



FOOD
For Lane County

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April 21, 2021

Co-Chairs Johnson, Steiner Hayward, and Rayfield
Members of the Joint Committee on Ways and Means

FOOD for Lane County asks the Joint Committee on Ways and Means to **allocate \$2.1 million during the 2021-2023 biennium to help fund Phase II of our *Building to Serve: Families Feeding Families Campaign* – the completion of our warehouse renovation and expansion. We anticipate this would be funded, and are ready to accept funds for this project through lottery-backed bonds or American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA) one-time funds.**

FOOD for Lane County's mission is to reduce hunger by engaging our communities to create access to food. Hunger in Lane County continues to be higher than the statewide average of 15%, and as the effects of the COVID-19 pandemic and recession deepen, we believe hungry families living in Lane County will require a substantial increase in the amount of food we distribute each year.

When our center on Bailey Hill Road opened in 1999, we collected, rescued, and distributed over 2.3 million pounds of food per year. This amount increased each year until we reached a total of 8 million pounds per year at the height of the Great Recession. The capacity of 8 million pounds of food constrained our ability to receive, sort, and distribute food through our network of more than 165 partner agencies.

We have also witnessed a substantial increase in the proportion of perishable food coming through our doors – now over 50% of donated food – from local grocery stores and farmers as well as the Oregon Food Bank, and the United States Department of Agriculture.

Our \$8.7 million *Building to Serve: Families Feeding Families Capital Campaign* will increase physical and refrigerated capacity, doubling our food storage and handling capacity for both perishable and non-perishable food items. Phase I allowed us to purchase and retrofit a new 40,000 sq ft warehouse which opened in September 2019 including:

1. Expanded cooler and freezer space to accommodate increased perishable food donations;
2. Expanded dry storage for non-perishables; and
3. Expanded space for preparing food orders that are then picked up by our 165+ partner agencies including facilitating pickup by multiple vehicles simultaneously.

Phase II will allow for a complete and essential renovation of the current Bailey Hill Road warehouse, including:

1. A new temperature-controlled food sorting room to allow best



FFLC is an equal opportunity
provider and a member of



and the Oregon Food Bank Network

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food safety practices;

2. Additional non-perishable food storage and processing to facilitate donations of bulk dry products;
3. A new volunteer center to increase volunteer work space and capacity that currently enables 4,000+ volunteers who provide over 75,000 hours per year, saving us nearly \$2.0 million in operating costs; and
4. A new meeting and training space to strengthen and support our network of more than 165 Partner Agencies throughout Lane County.

Our ***Building to Serve: Families Feeding Families Campaign*** goal totals \$8.7 million. To date, we have secured \$6.5 million in commitments from a combination of individuals, cash and in-kind contributions from businesses, and foundations. The requested \$2.1 million allocation will be used to renovate and modernize our Bailey Hill Road Receiving and Volunteer Center, in Phase II of the project. This allocation truly represents the final funding to wrap up this project and get us across the finish line.

The completion of a successful \$8.7 million capital campaign will benefit not only our hungry neighbors across Lane County, but the network of partner agencies deeply embedded in communities throughout the County, local farmers who will gain an additional market for their products, and ultimately our whole County as we mitigate and reduce the long term impacts of hunger.

We are pleased to meet with you and your colleagues as well as provide additional information.

Thank you for your kind consideration of our request.

Sincerely,



Tom Mulhern, Executive Director



Rachel Ulrich, Board Chair

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FOOD for Lane County in 2020

Over the years, volunteers have noted that FOOD for Lane County does so much good work in feeding hungry neighbors, yet our public profile and recognition often do not reflect our significance and achievements. **Because we primarily collect, sort, repack, and distribute food in behalf of more than 165 partner agencies at 180 distribution sites, FOOD for Lane County quietly works behind the scenes, while our partner agencies generally serve as the public face of food distribution in our communities.**

The People We Serve



Based on United Way's ALICE report, approximately 156,000 households, or 45% of households in Lane County do not have enough income to cover household essentials: **housing, child care, food, transportation, technology, and health care**, plus **taxes** and a **10 percent contingency**. These data do **not** reflect consequences of the **COVID-19 pandemic** and **recession**.

Most of our neighbors in need of help are **invisible, silent, anonymous, and proud**: children who begin each school day hungry, as more than half are eligible for free and reduced school lunches; seniors on fixed-incomes experiencing difficult choices among increasing medical, housing, transportation, and food costs; college graduates encumbered by enormous debts that limit choices among necessities such as housing, work, family, and adequate food; under-employed adults of all ages with families that are one paycheck away from catastrophe and having enough decent food to maintain and sustain their loved ones; single parents having to choose between work, housing, childcare, and food; neighbors with disabilities; and veterans, many of whom still suffer from the ordeals and aftermath of combat.

