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Introduction

The 2014 – 2018 Darebin Urban Food Production Strategy provides the scope and direction for how Council will work with the Darebin community to realise a shared vision for the cultivation, processing and distribution of food in Darebin. The vision for the Strategy is

Local Food Systems which are Secure, Healthy, Sustainable and Fair

The Strategy identifies four key action areas:

1. Home Food Growing

Identified as a priority action area, Council is committed to continuing to promote and celebrate home food growing through education programs and festivals. This includes whole-of-community capacity building as well as targeting disadvantaged communities whose need for the social and health benefits provided by home grown food is greatest. Home food growing will be integrated with other community development and planning initiatives to create more liveable, interconnected and safer neighbourhoods.

2. Community Gardens

Council will work with the community to support productive community gardens which maximise the social and environmental benefits to the community. This includes exploring partnership opportunities with Schools and the Aboriginal community to strengthen the communal food gardening network. The Communal Food Garden (Community Garden) Assessment Guidelines which have been developed in conjunction with the Strategy will enable potential communal food growing sites to be assessed comprehensively and equitably.

3. Other Urban Food Production Models

Council commits to supporting a wide range of local food system initiatives which engage a diverse demographic, have a strong educational component and deliver benefits to communities with the greatest need. A focus on partnerships which link local food with the sustainable business community and the arts is identified as a way of broadening community participation in local food systems. Council will demonstrate leadership by developing an internal sustainable catering policy.

4. Integrated Approach to Planning for Urban Food Production

Planning and infrastructure are critical areas which impact on the priority and support which can be given to urban food production initiatives. Council will advocate to State Government for strong policy direction to incorporate urban food production into planning decisions. Relevant food production policy will also be integrated into the Darebin Planning Scheme (MSS) and local planning policies. Projects which demonstrate the integration of food growing, waste and water management into urban renewal projects will be supported to showcase how urban food production can be implemented more broadly across the municipality

The Implementation Plan identifies the specific actions, timings, resources and responsibilities for Council to deliver the outcomes sought under these four key action areas. The performance measures will be used to report achievements against these actions.

The Role of Council

Council recognises it is not able to directly address the systemic issues underlying the contribution of conventional food systems to the poor nutrition related health indicators and negative environmental impact of urban areas. However, local government is well placed to promote, facilitate and advocate for urban food production and to direct action toward improving access for disadvantaged groups.

The implementation plan is designed around the key role Council can play in:

- harnessing the existing skills and resources in Darebin to build the capacity of the community as a whole to contribute to the development of local food systems and make sustainable food choices
- demonstrating leadership by supporting local and sustainable food production through its own activities, and advocating to other levels of government for the necessary legislative changes to support urban food production
- supporting urban food production in the delivery of planning, infrastructure and regulation
- building and strengthening partnerships with the community, local business, professional stakeholders and all levels of government so that an integrated response can be delivered.

Supporting Actions from Other Darebin Strategies

The following actions relating to urban food production are captured in the 2012 – 2020 GreenStreets Streetscape Strategy:

- Create nature strip planting guidelines and make available on-line (action complete)
- Create and make available updated nature strip planting application process (action complete)
- Increase the prevalence of community gardens in the City of Darebin (action ongoing)
- Create the opportunity for one community garden on public land each year until 2020.

The following table identifies the detailed tasks required to support the strategic actions adopted in the four key action areas. The department or unit leading each task is listed first followed by partner / supporting departments. Costs or resources required over and above existing budgets are identified separately.

