



Report to Council

From the Office of Councillor Amy Lubik

Date: February 8, 2020
Subject: Application for a Food Security Action Plan through UBCM Poverty Reduction Strategy Grants

Purpose

To present for Council's consideration an opportunity to apply for funding offered by UBCM for a Tri-Cities Food Security Action Plan through the Poverty Reduction Grants.

Recommendation

THAT staff be directed to apply for funding for a Poverty Reduction Planning and Action Program grant Stream 1 for regional assessments (Stream 1: Poverty Reduction Plans & Assessments) as recommended in the report dated February 8, 2020 from Cllr. Amy Lubik - regarding Application for a Food Security Action Plan Through UBCM Poverty Reduction Strategy Grants;

AND THAT the City of Port Moody agree to be the primary applicant to the UBCM Poverty Reduction Planning and Action Grant program for a food security regional project that also includes the Cities of Coquitlam, Port Coquitlam, and the Village of Anmore;

AND THAT the City of Port Moody receive and manage the grant funds on behalf of the other regional partners in support of the grant proposal.

Background

In September 2020, the Province of British Columbia released details regarding poverty reduction funding available to municipalities (which the City of Port Moody had requested through UBCM). There are two funding programs—the Assessment and Planning Program (Stream one) and the Action Program (Stream 2); the intent of funding stream is to support communities to develop or update assessments or plans in order to reduce poverty at the local level. The funding maximum under Stream 1 is \$25,000 for a single applicant and \$150,000 for regional applications. (**Attachment 1**). Because the Tri-Cities are highly entwined in food security because of the overlapping nature of organizations, roundtables, and activities regarding housing, poverty, and food security, and because we are currently establishing a food security working group out of the Healthy Communities Partnership, a regional grant to assess

and plan for food security and sovereignty activities and policies makes logical sense, which would mean \$75 000 maximum if we are successful.

Discussion

The last BC evaluation of food security in BC available from [PROOF Toronto](#) that across BC:

- Over one in 10 BC households (11.8%), representing 485,500 British Columbians, experienced some level of food insecurity. About 3% of households, representing 91,100 British Columbians, experienced severe food insecurity.
- About one in six BC children under the age of 18 lived in households experiencing some level of food insecurity (15.6%).
- The rate of household food insecurity varied within the province:
 - In general, the lower mainland and the south coast of BC had lower rates of household food insecurity and northern BC had higher rates.
 - Northern Health had the highest overall food insecurity rate (16.4%); however, the highest rate of severe food insecurity was in Island Health, affecting almost one in 25 households (3.8%).
- Household food insecurity rates in BC differ depending on different household characteristics:
 - Female lone parent-led BC households, with children less than 18 years of age, had the highest rate of food insecurity (34.2%).
 - In all of the health authorities, households with children had higher rates of food insecurity compared to those without. In Fraser and Vancouver Coastal Health, over one in 10 households with children were food insecure (12.3% and 11.0%, respectively), whereas in Northern, Island, and Interior Health one in about four to five households with children was food insecure (24.8%, 20.6%, and 20.8%, respectively).
 - Among food-insecure households in BC, about two thirds (65.0%) reported their main sources of income were wages, salaries, or self-employment.
 - Food insecurity affected over three quarters (76.0%) of BC households reliant on social assistance as their main source of income and about a third (32.7%) of those reliant on Employment Insurance or Workers' Compensation.
 - Renter households in BC experience disproportionately high rates of food insecurity compared to owner households.
- Food insecurity is associated with less favourable health outcomes in British Columbians:
 - Compared to individuals living in food secure households, those living in food insecure households reported significantly lower rates of positive general health (43.4% vs 62.2%) and positive mental health (55.1% vs 68.9%).
 - Those living in food insecure households also reported significantly higher rates of adult obesity and mood/anxiety disorder compared to those living in food secure households (19.5% vs 14.1% and 24.1% vs 9.4%).

More people are using the foodbanks this year in the Tri-Cities and lots of groups are doing work on this issue, as [was covered recently in the Tri-City News](#); however, we do not have a general idea of who is doing what, where, what some of our greatest opportunities and gaps are, and how we might work together to improve food security in the Tri-Cities. The goals of the project are to assess of the strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats for our local food systems in order to:

1. Improve Community Food Security program development and coordination - a comprehensive survey of community food security programs in the Tri-Cities will identify where programs are running and whether or not they are meeting the needs of those who need it the most.
2. Positively change public policy affecting the food system.
3. Improve awareness and understanding of food-related issues.
4. Development of new and stronger networks and partnerships.
5. Increase community participation in shaping the food system.
6. Address gaps in the community food security system.
7. Enhance community capacity.
8. Enhance the sustainability of the community food system.

