

# A Community Food Hub for the North of Moreland

Stage 1: Food System Community Asset Mapping

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Moreland City Council

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## 1. Introduction

Creating a more localised and sustainable food system has significant social, health and environmental benefits. The path to more sustainable food systems is often paved by community led initiatives that benefit from the support local councils can provide. In particular, Community Food Hubs offer a unique model to generate significant changes to local food systems and address food insecurity. Community Food Hubs enable food growing and distribution, community activation, and innovative initiatives to flourish by aggregating physical, social and human assets.

This report provides a brief overview of the Moreland Food System Strategy, Community Food Hubs, and the situation of food insecurity in Moreland. An asset-based community development approach was used to conduct the research and asset mapping used to convey the results. The report details the identified assets using a range of visual materials, including geographical maps showing the location of assets, as well as diagrams and tables to represent the networks and strengths of groups involved in food related activities. The project includes an analysis of the opportunities for the identified assets to grow and thrive and provide greater benefit to the community through the creation of a community food hub.

### 1.1.Objective

The aim of this research is to identify the individual and community assets, skills and passions in the North of Moreland which could be mobilised to help establish a community food hub. The results of Stage 1: Food System Community Asset Mapping will be used in Stage 2: Feasibility Study of a Community Food and to determine the model which best suits the communities' needs.

## 2. Background

### 2.1.The Moreland Food System Strategy

Significant environmental and social challenges are associated with dependence on the current global food system. Recognition of the need to foster more sustainable, local food systems has gained traction over recent decades, fuelled by community-based food movements. Research shows that cultivating local food systems can significantly enhance the health and wellbeing of communities, strengthening community resilience by improving the affordability and availability of, and access to nutritious food.<sup>1</sup> To support the creation of a more sustainable food system, Moreland City Council has developed a Food System Strategy 2017-2020. The Food Systems Strategy's vision is for a 'sustainable, just and vibrant food system' including a "a just food system that ensures nutritious food is socially and economically accessible to everyone in the community".<sup>2</sup> Moreland City Council is a signatory to the Urban and Regional Food Declaration, which recognises that access to nutritious food is a fundamental human right.

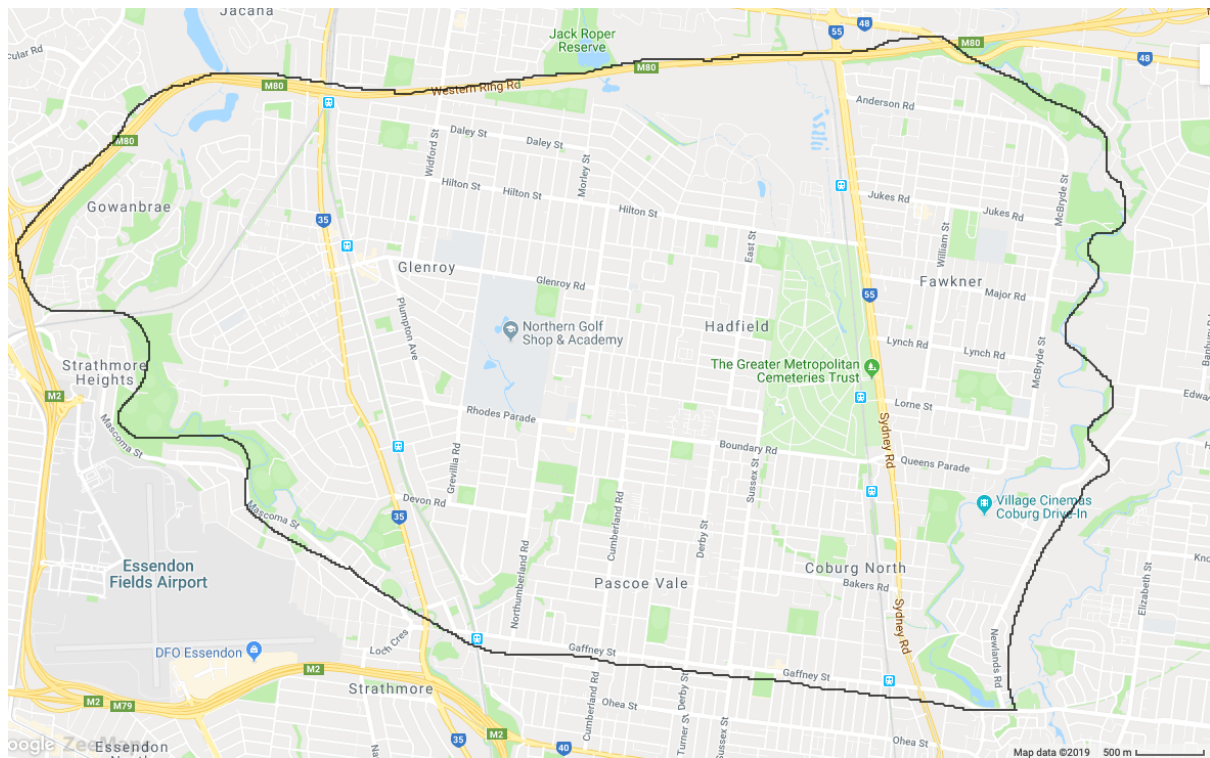
One of the actions in the Moreland Food Strategy to address food security is to complete a feasibility study in partnership with the Moreland community on establishing a community food hub in the North of Moreland. The Northern suburbs of Moreland, defined here as Fawkner, Hadfield, Glenroy, Coburg North, Pascoe Vale, Gowanbrae and Oak Park (See Figure 1) have been shown to have among the highest incidences of food insecurity in Moreland.

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<sup>1</sup> Heart Foundation, Food-Sensitive Planning and Urban Design: A conceptual framework for achieving a sustainable and healthy food system (VEIL & VicHealth, 2011) 2.

<sup>2</sup> Moreland City Council, Moreland Food System Strategy: 2017-2020

**Figure 1: Map of North Moreland**



## 2.2. Community Food Hubs

Community food hubs and community food centres have recently emerged as a model for supporting food security.<sup>3</sup> They are designed to promote social inclusion and empowerment and the human right to adequate food. Community food hubs and community food centres vary in terms of scale and functions, however core to their mission is supporting and working with local and regional food producers and suppliers. Common activities of community food hubs and community food centres are:

- **Food aggregation and distribution**, including farm pick-ups, food storage, processing and packaging, and the preparation, distribution and sale of food boxes.
- **Horticulture, farming and farmer training**, including food production, farm incubation and urban agriculture programs and internships, and business training
- **Consumer education and outreach**, including, food access programs, community gardens and kitchens, nutritional education and food literacy programs and food budgeting support
- **Community engagement**, including events, workshops, advocacy, distribution of community meals and volunteer opportunities.

Community food hubs and community food centres are welcoming spaces where people can come together to grow, cook, share and advocate for nutritious food. They also provide people with emergency access to food in a dignified setting that doesn't compromise their self-worth.<sup>4</sup>

## 2.3. Food Security in Moreland

Food security exists when all people, at all times, have physical, social and economic access to sufficient, safe and nutritious food that meets their dietary needs and supports an active and healthy life. Inherently, food security refers to the ability to regularly access healthy, affordable and

<sup>3</sup> Community Food Centres Canada, <https://cfccanada.ca/en/Home>

<sup>4</sup> Community Food Centres Canada

culturally appropriate food without the use of emergency food relief.<sup>5</sup> Moreland City Council considers food security a fundamental objective of a sustainable, just and vibrant food system and a key indicator of the effectiveness of a food system.<sup>6</sup>

Food insecurity is a complex social problem, with people often experiencing multiple physical, economic and social barriers to fresh food access. While the cost of fresh food is the most significant factor, other considerations such as time, mobility, mental health, cultural appropriateness and food literacy also play a role.<sup>7</sup> Food insecure households typically consume little fruit and vegetables, are at increased risks for diet-related diseases, and have higher rates of obesity and poor physical and mental health.<sup>8</sup>

Typically, only a fraction of people experiencing food insecurity access emergency food relief. Many people feel ashamed to access relief services and those who do often find the food inappropriate for their diet, lacking in quality, and of little nutritional value. In 2014, a joint Deakin University and Moreland City Council Food Service Project found that emergency food relief, such as food banks, 'is insufficient in all suburbs [of Moreland], especially Glenroy and Coburg.'