Key to Abbreviations

UFP	Urban Food Production	CALD	Culturally and Linguistically Diverse
DCH	Darebin Community Health	SHC	Sustainable Homes and Communities
ESD	Ecologically Sustainable Design	TBC	To Be Confirmed
DECC	Darebin Ethnic Communities Council	VCAT	Victorian Civil and Administrative Tribunal
DIVRS	Darebin Information Volunteer and Resource Service	FSPUD	Food Sensitive Planning and Urban Design

Implementation of Strategic Action Areas

1. Home Food Growing

Strategic Action	Task	Responsible Unit (s)	Timeframe	Within Existing Budget / Resources	Additional Costs or Resources	Performance Measure (s)
1.1 Develop and implement resources and programs to inspire, support and address perceived barriers to home food gardening across different sectors of the community	Ensure home food gardening programs and initiatives link with and support the 2014 -2018 Neighbourhood Action Plans where appropriate.	Environment and Natural Resources / Children Families and Community	Ongoing	Yes		Communities identified as disadvantaged in the Neighbourhood Action Plans have access to home food gardening programs as part of the overall strategy to improve their health and wellbeing outcomes.
	Investigate the provision of a targeted home food growing program for disadvantaged communities as part of an	Children Families and Community / Environment	2016/17	No	\$30,000	Program scoped and if feasible, included in future budget considerations.

Strategic Action	Task	Responsible Unit (s)	Timeframe	Within Existing Budget / Resources	Additional Costs or Resources	Performance Measure (s)
	integrated approach to improving health and wellbeing.	and Natural Resources				
1.2 Review and develop the Backyard Harvest Festival Program to empower inspire home food gardeners across different cultures,	Conduct post festival review with attendees, open gardeners, workshop holders and program partners DECC to identify improvement / development ideas	Environment and Natural Resources	Annually in Feb & June 2015 – 18	Yes		Feedback incorporated into future events
generations and demographics. Includes strengthening links with the Homemade Food and Wine Festival to support and celebrate multicultural home food preserving and preparation traditions as part of Darebin's thriving local food culture	Explore holding a Backyard Harvest 'home harvest feast' as part of the Backyard Harvest / Homemade food and Wine Festival program to showcase and celebrate the home grown and homemade food culture in Darebin	Environment and Natural Resources	2017/18	No	\$5,000	If funded, event is widely publicised / fully attended with positive feedback from gardeners and attendees
	Explore a Backyard Harvest food gardener mentoring program (potential links with 2.4 and 2.5 mentoring programs with schools, public housing tenant groups and the Aboriginal community)	Environment and Natural Resources	2017/18	No	\$10,000	If funded, mentor program participants report greater confidence in their food gardening skills, as well as feeling socially included and connected with other program participants
	Hold joint events and cross promote Backyard Harvest Festival in the Homemade Food and Wine Festival and SHC program Review food gardening workshop	Environment and Natural Resources / Creative Culture	Ongoing	Yes		 Increased number of Darebin residents participating in Backyard Harvest Festival events Maintain or increase in Darebin CALD community

Strategic Action	Task	Responsible Unit (s)	Timeframe	Within Existing Budget / Resources	Additional Costs or Resources	Performance Measure (s)
	program to ensure workshops are scheduled with the seasonal cycles and are strategically promoted in this context					participation, both as open gardeners / workshop facilitators and attendees
1.3 Explore partnerships between Council departments and / or with external agencies to deliver home food growing, preserving and preparation initiatives as part of an integrated approach to creating resilient and connected communities	Build capacity in home food production through the SHC workshops and Community Leaders in Sustainability program.	Environment and Natural Resources	Ongoing, depending on program funding	Current year only	Dependent on continuatio n of SHC program	SHC workshop participants report increased food gardening and preservation knowledge / skills UFP project ideas are presented / discussed with Community Leaders in Sustainability course participants, and at least one local food systems project is undertaken
	 Continue to explore partnerships with agencies such as DCH to support programs (including the 'Fresh' program) which help the disadvantaged grow or access locally grown fruit and vegetables Support agencies such as DCH in the development of evaluation criteria to measure the impact on disadvantaged communities of programs which strengthen local fresh food production and distribution networks. 	Children Families and Community	Ongoing	Yes (funding to be reviewed as part of the Food Security Implement- ation Plan)		 Programs such as 'Fresh' are supported through the Darebin Emergency Relief Network Evaluation criteria developed as part of the discussion with partners on program design and delivery

