

# Making the link: NOURISH and the Outer East Local Governments

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NICOLINA GRILLO<sup>1</sup>, RACHAEL REYNOLDS<sup>1</sup>, LINA WANG<sup>1</sup>, ALICE DUONG<sup>1</sup>

SUPERVISORS: DEBORAH COCKS, STACEY HOLDEN, NICOLE HUNTER

<sup>1</sup> *Monash University, Clayton, VIC, 3800, Australia*

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## Abbreviations

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LG – Local Government

LGM – Local Government member

MPHP – Municipal Public Health Plan

OEHCSA – Outer East Health & Community Support Alliance

## Background

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Food security is defined by the World Health Organisation (WHO) as “when all people at all times have access to sufficient, safe, nutritious food to maintain a healthy and active life<sup>1</sup>.” In 2007 food insecurity was identified in the Outer East communities, with 7.4%, 7.0% and 3.8% of individuals reported being food insecure in the past 12 months in the City of Knox, Shire of Yarra Ranges and City of Maroondah, respectively<sup>2,3,4</sup>. As a result, a project report titled “Outer East Community Food Access Research Project” was undertaken to address food security by mapping the physical barriers to accessing nutritious food<sup>5</sup>.

Current literature exemplifies that Local Government plays a pivotal role in addressing food accessibility and sustainability issues as they have the unique opportunity to work closely with the community, in addition to the provision of support, leadership, resources, and policy development<sup>6</sup>. Additionally, Local Government are at the grassroots level and are therefore more capable of responding to the community’s specific and distinctive needs<sup>7</sup>.

A key recommendation from the National Survey of Food and Nutrition Activities encouraged Local Government to undertake a larger role in targeting food security through the development of integrated food policies and land-use planning<sup>6</sup>. A great deal levels of emphasis has been placed on land-use planning as having a key role in achieving food security such as the protection of productive agricultural land, situating food businesses closer to residential areas, and several other beneficial roles<sup>6</sup>. The Environments for Health framework was developed to assist Local Governments in creating healthier communities and informs how all departments within local Council can assist with creating healthy built, social, economic and natural environments<sup>7</sup>.

However, there appears to be confusion surrounding the specific definition of food security, whether it is a social justice issue, an environmental issue or a land use planning issue<sup>6</sup>. Furthermore, there seems to be a lack of accountability within Local Government in terms of which individuals or departments have a role in creating effective and sustainable food systems<sup>6</sup>.

It must be noted that food security is a complex, multi-faceted and growing issue that cannot be dealt with by a specific individual or organisation alone<sup>8,9</sup>. Evidence indicates that Local Government policies and initiatives should involve most, if not all, departments<sup>8,9</sup>. Despite Local Government’s potential in supporting food security, they cannot achieve a sustainable food network single-handedly. Consequently, effective collaboration between Government, non-Government and corporate sectors need to be developed and strengthened to address a broad scope of food security issues<sup>10</sup>.

NOURISH has highlighted the need to increase their capacity to deal with food security issues within the Outer East. As a result, this project has been designed to increase NOURISH’s understanding of the Local Governments current and potential role in addressing food security. Additionally, this project also aims to achieve NOURISH’s vision through establishing an ongoing collaborative partnership with the Outer East Local Governments, with the long term goal of creating and maintaining sustainable food systems and initiatives into the future.

# Overview

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This project comprised of three main components. Firstly, conducting an extensive literature review to establish what is being done by Local Government in relation to food security. Secondly, consulting with NOURISH members to determine and improve their knowledge of the organisational structure and the responsibilities of members of the outer east Local Government. And finally, to consult with Local Government member's to assess their current knowledge of and barriers in addressing food insecurity.

**Part 1: Determine current best practice of Local Governments role in food security**

**Part 2: Improving the knowledge of NOURISH**

**Part 3: Consultation with Local Government**

## **Part 1: Determine current best practice of Local Governments role in food security**

An extensive literature review was conducted to determine the current roles and responsibilities of Local Government in addressing food access and sustainability. Current best practice of Local Government in addressing food security issues were investigated on a local, national and global scale to allow for a more extensive and in-depth insight into the best practice. This literature review also sought to generate recommendations for future research and for potential future implementation in the Outer East Local Governments. Literature was sourced from the Ovid and Cochrane database, however many valuable data and research were sourced from discussions with the project supervisor.

## **Part 2: Improving the knowledge of NOURISH**

The first section of this project investigated NOURISH's current understanding of Local Government's role in food security and their personal understanding of the term 'food security'. A baseline questionnaire was developed to determine their understanding (appendix 1). Information packs were then distributed to all NOURISH members, which contained information of each of the three outer east Local Governments. This information included an organisational map of Local Government members associated with food security, a contacts list and summary of each Local Government members (LGM) role (appendix 2). A follow up questionnaire, which was identical to the baseline questionnaire, was again distributed to all NOURISH members in order to ascertain whether their understanding of Local Government's role in food security had increased.

### **Recruitment**

NOURISH members were identified through the outer east Primary Care Partnership; all members were contacted via email and participation in the research was voluntary. Out of a total of 13 members of NOURISH, 8 participated in the research.

### **Participants**

NOURISH is comprised of individuals working for Local Government and community health services in the outer east community, which includes the Yarra Ranges Shire, City of Knox and City of Maroondah Councils. The majority of the participants had previous experience or interest in food security and insecurity.

### **Data collection**

The questionnaire was developed based on a detailed literature review and validated methodology for developing a questionnaire<sup>11,12</sup>. The questions included the role of the participant in addressing food security and their awareness of their organisation's initiatives, Local Government initiatives, and the contacts associated with food insecurity and the capacity for both organisations to work together

(appendix1) The questionnaire was distributed and returned electronically, which allowed for greater flexibility for completion by participants.

### Analysis

Data was analysed using quantitative and qualitative techniques. The qualitative technique used was the constant comparative method which is based on grounded theory<sup>13</sup>. The questionnaires were analysed by line-by-line coding, emerging themes were noted during the analysis and then reviewed once all questionnaires were analysed.

### Part 3: Consultation with Local Government

Another component of the methodology involved ascertaining the knowledge and opinions of various LGM's in relation to addressing food security and insecurity in the Outer East. The data collected from all LGM's were qualitatively analysed in order to gain greater insight into the experiences and difficulties faced by Local Government in addressing food insecurity in the Outer East.

### Recruitment

A snowball sampling technique was used to obtain participants for this study<sup>14</sup>. There was an initial discussion with the project supervisor at OEHCSA to discuss suitable and available participants. Following this discussion, an initial list of Local Government contacts was obtained. Telephone calls were made to each Local Government member and requests were made to take part in a semi-structured interview for the study. For those who accepted the request, interview times were arranged. Following initial contact with participants or during the interviews, other participants were suggested. Also during the course of the interviewing phase, the key contact at OEHCSA provided us with additional participants to contact. These Local Government members were then contacted and interview times arranged.

### Participants

Participants were recruited until it was felt that a diverse array and similar number of Local Government members were obtained from each of the Outer East Councils. Participants were recruited from all three of the Outer East Councils, which Maroondah, Knox and Yarra Ranges Councils. A total of seventeen participants were recruited with six participants from Maroondah Council, six participants from Knox Council and five participants from Yarra Ranges Council. Participants were from a range of departments as specified below.

**Table 1**

Department	No. of participants
Social Planning	3
Public Health and Development	3
Strategic Planning	2
Community Projects and Property	1
Economic Development	1
Early Childhood Services	1
Youth Services	1
Environment Planning	1
Aged and Disability Services	1
Food Services	1
Urban Planning	1

Open Spaces and Landscape Design	1
<b>Total</b>	<b>17</b>

### Data collection

The method employed to collect the relevant information from participants was a semi-structured interview. The questions were developed based upon an extensive literature review conducted which investigated best practice on a global and national scale, the role that Local Governments can play in addressing food security. Research was also undertaken to determine how to best develop a semi-structured interview<sup>12</sup>. By using a semi-structured interviewing technique, this allowed flexibility to gather additional information that may be deemed relevant to the study that was not covered by the developed question list. Interviews were recorded using a voice recorder, following explanation to the participant and the signing of a consent form. Interviews were transcribed immediately following each interview.

### Analysis

Data was analysed using a content analysis method, which involved reading through the transcript of each interview and identifying emerging themes<sup>15</sup>. Within each identified theme, codes were identified and their frequency documented. This allowed for greater understanding of the knowledge and perceptions of Local Government as a whole. This process was carried out by all four researchers (NG,RR,AD,LW) in the process of triangulation<sup>16</sup>. A group discussion followed from which all themes and coding processes were discussed and agreements reached.

## PART 1 - Literature review

This literature review has been conducted to provide a greater understanding of the current roles and responsibilities of Local Government in addressing food sustainability and food access. Furthermore, this literature review will highlight the differences in current Local Government practice and global best practice. As a result, recommendations will be discussed to assist with improving the capacity of Local Government in building and maintaining a healthy and sustainable community environment.

- Local and Global Government practices to achieving and maintaining Food Security
- Current practice in Local Government
- Best practice of Local Government in food security
- Global best practice in food security
- Comparison of Victoria and global best-practice on food security
- General findings
- Conclusion

### Local and Global Government practices to achieving and maintaining Food Security

#### Local Government role in Food Security & Food Insecurity

Food security is defined as the ability to consume nutritious, quality, affordable, safe and culturally appropriate food from non-emergency sources on a regular basis<sup>6</sup>. In comparison, food insecurity is the irregular access to safe, nutritious and culturally acceptable food from non-emergency sources<sup>17</sup>. Members of the community that are most at risk of food insecurity include the homeless, working poor, unemployed, people with disabilities, youth, older people, Indigenous Australians, those living in remote areas, and some immigrants<sup>6</sup>. In Victoria, 6.1% of households reported that they had inadequate food and could not afford to buy any more in the past 12 months<sup>6</sup>.

A healthy environment is conducive to better health and living for the community due to the way in which environmental factors impact how a person can work, play and live. Examples of health environments include: communities with parks and playgrounds which support the incorporation of physical activity into their daily routines; groceries selling nutritious foods which enhances accessibility to healthy foods<sup>17</sup>.

However, the creation and maintenance of healthy environments cannot be achieved in isolation by a single organisation or sector. Literature supports the coordinated effort to achieve improved health throughout the community<sup>17</sup>. Local Governments should take on a greater role in regards to food security due to their ability to achieve greater results by addressing multiple issues and facilitating collaboration among stakeholders<sup>8,18</sup>.

In order to support food security, collaboration and partnerships between sectors of Government, non-Government and industry need to develop and strengthen. Interventions targeted at food security issues need to be broad, and therefore, these interventions rely on collaboration within Government departments and between Government and non-Government sectors<sup>9</sup>. Lee et al. suggests that a Governmental approach to tackling food insecurity can also be known as an upstream approach. An upstream approach can have an indirect or long-term effect on the health of the community through the implementation of Government policies and initiatives<sup>9</sup>. Examples of these are discussed throughout the body of the report.

#### Healthy Cities literature

Healthy Cities is a global project endorsed by WHO and is based on the recognition of the significant role Local Government can play in the development of a healthy and sustainable environment<sup>10</sup>. A healthy city is not

defined by an outcome, but rather, it is defined by the process of continually creating and improving its physical and social environment, and building upon community resources to enable people to live in a healthy environment. The primary features of Healthy Cities is to commit and engage Local Government in improving health through capacity-building, providing leadership, developing collaborative partnerships across the community interdepartmental sectors, and community involvement. Healthy Cities believe that health is influenced by all Government sectors, and should therefore be high on their agendas<sup>10</sup>.

### **Land use planning**

Land use planning is the strategic process of managing the use and development of land and covers areas such as housing, transportation, the environment and the economy<sup>6,19,20</sup>. Land use planning has the **capacity** to positively influence food sustainability to ensure the supply and access of food is not limited. Examples of potential benefits of land use planning include: protection of productive land in rural and urban areas from being used for non-agricultural purposes; promotion of urban agriculture through public and community gardens; and planning for food businesses to be situated in close proximity to people to increase food access<sup>19</sup>.

Interestingly, the food system is not a priority in land use planning. Therefore, the absence of food systems calls for Local Government to become involved as they are able to impact all parts of the food chain to achieve sustainable food systems in terms of the production, processing, distribution and marketing of food<sup>6,19,20</sup>.

**This last paragraph should be rephrased – when you state the ‘absence of food systems’ what do you mean, needs more explanation as it is not clear what you re trying to say. Also perhaps it is not that the food system is not a priority in land use planning but that it is not a consideration and so lets ask why not?**

According to the Cancer Council of NSW 2007 **is this a report please indicate**, lack of access to healthy food as a result of structural urban design and governance issues negatively impacts people’s food choices and is associated with poorer health outcomes and obesity<sup>6</sup>. Consequently, this highlights the need for structural urban design and planning to address the unequal access to food for some groups of the community. The creation and maintenance of local food spaces and food access requires partnerships between community-based organisations, local leaders, Local Governments, food retailers and land use planners. Land use planners can assist with achieving sustainable food systems by facilitating and leading food security initiatives at a local level through the decision making process regarding the use of land. Additionally, land use planners can be productive by: analysing connections between food and other planning schemes, assessing the impact of current planning on the local food system, educate future planners about food system issues, and to revise local land use plans to ensure barriers to a sustainable food system are reduced<sup>6,20</sup>.

### **Food Procurement**

Food procurement can be one of the strategies to be considered by Local Government and other organisations to support local and sustainable produce. It is defined as the acquisition of goods and services<sup>21</sup>. The state Government is responsible for the purchasing of food for a wide range of organisations which include schools, childcare, prisons, aged care facilities, health care services, and catering within local and state Government. Due to the large number of food services provided under the Victorian Government, a change in the sourcing and promotion of food can result in significant improvements in the health of the community and staff, whilst promoting environmental health and stability<sup>21</sup>.

The Food Alliance strongly advises a minimum standard on health and sustainability standard for public sector bodies<sup>21</sup>. Food Alliance is an organisation established and supported by VicHealth and the Food Policy Unit at Deakin University, respectively<sup>21</sup>. The aim of the Food Alliance is to advocate for the development and implementation of policies that conducive to sustainable food security and healthy eating in Victoria. These

mandatory standards advocated by the Food Alliance will assist with building a sustainable food system by using the public money to buy fresh, locally produced food for the whole society. This change will enable the Government to provide leadership and encourage the public and other organisations to adopt sustainable and effective food purchasing practices. A shift in the purchasing practices of Government can encourage a change towards a healthier, accessible, affordable and environmentally-friendly diet. In addition, the mandatory food procurement standards make the Government accountable for their food purchases<sup>21</sup>. **have you found any other references on this – it is a bit narrow to include this but only reference on document**

The UK recently reviewed their sustainable food procurement policy and identified the potential benefits of the Government purchasing local, sustainable and healthy food<sup>21</sup>:

- Healthier environment = reduction in food miles and greenhouse gas emissions, less wastage, increase in bio-diversity
- Thriving economy = supporting farmers and small local businesses
- Improved public health = reduction in childhood obesity and diet-related diseases (e.g. heart disease, diabetes, cancer).

