



Shepherd's Table
TOGETHER MEETING NEEDS. CHANGING LIVES.

Strategic Plan for 2021-2023

Approved by the Board, September 2020

Shepherd's Table: Strategic Plan, 2021-2023

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Executive Summary

Shepherd's Table has operated for 37 years as a crucial part of the Montgomery County area's response to food insecurity and homelessness. In that time, it has served over one million meals – never missing a single meal service – and provided a range of services, from clothes, to legal referrals, to eye care. The organization's decades of compassionate and welcoming meals and services reflect the work of extensive and diverse supporters, including staff, religious communities, businesses, foundations, public sector agencies, volunteers, and individual donors.

Following a two-year process of board-staff cooperation, including consultation with a wide array of community stakeholders, Shepherd's Table has developed this new Strategic Plan, to guide the period of 2021-2024.

The Plan reflects an organization that is today operationally effective, financially healthy, and well-respected. The Plan is geared toward a community that has many strengths – including a broad web of socially-focused organizations – but one that is also confronting the harsh health, social, and economic impacts of the coronavirus pandemic and the subsequent recession. Throughout its pages, this Strategic Plan includes elements of both continuity and change: a determination to continue addressing hunger and other immediate needs, but also a commitment to focus on empowerment and new ways of meeting the needs of a diverse and changing community.

The major elements of this Plan include:

- **A new, updated mission statement:** *“Our mission is to improve quality of life, create a pathway toward self-sufficiency, and inspire hope for the most vulnerable experiencing food insecurity, homelessness, and poverty. We welcome all to our community table for meals and access to social services, provided with compassion and respect.”*
- **A new, first-ever vision statement:** *“A community where lives are transformed with nourishment, empowerment and care.”*
- **A new, first-ever set of values statements:**
 - **Community:** *We strive to strengthen our community's sense of safety and solidarity. Our impact and success relies upon our ability to be inclusive, harnessing the unique perspectives of all clients, volunteers, staff, and supporters.*
 - **Acceptance:** *We welcome everyone to the Table, and believe that each person should be treated with dignity and kindness.*
 - **Reliability:** *We are a constant and trusted resource for people in need. We are committed to providing healthy meals and social services for our clients every day.*
 - **Teamwork:** *We value the ongoing collaboration, partnership and support needed to fulfill our mission. Together, we will design and implement innovative solutions to meet our community's needs.*

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- **Agreement to continue a primary focus on Shepherd's Table's legacy programs of healthy, prepared meals, and social services.** The central programs for Shepherd's Table will continue to be the daily meals program at Progress Place in Silver Spring, and operation of the Resource Center, with its clothing, mailbox, referral, eye care, and other services.
- **Agreement to pursue four new operational opportunities, in phases, as funding permits:**
 1. **Mobile Meals.** Following a successful pilot effort in Summer 2020, Shepherd's Table plans an expanded and on-going "Mobile Meals" program that will deliver hundreds of meals to locations away from Progress Place each week.
 2. **Food Garden.** Shepherd's Table plans to significantly expand the small on-site food garden it created in recent years, in order to provide a more substantial source of healthy food for its operations, as well as to provide a way for staff, volunteers, clients, and other community members to building relationships and learn food growing skills.
 3. **Advocacy.** Shepherd's Table plans to gradually expand its capacity to add its voice to policy discussions at all levels to support policies that will benefit its clients and advance its mission.
 4. **Weekend Day Program.** Once it is feasible to do so, given considerations regarding the coronavirus, Shepherd's Table plans to create daytime programs within its dining facility on weekends, in order to provide a safe, attractive, healthy location for clients to congregate and learn.

⇒ **Process for refining these initiatives.** For all four of these initiatives, staff will develop more refined operating plans and budgets, as part of the 2021 draft budget process, for consideration by the board; those materials will include estimates of each program's total annual cost, an estimate of how much new fundraising the program can likely generate, and how much each program would need to be supported by spend-down of reserves.
- **Agreement to continue exploring two additional operational opportunities for possible action during 2021-2024 or beyond, contingent on funding, feasibility, and future approvals:**
 1. **Culinary Skills Training.** Shepherd's Table will continue exploring the idea of creating a culinary skills training program, which would use the organization's food preparation facilities to prepare qualified, at-risk individuals for jobs in restaurants and other food service operations; the program could help provide some of the additional food prep work anticipated as part of the Mobile Meals program.
 2. **Commercial Food Venture.** Shepherd's Table will continue looking at the possibilities for selling prepared foods, possibly linked to the Mobile Meals concept, as a way to supplement its income and provide an additional area of opportunity for trainees.

Along with many other elements, these components of the Strategic Plan aim to help Shepherd's Table meet more needs, help more people, and play an even stronger role in fostering a caring, inclusive community. Operating in close coordination with our many partners and stakeholders, we move toward our fifth decade with a determination to help serve, heal, and empower this community we share and love.

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Strategic Planning Overview

In September 2018, following a recommendation from a June 2018 board retreat, the Shepherd's Table (ST) board created a Strategic Planning Committee comprised of board and staff members. The committee was given a 1-year timeframe, and was charged with drafting a 3-year strategic plan for 2020-2023. The committee's mandate was subsequently extended by one year, with a new focus on the 2021-2024 period. This plan is the product of that effort.

The Strategic Planning Committee includes the following staff members:

- Manny Hidalgo, ST Executive Director (Jacki Coyle until July 2019)
- Haile Gebregziabher, Director of Operations
- Jilna Kothary, Director of Development and Communications
- Evert Vargas, Director, Social Services
- Keith White, Lead Chef
- Arvid Muller, Chef

The Strategic Planning Committee includes the following board members:

- Jeremy Rosner, Committee Chair
- Tracy Mabbitt-Boone (Committee Chair through 2019)
- Susan Collet (Board Chair, ex officio on Committee)
- Jonathan Alterman
- Deborah Boger
- Dean Cooper
- Ken Farber
- Laura Henderson
- Farah Nageer-Kanthor
- Paul Kaplun
- Gary Phoebus
- Helaine Resnick
- Rachel Schaffer (board member through 2019)

This plan comes at a critical time. Our community, like the broader nation, is in the grip of the coronavirus pandemic, which has driven the economy into recession, and hit hardest on the community's most vulnerable members. Community needs related to homelessness and food insecurity have increased substantially as a result. Along with many other organizations, Shepherd's Table is a vital element of the response to the community's needs.

This plan represents a determination by Shepherd's Table to help meet the basic needs of community members during this time of crisis, as it continues its 37-year record of service and compassion. The report also marks a commitment by Shepherd's Table to evolve its operations in order to respond to new needs and opportunities in the community over the longer term.

In that spirit, the report includes an updated mission statement, a new vision statement, a new set of values statements, and a set of new operational initiatives Shepherd's Table will pursue in the coming months and years. The report is thus in part a measure of ST's evolution, with expectations that it will continue to evolve over time to play its full part in serving our community.

This report has been a deeply collaborative effort between board and staff. It benefited from hundreds of hours of work by board members and staff, including conversations with clients,

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volunteers, and funders, and interviews with stakeholders throughout the community. Shepherd's Table expresses its gratitude to all who contributed their time, effort, and ideas.

Shepherd's Table Current Operating and Organizational Overview

Shepherd's Table began in 1983 as a soup kitchen in a small Cape Cod bungalow in Silver Spring, Maryland to provide meals to people experiencing hunger and homeless in the community. It is now the only provider of 3 hot, daily meals, prepared on site, in Montgomery County. Over those 37 years, the organization has never missed a meal. To date, it has served over one million meals and has served over 62,000 unduplicated guests.

As part of a broader network of public and non-profit efforts, Shepherd's Table has been an effective resource for welcoming and serving those in need within the Silver Spring area, and is supported by volunteers, religious organizations, government, businesses, foundations, and individual donors.

Mission, Vision, and Values

The starting point for all the work of Shepherd's Table is its mission, vision, and values. This plan updates ST's mission statement, and provides a first-ever vision statement and first-ever set of values statements. The process that the board and staff pursued to develop these new statements is described in Appendix A.

Mission Statement

This Strategic Plan introduces a new and updated mission statement for Shepherd's table:

*"Our mission is to improve quality of life, create a pathway toward self-sufficiency, and inspire hope for the most vulnerable experiencing food insecurity, homelessness, and poverty. We welcome all to our community table for meals and access to social services, provided with compassion and respect."*¹

Vision Statement

This Strategic Plan introduces a new, first-ever vision statement for Shepherd's Table:

"A community where lives are transformed with nourishment, empowerment and care."

Values Statements

This plan also introduces a new, first-ever set of values statements intended to define the core values that drive the operations, internal culture, and external services of Shepherd's Table:

- **Community:** *We strive to strengthen our community's sense of safety and solidarity. Our impact and success relies upon our ability to be inclusive, harnessing the unique perspectives of all clients, volunteers, staff, and supporters.*

¹ The previous Shepherd's Table mission statement was: *"Shepherd's Table's mission is to provide help to people who are homeless or in need by providing basic services, including meals, social services, medical support, clothing, and other assistance in an effective and compassionate manner."*

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- **Acceptance:** *We welcome everyone to the Table, and believe that each person should be treated with dignity and kindness.*
- **Reliability:** *We are a constant and trusted resource for people in need. We are committed to providing healthy meals and social services for our clients every day.*
- **Teamwork:** *We value the ongoing collaboration, partnership and support needed to fulfill our mission. Together, we will design and implement innovative solutions to meet our community's needs.*

Organizational Structure, Staffing, and Governance

Shepherd's Table, a 501(c)3 entity chartered in Maryland, is a direct service non-profit organization that provides food and social support services to people free of charge.

Staff Overview: ST currently has a staff of 18; 15 are full-time employees. Shepherd's Table's executive leadership team is comprised of:

- Executive Director (ED) (1 year; The current ED assumed this position in July 2019 following the departure of the previous ED, who served in this capacity for 15 years.)
- Director of Operations (11 years)
- Director of Development and Communications (5 years)
- Director of Resource Center (12 years)

The program team is comprised of:

- Resource Center Associate (1 year)
- Lead Chef (4 years)
- Chef (5 years)
- Chef (3 years)
- Part-time Chef (few months)
- Volunteer Coordinator (few months)
- Senior Program Assistant (5 years)
- Program Assistant (2 years)
- Program Assistant PT (4 years)
- Receptionist (few months)
- Bookkeeper (3.5 years)

The Development and Communications team is comprised of the Director, a Development Associate (few months), a Communications Associate (few months) and a part-time Donor Relations Associate (1 year).

ST employs multiple off-duty police officers to provide hourly security support during meal service and has one on-call chef and one on-call Resource Center Associate. ST also works with the Gelman, Rosenberg & Freedman consulting firm to provide audit support, and Lumix Accounting for accounting support.

Shepherd's Table provides health and life insurance benefits for staff, as well as vacation and sick leave. Staff evaluation practice includes a 90-day probationary and assessment period for new staff and an annual performance review which is conducted by the direct supervisor and

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Executive Director. Annual salary increases are based on both merit and cost of living considerations.

Volunteer Overview: In addition to staff, Shepherd's Table relies on the active support of volunteers to ensure service delivery in all its programs. In 2018, ST installed an online volunteer database to electronically track volunteers and manage volunteer sign up. Based on 2019 data, there were roughly 2,500 volunteers who supported ST during the year, providing a total of 28,425 hours of service. These figures were virtually unchanged from 2018. Most of the meal service volunteers, especially for dinner, come with a group from a local religious organization, business, or social group.

Board Overview: The ST Board is currently comprised of 24 standing members, one of whom serves as the Board Chair. Board membership includes the following requirements:

Financial: Minimum annual in cash or in kind donation in the amount of \$1,000 and purchase of tickets to attend ST's two annual fundraising events

Attendance: In person or via phone attendance at all 6 board meetings/year (every odd month)

Committee participation: Membership and active participation in at least one of the five standing Board committees Executive, Finance, Strategic Development, Personnel, and Board Development. Board members are also expected to participate in time-bound committees such as the Strategic Planning committee and committees that support the organization's fundraising efforts.

Recruitment and terms: Board members are appointed for a 3-year term with the possibility of renewal for a second term. Six of the current 24 members are in their final year and seven are in their first year. Board recruitment occurs annually. It begins in October and includes a call for applications between October-November, phone screening of top applicants between November-December, and nominating of new members at the January board meeting. A ½ day orientation for new board members is organized by the Board Development committee in February. A list of current board members is in Appendix C.

Development and Finance

Shepherd's Table seeks to operate on a break-even basis and has operated this way for, at least, the past 7 years. Its projected revenue and expenses for the 2020 budget period, January-December, are each \$1.508 million (both revenues and expenses exclude contributions and expenses that come from in-kind contributions). The organization's annual reports, audited financials, and federal 990 forms are available on the [Shepherd's Table website](#).

Personnel costs (including salary and benefits) account for roughly 70% of the operating expenses. Fringe benefits for staff include medical and life insurance, vacation, and sick leave. ST does not pay rent or maintenance costs as these are covered under a 5-year non-compete grant from the Montgomery County government. Based on audited 2019 financials, the majority of the organizational budget, 73%, is focused on program/service delivery; 17% on fundraising,

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administration, and overhead. Shepherd's Table has the following revenue sources (based on unaudited FY2019):

Individual (2,000+ people):	38%
Foundation grants:	24%
Montgomery Co. grants:	14%
Corporate:	10%
Religious organizations:	6%
Workplace giving:	2%

Shepherd's Table usually organizes two major annual community fundraising events. In 2008, Shepherd's Table began hosting an annual Spring fundraising event. There are three main features of the event: a silent auction, a live auction, and the wall of wine. The scale and yield of this event have grown since its inception. In 2011, the event raised \$9,000 and in 2019, it raised \$170,000. ST began an annual Fall fundraising event in 2017 to support the costs of the expanded 3 meals/day meal service. While the format for this event has varied over the 2 years since it started, it has included a live auction. The event raised \$122,000 in 2017 and \$163,000 in 2018. The Spring event in 2020 was conducted online due to limitations created by the coronavirus pandemic.

