

Q1 Update: Austin/Travis County Food Plan Implementation Collaborative

Food Policy Board Meeting

March 23rd, 2026



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CONSULTING

Overview

1. Background and Year 1 Goals

2. First Quarter Update

- Actions taken so far
- Proposed Liaison roles for the City, Travis County, and Food Policy Board
- Requests for support from the City

3. Questions for the Food Policy Board

Our Role

The WNT team will serve as backbone support

We will:

- Design and facilitate inclusive processes
- Support governance and structure development
- Coordinate outreach, meetings, and reporting
- Steward alignment with Food Plan goals and values

We do not make decisions for the Collaborative - we support the Collaborative in making them.



Our Team

- **WNT** (Kelly Nichols, Kelley Abell, & Andrea Torres)
- **Blue Sky Partners** (Matt Glazer & Audrey Sherman)
- **Dwyer Consulting** (JC Dwyer)
- **Network Weavers**
 - **Black Lives Veggies the Nonprofit** (Larry Franklin)
 - **Cygnus Advisory Group** (Joi Chevalier)
 - **Joshua Collier**
 - **Good Work Austin** (Nitza Cuevas and Kara Hanaoka)
 - **Fruitful Commons** (Angie Holliday)

Year 1 Goals (At a Glance)

Three core goals for Year 1:

- (1) Launch inclusive governance and leadership
- (2) Engage a broad, representative food system network
- (3) Establish clear ways of working and accountability

Year 1 Goal #1: Governance

Build a Collaborative people trust:

- Establish an interim structure to operate quickly
- Co-create a Collaborative Charter
- Define leadership roles, participation tiers, and decision-making
- Ensure power-sharing and equity guardrails

Year 1 Goal #2: Engagement

Bring the full food system to the table

- Targeted outreach across all food system sectors
- Network Weavers as trusted connectors
- Meeting people where they are
- Multiple ways to participate (deep + light touch)

Year 1 Goal #3: Credibility & Alignment

Build confidence with partners and the public

- Regular check-ins with City, County, and Food Policy Board
- Clear documentation and transparent communication
- Early wins that demonstrate momentum and value



Apply to join the
Austin-Travis County
Food Policy Board

Actions Taken So Far

1. Governance

- Obtained federal EIN # for the Collaborative

2. Engagement

- Informal Stakeholder conversations
- Hosted Community Orientation Session 2/24
- Initiated signup form for Network updates
- Convened Network Weavers to develop a food system stakeholder map and designate target networks

3. Credibility & Alignment

- Convened Subcontractor Team and Established Year 1 Work Plan; monthly check-in meetings with City/County
- Confirmed performance measures + reporting