## Current practice in Local Government

### Roles and responsibilities of Local Government

Local Government operate in accordance with the *Local Government Act 1989* and is responsible for implementing numerous programs and policies outlined by the State and Federal Government<sup>22</sup>. The following are areas of work that the Victorian Local Governments manage<sup>22</sup>:

- **General public services** include emergency prevention and protection, animal management and control, tourism visitor, and community information
- **Health, Welfare and Community services** comprise aged care programs, maternal and child health services, disability services, cultural development, public libraries, leisure and recreation services, housing, public health services, and migrant and indigenous services
- **Planning** includes statutory planning, strategic planning, rural land use management, forestry, and native cultural heritage
- **Environment** consists of waste management, water quality, sustainability, and green purchasing programs
- **Infrastructure and Assets** include road construction and maintenance, footpath construction and maintenance, traffic and parking management, public space maintenance, and leisure facilities.

Interestingly, not one of the Local Government's roles and responsibilities clearly specifies the development and/or maintenance of food sustainability and food access.

### Current barriers to Local Government achieving food security

Food sustainability and food access is influenced by many aspects of policy. A wide range of Governmental sectors have a direct interest and connection with food security issues. Despite this, the range of issues related to food is mainly dealt within separate roles of Local Government departments and their programs and initiatives. This is due to confusion surrounding whether food security is a social justice issue, an environmental issue or a land use planning issue<sup>6</sup>. Furthermore, there is no accountability in regards to food policy and the current divided approach to food policy is both inefficient and creates barriers to achieving an effective and sustainable food system<sup>19</sup>. Consequently, the roles and responsibilities of Local Government need to be revised to tackle food security issues in a holistic and collaborative manner<sup>6</sup>.

Local Governments are enthusiastic about tackling the issue of food security. However, a barrier to change is the concern that there would be no resources and funds provided to perform the role of tackling these food security issues, especially since food security issues are viewed as an open ended task that will continue to consume resources<sup>6</sup>. Successful initiatives targeting food security require an ongoing source of funding to ensure the program is sustainable in the long-term<sup>23</sup>.

Despite the strong association between food security and land use planning, a clear relationship between the two has not been made. The subject of food, food security, and land use planning is complex and is influenced by policies from the agriculture, transport, and health sector. Therefore, it has been suggested that an overall direction in respect to food, food security and land use planning is needed to adequately achieve food security. In addition, the actual and potential role of Local Government in managing land use planning and food needs to be clearly stated<sup>6</sup>.

Barriers to land use planners in dealing with sustainable food systems have been identified<sup>6</sup>:

- The belief that the food system is not directly influenced by the management of the built environment
- Lack of knowledge and awareness of food security as an issue
- Food is only seen as a rural issue and not related to the urban setting
- The view that there are limited opportunities for collaboration between food and land use planning
- Insufficient understanding of food security issues among planners to make a significant contribution
- There is no legal requirement to address food security
- The view that fertile land is an expendable resource

### Best practice of Local Government in food security

#### Local Government programs and initiatives

Local Government can achieve food sustainability through the development of food policies that link public health, community development and urban planning initiatives to produce a holistic and sustainable approach to food security<sup>6</sup>. Examples of capacity building include community gardens and kitchens which are important for raising awareness of food issues as well as empowering the community to become food secure through educating and training them on the necessary knowledge and skills. It is important for Local Government to increase community participation to achieve the following benefits: empower individuals, reduce social exclusion, ensuring ownership and the sustainability of programs<sup>7</sup>.

The following are initiatives and programs that can be adopted by Local Government to assist with improving food security in their community:

- **Community Gardens** provide an area of land for people who do not have the space or resources to have their own garden<sup>6</sup>. Benefits include: increased accessibility to healthy food, physically activity, development of self-reliance, and to a place to connect with nature. Community gardens can be leisure gardens (used by local residents who do not have an opportunity to have a garden at home); school gardens; entrepreneurial gardens (aim to reduce social exclusion and to also provide employment opportunities; and, training gardens (provide alternative activities for disadvantaged and troubled young people)<sup>6</sup>.

Land use planners need to incorporate community gardens when planning and to identify any existing vacant land that could be utilised.

- **Farmer's markets** are mainly fresh food markets located within a community to provide a suitable environment for farmers to sell their produce directly to consumers. Farmer's markets are favourable due to the shortened food miles, provision of sustainable local fresh food, and development of relationships between community members and agriculture<sup>6</sup>.
- **Food policy Councils** have been established to improve the local food supply and support food security. Food policy Councils have the ability to engage influential stakeholders and provide an environment to discuss changes and improvements to the numerous aspects of the local food system<sup>9</sup>. They can be formed at a local, regional or state level and can consist of collaborations between stakeholders from various aspects of a local food system such as local Council elected officials, managers (of urban planning and community services), Government representatives, managers of local grocery retail chains, the health department, members of the community, and community organisations concerned with welfare and food security<sup>9,18</sup>. Local Government officers are important members of Food policy Councils due to their ability to provide guidance and to advocate other aspects of the Government to achieve greater food security by developing policies and providing funds<sup>6</sup>. Food policy Councils have been found to be more successful if they receive on-going funding from credible and commonly recognised sources such as the local Councils, and Government departments (for example, the department of health and agriculture)<sup>9</sup>.
- **Food Charters** are created by Food Policy Councils and outlines the community's specific values and priorities in creating a fair and sustainable local food system<sup>6</sup>. Food Charters engage people and groups from all aspects of the food system to devise productive solutions to food security issues.
- **Food Policies** is any policy that addresses or regulates the food system in terms of how food is produced, processed, distributed, purchased, protected and disposed of. Food policy can operate at the global, national, regional, local and institutional levels<sup>6</sup>.  
According to the Public Health Association of Australia (2008), social inequalities such as food security are key priorities in Australia. They have emphasised that food policy is an efficient way of approaching food security. However, current food policies in Australia are mainly fragmented, and priorities would be more greatly dealt with when food policies become integrated. Food security must be entrenched within integrated Local Government policies, rather than being fragmented and isolated<sup>24</sup>.

### **Successful Local Government strategies in building sustainable environments - local and national initiatives**

**Moorabool City Council** strongly state that the protection of agricultural land and production is an important planning outcome. The Moorabool City Council will resist urban development applications for land if it compromises the productive use of rural land for agricultural purposes and if it interferes with the Council's environmental qualities<sup>6</sup>. This is because the municipality itself is mainly rural land and agribusinesses have a role in enhancing the economic development of this region.

One of **Casey City Council's** objectives is to maintain and protect the long-term quality of land for agriculture purposes to ensure future agricultural activities are not compromised<sup>6</sup>.

**Wyndham City Council's** policy is to ensure all urban development and building construction is to be compatible with their agricultural goals to protect their fertile land<sup>6</sup>.

**Brimbank City Council** developed a specific position to deal with food security within the Council. The creation of a specific position was beneficial due to enhanced opportunity for integration of food security programs, greater interaction and knowledge sharing, and increased ability to influence policy, planning and strategic development<sup>6,24</sup>.

**Maribyrnong City Council** has worked towards ensuring food security is embedded into Local Government policy. They have achieved this by incorporating relevant factors that support food security into their Municipality Strategic Statement such as increasing accessibility to transport, ensuring activity and sporting centres are within walking distance, and encouraging rooftop gardens to provide opportunities for growing food<sup>24</sup>.

**Food Fairness Illawarra** in New South Wales has been actively promoting initiatives and activities to ensure an adequate and healthy food supply to all in the community<sup>25</sup>. Such examples are: development of a low cost and free meals directory; providing support for local emergency relief providers and community gardens; working in collaboration with the university of Wollongong to form the Food Health and the Environment Forum and the development of a local food produce fact sheet<sup>25</sup>.

Sydney's **Hawkesbury Harvest** (HH) is a non-profit organisation with a vision of improving urban agriculture in the Hawkesbury region. In order to initiate and operate HH, it required the following project partners: Baulkham Hills Shire Council, Greater Western Sydney Economic Board, Hawkesbury City Council, Hornsby City Council, Penrith City Council and the NSW Department of State and Regional Development. The benefits of the HH program include the creation of a strong link between agriculture and the Sydney community, and the development of strong partnerships with all levels of Government. The HH program emphasises the need for local and state Governments to participate in the development and running of programs and initiatives to achieve a sustainable food system<sup>6</sup>.

**Brisbane City Council** has become a leader in embracing food as a fundamental element in its City's plans and initiatives. Defined environmental targets have driven policy and programs, such as the protection of agricultural land and local markets to provide healthy and fresh produce for the community. As part of GreenHeartCitySmart program, they aim to reduce carbon emissions through the following initiatives: planting food in the backyard, choosing local and seasonal produce, visiting local farmers markets, and joining a community garden<sup>6</sup>.

**Sustainable Gardening Australia** (SGA) is a non-profit, non-Government organisation that aims to enhance the Australian environment through educating the community on sustainable gardening practices<sup>26</sup>. The SGA call for Local Government to support the work of their organisation by subscribing to their cause to assist with raising community awareness of environmental issues through gardening. "Ground-up Gardening" is an in-depth community training workshop that provides training in environmentally sustainable garden design, construction and maintenance. In order to operate their workshops, it requires the Council to provide a suitable venue for the presentation and to assist with promotion<sup>26</sup>.

The **Banyule and Darebin Good Food Alliance** was formed to target the food insecurity in these two municipalities. They are a good example of the importance of collaboration, with partnerships formed with Darebin and Banyule Community health services, Primary Care Partnerships, Health and Disability services, Neighbourhood services, Department of Human services public health and community groups. Additionally, the City of Darebin and Banyule are both funded by the Victorian Department of Human Services to entrench food security into their Local Government policies and strategies<sup>24</sup>.

The City of Port Phillip have acknowledged food security as an issue within their municipality and have developed a wide range of potential strategies and opportunities to target food security issues<sup>27</sup>:

- Inclusion of food security in the Council's environmental initiatives
- Encouraging local food production in various settings such as private homes, community gardens, and public housing

- Develop partnerships with their sister Cities so that agricultural resources and food produced in excess can be exchanged.
- Consultation with the City of Port Phillip Planning department and the Economic Development department to discuss opportunities for improving local food access in areas with low access to food such as Port Melbourne – Garden city.

## Global best practice in food security

### City of Vancouver

Previously in Canada, Local Governments was seen to be voluntarily intervening in food systems in response to community pressure. Local Government members from the City of Vancouver were interviewed and it was found that the workers within Local Government had changing expectations in regards to their role in food security and sustainability<sup>18</sup>. Respondents from the Local Government in Vancouver acknowledged that Local Government should have a greater role in food policy to accomplish their fundamental aim of achieving and maintaining quality of life for their community. Other Local Government members also supported the view of Local Government addressing food access and sustainability because the Local Government are the community's elected representatives and are therefore responsible for initiating policies and programs to support the community<sup>18</sup>.

Currently, the Vancouver City Council demonstrates a Governmental approach to achieving and maintaining a sustainable food supply. A Food Action Plan was initiated by the Vancouver City Council. It is composed of three integral components: creation of a Vancouver Food Policy Council; five action items (city-wide food system assessment, rooftop gardens, community gardens, farmer's markets, and a food distribution facility for low income residents); and the employment of two full-time City staff positions (Food Policy Coordinator and Food System Planner)<sup>6</sup>. The development and implementation of the Food Action Plan provided numerous benefits. For example, the allocation of two full time staff was valuable in terms of providing leadership, organisational stability, and ensuring food system goals were constantly on Local Governments' agenda<sup>18</sup>. Furthermore, due to the approval of the Food Action Plan, the legal status and role of Local Government in the area of food policy was clarified and official acknowledged. This resulted in less confusion from Local Government regarding their roles and abilities to address food security issues<sup>18</sup>.

From the Food Action Plan, a Food Charter was adopted. The Food Charter is based on five main principles: community economic development (emphasis on locally-based food systems); ecological health (protection of natural resources, and reduction in food miles); social justice (food is a basic human right); collaboration and participation (strengthen food security through citizen participation and Government cooperation); and celebration (values the importance of food both culturally and socially)<sup>6</sup>.

"Grow a Row, Share a Row" program was initiated by the Food Policy Council to enable local gardeners to grow an extra row of vegetables and/or fruit tree in their garden. These would then be donated to the Greater Vancouver Food Bank Society and Neighbourhood Houses in Vancouver<sup>6</sup>.

### England

The UK created the "Sustainable Food Hub" because they had recognised the need to re-locate food supplies in order to provide healthy and affordable food access for those in deprived areas in London. The "Sustainable Food Hub" highlights the need for Government involvement and support in the development of a strong connection between local farmers with the markets in London to create a secure food supply. The UK boasts a productive and sustainable food system due to their strong preference for locally produced foods and politically commitment to support small food sector businesses and local initiatives<sup>6</sup>.

In the UK, an interdepartmental approach to health and social services has resulted in improved health services. Although each department has differing responsibilities, an interdepartmental approach enhances the standards of services delivered due to the sharing of resources, information, responsibilities and power<sup>27</sup>.

Furthermore, the UK community has developed three successful projects to assist the public sector organisations in improving their food purchasing decisions. They include the “Good Food on the Public Plate project”, “Good Food Training”, and the “Food for Life Partnership”<sup>21</sup>. These programs provide practical advice and complimentary training to the public sector catering and procurement staff to increase sustainable food purchasing practices. Despite the success of these programs, they are voluntary and therefore these beneficial changes have limited opportunity to influence positive change on a broader scale. Therefore, legislation that specifies targets for sustainable food procurement in the public sector would assist with large scale changes<sup>21</sup>.

### **Netherlands**

The Netherland Government have set specific food sustainability goals and aim to increase the purchasing of food products and services to 100%. Specific criteria have been set to instruct procurement officers when making purchasing decisions in regards to food. Furthermore, the criteria offers a method of monitoring the Governments’ compliance to sustainable purchasing practices<sup>21</sup>.

### **Comparison of Victoria and global best-practice on food security**

As indicated above, there are various best practise guidelines at a local, national and global level. Literature clearly emphasises that Victoria is far from global best practice in terms of food security when compared Europe and North America. The UK and Canada have excelled in achieving and maintaining sustainable food systems due to their Governmental and holistic approach to food insecurity. The Victorian Local Governments can utilise the best practice guidelines to effectively target food insecurity<sup>6</sup>.

Food procurement standards in the public sector in Australia mainly focus on nutrition, rather than the issue of food sustainability<sup>21</sup>. For example, most schools in Australia base their canteen foods and beverages on the traffic light classification system. Interestingly, only one Victorian program addresses food sustainability, which is currently being developed by the Department of Sustainability and Environment. This initiative is called Footprint, and it specifies sustainable food purchasing standards by the public sector in Victoria. These food procurement standards are voluntary; however, they provide an important step in improving purchasing habits in the public sector<sup>21</sup>.

