



Request for Proposals: Strategic Planning Services

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Why This Work, Why Now

The Good Food Collective (GFC) is entering a pivotal moment in its organizational life.

Since our formation in 2018, we have grown rapidly in scale, scope, and responsibility. What began as a nimble, relationship-driven organization has evolved into a regional backbone supporting multiple programs, partnerships, and a large, member-led coalition. Our staff team has grown. Our budget has grown. Our geographic footprint and expectations from partners, funders, and communities have grown as well.

In early 2025, GFC completed an organizational assessment that identified internal structural, governance, and operational improvements needed to strengthen our ability to deliver on our mission. Strategic planning is the next major step in implementing those recommendations and positioning the organization for long-term impact and sustainability.

What we are seeking now is not simply a strategic plan, but **clarity**.

Clarity about where we are going, how we get there, and what we must say yes or no to along the way.

Clarity about how our internal structures support our mission.

Clarity about our role as a backbone organization and steward of collaborative work, without over-centralizing power.

This planning process is about helping GFC move into its **next chapter with focus, alignment, and intention**, while strengthening the effectiveness and integrity of the La Plata Food Equity Coalition (LPFEC), our largest and most complex initiative.

We are seeking a consultant or consulting team to partner with us in holding this moment thoughtfully, rigorously, and with deep respect for equity-centered, community-led systems change.

About the Good Food Collective

The Good Food Collective (GFC) works with partners across SW Colorado to build a just and thriving regional food system where:

- Everyone can access nourishing food, no matter where in our region they live
- Households have financial wellbeing, so they can buy the food they want
- Farmers and food businesses are thriving
- Power is in the hands of our community, so we're connected and guiding food systems work

Our work spans direct program implementation, systems coordination, and backbone support for collaborative initiatives. In total, we work with 150+ cross-sector partners and leaders to transform fragmented efforts into coordinated strategic activities. Since 2017, GFC has facilitated \$2.25 million in market activity and invested over \$1.7 million in infrastructure, creating lasting assets such as processing facilities, distribution hubs, and SNAP-authorized

retailers. Other GFC programs include a five-county Farm to Food Access Hub, Farm to Institution Value Chain Coordination, Healthy Food Retail program, Produce Rx Program, and Policy work including participation in the Coalition that developed and passed Colorado's Healthy School Meals for All initiative.

A core value of GFC's work is that lasting change happens through shared leadership, not top-down solutions. We invest heavily in relationships, trust-building, and inclusive decision-making, particularly with communities that have been historically excluded from food and economic systems.

The Good Food Collective is a fiscally sponsored program of Onward! A Legacy Foundation.

About the La Plata Food Equity Coalition

The GFC launched the La Plata Food Equity Coalition (LPFEC) in 2020 to bring together those folks most impacted by food insecurity with agencies, institutions, businesses, and individuals to, together, develop and implement strategies that would address root causes of food insecurity and affiliated health inequities. LPFEC is a vibrant coalition of individuals, small businesses, food producers, nonprofits, and public institutions with a common vision: a La Plata County where all residents have agency over their well-being, equitable access to healthy food, and meaningful opportunities to drive systems change.

The LPFEC is currently the largest single initiative of the GFC in terms of staff and funding resources. The Coalition's initial seed funding sunsets at the end of 2026, prompting a mandated second round of strategic planning. This milestone offers a natural opportunity for members to reflect on the Coalition's form, function, and identity as it enters its next chapter. The upcoming planning process should build on the foundation established in the first phase, advancing the work already begun while laying the groundwork for a sustainable future, including a clear development strategy and a well-defined membership structure.

To honor the Coalition's commitment to being community-led, collective-impact framework, the GFC acts as a [backbone](#) to the LPFEC handling administrative and core backend functions. Governance over programs and focus area falls to the Coalition membership. The Coalition in turn, has shared ownership, shared accountability, and a strong expectation of equity-centered engagement. Any planning process for LPFEC must meaningfully reflect this reality

Scope of Work: Two Distinct, Connected Planning Efforts

This engagement includes **two related but distinct planning processes**, each requiring a different posture, methodology, and engagement approach.

1. Good Food Collective Organizational Strategic & Operational Planning (Budget not to exceed \$15K)

We are seeking support to develop:

- A 3–5 year organizational strategic plan that:
 - Clarifies GFC's long-term priorities and strategic focus
 - Aligns mission, vision, values, and theory of change
 - Defines what success looks like at an organizational level
- A 1–3 year operational plan that:
 - Translates strategy into near-term priorities and sequencing
 - Clarifies internal roles, capacities, and decision-making processes
 - Supports realistic implementation and accountability
- Generates Decision Making Frameworks that can be deployed to ensure that future programmatic decisions tie back to our theory of change

Engagement for this component will be primarily internal, centered on:

- GFC staff
- GFC Advisory Board
- Limited external stakeholder engagement as appropriate

This work is about strengthening internal alignment so that GFC can show up more clearly and sustainably in its external partnerships.