Food insecurity is classified into two categories; with and without hunger. Food insecurity *with hunger* occurs when a person has run out of food in the previous 12 months and could not afford to buy more. Food insecurity *without hunger* occurs when a person has worried about running out of food in the previous 12 months. People experiencing this type of food insecurity typically employing a range of tactics to avoid running out of food, such as relying on low-cost food, bargain-hunting, skipping meals, and reducing portion size.<sup>9</sup>

Not everyone in Moreland enjoys food security. In 2017, 4.3% of adults in the North of Moreland experienced food insecurity with hunger.<sup>10</sup> Those most affected are people who live in Fawkner, Pascoe Vale, Hadfield and Glenroy. Table 1 shows the percentage of households who reported running out of food in the last 12 months and not being able to buy more and the percentage for whom this occurred monthly or more frequently. In the whole of Moreland, in 2018, 13.9% of residents worried about running out of food in the last 12 months and 21% were not always able to access healthy food because it was too expensive.<sup>11</sup>

**Table 1: Food Security by Suburb**

| SURBURB      | % FOOD INSECURE<br>HOUSEHOLD | > MONTHLY |
|--------------|------------------------------|-----------|
| Fawkner      | 6.1%                         | 40%       |
| Pascoe Vale  | 4.6%                         | 16.0%     |
| Hadfield     | 3.7%                         | 50%       |
| Glenroy      | 3.1%                         | 66.7%     |
| Gowanbrae    | 1.3%                         | 100%      |
| Coburg North | 1.1%                         | 0%        |
| Oak Park     | 1%                           | 100%      |

<sup>5</sup> Merri Community Health Services, Integrated Health Promotion Strategic Plan 2013

<sup>6</sup> Moreland Food System Strategy 2017-2020

<sup>7</sup> Moreland Household Survey: 2017, <https://www.moreland.vic.gov.au/about-us/our-city/demographics-and-data/research-reports/>

<sup>8</sup> Department of Health and Human Services, Challenges to Healthy Eating: food insecurity in Victoria: findings from the 2014 Victorian Population Health Survey, (State of Victoria, Melbourne, 2017)

<sup>9</sup> Department of Health and Human Services, Challenges to Healthy Eating

<sup>10</sup> Moreland Household Survey: 2017

<sup>11</sup> Department of Health and Human Services 2017, Challenges to Healthy Eating

## 3. Methodology

### 3.1.Asset-based Community Development

Moreland City Council's approach to delivering the Food System Strategy is to positively influence investment in a sustainable, just and vibrant food system through partnerships with the community. As such, an asset-based community development and mapping approach was chosen to conduct initial research for the Food Hub Feasibility Study.

Asset-based Community Development is founded on three principles; (1) everyone has gifts, (2) everyone has something to contribute, and (3) everyone cares about something and that passion is his or her motivation to act. To improve individual and family well-being requires communities, neighborhoods and their residents to be involved as coproducers of their own and their community's well-being.<sup>12</sup>

Strong, safe, and healthy neighborhoods and communities are built on the strengths and capacities of their residents and associations that call the community home. Asset-based Community Development asks "What can we do with what we already have to get what we need?" This is in contrast to the traditional approach to delivering health and human services which focuses on bringing external services to address the community's needs and deficits.

### 3.2.Asset Mapping

Asset mapping is a positive-focused way of celebrating community resources and connecting individuals, organisations and spaces for collaboration, empowerment and support.<sup>13</sup> By mapping a community's resources spatially within a geographic boundary, we can discover its strengths and uncover gaps and solutions to improve a community's well-being.

Asset mapping gives the community information and access to assets that make their neighbourhood a better place to live; promotes relationships between community members and organisations; provides visibility and contact details for community organisations; identifies location data around issues to see if adequate support exists, or where best to locate new support; inventories the social wealth of a community: people, services, resources and places, and reveals how community members can access these assets; acknowledges a community's social, cultural and natural environment assets –beyond money and capital investment; enables residents to feel empowered and educated to create change from within their community; collects data that can be used for asset-based community development.

### 3.3.Methods

The research involved four stages, (1) creating an inventory of food related activities and groups, (2) interviewing stakeholders, (3) thematic analysis and grouping of the results, and (4), representing the results in maps and diagrams. To create an inventory of assets the researchers compiled a list using contacts from Moreland Council's Food system team; existing knowledge (both researchers are residents in the North of Moreland and active in the food system), internet searches by location and snowballing from interviews. Semi-structured Interviews were conducted. The interviewees were asked about any activities they were involved in relating to food, the assets involved, any networks or connections, and opportunities that would benefit from a food hub.

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12 Duncan, D, Asset Mapping Toolkit (Clear Impact, 2016)

13 Creating Communities <https://www.creatingcommunities.com.au/community-asset-mapping/>

The activities and assets of the groups were thematically analysed to identify common activity types and asset types which could then be categorised. The four activity categories listed above as typical activities of food hubs were used as a starting point; aggregation and distribution, food growing, community education, and community engagement. Analysis revealed that the activities of groups could be divided into two primary categories and six secondary categories. The two primary categories used are food system activities and community activation. The secondary categories in Food System Activities include; Food Relief; Aggregation & Distribution; and Food Growing. The secondary categories in Community Activation activities include; Community Engagement - Activity based; Community Engagement - Community based; and Networks and Community Support. These categories will be described in more detail in the results.

**Table 2: Community Asset Categories**

| <b>Primary Categories</b> | <b>Secondary Categories</b>            |
|---------------------------|----------------------------------------|
| Food System Activities    | Food Relief                            |
|                           | Aggregation & Distribution             |
|                           | Food Growing                           |
| Community Activation      | Community Engagement - Activity based  |
|                           | Community Engagement - Community based |
|                           | Networks/Community Support             |

We analysed the relative strength of the groups in three ways; the number of different types of activity categories the groups are involved in; how well connected they are to other groups, and whether the groups had strong physical, human or social resources. This measurement of resources is based on the five types of capital theory.<sup>14</sup> The five types are financial, natural, produced, human, and social. Capital, in this context, is anything that increases one's ability to generate value. In systems language, they are stocks that have the capacity to produce flows of desirable outputs, in this case for the creation of a sustainable food system. Because we were looking at community assets and activities, financial and natural capital were not deemed relevant. Physical assets are generated by applying human productive activities to natural capital. Human assets are the capacities of an individual, both inherited and acquired through education and training. Social assets are trust, mutual understanding, shared values, socially held knowledge, networks and connections.

An online mapping tool, Zee Maps, was used to plot the assets geographically by activity category. The address of some organisations has been slightly altered to ensure all markers were visible.

## 4. Results

We identified 33 community groups and organisations involved in food related activities in the North of Moreland. 29 of these groups were interviewed. Table 3 shows a complete list of the groups interviewed, their location, activity types, specific activities, and types of assets. We found two main clusters of activity; in Fawkner and in the north part of Coburg North, in particular around Merlynston Station. This area with hence forth be referred to as Merlynston. In both clusters key individuals are responsible for seeding and sustaining activities and networks. This is discussed further in section 6. There are 18 groups involved in food system related activities and 20 groups involved in food related community activation. Section 4.1 discusses in detail the groups involved in these activity categories and displays their location on geographical maps.

