



**ASHEVILLE BUNCOMBE  
FOOD POLICY COUNCIL**

The Asheville Buncombe Food Policy Council (ABFPC) was formed in 2011 out of a recognition by local advocates and policymakers that food insecurity is an urgent problem in Asheville and Buncombe County that has profound effects on the health and wellbeing of city and county residents.

At that time, a survey by Tyson Foods, Inc. listed North Carolina as the second most food insecure state in the nation, and another survey named Asheville as the nation's 6th most food insecure metropolitan area.

ABFPC functions as an umbrella organization seeking to bring together non-profit organizations, government entities, individual citizens, and food industry leaders to identify and prioritize food policy and advocacy issues.

- ❖ ***Our mission*** is to identify, propose and advocate for policies, financial appropriations, and innovative solutions to improve and protect our local food system in order to advance economic development, social justice, environmental sustainability, and community resiliency.
- ❖ ***Our vision*** is that all residents of Buncombe County have access to and the option to cultivate and prepare nutritious food within a resilient and sovereign foodshed that sustainably harvests and conserves farmland, forests, and water resources, sustains our population, collaborates with neighboring counties, and ensures a thriving agriculture-related economy.



# Context of Work



Asheville and Buncombe County are often included in national “best of” lists. The growing local food movement and burgeoning, innovative dining and beer scene in the region has even led Asheville to be branded as “Foodtopia” by many.

However, this region also has the unwelcome distinction of making it onto the “top ten” list of most food insecure communities in the nation. A 2013 [report](#) by the Food Research and Action Center ranks the Asheville Metropolitan Statistical Area as the ninth hungriest city in the nation, with more than 1 in 5 (21.8%) of residents experiencing “food hardship.” That same report ranked North Carolina as the tenth hungriest state in the nation. This is a call to action for city government, local non-profits, and our community at large to come together to address the root causes of this inequity through policy, advocacy, and innovative programming.

Fortunately, Asheville and Buncombe County are home to a tremendous wealth of businesses, individuals and organizations who care very deeply about our food and farms. The “support system” for a thriving, community-based food system exists here. It is our responsibility to prioritize cross-sector planning and collaboration which connect the dots between policy, programming, neighborhood, family, and community initiatives and builds a strong and resilient food system. The City of Asheville is already at the forefront of establishing supportive partnerships that have laid the foundation for this important work. Through the adoption of the 2013 Food Action Plan and its revision in 2017 along with the careful inclusion of food in the city’s sustainability plan, Asheville is poised to be a regional model for municipal-leadership in food systems improvement.

Our work at ABFPC focuses on bringing people together to expand the scope of our collective work to address the big picture of systems and policy change. Together we advocate for city and county engagement in and support of community-driven food systems improvements.

# Food Policy Councils – *what are they anyway?!*

Not totally sure what a Food Policy Council is? Below are some definitions and images to help you better understand the overall function and purpose of Food Policy Councils (FPC's) and where they are in North Carolina. Each council is uniquely structured and relies on their own community to determine priorities and operations, but in general, FPC's work across sectors to promote resilient food systems through coalition work in advocacy and policy development.

By bringing together key community, municipal, and private industry stakeholders, Food Policy Councils create space to develop innovative system support to improve and enhance community health, food access, natural resources, economic development and production agriculture. Striving for community control and meaningful input in food policy development, FPC's bring together diverse voices and program actors across the food system to develop a unified vision for whole system improvement to benefit all the community's citizens.



Many people in different sectors work to address issues that intersect with food.

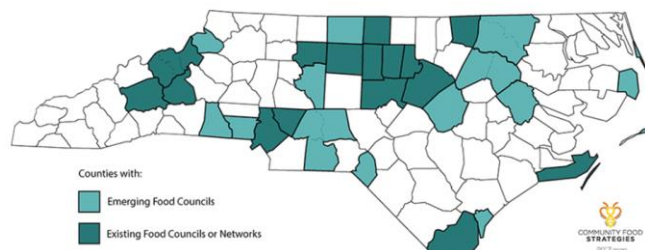
Usually not one group exists to tell the story of the food system as a whole. That's what food councils can do.



Councils provide a shared way of thinking about the *whole* food system by including voices from many different sectors.