2. La Plata Food Equity Coalition Strategic Programming Plan (Budget not to exceed \$40K)

In parallel, we are seeking support to develop a **strategic plan for the LPFEC** that:

- Reflects LPFEC’s identity as a **member-led, equity-centered collective impact coalition**
- Clarifies:
 - Coalition purpose and value proposition
 - Mission, vision, values and theory of change
 - Strategic priorities and programmatic focus
 - Expanded governance structure, decision-making frameworks, and accountability measures rooted in a collective impact approach
 - Clearly delineated, tiered membership structure and engagement guidelines and expectations
 - The relationship between LPFEC and GFC as the backbone organization

This process **must include extensive, equity-centered member engagement**, which may involve:

- Participatory action data collection methods for both qualitative and quantitative data:
- Research and facilitation approaches that are accessible, culturally responsive, and attentive to power dynamics:
 - Conduct a current landscape scan of La Plata County to understand marginalized populations not yet engaged in this coalition, such as the disabled, and present potential strategies for inclusion.
 - Rooted in Language Justice practices: all data collection will need to be bilingual in English and Spanish and make a meaningful effort to capture other BIPOC demographics, including ethnicities represented by other languages and indigenous groups such as the Southern Ute Indian Tribe.
 - Comprehensive stakeholder mapping to understand the complex ecosystem of partners we need to be inclusive of.

This is not a top-down planning exercise. The process matters as much as the product.

Holding the Work Together

While these two efforts are distinct, they are intentionally linked.

We are seeking a consultant who can:

- Design **parallel processes** that inform one another without collapsing into a single plan
- Help GFC clarify its backbone role without over-defining coalition direction
- Support LPFEC members in shaping their own strategic future
- Ensure alignment without erasing differences

Proposals should clearly articulate **how the consultant will honor both autonomy and coherence** across these planning efforts.

Deliverables

At a minimum, the selected consultant will produce:

- A **3–5 Year Strategic Plan for the Good Food Collective**
- A **1–3 Year Operational Plan for the Good Food Collective**
- A **2-5 Year Strategic Plan for the La Plata Food Equity Coalition program**
- **Supporting tools or frameworks to aid implementation and shared understanding**

Deliverables should be practical, accessible, and usable by staff, coalition members, and leadership bodies.

Who We Are Hoping to Work With

We are particularly interested in consultants or teams who bring experience with:

- Nonprofit organizational strategic planning
- Coalition-based or collective impact work
- Equity-centered facilitation and community engagement
- Backbone organizations supporting member-led initiatives
- Translating vision into operational reality

We value lived experience, cultural competency, and approaches rooted in humility and partnership.

8. Proposal Format

Proposals should not exceed **five (5) pages** and should include:

- Date of submission
- Proposal title
- Consultant or organization name
- Point of contact and contact information
- Project Description Addressing:
 1. Relevant experience and expertise
 2. Experience engaging rural and diverse communities
 3. Proposed approach, process, and tools
 4. Anticipated challenges and mitigation strategies
- Proposed timeline, milestones, and deliverables
- Team bios for key personnel
- Three (3) references

Attachments (not included in page limit):

- 1-2 examples of completed strategic and/or operational plans
 - Full Cost Estimate with common sense breakdown and explanation of costs
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Proposal Submission

Proposals must be submitted electronically to:

admin@goodfoodcollective.org

Submission Deadline:

February 20, 2026 (preferred)

Evaluation Criteria

Proposals will be evaluated based on:

- Alignment with equity-centered values and inclusive practices
- Understanding of GFC's organizational context and systems-level role
- Clarity and feasibility of the proposed process, tools, and deliverables
- Project management approach and tools
- Relevant experience and qualifications of the proposed team
- Budget clarity and overall price competitiveness
- References and past performance

GFC reserves the right to interview finalists and to negotiate scope, timeline, and budget.

Anticipated Timeline

- **RFP Issued:** February 3, 2026
 - **Proposal Deadline:** February 20, 2026
 - **Possible Interviews:** February 25rd-March 6th
 - **Consultant Selection:** By March 16, 2026
 - **Project Commencement:** March 30, 2026
 - **Project Completion:** On or before August 1, 2026
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Contact Information

For questions or clarifications, please contact:

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