engagement to survive and grow?
- Does this gather case studies of success and create a cohort of advocates?
- Does it offer an online gateway that promotes CoGD as a great place to set up a food business?
- Does it need a physical space to meet for programs and as a location to start your food 'establishment journey'?
- How would it build links across supply chain to promote localised production?
- How would it engage leading processors right across the system?



#3 CLOSED LOOP FOOD HUB

How might we create an integrated supply chain solution that demonstrates best practice in sourcing, making, selling and harnessing waste?



- How do we best optimise the great work being done at SE Food Hub?
- Does an inner urban 'garden site' add to the existing SE Food Hub to 'complete the picture'?
- How do we strengthen links to regional farmers and producers?
- Can we enable innovative waste solutions such as worm farm & composting at scale?
- How do we build links to CoGD traders and buyers (assess procurement opportunities)?
- Could this hub effectively collaborate with mobile food traders?
- How does a food hub align with community kitchens and RTO capabilities?

#5 A HOME FOR MICRO-BUSINESS

How might we foster a culture of start-up and micro-business?



- How can we enable the growth of 100's of micro-businesses that draw value from CoGD multi-cultural food strengths?
- How could more start-ups broaden the economic potential of CoGD?
- How do we catalyse this process?
- Is this an opportunity to build education offerings around production, prep & waste?
- Could these micro-businesses build links to regional farmers while growing the CoGD food brand credentials?
- Could micro-business collaborate with a Food Innovation Network for mentorship and co-investment? – What are the opportunities for micro-business to retail?
- What kind of micro-businesses would work in CoGD?

Industry Engagement Outcomes

Stakeholder consultation was undertaken with a wide range of food producers and processors throughout the Greater Dandenong area. The following sub-sectors were covered:

- Dairy
- Meat
- Cereals
- Bread and baked goods
- Biscuits, crackers and snacks
- Heath Products
- Small goods

A survey was drawn up to provide structure to the interviews. Broadly, the topics covered were as follows:

- Pertinent locational factors contributing to doing business in Greater Dandenong
- Greater Dandenong's position within its regional context, especially in the context of raw food inputs being sourced from Gippsland and surrounding regions
- Staff and training opportunities and challenges
- The role of innovation and design integration
- The role of City of Greater Dandenong Council in enabling enhanced productivity, and relevant Council programs
- The role of supply chain linkages, and the importance of sourcing quality food inputs
- The vision for food in the City of Greater Dandenong

All food manufacturers and stakeholders that were interviewed value the prospect of more clustering and collaboration to enable improved business linkages, enhanced access to local business capabilities and customer insights information.

Our key overall insights gained from this process were:

- Some companies are already competing successfully with high value-addition products these could be amplified for others to use as case studies
- The close proximity to high quality agricultural production is a plus which could be accentuated (particularly in relation to Gippsland)
- Established national and international export markets with potential for expansion could be better tapped into through strategic programs
- Existing investment by industry leaders in technical capabilities, machinery and plant could be communicated and connected together more through collaboration platforms
- Overall there is eagerness for access to knowledge and expertise to assist with further growth and export development
- There is strong acceptance that cross-disciplinary collaboration and collective promotion offers more benefits than costs

- There is an appetite for CGD to increasingly play a role as a regional centre for food focused R&D, processing, packaging, storage and logistics
- There are opportunities to develop deeper partnerships between social enterprises and the business community
- New and innovative funding and investment models should be explored to increase the likelihood of social innovation in the community food sector.



All food manufacturers and stakeholders that were interviewed value the prospect of more clustering and collaboration to enable improved business linkages, enhanced access to local business capabilities and customer insights information.

Retailer Engagement Outcomes

As part of the retail consultation process the Food Strategy team carried out in-depth retailer interviews with Greater Dandenong based restaurants, grocery stores and food related businesses to provide a range of qualitative data and insights.

12 retailers from diverse backgrounds (consultations included Afghan, Sudanese, Indian, Polish, Mauritian, Middle Eastern, Burmese and Cambodian traders).

The insights gathered reflect a deep affection for Greater Dandenong as a place and highlighted the value of life and business in Greater Dandenong. The level of positivity was both inspiring and a testament to the areas rich multicultural heart of the community.

