



**Greater Cleveland
Food Bank**
MEMBER OF FEEDING AMERICA

**GCFB Strategic Plan
FY23-FY25**

Approved by Board of Directors October 27, 2022

When the Greater Cleveland Food Bank was founded in 1979, its goal was to connect local nonprofits to surplus food from the food industry, keeping food from going to waste. Over the years, the organization has gone from focusing on pounds of food distributed, to meals made possible, to people assisted, to progress toward ending hunger. This is in alignment with our mission, *to ensure that everyone in our communities has the nutritious food they need every day*, and we move closer to this aspirational mission every day as we build capacity, increase community engagement in our work, and partner with new organizations to collaborate to reach every Northeast Ohioan who needs us.

In FY22, the Greater Cleveland Food Bank and our partners served roughly 349,000 unduplicated residents in our six-county service area. Unfortunately, 557,900 residents are income eligible for food from the Food Bank, at 200% of poverty or below (In 2022: below \$36,620 for a family of two, or \$46,060 for a family of three.) This leaves a gap of roughly 208,000 people who are income eligible for assistance and not receiving it.

The Greater Cleveland Food Bank team, including Board, staff, volunteers, donors, partners and community, has been working diligently to build the physical capacity needed to reach more people with more nutritious food. With the Food Bank’s current expansion plan, the largest capital project in our history, the Food Bank will have the physical space to do just that. In the next three years, we must work creatively and use our new capacity to reach more people with food, benefits access, and wrap around services to address hunger today, tomorrow, and for a lifetime.

**Proposed Goals, Strategies, and Tactics in support of
GCFB Efforts to End Hunger Today, Tomorrow, and For a Lifetime**

Actionable Strategies to move realizing this goal forward	Tactics
1A. Utilize new distribution capacity at our Partner Distribution Hub @Coit to expand the quality and quantity of food we	1A1. Use larger kitchen to expand prepared meals and related services and programs. (sub-tactics for years 1 through 3)
	1A2. Use cold storage and distribution space to increase distribution of healthy food. (plan in year 1 and implement by year 2).
	1A3. Help build agency capacity to help partners serve more people and distribute more healthy food by developing a more robust agency grants/capacity support program using

<p>distribute through our partner agencies</p>	<p>\$3M available from transformational gift. (evaluate early grants in year 1 and develop and implement evaluation-informed plan in year 2)</p>
<p>1B. Gather and analyze data from partners and income eligible people, including those who are hardest to reach, to improve access to nutritious food and reach more people.</p>	<p>1B1. Pilot Community Needs Assessment to update our areas of highest food insecurity; location of sites; open hours by site/access; populations served; and racial/ethnic disparities. (year 1)</p>
<p>1B. Gather and analyze data from partners and income eligible people, including those who are hardest to reach, to improve access to nutritious food and reach more people.</p>	<p>1B2. Develop Operational Response Plan to prioritize food and resource distribution to those communities with the highest need (working closely with Client Services Committee and DEI Council on how to best serve communities the culture-rich food they need and want and more) to address food access disparities; and to provide interventions (i.e. from increasing food volume, to increasing frequency of deliveries, to expanding hours of access, to opening new agencies to investing in agency capacity building.) (year 2)</p>
<p>1C. Expand our most effective programs to reach more income-eligible children, and their families, senior citizens and people with health challenges.</p>	<p>1B3. Engage third party research partner to conduct research with those who are below 200% of poverty but not receiving food assistance and find out why; determine how best to reach them. (year 2)</p>
<p>[Programs = Children’s Programs (Kids Cafes, Summer Meals, Backpacks, School Markets), Senior Programs (Senior Boxes, Senior Meals via Kitchen, Senior Markets), Programs that reach clients with health challenges through healthcare partners (Food Prescriptions+ Mobile</p>	<p>1B4. Communicate our findings as well as our plans to address what we learn more widely to our network of partners, stakeholders, volunteers, supporters, etc. using printed materials and other platforms like social media. (years 2 - 3)</p>
<p></p>	<p>1C1. Enhance children’s programming to reach more children in need, including but not limited to expanding programming and/or creating pairing of programming so that the entire family is served. (years 1, 2, and 3)</p>

<p>Pantries + Food Clinics + Other Initiatives)]</p>	
<p>1C. Expand our most effective programs to reach more income-eligible children, and their families, senior citizens and people with health challenges.</p> <p>[Programs = Children's Programs (Kids Cafes, Summer Meals, Backpacks, School Markets), Senior Programs (Senior Boxes, Senior Meals via Kitchen, Senior Markets), Programs that reach clients with health challenges through healthcare partners (Food Prescriptions+ Mobile Pantries + Food Clinics + Other Initiatives)]</p>	<p>1C2. Explore and expand our senior programming to reach more elderly people in need through initiatives including but not limited to expanded home delivery service with Door Dash for those who are homebound and with disabilities. Grow partnership with WRAAA and/or other home delivered meal providers; increase CSFP/senior box distribution. (years 2 and 3).</p>
	<p>1C3. Expand our Food as Medicine work through collaborative efforts that increase the number of neighbors being served through FAM initiatives in years 2 and 3 following needs assessment (year 1).</p>
	<p>1C4. Evaluate program types (i.e. Back Pack programs, Senior Markets, Pantries, etc.) for those with most impact, defined as follows: (1) Most clients served (# clients and services per client), (2) % nutritious food served, (3) Positive impact on food security, and (4) Net investment of GCFB resources. (years 1 to 3)</p>
	<p>1C5. Advocate for hunger relief programs that provide nutritious food for the clients we serve. Increase number of active advocates in our network of donors and volunteers; engage those with lived experience in advocacy efforts and conduct regular listening sessions with individuals with lived experience to strengthen federal commodity programs (TEFAP and CSFP), increase funding for the Ohio Agricultural Clearance and Food Programs, and push for a strong Child Nutrition Reauthorization bill.(years 1 to 3)</p>

