



**Regional Food System Action Plan  
Steering Committee Meeting  
February 25, 2026, from 11:00 a.m. to 12:00 p.m., virtually via Zoom**

### **Attendees**

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Bill Napolitano	Joanne Zygmunt, OCPC
Brenna Trollinger	Judith Henze
Cassandra Olaya	Kevin Cogan
Chris Heffernan	Liz Wiley
Christine Keller	Lydia Sisson
Debra Roberts	Meghan Riley
Frank Basler	Nathan Brown
Jared Rogers	Rita Higgins
Jill Slankas	Theresa Vernazzaro

### **Summary**

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- The public survey for the Plymouth County Regional Food System Action Plan is live through March 8th with 240 responses so far
- The Community Advisory Board is working through the CARAT tool assessment and is on theme 6 of 7
- Barrett Planning Group is preparing an existing conditions assessment to be shared with the Steering Committee by March 18th
- The team is actively seeking more survey responses, particularly from underrepresented demographics and communities
- Multiple outreach strategies are being implemented, including social media advertising, municipal outreach, and community partnerships

### **Discussion**

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#### **Community Advisory Board Progress**

- The CAB is working through the CARAT tool assessment with approximately 15 participants per session.
- Rita: Reported they are on theme 6 of 7 in the CARAT tool assessment, with about 15 regular participants

- Rita: Explained next steps include confirming findings and then scoring
- Brenna: Noted the CARAT assessment will be incorporated into the final action plan as its own chapter
- Lydia: Mentioned she's reviewing interview data from Bristol County CARAT assessment for relevant themes
- The CAB will complete the CARAT tool assessment in the next two meetings
- Findings will be confirmed through additional outreach and expert input
- The assessment will inform strategies and recommendations in the final action plan

### **Public Survey Update**

- The public survey has received 240 responses so far, with efforts underway to increase participation before the March 8th deadline.
- Joanne: Reported 240 survey responses so far, including 31 from businesses
- Joanne: Noted responses are concentrated in certain communities (Plymouth, Kingston, Brockton, Whitman)
- Joanne: Explained the survey is available in multiple languages (English, Spanish, Haitian Creole, Cape Verdean Creole)
- Theresa: Mentioned Whitman Council on Aging requested paper surveys
- Christine: Offered to share paper surveys with Catholic Charities clients
- The survey will remain open through March 8th
- Paper surveys will be provided where needed and entered manually
- More diverse representation is needed across communities

### **Survey Promotion Strategies**

- The team discussed various strategies to promote the survey and increase participation.
- Joanne: Outlined plans for social media advertising
- Joanne: Will send reminders to municipalities to share on their platforms
- Meghan: Offered to share the survey at the Farm Bureau legislative breakfast on March 6th
- Lydia: Contacted SEMAP to distribute through their farmer list and newsletter
- Nathan: Confirmed Rep. Badger will share on her social media
- Jared: Will explore sharing through United Way's Family Center
- Liz: Suggested reaching out to local papers like the Wareham Weekly
- Bill: Reminded about following up with Bridgewater Buzz
- Multiple channels will be used to promote the survey
- Team members will leverage their personal and professional networks

## Existing Conditions Assessment

- Barrett Planning Group is preparing an assessment of existing conditions in the regional food system.
- Brenna: Described the assessment's content, including demographics, farmland, food security, economics, climate resilience, transportation, and infrastructure
- Brenna: Noted Massachusetts has the second-lowest proportion of local food spending in New England, but the highest total amount
- Brenna: Identified data challenges, including confidential fishing data and census data limitations
- Lydia: Mentioned upcoming reports (port profile data and Greater Boston Food Bank's food security report) won't be available until April
- Brenna: Explained they're creating an interactive map of food-related assets using layers from MAPC, MDAR, MassGIS, and other sources
- Draft assessment will be sent to OCPC by March 11th
- Steering Committee will receive it by March 18th for review
- The assessment will inform strategies and recommendations in the final plan
- An interactive map will be created as a living document to be updated over time