There were three common types of food retailers:

- **Destination:** Those retailers that people came from many other suburbs to visit, a special occasion, functions and many returning customers. Not specific to migrant community.
- **Cultural:** Restaurants or grocers where specific migrant communities can get produce or dishes that are from their homelands. Sometimes visited by other communities however not as a majority.
- **Community:** Restaurants that are running on tight budgets and rely solely on family and friends visiting from the surrounding suburbs. These are most likely to suffer inconsistent business.

The key goals of the retail consultation were:

- To gather food usage and supply information
- To understand whether 'healthy food' played a part in the retail proposition or was a priority
- To gather new ideas and examine ways to stimulate business growth
- To gauge the level of interest in concepts such as vertical integration, street activation and business extension through external activities

Our key overall insights gained from this process were:

- All of these traders wanted to develop their business and are open to new ways that this can happen. They did not see this as CGD responsibility but are very supportive of initiatives that do so
- The biggest success stories had a direct correlation with well-designed, brand aware or culturally specific decor, with a rich development of atmosphere (music, scent and lighting) within the eating experience
- Significant inconsistencies were noted in relation to digital awareness and capacity to deliver a branded 'experience'. Attention is needed to develop digital capability and enable digital storytelling
- Interest was strong in relation to solutions that better activate street-scapes through food including new business opportunities to extend reach and ways to better activate their own premises
- Food businesses are generally located in Greater Dandenong due to migrant community ties which has strong future opportunities to emphasise CGD 'world food' credentials
- All of the businesses consulted considered health important. However many businesses associated health with hygiene and freshness. We need to consider how this relates to actual 'healthy' food
- Businesses were generally very supportive of the local economy and wanted to buy locally first, this presents a strong opportunity to link with local production & supply systems.



The biggest success stories had a direct correlation with **well-designed, brand aware or culturally specific decor**, with a rich development of atmosphere (music, scent and lighting) within the eating experience.

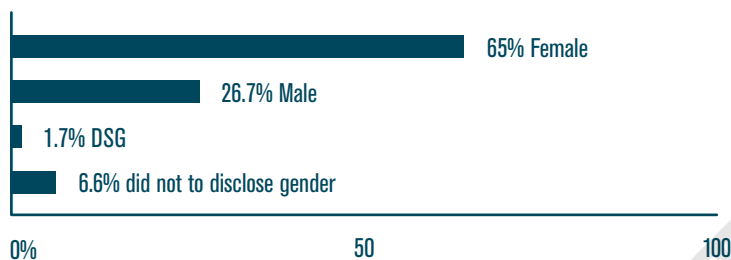


Community Sector Engagement Outcomes

We gathered community opinion and data to inform the development of the food strategy. The insights generated are being used to inform the production of the Food Strategy for the municipality.

Snapshot

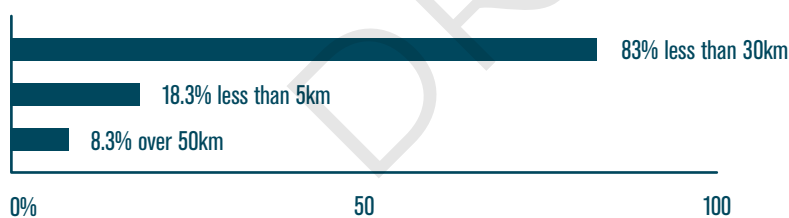
Gender



Age



Travel to Access Food



Regularity



Community Eating Habits



Food Strategy in Action

Access to Food



Food Culture



Insights and ideas through consultation

Through extensive face-to-face interviews, meetings and workshops we listened to many voices from across the Greater Dandenong food system – these represented diverse perspectives from Agriculture, Industry, Community, Health, Education, and Government.



Robyn Coslovich

Dandenong Neighbourhood House

Community kitchens enable us to develop a place for people to learn new skills, cook and connect. A kitchen like this helps people who have limited budgets, no community connections and in some cases little English language and cultural understanding.



Katrina Stevenson

Monash Health

It would be great to develop and foster more integration between community gardens, community kitchens, and increased accessibility to affordable, and quality food produce.



Rachel Carey

Food Alliance

A sustainable, fair and healthy food system for Dandenong that connects food producers in surrounding areas to local businesses and residents.



Jodi Clarke

Cultivating Community

Where healthy, fresh, and affordable food is accessible to all and people are connected through growing food locally within the community.



