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Executive Summary

The Fitzroy Community Food Centre (FCFC) will be a dynamic hub of community food activity engaging and partnering with community groups and organisations that will run a multitude of programs, events and activities in the centre. The link for these activities is food; however the forms they take are varied and will appeal to a wide cross section of the community. The FCFC will provide an integrated and facilitated space incorporating a kitchen and a garden allowing for synergies and cross pollination to occur between the programs and user groups.

The themes for the centre’s activities are broken in to the following; education, micro enterprise, food security, food waste and food system advocacy and community building, for both the Atherton Gardens Estate as well as the wider Fitzroy community.

The FCFC will be an enormous asset to both the residents of the Atherton Gardens Estate and the wider Fitzroy community, increasing access to fresh food, providing opportunities for skill and knowledge development, contributing to behaviour change around healthy and sustainable food, reducing social isolation, boosting the local economy, increasing community connectedness and wellbeing and playing a key role in the regeneration of the estate.

This innovative concept will create the first centre of its kind in Australia and is consistent with the area’s Master Plan imperatives including providing opportunities for social renewal and reducing the stigma of public housing.

In 2012-13 Cultivating Community managed the kitchen space, engaging a variety of groups, organisations and enterprises to use the space, as well as running a successful after school cooking program. During this time Cultivating Community had a vision to expand the space and concept into a Community Food Centre. Cultivating Community was engaged to complete a feasibility study for the FCFC by the Fitzroy Office of Housing in March to June 2014.

This report is the result of extensive research including desktop research investigating best practice in the area of community food projects in both Australia and overseas. Numerous case studies appear throughout the report highlighting successful projects providing inspiration for what is possible at the FCFC.

We have also gleaned data from local surveys, community consultations and interviews with key stakeholders in order to determine the needs of the community, identify gaps in current services and programs and to understand current community assets including partnership opportunities.

This report includes a project plan from 2014 until 2017 detailing what will be required to achieve the FCFC vision. It includes proposed developments to the site, ongoing staffing, budgetary requirements and avenues for funding, and movement towards a self-sustaining model.

Cultivating Community are excited to see this innovative concept come to fruition and look forward to working in partnership with the whole of community to realise the FCFC.

Peta Christensen and Neesh Wray
Key Recommendations

Community Food Centre
A Community Food Centre (CFC) is highly recommended for the Atherton Gardens estate and surrounding community. This project builds upon the existing garden and kitchen infrastructure and existing activities in the space in particular the Hope for the Future Employment and Training initiative on the estate. A CFC would address ongoing issues for residents including increased access to personal and community food security, increased community cohesion and cultural awareness and provide opportunities for pathways to employment.

Partnerships
Like all community projects, the success of the FCFC relies on building community connections and partnerships. This will be enhanced by a monthly forum that will be facilitated by the Community Liaison Committee. Collaborating with existing organisations and groups will facilitate interaction with not only a diversity of this complex community, but particularly those most difficult to access.

Funding
Securing additional funding is crucial for the success of the FCFC. A range of funding has been identified to enable substantial redevelopment, build a social enterprise, create employment and volunteer opportunities, and realise the FCFC vision. The project has already secured the support of the DHS, Mission Australia and the Community Liaison Committee who are responsible for the overall governance of the estate.

Steering Committee
A steering committee made up of local stakeholders should be established immediately to support and assist the project development where possible. This steering committee should meet regularly and provide a framework for the project to develop within. Cultivating Community will report progress every three months to the Community Liaison Committee and meet fortnightly with DHS/Mission Australia’s Partnerships and Projects Facilitator who will give continued support and advice to the project.

Project Mentor
In order to realise the vision of the FCFC a project mentor should be engaged to assist and guide the project worker. Ideally the mentor would have extensive experience with community initiatives, social enterprise and have some understanding of the community food movement.

Volunteers
Meaningful opportunities for volunteers to engage in the FCFC programs are also vital for a thriving hub of activity and longevity. This will be further enhanced by linking into the existing local network of community activity. Ongoing recruitment, incentives and acknowledgement of their value must be an integral factor of the project worker’s role.

Social enterprise
A key aspect of the FCFC is to support social enterprise development. Social enterprises will allow the FCFC to achieve some financial independence as well as provide meaningful avenues for participants to develop skills and gain employment.

Redevelopment
For the FCFC vision to be realised, redevelopment of the current site needs to occur. Securing funding for this may be difficult as the property belongs to the state government so some creative fundraising strategies will need to be employed.
**Project History**

**Cultivating Community**
Established in 1998, we are a non-profit organisation based in Melbourne. Historically, we are most well-known for our work supporting community gardens for tenants of inner-city public housing estates. Our passion for creating a better food future involves other activities spanning urban agriculture, food hubs, school gardens, permaculture, Community Supported Agriculture, organic farming, food waste management and environmental education.

**Project History**
Cultivating Community have an extensive history and relationship with the Atherton Gardens Estate and residents, initially taking on the management of the community garden in 2002 which we still manage more than a decade later. After working on the estate for several years, we realised not everyone could have a community garden plot and started to look into expanding the impact of our work to assist other residents increase their access to fresh food. We partnered up with the Brotherhood of St Laurence in 2004 and started running a weekly fruit and veggie market run by volunteers and offering affordable, seasonal produce. The market ran for nearly 6 years in different locations and forms filling a gap until the retail landscape eventually changed and a number of supermarkets moved into the area.

In October 2011, North Yarra Community Health held the Yarra Fresh and Affordable Food Forum, asking people from across the community about food issues and what they would like to see implemented – Multicultural cooking classes and Community Kitchens were identified as something needed in the community as there were no community kitchen projects happening in the area. With this in mind, Cultivating Community could see the potential to create a beautiful kitchen space in the light filled undercroft that adjoined the Atherton Gardens Community Garden.

Cultivating Community successfully applied to the Fitzroy Office of Housing for funding to develop the kitchen as part of the Melting Pot Community Kitchen pilot. This program ran for a year and in addition to running an after school cooking program, Cultivating Community engaged numerous groups who also started running cooking programs in the space including St Mary’s House of Welcome, the Asylum Seeker Resource Centre, Merri Community Health, Yarra Youth Services, Open Table and the Flavour Exchange. A local business also used the kitchen to make dips and after 8 months business began to grow and they were able to start employing two people from the estate.

Inspired by the success of the previous year of activity in the kitchen and garden, Cultivating Community realised that so much more could be done utilising the kitchen and the garden and began to explore best practise programs in Australia and overseas. This led us to the Canadian Community Food Centres which have an exemplary model of addressing many and varied social issues through food education, community building and opportunities to reconnect with the food system. In March 2014, Cultivating Community secured additional funding from the Fitzroy Office of Housing to complete this feasibility study investigating future models for the Community Kitchen/Garden as a next step in developing the potential that the space holds to become a thriving hub of community food activity.
Vision

To grow the Fitzroy Community Food Centre (FCFC) to be a dynamic hub of community food activity that will add value to the social and economic regeneration of the local community and be a leader in community food innovation.
To build an integrated and facilitated space incorporating a kitchen and a garden, allowing for synergies and cross pollination to occur between the programs, user groups and the community.

Mission

To increase access to fresh food, providing opportunities for skill and knowledge development, contribute to behaviour change around healthy and sustainable food, reduce social isolation and increase community connectedness and wellbeing.
To inclusively engage and partner with community groups, organisations, the residents of the Atherton Gardens Estate, and the wider Fitzroy community to run a multitude of programs, events and activities in the centre.
To realise the FCFC vision and inspire replication in more communities across Australia.

“Food is never just Food... We know that food is a holder of culture, a marker of identity, a source of physical and mental health, a way to nurture the planet, and a means to connect with each other.”

Nick Saul, President and CEO, Community Food Centres Canada
(Community Food Centres Canada Progress Report 2012/2013 pg 3)
What is a Community Food Centre?
A community food centre is a thriving community hub featuring a broad range of activities with the common thread being food. Its programs encompass food access, skill development and advocacy. It is a space that is created in partnership between the community and local organisations to address the relevant needs of the local population. A CFC needs to be created by its local community to address their specific needs. However, this is what a week in the life of the Fitzroy Community Food Centre could look like (see Appendices for full version of this document):

MONDAY
Good Food Box
Volunteers and residents sort boxes of affordable seasonal fruit & veggie supplied by the Open Food Network and supplemented by SecondBite.

Community lunch
Food from the OFN and the community garden is turning into a Vietnamese feast for volunteers, residents and the local community.

Sustainable Food Systems Education Program
Oxfam Grow Program collaborates with local primary schools to learn about sustainable growing, cooking skills, biodiversity and social justice.

Afterschool Program
Cubbies Adventure Playground & Merri Community Health work with 12-16 year olds to cook, garden and provide homework support.

Community Composting
Gardeners and volunteers collect food scraps, feed chickens, and create compost for the community.

Big Batch Bake
Monthly bulk cooking group for those who benefit from the convenience of frozen healthy food on hand.

TUESDAY
Positive Parenting with Food + lunch
NYCH facilitate a session on health and wellbeing whilst parents and kids cook lunch.

Bread and Bricks Community Action Program
Speakers and support workers contribute time to assist people with everyday access issues to social services.

Small Business Incubator
Micro enterprises use the space as they move towards financial sustainability.

WEDNESDAY
Certificate 1 Vocational Preparation Course
William Angliss Institute & St Mary’s House of Welcome provide hospitality training courses to helping people gain employment in the industry. Followed by a café-style lunch.

After School Program & Community Composting 2
Atherton Gardens Cooking School
Cooking school social enterprise that provides cooking workshops in all types of cuisines – tonight Afghani!

THURSDAY
Food Bank
Food Bank Victoria and SecondBite provide free and low cost fruit and veggies, plus food staples for low-income residents.

Atherton Gardens Cooking School
Today the cooking school is catering a Turkish lunch for a local business.

Local Growers Dinner – Seasonal event
A local chef works with local urban food growers to create a feast.

FRIDAY
Healthy Beginnings and Family Support Program
New parents bring their babies for all sorts of advice and support from social/health services.

Permaculture Playgroup
Parents bring their toddlers to experiment with growing and cooking and playing together.

Asylum Seeker cooking & community lunch
The Asylum Seeker Resource Centre use the space to build cooking skills and community.

Film and food night – Pizza
Ethical Food Group organise a screening of “Food Inc” combined with pizza from the wood-fired oven.

SUNDAY
Gardening workshops
Burnley Horticultural College combine with CC to provide gardening workshops for people all over Melbourne and provide income for the FCFC.

