



The Hat Food Movement

NOTES FROM
PLANNING DAY

June 13, 2013

OUR FUTURE...
OUR PURPOSE...

(Developing a Vision and Mission)

Prepared By:

Karen Blewett

Community Development Unit

Alberta Culture

Alberta

Recap of Planning Day:

The purpose of “The Hat Food Movement” (HFM) Planning Day on June 13, 2013 was to discuss the purpose and future direction of the HFM. With the assistance of a Community Development Officer from Alberta Culture’s Community Development Unit, community members interested in the HFM were able to participate in facilitated discussion around:

1. **Our Purpose:** Why do we exist? (Purpose / Mission)
2. **Our Future:** Where do we want to be in the long-term? (Vision)
3. **Next Steps:** Where do we go from here? “So What?”

The information contained within this document serves as the raw data notes from the planning meeting that will assist the Hat Food Movement in developing and implementing the “foundational” elements of a Strategic Plan (including the vision and mission).

1. OUR FUTURE- Where do we want to be?

Visioning is a critical role of any organization or group. Vision describes the desired or preferred future we wish to create. It is a long-term goal that articulates a view of a realistic, credible and attractive future for the organization and the community; one that is better than exists today. No part of an operational plan is attainable without the planning team knowing clearly what ultimate result they wish to achieve.

If we were to look five years into the future, what would success look like for The Hat Food Movement?

- Where do we want to be in the long-term? What is our preferred future?

The following reflects the ideas that the members came up with as they thought about the future of the Hat Food Movement and what impact they would be having if it were 2018:

- All areas of community know about the movement
- Completely sustained as a community (related to food)
- Planting real food in parks (ex. Raspberry bushes and fruit trees)
- GMO banned in AB – pesticide free
- City hall with garden (ex. White House, Queen’s garden)
- Everyone has a garden in the back yard
- Link schools with farms to see what food is about (agriculture)
- More food producers in Medicine Hat
- Community support / grass roots movement
- Large community support network / groups
- Sustainable food resources – teaching and Education –
 - Community kitchens
 - Targeted to needs. Ex. Diabetes
- Everyone to have access to safe, healthy, nutritious, culturally appropriate food
- Sustainable food resources – teaching and education
- Roof-top gardening

- Personal
- Restaurants
- Provide leadership to create...
- Our group connected to city planning
- Little district sustainable all year
- Community of this type of housing
- Each new area has gardening (%)
- More square foot of gardening than anywhere
- Engage elderly, hospitals, youth – connect so others feel productive and valued
- Help families who aren't able to do gardens (ex. cost factor) broader than community gardens
- Alternatives to getting the food to people - especially those in need (for everyone to have access to food)
- Community gardens niche

Considerations for Vision Statement Development:

Vision statements, like goals, are often written in results-based language as if your future already exists. The following words and phrases (from the ideas shared in the visioning exercise) could be used and modified as samples to further develop a vision statement:

- **Everyone in Medicine Hat has access to safe, healthy, nutritious, and culturally appropriate food**
- Our community is engaged in sustainable food systems
- **Medicine Hat and area is recognized as a leading community of people and neighborhoods that supports and embraces healthy and sustainable food**

Tip: The above bullets in bold are examples of vision-type language that could potentially be tweaked or modified for a more formalized vision statement.

Note:

- The intent of the visioning exercise was to generate ideas and key words or phrases that could be further developed into a new vision for the HFM.
- The wordsmithing will be left to the members of the HFM who can review, discuss and propose a vision based on the ideas from this workshop.

2. OUR PURPOSE - Why do we exist?

In order for an organization to be successful in what it hopes to achieve, it first needs to have a common understanding of its overall purpose.

Mission / Purpose:

Mission statements are a brief, simple statement or two that expresses or defines the purpose of the organization and its business or function. It is the true identity of the organization and should convey what makes you unique from other organizations. Your mission statement easily, clearly and concisely explains to the average person, who you are, why you exist, and what you do for whom.

When you think about the purpose of the Hat Food Movement, what comes to mind?

- Why are we needed or important in the community? Why do we exist?

