

Gift Proposal to District of North Saanich Farm Hub Food Processing Facility

Gregory Warner holds a Donor Advised Fund at CHIMP: Charitable Impact Foundation (Canada) with a current approximate value of \$750,000.00. Mr. Warner proposes to gift the full value of the funds held in his Donor Advised Fund to District of North Saanich to be used to contribute to the cost of constructing a Farm Hub Food Processing Facility in North Saanich (the "Gift").

The purpose of the Gift is to assist District of North Saanich in achieving tangible results in alignment with the [Draft Official Community Plan](#) ("OCP") presented to Council on Monday, March 24, 2025. The OCP provides at section 5.6.17 that the District will "support access to agricultural processing facilities and services including kitchen, cold storage, aggregating service, abattoir, tool access to reduce the greenhouse gases emitted to transport food." We understand based on the presentation of the OCP to Council that the District's staff, in drafting the OCP, incorporated feedback heard from the community with respect to the proposed initiative. Moreover, the District policy outlined in the OCP is consistent with community feedback reported in the [Staff Report to Council dated August 12, 2024](#) ("Staff Report") regarding the OCP Review "What We Heard Engagement Study". The Staff Report noted that "Farmer access to services that support their agricultural activities" is a priority for residents of the District in respect of agriculture and food security, including "A food hub/co-op with features includ[ing] processing facilities (storage areas, cleaning facilities, commercial kitchens), tool access and educational spaces and retail".

The need for a farm hub food processing facility has been clearly articulated by the community. Moreover, comprehensive studies concerning the need for a farm hub food processing facility have already been completed demonstrating gaps in the infrastructure required to support a robust local food system. Attached for reference at **Schedule "A"** are the slides from the presentation "Closing the Supply Gap: Making Transformational Change in the Food System" made to the Agriculture and Food Security Committee of the District of North Saanich by local non-profit CR FAIR. The slides show the existing gaps in the local food supply chain. We know what is missing from our local food processing infrastructure, and the Gift is intended to address one of those key gaps.

Moreover, district of Central Saanich has undertaken a comprehensive feasibility study concerning the development of such a facility, which is informative to the proposed project (see attached at **Schedule "B"**). In addition, District of North Saanich undertook a preliminary feasibility study (see attached at **Schedule "C"**) of the same issue.

1. "Phase 1" Food Hub

Mr. Warner intends for the initial donation to be applied toward the construction of a "Phase 1" food hub facility for the benefit of the District of North Saanich agricultural community. Ideally, as more funding becomes available, the food hub facility can be expanded to meet the needs of the community. The "Phase 1" facility should be designed such that it can be readily expanded in subsequent phases of development as funding becomes available.

Mr. Warner has had preliminary cost-estimate discussions with an experienced food hub developer, Motion Construction Ltd., concerning the construction of a 1,000 square foot slab-

on-grade metal frame building that would provide farmers access to cold storage, freezers and primary food processing facilities. The anticipated cost per square foot is estimated to be \$350.00. (This assumes that the District of North Saanich provides the land and utility hook ups as outlined the following Section 2.) Accordingly, the cost to construct the farm hub food processing facility building is anticipated to be \$350,000.00. The remaining \$400,000.00 that will be gifted to the District of North Saanich can be used to outfit the facility with refrigeration and freezer units, a combi oven, and related food processing and storage amenities. The total cost of the proposed "Phase 1" facility is anticipated to be \$750,000.00. Mr. Warner notes that there may be federal and provincial grants available which the District may be able to access to build a larger facility at "Phase 1", but the intention is that the construction of the "Phase 1" facility should be viable even without additional sources of funding. [before accordingly: This assumes that the district of N. Saanich provides the land and utility hook ups as outlined the following section 2.

2. Contribution from the District of North Saanich

To make the project feasible, the District of North Saanich would be required to contribute the lands upon which the facility is constructed, and all utility hook-ups required to service the facility, including three-phase electrical power service. While the funds for the "Phase 1" construction will be contributed by Mr. Warner, the District would be solely responsible for the planning, development, construction, fixturing and equipping of the "Phase 1" facility. The District would also be the sole owner of the facility, and responsible for finding an appropriate operator to run the facility after it is constructed.