### **General findings**

1. State and Local Governments to clearly establish the specific roles, responsibilities and funding initiatives between these two levels of Government. This is because Local Government would require additional funding from the state Government to develop and continue the management of programs and initiatives that support food security<sup>6</sup>.
2. Integration of food security and land use planning into Local Government policy to ensure food security is strongly on the Council’s agenda and that there is a legal requirement to address food security<sup>6,24,25</sup>. Furthermore, the addition of food security into policy will provide direction and ensures that food security is dealt with in all Council activity such as business development, infrastructure, land use planning, environmental sustainability and human services<sup>7,18</sup>. In order to incorporate food security into Council policy, local Council can develop and operate internal seminars, information sessions and workshops with Council staff to inform staff across all relevant departments regarding the issues of food security; and, identify existing opportunities to incorporate food security into policy such as the Municipal Public Health Plan<sup>25</sup>.

3. Ensure food policy is integrated, rather than being confined to a single Local Government department or sector<sup>18</sup>. Collaboration within Local Government is integral since the health of the community is affected by diverse factors such as environmental, social, cultural and economic influences. When food policy involves multiple sectors within Local Government, the ability to deal with food security issues is greater due to the sharing of resources, information, responsibilities and power<sup>28</sup>. Inter-departmental collaboration is an effective way of addressing multi-factorial issues such as food security and the obesity epidemic<sup>29</sup>. A few Australian states and territories have formed inter-sectoral task forces with other organisations to link health and the built environment. Examples include: the NSW Premier's Council for Active Living aims to build supportive physical and social environments for active living<sup>29</sup>.
4. Ensure there is a balance of roles and responsibilities between the Local Government and the community group<sup>18</sup>. Local Government members provide their legal knowledge and expertise and are therefore necessary in food policy because the community organisations and members most likely lack the experience of working within the legal framework. On the other hand, community organisations need to be involved and contribute to the planning and implementation of programs and initiatives to ensure the outcomes of these initiatives are comprehensive and relevant to the community. An indicator of success of a food policy is when all stakeholders have a sense of ownership<sup>18</sup>.
5. Allocate the specific role of achieving food security within the community to a specific member of the Local Government<sup>23</sup>. Their role would be to raise awareness of local food security issues, have a comprehensive understanding of the issues, initiating local strategies and policies, and building essential relationships within the Council and with local community members and organisations. In order to implement this recommendation, Local Government needs to allocate resources to support the development and implementation of new food security programs and initiatives; and, build partnerships across the various sectors in Council since food security is broad and multi-factorial (including human services, infrastructure planning, urban development, food supply, and sustainability)<sup>7</sup>.
6. Local Government can provide incentives for institutional procurement of local and regionally grown healthy foods for grocers, schools, childcare, employers, Local Government functions and other community institutions to support local produce<sup>17</sup>.
7. Mandatory food procurement standards should be development and implemented to ensure the public sector organisations are compliant with the specified food procurement requirements. These standards need to be monitored to ensure there are continual improvements in public sector food purchasing practices. It is necessary to develop and provide resources to support the implementation of these standards<sup>21</sup>.

## Conclusion

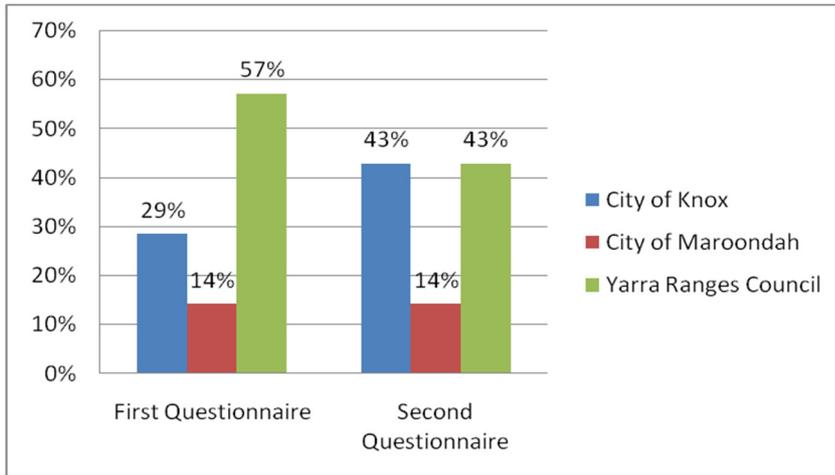
There is growing recognition of the integral role that Local Government can play in addressing food security, and achieving and maintaining a sustainable local agricultural system. The Local Government is vital due to their close relationship with the community, their role in land use planning, and ability to provide support, facilitation, and leadership to foster greater food security<sup>6</sup>. However, Local Government can only do this within a clearly defined State Government policy that has defined roles that are funded and supported. The integration of food security into Local Government policy will assist with ensuring food security is strongly on the Council's agenda and that there is a legal requirement to address food security. Furthermore, the addition of food security into policy will ensure that food security is dealt with in a broader sense and result in long-term sustainable solutions to food insecurity<sup>7</sup>.



## PART 2 – Nourish Consultation

### NOURISH members survey - understanding the Local Government role in food security

There was a 62% response rate to the questionnaire from a total of 13 possible participants. There was a poorer response rate for the second questionnaire (46% of total participants) and some individuals chose to partake only in the first or second questionnaire (8% and 8% respectively). The highest response rate was from Yarra Ranges Council in the first questionnaire (57% total participants), however fewer responses were gained during the second interview. On the contrary, response rate increased from the City of Knox (29% to 43%) and remained stable for the City of Maroondah (14% total participants).



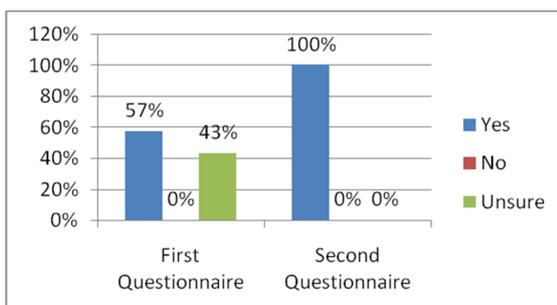
### Personal Barriers to contacting Local Government

Barriers	Responses
Nil issues	4
Limited knowledge of which relevant Local Government members/departments to contact	3
Time and resources	1

**Table 1.3 – Personal barriers to contact Local Government**

Most respondents felt there were no personal barriers faced when contacting Local Government. However, the common barrier mentioned was lack of knowledge regarding the relevant Local Government members and departments to contact if they had a food security related issue.

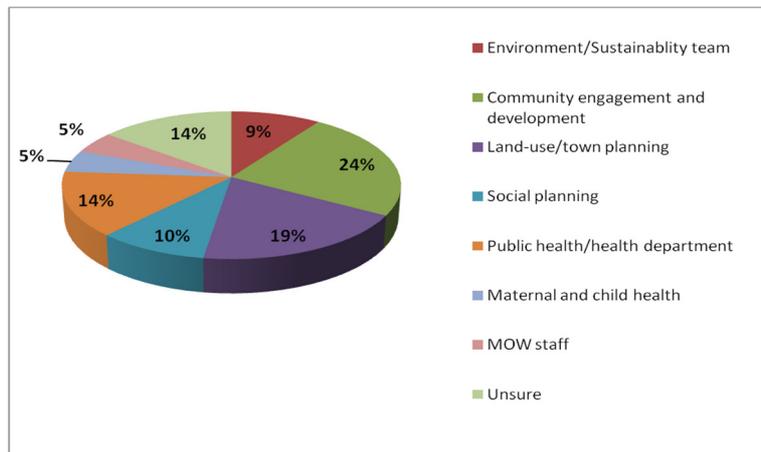
### NOURISH members understanding of Local Government initiatives in Food Security



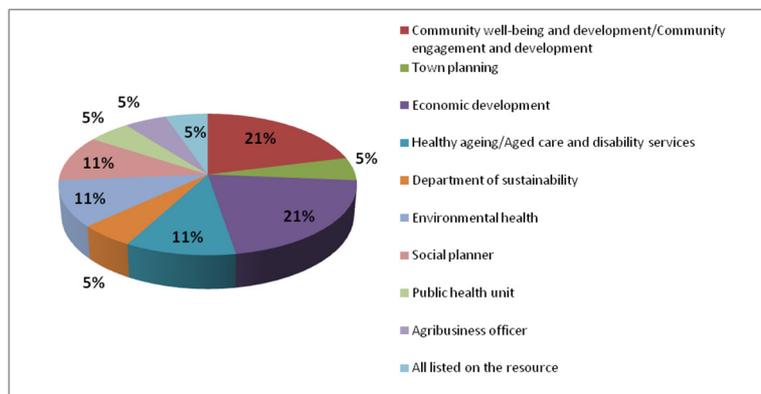
**Figure 1.6 – Comparison of Nourish’s knowledge of current policies/initiatives/programs implemented by Local Government to enhance food accessibility**

In both questionnaires, all respondents believed that Local Government should have a role in addressing food security. However, only 57% of the respondents were aware of the current interventions being implemented by their Local Government to enhance food accessibility. After circulation of the organisational structure maps and details of each Local Government, all respondents demonstrated an increased awareness of the current interventions being employed by their Local Government.

**Local Government departments perceived by NOURISH as having a role in food sustainability and accessibility**



**Figure 1.8.1 – Key departments within Local Government perceived by NOURISH as having a role in food sustainability and accessibility (First questionnaire)**



**Figure 1.8.2 – Key members and departments within Local Government perceived by NOURISH as having a role in food sustainability and accessibility (Second questionnaire)**

As demonstrated in [Figure 1.7.1](#), respondents listed the possible Local Government departments they believed to have responsibilities in addressing food security. After the distribution of the Local Government information pack (appendix 2), respondents provided a more specific list of key members and departments who they believed could play a role in food security issues, as seen in [Figure 1.7.2](#).

**Future collaboration between NOURISH and Outer East Local Governments**

The majority of the respondents (n=7) believed it was important for NOURISH and the Outer East Local Governments to have a collaborative partnership to ensure effective interventions and programs could be implemented. However, one respondent believed it would be difficult to establish contact initially, as this would depend on individual work schedules. The questionnaire also investigated whether there were current interventions that required collaboration between both organisations. Only 6 respondents (75%) identified

current interventions/programs requiring both organisations to collaborate, whilst the remaining 2 respondents (25%) argued collaboration has not been demonstrated for the following reasons:

- Interventions are in their early stages and have not been assessed
- Lack of staffing/resources
- Lack of understanding of the definition ‘food security’
- Perceived roles of Local Government members in addressing food security

Nonetheless, respondents listed strategies/activities to overcome the aforementioned barriers (Table 1.6) and the possible benefits likely to be achieved if a strong collaborative partnership were to be established (Table 1.7).

Strategies/activities	Responses
Establish joint projects between both organisations	1
Current research to enhance NOURISH’s knowledge of the roles and empathy of Council barriers to collaborate	1
Locating key person who will best represent both organisations and has a role in addressing food security	2
Adopting community/regional approach, whereby local Councils will start engaging more in NOURISH	1
Shared goals and outcomes	1
Greater resources and time	1
Advocacy of food security from both organisations	1

**Table 1.6 – Strategies/activities identified by respondents to overcome barriers for effective collaboration between NOURISH and Local Government (NOTE: 1 respondent did not answer this question)**

Possible benefits	Responses
Increases capacity	9
Efficient resource allocation	7
Greater access to funding	2

**Table 1.7 – Possible benefits identified by respondents if NOURISH and Local Government developed a collaborative partnership**

## PART 3 – Local Government consultation

### Results from consultation with Local Government

#### Understanding of the term 'food security'

Result	Frequency	Supporting quotes
<b>Access:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Capacity to access food</li> <li>Capacity to access affordable food</li> <li>Capacity to access nutritious food</li> <li>Not having to travel too far</li> </ul>	19	<i>"Access to nutritious food"</i> <i>"People knowing where their next meal is coming from."</i>
<b>Nutrition/Health/Culture:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Capacity to access nutritious food</li> <li>Fresh food</li> <li>Safe food supply</li> <li>Enough food to meet body needs</li> <li>Culturally appropriate</li> </ul>	15	<i>"Meeting your basic food needs"</i> <i>"Whether it's safe."</i> <i>"Access to and able to afford healthy food, fresh and healthy food."</i> <i>"and being able to meet your nutritional needs."</i> <i>"that it's ... culturally appropriate"</i>
<b>Local food production/Sustainability:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Sourcing local produce</li> <li>Sustainability of the food supply</li> <li>People growing their own food sources</li> <li>Importing/exporting- self sufficient</li> <li>Conserving productive agricultural land</li> <li>Peak oil prices and its effects</li> </ul>	11	<i>"Source local produce"</i> <i>"it means having systems in place where there are opportunities for good land not to be lost to residential"</i> <i>"but the real issue is what happens if you hit peak oil"</i>
<b>Affordability/Finances:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Capacity to access affordable food</li> <li>Enough money to buy food</li> <li>Keeping cost down</li> </ul>	9	<i>"Not thinking about the purchasing of food because you have the finances to do it."</i> <i>"within their budget."</i> <i>"capacity to access affordable and nutritious food."</i>
<b>Availability:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Availability in the food supply</li> </ul>	3	<i>"Food resources are available...to the broad community"</i> <i>"whether it is available in the food supply."</i>
<b>Education:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Associated with education</li> </ul>	2	<i>"It's also about education and understanding"</i>
<b>Developing world:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Relates to the developing world</li> </ul>	1	<i>"I think of the developing world"</i>

## Who Plays a Role in Addressing Food Security?

Result	Do play a role	Don't play a role
<b>Community Development &amp; Services</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>0</b>
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Support, leadership, assistance, leases, licenses</li> <li>• Develop &amp; manage community gardens, community kitchens, community-supported agriculture</li> </ul> <p><i>"My role...is to be a conjugant between the community group and Council... in terms of community development... So the community have all these ideas and it's my role to facilitate the development of the projects they want to get started."</i></p>	
<b>Open Spaces &amp; Landscape Design</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>0</b>
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Educating the community on sustainable gardening</li> </ul> <p><i>"... trying to educate the people about the importance of understanding their environment, and a part of that is sustainable gardening... growing your own food so that you are not buying it from large supermarkets which have so many non-sustainable aspects to it".</i></p>	
<b>Strategic Planning</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>1</b>
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Inclusion of food security into policy development</li> <li>• Position people/homes closer to transport and shops</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Inability to initiate food security land use plans</li> <li>• Limited to approving/disapproving land use plans</li> </ul>
<b>Social Planning</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>0</b>
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Development of MPHP &amp; including food security as a priority</li> <li>• Has great understanding of social issues (which affect food security)</li> <li>• Educating other LGM on food security</li> </ul> <p><i>"social factors are implicitly tied in with food security".</i></p>	
<b>Urban Planning</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>1</b>
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Don't view FS as a priority or area of responsibility</li> <li>• Could potentially assist with addressing FS by increasing residential lot size to support home gardening</li> </ul> <p><i>"I don't really think we think about food security as an issue. I think about housing, availability, affordability and things like that..."</i></p>