Open Table Community Lunch
Rescued cafe food is turned into a community lunch by Open Table volunteers and local residents.
**Why a Community Food Centre in Fitzroy?**

**Food Security and Health**
Food growing and eating are intrinsically linked to community wellbeing - food directly and indirectly contributes to the overall health of individuals and communities. Thus, improving access to healthy affordable food helps to ensure community health and wellbeing, particularly of populations at risk of food insecurity. Food security is said to exist when "all community residents obtain a safe, personally acceptable, nutritious diet through a sustainable food system that maximises healthy choices, community self-resilience and equal access for everyone" (Dieticians of Canada, cited AIFS, 2011).

Food security is mostly invisible to those not affected by it.

Research (NYCH 2011; AIFS 2011) reports that certain populations are more likely to experience food insecurity in Australia. Unsurprisingly, these people include low-income earners, the unemployed, rental and single parent households; indigenous, culturally and linguistically diverse communities; the elderly, homeless and socially isolated people. Public housing estate residents in particular are a population identified as significantly at-risk of food insecurity, as well as other health concerns (CIV, 2007; AIFS, 2011). As identified in the NYCH forum (NYCH, 2002) there is a gap for community-based food initiatives in the City of Yarra.

In the City of Yarra, food security is identified as an ongoing issue for residents. Approximately 7.8% of residents living in Yarra have experienced food insecurity (CIV, 2011). This is compared to 5.8% in the Northern and Western Metro Region and the Victorian average of 5.6%. Estimates also suggest that 40% of those experience severe food insecurity, defined as where meals are often missed or inadequate (AIFS, 2011).

Access to fresh, healthy, affordable and culturally appropriate food is a result of complex interrelated societal, political, cultural and environmental issues. Barriers to such food experienced by people or households include:

- low-income (and comparatively high fresh food prices)
- access to transport and mobility
- physical health, including people with chronic disease or a disability
- mental wellbeing and social isolation
- time availability, convenience and proximity to fresh food outlets
- diverse language and cultural needs
- employment and housing security
- loss of motivation, knowledge and skills about a nutritious diet
- separation of food production from local communities

(NYCH, 2011; Ennis & Christensen, 2009).

An important facet of food security is nutritional content. As a result of not eating enough fresh fruit and vegetables to meet our nutritional needs, health is compromised. In the City of Yarra statistics show that only 7.7% of the population met the recommended minimum daily intake for vegetables, and just less than half for fruit (DoH, 2010). Research shows that lower food and nutrient intake is observed in most disadvantaged areas: those with the poorest social, economic and educational resources are more likely to be obese (CIV, 2011). This
has been consistently observed across the developed countries of the USA, Europe and Australia (Burns, 2004, cited in CIV, 2011). Food insecurity can also impact negatively upon outcomes for children in the short and long-term - including children's academic ability and health issues including obesity, diabetes and heart disease (AIFS, 2011).

It is no secret that diet-related illness is rising with increasing prevalence of obesity, type-2 diabetes and cardiovascular disease. Furthermore, the risk of obesity is 20-40% higher in women who have low incomes and are experiencing food insecurity (CIV, 2011). Investigation from Second Bite found that the economic cost of managing and treating diet-related chronic disease is estimated at $6 billion per annum (Lindberg, 2011). In addition the attributed societal cost for Victoria of inadequate fruit and vegetable consumption is close to $1 billion.

"We see the devastating impact of food insecurity in our community every day, but its effects ripple through our entire society. We pay the price in ballooning health care costs, children unable to learn at school, unsafe communities, and unsustainable food systems"
– The Stop, Annual Report, 2013, p. 3

Research highlights that improving food security requires a multifaceted approach that emphasises broad-based community-level interventions and urban planning to redress current socio-economic inequalities and reduce barriers to fresh food and healthier dietary choices. Longitudinal studies unilaterally provide conclusive evidence that community kitchens have a positive impact on participants’ long-term nutritional and food security (Hwa Lee et al., 2010; Furber et al., 2010; Iacovou et al., 2012). Integrative community food centres in Canada, such as The Stop (see p. 12), show demonstrable impacts towards food and nutrition security at individual, household and community levels. In a study of collective kitchens in Canada, participants reported increases in food security (Engler et al, cited in CIFS, 2011), as well as increased dignity and psychological distress associated with food insecurity.

With such a plethora of research, more preventative community-based approaches to improving the access to fresh, healthy and culturally appropriate food are required. Integrative community foods centres do more than improve food security. They also promote physical and mental health; social inclusion; education and skills training; healthy eating; build community capacity and resilience; increase community engagement – the opportunities for both individuals and communities are boundless and exciting.

**Social health and community**

Food plays a significant role in our lives and that of our communities. It contributes to our physical, mental and emotional wellbeing, strengthens our local economy and fosters cultural and social connection. For many cultures, food is a special focus for social connections with family and friends. Social exclusion is defined as when people are shut out from the social, economic, political and cultural systems which contribute to the integration of a person in the community (Cappo, 2002, cited in AIFS, p. 5). Thus food production, distribution, preparation and enterprise are valuable tools for facilitating social interactions to foster social and cultural understanding and inclusion. The City of Yarra has the highest proportion of public housing renters in Victoria and 88% of these residents were born overseas. The Atherton Gardens Estate houses approximately 1850 residents from at least 8 diverse cultural backgrounds (FHO, 2012) across the entire age spectrum. With this wealth of diversity exists complex challenges inherently associated with public housing estates. Such populations often experience
entrenched disadvantage. These issues are broad, including unemployment or under-employment, mental health issues, racism and food insecurity. Such issues do not exist in isolation.

The Atherton Gardens Estate has been identified as an area requiring social, economic and physical renewal. Fostering social cohesion is essential for social renewal, and community food initiatives are recognised as fundamental to building community capacity and resilience. Community kitchens and food centres have shown to facilitate increased social interactions for isolated and food insecure people (Hwa Lee et al., 2010). Such community food spaces also increase access to a broad range of social and welfare services for marginalised people (Furber et al. 2010). Qualitative evidence from the research also suggests that community kitchens effectively improve participants’ cooking and budgeting skills, food knowledge and skills in food selection and preparation, consequently facilitating empowerment through education and skill development. Community kitchens have been shown to attract and retain participants experiencing food security and social isolation (Tarasuk & Reynolds, 1999, cited in AIFS, p. 6)

"When people cook together in our community kitchen or get their hands dirty in our community garden, they are not only eating healthier, they are learning skills, meeting their neighbours, and building a stronger, more connected community"  
- The Stop, Annual Report, 2013, p. 3

Food inherently brings people together, fostering the health and wellbeing of individuals, families and communities. Community kitchen and food centre initiatives provide evidence of their capacity to build a sense of community around sharing food, shared learning and collective advocacy. The integrative FCFC approach will provide a significant opportunity for community building and social renewal.
Best practice models
Research highlights that a multifaceted approach emphasising broad-based community-level interventions and urban planning is required to redress current socioeconomic inequalities and reduce barriers to fresh food and healthier dietary choices. The evidence from the pioneering Canadian Community Food Centres and similar community food projects in Australia and overseas successfully demonstrates this. Below are a number of inspiring models to provide food for thought. More locally, there are currently a number of community food-based initiatives improving access to healthy food, cultivating social capital and improved community wellbeing.

The Stop Community Food Centre – Toronto, Canada
The Stop is currently one of three pioneering community food centres in Canada. It has been building a thriving community food hub since 2002. The Stop were the founding affiliate of a national organisation - Community Food Centres Canada - which is now driving the development of 15 community food centres across the country over the next five years.

The Stop strives to increase access to healthy food in a manner that maintains dignity, builds health and community, and challenges inequality.

It has two locations that offer an impressive array of community food programs including:

- markets
- community cooking
- a perinatal program
- urban agriculture
- sustainable food systems education
- community advocacy
- community baking ovens
- a drop-in food bank, and
- a compost demonstration centre.

The Stop moves beyond emergency food access to community development, education and skill sharing, and supporting community advocacy and civic engagement. In 2013 The Stop’s programs bustled – 60,000 meals were served; 1,000 program visits by children and youth; 5,000lbs of food harvested from gardens and greenhouse; 10,000 food hampers distributed; and 1,000 weekly visitors to the Farmers’ Market. Funding is currently sourced through the following: 27% foundation funds, 16% social enterprise, 15% events, 13% donated funds, 13% corporations and organisations, and 16% other. The organisation has built up a huge network of supporters, partners and collaborations within the community to build a dynamic space that moves beyond self-sustaining to rapid growth. www.thestop.org
Mandela Marketplace – Oakland, California, USA
Mandela Marketplace is a non-profit organisation that works in partnership with local residents, family farmers and community-based businesses to improve health, create wealth, and build assets through cooperative food enterprises in low income communities. Through community organising, education, business cultivation, and ‘ladder-up’ financing, community members engage in the development, operation and ownership of a local economy and sustainable food system. Mandela coordinates an assortment of programs and community-driven initiatives including:

- retail food stores
- a nutrition education centre
- micro-financing
- community produce stands
- a food policy council, and
- establishing alternative distribution between local farmers and businesses.

Mandela Marketplace assists local entrepreneurs through novel micro-financing programs that provide start-up cost loans. In 2012 program service revenue increased from zero to 10%, with 90% coming from contributions and grants. It is anticipated that his gap will continue to reduce similar to the Canadian FCFC models.

www.mandelamarketplace.org
Community Kitchens Pilot Program – Frankston, Victoria
This project was initiated in by a local dietician in 2004 and was again inspired by the Canadian Community Food Centre model. A number of community kitchens were established in the area, operating within an existing space with a kitchen, for example churches, neighbourhood houses, schools, and men’s sheds. Each kitchen was set up to suit the needs of the local community. One such example is the Koori Kitchen based at a local hall and coordinated by Peninsula Health. The program aims to empower the local Koori community, provide a culturally friendly meeting environment, and promote a healthier wellbeing. Participants of the Frankston Community Kitchens Program reported positive changes in:

- social skills – communication and interpersonal skills
- teamwork and leadership skills – working with others, taking a leadership role
- budgeting – writing shopping lists, putting money aside, buying bulk or on sale
- cooking – learning new recipes, cooking techniques
- shopping – saving money of food costs
- greater motivation to cook at home and reduced intake of takeaway/fast food
- access to food – increased availability of food, increased variety
- increased fruit and vegetable consumption
- literacy and numeracy, and
- confidence and self-esteem.

