



Food
Bank
2020
STRATEGIC PLAN





"Our greatest aspirations for the communities we serve are that they become vibrant, resilient and nourished in ways beyond food—that the people within them feel loved, acknowledged and yearn to give back. Together, with you, we look forward to fostering a sense of shared purpose and commitment that will change the story for the thousands of families seeking healthy and hunger-free lives."

— Dan Flowers
President and CEO
Akron-Canton Regional Foodbank

VISION

The vision of the Akron-Canton Regional Foodbank is a thriving community free of hunger.

At the Akron-Canton Regional Foodbank we believe in a community where all people live healthy and hunger-free lives. It's because of that belief the Foodbank embarked on a strategic journey to transform the path to its next level of work for this community.

Launched in September of 2014 amidst times of growth, change and complexity in the hunger-relief system, the Foodbank and its partners crafted a process and

spent a year developing a strategic plan. Guided by a new vision and mission, this plan will foster deeper collaboration and create meaningful, lasting impact.

Foodbank 2020 is a result of a community working to empower real change for families and neighbors in need. We invite you to join our Foodbank community and use your personal power to help us feed people for today and fight to end hunger for tomorrow.

MISSION

The mission of the Akron-Canton Regional Foodbank is to lead a collaborative network that empowers people to experience healthy and hunger-free lives. We distribute food to feed people and we advocate, engage and convene our community in the fight to end hunger.



GOALS

With the intent of thinking innovatively about how the Foodbank can have the greatest impact on food security for its local communities, four main strategic goals were developed:



**TO PROVIDE ENOUGH
FOOD FOR ALL**



**TO BE CONNECTED
IN SERVICE**



**TO LEVERAGE FOOD AS
A COMMUNITY CATALYST**



**TO STRENGTHEN A
COMMUNITY ASSET**

WHAT IS THE MEAL GAP?

Every year in Northeast Ohio, individuals and children are missing 41 million meals—and turn to the Foodbank and its network of hunger-relief programs for support.

In 2015, the Foodbank and its network of hunger-relief partners provided access to 23 million meals.

In addition, the Foodbank's network of partners provided an extra 6 million meals through local relationships.

Despite this food safety net, 12 million meals are still missing—the meal gap. But for the first time the Foodbank is putting a stake in the ground and committing to reducing half of the meal gap in the communities it serves by 2020, and closing the meal gap by 2025.

But the Foodbank can't do it alone.



The meal gap is the difference between the number of meals that are needed by the members of the community, and the number of meals that they can access.

The Foodbank commits to providing access to enough food for 28 million meals annually by 2020.



The Foodbank commits to ensuring at least 25% of its total distribution is fresh, nutritious produce. That is more than 8 million pounds annually.

① GOAL 1 ENOUGH FOOD FOR ALL

Through the strengthening of existing relationships, it will explore and implement new food distribution models within its eight county service area, increasing the amount of food that is available and accessible to those who are in need.

SERVING THE REGION THROUGH COUNTY RESPONSE

Each county is unique, and therefore requires unique responses to hunger-relief. Strengthening the Foodbank's leadership presence in its eight-county service area will create opportunities for the Foodbank

to develop and implement effective and efficient methods for the distribution of food.

- The Foodbank will establish strategic partnerships with local stakeholders, resulting in the development of individual service plans for all eight counties.
- The Foodbank will establish a physical presence in key areas to create awareness, inspire collaboration and expand its services to its network of hunger-relief partners.

INNOVATION IN FOOD SOURCING AND DISTRIBUTION

The Foodbank will introduce new and innovative solutions for sourcing and distributing the full measure of available products.

By strengthening existing relationships and focusing on new partnerships, the Foodbank will diversify its food streams and provide more fresh produce and nutritious foods to those it serves.

MORE FREE FOOD FOR PARTNERS

The Foodbank currently distributes 70% of its food at no cost to its network of hunger-relief partners — a 35% increase since 2010. The majority of the remaining food is distributed at pennies on the dollar.

Over the next five years, the Foodbank will increase the free food distribution to partners, enabling the optimization of their resources.



The Foodbank commits to increasing the percentage of free food provided to partnering agencies to at least 80%.



COMMUNITY

2 GOAL 2 FOOD AS A COMMUNITY CATALYST

Food is the heart and soul of the Foodbank's mission, but to advance the health of the communities it serves, it's necessary to go beyond food and collaborate around addressing issues connected to food insecurity. Join the Foodbank in conversation as it commits to taking an active role in igniting the community.

CONNECTING THE COMMUNITY

Local communities coming together to make local decisions and take local action.