Starting in 2016, ST launched a three-year "It's a New Day Campaign." The purpose was to raise operating expenses for 2016, 2017, 2018, and an additional amount to create an operating expense reserve "Sustainability Fund," in part to backstop the expanded food service program at the new Progress Place. The campaign did not raise its total goal of \$5 million, but ST did raise the funds need to support operating expenses for an expanded program. ST did not solicit additional gifts for the campaign after 2017.

During 2019-2020, the organization adopted new policies regarding its operating reserves, designed to ensure financial stability and strength in the face of an uncertain economic environment. The organization authorized and fully funded an operating expense reserve fund equal to six months of operating expenses, plus 50% of its capital costs. And it adopted policies regarding any excess reserves, designed to ensure a balance among the imperatives of board oversight, strategic planning, and operational flexibility for the staff in meeting community needs.

Service Location

Shepherd's Table has a single brick-and-mortar location at Progress Place at 8106 Georgia Avenue in downtown Silver Spring, MD. ST moved to this location in December 2016 with support from Montgomery County. The building is owned by the County and ST holds a contract to operate on site for the annual rental payment of \$1.00.

Shepherd's Table shares the Progress Place building with two other non-profits, Interfaith Works and Mobile Med. Shepherd's Table services operate on the first and third floors of the building. The first floor houses the kitchen, dining room, and Resource Center while the Clothing Closet and administrative offices are located on the third floor. The Eye Clinic operates out of the 2nd floor of the Progress Place building and is part of the Medical Suite where Mobile Med's medical clinic is housed.

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Since the spring of 2018, Shepherd's Table has engaged in ongoing discussions with neighbors in the surrounding Silver Spring neighborhood about how to make the community more safe, clean, and welcoming for all. The discussions have included Interfaith Works, two civic associations, the Greater Silver Spring Chamber of Commerce, the Silver Spring Regional Center and Red Shirts, the 4th District Police, Montgomery Preservation, the Silver Spring Library, and several other government agencies. Several members of the County Council have also attended meetings of the group, and most of the members have toured the Progress Place facility.

While challenges remain, the group has had a number of successes, including modification of alcohol sales practices by a nearby store; improved monitoring, cleaning, lighting, and art under the CSX bridge; and authorization of \$356,000 of County funds in FY20 for security cameras and increased security staffing. This funding will also allow the Progress Place bathroom facilities to remain open continuously (thus increasing personal dignity and reducing inappropriate toileting in the area), and will provide for installation of an outdoor gathering space for Shepherd's Table guests and others (thus providing healthy outdoor relaxation space and lessening blockage of sidewalks etc.).

Programs and Services

Shepherd's Table provides three types of services:

- Prepared meals
- Social services
- Medical services

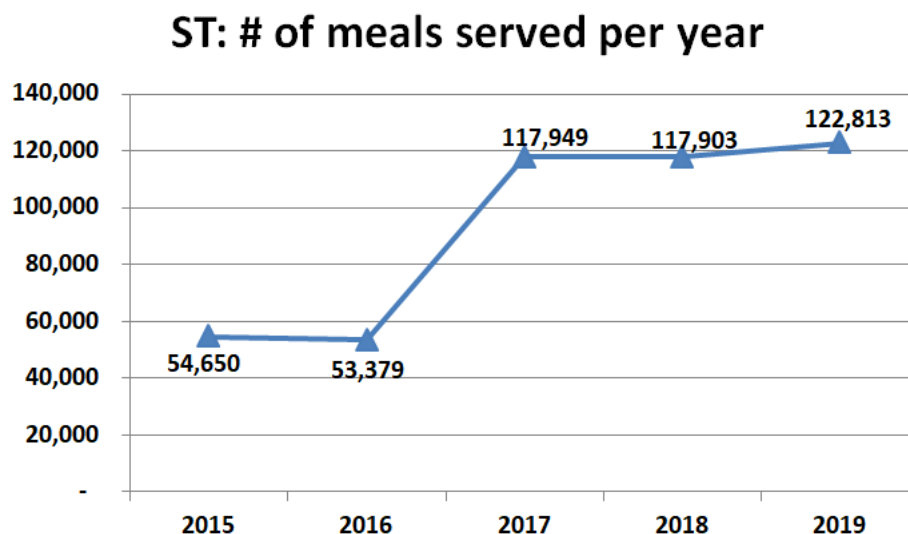
Meal Service

Shepherd's Table's largest program is its meal program. Prior to 2017, ST provided 9 meal services a week: dinner M-F, and brunch and dinner on each of the weekend days. At the end of 2016, when ST moved into its new facility, the meal service expanded to 19 meal services a week, with the addition of daily hot breakfast and lunch meals during the week.

All meals are prepared on site by one of three full-time chefs and a team of volunteers. Ingredients for meals are obtained in a few major ways: weekly donations of fresh vegetables and fruits from farms and farmers markets; donations from local businesses, community members, and individuals; and food purchased from US Foods. ST also obtains food, mainly casseroles, prepared by members of the community, which helps supplement the food prepared by ST Chefs.

ST also participates in the Community Food Rescue program, a coordinated food rescue program of Manna Food Center. In-kind contributions of food, in 2019, totaled \$438,514. As the Figure below shows, in 2017 – Shepherd's Table's first full year at the Progress Place location – it served 117,949 meals. By 2019, that figure grew to 122,813 meals. By comparison, Shepherd's Table served only 55,379 meals in 2016, the year before its move to the new location. Currently, on an average night, ST serves dinner to over 140 individuals.

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ST serves meals to anyone who comes through its doors at mealtime. There are no residency or demographic requirements, and no requirement to show identification. The food service is open to families and children as well as adults, however, the majority of those served are single adults.

Changes in response to the coronavirus pandemic. Starting on March 16, 2020, in response to the pandemic, Shepherd's Table made a series of changes to its food service operation:

- It moved meals to a pick-up basis, with clients receiving take-away meals outside the facility. ST installed a tent and a few tables in the parking lot, to provide a place for people to sit and eat their meals, in addition to allowing them to sit anywhere in the parking lot.
- ST reduced the meal service to brunch and dinner every day, with bag lunches available for takeaway.
- ST also provided meals for others in need, such as homebound seniors and another community in DC that would come by and pick up the pre-packaged meals.
- On a pilot basis in June, ST initiated a Mobile Meals program, "Beyond the Table." This program delivered a limited number of meals, three days a week, for 3 weeks, in the Aspen Hills neighborhood. For one week, in collaboration with a Prince George's County Councilmember, Shepherd's Table provided meals at three different PG locations on three days.

Social Services

ST's second largest program is the provision of social services. These services include those provided by the Resource Center and the Clothes Closet. The Resource Center provides:

- Information and referrals
- Mail and address assistance
- Prescription assistance

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- Transportation and toiletries assistance
- Pro-bono legal and appearance assistance

The Resource Center is open every day and staffed by the Director of Social Services and trained volunteers. The Resource Center provides information/referrals; toiletries; access to phones; bus tokens to travel to shelters and medical appointments; address support so that guests can receive their mail at Shepherd's Table; and prescription assistance. Guests can also access pro-bono services from lawyers, barbers, and others through the Resource Center. ST has been offering pro bono legal services to guests for approximately 15 years.

In 2017, the Resource Center served 1,788 unduplicated individuals, and 1,884 in 2018. This compares to 1,618 unduplicated individuals in 2016. Over the 2017-18 year, this program has seen a rise in the number of guests seeking assistance on a daily basis. A quantitative summary of the services provided by the Resource Center during this time period is as follows:

Description of service	2017-18 Deliverables
Mail collection	30,051 pieces of mail collected
Prescription assistance	144 guests served
Financial assistance to fill prescription	346 prescriptions filled
Eye clinic exams	232 exams provided to guests
Prescription eye glasses	228 eye glasses provided
Bus tokens	3,694 tokens provided (duplicated)
Haircuts	98 guests served
Legal assistance	85 guests served
Total volunteer hours over 12-month period	28,474 hours

ST also offers a weekly Clothing Closet program, where adult guests can obtain clean, seasonally appropriate clothing, shoes, and accessories in good condition. Guests can choose an outfit from head to toe, including accessories, and each person receives a new pair of socks and underwear. This service is provided once a week on Wednesdays for 2 hours and is staffed by a Program Assistant and volunteers.

The Director of Facilities, IT, and Food Service oversees this program. ST obtains supplies for the Clothing Closet exclusively from donations by members of the community. The Clothing Closet provided 2,740 shopping instances in 2017, and 2,607 instances in 2018. This compares with 6,493 instances in 2016. This marked decrease in the number of guests obtaining services at the Clothing Closet has been attributed to the fact that the space in the new facility at Progress Place is considerably smaller than the space at the previous location which prevents ST from also providing children's clothing and household items.

Changes in response to the coronavirus pandemic: The Resource Center remained open 5 days a week, for 3 hours per day, during the pandemic. The services remained the same, adding PPE to its list of hygiene items it distributed. The Clothes Closet had to close, as the room it is located in is very small and indoors.

Medical Services

Shepherd's Table has Montgomery County's only free Eye Clinic. A certified optometrist provides eye exams and prescription eye glasses to patients that are eligible for the service.

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These services are provided at a discounted price to Shepherd's Table, which pays for the optometrist's services and glasses for guests. The eye clinic operates 2-3 times a month, and is currently staffed by Dr. Bernetta Davis. ST has provided this service since 1999. This is the only service provided by ST that has prerequisites for accessing the service. To access eye clinic services, guests must: be a Montgomery County resident; be at least 18 years of age; lack vision insurance; and have a household income below 175% of the Federal Poverty Guidelines.

Shepherd's Table frequently receives referrals from providers across the County for this program. While Shepherd's Table does not track how many referrals it receives, staff estimate that approximately 90% of those referred are identified as eligible and about 60% will call to make an appointment.

In 2017, ST provided 266 eye exams, and 260 eye glasses. This number declined slightly to 232 eye exams and 228 eye glasses in 2018. Dr. Davis also provides referrals to ophthalmologists or other providers based on the client's needs. When Dr. Davis refers guests to specialists, ST does not routinely follow up with the client, but will do so if requested by the specialist. ST's eye clinic referred 34 people for related services in 2018, 46 in 2017, 50 in 2016, and 63 in 2015.

Changes in medical services in response to the coronavirus pandemic: The Eye Clinic closed in response to the pandemic, to ensure the safety of the clients, as well as the doctor, who is in a high-risk category.

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A summary of findings from the completed staff surveys is presented below in the SOAR framework.

<p><u>Strengths</u></p> <p><i>What services/characteristics set ST apart from sister organizations?</i></p> <p>Staff specific:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Employees are valued and supported • Organizational culture is strong <p>Program specific:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • One-stop shop • Guests [are] treated with respect • “Leads with heart” when making decisions • Drive, passion to serve the community each and every day • The food is on another level • The number of meals • The building • Serving the community no matter what 	<p><u>Opportunities</u></p> <p><i>What can ST change and/or leverage for success?</i></p> <p>Staff specific:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Continued support of volunteers and partnerships • Increased help in the kitchen, include training guests to work in the kitchen • Need to restructure management of the organization to improve in the future • Maintain efforts to reach out to and thank donors • Increased training for staff and support growth <p>Program specific:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provide additional haircuts and backpacks to guests
<p><u>Aspirations</u></p> <p><i>What can a future ST look like/how can ST challenge the status quo?</i></p> <p>Staff specific:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 100% volunteer coordinator, not split with development • Sous chef to support chefs in kitchen <p>Program specific:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • On site health care for guests • Changes in security are needed for stronger future • Transportation partnerships would strengthen program • Stronger relationships with Marriott, Walmart- to increase funding and sustained funding • Housing, employment, skills-learning – add these programs that offer longer-term solutions • Increase advocacy efforts and share impact of the organization being on the frontlines 	<p><u>Results</u></p> <p><i>How will ST know it has achieved aspirations and/or is achieving mission?</i></p> <p>ST specific:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Improved communications within the organization • Alignment of all staff on shared direction and approaches of the organization • Maintenance of open door policy with leadership • Treatment of all staff equally <p>Program specific:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Continue to put the needs of guests first • Healthier meal options • Programs that offer long-term solutions are included in programming • Sustained and diversified funding

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Shepherd's Table Board of Directors

2019 Board Survey Summary:

In June 2019, the strategic planning committee conducted a survey of the 24 Board members which yielded 14 responses. Survey results were collected anonymously online via SurveyMonkey. There were 10 open-ended survey questions that broadly fit into three categories: "Kudos for ST"; "Opportunities"; and "Looking Ahead." The survey questions and format mirrored that of the 2019 Staff Survey.

The Word Cloud below shows board member feedback to the question: "These three words describe why I am proud to be a part of Shepherd's Table."



A summary of findings from the completed board member surveys is presented below in the SOAR framework.

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Strengths

What services/characteristics set ST apart from sister organizations?

Program-specific:

- Meals and other services available to anyone
- High quality, nutritious, tasty daily hot meals
- Non-judgmental, welcoming hospitality
- Commitment to the community and compassion and respect for guests

Organization culture-specific:

- Mature organization, with a well-developed set of operating procedures for delivering its very substantial services
- Very strong network of support from the County, donors, religious organizations, etc.
- Willingness to build and improve on current success; not willing to stay idle, but explore opportunities to better serve or serve more citizens
- Demonstrated reliability in serving the needs of the homeless and the hungry
- Huge heart for the homeless and hungry in our community
- Unity of purpose
-

Opportunities

What can ST change and/or leverage for success?

Board member specific:

- Identify board member specific skills (that would add value to ST) and match with unique role on the board in order to maximize board member benefit to ST
- Greater staff-board partnerships
- Increased understanding of the operation and finances of ST
- Develop more concrete and proactive ways of engaging board in organizational needs from the start (recruitment and orientation)
- More one-on-one training by the staff of board members focused on increasing fundraising skills among Board
- Create a repository of reference materials, including past Board materials-to avoid continuous re-invention of efforts.