Food councils put the pieces together and tell the story of the whole food system. \*

## Food Policy Councils in North Carolina



\* Image and language courtesy of Community Food Strategies: <https://communityfoodstrategies.com/>

# ABFPC Organizational Structure

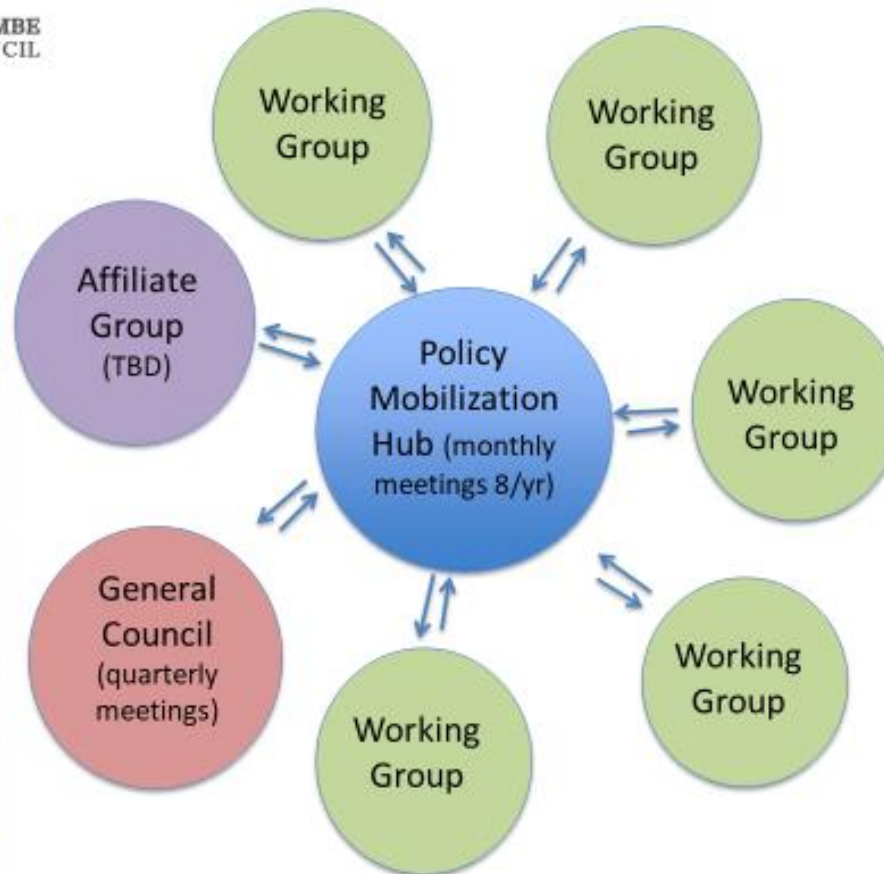


PMH determines ABFPC policy agenda and priorities and supports active working groups through cross-pollination and strategic action planning.

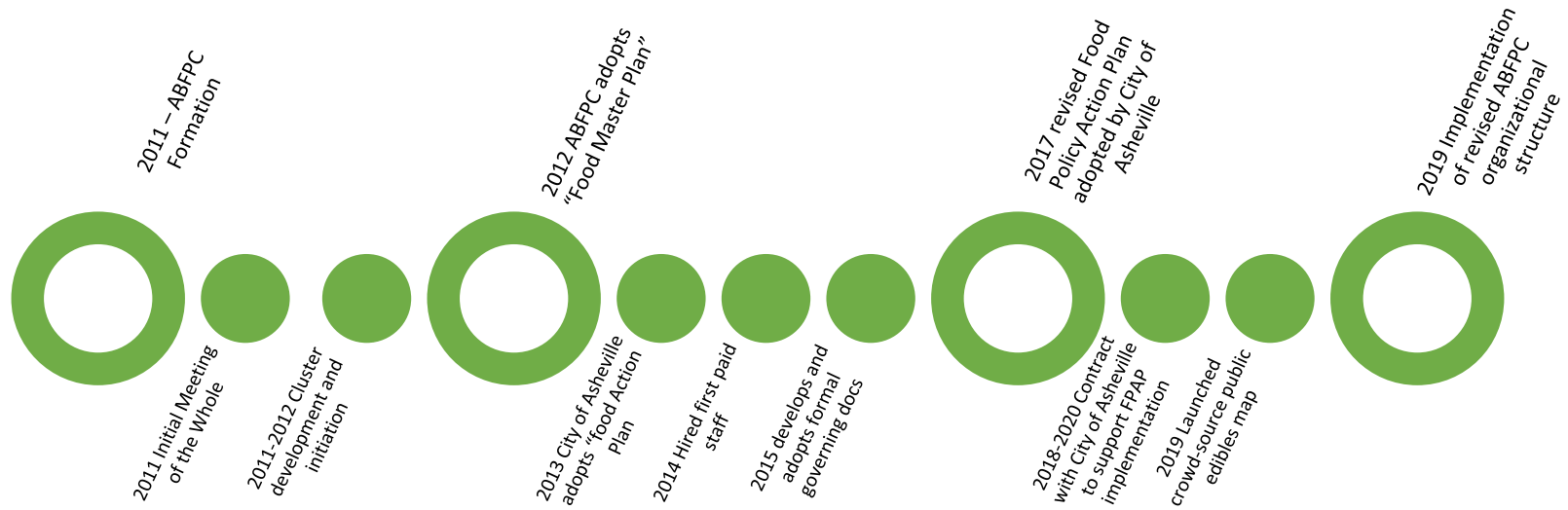
GC sets overall strategic direction, evaluates organizational direction and impact, and oversees governance and HR..