Strategic Action	Task	Responsible Unit (s)	Timeframe	Within Existing Budget / Resources	Additional Costs or Resources	Performance Measure (s)
1.4 Support the community in understanding State and Local government regulations relating to UFP. Review and identify appropriate updates to the	Review draft updated Local Laws to ensure changes are compatible with Council's actions supporting urban food production programs and activities	Environment and Natural Resources	2015/16	Yes		Home food gardening activities comply with new local laws, as demonstrated by the absence of infringements / offences relating to home food
relevant Local Laws to reduce unnecessary impediments to home food gardening as part of the 2015 Local Laws review	Provide advice / guidance on local laws relating to food growing, keeping animals for food and local health / food retailing regulations relating to home based food preparation for public sale at Sustainable Food events (eg. Backyard Harvest Festival, Sustainable Food Leaders Forums). Include in resource section of the Darebin Food Harvest Network website.	Environment and Natural Resources	Ongoing	Yes		production

2. Community Gardens

Strategic Action	Task	Responsible Unit	Timeframe	Within Existing Budget / Resources	Additional Costs or Resources	Performance Measure (s)
2.1 Develop site assessment form and community consultation guideline / report template	 Consult with relevant Council staff and expert stakeholders to inform the draft forms / guidelines and 	Environment and Natural Resources	2015	Yes		Site assessment form and community consultation guideline / report template

Strategic Action	Task	Responsible Unit	Timeframe	Within Existing Budget / Resources	Additional Costs or Resources	Performance Measure (s)
to support communal food garden applications on Council land.	Pilot and refine as part of new communal food garden projects	Environment and Natural Resources / Leisure and Public Realm	Ongoing	Yes		 developed by June 2015 Communal food garden projects meet the criteria outlined in the assessment guidelines
2.2 Develop a licence agreement template for community gardens.	Research and develop template and use to formalise licence agreements with current community gardens on Council land	Environment and Natural Resources / Assets and Properties	2015	Yes		Licence agreements established for Northcote Library Food Garden and East Reservoir Community Garden by Dec 2015.
2.3 Promote and make the communal food garden assessment process, forms and licence agreement templates available on-line.	Upload communal food garden assessment process, forms and licence agreement templates to the Darebin website and launch at Sustainable Food Leaders Forum	Environment and Natural Resources	2015	Yes		Forms / template are on-line by June 2015, and launched at Sustainable Food Leaders forum
2.4 Look for opportunities to collaborate with schools and public housing tenant groups on urban food production projects, including mentoring programs.	 Identify and work with local schools with the interest, need and capacity to participate in food gardening programs involving their local community. Facilitate links between schools and other organisations through the Education Committee to support UFP project partnerships (see also 2.5) 	Children Families and Community / Environment and Natural Resources /	Ongoing	Yes		 Schools identified that have food gardening interests / aspirations as part of the whole of council review of Schools work Opportunities identified to link schools with community based food initiatives

Strategic Action	Task	Responsible Unit	Timeframe	Within Existing Budget / Resources	Additional Costs or Resources	Performance Measure (s)
	Work with an interested school to develop a school food garden / community food pilot program	Children Families and Community / Environment and Natural Resources	2016/17	No	\$15,000	 Project scoped and if feasible included in budget If funded, students, families and local organisations participating in the program report increased food gardening skills and a greater connection with other local families and the community
	Work with the Darebin Neighbourhood House Network and / or DIVRS to identify potential mentoring opportunities with public housing tenant / community gardening groups	Children Families and Community / Environment and Natural Resources	Ongoing	Yes		Community gardens, tenant groups and individuals with the interest / potential to participate in a mentoring program are identified
	Support the Neighbourhood House Network / DIVRS to administer a community garden mentor program	Environment and Natural Resources / Children Families and Community	2017/18	No	\$15,000	 Project scoped and if feasible included in budget If funded, mentor program participants report greater confidence in their food gardening skills, as well as feeling socially included and connected with other program participants.
2.5 Consult with the Aboriginal community	Work with the Darebin Aboriginal Advisory Committee and	Children Families and	2016/17	No	\$10,000	At least one potential partnerships project is

