



Since 2013,
we've been
part of:

5
regional food plans

6
urban food plans

7
urban and
educational farms

2
collective food
systems organizing

2
food council
planning
collaborations

2
farmers market
projects

4
food hubs

3
food pantries

who we are

Community Food Lab is a design and planning company focused on solutions to complex food system challenges. By connecting design thinking, deep food system expertise, and collaborative, participatory approaches, we help create sustainable, equitable, and inclusive food systems.

Community Food Lab was founded by Erin White in 2013. Trained as an architect, White also brings background experiences in farming, public health, restaurant cooking, and carpentry. Community Food Lab is built out of this generalist approach, based on the thinking that food systems are rooted in multiple sectors and affect nearly every aspect of modern life. By knitting a food systems expertise together with a design thinking approach and a compulsion for creating lasting relationships and networks, the practice of Community Food Lab offers a unique set of skills to solve the complex food challenges we face together.

our work

Since 2013, we have built collaborative partnerships across sectors as we intentionally explore what it means to design for the human-centered territory of food systems.

We've found our international, award-winning work in the intersecting spaces of agriculture, community development, economic development, public health, and equity. This is where we make sense out of complexity and design solutions for resilience and shared purpose.

We find ourselves often working for local governments and non-profit organizations, with the occasional self-initiated project mixed in. Our key services include food system assessments, community engagement, food project planning and feasibility studies, data and spatial analysis, and strategic planning at local and regional scales.

our approach

At our core, we believe in building place-based, human-centered solutions that have a real impact on the communities we serve. We are pragmatic idealists, believing that smart, strategic, shared work leads to shared commitment and to our common good.

Our process stresses excellent communication, creativity, and place-based insights. Combined with professional project management and project delivery capability, our creative, design-forward approaches drive innovative outcomes on schedule and on budget.

A hallmark of Community Food Lab's work is a collaborative approach to multi-sector partnerships and an embrace of complex, open-ended planning projects. By strategically employing a "big table" approach to collective planning and development, we provide pragmatic systems thinking solutions that leverage resources across disciplines and sectors. This unique approach is grounded in our team's many years of interdisciplinary experience, and brings innovation, equity, and collaboration to the center of our work.

Community Food Lab creates change in communities by connecting people, design thinking, and intelligent food system planning.