Organization specific:

Mission/Vision

- Critical review of whether nutrition is the central mission of ST and, if yes, are we meeting standards
- Examine unexploited opportunities in Bethesda, Rockville, etc. as a MoCo-based organization
- Is ST playing as conscious a role as it could in getting folks into a more stable situation?
- Intentional focus on identifying who ST is not serving and how ST can reach them
- Engagement in local and state legislation affecting hunger, food, & homelessness
- If ST's goal is to serve the needs of people experiencing hunger in the county, we need to critically examine what % of the current programs is meeting the county-wide need.
- Can ST provide bathrooms and shower facilities to guests?

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- What is ST's role in making everyone feel safe overnight?

Partnerships-

- Collaborate with and coordinate efforts with partners in DC and PG county
- Outreach to other smaller food programs (church-based, etc.); leaders of other cultural communities; homeless youth to better identify remaining gaps
- Strengthen partnership with Interfaith Works, Catholic Charities
- Need stronger partnerships with food service organizations and distributors

Funding

- Explore funding from SAMHSA

Leadership

- Opportunity to improve organizational structure with new ED

Program specific:

- Adjust menu to address specific dietary needs based on cultural, religious, medical needs of majority of guests.
- Identify other ways to welcome people between/after meals, when they come to resource center
- Identify alternatives to feeding people who work and/or cannot attend meals (eg. Bags of food)?
- Include programs and services for families, including children
- Provide job search, interviewing, and training skills as well as career counseling and resume help
- Programs that link guests with housing (leverage ST's contact with guests to serve as a bridge to housing and other social services that can support their stability)
- Increase dental services and ability to provide ID cards
- Directly connect guests with detox, AA, substance use, mental health, etc. programs
- Increase publicity about Resource Center

Aspirations

What can a future ST look like/how can ST challenge the status quo?

Organization specific:

- Closer working relationship with local and state partners
- Explore corporate funding
- 'Next steps' for guests are more obvious when they come for meals
- ST explores policies that promote availability of service-sector jobs for guests
- More strategic management, willingness to experiment
- Prioritization of data collection and evaluation to support improved programming, expanding funding, and strengthening partnerships
- Improved security in and around building
- Engage in a detailed mapping of the other key social service organizations in Montgomery County (and emerging populations like LGBTQI youth) so that ST has a more precise and informed idea of who does what, when and how. This could help ST figure out where there are gaps that it makes sense for ST to fill, and where it's most strategic to make referrals to other organizations.
- Renew commitment to Table of Friends to engage more with larger individual donors/consider raising the threshold from \$500 to \$1000

Program specific:

- Try running AA/NA meetings out of Progress Place

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- Explore some training programs so that guests can get experience in food services, cooking, gardening, etc. Economic empowerment and building marketable skills needs to be explored.
- Provide services in other locations to reach those who don't walk through the door
- Focus on hungry children; explore partnerships with local schools and food-growing organizations
- Increase services for immigrant population
- Three meal a day service, translation help, strong financial position are maintained

Results

How will ST know it has achieved goals and/or is achieving mission?

Organization specific:

Mission/Vision

- ST has clearly articulated and publicized vision and plan for growing and transforming the organization
- A 3-5 year strategic plan is in place
- Policy advocacy at local and state levels integrated as part of organizational priorities

Staff

- ST staff at all levels demonstrate shared energy for organizational initiatives and are high quality, happy, and motivated

Partnerships

- ST has established strong partnerships with innovative programs that address the root causes of the poverty, joblessness, and homelessness experienced by ST guests-and tracks outcome and impact of these partnerships.
- Closer relationships with Silver Spring Council are established
- Increased community outreach, to garner support from 'neighbors' who may have voiced concerns about the guests and activity taking place around the building
- Volunteers more strategically organized and engaged as donors

Funding

- Increased funding and funding sources are more stable and guaranteed
- Endowment program in place
- Spring and Fall fundraisers are refreshed and improved
- Core corporate supporters are cultivated (e.g. Geico)
- ST has a more robust and well-financed communications program (e.g., more frequent website updates and periodic mailings to donors)

Programming

- Geographic footprint of ST expanded
- Different models of food service established
- Food service established as a doorway to assisting guests to move out of poverty situation

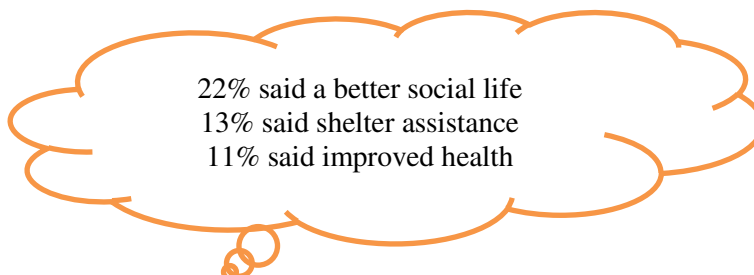
Shepherd's Table Guests

Each year, ST conducts an in-person survey of its guests, as part of a regional "point in time" analysis of homelessness. The most recent such survey was conducted in January 2020, but results for ST are only available from the previous survey, conducted May 2019. This survey was conducted during the course of a single day for all guests who opted in during ST's breakfast, lunch, and dinner service. The survey was available in English and Spanish and

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administered by staff, board members, and volunteers. Guests were able to complete the survey once and ST collected 126 results. There were 24 survey questions that broadly fit into three categories: Kudos for ST, Opportunities for improving ST services, and Looking Ahead.

The call-out below shows guest responses to the survey question “what changes have occurred in your life as a result of the services provided by ST over the last year”:



A brief summary of guest feedback related to their relationship with Shepherd's Table is presented below.

- 38% of respondents have been coming to ST for 1-5 years and 28% for 6+ years
 - 67% of respondents said it was easy to access services at ST and 78% reported feeling safe both inside and outside of ST
 - 51% found out about ST via word of mouth and 37% come to ST 7 days/week
 - Dinner service, the Clothes Closet, and Resource Center ranked 1st-3rd, respectively, of services most utilized by guests
- In a 1-5 point rating scale, 61% of respondents rate their experience with ST higher than that of sister organizations.

A summary of the completed guest surveys is presented below in the SOAR framework.

<p>Strengths <i>The services/characteristics that set ST apart from sister organizations</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Food • Communication • Counseling • Easy to access services • “what you’re doing now is great” 	<p>Opportunities <i>Resources/strategies that ST can leverage for success</i></p> <p><i>Vis a vis what guests think ST can improve</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Better handling the line outside • Provide hand sanitizer • Provide job assistance/training
<p>Aspirations <i>Strengths ST can build on that would challenge the status quo</i></p> <p><i>Vis a vis what guests want more of from ST</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provide brochures to other non-profits and link to other service providers • Provide job readiness, job placement and skills training like computers • Provide a good attorney • Increased transportation assistance • Community involvement 	<p>Results <i>How ST will know it has achieved aspirations</i></p> <p><i>Vis a vis guest responses to their goals over the next year</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Housing (58%) • Job (48%) • Food security (22%)

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<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Better access to Clothes Closet; provision of professional clothes; shoes• More help with housing assistance***• Case management support• Increase computer access	
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External Community Needs and Perceptions of ST

This section presents an overview of the external environment in which ST operates. The external environment includes the scope of community needs related to ST's mission (particularly hunger, homelessness, and poverty); the constellation of organizations that address these needs along with ST; and perceptions of ST among key *external* stakeholders. The data collection methods used for developing this section are summarized in Appendix B.

External Community Needs

Shepherd's Table provides services that intersect with three cross-cutting sets of challenges: homelessness, food insecurity, and poverty. All three of these challenges have intensified considerably – in this community, as well as nationally – after the onset of the early 2020 coronavirus pandemic and the subsequent economic recession. Authoritative local-level data on the post-pandemic changes are scarce, given the recentness of these events, and the figures below represent the best available data at this point.

Homelessness

Prior to the coronavirus pandemic, Montgomery County has experienced a period of some progress on homelessness. Figure 1 shows the results of the “point in time” survey that is conducted annually by the County in conjunction with the Metropolitan Washington Council of Governments and federal agencies. The most recent survey was conducted on January 22, 2020, just before the pandemic hit.

The 2020 results show there were 670 homeless people in the County at that time. This represented a 32% decline from the 2016 figure of 981, although after several years of decline the 2020 figure was up slightly, 4%, from the 2019 total. The biggest drop from 2018-20, in terms of both numbers and percent, was among persons in families, as opposed to individuals. Despite in the total 2020 figure, the annual point-in-time surveys suggest – at least until the onset of the pandemic – that the per-capita incidence of homelessness across the county and broader region has declined, even as total population has increased.

Figure 1: Number of homeless in Montgomery Co., January 2020 point-in-time survey

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Number of Unsheltered Individuals 2018-2020					
Category	2018	2019	2020	Percent Change 2018 to 2020	Percent Change 2019 to 2020
Total Number Counted	840	647	670	-20%	4%
Total Individuals	568	441	487	-14%	10%
Total Number of Families	86	61	60	-30%	-2%
Total Persons in Families	278	206	183	-34%	-11%
Total Adults in Families	93	76	70	-25%	-8%
Total Children in Families	185	130	113	-39%	-13%

In the report on the 2019 point-in-time survey, the County provided the following reasons for the drop in homelessness in the preceding years as follows: "This continued decline in homelessness can be attributed to the reallocation of funding toward permanent housing and the Inside (not Outside) campaign to end chronic homelessness. As providers have removed barriers to housing, including obtaining birth certificates, income, and required abstinence time, Montgomery County has prioritized the most vulnerable and got them in housing."

Across the greater metro area in 2019 (data not available for Montgomery County alone), among the *single adult homeless*, 70% were male, 73% were African American (even though African Americans account for only 25% of the region's total population), with 21% white; 8% were Hispanic (which may include both white and non-white individuals); 7% were age 18-24.

Among adults in *families* experiencing homelessness, the population is much more female, with women accounting for 80% of such homeless adults; this population is also younger, with 26% ages 18-24, and 43% are age 25-35; and it is even more heavily African American, 86%.

Across the region, 22% of adult homeless (both single adults and adults in families) were employed; 70% of adults in homeless families reported having some form of income, but only 53% of homeless adult individuals.

The Montgomery County Interagency Commission on Homelessness oversees the County's efforts in this area; MCICH's efforts are focused on four goals:

- Sustaining "Functional Zero" for veteran homelessness
- Finish the job of ending chronic homelessness by the end of 2017
- Prevent and end homelessness for families, youth, and children by 2020
- Set a path to ending all types of homelessness

In January 2016, Montgomery County committed to ending chronic homelessness by December 2018. To market the efforts to achieve this ambitious goal, the campaign was named the "["Inside \(not Outside\)" Initiative](#)". After confronting some hurdles in 2017, Montgomery County's ICH

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approved the extension of ending chronic homelessness from December 2017 to March 31, 2018. As of April 7, 2018, Montgomery County housed 347 chronically homeless households and 26 individuals remain.

The point-in-time report also summarizes the main elements of the “continuum of care” approach Montgomery County takes toward combatting homelessness. These include steps to prevent homelessness, and to end homelessness for families with children. An initiative to end homelessness for veterans has met its goal, as has an effort to achieve “functional zero” chronic homeless.

Emergency shelter also continues to play a major role in the County's efforts to address homelessness. As Figure 2 reveals, there are 140 year-round emergency shelter beds currently available in the county, which expanded to 385 beds over the winter months:

Figure 2: Inventory of emergency shelter beds, Montgomery County, 2020

MONTGOMERY COUNTY'S YEAR-ROUND AND WINTER INVENTORY OF BEDS				
	Beds for Households w/o Children	Beds/Units for Households w/children	Total Year-Round Beds	Total Winter Beds
Hypothermia/Overflow/Other (Additional winter Capacity)	245	65/18	0	310
Emergency Shelter Beds	140	138/43	278	0
Transitional / Safe Haven Beds	65	38/7	103	0
TOTALS	450	241/68	381	346

Impact of the coronavirus pandemic. The coronavirus pandemic and the resulting economic recession have significantly increased the community's homelessness challenges. Amanda Harris, the County's top official for homelessness, says that while no reliable data has been collected county-wide since the start of the pandemic, national studies suggest a 40-45% increase in homelessness nation-wide since the pandemic started. The county has taken a range of steps to respond to this increased need, including keeping winter shelters open, and using pandemic-related funding to focus on “rapid re-housing” for those who are newly homeless.

There is more on the profile of homelessness in the County and the greater metro region, including detailed discussions of policies and programs in Montgomery County, in the most recent (2019 and 2020) reports on the point-in-time survey results, which have been placed on the ST shared documents drive.

Food insecurity

Even before the coronavirus pandemic, a significant part of the local community faced food insecurity. According to the County's January 2017 strategic planning report on this issue, [“A Food Secure Montgomery,”](#) 7% of the County's residents – over 77,000 people – were estimated to be food insecure. The incidence of food insecurity among the County's children at that time was estimated to be about twice as high – just under 14%. The report identified

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central Silver Spring as one of the areas in the county with significantly higher-than-average levels of food insecurity.

A Maryland Food System [“heat map.”](#) created by the Johns Hopkins Center for a Livable Future, provides a useful visual representation of food insecurity concentrations across the broader region.