Apply for this grant and the subsequent deliverables would align with the [Metro Vancouver Regional Food Security Action Plan](#) as well. Observations from this document outlines a few actions and opportunities for Port Moody and our neighbours; however, through conducting a food security assessment would help us to more align with the Metro Vancouver Priorities. These include, but are not limited to, enabling residents to make healthy food choices, communicating how food choices support sustainability, improving access to nutritious food among vulnerable groups. Conducting this analysis also helps us fill gaps specifically identified in the Metro Vancouver Report such as “a lack of coordination among all levels of government, the private sector and civil society groups to respond to poverty and increasing numbers of residents that are reliant on food banks and social services for nutritious food.” It may also help us prepare for the impacts of climate change. Part of this issue is food sovereignty, and as Port Moody does not have land available in the ALR, which our neighbours do, collaboration and finding our strengths may be quite important ().

Further to the Metro Vancouver Regional Food Security Action Plan is to recognise the linkages among poverty, health and food” “The Regional Action Plan recognizes some aspects of food insecurity by focusing on improved access to food for vulnerable populations, and on supporting community groups to recover nutritious food. Since action plan adoption in 2011, and with input from health authorities and municipal social planners, a better understanding of food insecurity has emerged. In recognition of the key role that income plays on food insecurity and health outcomes, there is a need to build understanding of, and advocate for, more supportive policies to address the interconnection of social planning and food system planning throughout the region.”

These objectives further marry well with Port Moody’s vote to put a healthy community’s lens, of which food security is a part, on the update of our OCP. This aligns with our goals of a healthy

city, and this project would help us assess where we are at, in order to assess where we could be going. It will also help community organizations understand the state of food security in the Tri-Cities and may guide their projects.

Deliverables would include a final report identifying the Tri-Cities Community Food Security Assets, Weaknesses, Opportunities and Threats as well as recommendations for actions. An example of the type of document we aim to achieve may resemble that [accomplished by Revelstoke](#). This document will be used to inform the three municipalities of the status of Community Food Security for their citizens and potential actions policies or plans that can be supported at the municipal, provincial and federal level and direct the activities of the Tri-Cities Food Security Working Group, which comprises members of Port Moody, Coquitlam, and Port Coquitlam councils, as well as Fraser Health Staff, and representatives from SHARE, The Tri-Cities Homelessness and Housing Task Force the Coquitlam Farmer's Market, Douglas College Faculty, and other partners. They may also include public engagement workshops, [as demonstrated by New Westminster](#).

Because we are asking to apply for a regional grant through UBCM, which is more holistic than each municipality applying separately, one local government would need to be the main grant holder, with letters of support from the additional partners. Port Moody would be main grant holder in this case. The aim is to hire a consultant to do the majority of the work, with help wherever possible from the Tri-Cities Food Security Working group to minimize valuable staff time, much like what has been accomplished from our age-friendly city strategy working group.

Councillors from Coquitlam and Port Coquitlam and Anmore have been asked to obtain letters of support from their councils. The grant application has been written mainly by our Fraser health Community Dietician Donna Whitham with support of the Tri-Cities Food Security Working Group.

The deadline for applications is February 28th – Letters of support can be received by UBCM after this date; however, we anticipate having them available before this.

Other Option(s)

THAT the report dated February 8, 2020 from Councillor Amy Lubik regarding Application for a Food Security Action Plan Through UBCM Poverty Reduction Strategy Grants be received for information.

Financial Implications

There will be some staff time required if the grant is awarded to the City of Port Moody.

Communications and Civic Engagement Initiatives

There are no communication and civic engagement initiatives.

Council Strategic Plan Objectives

- Healthy City: Ensure plans and programs take into account the diverse needs of residents and factors related to age and other demographics such as income, languages, housing types, and abilities
- Environment: Broaden the City's sustainability programs
- Climate Change: Respond and adapt to climate change through planning and policy development
- Resilience: we respond to challenges, adapt to change, and help others.
- Compassion: we believe in kindness, caring, and helping others
- Service: Strengthen relationships with other levels of government, First Nations, community groups, and partners

Attachment(s)

1. UBCM Poverty Reduction Grant Instructions
2. Letter of Support from SHARE
3. Letter of Support from PHABC
4. Letter for Support from the Coordinator of the Tri-Cities Homelessness and Housing Task Force
5. Letter of Support from Fraser Health Authority