Milan Pact Awards 2025	**AUSTIN**						
Country	United States of America						
Population	1,025,668						
Title of practice	Austin/Travis County Food Plan						
Subtitle	A community-powered roadmap for a just, climate-resilient, and locally rooted food system in Central Texas						
MUFPP Recommended Action	4. Develop or revise urban food policies and plans and ensure allocation of appropriate resources within city administration regarding food-related policies and programmes; review, harmonize and strengthen municipal regulations; build up strategic capacities for a more sustainable, healthy and equitable food system balancing urban and rural interests. – GOVERNANCE						
Starting year	2023	**Ending year (if any)**			☐ already submitted in the past		
Actors and stakeholders' involvement	**Municipal departments**	**Other public institutions**	**NGOs CSOs**	**Research centres**	**Private sectors**	**International organizations**	**Other**
	13	4	187+	6	50+	2	
Budget	The total budget was € 525,000, funded by American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA) dollars. Funding supported consultants, workforce staffing, equity training, community engagement, logistics, and evaluation for the Austin-Travis County Food Planning process.						
Brief description	The Austin-Travis County Food Plan is a community-driven roadmap for a more equitable, resilient, and sustainable local food system. Led by the City of Austin's Office of Sustainability in collaboration with Travis County, the Plan was developed in response to long-standing food access disparities, climate challenges, and the need for stronger regional coordination. Through robust community engagement, including a Community Advisory Group and public input sessions, the Plan identifies nine goals and over 90 strategies to guide action. Our role as municipalities was to convene diverse partners, fund and facilitate the planning process, and embed equity and climate resilience at the core of the Plan. Beneficiaries include residents across urban and rural communities, with a focus on historically underserved populations. Key objectives included centring community voices, aligning policies across jurisdictions, and creating actionable steps for improving food access, supporting local farms, reducing food waste, and building economic opportunity. Key lessons learned include the importance of investing time in building trust with community partners, addressing the intersections of food, health, and environment, and maintaining flexibility to adapt strategies over time. The Plan's adoption by Austin City Council and Travis County Commissioners Court marks a major milestone toward a just and resilient food future for the region.						

Innovation	The Austin-Travis County Food Planning process represents a first-of-its-kind effort in Central Texas to develop a comprehensive, community-driven roadmap for a resilient, equitable local food system. Funded by American Rescue Plan Act, the food plan addresses post-pandemic vulnerabilities by centring historically excluded communities throughout the planning process. Key innovations include the creation of Food and Land Circles, culturally grounded engagement spaces where community members discussed and shaped priorities; embedding community leadership through a Community Advisory Committee and Issue Area Groups with a compensation model; and developing the first supply chain vulnerability assessment to inform action and get input from the private sector. Equity was embedded from the outset, with accommodations for language access, childcare, and transportation. Staff also developed a State of the Food System Report that helped ground participants in a shared understanding of the local food system highlighting key food system sectors, data, trends, challenges, recent policy changes, and indicators. By pairing traditional food systems research with civic training and co-governance principles, the process broke down systemic barriers and empowered diverse residents to co-author the plan. As a result, it sets a new regional model for food system transformation that responds to racial equity, climate resilience, and local economic development simultaneously.
Impact	The Austin/Travis County Food Plan delivers measurable social, environmental, and economic impacts aligned with the Milan Urban Food Policy Pact. Social Impact: Over 3,625 people participated—many from low-income, immigrant, youth, senior, and BIPOC communities. More than 50 leadership roles were compensated. Equity measures such as childcare, transportation, and language access supported inclusive engagement. All nine goals address social impact, with 25–30 strategies advancing inclusion, food access, education, workforce equity, and governance. Environmental Impact: Strategies promote regenerative agriculture, farmland protection, and a 20% food waste reduction by 2030. Key initiatives include composting infrastructure and soil restoration. About 20–25 strategies focus on GHG reduction, food waste diversion, and regenerative practices. Economic Impact: Thirty-two strategies support economic development through job creation, farmer viability, institutional procurement, and cost savings. A dozen more provide indirect benefits. We are tracking progress across all 61 strategies via a public Dashboard—nearly 40% are already underway. This Dashboard is accessible to policy makers, partners, and community alike which allows for increased accountability, transparency, and collaboration. Explore the data at centraltxfoodsystem.org and Food Plan Dashboard: https://austin-travis-county-food-plan-austin.hub.arcgis.com/pages/get-involved
Inclusion	The Austin-Travis County Food Planning process takes a holistic, systems-based, equity-centred approach. Governance: Inclusive structures like the Community Advisory Committee and Issue Area Groups shared decision-making across community members, nonprofits, farmers, businesses, researchers, and government departments. Sustainable Diets and Nutrition: Strategies expand access to healthy, culturally appropriate food through local procurement, farmers markets, and improved community-driven food retail. Social and Economic Equity: The plan invests in BIPOC farmer land access, community food hubs, and targeted food security efforts in historically marginalized neighbourhoods. Food Production: It advances urban agriculture, regenerative farming, and farmland preservation across Austin and Travis County by prioritizing equitable land access, technical assistance, and financial resources for historically marginalized farmers. Food Supply and Distribution: Strengthening local supply chains through aggregation, food hubs, and infrastructure builds resilience. Food Waste: Strategies support prevention, surplus recovery, composting, and circular economy innovation. The process engaged over 3,525 stakeholders from nonprofits, government, health, education, private sector, and grassroots groups. It operated across multiple territorial levels, reaching urban neighbourhoods and rural communities to ensure countywide inclusion and impact.