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<sup>14</sup> Goodwin, N. & Global Development and Environment Institute, Capital (2006), <http://editors.eol.org/eoearth/wiki/Capital>

**Table 3: List of groups, their location, activities and assets**

| NAME                                       | ADDRESS                                | ACTIVITY                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                         | ASSETS                      |
|--------------------------------------------|----------------------------------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-----------------------------|
| Community Information & Support - Moreland | 512 Sydney Rd, Coburg                  | Food Relief <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Vouchers</li> <li>• Food pantry</li> </ul>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                  | Human                       |
| Fair Share Fair                            | Fawkner resident (servicing Melbourne) | Community Engagement (activity) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Food/art/performance projects provoking climate preparedness dialogue</li> <li>• Indigenous food sovereignty</li> <li>• Knowledge networks</li> </ul> Growing <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Edible weeds &amp; indigenous edibles</li> </ul>                                                 | Human<br>Social             |
| Fawkner Bowling Club                       | 2 Creedon St, Fawkner                  | Community Engagement (Community) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Dinners events</li> <li>• Kitchen hire</li> <li>• Food networks meet</li> <li>• Licenced Bar</li> </ul>                                                                                                                                                                                                | Physical<br>Social          |
| Fawkner Community House                    | Crn Jukes Rd & Major Rd, Fawkner       | Food Relief <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Food parcels</li> </ul>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                     | Social<br>Physical          |
| Fawkner Food Bowls                         | Corner Lorne & Creedon St, Fawkner     | Growing & Distribution <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Community garden</li> <li>• Urban farm</li> <li>• Weekly market</li> <li>• Produce sales to Community Grocer</li> </ul> Community Engagement (community) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Food swaps</li> <li>• Volunteer gardening bees</li> <li>• Workshops</li> <li>• Community composting</li> </ul> | Human<br>Social<br>Physical |
| Fawkner Food Swap                          | Fawkner Food Bowls                     | Community Engagement (Activity) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Food Swap</li> </ul>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                    | Social                      |
| Fawkner Service Providers Network          | Fawkner (various locations)            | Community Support <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Networking for groups</li> </ul>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                      | Human                       |
| Fawkner Wholefood Collective               | Fawkner Food Bowls                     | Aggregation & Distribution <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Bulk foods retail</li> </ul>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                 | Human                       |
| Glenroy Neighbourhood Learning Centre      | 5B Cromwell St, Glenroy                | Growing <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Student program</li> </ul> Community Engagement (activity)                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                      | Human                       |

|                                                            |                                                           |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                          |                             |
|------------------------------------------------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-----------------------------|
| Glenroy Service Provider Network                           | Glenroy (various locations)                               | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Shared food for cultural events</li> </ul> Community Support                                                                                                                                                                      | Human                       |
| Gowanbrae Community Centre                                 | 2A Marigold Cres, Gowanbrae                               | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Networking for groups</li> </ul> Community Engagement (Activity) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Space hire</li> <li>Moreland hosts annual Gowanbrae Festival</li> </ul>                                                   | Unknown                     |
| Gowanbrae Community Garden                                 | 156 Gowanbrae Drive, Gowanbrae                            | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Growing</li> <li>Community garden</li> </ul>                                                                                                                                                                                      | Unknown                     |
| Hope Café – Saint Mark’s Church                            | 118 Argyle St, Fawkner                                    | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Food Relief</li> <li>Community meal</li> </ul>                                                                                                                                                                                    | Unknown                     |
| Hope Centre                                                | 93-95 Station Road<br>Glenroy                             | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Food Relief</li> <li>Community lunch</li> <li>Pantry</li> <li>Lunch to schools (planned)</li> <li>Mobile soup kitchen (planned)</li> </ul>                                                                                        | Physical<br>Human           |
| Melbourne Activist Catering                                | Fawkner residents<br>(servicing Melbourne)                | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Community Engagement (Activity)</li> <li>Food preparation for events</li> </ul>                                                                                                                                                   | Human<br>Social             |
| Merlynston Bulk Buying Co-Op                               | Merlynston residents<br>(servicing Coburg Nth. & Fawkner) | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Aggregation &amp; Distribution</li> <li>Bulk buying Co-op</li> </ul>                                                                                                                                                              | Human<br>Social             |
| Merlynston Progress Hall Action Group                      | Merlynston                                                | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Community Engagement (Community)</li> <li>Meal sharing</li> <li>Advocacy, campaigning</li> <li>Events</li> </ul>                                                                                                                  | Human<br>Social<br>Physical |
| Merri - Hello Fawkner!<br>(Great Ideas for Fawkner - 2019) | Fawkner Bowling Club                                      | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Community Engagement (Activity)</li> <li>Lost recipes of Fawkner</li> <li>Multicultural cooking collective</li> </ul> Aggregation and Distribution <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Fawkner Wholefood Collective</li> </ul> | Human<br>Social             |
| Merri Health                                               | 79 Jukes Rd, Fawkner                                      | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Community Support</li> <li>Funding &amp; resources for community groups</li> <li>Community Grocer host organisation</li> <li>Food insecurity research</li> </ul>                                                                  | Human<br>Social             |
| Moreland City Council                                      | 90 Bell St Coburg                                         | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Community Support</li> <li>Food Systems Strategy</li> <li>Funding &amp; resources for community groups</li> <li>Local Food Networks</li> </ul>                                                                                    | Human                       |
| Mulberry Community Garden                                  | 120 Glenroy Road, Glenroy                                 | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Growing</li> <li>Community garden</li> </ul>                                                                                                                                                                                      | Human<br>Social             |
| Neighbours United for Climate Actions                      | Merlynston residents                                      | Community Engagement (Community)                                                                                                                                                                                                                                         | Social                      |

|                                     |                                                                                                               |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                |                             |
|-------------------------------------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-----------------------------|
| Newlands Community House            | 20 Murray Road, Coburg North                                                                                  | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Activated community groups including permaculture/food</li> </ul> Aggregation & Distribution<br><ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Community Grocer boxes</li> </ul> Growing<br><ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Aged care program</li> </ul> | Human                       |
| North Coburg Food Swap              | Parker Reserve, Coburg North                                                                                  | Community Engagement (Activity)<br><ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Food Swap</li> </ul>                                                                                                                                                                                                 | Social                      |
| Online Networks                     | Good Karma: Pascoe Vale, Coburg, Glenroy, Hadfield, Fawkner<br>Residents Groups: Oak Park, Fawkner, Gowanbrae | Community Support<br><ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Produce swaps</li> <li>Knowledge sharing</li> </ul>                                                                                                                                                                                | Social                      |
| Open Table                          | Glenroy Senior Citizens Centre<br>Fawkner Senior Citizens Centre                                              | Food Relief<br><ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Community dinner</li> <li>Food Swap</li> </ul>                                                                                                                                                                                           | Human                       |
| Salvation Army -Glenroy             | 134 Cardinal Road, Glenroy                                                                                    | Food Relief<br><ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Parcels</li> </ul>                                                                                                                                                                                                                       | Unknown                     |
| Salvation Army – Coburg North       | 828 Sydney Rd, Coburg North                                                                                   | Food Relief<br><ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Pantry</li> <li>Vouchers</li> <li>Community meal</li> </ul>                                                                                                                                                                              | Human                       |
| Sussex Neighbourhood House          | 7 Prospect St, Pascoe Vale                                                                                    | Aggregation & Distribution<br><ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Community Grocer boxes</li> </ul> Community Engagement (activity)<br><ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Red cross food literacy program</li> <li>Cooking programs</li> </ul>                                          | Human<br>Physical<br>Social |
| Sustainable Fawkner                 | Fawkner residents                                                                                             | Community Engagement (Community)<br><ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Food Swaps</li> <li>Food Systems Advocacy</li> </ul>                                                                                                                                                                | Human<br>Social             |
| The Community Graft                 | Fawkner residents                                                                                             | Community Engagement (Activity)<br><ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Grafting workshops</li> <li>Edible public space advocacy</li> <li>Recovering cuttings &amp; relocating trees to be removed</li> </ul>                                                                                | Human                       |
| The Community Grocer                | 79 Jukes Rd, Fawkner                                                                                          | Aggregation & Distribution<br><ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Fruit &amp; vegetable market</li> </ul> Community Engagement (community)<br><ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Weekly gathering space</li> </ul>                                                                      | Human<br>Social             |
| Upfield Urban Forest & Rani's Patch | Between Brunswick Station and Merylnston Station                                                              | Growing<br><ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Vegetables and fruit trees</li> <li>Food forest</li> </ul> Community Engagement (community)<br><ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Neighbourhood connections</li> </ul>                                                                   | Human<br>Social             |

## 4.1. Community Activities

To map the community groups geographically we categorised the organisations based on the activities they are involved in as shown in Table 3. A map was created for each of the two primary categories; Food System Activities (Figure 2) and Community Activation (Figure 3). Different coloured markers show the secondary categories; Food Relief; Aggregation & Distribution; Food Growing; Activity-based Community Engagement; Community Based Community Engagement; and Community Support & Networks.