Strategic Action	Task	Responsible Unit	Timeframe	Within Existing Budget / Resources	Additional Costs or Resources	Performance Measure (s)
regarding opportunities and concepts for growing indigenous foods	Aboriginal organisations to identify partnership opportunities to implement indigenous food growing projects / initiatives	Community / Environment and Natural Resources /				identified and included in future budget considerations
	Explore a partnership project which promotes the Bundoora Park Aboriginal heritage and urban food production assets in school and community education programs (in line with the 2014 Bundoora Park Precinct Future Directions Master Plan)	Children Families and Community / Leisure and Public Realm / Parks and Vegetation/ Environment and Natural Resources	2017/18	No	\$10,000	 Partnership project is scoped and if feasible included in budget If funded, community members and schools accessing / interacting with indigenous foods report an increased knowledge of the history and cultivation of indigenous foods

3. Other Urban Food Production Models

Strategic Action	Task	Responsible Unit	Timeframe	Within Existing Budget / Resources	Additional Costs or Resources	Performance Measure (s)
3.1 Provide opportunities for Darebin's sustainable food network to learn from innovative urban food production projects and	Present UFP case studies / projects at Sustainable Food Leaders Forums and as part of the SHC Community Leaders in Sustainability program (see 3.4)	Environment and Natural Resources	Ongoing, depending on program funding	Yes		Participants indicate they have been inspired and have gained knowledge / ideas from the case studies presented

Strategic Action	Task	Responsible Unit	Timeframe	Within Existing Budget / Resources	Additional Costs or Resources	Performance Measure (s)
leading sustainable food businesses to inspire ideas						
and collaboration	Include sustainable food businesses in the annual Sustainable Living Expo	Environment and Natural Resources / Economic Development and Civic Compliance	Ongoing depending on program funding	Yes		Sustainable food businesses included in Sustainable Living Expo
	Convene a networking event for sustainable food business	Environment and Natural Resources	2016/17	Yes		Event convened and participants provide positive feedback
3.2 Create an internal forum and process for relevant Council areas to consider and develop innovative urban food	Continue to support UFP projects / initiatives through the Community Support Program	Environment and Natural Resources / Finance	Ongoing	Yes		Funding provided to UFP projects which address the Community Support Program priority areas
production proposals	Develop an UFP working group of Council officers	Environment and Natural Resources	2015	Yes		Working group convened and meets at agreed intervals
	UFP working group to identify and recommend local food businesses / enterprises to relevant business support services (such as incubators)	Various / led by Economic Development and Civic Compliance	Ongoing from 2015	Yes		Number of local food businesses / enterprises supported through business support services
	Utilise existing Council processes and networks (eg. Council Facilities Audit, Neighbourhood House Network) to identify potential bases for community	Various led by Environment and Natural Resources	Ongoing from 2015	Yes		Specific proposals subject to Darebin Unsolicited Proposals policy / assessment