- The Foodbank is working to create a framework that will actively engage and connect the communities it serves at the local level — empowering communities to make decisions and take actions that support those struggling with hunger.
- The Foodbank will create teams of “community connectors” tasked with gaining a greater understanding of the specific needs of the local communities.

- The Foodbank will convene hunger-relief partners and other community organizations, encouraging them to work together to strengthen each community's response efforts to address food insecurity.

COLLECTIVE WELLBEING

The Foodbank is actively seeking seats at the tables where conversations surrounding hunger and health are taking place. This goal aims to challenge community members to think creatively about system improvements that will have a lasting impact on the neighborhoods where they live, work and play. The Foodbank invites and encourages its network of hunger-relief partners to join in participating in community initiatives where food intersects with collective wellbeing, including community health, local food systems, and emergency preparedness.



CONVENE

VOICE

IMPACT

GROWTH

PARTNER

③ GOAL 3 CONNECTED IN SERVICE

The Foodbank is focused on building a strong, sustainable, collaborative network within the communities it serves in order to optimize its collective work.

NETWORK DEVELOPMENT

The Foodbank will optimize resources to maximize impact by:

- Convening the agency network to connect on goals and share aspirations.
- Establishing a partnership program outlining and facilitating various levels of collaboration.
- Providing specialized services to support individual programs across the network.

BE A VOICE FOR THOSE RECEIVING FOOD ASSISTANCE

The Foodbank will continue to echo the voice of those it serves throughout its work, making informed system improvements and increasing advocacy efforts to maximize the impact to the hunger-relief system as a whole.

The Foodbank commits to directly supporting its network of hunger-relief partners with \$1 million in equipment grants, capacity-building resources and strategic services annually.

GOAL 4 A STRONG COMMUNITY ASSET

The Foodbank will enhance its internal infrastructure and operating systems to sustain the mission of the organization today and support growth for tomorrow.

INNOVATIVE REVENUE STREAMS

The Foodbank is making plans to advance its social mission and diversify its revenue streams through creative, market-based strategies.

ORGANIZATIONAL CAPACITY

The Foodbank is investing in its facility, technologies and people to alleviate stresses on existing infrastructure. It is critical that the Foodbank continue to expand on its culture of excellence; supporting best-in-class, mission-centered community impact. This includes leveraging skill-based volunteers to support organizational capacity.

COMMUNITY RESPONSE AND SUPPORT

- The Foodbank will position itself for transformational growth by diversifying fundraising revenue and establishing a community based response to ending hunger.
- The Foodbank will broaden the awareness of its work by refining its brand and connecting it to each county it serves.

The Foodbank commits to increasing revenue and conducting a capital campaign that will provide support and ensure the success of the strategic plan initiatives.



★ Home of the Akron-Canton Regional Foodbank



Make Your Mark

Inspired. That is how I truly hope you feel after reading this plan that details how your Foodbank and our partners will embark on a journey to provide access to enough food for every single person struggling with hunger.

My promise to you is that distributing food will remain the heart and soul of our mission. But through our strategic planning process, we understand more deeply that the battle to end hunger cannot be fought with food alone.

This work is a collective result of more than 100 people who shared their combined wisdom and personal visions.

We are beyond grateful for the emotional energy they brought that gave a soul to this plan, and for their unwavering commitment to hunger-relief.

We invite you to be a part of the future work that is threaded throughout this plan. The accomplishments we're looking towards making in the next five years will be possible because of your support and commitment.

Make your mark. Contribute to this legacy and your personal power can enable our communities to thrive.

— Dan Flowers

Visit foodbank2020.org to make your mark on the Foodbank's Strategic Plan.

planning Committee

Chuck Allen
Shelly Allio
Lisa Backlin
Laura Bennett
Jim Bowen
Brian Broadbent
Jeff Caldwell
Joann Carpenter
Donae Ceja
Pat Divoky
Jenn Dyer

Dan Flowers
Larry Hasemeyer
Shelly Hinton
Chester Hitchcock
Sue Hobson
Harvey Nelson
Jill Oldham
Sue Pierson
Mark Putilar
Jim Rice
George Sarkis

Karen Sheppard
Carla Sibley
Tim Sisler
Eric Smer
Lydia Stahl
Jeff Wilhite
Bernett Williams
Rich Wilson
Jan Wojno
Nancy Wolf
Brittany Zaehringer



350 Opportunity Parkway
Akron, Ohio 44307

330.535.6900

akroncantonfoodbank.org



Produced with generous support
from Sequoia Financial Group