A range of federal, state, and local programs and organizations (in addition to Shepherd's Table) currently work to address the problem of food insecurity. These include:

- SNAP (Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program, formerly Food Stamps), which provides federal assistance to families at or below 130% of the poverty threshold. There were about 67,000 SNAP participants in Montgomery County in FY17.
- WIC (Women, Infants, and Children Program), which provides food assistance to women who are pregnant or new mothers, with incomes up to 185% of the poverty threshold. In July 2016, total WIC participation in the Country was just over 31,000, representing nearly 8,000 women and about 23,000 infants and children.
- CACFP (Child and Adult Care Food Program), a federally-funded, state-administered program, provides food aid to institutions that care for children and adults, including adult and child care centers and emergency shelters.
- TEFAP (The Emergency Food Assistance Program) is a federal program that provides low-income Americans with emergency food and nutrition assistance at no cost. The Capital Area Food Bank executes TEFAP for parts of Maryland, including Montgomery County.
- FARMS (Free and Reduced-price Meals) provides free meals to students whose families are below 130% of the federal poverty level, and reduced-price meals to children whose families are between 130-185% of the poverty level. In 2017, about 35% of all Montgomery County students qualified for FAMRS, nearly 55,000 students. The schools also provide After-school Snack, At-risk Supper, and Summer Food service programs.
- County-based programs. The County's Office of Management and Budget has identified 13 programs within the County that address hunger, supported by just over \$6 million federal, state, and county funds. In addition, the Montgomery County Food Council has identified over 100 unique non-government organizations in the county that provide food assistance to residents. In FY 16, the County awarded about \$650,000 in 23 grants to 15 non-profits to support food assistance and food recovery efforts.
- The County's strategic planning report notes the wide range of efforts by non-profits like Shepherd's Table: “The types of food assistance programs vary significantly in format, and include choice pantry, hot meals, pre-packed pantry items, discount grocery, and mobile market. Special features of some programs include fresh produce, delivery, multilingual support, federal benefit application assistance, referral to additional support services, dietary restriction accommodation, and nutritional counseling. Programs may require appointments, documentation, or a cost for service; others are provided on a walk-in basis. Some programs are open to the general public, while others serve only a specific population (seniors, children, homeless individuals, or residents of a specific

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housing community). Hours of operation range from open a few hours a week to daily services.”

The County's 2017 report offers additional points about the relationship between homelessness and food insecurity, which is particularly relevant to Shepherd's Table. It estimates that about 1,000-2,000 County residents are both homeless and food insecure. It also notes:

- “Lack of access to food preparation or storage of any kind makes food security especially challenging for homeless individuals and families. Any food support provided must be readily consumed without preparation. Additionally, this population needs to receive services daily, as they have no means to store food for later use.”
- “Though SNAP and food bank programs are available to homeless people, few of these program offerings have sufficient prepared, readily consumable food selections that adequately serve the needs of homeless people.”
- “Montgomery County has a variety of resources available currently to homeless people, as well as people at risk of homelessness. There are eleven homeless shelters as well as several organizations that offer meals and support to secure permanent housing. The shelters typically provide at least two meals a day to homeless people staying there. Some shelters do charge a lodging fee which can be a barrier for some—particularly for the chronically homeless. However, not everyone goes to shelter; many survive on the streets or in campgrounds. There are organizations that provide meals for anyone that is homeless. Transportation to these sites, however, can be challenging for homeless individuals, as shelter, employment support services, and meals might be located far apart from each other. Although homeless individuals are located throughout the County, shelters are primarily located in and around Rockville. There are also three shelters down-county and one up-county.”

Impact of the coronavirus pandemic. The pandemic has significantly exacerbated food insecurity in the County. According to Patrick Campbell (Senior Planning Manager, Office of Emergency Management and Mass Care Operations, Montgomery Co. Dept. of Health and Human Services), the number of food insecure may have declined somewhat between the 2017 report cited above and the onset of the coronavirus pandemic; County reports use a figure of “60,000+” for that period. Although there is no new systematic data on the full extent of food insecurity since the onset of the pandemic in March 2020, Campbell and Heather Bruskin (Executive Director, Montgomery County Food Council) believe that food insecurity has increased significantly since the start of the year, and may now affect around 100,000 to 150,000 county residents.

Steps taken by the State and County to combat the pandemic included business closures that resulted in job losses, reducing earnings and the ability of many families and individuals to obtain the food they need. Since early March, 2020, as the coronavirus outbreak spread, well over 100,000 Montgomery County residents filed for unemployment, according to the [Maryland Department of Labor](#).

The pandemic has increased food insecurity in other ways as well. As a County report notes, “Social distancing, health concerns, and changes in retail models have further limited food access for homebound seniors and residents with disabilities, people experiencing homelessness, and many other residents of our County.” Fear of exposure, combined with curtailment of public transportation, have made it more difficult for residents to access feeding

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programs. The early closure of the schools reduced the ability of many children to access subsidized school-based meals. Grocery delivery services have been overwhelmed or have become inaccessible for many people.

At the same time, the pandemic and recession have hampered the operations of many organizations aimed at alleviating food insecurity. As the County report notes, just as demand is rising, these new conditions have disrupted supply chains, making it harder to obtain food; strained the availability of funding; created disruptions or shortages for volunteers and staffing; and created shortages of Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) and cleaning supplies necessary for safe food-related operations. .

Poverty

The poverty threshold (level) is nationally determined by the U.S. Census Bureau annually each year, and is the same figure for all contiguous 48 states. In 2016, the poverty threshold was \$24,300 for a family of four. At that point, in Montgomery County, 73,213 people, 7.2% of the population, were living below the federal poverty level, an increase from 6.7% in 2009. The poverty rate for children under the age of 18 in the County was 8.9% (21,427 children) and 6.7% of seniors aged 65 and above.

The official poverty level, however, significantly understates the number of people who may be financially challenged in the County. According to County reports in 2017, it costs about \$91,252 for a four-person family to afford the basic necessities in Montgomery County, much higher than the \$24,300 Federal Poverty level. This "Self-Sufficiency Standard" is based on the cost of living in a specific area.

Federal benefits which provide supplemental assistance for food or meals to children in schools, are largely determined by household income. Supplemental food assistance programs are available to households living at or below 185% of the Poverty threshold (WIC \$44,995 in 2016) and 130% of the poverty threshold (SNAP \$31,590).

Unemployment in Montgomery County was 2.8%% in March 2020, just before the pandemic hit, lower than the nationwide rate of 4.5%. This figure does include people who are working part-time but would be working full-time if possible, and people who are not working in jobs that are commensurate with their training or financial needs. Underemployment is neither measured by the US Census nor the US Bureau of Labor Statistics.

Impact of the coronavirus pandemic. The pandemic triggered a national recession that has significantly undermined the region's economic health. As the national unemployment roughly tripled after the pandemic struck, the region's employment situation suffered as well. By May, the unemployment rate for all of Maryland reached 9.9%, according to the Bureau of Labor Statistics. As noted, over 100,000 Montgomery County residents filed for unemployment insurance during the first months after the start of the pandemic.

Other Relevant Trends, Including Population and Economy

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Montgomery County has seen relatively rapid population growth in recent years. According to the US Census Bureau, Montgomery County was home to just over 1 million people (1,058,810) in 2018, up 8.9% from 2010.

The county is one of the most diverse in the country. It is a majority-minority county, with 43% white, 20% Hispanic, and 18% African American. Fully 15% of residents are not US citizens; 41% speak at least one language other than English. A [recent study by WalletHub](#) finds that 4 of the 10 most diverse cities in the country are in the county – Gaithersburg (#2 on the list), Germantown (#3), Silver Spring (#4), and Rockville (#9).

The county is also one of the most educated and affluent in the country. A solid majority, 58%, hold a Bachelor's degree, and over 30% of residents 25 years and older hold a graduate degree. Median household income is around \$100,000, putting the county 14th in the country, according to 2016 Census data.

Despite the county's relative affluence and continuing population growth, and even before the pandemic-driven recession, there was debate over the strength of the county's economy and the need for stimulating development. A [report published in 2018 by Empower Montgomery](#), for example, argued that job growth in the county has been relatively slow – about 6% between 2001 and 2017, compared to over 12% for Maryland as a whole, and more than 10% for the US nationwide.

The 2020 recession has obviously brought substantial changes to the economic environment in which Shepherd's Table operates. The US economy contracted during the first quarter of 2020 at an annualized rate of 5.0%, according to the US Commerce Department. The Federal Reserve Bank has estimated that GDP could decline 35% during the second quarter of the year. Although there have been some signs of rebound in employment, retail sales, and the stock market, the economic picture for the country and the county remain uncertain. The recession will affect the level of need for services, as well as the size and generosity of the organization's donor base, including the fiscal capacity of Montgomery County, which is a major donor.

External perceptions of Shepherd's Table

A small set of conversations with external stakeholders, described in Appendix B, suggests Shepherd's Table currently enjoys a strong reputation. Community leaders are highly aware of the role the organization plays in addressing local problems of food insecurity and homelessness. Although only five external interviews have been conducted to date, it may be useful to note a few specific perceptions that surfaced from these conversations:

- ST is recognized as playing a central role in the community; its main image is as the leading provider of on-site, prepared meals, but there is also awareness of its role in helping to combat homelessness and servicing low-income populations with other services.
- The organization is seen as having strong leadership. Jacki Coyle built a strong reputation as an effective Executive Director. In his first year, Manny Hidalgo has also built a reputation of respect among local leaders.

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- ST is seen as being strong in its operational competence; stakeholders praise its record of delivering quality meals, to a large number of clients, on a highly reliable basis.
- The organization is seen as doing a good job of coordinating with the County and sister organizations. There is a sense, for example, that ST and its ED played a strong role in development of the County's food rescue system.
- ST, however, is not seen as particularly prominent on policy advocacy efforts, apart from its successful efforts to ensure county funding for its own operations.
- ST is seen as a highly site-specific organization, with its relatively limited to people who are in its proximity; it lacks the geographic impact of organizations that have multiple locations and/or mobile operations.
- ST is seen as addressing a very important but nevertheless limited range of needs for the clients it serves; for example, it provides meals, but not a place where the homeless can situate themselves during the day, with bathrooms or showers.

Operations: Options and Recommendations

The Strategic Planning process developed and evaluated a series of “operating opportunities” for the medium term (2021-2024). One option that was always on the table was continuity of the organization’s existing focus on prepared meals and social services; there was unanimous agreement to continue this as the organization’s central focus, and to continue the organization’s program of daily prepared meals and social/medical services.

Beyond the existing programs, board and staff wrote concept papers that developed eight additional operating opportunities in some detail. A year-long process of analysis and discussion led to consensus around a set of four options that which Shepherd’s Table now plans to pursue. These will proceed on somewhat differing timetables, but Shepherd’s Table expects to pursue all of them during this 2021-2024 period. ST also agreed to continue consideration of two other operating opportunities.

Eight Operating Opportunities Considered

The Strategic Planning process developed and evaluated in detail eight operating opportunities. Appendix D contains the full concept papers for all eight ideas, as well as a matrix summarizing key elements of each:

1. **Mobile Meals.** This concept would have Shepherd’s Table distribute prepared meals either at fixed distribution sites in the community (e.g., a parking lot in a high-needs area) and/or to specific locations (e.g., an apartment building with a high concentration of high-needs individuals). A pilot program along these lines was launched for a 4 week period during June 2020.
2. **Culinary Skills Training.** Shepherd’s Table would launch a program to recruit, train, and place qualified at-need individuals into food preparation jobs, using its kitchen facilities at Progress Place as a training site. The trainees would get real-world food preparation skills, while also providing an important element of the Shepherd’s Table food preparation staffing.
3. **Food Garden.** Shepherd’s Table would significantly expand the above-ground food gardens it has already initiated on the grounds of the firehouse that is adjacent to Progress Place. The expanded food garden would provide a source of health vegetables and herbs for Shepherd’s Table, while also providing a way for staff, volunteers, clients, and others to build relationships and learn food growing skills.
4. **Weekend Day Program.** Shepherd’s Table would open its dining room during weekend days to provide a safe, healthy place where clients can congregate and participate in programming.
5. **Expanded Advocacy.** Shepherd’s Table, which already participates in a range of local and county policy forums would expand its advocacy role, with greater participation in state and even federal policy efforts, as well as an expanded capacity to participate in local and county processes.

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6. **Additional Site.** Shepherd's Table would open an additional site for food preparation and meal service, akin to the one at Progress Place, in order to expand its volume of meal service, and so that it can address food insecurity in another part of the County.

7. **Commercial Venture.** Shepherd's Table would develop a program to sell prepared food – such as selling lunch and snack items at local office buildings – to capitalize on excess kitchen capacity, to provide additional opportunities for culinary skills trainees, to “mainstream” elements of the organization's operations, and to create an additional stream of revenue.

8. **On-site Bathrooms and Showers.** Responding to suggestions from many community stakeholders, Shepherd's Table would fund, provide, and maintain bathroom and shower facilities for its clients, including during periods between meal services.

Four Operating Opportunities Approved

Based on discussion of ideas, Shepherd's Table has approved four of these operational opportunities: the Mobile Meals program; Expansion of the Food Garden; Expansion of Advocacy; and a Weekend Day Program (contingent on coronavirus-related conditions). They will proceed with varying timetables over the next three years, and all will be subject to further evaluation and periodic review. These initiatives will be funded by a mix of expanded fundraising, linked to these initiatives, and spend-down of Shepherd's Table's reserves. The ability to pursue all of them will depend in part on the success of these fundraising efforts.

Following are some key points about each of the four initiatives that will be pursued:

- **Mobile Meals.** Shepherd's Table is encouraged by the pilot Mobile Meals program it conducted in July and July 2020 in Montgomery and Prince George's Counties. The organization believes this is a useful way to expand its provision of prepared meals during a time of heightened needs. Conversations with community stakeholders suggest this effort will help to meet an unfilled need, and that it fits well with ST's unique capabilities and record. Staff will refine the operating concept as it develops the 2021 budget, addressing such questions as:
 - Will food be distributed at fixed sites, or delivered, or both?
 - How many sites/delivery points will there be and how will they be selected?
 - What organizations will ST partner with to determine sites/deliveries?
 - What geographic area will this program cover?
 - How can this program minimize use of non-recyclables (e.g., plastic)?
- **Expanded Food Garden.** The Food Garden has already demonstrated success – as a way to provide food for ST, as a new way for staff and volunteers to work together, and as a magnet for fundraising. As part of the 2021 budget process, staff will refine plans for the next phases of expansion of the Food Garden, including such issues as:
 - Needed approvals and cooperation from the County Fire Station.
 - Possibilities of partnership with local gardening organizations.
 - Possibilities for expanded involvement of volunteers and possibly clients.
- **Expanded Advocacy Efforts.** As part of the 2021 budget process, staff will create a plan for the next three years that suggests how ST's advocacy efforts will expand over this period, addressing such questions as:

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- To what degree will advocacy efforts focus on state and/or federal policy?
 - What are the highest “value added” targets for ST’s advocacy?
 - How much staffing/consultant help will these efforts require?
 - How can the skills and networks of board/volunteers best be tapped?
- **Weekend Day Program.** While it is not currently feasible to launch a weekend day program, given conditions related to the coronavirus, Shepherd’s Table intends to launch such a program once it is safe to do so. Such a program would make greater use of the ST facility. It would provide a badly-needed place for clients to congregate on weekends. It could provide programming that contributes to empowerment goals. Once conditions regarding the coronavirus make this feasible (e.g., after development of a vaccine, or other major improvements regarding the pandemic), staff will provide a refined operational plan and budget for board review and approval. It is anticipated that a social worker for this effort would need to be hired some months before the program begins.