In the program’s final evaluation, reporting detailed evidence of achieving increased healthy eating, social inclusion and community strength. Reporting also highlighted evidence of expanded friendship networks, and notable impacts on participants’ mental health and wellbeing. www.communitykitchens.org.au
CERES – Brunswick East, Victoria  www.ceres.org.au  
CERES is a not-for-profit Centre for Education and Research in Environmental Strategies, located on 4.5 hectares that had been previously a bluestone quarry and a rubbish tip. Over the 30 years, through community initiative, the rubbish tip has been transformed into a vibrant thriving community space that incorporates a range of programs, making it more than a food centre, rather an integrative sustainability centre. Through a diversity of programs and initiatives CERES has become a resilient, economically viable self-sustaining model. A number of other small enterprises utilise and rent the CERES spaces including yoga/meditation, music events and seasonal celebrations. Programs include:

- Farm and orchard, including a propagation enterprise employing 2 staff and regular volunteers
- Daily fresh food market, selling producing from the farm and orchard
- Organic shop
- Café and restaurant, incorporating farm and local foods
- Permaculture nursery
- Education programs, including Vocational Education and Training, workshops and courses
- Community kitchen and venue hire
- Community book exchange
- Urban Harvest fruit and veggie swap

In successful partnership, PepperTree Place uses community horticulture as a tool to support volunteers and community to grow together through a diversity of programs and community driven initiatives. PepperTree Place has been developed over 10 years and currently has approximately 6 days of staffing. Its capital is comprised of government funding, Uniting Care funding, work for the dole, and income from the café and nursery enterprises, and annual events. They also engage up to 30 regular community members in volunteer roles. Its current vibrant programs include:

- Café cooperative
- volunteer run community plant nursery
- an edible classroom in a 7 year collaboration with a local primary school, learning to grow food and prepare meals
- a vocational development program
- a home-grown produce swap
- a multicultural sewing group,
- annual events and workshops.

“Grow your own healthy lifestyle” – supporting families to plan, develop and maintain a home garden, and build positive family relationships
Consultation

Ongoing Consultation
It is acknowledged that authentic comprehensive community consultation takes time, sensitivity and resources. Community consultation will continue throughout the stages of the FCFC, furthering local stakeholder engagement in the design and development. Future consultations and analysis will continue to draw out community needs, knowledge and insights to facilitate community ownership and involvement. Ongoing communication with stakeholders and reporting feedback to the community will ensure that wider networks will be accessed.

Overview
A variety of community consultation approaches were undertaken during the 10-week FCFC proposal timeframe. These consultations gained an understanding of the needs of the local community and relevant organisations, as well as identifying gaps in current services. Community assets were identified including existing programs and groups that could link into the FCFC. Finally, the process instigated broad collaborative partnerships. The range of consultations included:

1. A community organisation focus group: attended by representatives from 10 organisations
2. A Fitzroy Community Gardeners focus group: attended by 27 gardeners from 7 culturally diverse backgrounds
3. Key local stakeholder meetings: 12 individual and small group meetings
4. Online surveys for individuals and organisations: 28 organisational responses; 75 individual responses
5. Ongoing meetings with representatives from the Fitzroy Department of Housing and Cultivating Community to obtain ongoing guidance and feedback.

The consultations and online surveys were publicised via the following mediums:

- Cultivating Community and community food sector networks such as City of Yarra Sustainability News, Yarra Environment and Sustainability Network, Yarra Community Food Network, the People’s Food Plan, Yarra food swap, Moreland Food Gardens Network, and Food Know How
- The Atherton Gardens network of organisations and local groups
- Facebook: Cultivating Community and networks
- Yarra Urban Harvest Monthly Newsletter email list
- An article in “The Link” – a quarterly newsletter for all residents at the Fitzroy, Collingwood and Richmond housing estates
- A mail-out to Fitzroy gardeners, and posters displayed at the Fitzroy community garden
- Approaching key representatives spanning a diversity of community areas, e.g. ageing, employment
1. **Community Organisation Focus Group**

The aim of this focus group was to draw out knowledge from local organisations, as well as begin to foster relationships with the FCFC. It was attended by representatives from local organisations including:

- St. Mary’s House of Welcome - Fitzroy
- Open Food Network
- Melbourne Farmers Market Association
- City of Yarra – Urban Agriculture
- Cultivating Community – Atherton Gardens Community Garden Support Worker
- BankMECU – Community Development
- Cubbies Adventure Playground – Atherton Gardens estate

Participants highlighted the following aspects as instrumental to the success of community food projects:

- Volunteers
- Engagement Opportunities
- COLLABORATION AND PARTNERSHIPS
- Tacit Knowledge
- Good will

Developing local resilience combined with self-sustaining features is vital for success and longevity, and will form a significant aspect of the project.

Mapping existing programs and resources elicited a list of potential existing groups for collaboration such as homework clubs, school programs, and mobile markets. A number of people agreed that tapping into African communities, acknowledging that the cultural diversity within this broad umbrella label is often overlooked, was acknowledged as a key need and challenge.

Brainstorming innovative ideas for the FCFC overlapped mapping and led to an array of potential collaborative food initiatives for the centre. Ideas included:

- Collaboration with the Melbourne Farmers Market Association (see page 30)
- Coffee clubs to engage African communities in particular
- Ethnic food / "Flat food" pop up restaurants and take-away food
- Creation of a distribution hub for farmers’ produce connecting to local restaurants
- Food planning and financial literacy programs
- Linkages with local school breakfast programs, and after school homework clubs
- Bulk cooking groups, targeting senior citizens and people living alone
- Promotion of the FCFC as a meeting space with catering
- Catering programs similar to The Sorghum Sisters (see page 24)
2. Fitzroy Community Gardeners Focus Group
A focus group was originally planned for estate and local residents. However, it was concluded that tapping into existing group networks would be a more efficient use of the given resources and time. The Fitzroy Community Gardeners are an important community as their garden is physically linked to the FCFC and part of the long term vision. Twenty-seven of the sixty gardeners attended the meeting, with an even spread of the following language groups: Cantonese, Mandarin, Vietnamese, Dari, Arabic, Turkish and English. Interpreters for all six languages were present.

The meeting gave the gardeners space to vocalise any concerns about the growing FCFC vision and how it may impact the community garden environment. The attendees conferred that they are unconcerned about the FCFC, with many gardeners keen to join in programs or workshops, and potentially utilise the space for community cooking and food preparation.

At the conclusion of the meeting, the gardeners completed a printed copy of the online survey with interpreters (see section 4i, and Appendix 2). Key feedback from this consultation that has been incorporated into the design includes a microwave and covered outdoor BBQ space. Programs that the gardeners are most likely to get involved in are bulk cooking and baking groups; gardening and cooking workshops; and community meals (also represented in Table 1 Potential FCFC Programs and Services, page 20).

3. Key stakeholder meetings
Many of the key stakeholders were mapped at the beginning of the consultation process by Cultivating Community and DHS Fitzroy staff. Through promotions, networking and research, further meetings were organised with relevant stakeholders from the following organisations:

- North Yarra Community Health, renamed Cohealth
- Sustainability and Urban Agriculture Officers - City of Yarra
- Melbourne Farmers Market Association
- Atherton Gardens Residents Association (AGRA) President
- Collingwood Neighbourhood House
- Hope for the Future, employment
- Mission Australia
- Department of Housing, Fitzroy
- Community Engagement, Ageing - City of Yarra
- Permaculture design student
- Local Developer
- DHS Field Services Officer

These meetings provided a plethora of ideas and opportunities for collaboration. Phase 1 of the FCFC implementation plan (see page 35) will see reengagement with key stakeholders to work in partnerships to facilitate program development, organise community events and realise the vision of the FCFC. Key stakeholders will also be invited to form a Steering Group for the FCFC during this stage of implementation.

Online surveys
Two surveys were produced through the online website Survey Monkey. This was to enable contribution by those who could not attend either a focus group or a stakeholder meeting. The surveys were open for eight weeks and publicised via the networks previously listed. Some surveys were printed for completion, with
responses later uploaded to the web link for collation. A total of 28 organisation surveys and 75 individual surveys were completed.

i. **Individuals survey**

The demographics of survey respondents are represented below:

**Age groups**

- Under 25 - 2.67%
- 25-35 - 28%
- 36-60 - 46.67%
- 60+ - 22.67%

**Health Care Card**

- Yes - 43%
- No - 57%

**Household fortnightly income**

- less than $200 - 0%
- $200-400 - 11.6%
- $401-600 - 15.95%
- $601-800 - 10.1%
- $801-1000 - 17.4%
- $1000+ - 44.95%

**Respondant's household makeup**

- Single parent - 16%
- Single parent - 10.67%
- 2 or more adults, no children - 52%
- 2 or more adults, with children - 21.33%
The following graph gives an indication of which potential FCFC programs and services the community are interested in becoming involved in:

Other valuable contributions from the individuals’ survey responses included suggestions of:
- movie and soup nights
- farmers market
- education on better food choices
- links to kids services
- cookbook library
- conversations around the table, and
- cultural cooking and celebrations.
ii. **Organisations survey**

The respondents to the organisations survey represented a range of community organisations:

- Community health
- Local government
- Brotherhood of St. Laurence
- Department of Human Services
- Welfare, alcohol and drug services
- Mission Australia
- Neighbourhood Justice
- Emergency relief
- Housing and indigenous recreation
- Family support

**Visions** for the Fitzroy Community Food Centre:

**Gaps** that were identified by local community organisation representatives encompassed:

- Cooked fresh food options, including take-away food
- Free and accessible diet information, particularly for youths
- Access to African and indigenous foods
- Access to affordable fresh food
- Recycling and waste information, and
- Social meal options
Finally, recommended **community collaborations** and utilisation of the FCFC space comprised:

**Community Collaborations**
- Charcoal Lane (a local social enterprise that helps young Aboriginal people develop a pathway to ongoing education and employment)
- Second bite (food rescue and redistribution)
- Social studio – Collingwood
- Collingwood Children’s Farm
- ByTwoSisters (local Vietnamese food enterprise)
- Fitzroy Learning Network (community-based neighbourhood house)
- Connie Benn Centre (family’s and children’s community hub based in Fitzroy)
- Brotherhood of St Laurence
- Food Not Bombs (grassroots community meals)
- Hope for the future (Atherton Gardens employment services)
- Yarra Youth

**Utilisation of the FCFC space**
- Breakfast and homework clubs, and post sports cooking groups
- Communal cooking groups
- Community BBQs / community meals
- Education - nutrition
- Parents group space
- School holiday programs and youth activities
- Meeting space
- Residents groups/tenants groups/AGRA/local ethnic groups /African women’s group

*The authors wish to acknowledge all the time and wisdom shared by those who participated in the FCFC consultation process. Your contribution is invaluable – thank you.*
Activity Areas

The Fitzroy Community Food Centre will be based around a number of activity areas that have been defined through a research and consultation process between Cultivating Community, the Fitzroy Office of Housing, local agencies and organisations and the broader community. These activity areas use food as a the common vehicle to address numerous community needs in practical and creative ways.