Figure 2 shows food system activities. There are eight emergency food relief organisations, three in Glenroy, three in Fawkner and two in Coburg/Coburg North. Food relief activities involve providing free food, usually rescued or donated, in the form of food pantries, food vouchers, food parcels, and community meals. Food aggregation & distribution includes bulk food collectives, bulk buying co-ops and Community Grocer pick up points. Five organisations are involved in these activities, two in Fawkner, one in Pascoe Vale and two in Coburg North. Food growing includes community gardens, food forests and neighbourhood houses with gardening activities. There are five locations where community food growing occurs, one in Gowanbrae, two in Glenroy, one in Fawkner and one in Coburg. The Fawkner Food Bowls is listed in two categories because they grow and distribute produce.

Figure 3 shows groups involved in food activities where the primary focus is on community activation. This category included activities that engage and educate the community and institutions that support community food activities. Two types of community engagement were identified; activity-based and community-based. Activity based community engagement refers to specific activities with a specific purpose, such as food literacy education, food swaps, meal sharing and cooking collectives. Community-based engagement refers to groups that facilitate community ideas, generate energy and are involved in multiple activities, events and initiatives. There are eight groups involved in activity-based engagement, one in Glenroy, one in Pascoe Vale, one in Coburg North and five in Fawkner. There are seven groups involved in community-based engagement, five in Fawkner and two in Coburg North. The final category, networks and support, includes service provider networks, institutions such as Merri Health and Moreland City Council supporting community food activities and organisations providing spaces that enable food activities. There are five such groups, two in Fawkner, one in Gowanbrae, one in Glenroy and Moreland Council, with the main offices in Coburg.

It is important to note that several groups are involved in several activities and appear on both maps. Where possible organisations are listed based on their primary activity rather than a secondary benefit occurring as result of activities. For example, the food relief organisations often create a welcoming space where people can engage with other, yet creating community engagement is not the primary goal of this activity. A discussion of groups engaged in multiple types of activities is found in the discussion on the strength of groups, section 5.1.

Figure 2: Map showing the location of food system activities

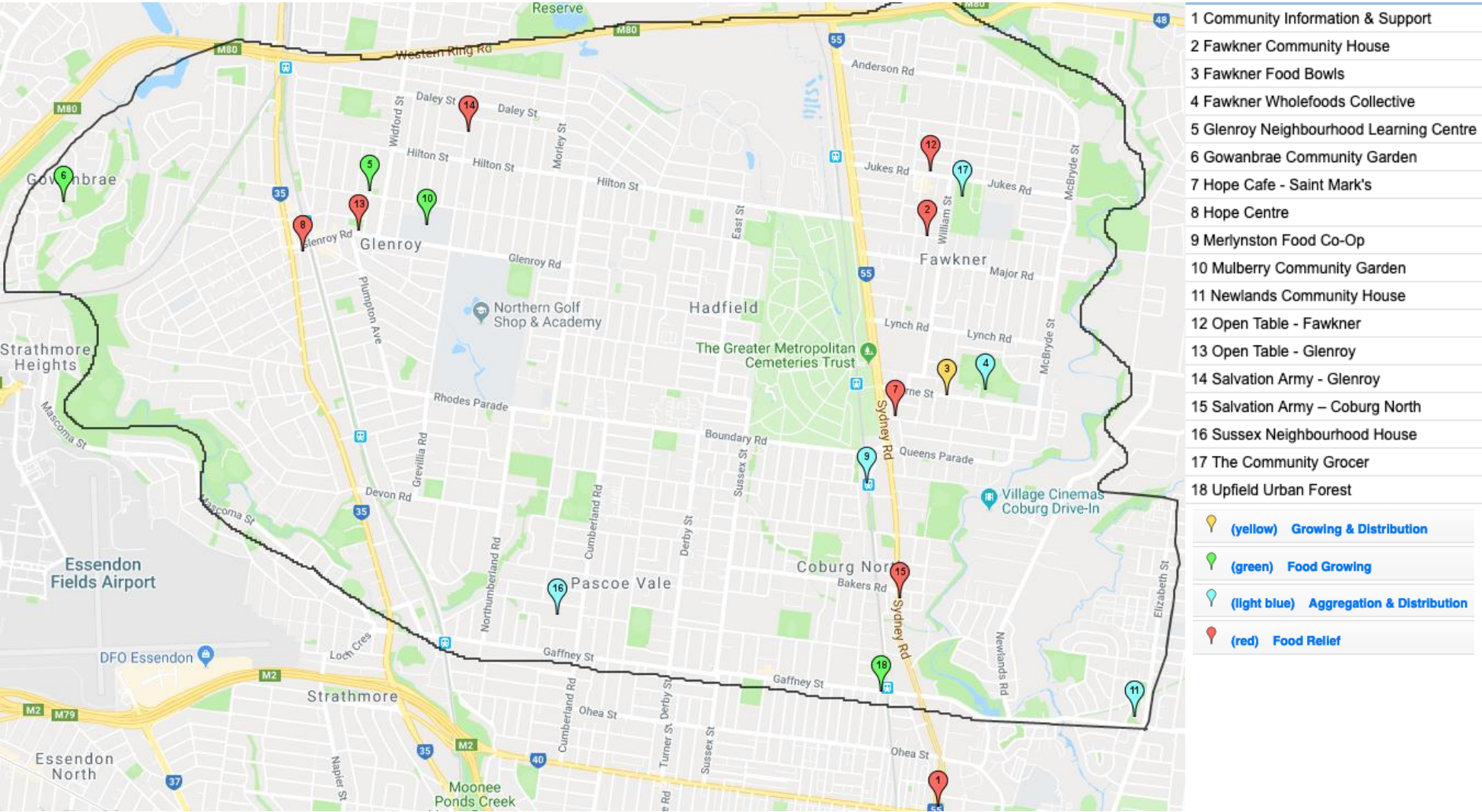
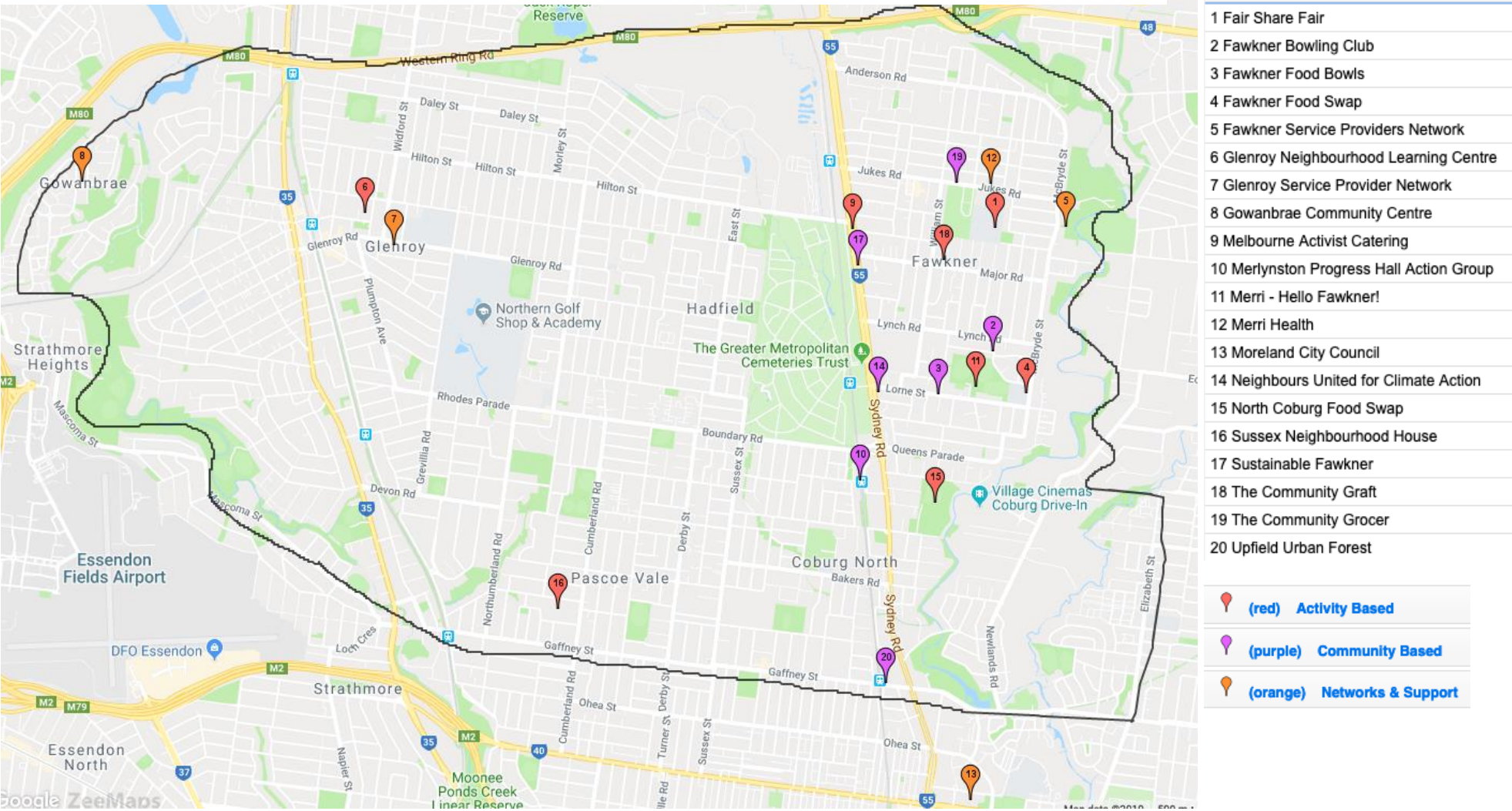