As our name suggests, we serve those living in **Lane County**, as well as those living in **Harrisburg** [Linn County]. Because of the geography of our county, we have clients living from the Oregon Coast to the McKenzie River Valley, in urban areas, suburban areas, rural areas, forested areas, in smaller hamlets, and along creeks and rivers.

Where Our Food Comes From

Grocery Stores [15%] *Market of Choice, Albertsons, Bi-Mart, Lochmead Farms, and Fred Meyer*, which were among the first grocers to donate food. Recently, *Safeway, Whole Foods, WINCO, and Costco* have joined and now participate in our Fresh Alliance Program.

Other local businesses [22%] including prepared food from local hospitals and the University of Oregon are major sources for our Food Rescue Express [FREX] program. We recover prepared but unserved food and repackage the food into family-sized portions for distribution. Additionally, local farmers with an overabundance of

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perishable nuts, berries, fruit and vegetables often donate their excess.

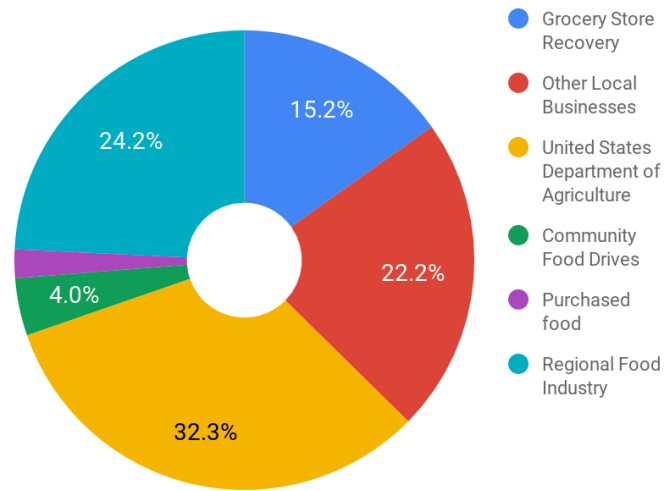
United States Department of Agriculture [USDA] [32%] processes and distributes food that is usually a consequence of excess production nation-wide, and is up from 19% during FY 2017-2018.

Community food drives [4%] include efforts through the *National Association of Letter Carriers [NALC]*; UO Spring Football Game, the Lane County Fair; efforts by KVAL and Fifth Street Market; as well as many drives in smaller venues.

Purchased food [2%] is often the result of gifts designated for that purpose, and has increased greatly during the COVID 19 crisis.

Regional food industry [24%] is the source of much of our perishable food, providing produce from outside our immediate region.

FOOD for Lane County Food Sources



Food and Education Programs

Although our primary mission is to collect, sort, and distribute food through our partner agencies, we also direct and manage several food and education programs:

Cereal for Youth, in partnership with *GloryBee, Attune Foods, LLC, and Grain Millers, Inc.*, provides nutritious cereal throughout Lane County to children and teens. Schools and youth programs distribute to students as breakfast, a school-day snack, or take home as an afternoon or weekend snack.

Children's Weekend Snack Pack provides school-age children in Lane County with two gallon-sized bags of easy-to-prepare, non-perishable food for weekends or during school vacations. *Umpqua Bank* sponsors and provides volunteers that prepare Snack Packs in our commercial kitchen located in our Bailey Hill Road facility.

Extra Helping provides a regular supply of bread and produce for residents in low-income housing, serving 42 sites.

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Job Training consists of two programs that teach food service or warehouse skills that prepare students for employment. Most students secure employment in restaurants and warehouses after they complete our curricula.



FOOD for Lane County gardens include our GrassRoots Garden and Youth Farm, where community members participate in educational programs and workshops, garden onsite, and produce fresh, organic produce for distribution to our neighbors.

The Dining Room is a restaurant-style meal site located in downtown Eugene that serves hot meals four afternoons per week. During FY 18-19, The Dining Room served 35,144 meals to 2,891 diners, an average of 190 meals per day.

Meals on Wheels is a daily program - five days a week - in which friendly volunteers deliver a freshly prepared, nutritiously balanced meal to seniors living within Eugene City limits, with time for a brief visit and safety check. Among program participants, 97% report that the program helps them maintain their independence. During FY 18-19, FOOD for Lane County served 84,019 meals.