Activity Area 1: Education – formal and informal/youth and adult

The 2011 North Yarra Community Health forum identified a major gap in basic nutrition and food education in the City of Yarra. Poor diets and nutritional intake result in compromised health and wellbeing which can lead to increased risks of chronic non-communicable disease such as diabetes and cardiovascular disease. Research shows that City of Yarra residents are not consuming an adequate amount of fruit and vegetables (NYCH, 2012). Food nutrition, cooking and food gardening education is paramount in building understanding and shared knowledge and skills around health and wellbeing, and increasing food security.

In addition to formal training opportunities such as hospitality and horticulture, there is an abundance of knowledge and skills already existing in and around the local community to be tapped into.

Proposed activities may include:

- Vocational education and training linkages – Food handling certificates
- Food growing and cooking workshops
- Volunteer opportunities – programs, events, social enterprise
- Informal knowledge and skill sharing - may cover seasonal growing, cooking and eating, nutrition and budgeting.

Case Study

Education: The Complete Urban Farmers course - CERES

CERES Environment Park in Melbourne’s inner north offers a number of education programs for schools, households and the community. Their delicious list of short courses and workshops spans from bread and cheese making to The Complete Urban Farmers course. This course has gradually become more popular over two years and CERES is now running six courses in 2014. There are 14 sessions in each course ranging in education about beekeeping, an introduction to permaculture, seed saving, propagation, chook care and more. The Urban Farmers courses provide income and an employment source for CERES.

www.ceres.org.au
Activity Area 2: Micro Enterprise
Communities labelled as disadvantaged usually experience higher rates of unemployment. The Atherton Gardens estate residents experience higher than average levels of unemployment or underemployment (those who do not have enough income to cover their or their family’s basic needs). Micro enterprises broaden the local economy by providing local jobs and new opportunities for people who may experience barriers to other forms of employment. Currently the Community Kitchen is home to Shuki and Louisa’s Dips – a successful micro enterprise producing and selling dips at local farmers markets. The FCFC is an ideal space to provide opportunities for micro enterprise that could take the form of cooking classes, catering, a seedling nursery or workshops. This element of the FCFC can also provide some income to contribute to the overall financial sustainability of the centre.

Proposed activities may include:
- Micro enterprise mentoring – for example a cooking school enterprise
- Micro enterprise incubator – provide space for enterprises to establish themselves in a supported environment
- Linkages with BSL micro enterprise Stepping Stones program
- Facilitating start-up of enterprises such as cooking lessons, catering services or similar
- Employment opportunities in enterprises for local people

Case Study
Micro enterprise: Sorghum Sisters – Melbourne, Australia
Sorghum Sisters is a financially successful catering enterprise. It began through a need expressed by the African community in the Carlton Housing estate to find creative ways of surmounting their barriers to employment and social engagement. The initial project was funded by the now Department of Planning and Community Development (DPCD) in collaboration between AMES, Carlton Primary School and the Horn of African Communities Network (HACN). Sorghum Sisters was formed by three refugees from the Horn of Africa. Alongside catering, the Sorghum Sisters offer an accredited vocational training course in safe food handling and preparation and promoting healthy eating by proving traditional school lunches at two local primary schools. In addition to training for employment and promoting healthy eating, they are also actively engaged in their community supporting events such as Harmony Day and Cultural Diversity Week. They have also been invited to speak at conferences and local events.

www.sorghumsisters.com.au
Activity Area 3: Food Security
Many people at the Atherton Gardens Estate and in the surrounding community experience a broad range of barriers to food security such as high fresh food prices in comparison to income, social isolation, and a lack of cooking skills and nutritional knowledge. Food and nutrition insecurity not only compromises physical health, but also mental and emotional health and wellbeing resulting in increased stress. The FCFC will increase access to fresh, healthy and affordable food and education by providing a diversity of programs the address the barriers.

Proposed activities of the FCFC may include:
- Affordable fruit and vegetable box systems or co-ops (linking with Second Bite and Food Bank Victoria)
- Free or low-income community run lunches
- Urban harvest style fruit and veggie swap meet
- Cooking and gardening workshops
- Access to nutritional advice

Case Study
Food Security: St. Mary’s House of Welcome
St. Mary’s House of Welcome have an ongoing garden plot at the Atherton Gardens Community Garden with which they engage local people experiencing disadvantage in particular people affected by homelessness. In 2013-14 they expanded their gardening program to include a weekly cooking session in the community kitchen. Although St. Mary’s House of Welcome already have their own kitchen, they found that bringing people across to the FCFC space meant that they could make the direct connection between the food they were growing and the food they were cooking and eating. Also having their cooking session away from their main site meant that they experienced a more focussed session with less interruptions from other centre users. Participants were learning valuable life skills such as growing food and cooking, increasing their access to fresh food and regularly being able to get together with people and share a meal. This lunch time program was also able to work in partnership with Yarra Youth Services when they were approached about providing a lunch for a school holiday art workshop, providing an intergenerational and multi-faceted activity on that day for both the young people on school holidays and the regular cooking group from St Mary’s. www.smhos.org.au
Activity Area 4: Food Waste and Composting
Research indicates that food waste is a significant issue in our urban communities. In the City of Yarra 50% of the average household’s bin is comprised of food waste. This amount of food waste can cost up to $1000 each year (FKH, 2013). Transformation of this waste into compost through food waste and composting education offers many opportunities for community gardens and community building. The FCFC can provide a space for food waste education as well as become a Community Composting hub for the surrounding Fitzroy community. Cultivating Community is already working with the City of Yarra to address food waste via the successful Food Know How program (see case study below) and can readily build some of these activities into the FCFC site.

Proposed activities may include:
- Community Compost hub
- Composting and food waste workshops
- Volunteer opportunities to pick up food waste from surrounding cafes

Case Study
Community waste reduction and composting: Food Know How – City of Yarra, Australia
Food Know How is a collaborative program between City of Yarra and Cultivating Community, with a grant from theMetro Waste Management Group (MWMG) to fund the first round of the 18 month pilot program. Food Know How empowers household, café and office participants within the City of Yarra to actively reduce or eliminate their food waste going to landfill by:
- Menu and meal planning
- Utilising leftovers
- Tips about smart shopping
- Training resources and workshops to encourage onsite food waste recycling
- Access to subsidised compost bins, worm farms and Bokashi systems
- Access to community compost hubs and a tricycle-based collection scheme

Over 550 participating households are learning how to reduce food wastage and most are recycling food waste through composting, worm farms or Bokashi. Café food waste is picked up by cargo trikes and delivered to a range of ‘hubs’ such as the windrow at the Collingwood Children’s Farm. The compost produced is then used to improve soil fertility of community or school gardens. Food Know How is empowering the community to reduce unnecessary wastage and turning food waste into a resource for growing food locally.

www.foodknowhow.org.au
**Activity Area 5: Food System Advocacy**

There is inherent multi-generational disadvantage associated with high rise housing estates such as Atherton Gardens (NYCH, 2012). Often the root causes of food insecurity as well as poverty and inequality are unknown to those experiencing them. The FCFC will provide a place for people to increase their awareness about where their food comes from, the impacts of their food choices and the way the greater food system works. Through increasing awareness, empowerment and community networking, the FCFC can work with the local community to strive for a fairer and more resilient food system which will in turn increase community food security.

Proposed activities may include:
- Oxfam GROW sustainable food education program
- Film screenings – for example Ethical Consumer Group ‘Meal and Movie’ events
- Food System discussion group
- Hosting speakers from relevant projects/organisations

**Case Study:**

**Advocacy: Meal and movie nights - Ethical Consumer Group**

The Ethical Consumer Group has run a number of informal ‘Meal and Movie’ nights over the past six years, mostly in people’s households. These evenings provide a relaxed and social space for conversations about serious food systems issues. Discussions give people an opportunity to both unpack the systemic issues as well as share the lived experiences in our current food and political context. The evenings attracted people from all over Melbourne keen to learn more about the issues and what they can do. The FCFC has already hosted its first film screening in May 2014. Addition of a projector will enable the space to be shared with groups for future meal and movie nights.

Activity Area 6: Community Building
The Atherton Gardens Estate has been identified for social, economic and physical renewal. Due to the diversity of cultural and social needs, community cohesion not only on the estate but between the estate residents and the wider Fitzroy community is challenging. The capacity of community kitchen and community garden programs to build community connections and resilience is well documented. Community building is an overarching principle of the FCFC – it guides the vision and runs through all the centre’s activities. The current projects running in the Fitzroy Community Garden and kitchen already demonstrate the power of community food projects to bring people together and further development of food activities on the site will continue to increase community cohesion for both the residents of the Atherton Gardens Estate and wider community.

Proposed activities may include:
- Community meals (such as Open Table)
- Food co-ops
- Mother’s groups and Permaculture playgroup
- Bulk Cooking Groups (‘a la’ book clubs) – share and bulk cook a recipe each time
- Baking Group – utilising the wood fire oven in the garden
- Community composting
- Connecting individuals with other services and programs
- Volunteering opportunities (build community capacity)

Case Study
Community building: Open Table, Melbourne
Shared community meals bring people together, irrelevant of income, race, gender or social status. Open Table is a community organisation that uses surplus food to create wholesome community feasts, bringing together people from all walks of life. Open Table is based on two key ideas — food waste; and meeting the neighbours. We cook nutritious feasts using produce salvaged by hero organisations SecondBite and Foodbank, as well as surplus food from local businesses and community gardens. Open Table now facilitates a number of community meals throughout inner-Melbourne, including one on the third Sunday of each month at the FCFC.

“Coming together over a meal is a brilliant opportunity to talk about shared experiences of place, food and culture. We hope to create stronger understanding and appreciation for our diverse community, and also to provide the opportunity to strengthen social skills for everyone wishing to participate more fully in our community.”
– Open Table, 2014
Partnerships

Working together
The success of the FCFC relies upon building strong community partnerships with groups, organisations, business, government and philanthropists. With support from partners, resources are shared, costs are reduced, and greater community ownership is fostered. Furthermore, shared understanding, strength and resilience throughout both the project and the community are increased.

