



Building a Resilient Food System in Plymouth County

Steering Committee – Terms of Reference Effective July 30, 2025

1. Background

Old Colony Planning Council, in partnership with Plymouth County and the Marion Institute, is leading a regional initiative to strengthen the local food system. The project aims to assess current challenges and opportunities in the food system and develop a regional action plan to support local food production and distribution. A key component of this effort is the Project Steering Committee.

2. Purpose

The Steering Committee provides strategic guidance, oversight, and accountability to ensure the successful delivery of the project and development of the Plymouth County Resilient Food System Action Plan. The Committee serves as a thought partner to OCPC and its project team, ensuring that the project process and final deliverables are rooted in community input, guided by best practices, and aligned with local priorities.

3. Roles and Responsibilities

Members of the Steering Committee will:

- Serve as ambassadors for the project within their networks and promote collaboration among municipal, nonprofit, business, and other community partners
- Provide guidance on stakeholder and public engagement to help ensure diverse representation across geography, demographics, and sectors
- Assist with planning and executing outreach and communication activities
- Offer guidance to project consultants
- Review and provide feedback on project outputs and deliverables
- Address any issues that may have significant implications for the project
- Help monitor project scope and flag any proposed changes for discussion

4. Membership

The Steering Committee will include representatives from

- Old Colony Planning Council,
- The Marion Institute,
- Plymouth County, and
- A diverse group of food system stakeholders from throughout the region.

Membership will aim to reflect a mix of geographic, demographic, and sector perspectives (e.g., planning, public health, agriculture, food access, education, business, and residents with lived experience).

Old Colony Planning Council will confirm Steering Committee appointments and may invite additional members to ensure the necessary expertise or representation.

5. Convenor

Meetings will be convened and facilitated by a staff member of Old Colony Planning Council or their designee.

6. Agenda Items and Meeting Materials

Old Colony Planning Council will determine the agenda for each meeting. Steering Committee members can request items to be added at least five business days in advance. Items not listed on the agenda may be discussed under “Other Business” if time permits. The Old Colony Planning Council will distribute agendas and materials in accordance with the Massachusetts Open Meeting Law at least 48 hours before each meeting.

7. Minutes and Materials

Minutes of each meeting will be prepared by Old Colony Planning Council or its designee. Minutes will be distributed and provided in accordance with the Massachusetts Open Meeting Law.

8. Meeting Frequency and Format

- Meetings will occur once a month starting in July 2025 and ending in June 2026.
- Each meeting will last approximately 60 minutes.
- Meetings will be conducted virtually through Zoom unless the Steering Committee approves an alternative.
- Members are expected to attend all meetings or notify Old Colony Planning Council if they are unable to attend.

9. Decision-Making

The Steering Committee is an advisory group. Decisions will be reached by consensus when feasible. Ultimately, Old Colony Planning Council, as the lead under the Municipal Vulnerability Preparedness grant, is responsible for delivering the required outcomes.

10. Term and Duration

Membership on the Steering Committee will last for the duration of the project, from July 2025 to June 2026. Members may be invited to continue in an advisory capacity during the implementation phase of the Food Action Plan.

11. Contact

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