Strategic Action	Task	Responsible Unit	Timeframe	Within Existing Budget / Resources	Additional Costs or Resources	Performance Measure (s)
	food enterprises or community based food centres / hubs					
	Identify the opportunity / feasibility of a program supporting community based local food initiatives to become economically sustainable	Environment and Natural Resources	2017/18	No	\$10,000	Research conducted and a Council report prepared detailing size of opportunity, cost and benefits
3.3 Explore options for recognising and rewarding community food enterprises, for example as an extension of the 'Greening our Business' program	Develop community food enterprise case studies and promote through Council channels, including sustainable food networking events (see 3.1)	Environment and Natural Resources	Ongoing from 2015	Yes		Case studies developed and promoted through relevant forums
	 Identify and encourage community food enterprises to participate in the Green Business program. Include eligible food businesses in green business and social enterprise business directories 	Environment and Natural Resources / Economic Development and Civic Compliance	Ongoing from 2015	Yes		Number of sustainable food businesses recognised as social enterprises or green businesses included in directory / program
	Support / encourage community food enterprise applications in the SHC Sustainability Awards	Environment and Natural Resources	2016/17, depending on program funding	No	Dependent on continuatio n of SHC program	Sustainable food businesses in SHC Sustainability Awards
3.4 Identify innovative local food projects to promote as catalysts for the more	UFP working group to identify innovative local food projects as case studies to promote through	Various / led by Environment and Natural	Ongoing from 2015	Yes		Case studies developed and promoted through relevant forums

Strategic Action	Task	Responsible Unit	Timeframe	Within Existing Budget / Resources	Additional Costs or Resources	Performance Measure (s)
widespread adoption of urban food production	Council networks and programs	Resources				
urban rood production	Explore opportunities to work with northern Councils to promote more transparent and closer links between producers, local food businesses and residents	Environment and Natural Resources / Economic Development and Civic Compliance	2015/16	Yes		Forum convened between 2 or more northern Councils to discuss proposals for jointly supporting closer links between producers, local food businesses and residents
	Include the promotion of local food initiatives / businesses as cultural food destinations as part a Darebin tourism campaign (a new initiative proposed as part of the potential development of a Cultural Tourism Strategy)	Creative Culture / Environment and Natural Resources	2016/17	No	Dependent on the Cultural Tourism Strategy being funded	Development of a Cultural Tourism Strategy and Action Plan would include promotion of local food tourism
	Support initiatives such as the Fruit Squad and work with the Fruit Squad to explore partnerships with schools, community centres and / or notfor-profits as part of developing an ongoing funding model	Environment and Natural Resources	ongoing	Yes		Review funding base / model for Fruit Squad for 2016/17
3.5 Develop an internal sustainable catering policy which includes encouraging orders from vendors who source ethically produced, seasonal and local food. Share and promote the	Research and develop criteria for healthy, ethically sourced, seasonal local produce / ingredients	Environment and Natural Resources / Children Families and Community / Corporate Governance and	2015/16	Yes		Criteria developed and adopted

Strategic Action	Task	Responsible Unit	Timeframe	Within Existing Budget / Resources	Additional Costs or Resources	Performance Measure (s)
policy with other organisations		Performance				
	Include sustainability criteria in the tender for provision of ad-hoc catering services	Corporate Governance and Performance	2016/17	Yes		Tender evaluation criteria includes sustainability and health criteria
	Provide guidance and education to staff on the benefits and impact of making healthier and more sustainable catering choices	Environment and Natural Resources / Children Families and Community	2016/17	Yes		Guidelines provided with catering panel
	Conduct review of sustainable catering policy with vendors and staff	Corporate Governance and Performance	2017/18	Yes		Vendors and staff provide positive feedback
	Share policy with large businesses and institutions to advocate for an increase in sustainable food procurement in Darebin.	Environment and Natural Resources / Corporate Governance and Performance	2017/18	Yes		Policy distributed to the largest Darebin employers
	Recognise and reward businesses who practice sustainable food procurement (for example in the SHC)	Environment and Natural Resources	Ongoing from 2016/17 depending	Yes	Dependent on continuatio n of SHC	Creation of at least one opportunity to recognise achievements in sustainable