Through the consultation process, the following strategic partnerships and collaborations were identified:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Activity Area</th>
<th>Potential partners</th>
<th>Proposed activities</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| Education – formal and informal/youth and adult | • Hope For The Future  
• City of Yarra – Urban Agriculture  
• Co-Health (formerly NYCH)  
• Community members/volunteers  
• MECU  
• Food Know How  
• Cultivating Community  
• City of Yarra – Youth Services | • Food handling/vocational training  
• Gardening workshops  
• Diet planning/dietician advice/paediatric diet advice  
• Food preserving workshops & informal skill sharing  
• Financial literacy & food planning workshops  
• Composting workshops  
• After School Cooking Club  
• Youth cooking club |
| Micro Enterprise                       | • Melbourne Farmers Market  
• Hope For The Future  
• FCFC project manager (in collaboration with successful enterprise programs)  
• Open Food Network  
• Atherton Gardens Community Gardeners  
• KIVA | • Establishing a Farmers Market linked to the FCFC facilitating establishment of micro enterprise  
• Employment opportunities for local people in enterprises  
• Facilitating start-up of enterprises, e.g. cooking lessons or catering services  
• Hub for storing farmer produce for distribution to local cafes/restaurants  
• Seedling enterprise |
| Community Building                     | • AG Community Liaison Committee  
• Open Table & Free feed  
• City of Yarra – Community engagement (Ageing)  
• Food Know How  
• Melbourne Farmers Market  
• Community members and volunteers  
• Hope For The Future  
• Co-Health  
• Open Food Network  
• Community members/volunteers | • Provide facilities and ongoing support  
• Community meals  
• Establishing a Fitzroy Elderly Citizens hub  
• Community composting  
• Volunteering opportunities  
• Community Wood Oven Baking Group  
• Employment and training  
• Connecting individuals with other services and programs  
• Bulk buying groups/food co-ops  
• Community bulk cooking groups |
### Food Security
- Cubbies
- Second Bite/Food Bank Victoria
- Atherton Gardens Community Garden
- Open Table and Free Feed
- Open Food Network
- Community members/volunteers
- North Yarra Community Health
- Cultivating Community
- VEG

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Cubbies Free Food program</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Mobile free/affordable food market</td>
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<tr>
<td>Food growing and skill sharing</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Free or low-cost community lunches</td>
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<tr>
<td>Low cost fruit and vegetable boxes/co-ops</td>
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<tr>
<td>Urban harvest style fruit and veg swap meet</td>
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<tr>
<td>Access to nutritional advice</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cooking and gardening workshops</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### Food Waste and Composting
- Food Know How / Cultivating Community
- City of Yarra – Urban Agriculture & Sustainability
- Glenn Morris - Developer

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Community Compost hub</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Composting and food waste workshops</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### Advocacy
- AG Community Liaison Committee
- FCFC program manager
- Existing estate/community groups
- Friends of the Earth
- Ethical Consumer Groups

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Connections to State &amp; City Govts, NGO’s, Business and Community.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Sustainability/environmental awareness raising and education</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Film screenings and discussion</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hosting speakers from relevant projects/organisations</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

### Existing Relationships

**Melbourne Farmers Market Association**

The Melbourne Farmers Market Association is currently exploring the feasibility of establishing a farmers market in Fitzroy, possibly on the Atherton Gardens Estate. The MFMA are keen to ensure that this market will be accessible for people on lower incomes and experiencing disadvantage through a range of community initiatives and creative enterprises. The MFMA have been part of the FCFC’s consultation process and many possibilities of cross over and partnership have been discussed. Cultivating Community see a strong link between the FCFC and a farmers market in Fitzroy and are keen to continue dialogue to strengthen this partnership and evolve projects together. Some examples of potential initiatives include: the farmers market being an outlet for FCFC enterprises, community gardeners being able to establish a swap table or sell seedlings at the market, FCFC participants setting up a coffee stall, and shoppers being able to donate produce to FCFC programs.
Community Wood Fired Oven
The Fitzroy Community Garden has the incredible good fortune to be home to one of the famous Wood Fired Oven builder Allan Scott’s ovens. This oven was built as a project around a decade ago and although it has produced many delicious pizzas over the years for numerous community groups and activities, this fantastic resource has never really been put through its paces and used to its full capacity.

The development of the Fitzroy Community Food Centre presents an excellent opportunity to incorporate this amazing resource and really build it into the fabric of the centre and community food initiatives. Cultivating Community envision the employment of a skilled baker and wood fired oven enthusiast to assist with both providing opportunities for the community to bake but also to skill up local people to be able to use the oven as it requires some skill to build a fire and reach the desired temperature for optimum and safe cooking.

During Phase 1 of the FCFC development Cultivating Community will seek funding to develop the Community Oven Program and engage a baker. It is envisioned that we will continue to provide ongoing guidance for the community baking program and continue to integrate the use of the oven into the FCFC’s programs and activities.

The Community Garden
The FCFC will not only include the kitchen space at 125 Napier Street but will also incorporate the existing community garden. In the FCFC, the garden and the kitchen are integrally linked providing a very real experience of food from seed to plate. The Atherton Gardens Community Garden is an important place for 60 community gardeners. Within this space is an abundance of knowledge and skills about food production, composting, seed saving and most likely cooking! This is a valuable resource to be tapped into by the FCFC project worker. Engaging the gardeners in programs will also augment access to other residents and communities within the Atherton Gardens Estate.

With development of the FCFC it is imperative the gardeners continue to be included in consultation and have a sense of ownership in the project. As reported the gardeners are not currently concerned about the development of the FCFC vision and are keen to become involved in various activities.

The FCFC will include an outdoor meeting space, communal garden beds for workshops and regular activities and an area for community composting.

One new initiative is a community composting collaboration with a local developer who is redeveloping the Napier St church across the road from the FCFC. Cultivating Community are working to secure funding to purchase a $70,000 rocket composter and the local developer is keen to provide infrastructure to house the composter in the Community Garden for use by residents of the Atherton Gardens Estate and residents in the redeveloped units.
Case Study
Previous FCFC enterprise: Shuki and Louisa’s dips

Shuki and Louisa are a couple of friends who love food and wanted to start a small business making middle eastern dips from Shuki’s mum’s recipes using grains and pulses from Louisa’s dad’s farm in the Mallee. The idea was to make dips to sell at Farmers Markets across the city. Louisa heard about the kitchen space at Atherton Gardens and emailed Cultivating Community to see if they could use the space for their start up business. Keen to engage different types of users in the space from across the community, Cultivating Community agreed for the young entrepreneurs to cook in the kitchen on Friday afternoons. The couple soon acquired permission and the appropriate paperwork from council and were off and racing with their new business. As Cultivating Community were not in a position to charge Shuki and Louisa to use the kitchen space it was agreed that they would contribute back to the community as payment for use of the facility. Over that first year, Shuki and Louisa helped out at the After School cooking club which was wonderful as Louisa is a primary school teacher by trade, Shuki and the cooking club kids put on a felafel stall for the whole estate and they contributed their dips and catering to numerous community events including Open Table lunches and volunteer appreciation celebrations. As business grew, Shuki and Louisa were also able to employ a couple of women from the estate to help them with weekly preparations. Word soon got around the farmers markets too about the quality of their product and they have been featured in the Age and Delicious magazine and now sell to a number of outlets around Melbourne as well as around 5 different markets. A year later this small artisanal food business has outgrown their Friday booking in the community kitchen and have recently signed the lease to their very own kitchen in Glenroy.

“This time last year we were just getting going with our dip making business and now, just this week we signed the lease and collected the keys to our very own commercial kitchen! We are so excited!!! We got an awesome leg up in starting our business from the wonderful people at Cultivating Community. We can’t thank Peta and the others enough for the amazing help they have given us. Please check out their website to see all the incredible work they do with communities around Melbourne...”
Shuki and Louisa Facebook post May 28 2014
Design

Design and Implementation
Cultivating Community is currently engaging designers to provide a preliminary vision for the redevelopment of the FCFC space. The design is based on contributions from the community consultations and surveys, as well as incorporating ideas from other best practice models such as The Stop in Toronto. A DHS Field Services Officer was consulted to provide initial quotes for the stages of redevelopment (see below). The following provides a written overview of the redesign, of which many ideas have been incorporated into the project development plan, dependent upon funding (see pages 34-40).

Small scale improvements include:
- Installing internal blinds and external trellis for summer shading, e.g. grape vine
- Installing a dishwasher
- Fitting a microwave
- Installing additional storage cupboards
- Installing fans and a reverse-cycle air-conditioning unit
- Mounting a fixed projector and draw-down projector screen
- Fitting a second oven and stove top
- Installing a second island bench
- Installing edible espaliered walk-ways from the kitchen to the existing wood-fired oven
- Installing trellis with edible vines around the existing water tanks

Larger scale redevelopment includes:
- Doubling the boundaries of the kitchen to incorporate the space adjoining the current kitchen (currently a bike shelter) to create a dining area and office space
- Creating an outdoor classroom/dining space in the east end of the community garden
- Removing a section of the community garden fence and opening the kitchen onto the east end of the community garden via sliding glass doors
- Connecting a walk-in cool room storage to the south, accessed via a door between the kitchen and dining areas
- Composting toilet

Major development works quote:
Works required:
- Remove existing glass partition & re-install on side wall
- Infill openings to concrete piers frame floor to ceiling using 7.5mm blue board on outside wall and 10mm plaster board in side
- Supply and install new skirtings to inside floor only
- Paint new wall inside and out and floor in new room only
- Supply and install new cabinets x 7
- Remove bike racks and chainmesh fencing
- Supply and install 6 twin fluorescent lights and 2 double GPO’s

Total cost of works $22,640.00 inc. GST (As of May 2014)
Figure 1. Artist Liberty Browne’s vision of the redeveloped Fitzroy Community Food Centre.
**Project Development**

The FCFC is an ambitious project taking the Napier St community kitchen and community garden and transforming them into an integrated and dynamic hub of community food activity. Much of the development of this project will rely on gaining further funding to enable each stage to be rolled out. Funding will be sought to cover costs of project workers, program costs and site development. Currently funding has been secured for Phase 1 of the FCFC development. Phase 1 will also include seeking further funding for the next development stages.

**Phase 1: July to December 2014** - Cultivating Community recognise that Social Sustainability is one of the key outcomes of the FCFC. This time frame will see the kitchen and garden site at Napier Street start to transition into the vision that Cultivating Community has to develop the site into an integrated Community Food Centre. This stage of development will see the current kitchen activities strengthened and expanded and some initial groundwork put in for Phase 2. Funding has been secured from the Office of Housing to carry out this work over the next 6 months. A project worker will be employed 2 days per week to principally seek further funding, develop relationships with other organisations and groups who wish to run programs, maintain the current users and site and develop a program around the wood fired oven located in the garden. The worker will be targeting groups whose programs fit into the 6 activity areas identified as priorities of the centre. Work will also be carried out to identify and support tenants who are keen to develop a social enterprise idea around food. The worker will also continue dialogue with other local organisations with emerging community food projects such as the Farmers Markets Association and work towards meaningful collaborations.