<b>Environmental Planning</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>0</b>
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Work on sustainable practices e.g. gardening</li> <li>• Lots of contact with community: provide support for sustainable community initiatives/programs</li> </ul> <p><i>"We deal a lot with community. Our main role is pulling groups that are already doing a good job within the community. We've come to this point where we think to get the sustainability message out there we have to tap into things that people are already interested in."</i></p>	
<b>Public Health Officers</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>2</b>
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Current member of NOURISH</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Focus on 'old health promotion' which is centred around infectious disease control, immunisation and food safety<sup>30</sup></li> <li>• Lack of food security in educational studies</li> <li>• More of an enforcer of food safety</li> </ul>
<b>Youth Services</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>1</b>
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Potentially, by providing practical cooking skills to the youth</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Mainly focus on health and nutrition, not food security or access</li> </ul> <p><i>"But amongst the sea of other things we're supposed to support young people with, [food security] is only one really teeny tiny part."</i></p>
<b>Early Childhood Services</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>0</b>
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Nutrition education</li> <li>• Ability to provide assistance to parents struggling with food acquisition and direct to relevant services</li> </ul>	
<b>Aged and Disability Services/Food services</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>1</b>
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Elderly/disabled are often disadvantaged and require additional sources of food</li> <li>• Educate and provide practical shopping and cooking skills</li> </ul> <p><i>"It is certainly a priority for our target group; they can often be very disadvantaged both financially and due to their skills and their frailty. They may not be able to source their food regularly, and that is why we have programs such as MOW."</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Lack of understanding of the issue</li> </ul>
<b>Economic Development</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>0</b>
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Education on sustainable practices for businesses</li> </ul>	

- Ensuring land and water management achieved to support growth of food

### Local Governmental Departments recommended for collaboration

Result	Frequency	Supporting quotes
<b>Community Development Department</b>	8	<p><i>"If it is a project about strengthening community and getting people together then community development would be the team to manage that."</i></p> <p><i>"It's (food security) a difficult, multi-faceted problem... it's difficult because those people [with] the problem don't have the economic resources to survive, which is why they need community development officers like myself to assist them".</i></p>
<b>Aged Care Services / Healthy Ageing Team</b>	4	<i>"It would really be ... aged and disability department. There's a fairly high focus on food security and nutrition value for our elderly people with disabilities."</i>
<b>Strategic Planning Department</b>	2	<i>"In terms of the space, a bunch of areas manage that, part of our [strategic] dept is [to] have a role in allocating some of that space to make it happen."</i>
<b>Councillors</b>	2	<i>"I think the Councillors have an interest, I don't know if they always understand it, but they have an interest."</i>
<b>Youth Services</b>	2	<i>"youth Council work and advise on projects to help educate people at a young age"</i>
<b>Sustainability Department</b>	2	<i>"Maybe the sustainability department in the future, if people start growing food from home a bit more"</i>
<b>State Government / Commonwealth Government</b>	2	<i>"It would be nice to see state Government step up into that role. I think it's bigger than a Local Government issue. When you look within Victoria, and how food is produced and distributed, I don't think it's a role for LG to intervene in directly."</i>
<b>Agricultural Department</b>	2	<i>"we have a dedicated agricultural officer here, who works with the agricultural community ... brings together a whole network of people, who are agricultural producers and we listen to their issues."</i>
<b>Health Department</b>	2	<p><i>"I suppose the health department to a certain degree ..."</i></p> <p><i>"possibly health..."</i></p>
<b>Economic Department</b>	1	<i>"... some of our actions relate to working with economic development for instance having access to farmers markets and so on"</i>
<b>Other Councils</b>	1	<i>"Then obviously, our neighbouring Councils. If there is a great initiative someone has done that has a really good outcome and been evaluated again. That's a good starting place for us. You don't want to be continually re-inventing the wheel."</i>

## Non-Governmental Groups Recommended for Collaboration

Result	Frequency	Supporting quotes
<b>Community Health services:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• EACH</li> <li>• Knox Community Health</li> <li>• Yarra Ranges Community Health</li> </ul>	8	<p><i>“Things like the Bayswater north community centre, and Bayswater north are quite a unique area cause of the public housing there, it’s a fairly low SES group, so they often try to, it’s something that definitely comes across.”</i></p> <p><i>“Community health care, eastern access community health is our local community health service. Any of those partners that have things growing already or have an interest in moving forward we would look at.”</i></p> <p><i>“We work a lot in partnership with them. There’s a lot of partnerships. Youth services would have partnerships with EACH, we certainly have partnerships with EACH, I would imagine in terms of the planning a development section, social housing they would be negotiating and working with EACH.”</i></p>
<b>Charities:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Salvation Army</li> <li>• St Vincent de Paul</li> <li>• Anglicare</li> <li>• Connections</li> <li>• Second Bite</li> </ul>	3	<p><i>“When I think of food insecurity I often think of disadvantaged people...Those with a lesser financial situation are more likely to go down a cheaper avenue and not as likely to go for fresh food. So I think organisations that would know more about that would be places like the Salvation Army.”</i></p> <p><i>“The non Government services in Maroondah are really strong and quite prolific. So there’s a huge capacity for them. So organisations like ... Connections and Anglicare and the churches within Maroondah have a really active role particular in providing material aid.”</i></p>
<b>Churches</b>	2	<p><i>“The church members actually donate produce to other church members who need the actual food themselves... if there are security issues I guess, they’ve got the produce sitting there and they actually distribute it themselves.”</i></p> <p><i>“So one firm I know of is called 'Second-Bite'. They do a lot of work with caterers to find solutions for excess food and wastage.”</i></p>
<b>Transition Towns Movement</b>	2	<p><i>“They do environment education, they do waste management strategies... And then there's the desire to link with land care groups, who have evolved to the point where they are interested in food security and a world that is going to have to find solutions and different ways of doing things due to excessive cost of oil. So transition towns’ movement is something we need to be aware of because it has some links to food security.”</i></p>
<b>Food groups:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Victorian Cherry Growers Association</li> <li>• Strawberry Growers Association</li> </ul>	2	<p><i>“...the Victorian Cherry Growers Association in Wandin... I think there’s a strawberry growers association... there are a number of those sort of food groups [such as] the Yarra Valley Regional food groups. They can tell you what their concerns are in food security and all that, like costs.”</i></p> <p><i>“Some of the smaller groups like the Yarra Valley Permaculture group do that. Those sorts of food solutions are grass roots activities and are vital to offer food security.”</i></p>

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Yarra Valley Regional food groups</li> <li>• Yarra Valley Permaculture</li> </ul>		
<b>Corporate Sector / Private Businesses:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Coles</li> <li>• Safeway</li> </ul>	2	<i>"important to not forget the corporate sector – they can raise awareness internally, support through fund-raising, donation of food."</i>
<b>Community Environment organisations</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Upper Yarra Community Environment park</li> <li>• CERES (Centre for education and research in environmental strategies)</li> </ul>	2	<i>"They are a good one to contact in terms of food security because they do a lot of work in terms of urban food in urban areas. So they have their own local market, food swaps... And food security is one of the areas that they will be looking at. So they will have community gardens and areas where people can learn about growing food..."</i>
<b>Schools</b>	2	<i>"A lot of the local schools... have spaces within the school for teaching kids about food security and where food comes from and how it grows." "schools can play a really big part, especially since they do school community gardens and do awareness raising"</i>
<b>Farmers markets</b>	1	<i>"Farmers markets... are a great avenue as they do offer small scale producers the opportunity to sell their goods. They can have avenues for distribution. Because one of the things about food security is that there are limited pathways to distribution."</i>
<b>All food stakeholders</b>	1	<i>"All of us really. We as consumers need to be more sensitive about food miles. The retailers of food need to be better at educating people and having prominence of origin in label, like pears Yarra Valley. There needs to be that kind of quality labelling."</i>

## Barriers to addressing food security

Result	Frequency	Supporting quotes
<b>Lack of understanding/awareness:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Uncertainty over whose role it is</li> <li>• Lack of understanding of the issue/complicated issue</li> <li>• Lack of awareness of the issue/interest</li> <li>• Lack of direction</li> <li>• Uncertainty of community resources/organisations</li> </ul>	12	<i>"Food security doesn't get a lot of air time or attraction"</i> <i>"not something that gets talked about much"</i> <i>"I don't really think we think of food security as an issue"</i> <i>"we don't have a specific list"- in reference to the community groups that exist</i> <i>"not bound to one person or department."</i> <i>"a lot of people don't understand or realise that something like that is an issue."</i>
<b>Lack of staffing/resources:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• No one coordinating health promotion</li> <li>• Requires more work and research</li> </ul>	10	<i>"Capacity is fairly stretched."</i> <i>"Unfortunately .... doesn't have anyone coordinating health promotion initiatives... identified here as a problem."</i>
<b>Lack of time:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Too busy with other work: Food Act</li> </ul>	8	<i>"So we have an enormous workload in relation to our legislative changes"</i>
<b>Lack of funding:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• State Government</li> <li>• Local Government</li> </ul>	6	<i>"We have a very small pool of funds... we will support other groups in what they want to do"</i> <i>"A lot of it is resourcing and dollars."</i> <i>"The other is funding."</i>
<b>Policy restrictions:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Focus on policies</li> <li>• Green Wedge Management Scheme not flexible</li> <li>• Limited by current policy structure</li> <li>• Liability- fruit trees</li> <li>• Restrictions on who can sell at farmers markets- must be a family member</li> </ul>	6	<i>"I think we make it too complicated sometimes by focusing strongly on policy and plans, when quite often the community have the resources themselves, they just don't know it, or they don't know basic stuff about how to set up their own vegetable garden or how to work together"</i> <i>"liability stops me from doing a lot of stuff"</i>
<b>Internal politics/expectations:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Disconnect between strategic policy of Council and Councillors decisions</li> <li>• Governed by historical role</li> <li>• State Government expectations</li> </ul>	4	<i>"Maybe state Government as well and what re their expectations..."</i> <i>"I think part of it is that Councils are governed by what's been their historic role and it takes a lot to shift that."</i>

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Guided by what core business Local Government does</li> </ul>		
<b>Outside LG role/abilities:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Marketing- skewed food advertising</li> <li>Disconnect between locals and knowledge of local produce</li> <li>Less people wanting to be farmers- land getting lost, less producers</li> <li>Highly influenced by water security</li> </ul>	4	<i>“disconnect about locals not knowing about local food.”</i> <i>“Another barrier that I see too are the restrictions of the Green Wedge Management Scheme.”</i> <i>“food security is highly impacted by water security.”</i>
<b>Department isolation:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Lack of communication between departments</li> <li>Working in isolation from other departments</li> </ul>	2	<i>“that will happen via email” – talking about communication</i> <i>“we tend to work in silos”</i> <i>“our major barrier is that isolation within teams”</i>
<b>None:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>No personal barriers- directly linked to food</li> </ul>	1	<i>“So I don't have any barriers because it's specifically my job.”</i>

**Is food security a priority issue within your Local Government?**

Result	Frequency	Supporting quotes
<p><b>Not a priority:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Not well addressed by LG/Councillors</li> <li>• Food in general is a priority but not food security</li> <li>• Thinks community is unaware that food security exists in Knox/their community</li> </ul>	6	<p><i>"I don't think it's in their priority"</i></p> <p><i>"not well addressed by Local Government."</i></p> <p><i>"community are unaware that food insecurity exists in..."</i></p> <p><i>"From a Council perspective, it probably isn't."</i></p> <p><i>"I don't think it's something that is thought about at all."</i></p>
<p><b>Linked directly/indirectly via Council policies:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Community Health Wellbeing Plan</li> <li>• Municipal Public Health Plan</li> <li>• Early Years Plan</li> <li>• Green Wedge Management Scheme</li> </ul>	5	<p><i>"nutrition would be one"- Early Years Plan</i></p> <p><i>"part of the 6 pinnacles in the community health and well-being strategy."</i></p> <p><i>"food security in its own right into the municipal public health plan"</i></p>
<p><b>Emerging issue</b></p>	3	<p><i>"So it's gaining attraction I'd have to say."</i></p>
<p><b>Key priority in Council</b></p>	2	<p><i>"since food security has been identified as a key priority, therefore it has been ingrained in their programs, activities and initiatives."</i></p>

## Understanding and Awareness of NOURISH

Result	Frequency	Supporting quotes
<b>YES - Understanding</b>	3 <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Health Development</li> <li>• Strategic Planning</li> <li>• Social Planning and Development</li> </ul>	<p><i>"I have heard of NOURISH before through the websites and doing my own searches."</i></p> <p><i>"Yes, I know (insert NOURISH members' names)"</i></p>
<b>YES - Minimal understanding</b>	2 <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Social Planning</li> <li>• Social Planning and Development</li> </ul>	<p><i>"Yes I have but I haven't had a clear idea of what they do."</i></p> <p><i>"Yes one week ago (via email)...only noticed the name."</i></p>
<b>NO</b>	6 <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Aged and Disability Services</li> <li>• Food Services</li> <li>• Urban Planning</li> <li>• Early Childhood Services</li> <li>• Youth Services</li> <li>• Economic Development</li> </ul>	<p><i>"NOURISH, no....I know what the word means but you're using it as a name of an organisation that I've never heard of."</i></p> <p><i>"No. Blatantly honest, no."</i></p> <p><i>"But I'm not sure what NOURISH do"</i></p> <p><i>"But I haven't had a clear idea of what they do."</i></p>

## Potential to Collaboration with NOURISH in the Future

Result	Frequency	Supporting quotes
<b>YES</b>	4 <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Public health Department</li> <li>• Strategic planner x 2</li> <li>• Community Development Department</li> </ul>	<p><i>"NOURISH is a great place to start and it gives us an opportunity to... meet up with like organisations that are in this area and therefore gives us intelligence, gives us research to be able again prove to Council that it suggests where the gaps and issues are. I mean anyone in the NOURISH group would be our partners in this area"</i></p> <p><i>"I think there's opportunities across Knox to interact with NOURISH"</i></p>
<b>NO</b>	0	

## Food Procurement Policy

Result	Frequency	Supporting quotes
<b>Unaware/ minimal understanding</b>	7	<i>"not that I'm aware of"</i>
<b>Philosophy to support local produce</b>	5	<i>"Try to buy healthy sustainable food... locality is a big one"</i> <i>"try to...support local businesses"</i> <i>"general sort of view... source food from local businesses"</i> <i>"we try"</i>
<b>No policy</b>	4	<i>Its "learn by example"</i> <i>"it comes down to the individual"</i> <i>Making a food procurement policy- "something adopted from the top up then we'd take it on board"</i> <i>"there's no policy on that"</i> <i>"No. There's none"</i>
<b>A similar policy</b>	3	<i>"there is a proof of supplies list"</i> <i>"sustainability purchasing policy which highlights local, local as preference"</i> <i>"we have a policy somewhere that we won't go something genetically modified"</i>
<b>Interested/ believe it would be beneficial</b>	2	<i>"would be nice"</i>
<b>Currently under development</b>	2	<i>"We've got a procurement officer here; it's only a new role within the finance team. Don't really know what he's done though."</i> <i>"Food procurement criteria is currently being developed by the community development officer"</i>
<b>Disinterested</b>	1	<i>"Don't think it's something that is thought about at all"</i>
<b>Existing policy</b>	1	<i>"We do have a food procurement policy. What specifically is in it I'm not sure"</i>

## Food Policy Councils

Result	Frequency	Supporting quotes
Doesn't exist /haven't heard of it	5	<i>"no. heard nothing of"</i>
Belief needs to be larger scale	3	<i>"Exists more at a state govt level." Belief that a larger "outer east metro food policy Council would be better"</i>
Belief would face logistical issues & inapplicable to this region	3	<i>"I think the problem with Australia is.....because we've got so much land, and so much fertile land ... I think it is something not always on our agenda, not the community as a whole would think about." "the climate is not the growing climate. So of course Vancouver is stellar in this area" "would be something produced internally" "would be difficult to select the committee members"</i>
Good idea	2	<i>"sounds like a good idea... something not always on our agenda"</i>

## Healthy Cities Framework

Result	Frequency	Supporting quotes
Unaware	5	<i>"I'm sure it's another catchphrase" "Possibly associated with the person in Public Health Planning"</i>
Minimal understanding	3	<i>"rings a bell" "long time ago, I've forgotten most of it by now"</i>

# Discussion

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## Improving the knowledge of NOURISH

A good response rate of 62% was achieved with both the NOURISH baseline and follow up questionnaires respectively<sup>14</sup>. This allowed for the opinions and experiences of a wide variety of NOURISH members to be investigated. The response rate could have been with the use of web-based questionnaires and a lack of interviewer involvement may have contributed to the scientific reliability of this research as unclear questions could not be explained directly<sup>11</sup>.