3. Similar Enterprises

Mr. Warner has done some preliminary investigations into existing charitable enterprises that are carrying on similar activities, including The Root, a project of Salt Spring Island Farmland Trust Society (see attachment at **Schedule "D"**) and Victoria Community Food Hub Society. Each of these organizations has demonstrated knowledge and experience in developing viable food hub services in the region, and may be able to provide guidance and feedback to help identify an appropriate operator of a food hub facility in the District of North Saanich. Mr. Warner would be pleased to facilitate an introduction between the District and Salt Spring Island Farmland Trust Society or Victoria Community Food Hub Society at the request of the District.

Mr. Warner has received verbal confirmation from persons involved in its development that The Root on Salt Spring Island cost, in total, approximately \$750,000.00 to construct. An image of that facility can be seen at Schedule "C". The lands and related basic utilities of The Root facility, including three-phase electrical power services, were provided to the site and were not part of the cost to construct the main facility. Mr. Warner has also received verbal confirmation from persons involved in the development of the food hub facility operated by Victoria Community Food Hub Society that the cost to construct that facility was approximately \$800,000.

4. Other considerations:

- The farm hub food processing facility should prioritize the needs of small- to medium-size agricultural producers from the community (e.g. promoting priority access for farmers who are cultivating less than 10 acres of arable lands or some other appropriate metric to be determined by the District.)
- The lands surrounding the North Saanich municipal hall site may be an appropriate location to develop the facility.
- The facility should be as large as funds permit, but not less than 1000 square feet.
- The facility should provide local farmers with access to, at minimum, primary food processing space and equipment including shared-use food packaging space, storage facilities, wet and dry processing equipment, combi oven and commercial cold storage and freezer facilities.
- Ideally the facility will also be used as a community hub and educational facility.
- The Victoria Foundation has commented that there may be options through the Victoria Foundation where support could be encouraged for other members of the community to support the farm hub food processing facility in the District of North Saanich if it proceeds.

5. Purpose of the Gift:

Mr. Warner's intention is that the Gift will be used to build a facility that will support the following goals:

- To preserve, promote and revitalize local agriculture.
- To encourage a new generation of local farmers by reducing their capital investment requirement by providing infrastructure to support their agricultural pursuits.
- To address gaps in the local food chain and encourage local small- to medium-size producers to produce more food by having facilities to assist with sale, storage and processing of their produce.
- To provide investment in capital intensive agricultural infrastructure projects to be accessed by farmers in North Saanich.
- To foster a sustainable, knowledgeable and food-secure community.
- To support and inspire a vibrant, thriving and prosperous agricultural community, increasing the percentage of local food that is grown, purchased and consumed for a more sustainable, equitable and food secure future.
- To reduce the carbon footprint of the current food supply chain.

Schedule "A"

Closing the

Supply Gap: Making Transformational Change in the Food System

Community values + climate
action + local food + local
food supply chain = sustainable
regional local food system & food sovereignty