See Table 2: Phase 1: June –Dec 2014, pages 35-36 for details.

**Phase 2: January to December 2015** - This phase will see the expansion of the space to include a kitchen preparation area as well as a sizeable dining room and will also involve working closely with a number of local groups to develop social enterprises. Although the FCFC will always rely on some forms of funding for its operations, the project also has enormous potential to raise some of its own funds as well as create jobs for the local community through food based social enterprises. Cultivating Community anticipate that enterprises may take the form of a cultural café, catering business or the manufacturing of a product. Cultivating Community also propose to develop part of the community garden into an outdoor classroom with areas for communal gardens that can be utilised for workshops and regular groups. With an increasing interest from across the community in food production and food preparation there is enormous potential to run workshops for both low and high income participants. In addition to skill development, these workshops can also generate some funds for the running of the food centre.

See Table 3: Phase 2: Jan –Dec 2015, pages 37-38 for details.

**Phase 3: January to December 2016** - It is anticipated that by 2016 most of the major works to the site will be complete and the FCFC will be well on its way to embodying the original vision for the centre. At this stage, much of the activities will already be established and the workers role will be to continue to support the many enterprises and projects that are part of the centre. There will be a dynamic and well developed year long program of workshops and courses and it is anticipated that a second project worker will come on board at this stage to assist with administration and enterprise development.


**Worst Case Scenario**

In the unlikely event that Cultivating Community fail in securing further funding to develop the site and see the FCFC into fruition, Cultivating Community feel confident that minimal funding can be secured to maintain the facility and offer low level support to the groups engaged to use the centre.
### Table 2: Phase 1: June – Dec 2014

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Program Phase</th>
<th>Program Elements</th>
<th>Implementation Strategy</th>
<th>Requirements</th>
<th>Timeframe – June 2014 to Dec 2014 (inc % of time required)</th>
<th>Budget</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Phase 1:</td>
<td><strong>FUNDING:</strong></td>
<td>Identify and apply for grants for following components:</td>
<td>1 worker 2 days per week</td>
<td></td>
<td>$16,045</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Secure funding</td>
<td>- Future Project worker positions</td>
<td>Additional program expenses: including equipment replacement and additions, catering for meetings/events, signage, cleaning products, travel costs for worker.</td>
<td></td>
<td>$1455</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>for next stages</td>
<td>- Future development of site</td>
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<td></td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>of project</td>
<td>- Equipment upgrades etc</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>development</td>
<td>- Community baking program</td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>- Explore Pozzible Campaign and other creative funding strategies.</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>- Explore sponsorship and donation avenues ie appliance manufacturers etc.</td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>- Project evaluation and grant acquittal</td>
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<td></td>
<td><strong>PROMOTION:</strong></td>
<td>Plan and host launch event</td>
<td></td>
<td>June-August</td>
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<td>Develop logo, signage etc</td>
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<td>June-September</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Develop and implement Social Media strategy and CC website content</td>
<td></td>
<td>Ongoing (15%)</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Generate press releases etc to attract media coverage</td>
<td></td>
<td>Ongoing (20%)</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td><strong>ENGAGEMENT:</strong></td>
<td>Engage potential kitchen users/groups/orgs</td>
<td></td>
<td>Ongoing (25%)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Engage local</td>
<td>Manage groups using kitchen space – this includes initial liaison, induction meeting and signing of user agreement and ongoing liaison.</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>groups and</td>
<td>Provide ongoing partnership support for some programs including the upcoming Café Nights events.</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>organisations to</td>
<td>Initiate programs/events where possible such as Welcome Dinners for new residents.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>use kitchen</td>
<td>Participate in Atherton Gardens Network.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>facility and</td>
<td>Work in close collaboration with DHS, Mission Australia &amp; CLC.</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>link in with</td>
<td>Work with Farmers Markets Association to integrate kitchen users (including social enterprises based in the kitchen), residents from Atherton Gardens and local gardeners into community food aspects of a Fitzroy Farmers Market.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>each other.</td>
<td>Work with Community Garden Workers to develop garden/outdoor classroom site plan and ensure community gardeners are comfortable with developments.</td>
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</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
| **SOCIAL ENTERPRISE SUPPORT** | • Support and assist interested residents from Atherton Gardens Estate and surrounds to investigate and establish social enterprise opportunities.  
• Provide ongoing assistance to social entrepreneurs to engage the local community in both employment opportunities and the product on offer. | • Ongoing (20%) |
|---|---|---|
| **OVEN PROGRAM** | • Develop guidelines and signage for oven use.  
• Create community baking opportunities  
• Once funding is secured develop training program for residents and community baking program. | • June - October  
• Ongoing  
• Subject to securing funding. (10%)  
| | | $5000 |
| **SITE DEVELOPMENT** | • Oversee next development stage:  
  - Install additional island bench  
  - Install additional cupboard space  
• Work with architect to further develop plans for site | • Subject to securing funding. (5%)  
| | | $2000 |
| **ONGOING MAINTENANCE** | • Maintain kitchen space:  
  - ensure kitchen is clean, fully equipped and that all equipment is in good working order.  
  - report all major maintenance issues to the Office of Housing  
• address any other issues that may arise including pest control, user groups storage areas etc. | • Ongoing (5%)  
| | | |
| | | Total:  
Confirmed $17500  
To be secured $7000 |
### Table 3: Phase 2: Jan – Dec 2015

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Program Phase</th>
<th>Program Elements</th>
<th>Implementation Strategy</th>
<th>Requirement(s)</th>
<th>Timeframe – January 2015 – December 2015</th>
<th>Budget (projected figures)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Phase 2:</td>
<td><strong>FUNDING:</strong></td>
<td>Identify and apply for grants for following components:</td>
<td>1 worker</td>
<td>Ongoing</td>
<td>$48,135.36</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
|               | Secure funding and sponsorship for next stages of project development | - Project worker positions  
- Development of site  
- Equipment upgrades etc  
- Social Enterprise development  
- Community Food Programs  
- Workshops for community | 3 days per week |                                    |                           |
|               |                  | Implement Pozzible Campaign and other creative funding strategies. |                       |                                        |                           |
|               |                  | Explore sponsorship and donation avenues ie appliance manufacturers etc. |                       |                                        |                           |
|               |                  | Project evaluation and grant acquittal |                       |                                        |                           |
|               | **PROMOTION:**   | Develop flyers/promotional materials etc  
Implement Social Media strategy and develop CC website content  
Generate press releases etc to attract media coverage |                       | Ongoing                                 | $1,000                    |
|               | **SOCIAL ENTERPRISE** | Identify groups who are interested in developing social enterprise  
Identify partner organisations/training providers etc  
Support groups to develop idea  
Provide ongoing support for existing social enterprises |                       | Feb to May  
Feb to May  
Ongoing |                           |
|               | **ENGAGEMENT:**  | Liaise with other potential kitchen users/groups/orgs  
Support user groups where required and actively link and connect programs to each other/other services etc.  
Manage groups using kitchen space – this includes initial liaison, induction meeting and signing of user agreement and ongoing liaison.  
Participate in Atherton Gardens Network and other relevant networks/committees etc.  
Work in close collaboration with DHS and Mission Australia.  
Work with Community Garden Workers to develop garden/outdoor classroom site plan and ensure community gardeners are comfortable with developments. |                       | Ongoing                                 |                           |
|               | **WORKSHOPS**    | Develop workshop program – some workshops will be for free and some will require payment generating some income for FCFC.  
Engage other organisations/individuals to deliver workshops  
Promote workshops  
Deliver workshops |                       | Jan to Feb  
Jan to Dec  
Feb to Dec  
March to Dec | $1,000                    |
| OVEN PROGRAM | • Create community baking opportunities  
• Once funding is secured develop training program for residents and community baking program. | • Ongoing  
• Subject to securing funding. | $5000 |
|---|---|---|---|
| SITE DEVELOPMENT | • Work with architect to further develop plans for site  
• Oversee next development stage:  
  - Development of dining area in bike shed  
  - Development of outdoor classroom area and shared garden zone  
  - Furnishings and equipment | • Subject to securing funding. | $22,640  
$10,000  
$10,000  
$1,000 |
| ONGOING MAINTENANCE | • Maintain kitchen space:  
  - ensure kitchen is clean, has cleaning supplies, is fully equipped and that all equipment is in good working order.  
  - report all major maintenance issues to the Office of Housing  
  - address any other issues that may arise including pest control, user groups storage areas etc. | • ongoing | $1,000 |

| Total:  
Program Expenses | $56,135.36 |
<p>| Site Development | $42,640.00 |
| To be secured | $98,775.36 |</p>
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Program Phase</th>
<th>Program Elements</th>
<th>Implementation Strategy</th>
<th>Requirements</th>
<th>Timeframe – January 2016 – December 2016</th>
<th>Budget (projected figures)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Phase 3</td>
<td>Worker 1:</td>
<td></td>
<td>1 worker 3 days per week plus program expenses.</td>
<td></td>
<td>$48,135.36</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>PROMOTION:</td>
<td>● Develop signage etc</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>● Implement Social Media strategy</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>● Generate press releases etc to attract media coverage</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>ENGAGEMENT:</td>
<td>● Liaise with other potential kitchen users/groups/orgs</td>
<td>Additional program expenses: including equipment replacement and additions, catering for meetings/event s, signage, cleaning products, travel costs for worker.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>● Support user groups where required and actively link and connect programs to each other/other services etc.</td>
<td></td>
<td>● June-August</td>
<td>$3000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>● Manage groups using kitchen space – this includes initial liaison, induction meeting and signing of user agreement and ongoing liaison.</td>
<td></td>
<td>● June-September</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>● Participate in Atherton Gardens Network and other relevant networks/committees etc.</td>
<td></td>
<td>● Ongoing</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Work with Community Garden Workers to develop garden/outdoor classroom site plan and ensure community gardeners are comfortable with developments.</td>
<td></td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>WORKSHOPS</td>
<td>● Develop workshop program – some workshops will be for free and some will require payment generating some income for FCFC.</td>
<td></td>
<td>● Jan</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>● Engage other organisations/individuals to deliver workshops</td>
<td></td>
<td>● Jan-Feb</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>● Promote workshops</td>
<td></td>
<td>● Ongoing</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>● Deliver workshops</td>
<td></td>
<td>● Feb-Dec</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>OVEN PROGRAM</td>
<td>● Manage and oversee program</td>
<td></td>
<td>● Ongoing</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>● Coordinate training for oven use for community members</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>● Ensure guidelines and signage is up to date and relevant</td>
<td></td>
<td>Subject to securing funding.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>SITE DEVELOPMENT</td>
<td>● Oversee any additional developments to the site.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
| **ONGOING MAINTENANCE** | • Maintain kitchen space:  
  - ensure kitchen is clean, fully equipped and that all equipment is in good working order.  
  - report all major maintenance issues to the Office of Housing  
  - address any other issues that may arise including pest control, user groups storage areas etc. | ongoing |  

| **Worker 2:** | 1 worker  
2 days per week plus program expenses. | $16,045.12 |  

| **SOCIAL ENTERPRISE** | • support social enterprise projects and groups  
• seek funding if needed  
• liaise with partner organisations/training providers/customers etc |  

| **FUNDING:**  
Secure funding for next stages of project development | • Identify and apply for grants for following components:  
  - Project worker positions  
  - Development of site  
  - Equipment upgrades etc  
  - Social Enterprise development  
  - Community Food Programs  
  - Workshops for community  
• Implement Pozzible Campaign and other creative funding strategies.  
• Explore sponsorship and donation avenues ie appliance manufacturers etc.  
Project evaluation and grant acquittal |  

| **Total Program Expenses** | To be secured | $67,180.48 |
Funding Opportunities