The below list reflects the collective thoughts of the HFM members:

- Connecting food to people
- Connecting people to food
- Advocating for sustainability
 - Ex Bylaws
 - Charter
- Educating people on problems / alternatives to food
 - Gardens
 - Canning
 - Community education
- Developing skills / leaders
- Supporting people / networks & providing resources
 - Those that don't have resources or are afraid - to help them with what they need
 - Providing resources (\$\$ ex. Buying the seeds or the plot for a community garden, etc)
- Creating a sustainable food system / alternative methods of farming / gardening

Following the idea generation on the purpose of the HFM, participants also delved further into the details of a purpose / mission statement.

Purpose / Mission Development

Name: The Hat Food Movement

Kind of Group: Community-based, caring / compassionate

What do we do?

- **Connecting** people to food
- **Advocating** for sustainability
- **Educating** people
- **Supporting** others
- **Developing** skills

Why?

- So people who want to be healthy / sustainable can come together as a whole
- Encourage healthy community / sustainable food
- Reduce / revolve staggering stags
- Connecting people socially (decrease depression)
 - Importance of social aspect
- Celebration of food and community

For whom?

- Medicine Hat and Cypress County
- For all ages, culture, race, gender, abilities

Considerations for Mission Statement Development:

OPTION 1:

The Hat Food Movement is a caring, compassionate community-based group serving Medicine Hat and area connecting people to food through advocating for sustainability, educating people on food issues, developing skills and supporting others with the necessary resources on access to safe, healthy, nutritious, and culturally appropriate food

OPTION 2:

The Hat Food Movement is a caring, compassionate community-based group serving Medicine Hat and area focused on promoting and supporting sustainable food resources for our community.

This is achieved through:

- **Connecting** people to food
- **Advocating** for sustainability
- **Educating** people (*elaborate briefly on what you are educating them about*)
- **Supporting** others (*to what?*)
- **Developing** skills (*so that...*)

OPTION 3:

The Hat Food Movement is a grassroots movement group in Medicine Hat and Cypress County that works to encourage a healthy sustainable community...

(*Option 3 is included as it was a ‘starting point’ for the possible content of the mission statement.*)

Tips / Suggestions:

- The content of Option 3 could be used for a future “goal” of the HFM...or part of the vision as it is more long-term in focus.
- Remember a mission statement should clearly articulate what you are in the ‘business’ of doing.
- Try to elaborate on what you do as a community group and what makes you unique or different from other groups or programs in the community.

3. NEXT STEPS – Where do we go from here?

The next step in the planning process will be for the Hat Food Movement (HFM) members to do a bit of an environmental scan or a “SWOT” Analysis to look at the current reality of what is working well, what challenges the HFM faces, what opportunities exist in the community, and what external roadblocks exist that may hinder the HFM’s progress. This will help the group in setting clear goals for moving forward.

The Hat Food Movement's Next Community Meeting (Date TBD)

It is anticipated that a follow-up community meeting for those interested in planning for the future of the Hat Food Movement will take place in September 2013.

This meeting will include discussion on:

1. Where is the Hat Food Movement at right now?
 - (Using a SWOT Analysis - Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities, Threats)
2. What does the Hat Food Movement hope to achieve?
 - What are the goals we hope to work on? What do we hope to achieve?
 - What is a priority for us?

The Hat Food Movement Small Group Meeting – June 26th 5:30 pm – 7:00 pm)

Those in attendance at the June 13th meeting also expressed interest in getting together to review the HFM's draft vision and mission. Others who are interested will also be encouraged to participate in this meeting. Another action item of this meeting will be to plan and develop a list of interested people to invite to the community meeting in the fall.

Further Assistance and Support

The Community Development Unit of Alberta Culture provides training, facilitation and consultation to non-profit, community, public sector and government organizations in order to help them improve their organizational effectiveness and build their capacity to achieve their goals.

Some areas of assistance include:

- Planning including strategic planning, operational planning, action planning
- Board development (roles and responsibilities, effective meeting Board, incorporation and bylaw review, policy development, committee roles, recruitment and retention, etc)
- Collaboration and partnerships – how to build effective collaborations, coalitions, partnerships and team building
- Grant resources, fund raising and proposal writing skill development
- Project development and evaluation
- Leadership engagement, development and training
- Large community development initiatives, community mobilization on an issue, community event planning, etc.