WG are action-oriented and issues based. WG advocate for better food policies and systems in the area, and exist to accomplish specific goals. WG's are dynamic and can form and disband as goals are met.

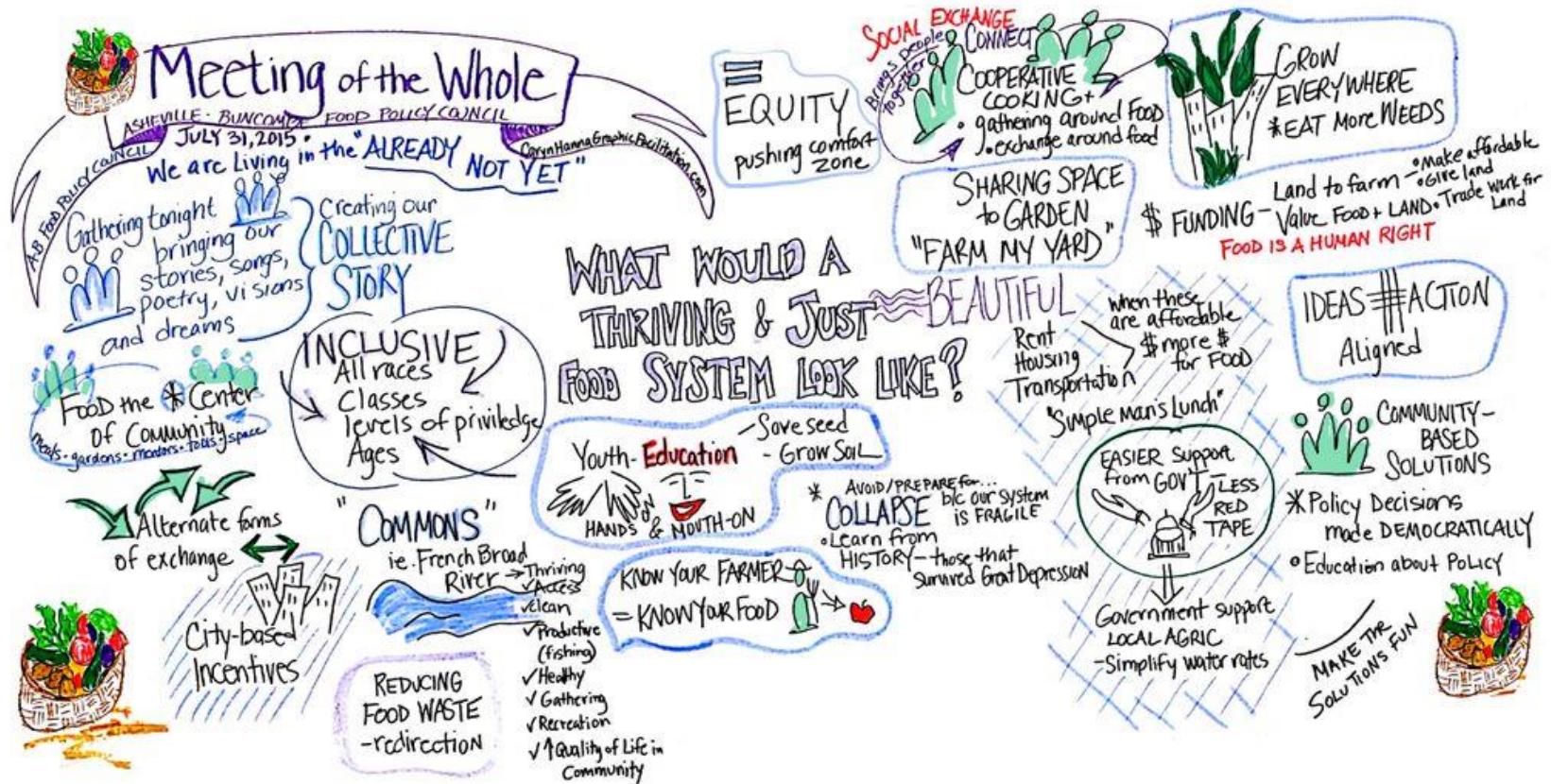
AG is a group of community leaders passionate and knowledgeable about food systems and policies. More info coming soon.