With funding being one of the greatest limitations to community-based projects it is projected that development of the FCFC will occur in stages as proposed in Phases 1-3 (see pages 34-40). Different stages of implementation will be funded by different sources and also enable community input into the rolling stages redevelopment. Four principal funding models will be employed to realise the FCFC vision: grants, partnerships, crowd funding and enterprise.

Grants & Philanthropy

A number of grants and foundations have been earmarked to provide funds for various stages of the FCFC development rollout. Currently Cultivating Community would auspice the funding, with guidance from the FCFC steering committee.

2014

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Grant</th>
<th>When?</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. DHS social renewal</td>
<td>July 2014</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Up to $20,000</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. City of Yarra Investing in Communities Grant</td>
<td>2015-2017</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>$25,000/year for three years</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. Sidney Myer Foundation</td>
<td>No time restriction. Notification is 3 months post application.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>$10,000-50,000</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. Helen McPherson Smith Trust</td>
<td>Post July 2014</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Up to $90,000, 2-3 years</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5. Ross Trust</td>
<td>No time restriction. 12 weeks from application</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>$30,000/year for three years</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6. Reichstein Foundation</td>
<td>Late 2014-early 2015</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>$25,000/year for up to three years</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7. Lord Mayors Charitable Fund</td>
<td>Mid-late 2014</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Up to $30,000</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8. Ian Potter Foundation</td>
<td>Late 2014-early 2015</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>$50,000-300,000 over three years</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9. SITA Community Grants</td>
<td>Mid-late 2014</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>$5,000</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>10. State Trustees Foundation Grant</td>
<td>August 2014</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>$10,000</td>
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</tbody>
</table>
2015

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Organization</th>
<th>Amount</th>
<th>Timeframe</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>11.</td>
<td>Scanlon Foundation</td>
<td>$5000-20,000</td>
<td>Early 2015</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12.</td>
<td>Medibank Community Fund Community Grants</td>
<td>$2,000-20,000</td>
<td>2015</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>14.</td>
<td>Paul Newman Foundation</td>
<td>Up to US$100,000</td>
<td>Mid 2015</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>15.</td>
<td>Australian Ethical Community Grants</td>
<td>$4,000-30,000</td>
<td>Mid 2015</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>16.</td>
<td>Crowd funding</td>
<td></td>
<td>2015</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**CASE STUDY**

**Crowd Funding: Food Justice Truck, Asylum Seeker Resource Centre – Melbourne, Australia**

Crowd funding is a contemporary approach to funding new and innovative projects. Web-based sites such as Pozible and Start Some Good facilitate the collection of money as well as assisting with promotion of the projects. In 2014 the Asylum Seeker Resource Centre raised $153,412 through the crowd funding website Start Some Good. Crowd funding enables people to access a wider range of networks mostly via online connections. A target goal is set and rewards can be offered, for example: each person who donated $100 to the Food Justice Truck is ‘rewarded’ by being able to volunteer on the truck for one day. Crowd funding is a successful approach to fundraising, networking, and capacity building.
References


Appendix 1

A NOVEMBER Week in the life of the Fitzroy Community Food Centre

MONDAY

Monday Morning: Good Food Box
The Community Food Centre Coordinator arrives bright and early to get ready for another big week of growing, cooking, learning and sharing. She puts out the sandwich boards detailing the week’s happenings then starts setting things up for the day’s programs. It’s not long before residents and volunteers start arriving – they trickle in and start laughing and chatting about their weekend and settle in for the weekly session making cups of tea and setting up trestle tables, scales and other equipment.

Jessie from the Open Food Network pulls up with a van load of produce and other growers soon follow delivering seasonal, local produce that will be packed into boxes by the expert team of residents and volunteers. SecondBite also drop off produce that will supplement the packers boxes as well as provide food for community lunches and programs throughout the week. Some of the boxes will be delivered to people in the surrounding streets for a small delivery fee by one of the tenants in the Food Centre Van, other boxes will be collected at the end of the day by neighbours and the rest of the boxes will go home with the packers whose sweat equity means their own food is significantly discounted. While the packers have been working away, a small cooking crew have been preparing lunch from some of the produce as well as other donated staples and some bits and pieces from the community garden – today the cooks are Chinese and Somali and the food reflects these contrasting and delicious cultures. Once the 80 boxes have been packed, the diverse group of friends will sit down and share lunch together.

During lunch a local resident pops into the centre to make some copies of a recipe he’s keen to try out with his Senior’s cooking group – there’s plenty of food, so he sits down to share the meal. There’s a flurry of cleaning and packing up and then everyone picks up their boxes and waves their goodbyes still plotting what they should make for lunch next week.

Monday Afternoon: Sustainable Food Systems Education Program, After School Program & Community Composting.
Now it’s time for the Centre Coordinator to prepare the space for the Sustainable Food Systems Education Program. At 1.30pm the Grade 5 students from Fitzroy Primary School make their way over to the centre where they are met by Clancy from Oxfam’s Grow Program who delivers a series of five workshops that are focused on food issues that also support the school’s curriculum. The sessions use games, tastings, and hands-on activities allowing students to learn about the many dimensions of the food system — from sustainable growing and cooking skills to social justice and biodiversity. The other primary schools in the area are booked in to participate in the program too and will each have a five week stint. The kids head back to school around 3pm and soon the three After School Program workers arrive and prepare the space for the afternoon's activities. This program happens 2 afternoons a week in partnership with the Cubbies Adventure Playground and Merri Community Health – with more of a drop in feel, here 12-16 year old kids cook, garden and receive homework support while their younger siblings are at Cubbies and other local programs. The older kids learn cooking skills which they can apply at home as many of them have the responsibility of caring for younger siblings and other family members. The space provides a supported refuge away from the hustle and bustle of home life and younger siblings.

During the afterschool program, the community composting area of the garden is open to the public and neighbours bring their buckets of compost to add to either the aero bins, worm farms or to feed the chickens. A volunteer works with some of the kids to tend the compost, bag it up for distribution and look after the chickens.

Monday Evening: Big Batch Bake
Around 6pm people start arriving for the monthly Big Batch Bake session, some folks come down stairs from the flats including a young Somali mum and a Vietnamese man and others come from the neighbouring area – all keen to learn some new recipes, try someone else’s cooking and take home a week’s worth of meals. The participants come bearing loaded up shopping bags with enough ingredients to make a meal that will feed 16 people. Everyone gets to work on their own dish and at the end of the session the meals are portioned out into containers and the participants take home double servings of each dish including their own which they will then freeze and eat at their convenience until next month’s Big Batch Bake.

**Tuesday**

**Tuesday Morning: Positive Parenting With Food**

Today the Centre Coordinator arrives and starts to prepare the space for the Positive Parenting with Food program. She sets aside the food allocated to the session sourced from SecondBite and other donations and prints off the recipes and notes sent through from the North Yarra Community Health (NYCH) dietician who will soon arrive to facilitate the session. The coordinator will assist with the session today and will also manage the photographer coming in from the Age newspaper to do a story on the centre.

Soon Mums, Dads and kids arrive and take their seats around the table. The group have organised themselves so that some of the parents participate in the cooking side of things whilst another group takes the kids out to the garden to tend to the group’s garden plot and learn about growing food from the community garden worker who will be in the garden and available to offer valuable growing advice to this budding group of gardeners. There is a sandpit nearby for the kids to play in too. The other community gardeners are usually also around and keen to offer their expertise and share seeds and excess produce. The kids take some of the garden’s offerings into the kitchen to be used in the day’s lunch.

Good smells start to waft from the kitchen and before long someone calls out that lunch is ready and the group come back together to share in the meal. The photographer has captured his images and is invited to stay and share in the lunch.

After the usual clean up commotion, the group leave and the Centre Coordinator spends some time responding to emails and phone calls before it’s time to prepare the space for the afternoon session.

**Tuesday Afternoon: Bread and Bricks Community Action Program**

At 3pm the Bread and Bricks group meet. This Community Action Program offers support and training so community members can speak out about and work for change on issues of poverty, hunger, and inadequate income. The group has regular speakers and support workers who contribute time to assist local people with everyday access issues. Some of the regulars have become peer advocates who use their own experience navigating social services to provide one-on-one assistance to others who need help accessing community resources. Local people know they can drop into this session from 4pm til 5pm to access assistance.

**Tuesday Evening: Small Business Incubator**

A couple of evenings a week the Food Centre becomes a Food Business Incubator for local small food businesses. On Tuesday evenings Dominca from the Ice-cream Embassy makes her weekly batch of ice-cream – Dominca uses the kitchen space rent free, however her payment takes the form of donating some of her ice-cream to the kitchen programs and running a couple of ice-cream making workshops a year for the general public for a fee that is donated to the Centre and goes towards the costs of running programs.

**Wednesday**

**Wednesday Morning: St Mary’s Certificate 1 Vocational Preparation Course**

It’s another big day at the Centre and this morning a group from St Mary’s House of Welcome come over to the kitchen for their Certificate 1, Vocational Preparation Course being run in partnership with the William Angliss Institute. This course provides hospitality training as well as personal skills development with the view to helping people gain employment in the industry. The course participants are particularly excited today as they will open up the kitchen to the broader estate for a café style lunch and practise the skills they have been learning in food and customer service.
Wednesday Afternoon: After School Program & Community Composting.
Just after 3.30pm the kids arrive for the after school program – there’s some delicious left overs from the St Mary’s lunch and everyone has a mini feast before beginning on homework or getting their hands dirty in the garden. The community composters also begin to arrive with a feast for the chickens and worms.

