



the Table
community food centre

Strategic Plan
2020 - 2025



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Preamble

Since 2012 The Table Community Food Centre has operated as an affiliate of Community Food Centres Canada (CFCC). As a Community Food Centre The Table engages in specific program areas including Food Access, Food Skills and Community Engagement, and maintains close collaborative relationship with CFCC and other affiliated sites across Canada. In 2015 The Table undertook a strategic planning process providing direction to the organization from 2016 – 2019.

Late in 2019 a facilitated planning exercise brought together staff, board, volunteers and participants from local partner organizations. The following report is a summary of the findings of this process.



Mission/Impact Statement...

Our mission is to foster a healthier and more connected community. We do this by improving access to healthy food, improving food skills and food literacy, advocating for individual well-being, and educating, engaging and advocating social policies to address food insecurity and poverty.



What Good for Which People?

The strategic planning process clarified the role of The Table by answering two questions;

What Good? And for Which People?



Impact “What Good?”

- Healthy people via healthy food
- Empowered people
- Reduce barriers to food security
- Reduce barriers to addressing poverty
- A supportive community which values food security

Beneficiaries “Which People?”

- Youth & children
- Marginalized community members
- The broader community (to support programs and policies for our target populations).
- Our work is focused in Perth but reaches throughout Lanark County where partnerships and resources permit.



Organizational Beliefs

Every person has the right to access healthy food

Universal access to food provides broad societal benefits

Food insecurity is fundamentally a symptom of poverty

A stable, local food supply is important for long-term food security

Support in the form of education and advocacy must be available to help participants gain sustained access to healthy food

A diverse mix of funding sources is crucial to The Table's sustainability

Measurable analytics help inform good decision making

Community Food Centre Canada's five Good Food Principles

CFCC Good Food Principles

Taking action from the individual to the systemic (through food access, food skills, and civic engagement programs);

Believing and investing in the power of good food;

Creating an environment of respect and community leadership;

Meeting people where they are at; and

Aiming high for our organization and our community.



The Table's Current Programs

In each of our programs, we strive to fulfill our mission and provide multiple benefits to participants. The programs can be categorized as Food Access, Food Skills, and Community Engagement . The Table's affiliate agreement with CFCC requires a balance of programs in these broad categories. The strategic planning exercise supported and validated all of The Table's current programs.



Food Access

Good Food Bank
Community Meals



Food Skills

Community Garden and Garden Workshops
After School Program
Community Kitchens: Drop In, Family Cook, Tiny Tastes, Cooking With Cents
FoodFit & FoodFit Alumni
Good Food in Schools Forum
Kids Can - School Snack Prep
Youth Centre Food Skills Programs



Community Engagement

Peer Advocacy Office
Lanark County Community Action Network
Community Action Training



Other

Seniors Gentle Fit



Strategic Directions 2020 – 2025

Vision:

A community where the transformative power of good food can be accessed by all in need and nurtured through education and advocacy. The strategies we undertake will:

Respect our Mission, Vision and Beliefs
Strengthen our financial position
Complement and augment existing programs
Enhance on-going community partnerships
Improve organizational sustainability
Be durable over the long term

The following strategic directions were identified during the planning process:


1. Focus on longer-term, higher impact fundraising
2. Explore opportunities for social enterprise
3. Access space for additional programming, staff and food storage
4. Further establish our presence and partnerships with the health system
5. Explore transportation solutions
6. Develop a food recovery and waste reduction plan
7. Clarify our role in and build capacity for our advocacy program
8. Enhance the breadth and depth of participant engagement




Given the scope of these strategic directions, and the potential limitations of time and resources, several strategic directions were prioritized for immediate action:

Priority Directions and Initial Actions


Focus on longer term, higher impact fundraising


 Focus on building the endowment fund with a long term view and a target 2M\$ over 5 years


 Reduce dependency on fundraising events


 Enhance major gift and legacy giving as key part of fundraising plans

Explore opportunities for social enterprise

 Create a sub-committee to take action re: grant opportunities with short term deadlines (e.g. the federal Investment Readiness Program). Create clear terms of reference/mandate to enable “agility”


 Learn and understand – invite people in who have/are “doing” social enterprise to help us understand opportunities and risks


 Determine investments needed (funds; staffing; space) to support “exploration” activities


 If there are viable opportunities, create a business plan




Further establish our presence and partnerships with the health system

 Further collaborate and seek out synergies for programming with the health sector

 Enhance messaging of health and food connection in our e-news, social media.


 Explore opportunities to further evaluate health-impacts of our programs

 Participate in Ontario Health Teams Development


 Prioritize developing and delivering targeted health-themed programs where gaps exist

Explore transportation solutions

 Identify transportation needs, existing resources and identify gaps

 Evaluate existing experiments with shuttle services

 Continue to include transportation in grant applications

 Work with partners to advance mutual opportunities for improving publicly available transportation in the area

Implementation and Monitoring

The Table's Board of Directors will work with the Executive Director to identify individuals, including Board Members, responsible for moving these strategic directions forward and developing more detailed action plans. Progress reports will be part of the board's monthly meeting routine. Annual Reports will include a summary of progress made on strategic directions.