



Middlesex London
Food Policy Council

Annual Report 2024



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Introduction

2024 was a year of changes for the [Middlesex London Food Policy Council](#) (MLFPC). We had a significant shift in our Executive Committee, completed some governance changes, and, with support, improved our internal structures with a focus on actioning. After completing all four phases of the Multi-phase Assessment of Community Food Security in Middlesex London, we had to ask the question “what now?”. This prompted us to do some internal reflection and explore how we as a council could be in the best position to execute our recommendations and support the community. This year marked the end of our [2022-2024 strategic plan](#). We did a lot of work on the strategic priority “Building Council Engagement and Capacity” through the addition of our Food Systems Facilitator and Project Enhance MLFPC. We also dedicated some more resources to our Communications committee, helping fulfill our strategic priority of “Become a Trusted Voice Regarding our Food System”. As we head into 2025, we are excited to see the launch of this action-phase and continue to work towards our strategic goals.

Member News

This year, we saw the retirement of our long-time RD Coordinator and co-founder, Ellen Lakusiak. Ellen had been with the council since the very beginning, being a driving force in our ongoing success. Ellen was instrumental in fostering collaboration and engaging partners across Middlesex and London to create a healthier, more sustainable local food system.

Ellen shared that she felt privileged and truly pleased to witness the Middlesex London Food Policy Council come to life and to be a part of it. She recognized that none of it would have been possible without the passion and determination of many dedicated Middlesex London residents, who collaborated to build the organization. Ellen looks forward to continuing her support of MLFPC in a volunteer capacity, as she firmly believes this work will strengthen and enhance the resilience of the local food system. In her transition out, we welcome our new Middlesex-London Health Unit RD Coordinator, Ginette Blake. Ginette is passionate about exploring how just and equitable food systems connect us with our community and protect the environment. We are excited to have her expertise, dedication, and leadership on the MLFPC.



Ellen Lakusiak



Ginette Blake

Member News Continued

This year, we also added a new staff member - our Food Systems Facilitator, Kathy MacKay. Kathy is a registered dietitian with experience in healthcare and academia. Kathy and her role bring a new and exciting change to the council in strengthening council operations and community engagement, aligning with our strategic priorities. Kathy supports council administration, including record-keeping, agenda preparation, and leading the Communications Committee. She has helped build strategy and capacity in communications by recruiting volunteers, increasing original content, and expanding outreach. Another focus of her role has been enhancing public engagement within our committees and working groups. She is collaborating with the council to create meaningful opportunities for community involvement. Beyond this, she has been actively building relationships across the local food system, strengthening connections to advance the council's mission. We are excited to see how Kathy and her role will continue to uplift and enhance the MLFPC.



Member News Continued

Lastly, we saw the transition of our Chair, Janan McNaughton (Dean), and Vice Chair, Jose Medina, welcoming two new members to take their place in 2025 - Keisha Joseph (Chair) and Andrew Fleet (Vice Chair).

Keisha and Andrew both have a passion for food security, food literacy, and our local food system. Keisha discovered her passion for community nutrition and policy while completing her degree in Nutrition and Dietetics at The Brescia School of Food and Nutritional Sciences (formerly Bresica University College). She is currently the Food Program Coordinator at Indwell where she works to improve the food security of those experiencing homelessness, mental illnesses, and disabilities. Through her work with the council, she hopes she can help improve food security initiatives and opportunities for all those in the London and Middlesex region. Andrew is the co-founder and Executive Director of Growing Chefs! Ontario, a London based charity with a mission to change the way people learn about and develop healthy relationships with food. Andrew is an advocate for the advancement in food literacy and has worked with the Ontario Ministry of Education to help develop learning outcomes related to food literacy and food systems. Keisha and Andrew have served on the council as members for the last two years and are excited to help usher in this era of action. Janan will continue to support the Executive Committee in the Past Chair role and Jose will continue to support the council as a member.