Next steps for developing these four operational opportunities. In all, it is anticipated that these initiatives will somewhat increase Shepherd’s Table’s program costs over the next three years. Shepherd’s Table expects to finance these additional costs through a combination of increased fundraising around these ideas, and some degree of spending down its reserves, in line with the “Excess Reserves” policy adopted at its May 2020 board meeting.

Accordingly, as part of the 2021 budget process, staff will develop more details on each of these four programs regarding: operational details, precise costs, the potential for expanded fundraising on each, and the anticipated split between fundraising and spend-down of reserves.

While the potential for new fundraising is not yet certain, there is reason to believe these programs can help generate additional funds. For example, a Spring 2020 fundraiser linked to the Food Garden initiative raised approximately \$50,000.

Shepherd’s Table will assess on an ongoing basis whether its additional fundraising efforts are generating the revenues needed to sustain these new initiatives, and will make appropriate adjustments to its programming and budgets during the 2021-2024 period.

Two Other Operating Opportunities for Future Consideration

Shepherd’s Table has decided to continue consideration of two additional operational opportunities, with the expectation they may prove viable in the future, at which point the board would give them new consideration for action.

- **Culinary Skills Training.** There is strong board and staff interest in this concept. It would demonstrate a commitment to the ideas of empowerment contained in ST’s new mission, vision, and value statements. The ST facility is already physically well laid out to accommodate such a program. The trainees in such a program could provide part of the additional labor needed for the Mobile Meals program, which could mean major synergies between the two efforts. Accordingly, board and staff will continue developing this idea, with strong attention to such considerations as:
 - Is there sufficient demand for such trainees in the pandemic economy?
 - How many trainees could work on Mobile Meals, and for how long?
 - Is the cost per trainee reasonable, given ST’s competing resource needs?

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- **Commercial Venture.** There are many potential synergies between the Mobile Meals program, Culinary Skills Training, and a Commercial Venture. If ST is already delivering meals, it seems it might be feasible to offer some amount of them for sale, such as to local offices. If ST has a training program in place, then a Commercial Venture could provide an additional outlet for the work of the trainees. In the face of the pandemic economy and the revenue constraints it may impose, a Commercial Venture might provide an additional stream of funding for ST. Accordingly, board and staff will continue to examine this idea, including such considerations as:
 - With more people working from home, would sales at offices still be feasible?
 - Are sales/delivery to individual addresses a viable model?
 - Does COVID-19 create other difficulties that this concept would need to meet?

Two Operating Opportunities Rejected

The Strategic Planning process ultimately decided against pursuing the final two operational opportunities:

- **An Additional Site for ST.** This idea is attractive, given the success of ST's model and the high levels of needs in other parts of the community, beyond Silver Spring. Unfortunately it is an initiative that would require very substantial funding, including from the County, and with the County budget so strained it appears unlikely that such funds would be available.
- **ST-provided Bathrooms and Showers.** ST believes it is important for its clients to have access to bathrooms, showers, and hand-washing facilities, as matters of health, sanitation, and dignity. At this point, the County is providing mobile bathrooms and showers outside of Progress Place, in addition to the bathrooms and showers available in the building during certain hours. Since these facilities already exist, ST has decided not to pursue providing them on its own, and instead will continue to press the County to ensure continuity of such services.

Shepherd's Table believes this mix of new operational opportunities will help expand the services we provide, in ways that are organizationally and financially sustainable. They will build on ST's strengths, integrate with other community programs and resources, and help to advance the concepts embodied in our new mission, vision, and values statements. The board and staff will periodically evaluate the progress of these efforts during the coming years to ensure they are successful in meeting their intended goals.

Appendix A: Process for Development of New Mission, Vision, and Value Statements

Shepherd's Table's new Mission, Vision, and Value statements reflect an extensive development process.

The Mission, Vision & Values (MV2) subcommittee of the Strategic Planning Committee began a planning and design process in September 2019. The group, comprised of both staff and board members, spent thoughtful time in the early weeks agreeing upon shared terminology for mission, vision and values. It identified examples of mission, vision values from other organizations that could serve as good models for the ones ST would develop.

Subcommittee participants discussed aspirations as they related to how they wanted each of these elements (mission, vision, values) to feel to stakeholders and how they might be applied by Shepherd's Table in the future. They also set a projected timeline to guide the deliberation process and set-up target benchmarks for each deliverable (mission, values, vision).

Shepherd's Table's previous mission statement (see footnote on page x) had existed unchanged for many years. The MV2 subcommittee agreed that the mission statement was outdated and needed to feel more aligned, relevant, and up-to-date with the organization.

The subcommittee began its work at a point when the organization had not vision statement or values statements. Subcommittee participants used a collection of pre-existing messaging and collateral to pull out value words that served as a jumping-off point for the creative process. The values list grew and evolved as the group got more input.

The MV2 subcommittee agreed to develop a vision statement last, since the new operational directives highlighted in the overall strategic plan would have a strong influence on the vision statement that would be drafted.

The MV2 subcommittee was clear from the onset that it wanted to create a process that incorporated ideas, perspectives, and voices from across the Shepherd's Table community. The subcommittee identified four key groups that would participate in the development process: staff members, volunteers, board members, and clients. A design workshop was held in December 2019 that served as a template for four workshop/brainstorms with each stakeholder group.

Early in 2020, the subcommittee kicked-off with a 90-minute interactive, in-person workshop with the staff with almost full participation. Staff provided feedback on values and a draft mission statement. Unfortunately, the emergence of the coronavirus pandemic impacted the ability to meet with all stakeholder groups in person. The subcommittee used the template of the first workshop to create a virtual experience for groups of volunteers and board members. Finally, the staff used a survey to collect input from clients on the newly proposed mission statement and value statements.

There were a few themes that came up multiple times in the different stakeholder workshops. These included:

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- **The consideration of geography in the mission statement.** Stakeholders across the staff, volunteer and board groups shared the opinion that including geography (Montgomery County or Silver Spring) would be too limiting.
- **The important role that meals play at Shepherd's Table.** Both staff and board participants felt strongly that the mission statement needed to call-out the integral role that food plays in supporting the community, but also use language that could call-out the other important services the organization supports.
- **Shepherd's Table plays a critical role in the continuum of care.** There was a strong feeling among staff that although Shepherd's Table is only one part of a larger ecosystem of social service organizations, the role that it plays is critical to the ability of individuals to empower themselves and transform their lives, which ultimately contributes significantly to breaking the larger forces of poverty and homelessness.

Using the feedback from all groups, the subcommittee came up with new proposed mission and value statements that underwent further editing after being shared with the larger strategic planning committee. Last, the committee came together to generate the vision statement that was shared with staff before being finalized.

Appendix B: Data Collection Methods on External Community Needs and Perceptions of ST

Data for this section was obtained from in-depth discussions with seven key external stakeholders. These seven individuals were drawn from a list suggested by former Executive Director Jacki Coyle and current Executive Director Manny Hidalgo. They do not constitute an exhaustive or systematic selection, and we expect to supplement these with additional conversations with other external stakeholders as the strategic planning process continues. The seven stakeholders were:

- Heather Bruskin, Executive Director, Montgomery County Food Council
- Patrick Campbell, Senior Planning Manager, Office of Emergency Management and Mass Care Operations for Montgomery County Department of Health and Human Services
- Jackie DeCarlo, CEO, Manna Food Center
- Amanda Harris, Montgomery County HHS Homelessness Director
- George Leventhal, Kaiser Permanente; former Montgomery County Council Member
- Reemberto Rodriguez, Montgomery County Silver Spring Area Director
- Susie Sinclair-Smith, CEO, Montgomery County Coalition for the Homeless

Data was also gathered through a review of key regional and county studies and reports on issues related to hunger, homelessness, poverty, economic development, and demographic projections.

Appendix C: Current Board Members

Current members of the Shepherd's Table board are:

Susan Collet, Chair
Jeremy Rosner, Vice Chair
Jon Alterman, Vice Chair
Gary Phoebus, Treasurer
Deborah Magidson, Secretary
Paul Kaplun, Board Representative
Deborah Boger
Chasmin Brooks
Torey Carter-Conneen
Adele Chazin
Dean Cooper
Ken Farber
Amber Harris
Laura Henderson
Steven Jacobs
Aaron Lichtig
Tracy Mabbitt-Boone
Farah Nageer-Kanthor
Helaine Resnick
Sonya Snedecor
Heidi Weber
Tesia Williams

Appendix D: Concept Papers on 8 Operational Opportunities

Attached are concept papers that staff and board members developed regarding the eight operational opportunities considered by the Strategic Planning Committee.

[Note: these papers were meant for discussion purposes; facts and figures in these papers have not been verified.]

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1. Shepherd's Table Strategic Opportunities: Mobile Meals Service ("Beyond The Table")

Description

On June 15, 2020, Shepherd's Table began a mobile meals pilot program dubbed "Beyond The Table," initially for a test period of four weeks, to use a rented van to distribute 200 meals three times per week at North Gate Park in Aspen Hill, MD, an area with the highest poverty and food insecurity rates in Montgomery County. We have partnered in the pilot program with CASA of Maryland to pre-identify 200 households in a cluster of apartment buildings located across from our North Gate Park distribution spot to be our first meal guests.

This paper examines the idea of a fully ramped-up mobile meals distribution program – potentially involving in the near term the distribution of 2,800 meals each week (200 meals, twice a day, 7 days a week). It looks at how such an initiative might help Shepherd's Table provide hot and fresh meals to low-income food insecure county residents in multiple areas of Montgomery County, while fully maintaining our core program in Silver Spring served at Progress Place.

The program would focus on distributing meals at locations/apartment buildings where food insecure, low-income residents live. There are several potential locations in Rockville, Hillandale/White Oak, Gaithersburg, and Wheaton within a reasonable distance of Progress Place that have apartment building clusters with highly food insecure and poor residents. Those communities have also been negatively impacted by COVID-19. Whether we partner with other organizations to identify needy households in apartments as we did in the pilot with CASA of Maryland, or advertise our program with leaflets at apartments we identify and then have residents sign up to reflect their interest in receiving food, is to be determined, and may vary depending upon location.

Phases 1-3 and Timeline

(Note: the question is presented in the next section whether we should provide mobile meal service on the weekends. The description of Phases 1 and 2 in this section assumes that we will have meal deliveries 7 days a week.)

Phase 1: expand the delivery of 200 meals a day from 3 days a week in the pilot program to 7 days a week. We could go to 7 days a week solely at the Aspen Hills location or we could stay at 3 days a week in Aspen Hills and distribute 200 meals per day the other 4 days a week at another location, TBD.

Timeline Phase 1: Staff indicates that we could begin Phase 1 in October 2020 and that it might take several months to ramp up to 200 meals a day 7 days a week. It is expected that we would gradually ramp up the number of meals as demand requires and ultimately expand the number of days up to 7 days. A new chef and a program coordinator will need to be trained. Deliveries on weekends will pose some new challenges. If we split deliveries between Aspen Hills and another location, it will take 0-4 months to select a location and obtain approvals for a distribution spot, engage a partnership to identify households or advertise the program ourselves to find interested households, before we begin deliveries to the second location.

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Phase 2: delivery of an additional 200 meals, 7 days a week. We could deliver those meals all 7 days to the same location TBD or split it up 3 days/4 days at two separate locations, TBD.

Timeline Phase 2: Staff indicates that Phase 2 could begin in the winter of 2021, once Phase 1 was fully implemented and we were confident that we could generate an additional 200 meals while keeping up with the number of meals required at Progress Place. It is expected that it might take several months to ramp up to 200 meals a day 7 days a week. A second chef will need to be trained. We will also need to work through the scheduling and logistical challenges of using the van for two deliveries each day at times that our clients will be available to receive the meals, an issue that will be affected by whether people are working again. Nonetheless we can begin in October 2020 to select possible location(s) and obtain approvals for distribution spot(s), as that research is similar for both phases 1 and 2.

Phase 3: purchase/rental of a second van and distribution of 400 additional meals to various locations in the county. Approximately 800 meals a day will be required to satisfy the needs at Progress Place and fulfill Phases 1 and 2. Management estimates that the maximum capacity of the Progress Place kitchen is no more than 1000 meals per day and might be less. Accordingly, implementation of Phase 3 would be contingent on obtaining additional kitchen space or cooking meals at Progress Place during the night. Phase 3 is a placeholder for a further extended program which is not evaluated at this time.

Timeline Phase 3: TBD.

Key Considerations

Should we ultimately provide mobile meal service on the weekends?

Pros:

- There is a demand for meals on Saturdays and Sundays; otherwise households will have to find other food resources on their own on Saturdays and Sundays.
- Other organizations with mobile meal services (e.g. McKenna's Wagon at Martha's Table) provide hot meal deliveries every day of the week.
- Would result in more efficient utilization of the van.
- Weekend deliveries might enable us to establish a more consistently reliable and closer relationship with the households we will be serving.

Cons:

- If some issue or emergency arose in the program on Saturday or Sunday requiring management action, currently there is no management on duty on Saturday and Sunday.
 - Shepherd's Table does not have a manager on duty for the six meals we do on weekends and have managed to make it work.
 - Concern might be addressed if Haile/Manny took turns being on call on weekends, particularly during the first two weekends of new Phases or locations.
 - Suggests that more experienced chefs should be assigned on weekends who could deal with issues that might otherwise require attention by management.
- More personnel (e.g., receptionist, security personnel) who could be called upon to assist with program do not work on Saturday and Sunday and thus fewer staff available to assist on weekends.