Strategic Action	Task	Responsible Unit	Timeframe	Within Existing Budget / Resources	Additional Costs or Resources	Performance Measure (s)
	Sustainability Awards)		on program funding		program	catering
3.6 Look for opportunities to broaden community participation and connectedness by including local food growing groups and activities in Darebin arts festivals such as the True North Reservoir Arts Festival	Support community food enterprises / local food groups to promote and celebrate their activities and food cultures as part of the calendar of Darebin festivals, for example: social enterprise food trucks / stalls hold festival events at local farmers markets or community gardens	Environment and Natural Resources / Creative Culture	Ongoing	Yes		At least one community food enterprise / local food group represented per year at a major arts / cultural festival

4. Integrated Approach to Planning for Urban Food Production

Strategic Action	Task	Responsible Unit	Timeframe	Covered by existing budget	Additional Costs	Performance Measure (s)
4.1 Advocate to have UFP recognised in the State Planning Policy Framework so it can be integrated in the Metropolitan Planning Strategy and VCAT	Continue to advocate for the recognition of urban food production in submissions to current and future reviews of the Planning Policy Framework	Strategic Planning	Ongoing	Yes		Included in Darebin submissions to the State Government regarding metropolitan planning.

Strategic Action	Task	Responsible Unit	Timeframe	Covered by existing budget	Additional Costs	Performance Measure (s)
decisions.						
4.2 Integrate relevant food production policy into the Darebin Planning Scheme (MSS) and local planning policies by referencing the Food Security Policy and Urban Food Production Strategy.	Explore provision for urban food production and local food activities during the next Darebin Planning Scheme review.	Strategic Planning	2016/17	Yes		The MSS review includes consideration of provision for urban food production and local food activities
4.3 Apply principles of Food Sensitive Planning and Urban Design (FSPUD) to future Structure Plans and urban renewal projects such as the Northland Urban Renewal Precinct.	Include consideration of FSPUD principles as part of a holistic Ecological Sustainable Design (ESD) Strategy and Action Plan for the Northland Precinct	Strategic Planning / Environment and Natural Resources /	2016/17 (depending on ESD Strategy)	Yes		FSPUD principles included in the ESD Strategy and Action Plan
4.4 Progress the food production elements as part of the implementation of the Reservoir Structure Plan, such as the 'Food Park' food growing project.	Scope the Reservoir 'Food Park' food growing project in future budget processes	Project Management Office / Strategic Planning / Environment and Natural Resources / Leisure and Public Realm	2017/18	No	TBC	Proposal for 'Food Park' food growing project scoped and if feasible, included in capital budget
4.5 Explore opportunities to develop urban food production sites on Council land as demonstration sites for integrated food growing,	Investigate the potential for a community garden or other UFP site to be developed as a local composting hub. Support community support program	Environment and Natural Resources	2015/16	Yes assuming \$6,000 from Darebin		Creation of the opportunity for an UFP group to establish a community composting hub

Strategic Action	Task	Responsible Unit	Timeframe	Covered by existing budget	Additional Costs	Performance Measure (s)
water and waste management	funding application.			Community Support Program is available		
	Review the potential to expand / develop the integrated water and waste management / recycling systems at the Bundoora Park food growing sites, farmers market and café (in line with the 2014 Bundoora Park Precinct Future Directions Master Plan).	Environment and Natural Resources / Parks and Vegetation / Leisure and Public Realm	2018	No	TBC	Project scoped, and if feasible included in future budget considerations
4.6 As part of the 2014 Food Security Policy review ensure the vision, approach and actions of the Food Security Policy and Urban Food Production Strategy are aligned and integrated.	 Recognise the UFP Strategy in the proposed overarching Food Policy Statement connecting all food related Council work Include UFP in the Food Security Implementation Plan as one of the actions to reduce the risk of food insecurity for vulnerable groups 	Children Families and Community / Environment and Natural Resources	2015/16	Yes		 UFP Strategy recognised in adopted Food Policy Statement The potential for UFP to facilitate access to fresh food is recognised in the Food Security Implementation Plan.

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