The common barrier noted was the lack of knowledge of the key LGM or departments to contact, which was identified as the initial aim of this project. This was addressed through the circulation of the organisation maps and contact lists, whereby as a result demonstrated NOURISH members to have an increased awareness of the existing and relevant LGM who have a potential or actual role in addressing food security (refer to figures 1.7.1 and 1.7.2). Furthermore, respondents were clear of the current interventions or programs offered by their Local Government in the second questionnaire (refer to figure 1.5).

However, the extent of their knowledge and the effectiveness of the resources could not be assessed. Although the second set of questionnaires were sent a few days later, this did not show that all respondents had read the resources before or after receiving the questionnaire. Major contributors to this may have been individual work times and the short time length given for NOURISH members to read through the resources.

Interestingly, majority of the respondents felt there were no barriers suggesting they were already working in partnership with LGM or were representatives of their Government. This indicates NOURISH has already established this working partnership with parts of their local Council. Then again, 25% of the respondents has identified collaboration has not been evident. As the literature exemplifies, collaborative partnerships are pivotal in addressing sustainable food systems, but major barriers are faced by the Local Government to achieve this<sup>6,9</sup>. The main issues identified are the complexity of the term 'food security' and NOURISH's key priorities to address an accessible food supply. This must be made known to the Local Governments first, so that effective and suitable goals and outcomes can be generated from the collaboration between both organisations to benefit the Outer East community.

## Consultation with Local Government

### *Understanding of Food Security:*

Food security is defined as the ability to consume nutritious, quality, affordable, safe and culturally appropriate food from non-emergency sources on a regular basis<sup>6</sup>.

#### **Access:**

The basic understanding of people having access to food was the most common response to peoples' understanding of the term 'food security.' Within this general understanding, there was variety in the depth of people's understanding to access. Such varieties included having access to affordable food and nutritious food, and not having to travel too far to access the food. This concept of 'access' is appropriate for the definition of food security<sup>6</sup>.

#### **Nutrition/Health/Culture:**

The second most common occurrence related to nutrition, health aspects and culture. Following on from access to food, was the capacity to access "healthy food, fresh and healthy foods." Being able to meet ones

“basic food needs” was raised as being in line with food security, as well as having a safe and fresh food supply that is culturally appropriate. Within the terms that were raised in this category, ‘nutritious’, ‘safe’ and ‘culturally appropriate’ foods are in line with the current definition of food security<sup>6</sup>.

#### **LOCAL FOOD PRODUCTION/SUSTAINABILITY:**

Another common theme that emerged when people were asked about their understanding of food security was related to local food production and the sustainability of the food supply. The main topics raised included “sourcing local produce”, sustainability of the food supply, conserving productive agricultural land and ensuring that “good land not be lost to residential” and taking into account the issues associated with “peak oil.” These themes still fall within the definition of food security, as it has also been defined as ‘protecting the water, land, and people who grow and produce food.’ This aspect is also important as it draws focus to the fact that sustainable food production needs to be continued into the future<sup>25</sup>.

#### **Affordability/Finances:**

On nine occasions the issue of affordability were raised, and included ones “capacity to access affordable food”, having enough money to purchase food and it falling “within their budget.” The issue of affordability was accurately stated as it falls within the definition of food security, as one needs to have the ‘ability to consume affordable food’<sup>6</sup>.

#### **Availability:**

Another important segment of the food security definition involves availability when it refers to being able to acquire “food from non-emergency sources on a regular basis.”<sup>6</sup> Participants raised points such as “food resources are available...to the broad community” and “whether it is available in the food supply.” Despite this being an important contributor to food security, it was only raised on three occasions.

#### **Education:**

Another definition for food security that was raised on two occasions related to education, with one participant stating “it's also about education and understanding.” Whilst the definition of food security does not specifically mention education, it remains an important component. Furthermore a lack of basic education has been linked to vulnerability to food insecurity<sup>31</sup>. This highlights the fact that the two themes are related.

#### **Developing world:**

On one occasion the ‘developing world’ was raised as being associated with the definition of food security. Whilst food security is a significant issue in the developing world, it is not limited to the developing world<sup>32</sup>. Food security can exist in any country, at the national, state and local level<sup>33,34</sup>.

#### **Who plays a role in food security?**

It has been identified that a large number of departments do or potentially have a role in food security, as listed in table \_\_\_\_\_. Nevertheless, there is confusion surrounding the roles of land use planners and the public health department in targeting food security.

Strategic planners and urban planners have identified that land use planning is one of their key responsibilities. Despite literature strongly suggesting the important and significant role that land use planners have in addressing food security, the two interviewed LGMs have voiced their limitations in targeting food security.<sup>6</sup> The barriers highlighted in the literature review are similar to the barriers

experienced by the two interviewed land use planners, such as: viewing food only as a rural issue, and the perception that there are limited opportunities for collaboration between food and land use planning.<sup>6</sup>

- ***“I think the planning system in Victoria has a really limited role in terms of food security. I guess the only way strategic planners can play a role in food security is to increase the amount of people closer around shops and transport to increase food access.”***
- ***“We had a big impact 70 or 60 years ago, when we were allocating land for rural uses. But at the moment ... we probably don’t have a very big role to play in at all, in terms of local availability of food. You probably looking at, areas like Warragul and places like that, where there is a lot of farm land still and they’ve got all the farming zones. Then as an urban planner out there, it’s probably on your mind all the time. Here, not so much so.”***

Furthermore, the responsibilities of strategic planners are restricted to only approving initiatives that support food security, rather than allowing strategic planners to be proactive and initiate their own land use plans. The strategic planner’s ability to support food security initiatives and plans is reliant on both individuals from within the Council and the community who are passionate about achieving food security:

- ***“We can definitely support and approve the development of a community garden, but we can’t make it happen in planning... So I think with the support of the community and a really passionate individual, a lot can be achieved. But once again, land use planning can only enable or disapprove a community garden plan; it doesn’t have the mechanisms to develop it.”***

The public health department mainly focuses on areas related to the old health promotion such as immunisation and food safety<sup>30</sup>. A possible reason for this may be the public health officers’ limited opportunity to study food security during their educational studies:

- ***“I finished in 2002, food security as a topic was only just coming about then ... and food security [was] becoming this whole big area that needed a lot of work”.***

Despite food safety being a key priority, food security is not viewed as an area of responsibility in the other two Council’s public health departments.

- ***“So we don’t kind of look at the community and how certain groups access food... Local Government is more of an enforcer when it comes to food surveillance... in saying that though, we ensure that those community groups have safe food.”***

However, the strong focus on food safety can indirectly address food security by ensuring that the food supply is safe for consumption and that the risk of food borne illnesses is reduced to prevent large losses from the food supply:

- ***“... we’re interested in preventing the spread of food borne illnesses, which can be a potential problem for the overall food security issue... some foods become risky and then people stop eating those foods, and people can get sick and then that affects a whole lot of issues.”***

### **collaboration: Government**

Collaboration and partnerships were common terms that were highlighted throughout all the interviews. As highlighted by current literature and the LGMs, working as a team with other departments and organisations maximises the desired results due to the efficient sharing of skills, knowledge, resources and ideas to achieve desired outcomes<sup>8,9</sup>.

- ***“We prefer to work collaboratively because the projects that have been the most successful have been a collaborative effort. We [are] constantly trying to make sure we are doing combination projects.”***
- ***“... we sort of look at what other people are doing and how can we add value to that or how can we find something where other people can add value to what we are doing rather than starting at base. Cause that also addresses some of those resourcing issues.”***

The community development and services department was an overwhelmingly common code seen throughout all the interviews, with eight of the Local Government members highlighting the community development departments’ importance and role in food security. This is due to the department’s close relationship with the community, and therefore, being well positioned to understand and support the community with their food security issues.

The aged and disability department was also viewed as key players, with four Local Government members identifying them as having a role in food security due to their provision of additional sources of food for those disadvantaged groups in the community.

Despite the Youth services department stating that they did not have a role in food security, other Local Government workers have identified them to be a key player. However, other Local Government members who suggested the youth services department may not have been aware that this department mainly focus on educating on nutrition and health, rather than access to food. One Local Government member held the same view that youth services did not have a role in food security.

- ***“Youth probably doesn’t have much to do with it. I know the food involved in some of their programs, which I’m sure would have some nutrition value to it.”***

The State Government was coded twice and emphasised by the Local Government members as having a role in targeting food security as it is a complex and multi-faceted issue. As demonstrated in the literature, state Government needs to be involved by providing an ongoing funding source for Local Government initiatives and programs that target food security<sup>6</sup>. Currently, there is no definite source of funds directed toward food security from the state Government. However, Local Government receives funding for other health programs such as immunisation and the leftover monetary resources are redirected to other programs such as food security:

- ***“[the] higher percentage we get people vaccinated, the greater amount of money we get to continually develop that program and we are also able to, [in] some respect, divert that funding to other program areas.”***

### **collaboration: non-Government**

Additionally, numerous responses from LGM indicated that the issue of food security should be dealt with by the Council in conjunction with community individuals and groups. Community organisations need to be involved and contribute to the development and implementation of programs that target food security to ensure the outcomes of these initiatives are comprehensive and relevant to the community. Additionally, this will provide a sense of ownership for those in the community<sup>8</sup>.

- ***“Responsibility of addressing food security is not bound to one person/department. All the key members should be responsible as a team. [We] collaborate with other Local Government departments and officers as well as community members and organisations.”***

The main organisations listed are as follows:

- Community health services, such as Eastern Access Community Health (EACH) are important due to their interest in health and community well-being, as well as their ability to share resources and assist with identifying food insecurity groups.
- There was a strong focus on non-profit community organisations such as charities and churches because their main target group commonly experience food insecurity and they are able to donate additional sources of food for these groups.
- Transition Towns are a fairly new concept and has only been adopted by one of the Councils interviewed. They play a role in educating the community on sustainable and environmentally-friendly practices such as Farmer's markets and community gardens.
- The corporate sector has the monetary resources to provide funds for community-based food security initiatives, as well as the provision of food supplies and raising awareness of food security internally and within the community.
- Schools are a key player in food security because of their important role in raising awareness and educating the future generations about food security and sustainable food practices.

#### *Barriers to addressing food security:*

##### **Lack of understanding/awareness:**

The common barriers described by the Local Government members interviewed were consistent with the barriers identified in the literature review. The main issue proved to be the lack of understanding and awareness of food security as a whole, which was stated by twelve of the seventeen participants. As described in the literature review, there is confusion surrounding who is actually responsible for addressing food security and as such there is a lack of accountability for the issue<sup>19</sup>. As such, the issue is less likely to be brought to the attention of the community, which also results in reduced advocacy from community groups to improve food security in the community at large<sup>35</sup>.

##### **Lack of staffing/resources:**

Another commonly reported barrier was that of not having adequate resources and staff to tackle the issue. This was reported in ten of the seventeen participants and was further supported by the findings of the literature review, which suggests that there is concern for adequacy of resources, in particular staff and that the nature of the issue will require resources to be continued to be required<sup>6</sup>. As ten of the participants suggested, "capacity is already stretched" and the lack of staff to drive initiatives to improve food security is highly inhibitive.

##### **Lack of time/lack of funding:**

Lack of time was identified as a perceived barrier by eight out of the seventeen individuals interviewed; similarly lack of funding was identified by six individuals. In particular the amendments to the Food Act were causing a significantly increased workload for those in the public health departments, causing other

initiatives, which could be related to food security, to be put on the back burner. These barriers were also identified by a project undertaken by Sydney Food Fairness titled 'Local Government Role in Food Security: What are the Barriers?' suggesting these barriers would need to be addressed appropriately for food security initiatives to be put into place <sup>35</sup>. Policies and programs would require funding, which may be a prolonged requirement. Funding from both State and Local Government were identified as barriers.

#### **Policy restrictions:**

Restrictions created by policies were highlighted on six out of seventeen occasions, with reasons such as being "limited by current policy structure." One scheme in particular was the Green Wedge Management Scheme, which was highlighted as "not flexible" as it imposes restrictions on businesses and producers affecting their ability to sell their produce. Local Government members must work within the boundaries of the current policy structure, which may cause limitations to their ability to create initiatives designed to target food insecurity. Another issue that arose was that of farmers markets. One Local Government member stated that only family members of the producers could provide sell food at farmers markets, which prevents a distribution channel for producers who aren't able to send a family member to one of the markets. Literature also supports the notion that policy creates barriers, suggesting there is a current divided approach to food policy creating an inefficient structure <sup>19</sup>.

#### **Internal politics/expectations:**

Four people interviewed identified a barrier to addressing food security as being internal politics and expectations of Local Government as a whole. Some examples of this included that there was a felt disconnect between strategic policies and their intentions, and the final decisions made by Councilors, and that the two were not always in line. Another example that arose was that Local Government priorities are guided by its historical role. Therefore it may take time to bring new issues to their attention, if they are not traditionally considered issues for that area. Given that Local Government is strongly influenced by expectations of State Government, the fact that there is not legal requirement to address food security is a contributor to lack of food security initiatives. With no statutory obligations for Local Government to uphold, there is a resulting lack of support for policy and programs for food security in many cases <sup>6</sup>.

#### **Outside LG role/abilities:**

On a similar theme, four people stated that they felt food security was an issue that was outside the role of Local Government. This issue links in with the fact that food security is a multi-factorial issue and influenced by a wide variety of factors. Some of these factors were highlighted by Local Government members interviewed and included marketing and food advertising, number of people wanting to be farmers, water security, and locals' knowledge of food production. This was also supported by the literature review conducted, which also mentions the perceived notion that food is governed by markets <sup>35</sup>. Similarly, that food security is influenced by policy from the agriculture, transport and health sectors <sup>6</sup>.