Trish Keilty

Avocare

Avocare has achieved great results for this community: 45-55% of people that have been through our training programs have entered into or returned to work. I also have future visions for developing a supermarket for the elderly, setting up a best practice worm farming facility, continue to provide diverse training opportunities such as with the South East Food Hub.



Peter Meek

CEO of Chobani Yogurt

I believe a Food Strategy can enable us to be a part of a wider food innovation network, which will connect us with other food organisations and people to share knowledge and expertise. We are happy to be in Greater Dandenong, located on the edge of Gippsland Farmland - the "gateway of Gippsland" - so fresh milk is easily delivered to our factory.



Leanne Fitzgibbon

Birubi Foods

Greater Dandenong has the ability to have a very strong multi-cultural food identity providing great food variety that taps into the exciting flavours and food styles represented in the area. Greater Dandenong has a long history in all aspects of food, in particular as entrepreneurs in manufacturing and distribution where there are opportunities to nurture further development of these capabilities.



Peter Steedman

Tip Top

I want to see Tip Top maintain employment for the community of Greater Dandenong as a first class manufacturing facility.



Gary Castricum

Castricum Master Meats

Greater Dandenong is the gateway to Gippsland, lets make the most of this perfect geography and become a leading food city.



Sam Brown

Waterwheel

Greater Dandenong is uniquely placed to become a Food manufacturing centre, and a centre of excellence for food manufacturing.



Nitin Patrichot

Green Coriander Cafe

I'd love to see public spaces such as the new municipal library square activated by food focused push carts or small multi-cultural stalls with food offerings – maybe market style – once a month, or one night a week.



Andrew Lipiszko

Polish Rye Crust Bakery

Greater Dandenong diversity. It is a city for opportunity and the fruits of hard work.



Rahimi Baryalai

Afghan Rahimi

My vision is to welcome everyone the City of Greater Dandenong. Use marketing, only deal with the local economy, provide advice and share with other businesses and quality food provision – making standards across all business of freshness, of hygiene, of quality.



Keah Pooth

Lalumba

My dream is for business to grow – to employ someone, go back to study as well. Will not leave the business, it is the help to the community! I am hoping the future will give this.



Karl Lim

My Cambodia

Dandenong is multicultural, convenience and very strong community. Everyone tends to know each other – customers sometimes pay each others bills.



Rob Jones

Ginger Jones

I want to see Greater Dandenong accepted as a food destination. On the whole lift this means listing the identity and other people's awareness of Greater Dandenong and what's on offer.



Ibrahim Haidary

Bamyam Fresh Food

Health is 100% important to our business as we grow – very important fresh, good quality, quality food.



Greater Dandenong is the gateway to Gippsland, lets make the most of this perfect geography and **become a leading food city.**



Recommendations: Food Strategy in action

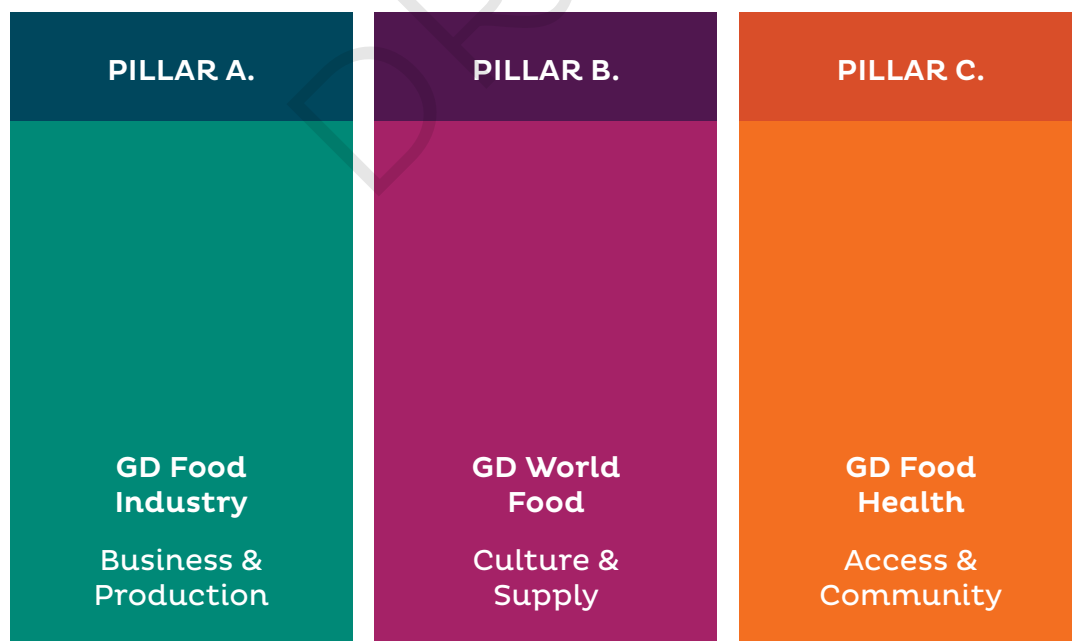
This section outlines a set of **Steps** for the City of Greater Dandenong Council to implement the Greater Dandenong Regional Food Strategy. As the food sector is a 'system' each step in some way relates to or builds upon the others.