Figure 3: Map showing the location of community activation activities



## 4.1. Community Networks

The connections between groups and organisations are an important determinant in successful community development. Figure 4 shows the networks that exist between the groups interviewed in this research. These include through formal partnerships and collective activities, as well as where key individuals are involved in multiple groups. In the interest of creating a useful diagram, the following partnerships were omitted; partnership to groups not interviewed; Moreland City Council, because they have such extensive partnerships; and the Service Providers Networks, because they are a network rather than a group.

As the diagram clearly shows, Fawkner Food Bowls is the most well networked group, with ten partnerships. Merri Health, the Hello Fawkner: Great Ideas for Fawkner projects, The Community Grocer, the Fawkner Community House, Fawkner Bowls Club, Sustainable Fawkner, North Coburg Food Swap, Merlyston Food Co-op, and Open Table are also well networked, each having three or four local partnerships with food groups.

## 4.2. Public Transport Routes, Fresh Food Outlets and Registered Kitchens

Issues of access, transport and mobility are important factors determining a person's food security status. Many people experiencing food insecurity face barriers to mobility and reliance on public transport is common. Public transport routes and proximity to local shops are therefore important to consider when investigating the suitability of potential food hub locations. Registered kitchens have been mapped due to the role they could play in facilitating food related activities in the community.

Figure five shows the public transport routes in the North of Moreland.<sup>15</sup> Black lines show train lines, coloured lines show buses, green dotted lines show trams. Two train lines travel north-south, the Craigieburn travels through Oak Park and Glenroy and the Upfield line through Coburg North and Fawkner. Train lines are shown in black. There is one tram line, number 19, which terminates in Coburg North, shown by the green dotted line. The following bus lines operate: 490 in Gowanbrae; 542 in Oak Park and Glenroy; 513 in Glenroy and Pascoe Vale; 534 in Glenroy, Hadfield and Coburg North; 536 in Glenroy and Hadfield; 527 in Hadfield and Pascoe Vale; and 631 and 530 in Fawkner.

Figure six shows the local fresh food outlets, including fruit and vegetable shops, major supermarkets, small chain supermarkets and other shops selling a limited range of fresh fruit and vegetables. There are five major supermarkets, Coles, Woolworths and Aldi in Coburg North, a Woolworths in Hadfield and Coles in Glenroy. There are five small chain supermarkets (Food Works and IGAs), three in Pascoe Vale and two in Fawkner. There are four fruit and vegetable shops, two in Hadfield, one in Fawkner and one in Pascoe Vale. There are also six other outlets which likely sell a small range of fruit and vegetables, as well as other groceries. This is based on a google search and not verified.

Figure seven shows the registered kitchens. There are 18 kitchens registered with council. Three of these are community kitchens, with the rest being sports club kitchens.

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<sup>15</sup> Public Transport Victoria. [www.ptv.vic.gov.au](http://www.ptv.vic.gov.au), accessed 2019.