#### **Department isolation:**

Department isolation was highlighted as a barrier for addressing food security in two cases. It was stated that one of the major barriers "is that isolation within teams." By Local Government departments working in 'silos' as was suggested by a Local Government member, there is disconnection in communication and a reliance on emailing. Literature supports this with the view that there are limited opportunities for collaboration between food and land use planning <sup>6</sup>. This could also be the case for other sectors of Local Government also. This current divided approach, suggested by literature creates inefficiencies in policies.

**No barriers:**

Only one person out of the seventeen people interviewed stated “I don’t have any barriers because it’s specifically my job.” Given that this person’s job is directly linked to food, the other barriers mentioned by all other participants were not relevant and not an issue. Although there was one identified individual who has no perceived barriers to addressing food security, the overwhelming majority feel that there a number of barriers that are preventing food security from gaining more attention and being promoted within Local Government.

**Food security as a priority:****Not a priority:**

The most common response to whether food security was a priority issue in Outer East Local Government was that it was not. This was stated by six of the seventeen participants. The reasons for this were that it was not well addressed by Local Government as a whole or by the Councilors. It was also thought that the community is unaware that food security exists in the outer east region; therefore there is not a strong push from community for Local Governments to address the issue and become more proactive. It was also stated that food in general was a priority however food security as a more specific issue was not. This could be for several reasons, which have been discussed in the barriers section of results. Some examples of contributing factors which were suggested as barriers to addressing food security by Local Government and also supported by literature included: lack of understanding of the issue, lack of funding, lack of resources and lack of awareness amongst others <sup>6,35</sup>.

**Linked via Council policies:**

Five out of seventeen participants from Local Government suggested that issues related to food security and insecurity were linked directly or indirectly via Council policies and plans. Such examples that mention food security and/or related issues included Council Community Health Wellbeing Plans, Municipal Public Health Plans, Early Years Plan and the Green Wedge Management Scheme. Although these participants did not state that they felt it was a key priority for their city Council, they still felt it was being incorporated into policies and plans.

**Emerging issue:**

It was felt by three of the seventeen participants that although food security was not a key priority for their Council, they felt it was an emerging issue. This is supported by the fact that many people did not have a good understanding of what the term ‘food security’ actually meant and similarly there was a lack of awareness of the issue in Council. By increasing awareness of the issue, food security has the potential to move from an emerging issue to a key priority.

**Key priority:**

Only two of the seventeen participants interviewed felt that their Council considered food security a key priority and felt that “it has been ingrained in their programs, activities and initiatives.” Current literature of best practice of Local Government in addressing food security suggests that by linking public health, community development and urban planning initiatives, a holistic and sustainable approach to food security can be achieved <sup>6</sup>. If the city Councils can link policies from various departments, they too can achieve this sustainable approach to food security.

***NOURISH: LGMs’ understanding and awareness of NOURISH, and the potential for collaboration***

- It appears that NOURISH is not well known or understood to the Outer East Local Governments, with six of the interviewed Local Government members responding “No” when asked if they knew who NOURISH was.
  - ***“NOURISH, no...I know what the word means but you’re using it as a name of an organisation that I’ve never heard of.”***
- The minimal understanding and awareness of NOURISH is problematic as NOURISH is aiming to work collaboratively with the Outer East Local Governments to address food security. However, four Local Government members were supportive of the idea of a collaborative partnership with NOURISH to share ideas and resources.
  - ***“NOURISH is a great place to start and it gives us an opportunity to... meet up with like organisations that are in this area and therefore gives us intelligence, gives us research to be able again prove to Council that it suggests where the gaps and issues are. I mean anyone in the NOURISH group would be our partners in this area”***

### **Food Procurement**

As the literature suggests, the development and implementation of food procurement standards within an organisation such as Local Government can positively influence food security<sup>19</sup>. The findings from this study suggest that most individuals had minimal understanding of food procurement although a significant proportion believed in trying to supporting local businesses. Multiple individuals were confused by what a food procurement policy was, claiming that there was a similar policy, or a policy was being formed. As most food sourced by Local Government is through catering companies their control over supporting local and implementing a food procurement policy could strain relationships with catering companies. Additionally for events where food is sourced directly by a member of Local Government being able to comply with a food procurement policy may be difficult due to resource and time constraints. There was minimal awareness of the snowball effect of sourcing locally could have, such as the environmental, economical and public health impact<sup>19</sup>.

It appears that greater awareness of the benefits of sourcing locally would assist Local Government in making an informed choice when purchasing produce. Additionally the literature suggests that a mandatory food procurement standard should be developed and implemented to ensure the public sector organisations are compliant with the specified food procurement requirements<sup>19</sup>. These standards need to be monitored to ensure there are continual improvements in public sector food purchasing practices. It is necessary to develop and provide resources to support the implementation of these standards<sup>19</sup>. To gain resources to support these standards, a greater awareness of the impact that food procurement plays and how Local Government can support food procurement is recommended. Some suggestions include providing incentives for institutional procurement of local and regionally grown healthy foods for grocers, schools, childcare, employers, Local Government functions and other community institutions<sup>18</sup>.

### **Food policy Council**

Food policy Councils overall aim is to generate capacity to bring about change in reference to food insecurity<sup>9</sup>. A food policy Council would contain many key stakeholders and can be very influential to creating change and improvement towards food security. Some members of local Council believe food policy Council is a good idea. Others believed that a food policy Council would be more effective on a larger scale, such as state or outer east level. The literature suggests that a food policy Council would be effective at a local level or on a larger

scale<sup>9</sup>. Establishing a food policy Council on a larger scale would address some of the barriers suggested in the interviews, such as logistical issues and also in the literature for instance the maintenance and funding of a food policy Council<sup>9</sup>.

Therefore, development of a food policy Council may be a consideration in the future, following the implementation of smaller projects, by NOURISH, that influence the food supply. This would allow a greater understanding of food security to arise and may assist in a greater appreciation for food policy Councils which would make funding easier to source. NOURISH have the capacity to be at the forefront of establishing such an organisation once they have established themselves amongst the community<sup>9</sup>.

Current food policy Councils nationally and internationally include the south Sydney city food policy, Toronto food policy, the Penrith food project and the Hartford food systems<sup>9</sup>. A review of these food policy Councils will assist in determining the need within the Outer East. Additionally, the barrier of who would sit on the selection committee was raised by one member of local Council. It is recommended that committee members be from many disciplines and may including members of Council, members of local retail businesses, primary producers, non-Government organisations, community groups and individuals<sup>9</sup>. Overall, food policy Councils contain many key stakeholders and can be a driving force in implementing change.

### **Healthy cities**

As described in the literature review, A healthy city is;

**“ one that is continually creating and improving those physical and social environments and expanding those community resources which enable people to mutually support each other in performing all the functions of life and in developing to their maximum potential.”<sup>36</sup>**

Awareness of the Healthy Cities framework was minimal amongst members of Local Government. However, this was not surprising as only 8 locations in Australia are full members of the healthy cities alliance<sup>37</sup>. Any city would have the capacity to become a healthy city if they are committed to development and maintenance to the physical and social environment. One member of Local Government raised the concern about the cost of being branded a healthy city; however an annual membership for 2010 equates to \$500<sup>38</sup>. This membership entitles a city to international support and is an effective tool in assisting a city to achieve its goals. To become a healthy city requires significant input at a Governmental level and therefore with most Local Government members having minimal unawareness and understanding of what a Healthy City is more research into how the healthy cities framework could be applied in the Outer East should be presented to the Outer East Council to provide more opinionated feedback. A recurrent theme was the abundance of frameworks applied by local Council meaning that presentation of ‘another framework’ can be tedious and consideration into the long term effectiveness of being a healthy city should be considered.

## **COMPARITIVE ANALYSIS: OUTER EAST LOCAL GOVERNMENTS AND BEST PRACTICE ON FOOD SECURITY**

- Food security is embedded in all outer east Local Government MPHP, but majority of LGM are not aware of this. Only those who have helped to develop the MPHP are clear<sup>39,40,41</sup>. There may be a need for the LG to address this by informing all LGM’s of food security as a priority and issue.
- There is no food policy Councils present within the Outer East communities. There appears to be a minimal understanding of the purpose and structure of food policy Councils across all three Councils. This may be adopted as a new approach to dealing with food accessibility at a policy level.

- Despite all three Councils having purchasing and procurement policies, they are largely focused on sustainable financial and operational benefits, rather than supporting local food produce. It has been identified through the interviews that the LGM's are adopting the practice of supporting their local food system rather than in a policy.
- Land-use planning is covered in the job responsibilities of an urban and strategic planner as identified by the interviewees. However, this project has demonstrated that the majority of planners within the Government do not perceive themselves as having a direct role in food security. Only one strategic planner believed they have a role through the preservation of agricultural land in their environmental plans. This is a contrast from current literature, which strongly advocates for land-use planners to become involved in achieving food security through their decisions, protection of agricultural land and promotion of urban agriculture such as community gardens and roof-top gardens<sup>6</sup>.

## CONCLUSION

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There is growing recognition of the integral role that Local Government can play in addressing food security. However, the role of LG in addressing food security issues remains unclear and not well understood<sup>6,18</sup>. Consequently, this research project is an important step towards achieving greater food security for the Outer East communities by enhancing NOURISH's knowledge of the LG's role in food security.

Despite all three Councils listing food security as a priority within their MPHP, only two of the seventeen LGMs could identify food security as a key priority within their Council. In order for food security to be effectively addressed, all LGMs need to be aware of Council's priorities so that the whole Council is working towards an ongoing commitment to food security.

A myriad of barriers were discussed, with the common areas identified as: insufficient understanding of the relevant bodies responsible for food security; lack of direction; limited resources and funding. It is important to have a clear understanding of the barriers experienced by LGMs in order to address them, and therefore, assist with increasing Local Government's capacity to target food security.

Although numerous literature highlight the importance of land use planners in targeting food security issues, the perceptions of two land use planners disagree with that proposal<sup>6</sup>. The difference in opinion is significant because although literature and other LGMs perceive land use planners as key players, there is a lack of knowledge surrounding the actual role of a land use planner<sup>6</sup>. Land use planners are limited to assessing land use plans, rather than having the ability to initiate plans, which could potentially support food security.

The questionnaires completed by the NOURISH members revealed that identifying which key LGMs to contact regarding food security issues was a common barrier. Consequently, an organisational structure map was developed about each LG for NOURISH members to overcome this barrier. Additionally, a relatively good response rate of 62% (eight out of the thirteen NOURISH members) was received, which demonstrated an increased awareness of the NOURISH members who participated.

The LGM interviews and the NOURISH questionnaires identified that a large variety of Local Government members and departments, community health groups, and non-Governmental organisations either have a role in food security, or have the potential to play a key role. Given the broad and multi-faceted nature of food security, it is pleasing to know that the majority of LG and NOURISH members feel that they have a role in food security. Additionally, both NOURISH and LGM's identified one another as important bodies that could form a collaborative partnership to establish interventions designed to create a food secure community.

At the conclusion of this research project, the valuable perceptions and experiences of a wide range of LGMs generated interesting data for discussion. As a result, this will undoubtedly improve NOURISH's knowledge and understanding of the current and potential roles of Local Government in targeting food security, as well as providing an avenue for future collaboration.

# Recommendations

## **1. NOURISH should increase the awareness of their organisation to Local Government and clearly define their desired goals, both short and long term.**

All businesses and organisations should develop clear goals and objectives so that the whole organisation can work together towards their fulfilment<sup>42</sup>. The semi-structured interview results demonstrate that LGM's understanding of NOURISH, their role and previous work was minimal. If NOURISH promote themselves amongst members of LG and clearly define what they hope to achieve, in both the short and long term, this could enhance their profile and credibility. Furthermore, many members of local Council stated that they prefer not to "reinvent the wheel", rather they would be happier to support organisations that are currently active and working towards a positive change, which is what NOURISH is aiming to do.

## **2. NOURISH should Improve Local Government's understanding of food security and insecurity and its prevalence in the outer east communities.**

In Australia, understanding of food security is poor on many levels, including at the professional level<sup>43</sup>. After consultation with members of LG, some demonstrated minimal understanding of the term 'food security', with one LGM referring to it as a 'developing world' issue. Evidently, a limited understanding will influence one's interest and perceived need to act on the issue. Therefore, there is an identified need to provide factual information about the nature and extent of food security and insecurity and their implications. One suggested NOURISH initiative is to provide food systems education to members of Council through work-based training and development<sup>9</sup>. Some recommendations to improve awareness and understanding of food security include development of stationary such as mouse pads or coffee coasters with the definition of food security and NOURISH's logo. Having this information in proximity of the computer means individuals may be more inclined to conduct personal research on the topic and organisation. Additionally a training day or Food Fair open to all members of LG could be beneficial by improving their awareness of NOURISH and food security. This day would need to be balanced with education, information and incentives to get LGM's to attend.

## **3. NOURISH should collaborate with Local Government about potential food security projects, while ensuring a balance of roles and responsibilities.**

Food security is complex and effected by numerous factors, suggesting that there is not a quick solution. Therefore a commitment to community-led, comprehensive, inter-sectoral strategies is advised<sup>43</sup>. Some examples of such strategies requiring a multi-sectoral approach include Mt Druitt Food Project<sup>44</sup>, Hawkesbury Food Program<sup>45</sup> and Penrith Food Project<sup>46</sup>. These projects were sustainable over a number of years due to leadership by the public health nutrition workforce, substantial commitment by LG departments and members of the community. Furthermore, a balance in responsibility between LG and NOURISH is essential due to the different perspectives and skills both organisations can contribute. Success is believed to be most effective when all stakeholders have a sense of ownership<sup>8</sup>. LG can typically provide legal knowledge and expertise whereas community organisations, such as NOURISH, can contribute to the planning and implementation of programs and initiatives.

Currently NOURISH have taken a strategic approach to advocacy and promotion of their organisation by assessing the current perception of food security at a LG level. Findings from this report suggest that NOURISH should better promote themselves at the LG level to improve their capacity to work in collaboration with LG and advocate for desired projects, such as; a food policy Council and food procurement standards. Working in collaboration will strengthen the impact made on food security due to the sharing of resources, information,

responsibilities and power<sup>43</sup>. Additionally; there was widespread knowledge of organisations such as EACH. Consideration of their structure and how they became well known across nearly all departments in LG is recommended.

#### **4. NOURISH should Expand their networking to include the community and local businesses**

A report published by Eat Well NSW 2004<sup>43</sup>, suggested potential partners to address food security issues are vast and include; the health sector, non-Government agencies, Government sector, Local Government, aboriginal sector, community sector, business sector, academic/education and media funding bodies<sup>43</sup>. Furthermore, 25 projects relating to food programs in the United Kingdom were review and found that partnership equality, and inclusion of local community members in the programs reviewed, was a key element to the success of an initiative<sup>43</sup>. During the interviews with LGM's, it was identified on several occasions that local businesses can play an important role in food security. It would be beneficial to improve local businesses understanding of food security and how it affects their community. NOURISH could work at a 'grass roots' level with local businesses, which would assist in the promotion of the food security message to the community and continue to consolidate their credibility and respect from LGM's.