Member News Continued

Janan McNaughton (Dean), Chair from 2022-2024



Jose Medina, Vice Chair from 2022-2024



Keisha Joseph, Chair as of Jan 2025



Andrew Fleet, Vice Chair as of Jan 2025



Governance

Project Enhance MLPFC

At the beginning of this year, we enlisted the consultation services of Cox & Co. to help us with some internal governance work - this was called Project Enhance MLPFC. As a council, we completed two sessions focusing on capacity-building, mapping the work ahead of the council while working with the Multiphase Assessment of Community Food Security (MACFS), and firming up an annual work plan. The first session focused on Purpose-Driven Leadership. This had us review: our purpose, mission, and values, begin prioritizing the MACFS recommendations, and begin to draft an annual council action plan. Through this session, we were able to determine our purpose revolving around three key areas of work: knowledge mobilization, advocacy and community building. We also determined our priority recommendations for the next two years. Year 1 will prioritize recommendations one, two, three, four, nine, and 11, and Year 2 will prioritize recommendations five, six, seven, eight, and 10. The second session focused on Capacity-building and Organizational Strategy Execution. Through this session, we determined who MLPFC does this work for, with, and why. We identified this through the lens of our strategic pillars and previously determined purpose. We plan to use this work to help guide the development of our new strategic plan and kickstart a year of action.

[View Cox & Co Report](#)

Governance Continued

Terms of Reference

The MLFPC 2017 Terms of Reference (TOR) had been in place since the inception of MLFPC. Following the consultation with Cox & Co., the Governance Committee met frequently in the late summer and fall to review and revise the original TOR. An equity, diversity and inclusion lens was taken and is reflected in the new “Guiding Principles” section which was formerly called “Values”. A land acknowledgement was included to demonstrate our commitment to Truth and Reconciliation. The new TOR reflects the structural changes made to MLFPC in 2024, resulting in significant changes to the membership section and includes the description of the full time Food Systems Facilitator. It was determined this year that MLFPC should consist of a minimum of 9 members and a maximum of 15 members. Four options for membership composition are now included. In addition, the “Activities” section is now called “Scope of Activities” reflecting the broadening scope of actions taken on by MLFPC. The TOR is set to be reviewed at a minimum frequency of every three years.

[View Terms of Reference](#)

Finances

The London Food Bank (LFB) acts as the Trustee for the MLFPC. The MLFPC has continued to explore sustainable funding this past year. MLFPC contracted a consultant to navigate governance fundamentals and revisit the structure and function of MLFPC, as well as set out to action the recommendations from the MACFS (2023). A full-time Food Systems Facilitator was hired on an 18 month contract this fall. The remaining funds from the City of London Food Security Funds were utilized.

Table 1. Food Bank Funds Financial Overview

Income	Actual	Budget
Food Bank Funds	\$10,000.00	
Expenses	Actual	Budget
Event	\$520.19	\$1,500.00
Recognition Placement	\$0.00	\$250.00
Training	\$0.00	\$250.00
Marketing/Communications	\$242.25	\$500.00
Supplies	\$0.00	\$500.00
Website	\$901.56	\$2,000.00
Facilitation Sessions	\$3,955.00	
Sponsorship	\$0.00	\$1,000.00
Memberships	\$275.00	\$250.00
Contingency	\$0.00	\$3,750.00
Total Food Bank Expense	\$5,894.00	\$10,000.00
Funds Remaining	\$4,106.00	

Finances Continued

Table 2. City of London Food Security Financial Overview

Income	Actual	Budget
City of London Funds	\$100,000.00	
Expenses	Actual	Budget
Phase 1: Updating The 2016 Community Food Assessment, Community Discussion and Consultation (Jan2021-Dec2022)	\$46,221.39	\$46,221.39
Environmental Scan (December 2022- May2023)	\$10,000.00	\$10,000.00
Phase 2: of Community Discussions (Jan2022-Dec2022)	\$10,542.42	\$10,542.42
Phase 4: Explore Framework for Regional Agrifood-Network (Jan2022- Sept2023). Included facilitated sessions.	\$33,236.19	\$30,285.34
Total City of London Food Security Funds Expense:	\$100,000	\$97,049.15
Funds Remaining	\$0	



Conclusion

Moving forward, the Middlesex London Food Policy Council is committed to taking action with a heavy focus on our strategic priorities. With a new team and some new members, we are confident in our ability to work toward these goals and have a positive impact on our local food system.