Figure 4: Network diagram showing community connections

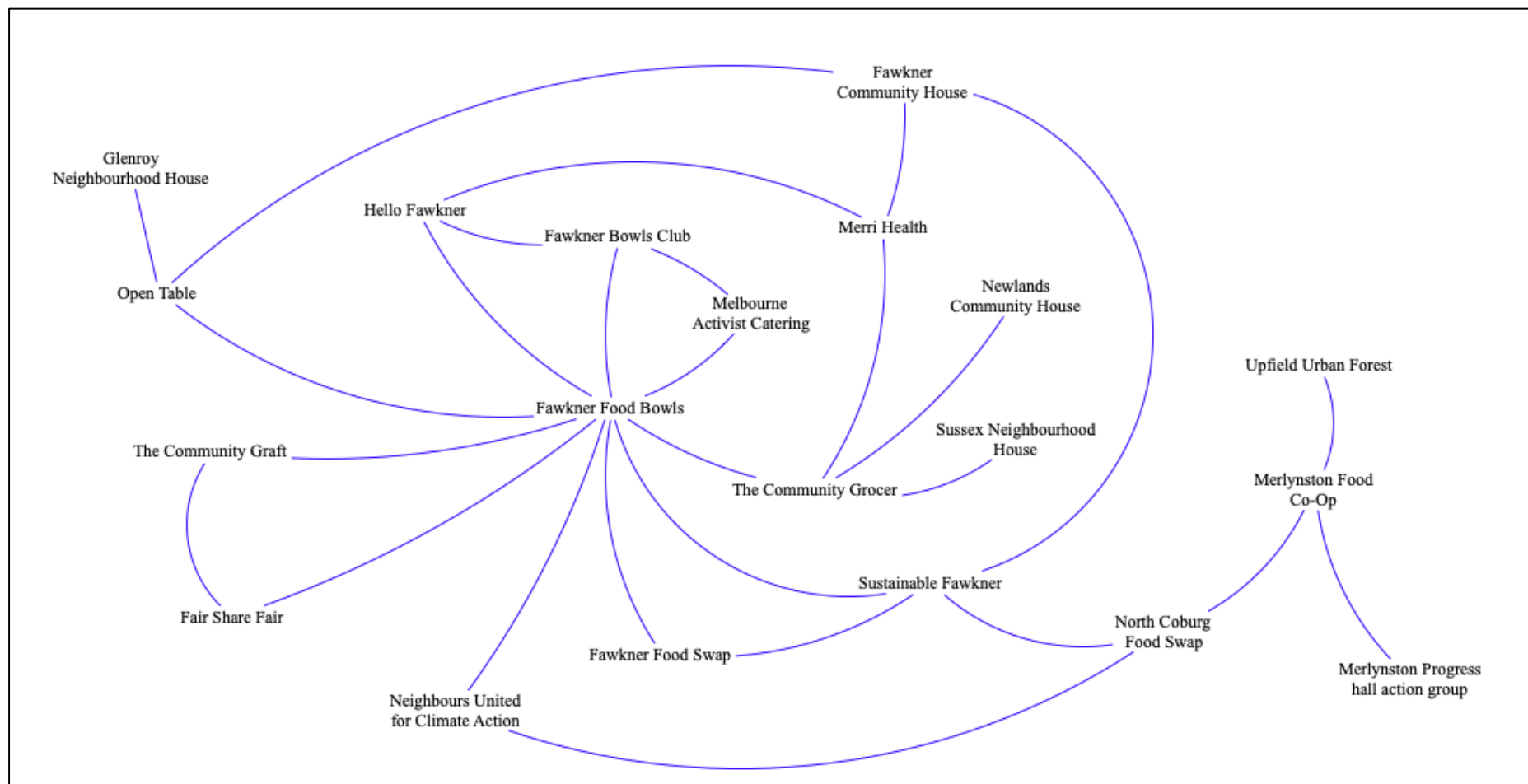


Figure 5: Public Transport Routes

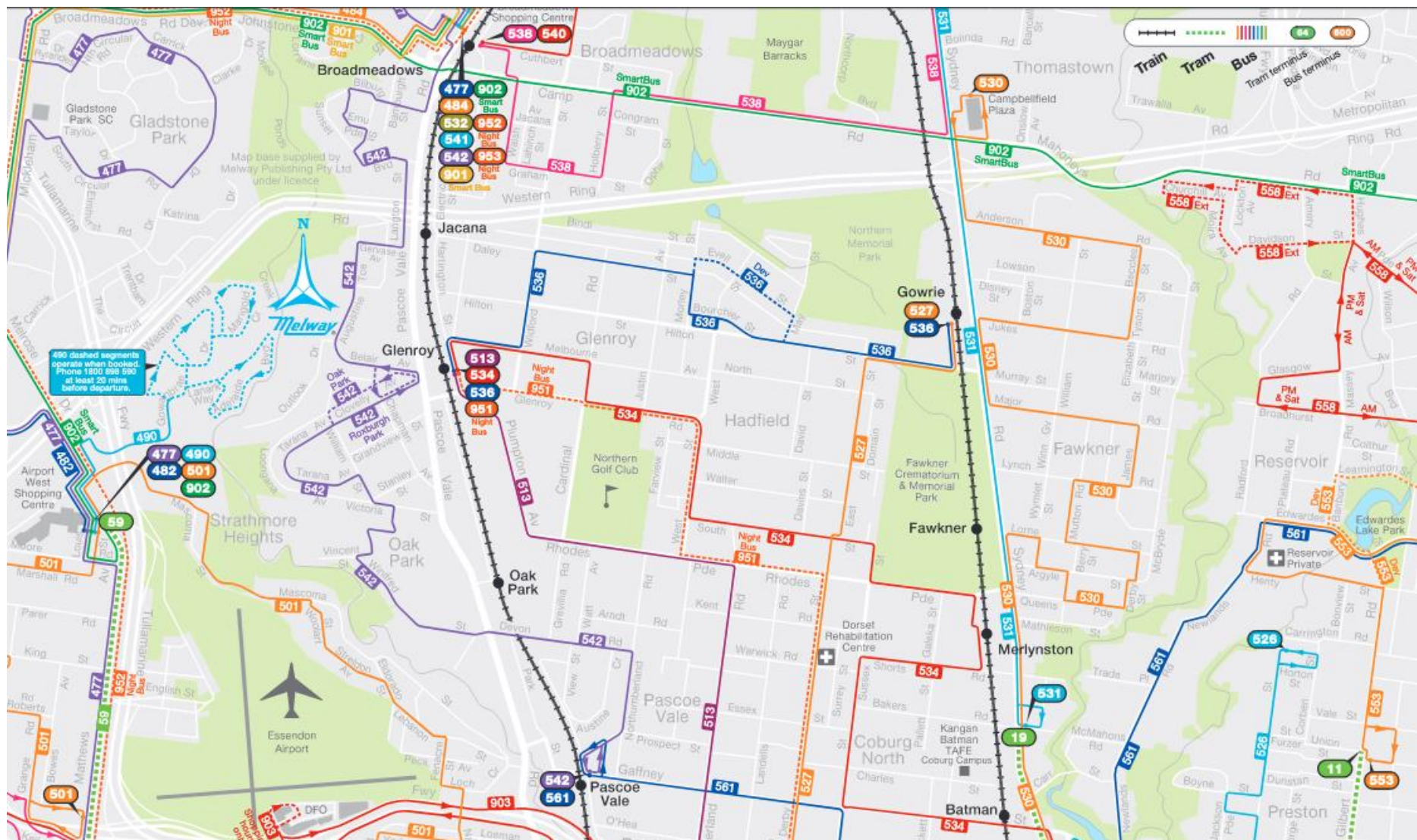


Figure 6. Local fresh food outlets

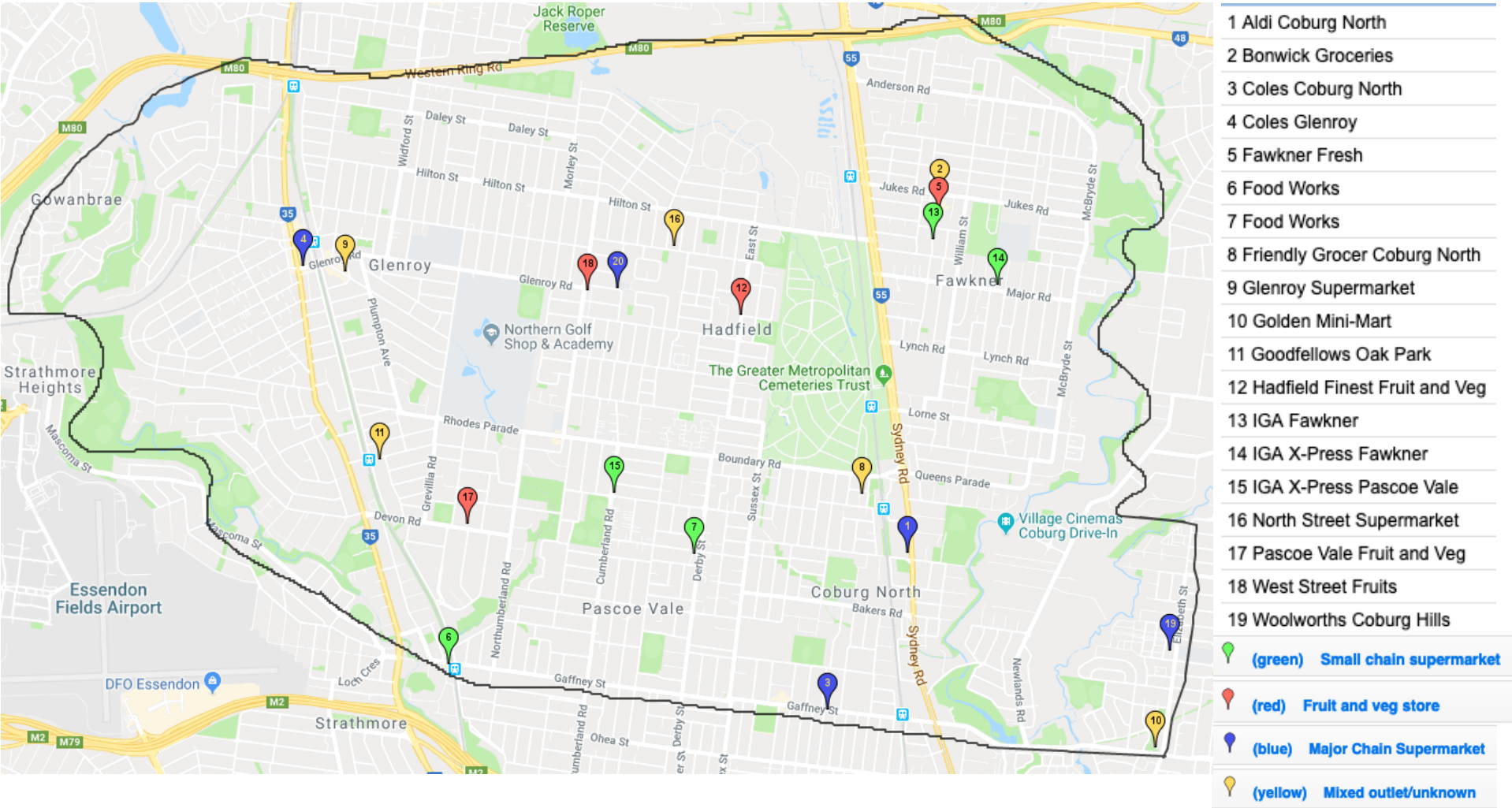
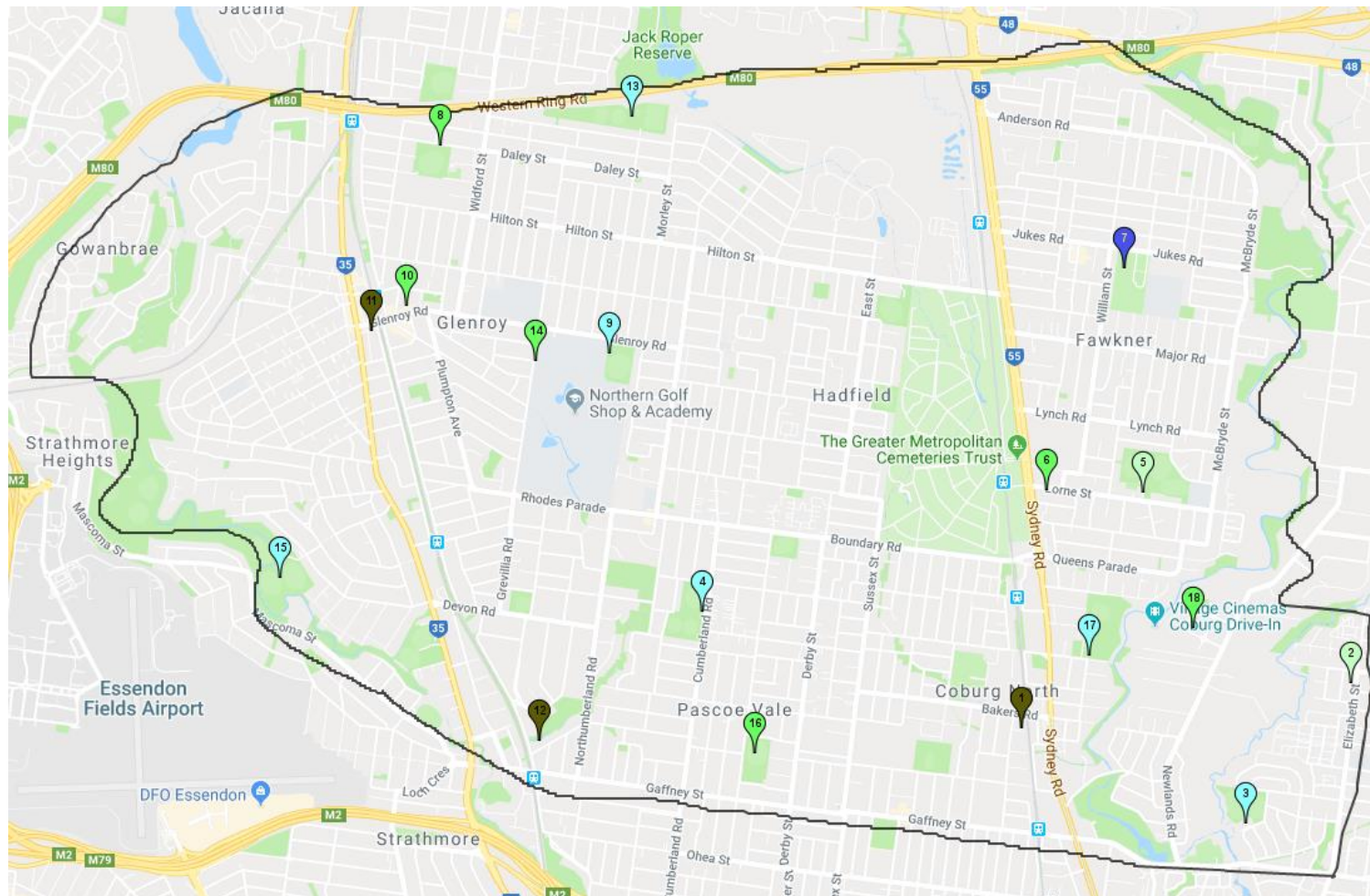