Some of the key items, including a signature event (Multi-Cultural Food Festival) have been recommended within Council's recent Tourism Strategy, and costed within that Strategy.

There are 5 types of activities proposed:

1. Internal capacity building and organisational development within CGD Council designed to position CGD to successfully react to, and deliver the priorities and objectives of the Food Strategy
2. External capacity building within the Food Processing and Production Sector, through projects and initiatives that continue the activation of new networks and platforms instigated within the co-design process
3. External programs and activities to assist with the affective branding, marketing and communications of Greater Dandenong as a retail food destination
4. External programs and initiatives to stimulate stronger integration of food cultivation and production into urban and peri-urban locations
5. External programs and initiatives to increase the availability and accessibility of healthy food to all members of the CGD community

Actions have been grouped around the 3 pillars of the GD Food System:



Actions

1. Appoint a new City of **Greater Dandenong Food Leadership Team** drawing food aware leaders from senior positions across all departments of Council touched by food (Executive, Environmental Health, Economic Development, Communications and Customer Service, Community Services, and Planning & Design). Invite key members of the food business, health and community sectors to join this team. Empower this Team to facilitate and activate the development of a new City of Greater Dandenong Food Policy by 2016 and enable the Team to deliver on the recommendations in this Food Strategy.

PILLAR A.

GD Food Industry Business & Production

Greater Dandenong is a smart and connected place to do business in food processing, production and export. This Food Strategy aims to amplify these existing strengths to make Greater Dandenong Australia's premier location for food processing and manufacturing.

We will: Build internal capacity **within CGD Council** to successfully deliver the priorities and objectives of the Food Strategy

We will: Focus on external capacity building within the **Food Business, Processing and Production Sector**, through projects and initiatives that continue the activation of new networks and platforms instigated within the co-design process.

1. Appoint a **Food Enterprise Leader** within Council empowered to lead the Marketing and Business Development initiatives surrounding food business establishment and connectivity between existing producers, processors and associated organisations within the municipality. Strive to become Australia's preeminent centre for food production, processing and related services.
 - a. This role would be a full-time appointment most logically appointed to join the Economic Development Unit (EDU) team to oversee the implementation of:
 - i. GD Food Consortium
 - ii. Micro-Food Enterprise Zone
 - iii. Street Food Activation programs
 - iv. Think Outside the Shop Program
2. Establish and facilitate the growth of the **Greater Dandenong Food Consortium** and associated programs so as to better connect the production, processing and associated sectors to enable cluster-based collaboration, access to relevant expertise and to drive a new wave of business innovation and economic development via an enhanced understanding of design integration, value addition, trend forecasting, marketing, and export development strategy.
3. Launch a **Micro-food Business Facilitator** program within Council and aim to convert the high number of existing micro-food business enquiries (received by Environmental Health) so as to facilitate the establishment of a target of 100 new Micro-food businesses within 3 years. Do this through info-sessions, mentorship and a Micro-food Grant Program. Streamline and simplify the process of establishing and running a food-based micro-business. Link existing and new food focused micro-business together via the new Greater Dandenong Food website and Food Consortium programs. Encourage collaboration and connectivity under the guidance of the Food Enterprise Leader and Food Curator. Make micro-business a feature of the annual Food Festival and ongoing cultural and street food programs. Enable access for micro-business to Street Food Carts via the Think Outside the Shop program. Link this activity to the Food Brand, Digital Strategy the annual Food Culture Program.

