

DATE: January 22, 2021

FILE: 6750-20

TO: Chair and Directors
Regional District Board

Supported by Russell Dyson
Chief Administrative Officer

FROM: Russell Dyson
Chief Administrative Officer

R. Dyson

RE: Regional Food Hub Cost Sharing Agreement

Purpose

The purpose of this report is to inform the Comox Valley Regional District (CVRD) Board of a provincially supported Regional Food Hub opportunity.

Recommendation from the Chief Administrative Officer:

This report is for information.

Executive Summary

- Staff have negotiated a shared cost agreement with the Ministry of Agriculture, Food and Fisheries to help fund development of a plan for a Comox Valley Food Hub (including a clear food hub model, proposed services and comprehensive business plan).
- The project is part of a larger provincial initiative to develop a series of regional food processing and innovation hubs that will, together, comprise a BC Food Hub Network.
- The project is intended to support the Comox Valley in our aim to:
 - Promote collaboration between food and beverage producers and processing entrepreneurs, post-secondary institutions and local First Nations; and
 - Develop opportunities to sustainably increase food and beverage production, innovation and market share.
- The project will be undertaken in two parts: project plan development and final business plan completion. Up to \$30,000 is available under the terms of the agreement for project plan development (to be submitted to the Ministry by February 25, 2021) and an interim business plan (to be submitted to the Ministry by March 22, 2021). An additional \$20,000 may be available for development of the final business plan depending on the outcomes of the project plan phase (final business plan completion date to be determined with the province and a revised cost sharing agreement). Staff will be retaining a consultant to lead these deliverables in consultation with planning, community services and finance staff.
- This is a very aggressive schedule but is based on forthcoming funding opportunities.
- Staff are in the midst of securing experienced consulting services to support the project.
- Staff will report back to the CVRD Board with the proposed project plan in February which will include: a project methodology, timeline and budget. As well as a description of the role of staff, a consultant and an assembled working group.

Prepared by:

Concurrence:

A. Mullaly

Alana Mullaly, RPP, MCIP
 Senior Manager of Sustainability
 and Regional Growth Strategy

Scott Smith, RPP, MCIP
 General Manager of Planning and
 Development Services

Government Partners and Stakeholder Distribution (Upon Agenda Publication)

K’ómoks First Nation	✓
North Island Farmers’ Institute	✓
Mid-Island Farmers’ Institute	✓
Comox Valley Economic Development Society	✓
Lush Valley Food Hub	✓