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**BALLARD FOOD BANK SECURES SITE TO BUILD ITS NEW HOME**

Property Acquisition Will Expand Food Bank Programs and Community Resource Hub Services for Northwest Seattle

SEATTLE, NOV. 20, 2019 – After an exhaustive two-year process, the Ballard Food Bank has closed on the property that will serve as its future permanent home -- for the first time in its history. The new location, 1400 N.W. Leary Way, is just several blocks away from the current facility and is easily accessible from major arterials and by public transportation. The move will double Ballard Food Bank’s footprint and expand its capacity to serve more neighbors, who are struggling to keep up with Seattle’s cost of living.

In addition to housing a larger grocery-store-style food bank, the new building will increase the number of social services and programs the organization delivers. The new home will serve as a Community Resource Hub, providing spaces for community members to access a range of social service providers to meet emergency financial assistance, housing, health, employment, and case management needs.

“Our mantra is that access to food is a basic human right,” said Jen Muzia, executive director of the Ballard Food Bank. “Unfortunately, the demand for our services continues to swell, and we’ve outgrown our space. Being able to acquire the lot and tailor a new building to best serve our neighbors in need is going to be transformational.”

Ballard Food Bank’s current lease expires in October 2021, which compounded the urgency to find a permanent home. “We are bursting at the seams, but our vision is to create more thoughtful, welcoming spaces where the thousands of people we serve from across northwest Seattle can feel a sense of belonging,” Muzia said.

Despite a booming city, nearly 14 percent of people in Seattle live in poverty and experience hunger and even homelessness. Sometimes, that poverty can be “hidden” in neighborhoods where you least expect it. Ballard Food Bank serves northwest Seattle across seven zip codes, all the way up to 145<sup>th</sup>. Their service area includes the neighborhoods of Magnolia, Queen Anne, Ballard, and parts of South Lake Union and was recently expanded to include the neighborhoods of Fremont, Phinney Ridge, Greenwood, Greenlake, and Licton Springs. Clients

can shop at the grocery-store-style food bank or, if they are home-bound, they can request delivery.

“Securing the land is only the beginning of our journey,” said Andrew Weber, president of the Ballard Food Bank board of directors and a Ballard resident. “We have a long road ahead as we build the community and civic support necessary to invest in the food bank’s future home and sustain daily operations.”

Ballard Food Bank’s vision for a purpose-built food bank and community resource hub that serves our neighbors’ basic needs, while enabling access to services, will provide the opportunity for many to get back on their feet. Achieving this goal will depend on a community of individuals, foundations, businesses and the government to contribute to the campaign. So far, funding support includes an initial commitment of \$500,000 from the City of Seattle, \$750,000 from the State of Washington, and \$1 million from the Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation.

Construction on the new site will break ground in 2020. Doors will open in the fall of 2021.

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#### **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 throughout northwest Seattle. To achieve our mission, we provide access to nutritious foods and services that support self-sufficiency, and we advocate for food equity and justice. More than 1,200 households access the food bank each week. We also provide additional resources including our hygiene bar, mail services and emergency financial assistance. The vast majority of Ballard Food Bank’s funding comes from local donors and community businesses. For more information, please visit [www.ballardfoodbank.org](http://www.ballardfoodbank.org).

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