4. Create a new **Micro-Food Enterprise Zone** by identifying a suitable location and operating model for space to be created in the heart of Dandenong. Encourage 10 new food-focused enterprises to establish in Greater Dandenong by 2016 through leasing incentives or seed funding. Strategically connect these enterprises together as a Micro-Food Enterprise Cluster and link to food related health programs, urban farms, micro-business operators, alternative, distribution programs, and skilled employment training activities.

DRAFT

PILLAR B.

**GD World Food
Culture & Supply**

Greater Dandenong is one of Australia's most unique and culturally diverse communities. The community is home to exceptional traders and retailers offering unique food experiences. This Food Strategy seeks to consolidate and communicate this unique strength as an integral part of the City's retail, social and cultural future.

We will: Grow external programs and activities to assist with the affective branding, marketing and communications of Greater Dandenong as a retail food destination.

We will: Seek new and innovative ways to enable traders to grow and diversify their offering, to reach new audiences and to activate our streets and urban precincts through the unifying power of food.

Actions

1. Appoint a **City Food Curator** within Council empowered to lead the development of food focused cultural programs and initiatives – with a strong focus on a new annual Multi-cultural Food Festival and ongoing activation of the 'Big Screen', retail zones and public spaces through a 12-month program of food focused content, promotions and activities. Utilise this new Food Culture Program to redefine Greater Dandenong as a prominent, safe and vibrant destination for authentic, culturally diverse culinary experiences.
2. Foster an internal food culture within Council through staff training, programs and education that emphasises that **'Food Connects the City'** and is a core strategic objective for the City as a driver of economic development, sustainability, resilience, social inclusion, health and cultural diversity. Lead through example.
3. Activate the Industry and Consumer facing elements of the **Greater Dandenong Food Brand** so as to effectively market Greater Dandenong as a leading food production and culinary destination. Partner with respected events and opinion shaping media brands. Invest in quality collateral and marketing resources. Use authentic storytelling and sophisticated design to shift consumer perceptions. Leverage the Food Brand to encourage stronger visitation to Greater Dandenong's leading multi-cultural food precincts and outlets. Form a group of Greater Dandenong Food Ambassadors and opinion leaders. Focus on quality not quantity.
4. Launch a sophisticated **Greater Dandenong Food Website** and associated **Digital Food Strategy** aimed at promoting local and multi-cultural food to opinion leaders across metro Melbourne. Drive digital innovation across the multi-cultural food retail sector; encourage and guide the implementation of online ordering and digital proficiency amongst traders. Link the Food Website to the annual program of cultural food activities, initiatives and events. Focus on authentic, original content and adopt an editorial model of operation driven by sophisticated storytelling.

5. Develop a new **Street Dining Strategy** that streamlines health, safety and planning requirements and positions costs so that cafes and restaurants are encouraged to locate tables in the street. Work hard to encourage sidewalk activation and vibrancy through food focused activity. Link this Street Dining Strategy to the Food Brand, Digital Strategy the annual Food Culture Program.
6. Launch a major annual **Multi-Cultural Food Festival** as a signature event for the City in partnership with existing key festivals such as Melbourne Food and Wine Festival or Good Food Week. Work strategically on this with the Dandenong Market under the curatorship of the newly appointed Food Curator. Link the Festival strongly to the Greater Dandenong Food Brand Strategy, promotions and Digital Strategy.
7. Encourage Greater Dandenong to become a focal point for **Food Trucks** and **Street Food** by developing a new street food initiative within Council – **'Think Outside the Shop'**:
 - a. Consider the creation of a safe late-night Street Food Zone in the heart of the city. Through grant and investment programs generate new ways to link food trucks and street activation into the business models of existing traders. Invite food trucks to locate within the municipality. Seed-fund up to 3 new social enterprise oriented trucks within 5 years.
 - b. Invest in up to 20 adaptable Street Food Carts by 2015 for existing Greater Dandenong food traders to access on flexible lease arrangements. Use these Street Food Carts to also safely activate the Street Food Zone along the urban spine at night. Link this activity to the Food Brand, Digital Strategy the annual Food Culture Program.
 - c. Ensure that the 'Think Outside the Shop' initiatives comply with Victorian Health Eating Advisory Service and /or ensure a percentage of produce served is healthy. Consider adopt a 'traffic light' system for foods sold in through these initiatives
 - d. Support local initiatives to improve food access for individuals, families or community groups within the local food system. This may include Food hubs and Food Cooperatives that operate out of Greater Dandenong enabling them to act as a base for health, education, employment and community strengthening activities

PILLAR C.