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- Concern should be alleviated by the Program Coordinator whose job is to coordinate and assist as needed.
- Cost of 7 days vs. 5 days is \$106,842 higher on an annual basis (5 day Budget attached as an Addendum should it be decided to have mobile meal service only Monday-Friday).

All 7 Days to the Same Location or Split 3 Days to One Location and 4 Days to Another Location?

The advantage of meal service to the same location would result in a reliable source of food every day of the week for interested households.

The advantage of splitting the meal service 4 days/3 days would enable us to provide 2,800 meals per week in 4 different locations in Phases 1 and 2, serving twice as many different households as delivering to the same location. Most of those households would have access to food supplies to cook in their apartments during the days that we are not providing meal service in their location.

Van Rent/Purchase Decision

Rental of a van from Enterprise costs \$1,900 per month, inclusive of insurance. A new van can be purchased for approximately \$25,000, according to the Executive Director. Based on that data, the payback on purchase vs. renting is less than 14 months. It is possible that we could get an in-kind donation of a new van. A new van would be expected to have a useful life exceeding 10 years assuming proper maintenance. The van would be used for all the meal deliveries under this program. The van would also be used to pick up food donations and large bulk food supplies at the food bank.

Insurance

The van rental is covered by liability/collision insurance from Enterprise. Any injury/loss sustained by an employee while riding in the van on a work related matter will be covered by workers comp. Because volunteers are not covered by workers comp, volunteers will not be permitted to ride in the van. It has been confirmed that Shepherd Table's existing insurance will cover and protect both employees and volunteers when working on this program at locations other than Progress Place. If we purchase a van, liability/collision insurance coverage will be obtained separately. Otherwise, everything else remains the same.

Selection of Locations and Partnerships with Other Organizations

Proposed that Shepherd's Table staff, under the direction of the Executive Director, identify possible locations/apartment buildings for the distribution of meals using Montgomery County's on-line FoodStat data tool (<https://mcgovgis.maps.arcgis.com/apps/MapJournal>) and any other data and/or resources deemed reliable to evaluate apartment complexes with high food insecurity rates and poverty rates.

In addition, whether partnerships with other organizations would help facilitate this program should be considered. Consideration should also be given to whether other organizations are already providing similar food services to those apartment complexes to avoid duplication. Additionally, locations should be selected that are on average within 1 hour or less driving time in each direction from Progress Place during the times of day when driving will occur. Although it is expected that all proposed new locations/apartment complexes will have relatively high food

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insecurity rates and poverty levels, those rates need not be the highest in the county if other factors (e.g., special needs, diversity, political factors, fairness, distance from Progress Place, etc.) militate in favor of that location's selection.

It is anticipated that the locations/apartment complexes for deliveries under this program may change or rotate over time and partnerships may be modified. Before initiating food deliveries to any new location/apartment complexes or initiation or changes in partnerships with other organizations under this program, the Executive Director shall advise the Executive Committee of the proposed location/apartment complexes and/or partnerships and obtain its approval.

Illustrative Budget (7 days per week meals service)

One-Time Expenses:

Van Purchase	\$25,000	(Van rental \$1900/mo.)
Blast chiller	6,000	
CAMBRO Insulated Containers	4,224	
Total One-Time Expenses	\$35,224	

Annual Expenses Phase 1:

Insurance and Gas	\$3,900
Driver/security (4hrs/meal, \$18/hr)	26,208
Chef (8hrs/meal, \$18/hr)	52,416
F/T Program Coordinator	50,000
To-go containers (\$65/box of 150)	31,546
Food purchases	72,800
Marketing Materials	1,000
PPE Supplies	4,004
Replacement of coolers	300
Replacement of tent	300
Miscellaneous operational	2,500
Total Annual Expenses Phase 1	\$244,974

Annual Incremental Expenses Phase 2:

Gasoline	\$ 400
Driver/security (4hrs/meal, \$18/hr)	26,208
Chef (8hrs/meal, \$18/hr)	52,416
To-go containers (\$65/box of 150)	31,546
Food purchases	72,800
PPE Supplies	4,004
Total Incremental Annual Expenses	
Phase 2	\$187,374

TOTAL ANNUAL EXPENSES

PHASES 1 AND 2 **\$432,348**

Note: A budget for the first year of operations would be less than the above total annual expenses because we would expect to gradually ramp up the number of meals served, the number of days of service, and the number of locations served over the course of the first year. When/if, a van is purchased would also affect the annual budget. Finally, the PPE Supplies will no longer be needed once the threat passes from COVID-19.

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Players

We would have an opportunity to engage with various houses of worship and community advocacy/aid organizations like we did with CASA of Maryland to help us identify food insecure/needful households in the locations we are considering for the mobile meals service. Similarly, local schools would be a good resource to identify children qualifying for Free and Reduced Meals.

We would have the opportunity to work with representatives from the County Council in the areas that we will be serving like we did with Evan Glass in the pilot program to give them a connection with our program. Should we choose a location in Rockville as a program site, it would facilitate the ability for county officials and representatives to personally observe the program firsthand to show the valuable work that Shepherd's Table is doing and gain their support. Such visits might also help us get favorable media coverage when they visit.

To the extent that we will be serving tenants in various apartment buildings, it would be helpful to establish a connection with owners/management of those apartments either to permit us to advertise our program in their buildings and/or get their consent to distribute meals on-site, if needed. It is also possible that those companies would give donations/sponsorships to support the program.

The program would utilize several volunteers each day on-site. Such volunteers can be good ambassadors for the program and are often a source of personal donations.

Fit with ST Mission

Providing meals to food insecure low-income households fits nicely within our focus of feeding those who need it and would be a harmonious complement to feeding the homeless. It would permit us to reach a diverse clientele that we have not served before and would further enable us to reach out to underserved areas in the county that we have not served previously.

Development potential

Expanding our daily meal program to include a mobile meal service would be very appealing from a development/fundraising perspective. Adding mobile meals is consistent with our mission, allows us to target some of the highest food insecure populations in the county, and expands our reach deeper into the community -- for clients as well as donors. This program would be beneficial for asking existing donors of all types to continue and/or increase their level of giving, and also gives us an opportunity to target new foundation partners, donors in the business community, houses of worship, and individual donors in other parts of the county. This initiative shows that Shepherd's Table is committed to taking the necessary next steps in the fight against homelessness and food insecurity, and affirms that we are committed to meeting the needs of the community, which is always a plus for both recruiting new and retaining current donors.

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ADDENDUM

Illustrative Budget (5 days per week service)

One-Time Expenses:

Van Purchase	\$25,000	
Blast chiller	6,000	
CAMBRO Insulated Containers		4,224
Total One-Time Expenses	\$35,224	

Annual Expenses Phase 1:

Insurance and Gas	\$3,900
Driver/security (4hrs/meal, \$18/hr)	18,720
Chef (8hrs/meal, \$18/hr)	37,440
F/T Program Coordinator	50,000
To-go containers (\$65/box of 150)	22,533
Food purchases	52,000
Marketing Materials	1,000
PPE Supplies	2,860
Replacement of coolers	300
Replacement of tent	300
Miscellaneous operational	2,500
Total Annual Expenses Phase 1	\$191,553

Annual Incremental Expenses Phase 2:

Gasoline	\$ 400
Driver/security (4hrs/meal, \$18/hr)	18,720
Chef (8hrs/meal, \$18/hr)	37,440
To-go containers (\$65/box of 150)	22,533
Food purchases	52,000
PPE Supplies	2,860
Total Incremental Annual Expenses	
Phase 2	\$133,953

TOTAL ANNUAL EXPENSE

PHASES 1 AND 2 **\$325,506**

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2. Shepherd's Table Strategic Opportunities: Commercial Venture/Restaurant

Description

This effort would involve setting up a retail food operation. Administratively, the operation could be a separate entity from Shepherd's Table, or it could be part of ST's existing administration and operations. A retail entity could therefore be set up in a for-profit or non-profit administrative framework. There are potential merits as well as liabilities associated with the various administrative approaches to setting up this entity. There are also merits and liabilities associated with the services/products the entity could provide, how it could be staffed, and where it could be located.

The onset of the COVID-19 pandemic required a re-working of the original outline of this concept. However, the "scaffolding" of the concept remains unchanged.

Timeline

Conservatively, it would take between 12 and 18 months to fully explore and set up this entity. However, such an exploration is best pursued in a structured, sequential manner, with the goal of "failing quickly" if early investigations suggest the effort is not prudent for one or more reasons. If the first phase of work suggests a retail effort is feasible and practical, a second set of explorations should occur. The overarching goal of the second phase of work would involve executing tasks that are needed to fully "set up" all aspects of the retail entity's operations.

The **first phase** of the work would take perhaps 6 months, and it might include the following tasks:

- Consider merits and liabilities of multiple retail models, and make a decision about the best model(s) to pursue in the near term:
 - A traditional storefront restaurant
 - One or more food carts
 - A food truck
 - A mail order business
 - A subscription service
 - Establishing one or more "pick-up sites" or partnering with CSAs or other entities with existing pick-up sites and schedules
 - A "ghost kitchen"
- Understand how a retail effort could dovetail with culinary skills training effort.
- Consider merits and liabilities of for-profit and non-profit structures.
- Determine what permits, certifications, or other regulatory matters need to be addressed.
- Determine if new, or existing partnerships/sponsors can assist in the launch of the new effort.
- Identify and enlist assistance from one or more *pro bono* consultants with demonstrated experience in marketing in the retail food space.

Exploration of the points above would likely uncover additional issues that would be prudent to explore in the short-term/first phase of work.

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If the first phase of work demonstrates promise, the second phase of work might include the following tasks:

- Finalize choice of retail model.
- Finalize retail location(s).
- Formalize business partnerships as required by the selected retail model.
- Begin job skills training (if this is pursued) for the new retail effort.
- Purchase needed equipment.
- Gather needed regulatory paperwork.
- Write proposal(s) to secure seed/launch resources.
- Develop and launch a communications plan at least 3 months prior to retail launch.
 - Develop a robust social media plan.
- Work with local customer bases (e.g. NOAA, ST mailing contact lists) to build enthusiasm.
 - Customer base will depend on retail model.
- Work with SS Chamber of Commerce to cement key partnerships, as appropriate.
- Hold “testing sessions” with potential customers to gather product feedback, give experience to new workers, refine recipes, etc.

As with the first phase of the work, as we get into the weeds with the second phase, there will undoubtedly be more tasks that need to be addressed to ensure a successful launch.

Players

There are a number of organizations—both local and out of town—that have established retail food operations as a means to deliver job skills for special populations. Two local examples are the Dog Tag Bakery in Georgetown (Veterans and military spouses) and Sunflower Bakery in Gaithersburg/Rockville (developmentally disabled individuals). I am in touch with the leadership of Sunflower Bakery and I understand that other members of the ST board are connected with Dog Tag Bakery, and perhaps other organizations that have gone down a similar path. Dog Tag and Sunflower are non-profit ventures, and both have a well-defined stakeholder base. Sunflower bakery focuses on the kosher market and until recently, it leveraged synagogues, Jewish day schools and other Jewish communal organizations to distribute its products to consumers. More recently, Sunflower opened a storefront in a Rockville office building that houses other Jewish communal organizations. Sunflower's trajectory reflects a deep understanding of its stakeholder base, and a “slow and steady” approach to business development. The leadership of Sunflower bakery has expressed willingness to work with ST to develop our retail concept.

Concerning whether an ST retail concept would duplicate the mission-oriented aspects of other programs, I am unaware of other local programs for the homeless that are directed toward training for employment in retail food establishments—but these programs may well exist in our area. However, it may be the case that a retail food initiative would not involve job training at all, and this scenario should also be explored. Regardless, there appear to be at least a few programs aimed at culinary skills training in different populations, some of which direct those skills to a retail food operation. My sense at this time is that it is likely that the opportunities for collaboration are greater than the ones for duplication.

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Concerning whether an ST retail concept would duplicate sales of other products, the products that would be sold under this effort would likely be defined in part by the location of the retail operation, as well as its product delivery strategy (store front, food cart, mail order, subscription, etc).

For example, we could begin with a "Soup and sandwich cart" that is parked at NOAA when restrictions begin to ease. We could also offer a delivery-only business with a focus on NOAA. Another strategy is to identify and partner with CSAs and other community-based food suppliers and offer one or more products that are appealing to their clientele.

"There are several thousand of us (including contractors) mulling about at lunchtime, like zombies, thinking about where to eat. Not feeling like eating their officemates, we usually turn to external lunch options...."
 --Observations of a NOAA employee (and amateur mandolin player) who was asked for his reaction to the concept of an ST food cart that would operate around lunchtime in the NOAA complex

We could also explore the feasibility of a subscription model in which customers receive one product each month through the mail, or at a pickup location. Similarly, we could set up a mail order business where customers could order products anytime, or we could set up a "ghost kitchen" that leverages ST's existing. Each retail model would require a different approach to product development, with some products likely having greater overlap with existing offerings than others.

Benefits

Some benefits of this effort might include:

- Providing a platform for culinary skills training.
- Certain retail strategies may have low start-up costs (e.g. mail order, subscription models, ghost kitchen, partner with CSAs)
- Providing opportunities for ST guests or others to engage in wage-earning to the extent they are able and/or interested.
- Promoting ST by "pushing out" ST food products into the community.
- Establishing a new revenue stream for ST.
- Providing a platform for new inter-organizational collaborations among entities whose missions are aligned with this effort.
- Opportunities to engage new sponsors and volunteers.

Costs/challenges

Some challenges that may come with pursuit of this effort may include:

- Cost of any new equipment that may be required to implement this effort.
- Staff time/labor associated with investigating locations, working with new partners, etc.
- The potential that this effort may be a loss leader for an unknown period of time.
- ST is not experienced with job training at this time.
- If a store front option is selected, rent will likely be substantial.