Figure 7: Registered Kitchens



- 1 Alevi Community Council
- 2 Australian Association Of Kastorians
- 3 Coburg Athletic Ground Management Committee
- 4 Coburg District Football Club Inc.
- 5 Fawknor Bowling Club Inc
- 6 Fawknor RSL
- 7 Fawknor Soccer Club
- 8 Glenroy Bowling Club
- 9 Glenroy Football and Cricket Club
- 10 Glenroy RSL
- 11 Hope Centre
- 12 Kurdish Association of Victoria
- 13 North City Wolves Soccer Club
- 14 Northern Golf Club
- 15 Oak Park Community Sports Association
- 16 Pascoe Vale Sports Club
- 17 Reservoir Rebels Baseball Club
- 18 Solarino Social Club

|  |                                       |
|--|---------------------------------------|
|  | (blue) Club Sport                     |
|  | (green) Club Licence                  |
|  | (light green) Club Licence Restricted |
|  | (light blue) Club Sport Restricted    |
|  | (olive) Community Organisation        |

## 5. Discussion

This section will discuss the relative strength of different groups, the attributes of strong communities and the further potential and opportunities that could be realised through the creation of a community food hub and support for a local, sustainable food system.

### 5.1. Strengths of Groups

We analysed the relative strength of groups using three criteria; activity categories; asset categories; and community connections. Table 4 shows the strongest groups (no. 14) based on these criteria, with a total illustrating relative strength. The strongest group is the Fawkner Food Bowls with a total of 16, followed by The Community Grocer with a total of eight. The remaining groups have a total of between five and seven.

**Table 4: Strength of Groups**

| Name                                  | No. Activity categories | No. Asset categories | No. Connections | Total |
|---------------------------------------|-------------------------|----------------------|-----------------|-------|
| Fawkner Food Bowls                    | 3                       | 3                    | 10              | 16    |
| The Community Grocer                  | 2                       | 2                    | 4               | 8     |
| Sustainable Fawkner                   | 1                       | 2                    | 4               | 7     |
| Great Ideas for Fawkner Projects      | 2                       | 2                    | 3               | 7     |
| Merri Health                          | 1                       | 2                    | 3               | 6     |
| Fawkner Community House               | 1                       | 2                    | 3               | 6     |
| Merlynston Bulk Buying Co-Op          | 1                       | 2                    | 3               | 6     |
| Fair Share Fair                       | 2                       | 2                    | 2               | 6     |
| Fawkner Bowls Club                    | 1                       | 2                    | 3               | 6     |
| North Coburg Food Swap                | 1                       | 1                    | 3               | 5     |
| Open Table                            | 1                       | 1                    | 3               | 5     |
| Merlynston Progress Hall Action Group | 1                       | 3                    | 1               | 5     |
| Sussex Neighbourhood House            | 2                       | 2                    | 1               | 5     |
| Upfield Urban Forest                  | 2                       | 2                    | 1               | 5     |

The strength of Fawkner Food Bowls lies in its breadth of activities, assets and connections. The placed-based physical asset of land for food growing is a strong enabling factor for multiple activities and community engagement, facilitated by passionate and well-connected people. This is well illustrated by the number of other strong groups associated with or co-located with The Fawkner Food Bowls, including the Fawkner Bowls Club, Sustainable Fawkner, Fair Share Fair, the Hello Fawkner: Great Ideas for Fawkner' projects.

Another two clusters of strong groups can be identified, one around Merri Health, and the other in and around Merlynston. Merri Health, driven by their strategic imperative to improve the community's health through food, were responsible for bringing The Community Grocer to Fawkner and for initiating the 'Hello Fawkner: Great Ideas for Fawkner' projects, all three of which are food projects. The cluster of groups around Merlynston is less obvious when compared with Fawkner, as there is no one physical location or central group. Instead, the groups are connected by the same people generating multiple ideas and initiatives. This clusters includes Merlynston Progress Hall Action Group, Upfield Urban Forest, North Coburg Food Swap, Merlynston Bulk Buying Co-Op, and Neighbours United for Climate Action.

## 5.2. Community Strengths

The strengths associated with the clustering of groups and activities described above illustrates the power of community connections for food related activities. We identified two core groups of people involved in the multiple groups and resident led activities clustering in two neighbourhoods; Merlynston and Fawkner.

Three key factors resulting in this clustering of activity were identified.

- (1) Community activators
- (2) Opportunity to meet and talk with like-minded people
- (3) Engaging people with a strength-based approach

Activities in these two groups were initiated by key individuals with a strong sense of agency; a unique approach to engaging others; often with an arts and/or activist background; a passion for food sovereignty; and a talent for bringing people together. These individuals play a key role in the community by seeding and maintaining activity and networks.

