



**Council Member Motion
For the Committee of the Whole Meeting of May 14, 2020**

Date: May 11, 2020

From: Councillor Isitt, Councillor Dubow, Councillor Potts

Subject: Food Security during Covid-19 Recovery

Background

The Covid-19 pandemic and the associated social and economic crises have demonstrated the vulnerability of existing food systems and the strong desire of residents and community organizations to build more sustainable, resilient local food systems.

One particular initiative is the Community Food Support Network, a grassroots and entirely volunteer-run group associated with the University of Victoria Students' Society that connects students and community members struggling to access food, with free hampers by delivery. The Network does so in partnership with the Food Distribution Warehouse and local grocery stores.

COVID-19 has exacerbated existing barriers to accessing food. Students in particular have been left with little government support, and the closure of the UVic Food Bank left many who relied on this program with fewer options. The Network aims to help fill this gap and has successfully operated this program for 4 weeks and delivered over 200 hampers. The program currently faces uncertainty due to the requirement for insurance to continue operating out of the Fairfield Community Centre.

Another new food security initiative is the City of Victoria's *Get Growing Victoria* program, which is distributing food plants, gardening materials and educational resources to community members, including members of Indigenous communities, local social service organizations and City of Victoria residents.

It is recommended that the City of Victoria continue to support the shift toward more resilient food systems by: (1) Authorizing a grant to provide insurance to allow the Community Food Support Network hamper program to continue to operate, and (2) Endorsing the continuation of the *Get Growing Victoria* program during the Covid-19 recovery phase.

Recommendations:

That Council continue to support the shift toward more resilient food systems by:

1. Authorizing a grant to provide insurance to allow the Community Food Support Network hamper program to continue to operate from May 18, 2020 to August 31, 2020; and
2. Endorse the continuation of the *Get Growing Victoria* program during the Covid-19 recovery phase, including the distribution of food plants, gardening materials and educational resources for the winter 2020-2021 growing season.

Respectfully submitted,



Councillor Isitt



Councillor Dubow



Councillor Potts