#### **5. NOURISH should plan for outcome evaluation in the future**

Insufficient resourcing, time restraints, complex interventions which make it difficult to determine what to evaluate and some of the many barriers that prevent evaluation from being completed<sup>43</sup>. It is advisable that a plan for outcome evaluation for this project be developed by NOURISH members to assess whether NOURISH's understanding of LG's role in food security has continued to remain improved in the long-term as well as the short-term; as well as to determine if there has been an improvement in their collaborative relationship with the outer east LG's.

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## Appendix 1 – Project background

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### Project intentions

#### Vision:

A healthy community where everyone has easy access to nutritious food (NOURISH vision)

#### Goal:

To increase the capacity of NOURISH to collaborate effectively with Outer East Local Governments in addressing food security and food insecurity.

#### Objectives:

1. By October 2010, NOURISH will have a comprehensive knowledge of the Outer East Local Governments (City of Knox, City of Maroondah, and Yarra Ranges Council) capacity to address food insecurity.
2. To identify the current barriers and gaps in addressing food insecurity of Local Government departments linked to food sustainability and food access by October 2010.

### Ethics

Ethics approval was granted for this study by the Monash University Ethics Committee.

### Abstract

Food insecurity has been identified in Outer East Melbourne communities, City of Knox, City of Maroondah and Yarra Ranges Shire. NOURISH, an organisation dedicated to achieving food security in the outer east, have identified a need to better understand LG and form a collaborative partnership. Literature suggests that the LG can play a pivotal role in addressing food security, however their role is unclear and needs to be better understood.

**Goals and Objectives:** The two project objectives were to enhance NOURISH's understanding of the Outer East LG's role in addressing food security; and to identify the current barriers and gaps in addressing food insecurity from a LG perspective; with the overall goal of increase the capacity of NOURISH to collaborate effectively with Outer East LGs in addressing food security and food insecurity.

**Method:** A literature review was conducted to determine current best practice of LG in addressing food security issues on a local, national and global scale. Questionnaires were developed and distributed to all NOURISH members at the commencement and conclusion of the project. An organisational structure map and contact list of relevant Council members was circulated prior to the second questionnaire to evaluate changes to NOURISH's understanding of LG's role in addressing food security. The literature review was used to guide the development semi-structured interviews, which were conducted on various LGM's to determine their perceptions of food security and barriers faced to address food security.

**Results:** The findings of the literature support the notion that Local Government can play a pivotal role in addressing food security, as they have the ability to address multiple aspects if the issue<sup>1,2</sup>. All NOURISH members demonstrated an increased understanding of LG's role in food security, and were more aware of key LGM's and departments to contact, in the follow up questionnaire. Of the 17 LGM's interviewed, only two identified food security as a key priority within their LG; four believed NOURISH and LG could work collaboratively; and only 3 had an understanding of whom NOURISH are and what they do. The most common barriers identified by LG were lack of awareness of food security and lack of resources.

**Recommendations:** It became apparent that NOURISH needs to be more specific with their goals and objectives for addressing food security; provide a clear definition of food security to all Local Governments; expand the NOURISH network to incorporate local businesses; and continue to strengthen the collaborative relationship with Local Government to form an equal partnership. Training days on addressing food security are a suggested means to better inform Local Government, whilst providing opportunities for relationships to develop between organisations.

**Conclusion:** This project has been the first to investigate LGM’s role in addressing food security in the outer east. It has raised awareness in both NOURISH and LG. These findings can be used as the foundation for future research and evaluation to further strengthen the understanding of food security and collaborative partnerships, and determine the effectiveness of the project outcomes. The project objectives were met, as NOURISH’s understanding of Local Government was increased, whilst interviews identified Local Government members’ perceptions and barriers to food security. NOURISH will have a greater capacity to collaborate with the outer east Local Governments to address food security issues for their communities.

**Key words:** Food Security, Local Government, NOURISH, Outer East

### Strengths and Limitations

Strengths	Explanation
<b>Detailed literature review to establish questions</b>	A detailed literature review was conducted to establish best practice of Local Governments in addressing food security on both a global and national scale. Questions for the semi-structured interview were based on the findings of this literature review. This helped to ensure that questions would target the most relevant and beneficial information.
<b>Liaised with all local Councils within the outer east</b>	In order to get a comprehensive overview of Local Government’s experience and perceptions, all three local Councils in the outer east were targeted. Each local Council brings a unique perspective, and therefore it was essential to include a cross section of Local Government members to get a more realistic and comprehensive understanding.
<b>Critiqued of NOURISH questionnaire and semi-structured interview questions by external panel</b>	After the research team members had developed both the questionnaires and the semi-structured interview questions, copies of each were sent to three individuals to critique. These people included our key contact at OEHCSA, a dietitian and a member from Local Government. This allowed for important feedback and subsequent alterations to be made, which contributed to the improved quality of works.
<b>Triangulation analysis</b>	Upon completion of all Local Government interviews, the process of triangulation analysis was undertaken <sup>16</sup> . All research members read through every transcribed interview and qualitatively analysed each interview using content analysis. This was done individually and then all four members came together to discuss the findings. Each person’s analyses were examined and themes and codes were agreed upon. By using this method the credibility and validity of the qualitative analyses have been strengthened <sup>16</sup> .

Limitations	Explanation	How to avoid next time?
<b>Did not speak to all relevant Local Government members</b>	A selection of Local Government members were interviewed from each of the three local Councils in the Outer East. Due to time restraints and limited resources, not all members/departments were interviewed. Important opinions and personal contributions have been missed as a result, which	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Allow more time for interviews.</li> <li>• Employ another researcher to better distribute the workload.</li> </ul>

	could limit the comprehensiveness of this body of research.	
<b>The cross section of job roles was not the same throughout the each local Council</b>	The process of snowball sampling was used to recruit participants for this research project <sup>14</sup> . As a result, the job roles of the participants we interviewed were not strictly uniform between the three local Councils. This may introduce bias, as the opinions of one specific role from one of the Councils may be vastly different to someone with the same job role from another local Council, therefore skewing the results.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Ensure uniformity of job roles across all three local Councils.</li> <li>• Adopt a more strategic approach to the selection of participants in the local Councils.</li> </ul>
<b>Limited sample size-difficulty recruiting participants from local Councils</b>	There was some difficulty initially in recruiting people from local Council to participate in the interviews. There may have been confusion in what the aim of the project was, which involved talking to a wide range of Local Government members, as many saw themselves as irrelevant to the project. Also a list of contacts for one of the Councils was not available until late into the project timeframe, which increased the workload and pressure to complete all interviews.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Make it clearer to each local Council that the opinions and experiences of a wide variety of local Council members was desired, not just those directly linked to health or food security.</li> <li>• Be more proactive and assertive with local Councils who are taking longer to respond, and seek the contact details of the desired participants.</li> </ul>
<b>Snowball sampling</b>	The use of the method of snowball sampling to recruit participants reduces the likelihood that the sample will represent a good cross section of Local Government members <sup>14</sup> . It relies on the knowledge of the individual and is based on who they think should be interviewed.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Use a more specific technique to select participants, which allows for the most appropriate participants to be selected.</li> <li>• For example stratified sampling, judgement sampling or quota sampling (insert reference)???</li> </ul>
<b>Interviewer bias</b>	The workload of interviewing all Local Government members was divided between the four researchers. Due to the fact that four different people were conducting interviews, interviewer bias was introduced. This may have skewed the results, as each person will have a different style of interviewing. There is also the possibility of using leading questions, which can also influence the response of the participant and skew the results further.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Have one person conducting all the interviews.</li> <li>• Ensure that strict questions are developed and each question is delivered exactly as discussed by each interviewer.</li> </ul>
<b>Technical problems-with recorder</b>	On two occasions a technical glitch occurred, which resulted in the deletion of two of the interviews. Only limited data could be recovered from this interview, thus limiting the quantity and quality of the overall data collected and analysed.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Ensure that voice recording devices are functioning appropriately.</li> <li>• Only use reliable voice recording devices.</li> </ul>
<b>Inability to assess long term effectiveness of organisational map/contacts list</b>	An organisational structure mapping activity, and development of a contact's list was carried out on all three of the local Councils. These resources were distributed only a number of days prior to the follow up NOURISH questionnaire. Subsequently	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Conduct a third questionnaire to measure the effectiveness and assess whether knowledge remains at the same level or has diminished.</li> </ul>

	this prevents the opportunity to assess the long-term effectiveness of providing this information, on improving NOURISH's knowledge of Local Government.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Conduct the follow-up survey at least one to two weeks post the delivery of the information.</li> </ul>
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## Appendix 2 - NOURISH Questionnaire

### 'Food Fairness in the Outer East' Evaluation Survey

Please take a few minutes to fill out this survey. Your feedback and answers will be kept confidential. Thank you for your participation.

#### General Information

**Please highlight your gender:**

- Female       Male

**Please highlight your age:**

- 18-24 years       25-40 years       41-60 years       >61 years

**Please highlight the Local Government Council you belong to:**

- City of Knox       City of Maroondah       Yarra Ranges Council

#### About You and Your Organisation (NOURISH)

**What is your role in addressing food security within the Outer East region?**

Answer:

**What are the current initiatives/policies/programs offered by your organisation (NOURISH) to address food insecurity?**

Answer:

**Do you believe that these initiatives/policies/programs have addressed and established a sustainable and accessible food supply to all in your community?**

- Yes       No

*If YES, what initiatives/policies/programs have worked?*

Answer:

*If NO, please specify why these initiatives/policies programs have not addressed this problem:*

Answer:

**What are some personal barriers (e.g knowledge, confidence etc) preventing you to contact your Local Government Council regarding a food security issue?**

Answer:

#### About Your Local Government Council

**Is your Local Government Council implementing policies/initiatives/programs to enhance food accessibility within your community?**

- Yes       No       Uncertain

*If YES, please specify:*

Answer:

**Do you believe your Local Government Council should have a role in addressing food insecurity within your region?**

- Yes       No

*If YES, what kind of role should the Council play?*

Answer:

*If NO, what do you think are the potential barriers within your Council not acting to address food security issues?*

Answer:

**Which key members or departments within your Local Government Council do you think are involved in food sustainability and accessibility?**

Answer:

**Who or which department/s within your Local Government Council would you call if you had an issue related to food insecurity?**

Answer:

**In the last month, have you contacted any member or department within your Local Government Council regarding a food security matter (for example: sustainable food system, food access, community gardens, community kitchen etc)?**

- Yes       No

*If YES, who or which department and for what reason?*

Answer:

*If NO, who would you contact apart from your Local Government Council?*

Answer:

Collaboration between Your Organisation (NOURISH) and Your Local Government Council

**Do you believe NOURISH and your Local Government Council should work together to establish effective interventions/programs to address food insecurity in your region?**

- Yes       No

**Are there currently any interventions/programs in place, which require collaboration between NOURISH and your Local Government Council to target food security issues?**

- Yes       No

*If YES, please specify the interventions/programs and their aims:*

Answer:

*If NO, what do you think are the potential barriers preventing the collaboration between both organisations (NOURISH and your Local Government Council)?*

Answer:

**What do you think are some strategies or activities to overcome these barriers for NOURISH and your Local Government Council to collaborate effectively?**

Answer:

**What do you believe are the possible benefits if both organisations (NOURISH and your Local Government Council) were to work together effectively?**

Answer:

**Do you know of any effective interventions/programs/activities within other Local Government Councils and other health promotion groups that have demonstrated collaborative work between both organisations?**

- Yes       No

*If yes, please specify:*

Answer:

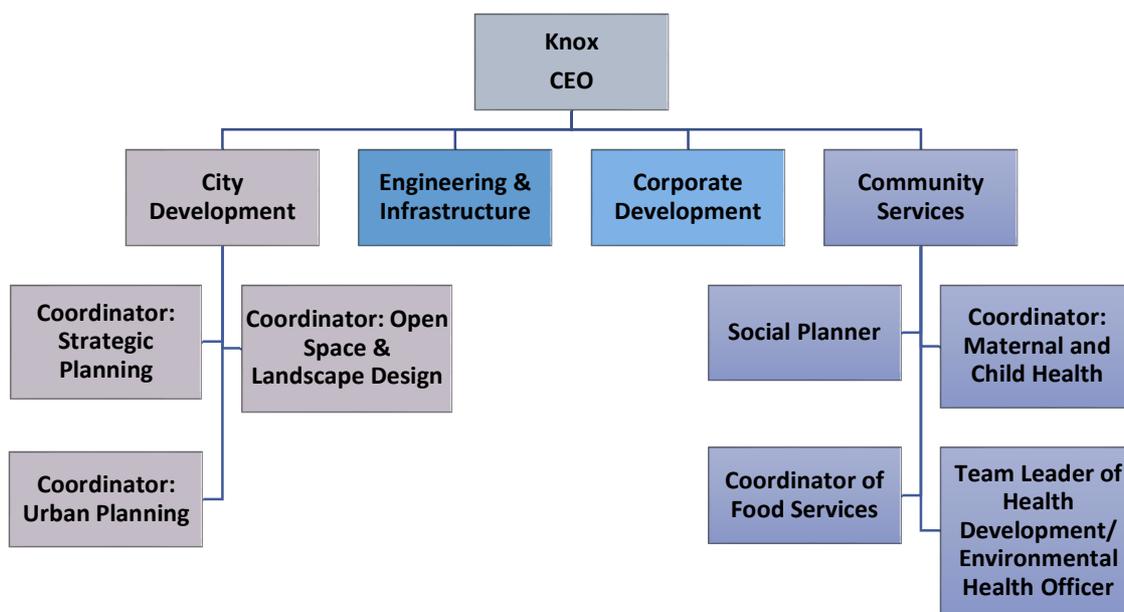
Additional Comments

Comments:

Thank you for taking the time to fill out this survey. We rely on your feedback to assist with our research project. Your input is greatly appreciated.

## Appendix 3 – Organisational structure maps in reference to food security

### Knox Local Government organisational structure: Food Security



### KNOX CITY COUNCIL- CONTACT LIST

Directorate	Position	Name	Contact number	Email address
Community and Leisure Services	Social Planner	Alice	-	-
	Team Leader of Health Development/ Environmental Health Officer	Andrew	-	-
	Coordinator of Maternal and Child Health	Donna	-	-
	Coordinator of Food Services	Matthew	-	-
City Development	Coordinator of Strategic Planning	Alanna	-	-
	Coordinator of Open Space & Landscape Design	Teagan	-	-
	Coordinator of Urban Planning	Billy	-	-

*Note: All names have been changed to protect the confidentiality of all participants.*

### KNOX CITY COUNCIL-ROLES IN FOOD SECURITY

#### *Alice:*

Alice is the Social Planner in Knox City Council and is one of the many members who contributed to the development of the Community Health and Wellbeing Strategy 2009-2013. This strategy is intricately linked to Alice's work and the plan encompasses several areas relating to food security including:

- Healthy living- empowering individuals to fully participate in life, increasing access of nutritious and affordable food to all in the community
- Strong family and community- influencing the choices/decisions of the individual's health and well-being to build a strong and engaged community
- Housing choice- providing secure and affordable housing which is appropriate for their living conditions as such needs can be met

**Andrew:**

Andrew is the Team Leader of Health Development and also an Environmental Health Officer. He oversees the health promotion initiatives within Knox such as: Immunisation programs, food safety, infectious diseases control, waste water management, tobacco control, environment protection, noise control, pest and vector management

**Matthew:**

Matthew is the Coordinator of Food Services at Knox City Council. A significant component of his role is coordinating food services, including the Meals on Wheels service for the Knox municipality. He also coordinates the volunteers who donate their time and resources to delivering meals to those requiring them.