Next Up: Targeted Outreach

1. Values

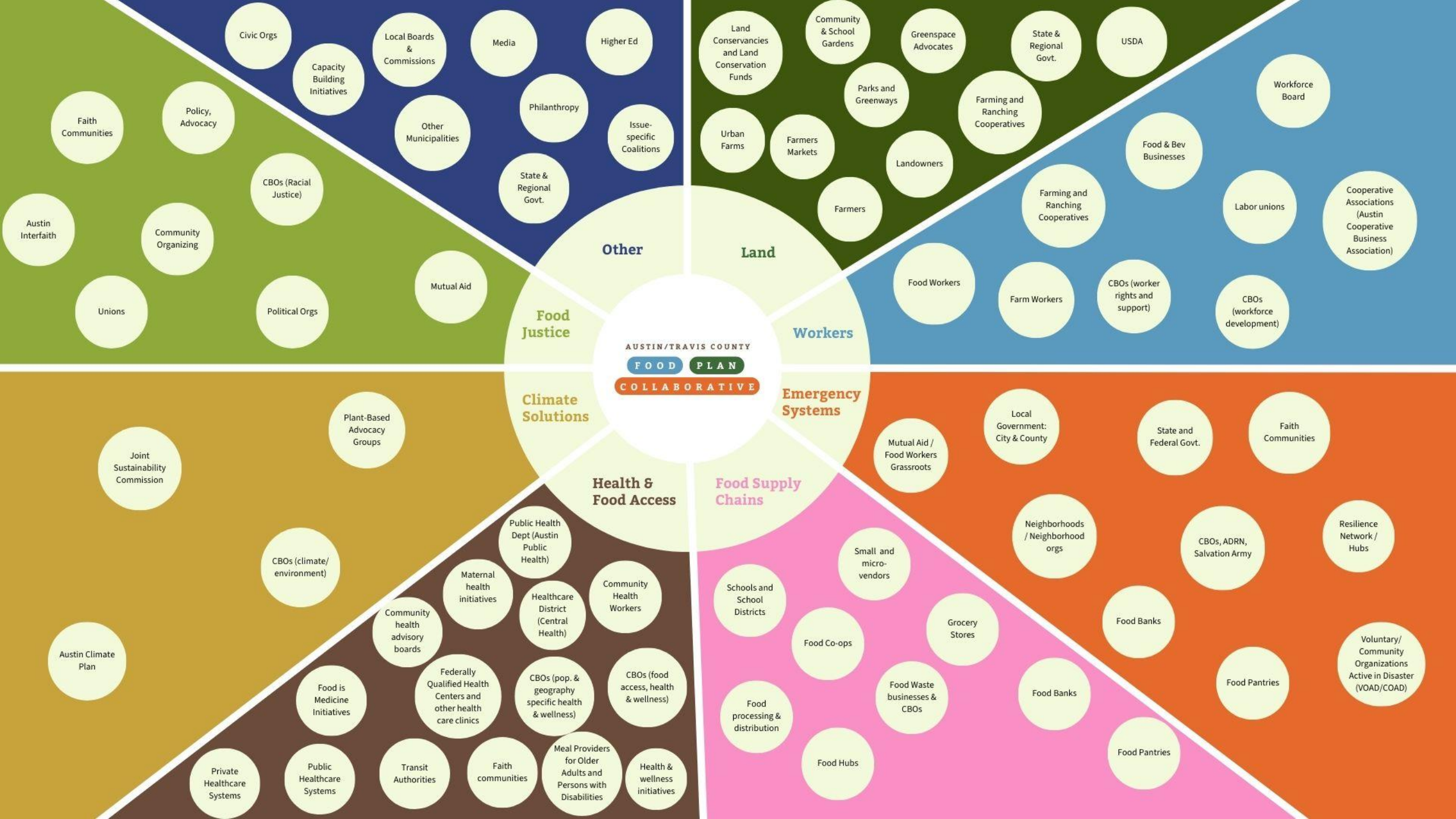
- *If this Collaborative is successful, what do you envision would look different in our food system?*
- *What would make participating in the Collaborative worth your (or your organization's) time and energy?*

2. Tradeoffs

- *Speed vs Shared Decision-Making*
- *Independence vs Government Alignment*
- *Flexibility vs Formality*
- *Clear Leadership vs Distributed Ownership*

3. Power & Guardrails

- *What would make you worry this Collaborative isn't really sharing power?*
- *What decisions should never happen without community voices?*



Liaison roles for the City, Travis County, and Food Policy Board

City of Austin Liaison

- Serve as primary point of contact between the Collaborative and the City departments engaged in Food Plan implementation
- Share updates on City-led food system initiatives, policies, and timelines
- Surface opportunities for alignment, coordination, and resource leverage
- Support coordination across City-County implementation efforts

Travis County Liaison

- Serve as primary point of contact between the Collaborative and Travis County departments engaged in Food Plan implementation
- Share updates on County-led food system initiatives, policies, and timelines
- Surface opportunities for alignment, coordination, and resource leverage
- Support coordination across City-County implementation efforts

Food Policy Board Liaison

- Support alignment between the Collaborative and the Food Policy Board by representing the Board in its advisory role
- Share updates, feedback, and emerging priorities between both bodies
- Support accountability to the Food Plan's vision, goals, and equity principles

Liaison roles for the City, Travis County, and Food Policy Board

Key Responsibilities (all Liaisons)

Participate regularly in Leadership Council meetings (or designated check-ins prior to Leadership Council formation)

Act as information bridges, not decision-makers, within Collaborative governance

Elevate questions, risks, and opportunities early

Support transparency, trust-building, and shared accountability

Help translate between community-driven processes and public-sector systems

Boundaries & Guardrails

Liaisons do not direct Collaborative decisions or priorities

Liaisons respect the Collaborative's consent-based decision-making process

Role is advisory and connective, not supervisory

Value Added

Reduces duplication and misalignment

Strengthens credibility with public partners

Accelerates implementation by improving coordination and clarity

Questions for the Food Policy Board

1. Questions or Clarifications on the Liaison roles? How is the Board going to determine their Liaison to the collaborative?
2. How should we be engaging City Council & County Commissioners & does the Board want to be involved?
3. Additional feedback on the proposed outreach process?

Our Asks for You

1. Determine the Food Policy Board liaison to the Implementation Collaborative (ideally by May)
2. Take the survey
3. Share the survey
4. Join us for the first Collaborative meeting on Friday, June 5th

SIGN UP FOR UPDATES