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Fit with ST

Shepherd's Table existing mission: To provide help to people who are homeless or in need by providing basic services, including meals, social services, medical support, clothing, and other assistance in an effective and compassionate manner.

ST's mission statement does not cover job training. If this effort is pursued and job training is one element, there may be a need to re-think ST's mission statement. A countervailing argument is that job training is a social service, and that acquisition of job training and development of pathways to employment are reasonable extensions of ST's "basic service" offerings.

Stakeholders

- ST guests
- Sunflower Bakery
- Dog Tag Bakery
- DC Central Kitchen, STEP, Marriott (linked to culinary skills training efforts)
- NOAA, downtown Silver Spring workforce/residents (assumes a SS-based storefront or food cart)
- Silver Spring Chamber of Commerce (assumes a SS-based storefront or food cart).

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3. Shepherd's Table Strategic Opportunities: New Culinary Skills Training Program

Goals of Program:

Short Term Goal:

To provide Montgomery County residents who are experiencing housing and/or food insecurity with culinary skills training and wrap-around services, to help prepare meals for the Beyond the Table mobile meals service program.

Long Term Goal:

To enable graduates to enter stable food industry jobs with good wages and benefits. Although those jobs are currently hard to come by due to the COVID-19 pandemic we anticipate that by June of 2021 there may well be a vaccine available and the industry may be rebounding strongly.

Program Length:

The program is designed to be 40 hours a week for 16 weeks. The program would start in January 2021 and run through end of May 2021. This time will include both the culinary skills training as well as the wrap around programs. There would be an initial three day trial period in order to determine if the program is appropriate for the student.

Size of Program:

4 students for the pilot program, which can be expanded in the future based on program evaluation.

Recruitment:

Applicants can come from a number of sources. Initial sources for recruitment are:

- Interfaith Works (reviewing their current clients for potential applicants)
- Current meal guests based on existing knowledge of Shepherd's Table staff
- Clients identified through other County agencies

Program Components

Culinary Skills Training

Students will develop a set of culinary skills in the course of helping the Chefs prepare the meals that are served daily to our guests. See detailed description of specific skills below.

ServSafe Food Handler Certification Training

Ongoing lessons integrated into the Culinary Skills Training on understanding food safety rules with the goal of students taking and passing the ServSafe food manager exam.

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Employment Skills

Classes to develop job readiness skills including helping students understand the job application process (resume, cover letter, interview skills) as well as the skills they will need to succeed at a job including communication, workplace ethics, harassment etc.

Self –Empowerment

Classes to include discussion about identifying personal life changes that are needed for success. These discussions can include: identifying emotional triggers; developing coping strategies and resolving conflict.

Financial Literacy

Program to develop financial planning skills. Program would include opening of a bank account (if student doesn't already have one); a weekly stipend with periodic discussion of establishing savings goals, reviewing credit reports and other personal financial barriers they are facing, and providing incentives for regular savings. (See below for detailed description.)

Job Readiness and Eventual Placement

Allow students who've completed the 16-week training to serve as paid interns working under the direction of the Chef leading the Beyond the Table mobile meals service program. During the paid internship, completers of the training program will work with the Case Worker and the new Vocational Trainer for Interfaith Works to identify job openings in stable food industry jobs with good wages and benefits. Our expectation is that by June of 2021 potential worksites and commercial food operations such as Sodexo as well as hotels in the area (Marriott/Hilton etc), and local restaurants that have been supportive of Shepherd's Table in the past including All Set, and Not Your Average Joe's will be rebounding from the COVID-19 pandemic and seeking new hires lost during the closing of 2020.

Culinary Skills Training Components

- *Introduction to Kitchen Equipment and Workflow*
- *Knife Skills*
- *Following recipes, recipe scaling*
- *Measuring*
- *Emulsions/Stocks/Sauces*
- *Cutting/Cooking Vegetables*
- *Cutting/Cooking fish, poultry and meat*
- *Cooking starches/legumes*
- *Baking Basics*

Eligibility criteria

Program eligibility criteria should be in sync with the hiring criteria that will be used by prospective employers.

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- Be at least 18 years of age.
- Be legally eligible for employment.
- Be able to work for 40 hours a week between the hours of 6am-8pm Monday – Sunday.
- Be curious, ready to learn, and able to complete all homework assignments.
- Be either unemployed or underemployed.
- Be able to read (at a 3rd grade level), speak, and comprehend English in a fast paced environment.
- Be able to see well enough to read at 2.5 feet with reasonable accommodations.
- Be able to stand for a minimum of 8 hours with two 15 minute breaks and be able to lift 50 pounds with reasonable accommodations.
- Be able to hear in a noisy environment with background noise from a distance of 20 feet with reasonable accommodations.
- Be willing to undergo random drug screening throughout the program.
- Stable housing situation preferred

Program Costs:

Shepherd's Table would make one of the part-time chefs a full-time position and it would be his/her responsibility to coordinate the culinary training and backfill for the other chefs when they are training the students. The other two chefs would each get a supplement to their current salary to reflect the additional task of training. The Program will also hire a full time case worker to help the students with all of the non-culinary program aspects. The financial literacy component includes a stipend to students which increases as their experience increases. The other costs listed below are taken from the budget of the Boeing Proposal. There may also be additional costs for community partners who will be providing wrap around services that will need to be added in.

Culinary Training Program Budget: FY21

Full-time Chef/Intern Coordinator	\$45,000
Training supplement to Current Chefs (10k each)	20,000
Full Time Case Worker	45,000
Student Stipend Costs (\$1,700 per student) four students	6,800
Communications Associate Salary (7%)	3,500
Marketing Materials	2,000
Director of Operations Salary (10%)	8,524
Food and Equipment	2,700
Executive Director (5%)	5,400
Curriculum and Training	2,000
Misc. Costs (Office supplies, printing, phone, IT)	2,500
TOTAL	\$143,425

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Shepherd's Table Culinary Skills Training (CST) Program Financial Literacy Component (Based on Program developed by DC Central Kitchen)

Goals:

- To **remove** the “abstraction” from the financial literacy program by integrating student stipends into the training.
- To **provide** an opportunity for students to have savings at the end of the training that can be used to accomplish pre-determined financial goals, including paying debts, or establishing an emergency savings fund, or acquiring a secured VISA card for credit score improvement.
- To **encourage** students to save a portion of their stipend on a regular basis.
- To **promote** the habit of a continued saving after graduation.

Description:

- **WEEK #1:**
 - Partner bank enrolls students with a basic credit union savings account, and ATM-only Debit Cards during the first week of training
 - Students may apply for a checking account after completing the financial workshop.
 - CST students are informed about their training stipend, and the payout structure:

<input type="checkbox"/>	Weeks 1-4;	\$50/wk.	=	\$200
<input type="checkbox"/>	Weeks 5-8;	\$75/wk.	=	\$300
<input type="checkbox"/>	Weeks 9-12;		=	\$400
<input type="checkbox"/>	Weeks 13-16;		=	\$800
TOTALING:				\$1,700
 - CST students are introduced to the “**Savings Initiative**”
 - Partner bank advises students to save 10% - 20% of their income. To promote positive money management practices, to incentivize students to complete the CST training, and to ensure that students graduate with money in their savings account. Students will be guided in using their savings to meet their previously identified financial goals.
 - Any student who
 - 1) Successfully completes the Culinary Skills Training Program, and who
 - 2) demonstrates a **regular** pattern of stipend saving will be eligible to receive a **\$150 completion** incentive; to be added to their savings account.

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- A “**regular pattern of savings**” is defined as six or more weeks of demonstrated savings activity.

- **WEEK #3:**
 - Partner bank staff conducts a brief workshop to answer students’ account management questions (ATM usage, online banking, and mobile banking set-up, etc.).
 - Students get copies of their credit reports and discuss and prioritize any personal financial barriers they are currently facing.
 - Students complete a financial goals worksheet.
 - Students begin tracking daily spending to **evaluate savings opportunities**.
 - Partner Bank staff and Program Coordinator reintroduce the savings *incentive* plan.

- **WEEK #6 & #9:**
 - Partner bank staff meets with students to follow-up on their financial goals, and to monitor their saving activities

- **WEEK #14:**
 - Partner bank and Program Coordinator will begin evaluating the ways in which students use their savings post-graduation and will report finding.

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4. Shepherd's Table Strategic Opportunities: Food Garden

Summary:

This project would continue to expand the existing garden behind the Shepherd's Table building in order to boost our production of fresh fruits and vegetables for consumption by clients. Shepherd's Table would eventually train a small number of clients in gardening techniques and enlist their assistance in garden maintenance.

Description:

The area behind the Shepherd's Table building – adjacent to both Progress Place and the Fire Station – is owned by Montgomery County. It consists of a parking lot used by firefighters and a small (1,000 square feet) space with grass and one corner enclosed by a low cement wall.



In early March 2020, Shepherd's Table hosted a workday to install an initial expansion to a small garden that had been previously installed by ST Chef Christina Moore. The current ST garden, pictured at left, has about 12 garden beds that grow greens and other vegetables to be used in the ST kitchen and served to guests.

This proposed project would significantly expand the current growing area by installing additional garden tables, ground-level garden beds, and pollinator plants to grow more food at a larger scale.

This project will eventually engage clients who are interested in learning the basics of gardening. ST will recruit a handful of clients willing to be trained in gardening techniques to assist in the maintenance of the gardens – from planting to weeding to harvesting. Clients will meet for training and access the gardens at a time when their work can be supervised by ST personnel.

Timeline

The construction of additional planting areas can be done in stages, and the speed of each stage will depend upon the availability of labor and materials. The planning, designing, purchasing and installation of the initial dozen garden tables took place over approximately 3 months, with intensive support from staff, board members, and dozens of volunteers. The full installation of 1,000 square feet of garden tables, beds and landscaping could be done in less than one year with the assistance of a professional landscaping organization. If we conduct this work ourselves with socially-distanced volunteers, a more likely scenario would be adding 2-3 garden tables and beds every year for 3-5 years, until the space is at capacity. It is possible that a second volunteer workday could finish the in-ground garden beds in one day if the need for social distancing is eliminated.

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Once plants are growing, the maintenance of a well-functioning garden is ongoing. A garden needs tending in all seasons except the coldest parts of wintertime, and most active gardeners use the wintertime to plan out the spring's plantings, crop rotation, and harvests. A client-focused gardening program would be ongoing.

Players

There are multiple organizations operating, maintaining, and supporting urban gardens in Montgomery County. The Master Gardener program, run out of the extension school at University of Maryland, supports urban gardening in Montgomery County through a network of Master Gardeners who offer support, training, advice, and demonstration opportunities throughout the county in various venues every year. We have had the benefit of multiple master gardeners supporting our work, helping us oversee volunteers during workdays, giving input on planting and garden design, and presenting at our virtual fundraiser.

CKC Farming runs the Koiner Farm, located 0.6 miles from Shepherd's Table, whose mission is to help manage and preserve urban farms through training and hands-on education. ST has partnered with CKC Farming on grant proposals, ST garden design, and the ST virtual fundraiser.

Brookside Gardens also hosts regular programs supporting urban gardening. Through a personal connection, Brookside Gardens has become involved with our garden efforts, supporting the ST virtual fundraiser and donating plants for our garden.

Benefits

The benefits to Shepherd's Table and its clients of expanding our garden are many. First, Shepherd's Table will become more self-sufficient in obtaining a regular and plentiful supply of a greater variety of fresh fruits and vegetables. We currently get plentiful donations of some particular fruits and vegetables such as squash, greens, and tomatoes, but the variety is limited. Our chefs would like to produce a greater variety of crops such as beans, greens, fennel, lemongrass, Thai basil and more in order to produce dishes that meet the very diverse dietary needs, tastes and cultural familiarity of our clients.

Second, the garden training program will teach our clients a skill that they can use to produce food for themselves at low cost. Especially for recently housed clients, learning how to grow significant quantities of food in small spaces (such as a windowsill) can supplement their food supply. If a client is interested enough in gardening techniques to become an advanced gardener, the training could conceivably lead down a path to professional employment.

Third, there is no better community builder than working in a garden together. The recent Phase 1 report from the SPC mentioned that many clients desire a better sense of community; bringing clients, staff, and trainers together in a garden is a terrific step toward this goal.

Last, we have solid evidence that this project appeals to donors. ST staff noted more numerous-than-usual positive responses from individual donors after receiving an email about the garden workday; one of the master gardeners offered Shepherd's Table as her church congregation's special monthly collection recipient and raised over \$1500 for ST; and we were able to get most of our materials for the March workday either donated or at low cost from local businesses. We believe that additional community businesses and food insecurity and

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environmental funders may also be interested in supporting the project. The garden lends itself to individual project components that may be completed by volunteers (building an individual garden bed, for example).

Costs and Challenges

The costs of constructing and installing garden tables and beds can be quite low, if materials and labor are donated, as they were for our initial expansion,* or can run into the thousands of dollars if high-quality materials and labor are purchased or if a landscaping company is contracted.

The primary challenge of an urban garden is maintenance. Beyond planting and harvesting, the garden needs to be planned annually, and consistently weeded, watered, and monitored over time. A very common phenomenon for urban and school gardens is to go into decline when the cohort of adults who create and tend the gardens move on to other schools or projects.

A rough budget estimate for garden expansion costs is at the bottom of this document.

* The initial expansion was completed with well over 300 volunteer hours of labor for design, planning, construction, and installation, and many materials were donated or contributed at low cost by local businesses. The expenses incurred by Shepherd's Table for the initial expansion totaled approximately \$1,000, and donated materials totaled approximately \$700.

Fit with Shepherd's Table

In our judgment, this project fits extremely well with the goals of Shepherd's Table because it meets a number of needs that have been expressed by staff, Board and clients. The garden program is inspired by Shepherd's Table's talented chefs, who strive to provide nutritious and tasty cuisine. With our chefs' full commitment and leadership, we are confident that the food we grow will be used in creative ways to meet our guests' needs at very low cost. Our aim to eventually train and involve clients in the gardening program fits well with ST's work-training ambitions.