**Alanna:**

Alanna is the Coordinator of Strategic Planning, which lies in the Strategic and Economic Development Department. Alanna's key responsibilities include economic development, strategic planning and place making. The primary role of her team is planning scheme amendments and making changes to the Knox planning schemes. To some extent, her team is also involved with land-use projects and conducts research on the capacity for future housing numbers within Knox.

**Teagan:**

Teagan is the Coordinator of Open Space and Landscape Design, which lies in the Department of Sustainability. Her key responsibilities include overseeing the design of spaces, infrastructure, and policy work. For example the Liveable Streets Plan, this involves designing how they want the streets to look like in Knox. Teagan's primary role in food security is to reconnect the community with their land and environment through educating the people about sustainable gardening, growing their own produce, and community gardens.

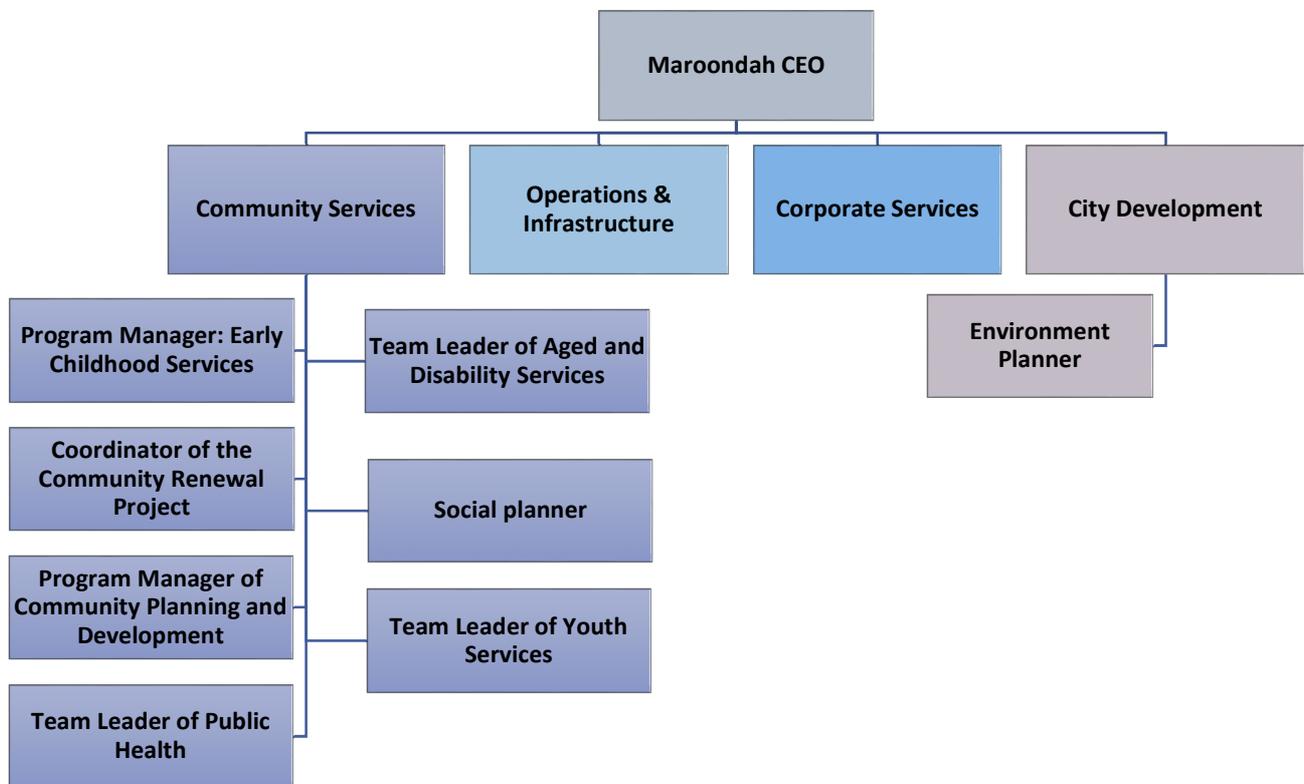
**Billy:**

Billy is the Coordinator of Urban Planning. His primary roles include:

- Statutory planning- implementing the Planning Environment Act and the Knox Planning Scheme
- Assessment of the land-use application
- Determination of whether or not to issue permits

Billy has been involved with MIRVAC, a real estate group, in the development planning for a new residential area located on Stud Road, where a community garden will be placed.

**Maroondah Local Government organisational structure: Food Security**



**MAROONDAH CITY COUNCIL- CONTACT LIST**

Directorate	Position	Name	Contact number	Email address
<b>Community and Leisure Services</b>	Program Manager of Early Childhood Services	Josie	-	-
	Team Leader of Aged and Disability Services	Sally	-	-
	Coordinator of the Community Renewal Project	Jane	-	-
	Social planner	Nicole	-	-
	Program Manager of Community Planning and Development	Taylor	-	-
	Team Leader of Youth Services	Shane	-	-
	Team Leader of Public Health	Caitlin	-	-
<b>City Development</b>	Environment Planner	David	-	-

*Note: All names have been changed to protect the confidentiality of all participants.*

**MAROONDAH CITY COUNCIL- ROLES IN FOOD SECURITY**

*Josie:*

Josie is the Program Manager of Early Childhood Services, which encompasses maternal and child health, enhanced home visiting, occasional care, vacation care and family day care. One of Josie's key roles is to oversee the implementation of the Early Years Plan in the community of Maroondah. The Early Years Plan is a five-year action plan with the following goals:

- Improving health outcomes for all children
- Ensuring that all children have access to quality care environments
- Enhancing educational opportunities for children
- Facilitating social connectedness in the community

Josie also oversees the implementation of nutrition policies in such places as family day care, where criterion have been developed around what foods can and can't be brought in. Another component of her role is to ensure that her staff are able to provide relevant information and assistance to those who require additional support, for example if obtaining food is an issue.

#### *Sally:*

Sally is the Team Leader of the Aged and Disability Services at Maroondah City Council. This includes the service delivery of HACC to the HACC target group in the Maroondah community. She oversees a variety of programs including:

- Social support programs
- Home care
- Personal care
- Respite care
- Home maintenance
- Meals on Wheels (MOW)

The main role Sally has in relation to food security is overseeing the delivery of meals to all clients receiving MOW. Many of these clients rely on the delivery of these meals for obtaining food. Client's receiving MOW are those that are HACC eligible, have some nutritional need that isn't met and cannot be met by other resources. Therefore this client group would be considered to have a degree of food insecurity and rely on this MOW service to remain food secure.

#### *Nicole:*

Nicole is a Social Planner for Maroondah City Council and her primary responsibility is to develop the Municipal Public Health Plan, each plan spanning four years. The current plan is titled 'Maroondah City Council Community Wellbeing Plan 2009-2013.'

This plan covers many aspects related to food security and insecurity.

- 'Accessible safe communities' includes enhance food security as an objective. Furthermore one of their strategies is to 'respond to the findings of the Outer East Community Food Access Research Project by strengthening partnerships to improve access to healthy eating for vulnerable groups.'
- 'Lifestyle Opportunities and Choices' highlights 'healthy families and children, healthy young people and empowering individuals and communities to modify their lifestyles.'
- 'Targeting Equity and Social Inclusion' identifies objectives related to vulnerable groups at risk or experiencing food insecurity and aims to 'improve mobility opportunities' and increase involvement of social isolated groups with the community.

The Bayswater Renewal Project is funded by State Government and includes a community kitchen in a Bayswater North Neighbourhood House, establishing a community garden and encouraging people to grow food in their gardens.

**Shane:**

Shane is the Team Leader of Youth Services in Maroondah. The role of youth services is to “make good lifestyles for young people and enable them to meet their own needs.” This department covers a broad range of activities for individuals aged 12-25 years. There is a close collaborative relationship with schools to connect children and teenagers with their community as well as offering grants to schools. The youth centre is central to Shane’s work. The centre has been designed to be fun and to act as Local Governments interface with young people. The drop-in style centre offers cooking classes, internet access as well as other recreational activities. One member of the youth service team is responsible for keeping their finger on the pulse regarding healthy minds and healthy bodies.

**Caitlin:**

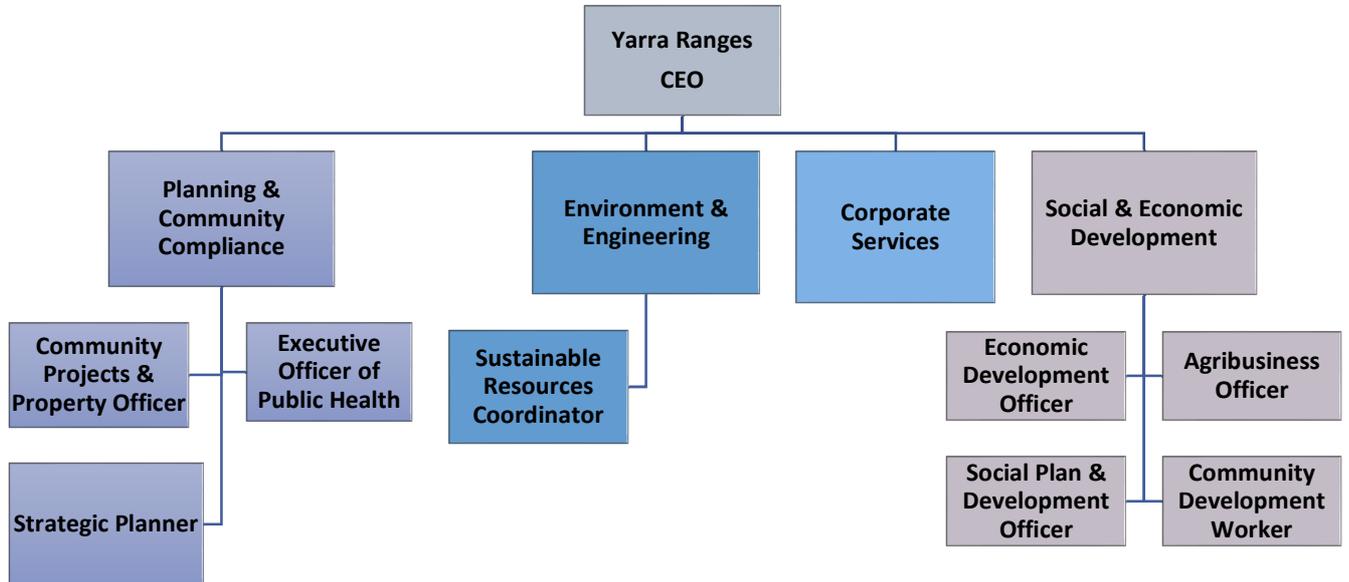
Caitlin is the Team Leader of the Public Health unit at Maroondah City Council. The two main responsibilities for Caitlin include overseeing the immunisation program and the enforcement of food legislation, primarily the Food Act. Caitlin's unit is responsible for ensuring that all businesses providing food to the public in the Maroondah community are complying with the newly revised Food Act, otherwise educating the businesses on what they should be doing.

The strongest link to food security for Caitlin's department is that they are ensuring that the public have access to a safe and suitable food supply. Currently due to changes to the Food Act and the associated increased workload, health promotion initiatives have been put on hold.

**David:**

David is an Environment Planner Councillor, who deals primarily with the Strategic Planning and Sustainability teams. His role covers multiple areas including sustainability, biodiversity, community education and internal education, and is directly linked to Maroondah's Sustainable Strategy. This role really focusses on promoting the groups that are in action in the community already and are often guided by what the community wants. The Transition Towns Movement is one initiative that is being promoted, which aims to enable communities to address the challenges and impacts of climate change and peak oil. Issues related to sustainability, the natural environment and water, are all relevant to David's line of work.

**Yarra ranges Local Government organisational structure: Food Security**



**YARRA RANGES COUNCIL- CONTACT LIST**

Directorate	Position	Name	Contact number	Email address
Social & Economic Development	Economic Development Officer	Larry	-	-
	Agribusiness Officer	Brent	-	-
	Social Plan & Development Officer	Abby	-	-
	Community Development Worker	Stacey	-	-
Planning & Community Compliance	Community Projects & Property Officer	Toby	-	-
	Executive Officer of Public Health	Tim	-	-
	Strategic Planner	Carol	-	-
Environment & Engineering	Sustainable Resources Coordinator	Emma	-	-

*Note: All names have been changed to protect the confidentiality of all participants.*

**YARRA RANGES COUNCIL- ROLES IN FOOD SECURITY**

**Larry:**

Larry is the Economic Development Officer at Yarra Ranges city Council. His portfolio contains a number of key responsibilities that include:

- Managing stakeholders from the business, community and investment sectors that require assistance or facilitation for property development, new business establishment or guidance for regionally significant economic development investment or even for establishing a new business
- Working with internal and other Government stakeholders to facilitate projects that will benefit our urban or regional areas (i.e. place-making initiatives or urban regeneration initiatives) or that benefit our tourism sector
- Policy, research, data analysis and managing consultancies that are relevant to the above objectives. For example working on the Yarra Ranges Economic Development Strategy and Action Plan for the next five years
- Project managing specialist training programs for the businesses in the Yarra Ranges region such as the Sustainable Business Program
- Linking with colleagues on cross-department projects of strategic significance, for example an internal working group studying the future effects of peak oil on the region and Transition Towns

***Brent:***

Brent is the Agribusiness Officer at Yarra Ranges Council. Brent's work in terms of food security is centered on work with the agricultural sector. His interests in food security lies with the valuable soil and water resources that are used for food production, and ensuring Australia's total food security by conserving our resources for future generations.

***Abby:***

Abby is the Social planning and development officer at Yarra Ranges Council. Her role has more of a focus on research as opposed to social planning. Some of her job roles include contributing to the development of a health profile for the area, as well as the development and implementation of the Municipal Public Health Plan. One priority in this plan relates to food security.

***Toby:***

Toby's role is the Community Projects & Property Officer at Yarra Ranges city Council. His main role is in community development and this involves working with community groups to help them achieve their desired outcomes. He also provides assistance to guide them through Council processes and where necessary providing resources and advice. Toby also works with community gardens, community cafes, an environment park and runs a sustainable food network. Many of these initiatives are closely related to the concepts of food security and food insecurity.

***Tim:***

Tim's job role is as the Executive Officer of Public Health Services, which sits in the public health department of Council. His primary role is as a food regulator, preventing the spread of food-borne illness and ensuring the food supply in the region is safe for people to consume. There is less of a focus on food security issues such as promoting nutritious food.

***Carol:***

Carol is the Executive Officer of Strategic Planning at Yarra Ranges Council. Her role deals with changes of land use and changes to the Council's planning scheme. She also implements policy and change through the planning scheme. Her work is associated with the Green Wedge Management Plan.