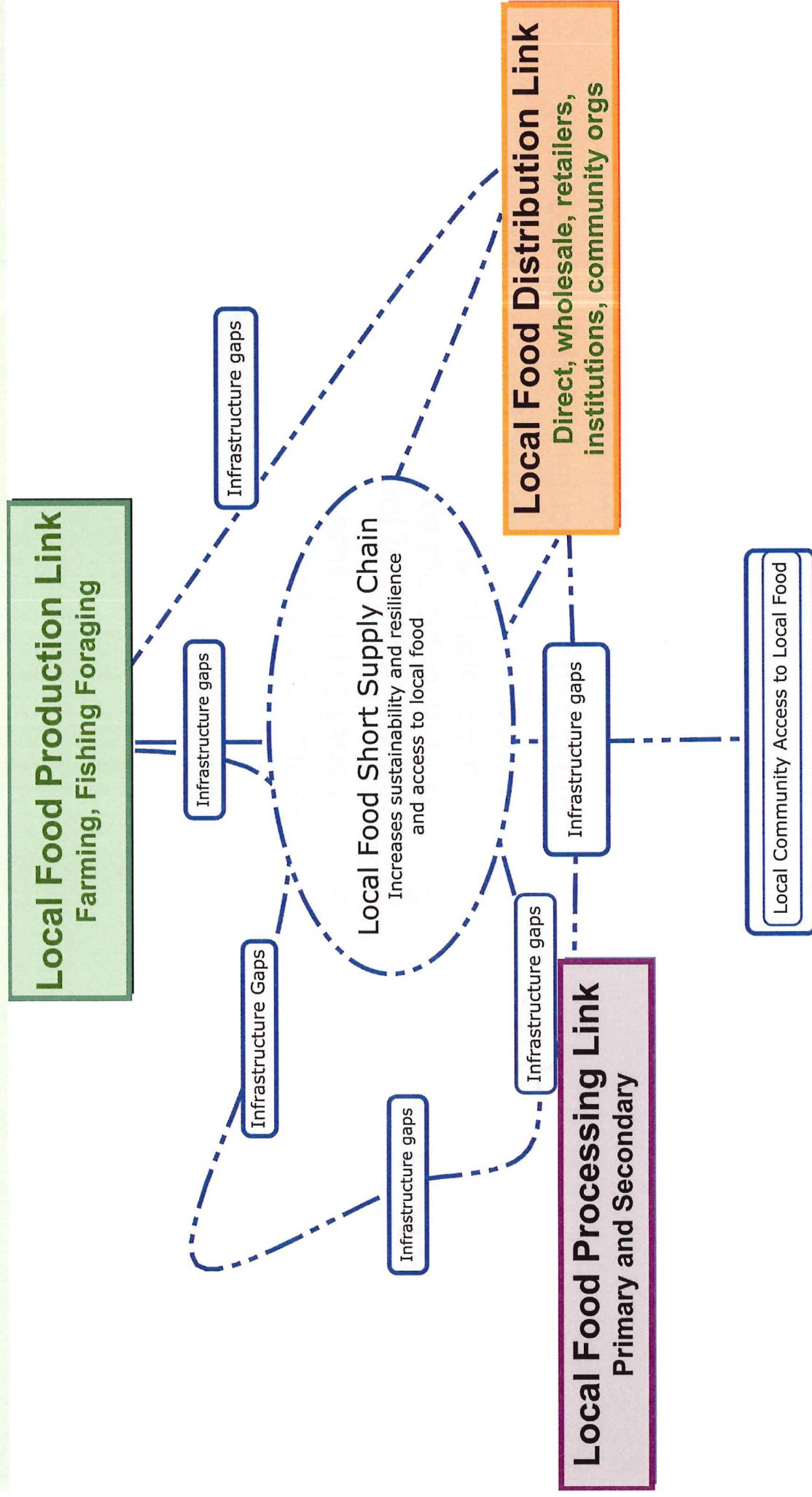


Taking a Systems Approach to Local Food Across the Whole Region

- ❖ We are building **collaborative leadership relationships** among local food leaders among non-profit food hubs and commercial local food businesses (farmers, fishers, primary processors, food distributors, investors), local and provincial policymakers, and public and private infrastructure investors
- ❖ We have identified the **infrastructure gaps** across the region that are barriers to increasing local food production and access to local food
- ❖ The aim is to **model a local food supply chain** that
 - is system-based and regional in scope (place-based) consistent with the boundaries of the Capital Region
 - that effectively links local production, harvesting, and primary processing with quality temperature-controlled storage, decentralised inventory management, and energy-conscious delivery
 - embeds values of food equity, cultural diversity, and nutrition
 - adopts circular economy principles including ecological values and is socially just
 - emphasises seasonally-appropriate foods

Closing the Supply Gap Priorities

- Address fragmentation and infrastructure gaps in the local food system
- Build a robust (circular) local food economy
- Empower local farmers, fishers, primary processors, local food hubs and independent food distributors to increase production and the availability of local food
- Leverage investment that increases food equity and justice in the food system
- Build regional food sovereignty based in local collaboration and climate action



Highlights of Local Food Supply Chain Gaps Survey

Survey respondents: farmers, fishers, processors, grocers, restaurants, community organisations, 96 in total.

- 77% of farmers said they sell most of their products directly to eaters; only 14% of farmers sell directly to processors and 5% directly to institutions
- 83% of farmers said they do their own deliveries
- 70% of farmers expressed an interest in supplying school meal programs; 30% indicated no capacity
- 100% of the fishers said that increased local processing and cold storage for their catch is critically important for them to function directly within local food system
- 67% of grocers said they have the infrastructure they would need to expand their local food stock

Priority Infrastructure Gaps

