

## **Request for Proposals Business Plan for Foothills Food Bank**

### **Contact:**

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**Submission deadline: July 15<sup>th</sup>, 2019**

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The Foothills Food Bank (FFB) is seeking a qualified consultant or team to develop a business plan for the FFB. The proposed business plan will be the result of reviewing FFB's current operations, clarifying and quantifying FFB's goals for serving its community, assessing the opportunities and limits that community has to help FFB meet its goals, and providing recommendations for meeting those goals. Up to \$20,000 is allocated for the consultant's work, to be completed by **November 1<sup>st</sup>, 2019**.

### *Current Situation*

The Foothills Food Bank is an independent, 501(c)(3) non-profit organization, and is part of the network of Whatcom County food banks that distribute commodity food resources in Whatcom County. FFB is currently a completely volunteer run food bank serving an area referred to as East County. It has a volunteer director, dedicated volunteer team, and a participatory board of directors. FFB's service area is geographically large and includes Glacier, Maple Falls, Kendall, Columbia Valley, Deming, Van Zandt, and Acme. Additionally, this region of East Whatcom County has a larger percentage of low-income and food insecure families than the other parts of Whatcom County that are closer to the I-5 corridor.

FFB distributes food one day a week from St. Peter Catholic Church in Deming, and monthly from the East Whatcom Regional Resource Center in Kendall. FFB has very few options for grocery rescue (recovering food from local grocers). FFB also operates several additional hunger relief programs, including a spring and fall school pantry program that serves over 500 children during school breaks, a small home delivery program, and an emergency food box program in partnership with the local fire departments.

### *FFB's Goals*

FFB has aspirational goals to distribute more food to families that visit the food bank, be open more than once a week, and ultimately operate satellite/"pop-up" food banks in underserved areas of East Whatcom County. These goals were developed as a result of a community driven process that resulted in the development of the Foothills Food Access Plan. In 2020, FFB will be moving into its own 4,600 square foot facility just a

few miles north of its current location, at the East Whatcom Regional Resource Center, which is managed by the Opportunity Council. The new facility will have significantly more dry storage, cold storage, and food distribution space.

### Specific Tasks and Deliverables

- Review FFB's current operations and the region's food access goals, as reflected in the Foothills Food Access Plan.
- Review FFB's budget, revenue streams, and food streams.
- Translate the board's general goals for improving food distribution into specific quantifiable targets of the amount, type, frequency, and methods for food distribution. Develop gap analysis of current and desired distribution goals and projections for growth.
- Assess FFB's strengths and growth potential in terms of operations, fundraising, food sourcing and acquisition, volunteer recruitment and retention, community engagement and outreach, and fundraising.
- Research other rural food banks experiencing similar challenges to FFB to explore any best practices.
- Determine grants that are potentially available to FFB to support the achievement of the Foothills Food Access plan, evaluate likelihood of qualification for those grants, and capacity needed to pursue them.
- Determine opportunities for support from Federal and State rural food access programs.
- Determine opportunities for support from Whatcom County Government.
- Determine fundraising potential, independently and in collaboration with other food banks.
- Determine food sourcing potential for rescued food, gleaned food, donated food, and purchased food, independently and in collaboration with other food banks.
- Explore opportunities to partner/merge with other organizations with similar missions for long-term relationships, including Opportunity Council, Bellingham Food Bank, Nooksack Valley Food Bank, and the whole of the Whatcom County Food Bank Network.
- Engage the Foothills Community Food Steering Committee, Foothills Food Bank Board Members and other key stakeholders in the plan development process to ensure operational functionality and adaptability for future updates.

- Develop a business plan that includes:
  - ✓ Identification of the food (volume and variety) needed to meet FFB's goals and plan for growth over the next three years.
  - ✓ Identification of revenue needed to meet FFB's goals that include detailed strategy to attain revenue target.
  - ✓ Identification of labor needs to deliver programs and services.
  - ✓ Development of a proposed schedule of food bank operations including food bank and other program distribution hours and location(s), volunteer schedule, and staff schedule.
  - ✓ Development of staffing recommendation (paid and volunteer) to run the operations.
  - ✓ Development of a recommendation for the most cost-effective methods for acquiring the targeted quantities and types of food to be distributed.
  - ✓ Outlining of a realistic developmental pathway for operational systems such as general operating requirements, fiscal management, and risk management.
  - ✓ Assessment of current partnerships and identification of opportunities to expand partnerships or combine functions or services, or possibly even merge with other organizations to meet FFB goals.
  - ✓ Development of alternatives for organizational structure and governance, including options for partnerships or mergers to best meet FFB's goals and values.
  - ✓ Development of recommendations for Board consideration.

### Submission Requirements

Interested parties are asked to submit a proposal with the components listed below by **July 15<sup>th</sup>, 2019:**

1. Consultant name, address, and contact information of individuals authorized to answer questions.
2. Consultant Profile: Include background and ownership of the company; number of employees; location of primary and any satellite locations; number and nature of professional staff to be assigned to this project; identify supervisory and management staff and summarize experience.
3. Summary of Related Experience: Briefly summarize your experience working in the food bank sector, and in particular, organizational assessment and business planning. Please also identify that which makes you and your team uniquely qualified to perform the work. A resume can be included as an optional supplement to the summary.
4. Approach to Complete the Scope of Work: Please describe the methodology that you would take to conduct the assessments and develop the business plan described above.

5. Cost: Provide a standard fee schedule (hourly rate or other proposal) for services offered and a cost breakdown for completing the project tasks.
6. Subcontracting: Identification of any services that may be subcontracted, including (if known) the name of the subcontractor and applicable experience.
7. References: Provide a list, with current contact information, of references that can speak to your firm's relevant work within the past three (3) years.

### Evaluation of Responses

Responses to this RFP will be evaluated based on the following:

- Experience performing similar projects and demonstration of an understanding of this project's scope.
- The applicant's knowledge and experience of rural food access work, Washington State, and regional food bank infrastructure.
- The applicant's proposed approach and methodology to the project.
- Ability to meet project deadlines.
- Cost effectiveness and approach to budget.
- References.