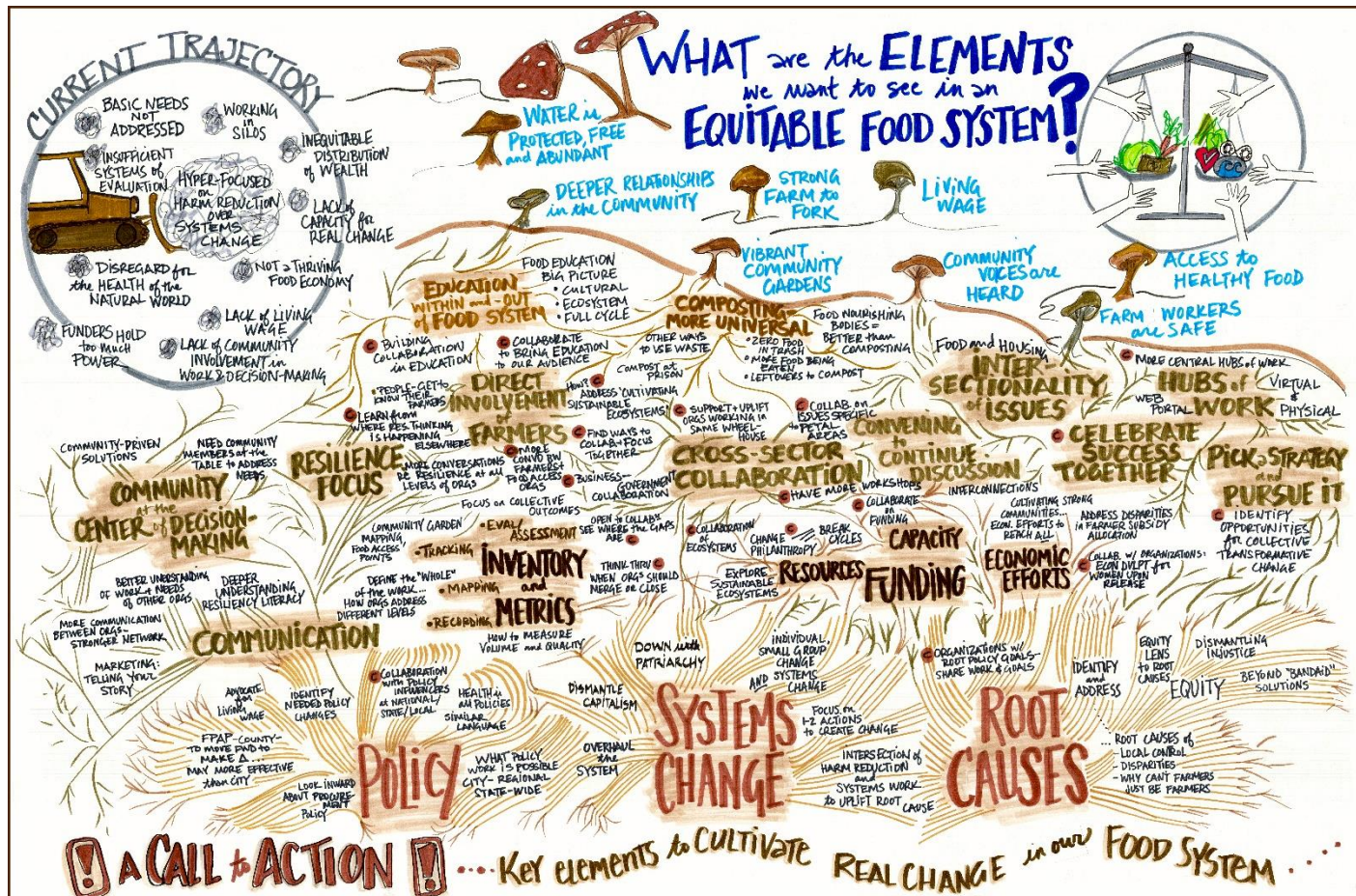
# ABFPC timeline



*Meetings of the whole* – bring people together to provide updates current work, encourage engagement, and build community.



**Resilience convenings**- community think tank events to educate, engage, and elevate our individual, organizational, and institutional work to the food systems level.



*Food Waste Solutions Summit(s)* - regional gatherings to disrupt food waste issues facing our communities, expand networks, and inspire dynamic solutions

# Food:Waste SOLUTIONS<sup>WNC</sup>

*Asheville Edibles Crowd Source Map*- An [interactive map](#) to document and share the edible resources in our community.





## How to get involved

1. Attend a Policy Mobilization Hub meeting to see what we're up to! Check out meeting details [HERE](#).
2. Join an existing [Working Group](#) or propose a new working group idea to the Policy Mobilization Hub.
3. [Follow us on Facebook](#)
4. Check out our website: <http://www.abfoodpolicy.org/>