GD Food Health
Access & Community



Rich in cultural diversity, industry and cultural values, Greater Dandenong is also a place of relatively high un and under-employment and is subject to the social and economic challenges associated with low school retention, high levels of humanitarian settlement, and large industries with fluctuating work forces reliant on global markets. Implementation of this Food Strategy will build our resilience and will make a significant positive impact in ensuring every member of the community has access to affordable healthy food.

We will: Seek new and innovative ways to **stimulate stronger integration of food cultivation and production** into urban and peri-urban locations, increase the connectivity between the business and social services sectors, foster a culture of social enterprise, and strive to create additional food supply solutions focused on shorter supply chains, local production and community-le food activity.

Actions

1. Appoint a **Food Access Leader** empowered to build greater connectivity between Council departments, health providers and community institutions with a particular emphasis on optimising awareness and promotion of existing Health programs (within Council and externally) and outcomes focused on food production and consumption that enable community health and education outcomes. Strive to ensure that all resident of the City have access to healthy food options and information as per the Healthy Together Victoria (HTV) Healthy Food Charter.
2. Implement a **Council Food Procurement Initiative** that promotes the purchase of locally grown and processed food by the City. Encourage other major tenants, businesses and institutions to do the same through a Home Grown Dandenong campaign. Ensure that the Council Food Procurement Initiative has a health lens placed over it that would ensure that the Policy promotes the purchase of locally grown and processed food by the City, compliant with the Healthy Together Victoria (HTV) Healthy Food Charter.
3. Continue the work begun to strategically plan for the food future of the City by designing and adopting a practical **City of Greater Dandenong Food Policy** by mid-2016. Enable this within Council by drawing knowledge into the new Food Leadership Team from the pilot programs and food-focused initiatives in this Food Strategy, work with the food advocacy groups and other Councils to create policy in line with international best practice.
 - a. Explore ways to design and implement new **Food Focused Urban Activation & Development Tools** to encourage integration of food production in multi-residential and commercial developments including factories and business parks. Extend, diversify and scale up successful initiatives that support healthy food access throughout the Municipality across the food system.
 - b. Examine the situation in relation to **'food deserts'** for access to healthy food within the municipality and consider ways to use planning, education and mobile food initiatives to redress this scenario. Develop future strategies to ensure that existing food deserts will be reduced or eradicated into the future. Take steps to ensure that new Food Deserts are not created as part of future urban development.

- c. Ensure the Food Policy fosters **food based economic development**; access to affordable and healthy food, local food production, food based street activation and food culture. In this way become an international exemplar of progressive food policy development.
4. In order to facilitate the creation of alternative, shorter and stronger local supply chains for fresh healthy food, it is recommended that CGD Council examine ways to utilise **Food Hub projects** and programs to assist the City to become a leader in the production, distribution and consumption of food from the SE region.
 - a. A Food Hub is non-profit organisation working to strengthen and secure the future of a healthy regional food supply by providing small farmers with concrete services that support their economic vitality and promote stewardship of the land.
 - b. Food Hubs offer a range of flexible services for farmers, including aggregation, distribution, sales, marketing, and access to large consistent buyers. Food Hubs also often offer a range of other programs including educational programs such as farm worker training and school programs, workshops, and pop-up markets.
 - c. Food Hubs most often operate in a semi-commercial capacity – with stronger links to social service providers, emergency food programs and social enterprises than traditional wholesalers. The Hub operates as local food warehouse that purchases or aggregates locally grown produce from small family farms, urban market gardens and peri-urban farms.
 - d. Food aggregated within a Hub is then distributed via a number of supply strategies including food box programs, direct sales and via Hub contracts to supply locations in the region, including public schools, hospitals, social enterprises, local government, institutions, restaurants and private households.
5. Establish a pilot **Greater Dandenong City Farm** on suitable underutilised land in the heart of Central Dandenong in partnership with organisations such as 3000 Acres and Farm Incubator. Map the establishment phase so as to track appropriate adjustments to internal Council policies to streamline the process for the future urban agriculture development.
 - a. From this pilot program develop a feasibility study to launch a **City Farm Program** with associated **Farming the City Guidelines** by 2016 that encourages developers, land-owners and community groups to appropriately activate underutilised urban land for food production and food-based programs. Link the Greater Dandenong Urban Farm and City Farm Program to existing health, training and social enterprise programs through the Council Food Team and aim to launch 3 further sites across the municipality by 2017.
 - b. Ensure that City Farm initiatives adopt a health outlook so as to maximise access to the Farm for residents most at risk of food insecurity. This could also link to training and volunteering experiences.