Stakeholders

The stakeholders for this project would be the Shepherd's Table staff, Board of Directors, and volunteers; our project partners; and most importantly, the clients we serve.

In addition, The Montgomery County Master Gardeners have expressed both a willingness to help train our staff and clients, and also a potential desire to use our urban garden as a Downtown Silver Spring showcase for urban gardening. This arrangement could entail occasional openings to the public.

CKC Farming, the land trust mentioned above who partners with ST, is willing to offer limited pro bono consulting services and ongoing collaboration.

Three different local Boy Scout Troops and a church youth group helped with the March workday and expressed their interest in continuing to be involved with the ST garden. We expect that other family- and community-oriented groups will also be enthusiastic about helping with future garden expansions.

Rough Garden Expansion Budget

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Soil testing	\$250.00
Garden tables and garden beds	
4 x 8 ft cedar garden beds 20 beds @ \$120 each https://www.homedepot.com/p/Greenes-Fence-4-ft-x-8-ft-x-10-5-in-Original-Cedar-Raised-Garden-Bed-RC6T21B/203477958	\$2,400.00*
4 x 2 foot garden table 5 tables at \$132 each https://www.homedepot.com/p/Greenes-Fence-48-in-L-x-24-in-W-x-31-in-H-Elevated-Garden-Bed-RCEV2448/302164470 5 tables @ \$132 each	\$660*
Garden soil 1,000 cubic feet at \$8.50 per 2 cubic feet https://www.homedepot.com/p/Miracle-Gro-2-cu-ft-All-Purpose-Garden-Soil-75052430/206553446	\$4,250.00*
Seeds	\$130.00
Seed Starter Trays	\$30.00
Perennials to attract pollinators	\$250.00*
Compost bins, 2	\$560.00*
Cold frames for garden beds 10 at \$44 each https://www.homedepot.com/p/Frame-It-All-4-ft-x-4-ft-x-36-in-Extendable-Greenhouse-300001016/202546821	\$440.00
Rough Garden Budget Total	\$8,970.00

* Similar to the initial expansion, we hope and expect to procure many of these materials as donations from local companies. Specifically, our hope is to get donated compost bins from the Institute for Local Self Reliance, donated soil from Veterans Compost or local landscapers, and donated materials and labor for garden beds and tables from the Boy Scouts or other volunteers. We can easily reduce the number of garden beds, garden tables, and amount of soil in order to start with a smaller garden area if needed. In addition, local gardeners can donate seedlings of perennials to attract pollinators. All these donations will significantly reduce costs.

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5. Shepherd's Table Strategic Opportunities: Daytime toilet and shower facilities for ST clients

Description: ST could provide or facilitate the provision of toilets and shower facilities to guests.

Timeline: This is now being done, and we foresee continuing to provide this.

Players: ST has opened its first-floor toilets for client use.

Interfaith Works also has toilets and showers in their facility in our building.

The county trailer with showers and toilets will be available through the end of the year.

There are reportedly public restrooms available elsewhere in Silver Spring: near the Wayne Avenue Parking Garage, in the Silver Spring Library, in the City Place Mall, and at the metro station.

Benefits: Difficulty finding access to restrooms and showers affect the public health of people experiencing homelessness as well as the community at large. Public defecation contributes to the spread of Hepatitis A, which can be deadly. The ability to wash regularly, including handwashing, can cut down on the spread of diseases including shigella, streptococcal infections, and typhus.

Public defecation and public urination also can create community hostility to our guests, creating hostility to ST's operations in Silver Spring more broadly.

While access to safe and clean restrooms will be appreciated by guests, I am not sure that toilets and showers are glamor items that will bring in significant donor support.

Costs/challenges: The costs of restrooms varies.

The cost to ST of having professional cleaning of our first-floor toilets is approximately \$1000/month. Interfaith Works contributes to the cost of this service.

Several California cities have utilized toileting trailers with three stalls and multiple attendants that are open seven to ten hours a day. The cost is up to \$330,000 per trailer per year, including labor.

Numerous reports suggest that maintaining constant supervision is vital to the bathrooms remaining clean and in good repair. Some articles suggest that the supervisors can provide another form of liaison with populations experiencing homelessness, so that is an added benefit. Generally, toileting facilities include areas to collect dog waste and used needles, which further serves community needs.

The county is now providing additional security for Progress Place, which is the most significant incremental cost of having 24/7 access to toilets.

Fit with ST: While this very much serves our population and is consistent with our values, it feels out of our area of core competency. The relatively low ongoing cost, however, makes it an attractive activity to sustain.

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Stakeholders: We should continue to explore the sentiments of other stakeholders here: Interfaith Works and the county are the biggest. There is also an element that involves the business community. Our provision of these facilities may be a point of strength as we work to build greater support with local

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6. Shepherd's Table Strategic Opportunities: Additional Shepherd's Table Location

Concept:

Open an additional location for Shepherd's Table in a different part of the County.

Basic idea:

ST would open another location, in a different part of MoCo, for serving hot meals.

The concept is not hypothetical. According to Manny, there were discussions (pre-coronavirus) at the County's most senior levels about opening another ST-type facility in another part of MoCo – most likely Rockville – and County leaders asked him whether ST would be interested in operating it. Some County leaders were worried about the concentration of homeless in downtown Silver Spring, and felt that opening another feeding site in a different part of the County could help ensure more even distribution of homeless and facilities to serve them. Rockville could be a likely site because of existing homeless shelters there (Interfaith Works, Community Cares, Montgomery County Coalition for the Homeless [MCCH]) near Gude Drive.

The coronavirus pandemic has elevated the need for meals in the Montgomery County area, but also strained county budgets and made it more difficult to fundraise from some sources (e.g., corporations). The prospects for opening an additional ST location in the immediate term therefore now seem somewhat less promising than they did before the pandemic hit.

Opening a new site would entail several elements:

- Probably some form of serious, formal feasibility study
- Applications to the County for approval and resources
- Applications in advance to foundations/donors to support this initiative
- Finding a suitable building/site (hopefully County might donate one, as with existing site)
- Hiring and training necessary staff, including management staff
- Discussions with other area providers (homeless shelters) to ensure coordination
- Discussions with local neighborhood/leaders to ensure acceptance

Timeline:

All this would likely take at least a full year after approval of the concept by ST board/staff. It might ultimately require more than that – perhaps 2 years.

Players/Stakeholders:

It is not clear that any other organizations are clamoring to fill this role. County leaders were apparently delighted to hear that ST would even consider this idea. That said, launching this major initiative would require close coordination with many other area entities:

- County leadership/Council/HHS; possibly state leaders as well
- Homeless shelter providers in Rockville area (Interfaith Works; Community Cares)
- Rockville neighborhood leaders
- ST's major funders, especially foundations, to assess interest in funding this initiative
- ST up-county volunteers, to assess interest in working at new site
- Religious institutions in Rockville area, for interest in volunteering, donating
- Companies in Rockville area, for interest in supporting

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Benefits:

- Opportunity to serve significantly more hungry/homeless (maybe 40,000 meals/year?)
- Opportunity to ensure more parts of the County have such service
- Respond to sense of need expressed by County leaders to have more feeding sites
- Apparently no other organization willing/able to meet this need; little chance of "overlap"
- County's sense of need to could open the door to strong County financial support
- In addition to grants, County might be able to donate a building for this use?
- New site in new geography might help broaden ST volunteer base
- New site in new geography might help broaden ST donor base
- Would be a near-term way to put ST's significant fund balance to work for clients

Costs/challenges:

- One of the most expensive potential organizational options (probably \$500,000+/year?)
- Would come at a time when County budget is strained by recession, COVID-19
- Puts very significant additional demands on annual fundraising
- Would require significant expansion in ST staff: chefs, admin; etc.
- Could dilute focus on ensuring smooth operations at existing facility
- All at a time when ST has a relatively new Executive Director
- Implicitly accepts premise ST is a magnet for "too many" homeless in downtown SS area

Fit with ST mission:

This seems like a close and relatively easy fit with ST's existing mission/vision/values, since this simply extends ST's current service model to more of the County and more potential clients. The challenge is more about capacity and funding than any significant change in ST's focus.

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7. Shepherd's Table Strategic Opportunities: Expanded Shepherd's Table Capacity on Advocacy

Concept:

Increase the presence and impact of Shepherd's Table in advocacy efforts on issues linked to our mission, at least at the County level, but possibly at State and even federal levels as well.

Basic idea:

ST would step up its efforts on issue advocacy. Preliminary external discussions found that multiple external stakeholders viewed ST as being "not very active" on policy advocacy – apart from advocacy for its own County funding – and wished ST would be more active.

There are real costs to an expanded advocacy effort. To start, it requires serious time and attention. There are different ways ST could provide such resources, including:

- Rely on existing staff – making this an added responsibility for Manny and others
- Hire someone on staff (probably part-time, but perhaps full-) to lead these efforts
- Hire an outside lobbying consultant to handle this (part-time)
- Rely on volunteer efforts by a mix of board members and other interested people

It will require more conversations to refine cost estimates, but total costs for this effort (depending on which of the four above courses was pursued) might range from \$0 to \$100,000 per year, and would be a recurring annual expense.

The amount and cost of staffing/time/resources would depend on such questions as:

- Would this only focus on MoCo policymaking, or also State and/or regional and/or federal?
- How broadly would we define our policy objectives? Only hunger? Hunger and homelessness? Hunger/homelessness/poverty? Etc.
- Would advocacy be limited to testifying and making our positions known (e.g., in Rockville)? Or would it also include a significant increase in involvement in regional issue groups that coordinate on issues? Would it also include involvement in grass-roots organizing?

Timeline:

This is an organizational opportunity that would not require a great deal of lead time in order to launch. It would require little more than finding the person/people to lead this effort – whether someone on staff and/or consultant/lobbyist and/or board members. With needed resources, it could probably be launched in 3-6 months.

Players/Stakeholders:

This is not an area in which it is relevant to ask whether we would be overlapping with other organizations or really "filling a gap." Although many other groups are involved in advocacy on

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our issues, nobody can fully speak for ST's own perspective. The other groups already advocating on our issues would almost certainly welcome our added voice and power.

Benefits:

- Advance policy and funding on hunger, homelessness, and other ST priorities
- Use our standing to help our existing and potential clients in an additional way
- By helping other groups on their issues, they may be willing to help us on ours
- Strengthen our profile with policymakers, which can improve our public funding
- Expand our local/state/regional/national networks, which can help on ideas and funding
- Provide an additional way for board members and others to advance ST's goals
- Strengthen our understanding of, and "early warning" about, relevant policy developments

Costs/challenges:

- Although not hugely expensive, could be as much as about \$100,000/year
- Money does not go to direct service delivery, which would be a change for ST
- Potentially puts us in the middle of divisive policy fights
- It may be that ST is too small to change much on policy/funding outcomes
- Can be an endless time suck; would need to put limits on how much we do
- May be legal issues/limits linked to advocacy given our 501(c)3 tax status (501c3's risk losing their tax-exempt status if lobbying constitutes a "substantial part" of their operations), although it is highly unlikely ST would get near those limits ("25%" often cited)

Fit with ST mission:

Advocacy on issues like hunger/homelessness would fit well with our existing focus on those issues. But it would be somewhat of a shift to move from a total focus on direct service delivery to a greater focus on policy advocacy. We would need to ensure that board, staff, and major funders/stakeholders are comfortable with that shift.

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8. Shepherd's Table Strategic Opportunities: Weekend Day Program [NEW]

Concept:

Shepherd's Table would open its dining room during weekend days for clients who want a place to congregate or participate in a range of programming.

Basic idea:

Shepherd's Table has long partnered with Interfaith Works (IW) at Progress Place to provide comprehensive services to people experiencing homelessness. In addition to managing the 4th floor permanent supportive housing program and the overflow homeless shelter program from November – April each year, IW also has a program offered on weekdays they refer to as “the Day Program.” It's essentially the provision of a large room where the homeless can relax during the day and be protected from the elements.

In the past IW organized recreational and therapeutic activities such as yoga, meditation and art classes as part of the Day Program but not so much anymore. The Day Program is closed on weekends which often leads to more homeless people than usual congregating in the parking lot of Progress Place or at the train station next door. This can lead to increased conflicts among clients and ultimately complaints from area residents and small businesses.

A weekend Day Program led by Shepherd's Table would help keep people safely off the street and enable them to learn valuable skills in a group setting. It would be led by a social worker with experience designing and leading groups for adults experiencing homelessness. She/he would offer the groups in between meal services and would design them based on evolving needs and wants of the people we serve.

Timeline:

The **first phase** of the program would be to hire a part-time Program Coordinator for the Weekend Day Program which takes on average 30 – 45 days. Steps include:

- Developing a Job Description (JD)
- Sharing JD with partner nonprofits and Montgomery County's Services to End and Prevent Homelessness
- Interviewing candidates for the position
- Hiring and training the new Program Coordinator

The **second phase** would be to design and develop the Day Program by meeting with IW to learn from their experience and interviewing meal guests and clients to determine their main interests for group learning.

The **third phase** of the project would essentially be the launch of the program and gathering of data to ascertain that it's meeting its objectives.

Benefits:

Some benefits of this program include:

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- Providing a safe place for people experiencing homelessness to interact and learn new skills on weekends
- Having an experienced Social Worker on staff who can educate and potentially train staff on conflict de-escalation methods and Mental Health First Aide
- Opportunity to engage new volunteers who wish to engage with ST clients in a more interactive and empowering way
- Opportunity to screen clients who could be a good fit for the Gardening Program and Culinary Skills Training Program (late 2021)

Costs:

- \$25,000 for part-time Program Coordinator with a degree in Social Work
- \$3,000 for program supplies

Challenges:

- Motivating clients to participate in groups
- On-going assessment of client interest in groups and ability to pivot to new groups when necessary
- Additional work for weekend security staff

Fit with ST:

Providing a safe place for people experiencing homelessness to be on weekends and potentially learn new skills is a direct fit with ST's mission.

External Stakeholders:

- Interfaith Works
- Bethesda Cares
- Montgomery County Services to End and Prevent Homelessness