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Press Release

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Contacts:

Colleen Martinson
Director of Development and Communications
(253)-372-2075
colleenm@ballardfoodbank.org

Luke Ilgenfritz
(206) 496-3895
luke@minervastrategies.com

Ballard Food Bank celebrates opening of its new home—a Hub for Hope in the heart of NW Seattle

Food Bank will offer healthy food and other vital resources to help families and prevent homelessness

Seattle, WA: Ballard Food Bank opened the doors of its new home today, the culmination of a more than four-year effort to bring its “Hub for Hope” to northwest Seattle. Located at 1400 NW Leary Way, this is the first building the Food Bank has ever owned. Ballard Food Bank expects to welcome thousands of community members in the coming weeks and months.

“Ballard Food Bank is so grateful for the incredible community support that has made our new home a reality. That support means children have food in their bellies when they go to bed. It means elderly folks can count on weekly grocery delivery from a friendly volunteer. It means people know we are here when times get tough. This building symbolizes the true meaning of community: neighbors helping neighbors, every day,” said Jennifer Muzia, executive director at the Ballard Food Bank.

The facility offers access to healthy food and critical social services in a warm and welcoming environment. Its grocery-store-style food bank will be open to clients from across our city. It will also feature a garden, spacious waiting area, and the Kindness Café, where visitors can share food and community. A large warehouse space will include more room for the Food Bank’s Weekend Food for Kids program, which provides food to students in 20 schools across northwest Seattle. In addition, the warehouse will be a staging area for the Home Delivery program for the elderly and homebound.

“Everyone deserves to have access to healthy food. At a time when so many children and families are facing hunger and poverty, Ballard Food Bank is part of an important statewide network to provide for them. This Hub for Hope will help our community heal, grow, and flourish. Ballard Food Bank is a great model of community support and connections,” said Washington State First Lady Trudi Inslee, who spoke at today’s ribbon cutting ceremony.

The new building will feature a Community Resource Hub that hosts nearly a dozen partner organizations including United Healthcare, Byrd Barr Place, Swedish Ballard Family Medicine, and the VA. These partners will provide access to vital resources including medical check-ups, mental health services, housing connections, transportation passes, and more. Ballard Food Bank's rent and utility assistance helps prevent homelessness.

The opening of the building happens at a critical time; needs have increased dramatically over the past 18 months. Before the pandemic, in February 2020, 3,200 people visited the food bank or received home deliveries; that number has more than doubled to 7,000+ in a single month. Ballard Food Bank's volunteer delivery drivers are now making 950 home deliveries per week.

At 11,000 square feet, the facility is double the size of the Food Bank's former home on Leary Avenue. The project has been in the works for more than four years and cost \$13.9 million. It is the first building the Food Bank has ever owned, which provides assurance it will be a community resource for years to come.

The new building is made possible by a dynamic project team. Spectrum Development Solutions oversaw the project as the development manager. Graham Baba is the architect and Wilcox Construction led construction of the building. Donors to the project include Amazon, the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation, the Norcliffe Foundation, the City of Seattle, Employees Community Fund of Boeing, MJ Murdock Charitable Trust, and the State of Washington.

"It has been amazing to witness the outpouring of generosity for this project. More than 1,300 individuals, companies, and organizations contributed with gifts starting at just \$5—it all added up to make our new home a reality. This is an incredible day," said Jen Muzia.

About Ballard Food Bank:

Ballard Food Bank's mission is to bring food and hope to our neighbors because there can be enough for everyone. We serve individuals living in Northwest Seattle, including Ballard, Magnolia, Queen Anne, Fremont, Phinney Ridge, Green Lake, Westlake, and parts of South Lake Union. To achieve our mission, we provide access to nutritious foods and services that support self-sufficiency, and we advocate for food equity and justice. For more information, please visit: www.ballardfoodbank.org.

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