- 
6. Develop a feasibility study to underwrite the launch of a peri-urban demonstration **Green Wedge Demo Farm** by 2017 in partnership with suitable agencies and partners such as State Government, the South East Permaculture Group, Open Food Network, 300 Acres and Farm Incubator.
 - a. Use the demonstration farm to create a **Green Wedge Farming Guide** that promotes innovative multi-tier farming practice and articulates how peri-urban farming has generated viable returns on smaller parcels of land in many inter-national municipalities.
 - b. Using knowledge gathered from the demonstration farm, offer **City Farming Programs** – educational and promotional programs to landholders within the green belt.
 - c. Work with partners such as 3000 Acres and Farm Incubator to examine, document and streamline land access pathways to create new **Green Wedge Sub-lease and Land Access Toolkit** to encourage landowners to think creatively about ways in which external parties could access and farm privately held land within the green belt.
 - d. Link the Green Wedge Demo Farm(s) to **skills development and accredited training programs** for refugees, migrants, youth job seekers and the elderly. Build linkages with Greater Dandenong food retailers and social enterprises so that the Green Wedge Farm acts as a supplier of fresh produce into the broader community economy.
 - e. Develop a **2020 Business Plan** for the Green Wedge Farm(s) to remain viable as a location to produce, process and retail high-quality organic and heirloom foods by 2018. Work towards the farm being a respected, innovative farming and food focused tourist and culinary destination by 2020.
- 

We co-designed this Strategy with...

This document is the culmination of a participatory process that involved the input of time from many people who contributed their ideas and insights during the consultation and co-design. The following group of stakeholders jointly created the recommended actions put forward within this document.

Food Retailers

- Dandenong Market
- My Cambodia Restaurant
- Green Coriander Cafe
- Afghan Rahimi Restaurant
- Afghan Pamir Restaurant
- Ginger Jones Café
- A1 Bakery
- Polish Rye Crust Bakery
- Free Burma Café
- Bamyan Shop
- C J Spices
- Lalumba Restaurant & Café
- Gulistan Supermarket
- Rob's British Butchery
- Kluska Polish Restaurant
- Best Way Supermarket
- Gold Leaf Restaurant
- Dandenong Pavilion
- Gibe African Restaurant
- African Village Kitchen – Café
- The Dandenong Club

Government

- City of Greater Dandenong
 - Department of State Development, Business and Innovation (DSDBI)
 - Regional Development Australia (RDA)
-

Health / Community

- City of Greater Dandenong
- Department of State Development Business and Innovation
- Ermha / Madcap Café
- Avocare Ltd
- Southern Migrant and Refugee Centre
- Australian Food Sovereignty Alliance
- Brand New Day
- Dandenong Neighbourhood House
- Open Food Network
- Dandenong Market
- Monash Health
- South East Food Hub
- Noble Park Community Garden
- The Social Studio
- 3000 Acres
- Urban Commons
- The Food Alliance

Production & Processing

- Agribusiness Gippsland
 - Supreme Quality Foods
 - Chobani Yogurt
 - Castricum Meats
 - Tip Top
 - Jurgens Swiss Bread
 - Water Wheel
 - Popina Foods
 - Cadbury Kraft Foods
 - Noisette Bakery
 - Muffin Box
 - Super Pop Group
 - Birubi Foods
 - Enterprise Connect
 - Tasty Trucks
 - M+K Lawyers Food Division
 - Pitcher Partners – Dandenong office
 - Greater South Eastern Permaculture Group
-

Steering Group Members

Our thanks to the members of the Food Strategy Steering Group for their time and input.

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Miranda Harwood	Communications Officer, City of Greater Dandenong
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Julie Busch	Chair Dandenong Market Board

Our Team

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Consultants

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Retailer Engagement	Philippa Abbott at A&D Projects
Public Consultation	Bec McHenry and Hugo Lamb at Policy Booth

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The FIELD Institute

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The Field Institute is a design-led research, communications and strategy office focused on the food and agriculture sector.

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