



DEEPEN OUR *impact*



AKRON-CANTON REGIONAL


**FOOD
BANK**

A STRATEGIC PLAN FOR OUR FUTURE



GROWING *together*

The Akron-Canton Regional Foodbank is committed to providing food to our neighbors facing hunger. The challenges of the past few years launched us in new directions and caused us to respond in ways we never thought possible.

Because of the pandemic, your Foodbank experienced 10 years of innovation in two short years to ensure we were meeting the urgent needs of our community. This was an important moment to pause, reflect and set the stage for our work ahead. So, we engaged in meaningful dialogue with families receiving food, hunger-relief partners, volunteers, donors, community leaders and other nonprofits in the community to collaboratively develop a new strategic plan that moves us closer to our vision of a thriving community free of hunger.

Time and again during these conversations, we heard that the Foodbank not only rose to the challenge during the pandemic, but it surpassed expectations. The foundation is strong. Moving forward, we should strive to **DEEPEN OUR IMPACT.**

our mission statement:

Lead a collaborative network that empowers people to experience healthy and hunger-free lives. We distribute food to feed people and we advocate, engage and convene our community in the fight to end hunger.

OUR Neighbors

Each person the Foodbank serves has a unique set of circumstances. It's important to us to stay connected with our neighbors to determine the specific food they need, how best to get it to them, and to ensure their experience accessing charitable food is one that maintains their dignity and respect. We will **deepen our impact** for our neighbors by deepening our relationship with them.

To best serve our neighbors, the Foodbank will:

- Listen intently to the people we serve and cater to their specific needs, personally and geographically, by soliciting and addressing feedback
- Renew its focus on wellness and nutrition by evaluating and accommodating food needs related to nutrition and culturally appropriate products, and expanding partnerships providing services beyond food
- Celebrate resilience and seek to reduce stigma related to the utilization of the charitable food network and continuously improve the neighbor experience

The **people** we serve are the **beating heart** of **everything** we do. They are the reason we exist. Their **health, happiness and success** drive what we do and how we do it.



OUR Communities

One of the challenges – and opportunities – the Foodbank faces is that each of its eight counties is unique. Some are densely populated, while others are predominantly rural. There is no “one size fits all” approach. The Foodbank needs to be nimble, flexible and creative to meet the needs of its diverse service area. As **we deepen our impact** throughout our geographical footprint, the organization must forge deeper collaborations, maximize shared infrastructure, expand community connection points and leverage its scale to better serve its region.

To connect with each community more fully, the Foodbank will:

- Have an authentic, vibrant and open two-way connection with each county in our service area
- Increase its advocacy efforts by developing an outreach strategy for local, state and federal elected officials
- Strengthen relationships with other social service and community organizations to garner greater support and participate in coalitions that advocate for neighbors facing hunger

Whether rural or urban, rich in resources or struggling to meet basic needs, we **owe every community** we serve a **consistently high-quality experience.**





OUR Investors

Our work is enabled by the **extraordinary generosity** of our investors in the form of **food, money and time.**

The Foodbank is grateful for the individuals, organizations, corporations and foundations who choose to support local hunger relief through contributions of their time, food and financial resources. We are the community's food bank – they support us persistently, this work and our neighbors facing hunger. We couldn't do this work if it weren't for them. The Foodbank vows to never take these investors for granted, but instead strives to **deepen our impact** with these essential partners.

To create a deeper connection with our stakeholders, the Foodbank will:

- Cultivate deeper relationships with the companies that donate food
- Grow the endowment to ensure continued financial stability for the future
- Strengthen relationships with financial supporters to ensure they understand the ongoing need for support
- Celebrate and engage the Foodbank's army of volunteers by ensuring they feel loved and appreciated

To accomplish our goals, we must continue to build a best-in-class team of employees who are proud of – and driven by – our mission.

FOR OUR Foodbankers

Foodbankers go about their important work with a sense of duty, and everything is done with kindness, respect and professionalism. Through the years, the Foodbank has built an extraordinary team, from senior leadership to the people serving on the front lines. The Foodbank wants its employees to feel they are a part of an organization with a noble mission; but that it's also a place to build a career and develop skills that will benefit them throughout their lives. The Foodbank strives to be a place where people do good, feel rewarded and have fun.

To deepen our impact for the community and continue cultivating the Foodbank Family culture, the Foodbank will:

- Improve staff retention, connection and wellness by creating a culture that drives engagement and joy
- Invest in Foodbankers through professional development opportunities and creating a mentorship program
- Hone its recruitment strategies and improve messaging of our employee value proposition – few employers offer the opportunity to impact so many people in such a meaningful way
- Continue building a staff that reflects the communities served by the organization



OUR Foodbank

Our physical locations and the manner in which we run them must continue to enable our responsiveness, agility and commitment to innovation.

For more than 40 years, your Foodbank has faithfully served the community. We will continue to **deepen our impact** by investing in the organization and continuing our legacy of efficient operation and high-quality service. As the Foodbank looks to the future, it must reflect on the organization's staff structure, physical presence, how it engages employees, and its commitment to evolving with the ever-changing business, economic and environmental climates.

To create an organization that will continue to operate effectively for many years to come, the Foodbank will:

- Develop a long-term environmental sustainability plan connected to operations
- Enhance the Foodbank's information technology infrastructure and increased use of data analytics
- Update and review its disaster response plan annually and ensure preparedness of its hunger-relief network
- Complete the expansion project of the Main Campus in Akron

AKRON-CANTON REGIONAL
FOODBANK



350 Opportunity Pkwy

AKRON-CANTON REGIONAL FOODBANK



1365 Cherry Ave NE

FOOD AND RESOURCE CENTER



INSIDE EACH OF US

is a

Portrait



OF OUR IDEAL SELVES.

We spend our lives seeking to realize that ideal —

FALLING SHORT, REFOCUSING, TRYING AGAIN,

ASPIRING *Still!*



The same is true of our Foodbank



as we seek to realize our vision of a **THRIVING** community

Free of Hunger.

-DAN FLOWERS
President and CEO
Akron-Canton Regional Foodbank



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