Actionable Strategies to move realizing this goal forward	Tactics
2A. Reach more income eligible Northeast Ohioans in need of benefits with application assistance . Public benefits we assist with include: SNAP, Medicaid, Child Care, Cash Assistance, and Medicare Savings	2A1. Expand efforts (methods, programming, etc.) to reach more people with benefits assistance through improved access, education, and work to reduce stigma. Monitor current and potential SNAP policies at the state, county, and federal levels, with a focus on policies impacting vulnerable populations, including seniors, households with children, and individuals with health challenges. (years 1 through 3)
2B. Increase SNAP approval rates through advocacy	2B1. Advocate for improvements in benefits access at the Federal, State and Local levels. Directly engage elected officials, nonprofit partners, and general public to directly influence policies that refine services and expand access to SNAP. (years 1 through 3)

Actionable Strategies to move realizing this goal forward	Tactics
3A. Renovate, open, and begin to evaluate the impact of our new GCFB community resource center at S. Waterloo.	3A1. Collaborate with partners to establish final programming & goals model (year 1)
	3A2. Renovate (year 1) and Open (year 2) Community Resource Center (providing nutritious food, referral, and services and collaboration with partners.
	3A3. Analyze data from first year and of operations; using client survey and other measurement of early impact (year 3)
	3A4. Capture and promote learnings on an annual basis with partners, Feeding America, the food bank network and other key constituents. Offer regular best practice learning opportunities for partners. (years 1 through 3)
3B. Identify locations for Community Resource Centers on the West and South sides of our service area to provide additional access to both nutritious food and additional wrap around services.	3B1. Use learnings from the first full year at S. Waterloo to develop expansion plans for additional Community Resource Centers. Refresh GIS mapping, identify ideal spaces/budgets, engage realtor, identify partners for each location. (year 3)
	3B2. Determine transition plan for our Euclid Neighborhood Pantry and what is best for the community. (year 2)
	3B3. Get our West Side pantry up and running and determine how, and if, we transition this to a community resource center of the future. (year 1)

3C. Develop relationships and connect clients to the most effective partners to provide wrap around services*.	3C1. Develop a multi-year plan to review/refine wraparound services; add financial literacy partner. (year1)
	3C2. Advocate to uplift policies in support of food security and related to wrap around services* proven to reduce food insecurity (employment, housing, and health care, and financial literacy). (year 2) *Employment (preparing and/or connecting people to available higher paying jobs), Housing (including utilities), Health Care (physical and mental health), Financial Literacy and Coaching

Infrastructure support to power achievement of strategic goals:

<p>A. Develop and support our team -- both paid and unpaid – to help them have the most impact possible.</p>	<p>A1. Continue to focus on increasing compensation (including our GCFB minimum wage) to help our team thrive. Explore various compensation and benefits strategies and ensure equitable compensation across the organization. (years 1 and 2)</p>
	<p>A2. Further develop efforts to make GCFB a top employer. (year 1 planning; ongoing rollout)</p>
	<p>A3. Increase retention and recognition for our current volunteer base and recruit additional volunteers (Develop plan: year 1; rollout: years 2-3)</p>
	<p>A4. Focus on team development to ensure our paid staff are having the most impact possible. Create a formal development and retention program. (Assessment of needs: year 1; Develop plan: year 2; Rollout: year 3)</p>
	<p>A5. Increase DEI awareness and build cultural competence of Food Bank Leaders, Staff and Partners. Collaborate with Board to develop or source a Board-led DEI Assessment and Action Plan (Continuing efforts years 1-3)</p>
<p>B. Analyze and improve IT systems to significantly improve capacity to meet short and long term strategic goals.</p>	<p>B1. Perform analysis on GCFB IT systems and needs to determine pain points, programmatic needs, and shorter term (1-3 year) solutions. Develop additional training opportunities to address these</p>
	<p>B2. Research and identify a tool to track activities and impact of wraparound services (Year 1); pilot it at S. Waterloo (years 2 and 3)</p>
	<p>B3. Develop 3-5 year technology plan in support of longer-term strategic mission related goals.</p>
<p>C. Create a culture of continuous improvement in support of mission related efforts.</p>	<p>C1. Build a robust Lean Council with representation from each department. (year 1)</p>
	<p>C2. Build Continuous Improvement infrastructure. Provide resources and kaizen information on continuous improvement portal, include CI initiatives in performance goals and job descriptions and more. (years 1 - 3).</p>
<p>D. Build new and existing financial capacity and revenue streams in support of efforts to end hunger today, tomorrow and for a lifetime.</p>	<p>D1. Research and evaluate up to 5 non-traditional fundraising/ business model innovations/revenue sources. (year 1) Implement up to 3 potentially high yield opportunities. (years 2-3) (Some ideas to explore: utilize GCFB kitchen as a social enterprise, open S. Waterloo space and begin operating as landlord for partners/tenants; learn more about Environmental, Social, Governance (ESG) priorities for local corporations and identify companies who could provide opportunities for collaboration; invest in Food as Medicine work, particularly programming that is reimbursable by Medicaid or the health care sector; additional sustainability efforts to either increase revenue or decrease expenses. (years 1 through 3)</p>

	D2. Set and meet challenging annual fundraising targets in support of mission related goals.
	D3. Complete expansion campaign to implement phases two and three of our “Food for All” campaign.
E. Strategically tell the story of GCFB in support of fundraising and advocacy priorities.	E1. Develop a multi-year, written communication plan that includes target audiences, stories/messaging for each, and tools to do so. (years 2 and 3)