Engaging people with a strength-based approach means engaging people based on what they have to offer, welcoming and celebrating ideas and skills, and giving people a voice. When it is the intention of groups to do this, the result is successful community engagement. It enables the momentum of groups builds as more people are connected, new ideas are generated and gain support, and activities are initiated and sustained.

In contrast, groups without successful community engagement typically engage people on a task-orientated bases and people aren't encouraged to assume agency and don't feel valued. For example, we were told of cases where there has been a disruption to management structures and a restructuring process that led to top down decision making where community members were not consulted, programs stopped being community led, and community involvement has declined. In other cases, outside organisations have come in to run short term projects, which in themselves are valuable, however has not led to any sustained engagement or community activities. It was felt that if such project had been community designed and led, it could have facilitated more community networking, rather than remaining an isolated event.

The importance of creating diverse opportunities for people to meet and connect is illustrated by the activities that resulted from the two food networks events organised by Moreland Council. These include:

- Partnership between Fawkner Wholefood Collective, Fawkner Food Bowls & the Fawkner Bowls Club
- A formalised supply partnership between The Community Grocer and Fawkner Food Bowls
- Open Table establishing a composting arrangement with Fawkner Food Bowls
- Fawkner Food Bowls pitch for Pick My Project to become a Food Hub.

## 5.3. Opportunities

The opportunities outlined below pertain not only to those that could be realised through the creation of a community food hub, but more broadly to enabling a more sustainable food system in the North of Moreland.

### 5.3.1. Neighbourhood Houses

Neighbourhood Houses have the potential to be more active in the local community food system. All of the Neighbourhood Houses expressed a keen interest in facilitating more food related activities and have significant physical and social assets to varying degrees. Because of their multipurpose nature, these organisations would benefit from the expertise of someone involved in food systems to provide advice and help facilitate opportunities enabling community ideas to flourish. Council funding to make food projects a priority area would assist in facilitating this. For example, Sussex Neighbourhood House have a strong interest in establishing a community garden on site, as well as a large kitchen and community meeting spaces. Fawkner Community House also has a renovated kitchen and spaces for shared meals. Newland community House has a garden space and a program that is being built with local older residents.

### 5.3.2. Community Networking

As discussed above, opportunities to connect are paramount. Key community members currently play a vital role in creating opportunity for community to connect. Council could play more of a role in this space by providing more funding and support, specifically by hosting a range of events and networks. While the existing service provider networks in Glenroy and Fawkner are extremely valuable, it is felt specific networks relating to food activities and community engagement, supported and funded by council would generate more opportunities for a broader range of people to meet and connect. The types of networks suggested include; community gardens, food relief, volunteering, and food enterprises. Such networks exist in Darebin and the level of community involvement in food projects there is testament to their success.

The creation of more capacity within council dedicated to food systems and environmental sustainability would help to enable council to play a larger role in supporting food related community activities and encouraging greater community engagement. For example, The Community Engagement Reference Group is now yielding significant results - a new role in council, such as a Community Engagement Officer; a community engagement and public participation policy, with an implementation plan and framework, and the Democracy Lab project.

### 5.3.3. Food Relief

A Community Hub providing dignified, socially inclusive and quality food relief would be hugely advantageous for people experiencing food insecurity. Organisations we spoke to stressed that the main barriers to accessing services are the ever-changing criteria for access and opening times, making it hard to find up to date information and the services often feel undignified. Despite this, organisations expressed that they struggle to meet demand. A model providing a one-stop-shop with daily meals and no access criteria was recommended. Transport issues were deemed insignificant when compared with the other barriers. It was recommended the directory of services on the Moreland City Council website be updated, enabling clients and other groups to make contact more easily. Hope Centre in Glenroy also presents opportunities for further partnerships and engagement due to their innovative nature and social enterprise model. A more nuanced understanding of food security in the region, such as by understand population groups experiencing food insecurity and extend of food insecurity without hunger and conducting a price comparison using the Victorian Health Food Basket study could be advantageous.

### 5.3.4. Utilisation of Physical Assets

The importance of physical spaces to meet, cook and share food was highlighted time and time again in interviews, as was a space to aggregate and distribute food. Existing spaces with kitchens and event spaces that could be further utilised by building upon existing community groups include the Merlynston Progress Hall and Fawkner Bowls Club. Melbourne Activist Catering and Fair Share

Fair would like to build on their ventures by utilising a commercial kitchen as part of a movement towards zero waste and community resilience. The Community Grocer expressed a strong desire to have a base with cool storage and packing space which would enable a supply and distribution network of local and wholesale produce. This would facilitate increased access to more food insecure population through diversified services, while simultaneously lowering the cost of produce and increasing the quality.

### 5.3.5. A Community Food Hub

The Fawkner Food Bowls and Fawkner Bowling Club site has potential to become community food hub. This location has strong physical, social and human assets, both groups are well connected in the community and it has already become a hub of sorts, with multiple food, sustainability, and community activities occurring on a regular basis. Fawkner Food Bowls are also auspicing food projects initiated by other Fawkner residents, such as The Community Graft and Fawkner Wholefoods Collective. There is a desire from both the Fawkner Food Bowls management committee and the community for the site to become a food hub. In fact in 2018, just six months after launching, Fawkner Food Bowls proposed to establish a Food Hub in the Victorian State Government 'Pick My Project' grants and received 166 votes. 12 months on, there is much more community involvement in the Fawkner Food Bowls and support for this project.

The Bowls Club has a large hall, dining room, community kitchen, bar, cool store, sheds and storage. Most of these assets are underutilised and despite years of efforts to increase membership of the Bowls Club, the number of bowling members continue to fall. Social membership, on the other hand, is growing due to activation of the space by the Fawkner Food Bowls. The use of facilities could be renegotiated between Council and the Bowls Club, with the Bowls Club becoming a multi-use facility, with a focus on food and well-being.

## 6. Limitations

Due to time constraints we were unable to interview or make contact with several groups or pursue several lines of inquiry. Several groups known to us were not interviewed, but are listed in table 3. There may also be more groups we are yet to uncover. For example, online networks such as Good Karma networks, residents' groups, Buy Nothing New, Reduce Reuse Recycle and permaculture groups present a good opportunity to uncover activities that this research was unable to. Schools and early learning centres were not included; however, many have growing spaces and school communities are a significant community asset. CERES Fair Food Box hub houses were also not included. For profit bulk food retailers outlets were not included, because of the focus on community-based activities and fresh food. Not-for-profit bulk food organisations were included. We also struggled to find groups in Gowanbrae and Oak Park, which may in part be due to the lack of personal connections to those suburbs.

Assets categories were not made explicit to participants, rather inferred from interviews. When asked to describe the resources involved in activities participants may not have considered social assets, as this was not mentioned, while people and physical were. See Appendix one.

The process of community asset mapping can be used to promote community connection and empowerment. Due to the time limitation of this project, the project focused creating an inventory rather than generating a collaborative process. The project could be extended in several ways in order to facilitate community engagement, for example by giving the community information and access to assets; promoting relationships between community members and organisations; and provide visibility and contact details for community organisations.

## 7. Conclusion

We identified 33 community groups and organisations involved in food related activities in the North of Moreland. Approximately half of these groups are involved in food system related activities, such as food relief, the aggregation & distribution of food, and food growing. The other half is involved in food related community activation, either through specific activities, broad-based community activation, or through providing support and networks.

Fawkner Food Bowls was identified as a very strong group due to its breadth of activities, assets and connections. There are also strong community assets in Fawkner and Merlynston, where there are ten strong, active groups. The strengths associated with the clustering of groups and activities illustrates the power of community connections for food related activities. Three key factors resulting in this clustering of activity were identified; community activators; opportunity to meet and talk with like-minded people; and engaging people with a strength-based approach. The assets in these communities could be leveraged to establish a community food hub. More food related community activation in other suburbs could be facilitated by opportunities for residents to meet and connect, ensuring initiatives are community led.

## 8. Appendix

### Interview Questions

1. What is your organisation doing related to food? (Growing, processing, cooking, sharing, distribution).
2. Who is involved and what assets do they bring? (Number of people and specifics: skills, enthusiasm, time, resources, connections).
3. Can you describe any networks/connections/partnerships around food in this community?
4. Are there initiatives or opportunities you know of that would benefit from a food hub model? Please explain these?
5. Who are two other people you think I should talk to?