Wednesday Evening: Atherton Gardens Cooking School Afghani Dinner
Around 5pm three local Afghani women bustle into the kitchen with bags of produce and start to prepare the space for their cooking lesson and dinner that will begin at 6pm – these women are part of the Atherton Gardens Cooking School, a Social Enterprise based at the Community Food Centre. The cooking school allows the women to share their culture and cooking skills with the broader community as well as provide them with a little income and also generate funds for the Community Food Centre. By the time the participants arrive (tonight it’s a group of friends celebrating a birthday) the room has transformed into a middle eastern bazaar and the group are excited and keen to get cooking. This is a hands on experience and the guests learn the secrets of the cuisine from the women before they all sit down together to share the meal.

THURSDAY
 Thursday Morning: Food Bank
The Centre Coordinator gets out the scales and baskets and sets up the trestle tables ready for the FoodBank team to arrive. She puts out the signs and sends out a Facebook and email reminder. Soon the FoodBank truck arrives with boxes of food staples which are then set up on the tables in the kitchen. A couple of volunteers also arrive and head out into the garden to harvest fresh food for the food bank as well as sort through any donations from SecondBite from earlier in the week. The coordinator makes sure the urn is hot and lines up cups, tea bags, coffee, sugar and milk knowing that people will soon drop in to collect food but to also stay for a cuppa and a chat. Today the dietician from North Yarra Community Health is coming by to talk to people about easy and affordable meal ideas as well as information about the other services provided by the health service. It’s a sunny day and a group of people sit out in the garden enjoying a cuppa together and the sunshine.

A couple of volunteers who access the food bank are busy working in the garden and tending to the chickens and worm farms and engage some of the group in what’s happening in the garden.

Thursday Afternoon: Atherton Gardens Cooking School Catering Service
At mid-day a small group of Turkish women gather in the kitchen to prepare food for a local catering order. These women are part of the Atherton Gardens Cooking School which gets regular catering requests from local people, businesses and organisations. Today they are preparing Turkish finger food for an engagement party a few streets away.

Throughout the afternoon, growers from the community garden and surrounding neighbourhood backyards arrive to deliver their homegrown goodies, which will be used this evening for the quarterly Local Growers Dinner.

Thursday Evening: Local Growers Dinner
Just as the Turkish women are leaving to deliver their delicacies to the party, a new group of cooks arrive. Tonight is the Local Growers Dinner, a quarterly event bringing food gardeners from across the neighbourhood together to share in a feast prepared by a local chef from ingredients grown in local backyards and community gardens. The gardeners look forward to this opportunity to enjoy great food, hear from a guest speaker about a local gardening or sustainable food initiative and catch up with other friends and gardeners.

FRIDAY
 Friday Morning: Healthy Beginnings and Family Support Program and Permaculture Playgroup
Friday morning the Coordinator has a little time to take stock of the kitchen and heads to the shops to stock up on supplies, on the way she drops into the neighbouring kindergarten and puts on a load of the week’s tea towels and dish cloths in the centres washing machine and will return later in the afternoon to collect them.
The space is ready to go for the 9.30am Healthy Beginnings and Family Support session – this monthly program sees a team of social and health care professionals, settlement, family support and community workers offer a pre- and post-natal nutrition and support program for women living on low incomes. Activities include breastfeeding support, information about healthy eating and workshops on a variety of relevant topics.

At the same time, the Permaculture Playgroup takes place outside in the garden where parents with children up to 5 years old garden, play and chat together about growing food and the ups and downs of life with little kids – these families come from on and off the estate with some of the mums coming to the group via the healthy beginnings sessions which they attended when their kids were babies. The group have a stash of toys and activities as well as their own garden bed which the little kids can dig around in, pick vegies and experiment in.

Friday Afternoon:
It's mid-day and the Asylum Seeker Resource Centre bus arrives with participants and volunteers ready to cook and prepare lunch for the weekly Refugee and Asylum Seeker cooking program. This popular program has been running for the past 6 years and has seen participants take part in the St Mary’s Certificate 1 Vocational Preparation Course as well as become cooks in the Atherton Gardens Cooking School Social Enterprise. The cooking sessions provide people with an opportunity to gain cooking skills as well as pick up vital information about the types of food available in Melbourne, how to store and prepare them and also where to access affordable and free food. These lunches are noisy and raucous and always result in a delicious meal prepared from donated and homegrown produce.

Friday Evening:
Luckily it’s a balmy spring evening, as the Community Food Centre will host the first of its Summer Series Film and Pizza night. The pizza oven was lit by a volunteer earlier in the morning who has carefully tended the flames throughout the day to ensure the temperature will be perfect for pizzas come nightfall. The feature film (something foodie, relevant, with broad appeal and numerous sets of subtitles) will we screened in the garden preceded by a short talk by a local organisation about a new sustainable food initiative starting up in the area. Pizza and garden cordials will be available for punters throughout the evening. The evening is pulled together by a team of CFC volunteers and CC interns.

SATURDAY

Saturday Morning: Food Swap and Bake Oven
The oven is still hot after the Pizza crew stoked it up before they left last night’s event which means it’s ready to go for this mornings Bake Oven session taking part alongside the monthly Food swap. People from the community garden as well as other local gardeners will bring along their excess home grown produce and other goodies including jams, chutneys, seeds, plants, eggs and honey and swap it with each other for things they haven’t got growing. Others will bring along pre prepared but uncooked loaves of bread, spanakopitas, pastries and other goodies to bake in the oven both to share and take home, and of course there will be another pizza making session.
This morning will also provide further opportunity for local residents to bring along any food waste to add to the compost system or feed the chooks – composting volunteers will be on hand to offer assistance and tend the system.

Saturday Afternoon: Flavour Exchange
Later in the day the Flavour Exchange mob will arrive making the most of any left over food from the morning’s swap as well as conducting a preserving session using SecondBite seconds, that is rescued fresh produce that has gone a bit soft and won’t be any good to eat fresh but is perfect for making jams, sauces or other preserves. Steve and Adam run the show together with a keen group of helpers and newbies eager to learn the lost art of preserving food. These sessions create a welcoming and warm atmosphere with music and cups of tea and plenty of drop-ins curious about what they are cooking up in there.

SUNDAY

Sunday Morning: Gardening Workshop
It’s a perfect low 20s spring morning and the garden is bursting with vibrancy and abundance. Cam from Cultivating Community arrives with a travel cup of coffee he picked up on his way to the garden from a local café where he also
picked up their buckets of food scraps to give the garden’s chickens. Cam will be running a workshop in the garden this morning, today’s topic being “Growing Food in Small Spaces”. Today’s session is part of a series of workshops that Cultivating Community runs in partnership with Burnley Horticultural College over Spring and Summer for urban food gardeners. The workshops attract people from across Melbourne and the workshop fees will go towards the running of the CFC. A couple of sponsored spaces are offered to interested people on low incomes.

**Sunday Afternoon: Open Table Community Lunch**
As the gardening workshop is wrapping up, the volunteers from Open Table arrive with boxes of donated food from local cafes and SecondBite. Each month the team from Open Table create a fantastic feast for anyone who would like to share in the meal from donated and rescued food. These lunches have become a local institution and ‘not to be missed’ event for estate tenants, rooming house lodgers and local neighbours alike. The word is definitely out and the feast seems to be getting bigger and bigger each time. Luckily, the donations keep rolling in from local food businesses, gardeners and organisations.
Appendix 2

Fitzroy Community Food Centre – Organisations survey

Hello! Firstly, thank you for taking the time to participate in this survey – your answers will be a valuable contribution to the development of this innovative community food project. Cultivating Community is currently exploring the feasibility of a community food centre at the Atherton Gardens Estate in Fitzroy to be located at the existing community garden and kitchen space. The aim of the centre is to be a thriving hub of integrated community food activity for the entire local community delivered in partnership with local groups, organisations and businesses.

Imagine a week in the life of the Fitzroy Community Food Centre …
• Community and school cooking and gardening programs
• Small local enterprise, including catering and cooking classes
• Community produce markets
• Wood-fired oven baking groups
• Co-ops and food swaps
• Vocational education and training linkages
• Food waste and composting education
• Community food advocacy evenings

If you would like more information or to give more feedback, please email neesh@cultivatingcommunity.org.au

1. What do you think contributes to a successful community food program? List any examples you know.

2. When you think of the Atherton Gardens and surrounding community, can you identify any:
   a. gaps in the community food system?
   b. specific needs?

When answering the following questions keep in mind:
- community development
Fitzroy Community Food Centre

- education
- micro enterprise
- food security
- food waste
- advocacy

Also think about both food and non-food based linkages.

3. What images / visions / activities do you connect to the Fitzroy Community Food Centre?

4. Do you have any suggestions of community collaborations that could connect with the Fitzroy Community Food Centre?

5. Could you see yourself or a group you are involved with using the FCFC space? If yes, how?

6. Please tell us what type of organisation you are from. This space is also for anything else you have to add including funding/grant suggestions, design for the space ... THANK YOU!
Appendix 3

**Fitzroy Community Kitchen Centre**
May 2014

1) What is your age?
   a. Under 25
   b. 25-35
   c. 36-60
   d. 60+

2) Which of the following best describes your current household?
   a. Single
   b. Single parent
   c. 2 or more adults, no children
   d. 2 or more adults with children

3) Do you have a current health care card?
   a. Yes
   b. No

4) How much is your household’s fortnightly income?
   a. Less than $200
   b. $201-400
   c. $401-600
   d. $601-800
   e. $801-1000
   f. Greater than $1000

Continued over page ...

5) What activities would you be interested in participating in at the Fitzroy Community Food Centre?
   Tick/circle more than one
a. Gardening workshops
b. Cooking classes to increase cooking skills
c. Cooking workshops, e.g. preserving, fermenting, bread making, etc
d. Community meals
e. Food related business/enterprise
f. Employment and training pathways
g. Food bank
h. Food co-op, e.g. sustainable fruit and veg box, bulk dry goods
i. Food swaps
j. Community composting
k. Baking group – wood fire pizza oven
l. Volunteering opportunities
m. Community café
n. Pop-up multicultural restaurant/café
o. Connecting with local services, e.g. health services, dieticians, etc.
p. Food issues – speakers, films, discussion, etc.

6) Any other comments?