



# WASHTENAW

## COUNTY FOOD POLICY COUNCIL

HEALTHY. FAIR. AFFORDABLE. SUSTAINABLE.

2018 was an exciting and busy year for the Washtenaw County Food Policy Council. We received a mini grant from the Michigan State Center for Regional Food Systems that helped us increase our capacity as a council through 4 main projects:

- (1) Researched & reached a consensus on the most effective financial structure by talking to food policy councils around the nation, as well as the Washtenaw County Board of Commissioners, Finance Department & Health Department
- (2) Developed an improved system of accountability such as our first annual report and improved internal tracking tools
- (3) Expanded our community engagement by developing a plan to incorporate racial equity and diverse perspectives into our work
- (4) Designed a relationship building toolkit for elected officials

In addition, the council led advocacy efforts surrounding the Farm Bill, bringing in partners from all over Southeastern Michigan for a Farm Bill workshop; helped develop and support a plastic bag campaign with Recycle Ann Arbor; collaborated with the University of Michigan to examine the impacts of recent cuts in food assistance programs; attended the Good Food Summit to collaborate with other food system leaders; established our strategic priorities with a strategic planning retreat; and connected and grew in our knowledge and power for effective policy action.

## OUR VISION

To have a healthy community and thriving local food system that:

- Provides access to healthy and culturally appropriate food for all residents
- Values and preserves community land for food production
- Maximizes the use of local, regional and seasonal food
- Meets the needs of the present generation without compromising the needs of future generations
- Promotes economic development and a local economy within and around the food system

## BY THE NUMBERS



**1,651**  
Website Visitors



**19**  
Average Number of Attendees at Council Meetings



**600**  
Facebook Page Likes



**411**  
Listserv Subscribers

### POLICY ACTION TEAMS

**1. Food Access & Nutrition** - Works to make healthy food more accessible in Washtenaw County & beyond

**2. Food Waste & Packaging** - Develops campaigns around food waste prevention & recovery systems from businesses, institutions, residents & agencies

**3. Planning & Zoning** - Examines land use issues around the food system as they relate to zoning & planning ordinances & regulations

**4. Farmers & Institutional Purchasing** - Consists of farmers & non-farmers who seek to create a voice for growers through examining policy

Washtenaw County  
Food Policy Council  
15 appointed members

4 Policy Action  
Teams

## WHO WE ARE

**Markell Miller**

Chair, Emergency Food Systems, *Director of Community Food Programs, Food Gatherers*

**Shannon Brines**

Vice Chair, Rural Agriculture, *Brines Farm, University of Michigan School for Environment & Sustainability*

**Sharon Sheldon**

Treasurer, Community Representative, *retired from Washtenaw County Health Department*

**Melissa Robinson**

Secretary, Food Manufacturer & Distributor, *University of Michigan Master of Public Health Candidate, Nutritional Sciences*

**Noelle Bowman**

Waste Management, *Washtenaw County Solid Waste Program Specialist*

**Jae Gerhart**

Economic Development, *Washtenaw County Local Foods Coordinator, Michigan State University Extension*

**Khadija Wallace**

Food Service, *President, Ann Arbor/Ypsilanti U.S. Black Chamber of Commerce; Joyful Treats Catering*

**Elisabeth Vanderpool**

Health Care, *Director of Community Health, Saint Joseph Mercy Health System*

**Kendrin Sonnevile**

Nutrition, *Assistant Professor, University of Michigan School of Public Health Department of Nutritional Sciences*

**Anikka Van Eyl**

Planning, *University of Michigan Master of Urban & Regional Planning, Master of Social Work Candidates*

**Michelle Deatrick**

Washtenaw County Board of Commissioners

**Kim Bayer**

Community Representative, *Slow Farm*

**Wendy Banka**

Food Retail, *Mighty Fine Poultry Processing LLC*

### FARMERS' PERSPECTIVE ON THE FARM BILL

Through programs such as crop insurance for farmers to healthy food access for low-income families, and from beginning farmer trainings to support for sustainable farming practices, the Farm Bill sets the course of our food and farming system.

The Washtenaw County Food Policy Council's Farmers & Institutional Purchasing Policy Action Team produced two videos that highlighted our local Washtenaw County farmers' perspectives on two Farm Bill programs that faced threat during the Farm Bill revision: beginning farmer development programs and conservation programs.

<https://youtu.be/NKsyY2zlonM>  
<https://youtu.be/1JXRxiMTWyY>

### LUNCH SHAMING: WASHTENAW COUNTY SCHOOL POLICIES

In 2017, national news outlets called attention to 'lunch shaming', a phenomenon pertaining to students who attended schools with policies that singled out those who came to school with no packed lunch and without enough money to purchase lunch from the cafeteria.

By the start of the 2017-2018 school year, school districts were required to have a formal, written school meal charge policy dictating their procedures around meal charges. Members of Washtenaw County Food Policy Council's Food Access & Nutrition Policy Action Team (PAT) collected these 'meal charge policies' from the school districts in our area to see how well they covered the topics outlined in the USDA's Overcoming the Unpaid Meals Challenge.

After collecting data, the Food Access & Nutrition PAT compiled a report to send back to school district about the state of policies in Washtenaw County and offered to do an individual examination of their policy to help point out areas of improvement. Although they already had one of the most complete policies initially, Dexter Community Schools was the only district that asked us for assistance in improving their meal charge policy.