Nutrition Education provides nutrition, basic cooking skills, and tips on how to stretch limited food budgets to income-eligible audiences throughout Lane County in English and Spanish. Cooking classes are offered in a variety of settings, as well as grocery store tours and outreach events.

Senior Grocery Program is a USDA program that provides a monthly food box of healthy staples to low-income seniors. We deliver around 450 boxes per month.

Summer Food Program serves nutritious meals during the summer to children five days a week when school is not in session. During Summer 2019, 64,896 meals were served to children at 48 sites by 55 staff members and volunteers.

Produce Plus, in partnership with Trillium Community Health Plans, creates access to fresh, nutrient-dense produce for families in need, especially members experiencing Type 2 diabetes and high blood pressure.

FOOD for Lane County Beyond 2020

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As we look forward to the future of our work and the challenges in our community, the need to increase our capacity is clear. **In FY 17-18 we had to turn away 1 million pounds of food because we simply did not have the space for it. We also have been unable to add new partner agencies to help distribute food in more remote areas of Lane County.**

Additionally, while we have historically depended on canned and packaged goods with long shelf-life for distribution, perishable food has become a substantial staple in our food stream. **Perishable food now accounts for 56% of our donated food.** Although more nutritious, perishable food requires refrigeration and freezer facilities, as well as space to safely process those donations.



In 2020 our community has faced the devastating impact of COVID-19, which greatly altered routines and necessitated substantial adjustments as we continued to meet the needs of our communities. COVID-19 disrupted our supply of donated food, forcing us to spend an additional \$100,000 per month to purchase food starting in March 2020.

We temporarily suspended the in-person volunteer shifts and restricted partner agency access to our West Broadway Distribution Center by transferring food in the parking lot. FOOD for Lane County employees prepared emergency food boxes for distribution through a new initiative—four temporary mobile pantries located in Cottage Grove, Eugene, Oakridge, and Springfield—where we distributed food to more than 12,000 households from late March through mid-June 2020. By early summer 2020, we cautiously resumed our volunteer and food collection and distribution efforts, while maintaining prudent COVID-19 safety protocols.

As we moved into July 2020, we launched our annual Summer Lunch Program for children that—because of COVID-19—involved distribution of grab-and-go meals at school locations instead of picnic-style meals in parks.

The adjustments that this year has required reinforce the ways we must plan to meet the continuing challenges of COVID-19 and other potential emergencies - natural disasters such as fires, floods, and earthquakes.

Expanding Capacity

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Our Bailey Hill facility was built in 1999 with 30,000 square feet to accommodate primarily shelf stable canned and packaged food. In 2016, we explored our available options for expanding our operational space. **We were fortunate that one of our Partner Agencies - St. Vincent de Paul - was selling a 40,000-square-foot facility that more than doubled our working and operational space, and was conveniently located 1.2 miles from our Bailey Hill Road facility.**

With the Phase I acquisition of the West Broadway property and facility:

1. We saved, retrofitted, and renovated an existing warehouse.
2. We divided operations of FOOD for Lane County, allowing our Bailey Hill Road facility to receive and sort donated food which is transported to the West Broadway Distribution Center to be picked up by our partner agencies to for distribution.
3. Our renovated and retrofitted West Broadway Distribution Center adds essential freezer and cooler capacity to accommodate increased quantities of perishable food, and contains a 3,500 square-foot industrial freezer as well as two large coolers - one for refrigerated storage, and one serving as an in person Shopping Cooler for our 165+ partner agencies.
4. **Relocation of our distribution center to West Broadway allows us to renovate our Bailey Hill Road facility to serve efficiently and effectively as our receiving center—with enhanced refrigeration and sorting space as well as increased opportunities for volunteers.**

With our purchase of the West Broadway facility in July, 2017, we launched our **\$8.7 million *Building to Serve: Families Feeding Families Campaign***. Phase I of the campaign included the purchase and renovation of the West Broadway warehouse [\$6.6 million], and **we are now preparing for Phase II, renovation/retrofitting of the Bailey Hill Road facility [\$2.1 million].**

Completion of our \$8.7 million *Building to Serve: Families Feeding Families Campaign* will ensure that both centers are retrofitted, renovated, and free of debt, so that we may focus our efforts on feeding hungry neighbors in Lane County during the years to come. The following table reflects the project breakdown for Phase II:

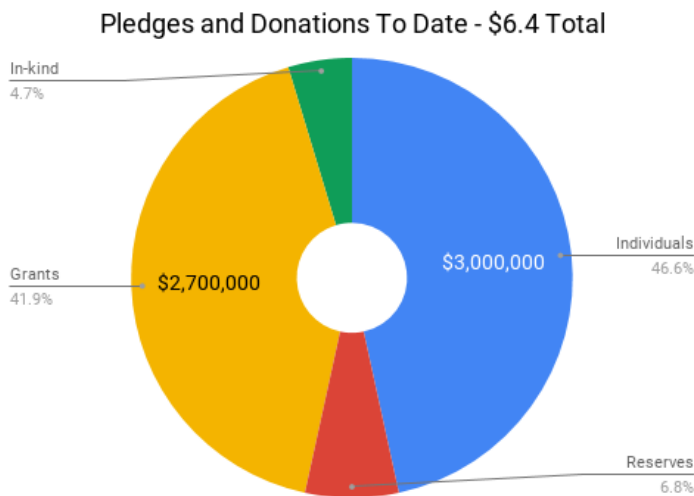
Refrigerated Cooler	Refrigerated storage for perishable food
Processing Room	Temperature-controlled sorting & processing room for perishable food, with water for rinsing staples
Plumbing Infrastructure	Plumbing trenches for coolers, drains & sinks
Electrical Infrastructure	Interconnect coolers, electrical lines and panel, warehouse & office lighting, relocate HVAC, lighting controls

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Fire Suppression	Upgrade fire sprinkler systems to latest code
Loading Dock Enclosures	Enclose loading dock as a sanitary quarantine area
Equipment & Material	Forklift trucks, hand jacks, high-speed cooler doors, floor scales, pallet wrappers, hydraulic-assisted dock levelers
HVAC	Upgrade HVAC since most administrative & volunteer activities remain at the Bailey Hill Road facility
Communications	Telephone, cable & fiber
Electronic Safety & Security	Fire alarm extension, control system, security system & CCTV
Interior Work	Volunteer space, multi-purpose room, acoustics, finishes, furnishings
Exterior Improvements	Paving, fencing, refuse enclosures, landscaping, storm treatment, truck wash rack
Contractor Costs	Staffing, services, contingency, insurance, fee

Whatever that future holds, our new West Broadway Distribution Center is essential as we respond, receive, and distribute greater amounts of food under radically changing circumstances. This capacity—together with a need to receive, sort, and distribute larger amounts of perishable food—provides even greater impetus and urgency to create the Bailey Hill Road Receiving & Volunteer Center.

Progress To Date



Since we initiated our *Building To Serve Campaign* in July 2017, our efforts have been funded primarily by representatives of families. For example, among our commitments totaling over \$6.4 million, most have come from representatives of families. In August 2018, we added “Families Feeding Families” to our *Building to Serve Campaign* to acknowledge and honor the

prominent and enduring significance of family leadership and generosity over generations throughout Lane County.

We have had incredible support from families and businesses in our community, with campaign commitments of \$1,000 or more:

Campaign Steering Committee

Mike Drennan
Benj Epstein

Justin King, Co-Chair
Kathy Kitchel, Co-Chair

Marion Sweeney
Jean Tate

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Pat Farr	Scott Kitchel, Co-Chair	Jon Texter
Ed King, Co-Chair	Stephen Mallery	Tom Wuest, MD
Jodee King, Co-Chair	Gary Powell, D. Min	

Families Feeding Families

Anonymous #1	Hodges	Murphy
Anonymous #2	Hottle	Neal
Anonymous #3	Hughes	Papé
Anonymous #4	Ing	Pope
Barnhart	Karcher	Potter
Bowerman	King	Powell
Cargill	Kitchel	Ralph
Collins	Korbelik	Reed
Coughlin	Kordesch & Fryefield	Reynolds
Curtis	Koris	Schuman
Dobson	Korth	Stanton
Drennan	Machamer	Stokes
Eaton & Palmer	Mallery	Sweeney & Laue & Evans
Epstein	McDonald	Tate
Fidanque	McKay	Texter
Fitzsimmons	McNally	Thomas
Gardener	McPherson	Ulrich
Gonyea	Mehlum	Vos
Gorham	Montgomery	Whyte & Saylor
Gray & Hoffman	Moshofsky	Wildish
Gryziec	Mulhern	Winqvist
Haugland	Murdock	Woolley
Hazarabedian		Wuest

Foundations and Organizations

American Concrete Company	First Interstate Bank	Oregon Food Bank
American Refrigeration, Inc.	HEDCO Foundation	Robertson Sherwood Architects
Bi-Mart Corporation	Home Insulation Company, Inc.	Summit Bank
Construction Focus, Inc.	Innovative Air, Inc.	Systems West Engineers, Inc.