



From: the Everyone At the Table collective (EAT)

May 27, 2023

Everyoneatthetablepg@gmail.com

City of Prince George

1100 Patricia Boulevard
 Prince George, BC, Canada
 V2L 3V9

To Mayor and Council,

RE: Proposal for A North Central Regional Food Hub: A New Life for a Historical Farm

It is with enthusiasm that we, the Everyone At the Table (EAT) collective, have joined with a diversely rich group of community members and institutions to form the Queensway 5 coalition because the vision of the current owners and of the coalition partners align with the EAT objectives which are (in part):

1. To improve regional food security and sovereignty through a just regional regenerative food system by:
 - a. Cultivating meaningful partnerships/collaborations with individuals and groups pursuing new food initiatives to bridge the gaps by implementing community-based food programs
 - b. Drawing upon local knowledge and resources, and building capacity and channels of interconnectedness between government, community organizations and the public.
 - c. Providing a forum for networking
 - d. Actively supporting and contributing to Indigenous Food Sovereignty initiatives in the spirit of reparation and reconciliation.
2. To ensure action and activism are well grounded in the voices of our communities and building on the best of research and wise practices that are available

3. To build a strong evidence base by asking questions about, and and speaking up on community issues impacting local food systems
4. To build connections for producers, consumers, and policy makers by breaking down silos to bring the food community closer together including support to new food producers and information to funders and policy makers.

We join the rest of the coalition in requesting that the municipality invest, not just in our present food security and sovereignty but also in that of future generations by purchasing the Gilliards' 5 acres and holding it in a covenant for that specific purpose. Some coalition partners will focus on teaching and research, others on composting, others on food growing, our particular interest is in the establishment of a food hub with a commercial kitchen. We are overdue to invest in a food hub that prioritizes community food security and would help build self-sufficiency for Prince George and North Central BC. The provincial government will be continuing to invest in food hubs with local governments and organizations across BC¹. Initiating a regional food hub begins with obtaining land that can be integrated with food growing activities that are intentionally linked to public outcomes (e.g., health and well-being, community connectedness and sense of place, protection of green space and biodiversity)².

A quick review of the current municipality of Prince George OCP which was developed after an extensive consultation with the public indicates clear support for this initiative. That endorsement does not have to be established. It is right there in the OCP. See the attached list of relevant policies, but allow us to particularly underline:

- **Policy 7.3.7** Support agricultural and food systems planning to improve the current state of food systems **and to encourage local food self-reliance.**
- **Policy 8.1.9** The City may identify agriculturally valuable lands outside the ALR and encourage their inclusion into the ALR.
- **Policy 8.3.21** The City should undertake a review of the zoning bylaw to ensure that farmers markets, community gardens, etc., are permitted use of both public and private realms and that **design guidelines support food production.**
- **P179 Social Development. Policy 11.3.2** The City should consider acquiring land to support sustainable food systems.

We look forward to joining with our elected officials and municipal staff to improve regional food security and sovereignty for all.

In solidarity,

Roanne Whitticase, Alex Rowan, Terri McClymont, Kym Gouchie

For the Everyone At the Table collective

Everyone At the Table (EAT) <https://www.letseatlocalpg.com/>

¹ Government of BC (2023). Historic investment in food security support British Columbians.

<https://news.gov.bc.ca/releases/2023AF0016-000277>

² Public Health Association of BC (2021). Urban Foodlands: Case Studies of Kamloops, Vancouver, and Victoria.

<https://cydi.ca/wp-content/uploads/2021/06/PHABC-Urban-Foodlands-Report-Provincial-Report.pdf>

The Good Food Box <https://www.thegoodfoodboxpg.ca/>

The Canning Circle <https://www.letseatlocalpg.com/canningcircle>

We wish to acknowledge the 9000+ years of the Lheidli T'enneh Nation's stewardship. The Lheidli T'enneh' ancestors have cared for this beautiful land that feeds us all and we will continue to welcome their teachings and ancestral knowledge as we work towards food security for all people.

Policy relevant to Local Food Security from Prince George's Official Community Plan

Policy 13.5.14 The City should adopt a community generated food charter that sets out a vision for food and agriculture in Prince George.

p5 maintaining the integrity of a secure and productive resource base, including agricultural land reserve and aggregate resources

p47 Policy 6.4.11 Integrated land use approaches should be implemented wherever possible to improve opportunities for biodiversity, ecosystem connectivity, recreation, agriculture, and local food production, while reducing conflicts.

p72 Food Security:

Food and agriculture play an important role in a sustainable community by improving the environment, the economy, the health of our population and our community's well being. Access to quality, local food is increasing in demand throughout much of North America due to high cost of food, limited availability and a growing awareness in sustainable agriculture. The increasing costs associated with the production and shipping of food can result in limitations for community access to quality food. The production and supply of local food can help provide food security but requires support to establish systems for community food production at all levels.

Policy 7.3.7 Support agricultural and food systems planning to improve the current state of food systems and to encourage local food self-reliance.

P73 Policy 7.3.5 Support increased consumer access to local and healthy food through local food institutions and retail markets throughout the community.

P92 Objective 8.1.12 Preserve forests, agricultural lands, soils, and environmental resources.

P93 Policy 8.1.8 The City does not support farmland subdivisions in the ALR or agriculturally valuable lands that produce any parcels smaller than 15 ha parcels.

P93 Policy 8.1.9 The City may identify agriculturally valuable lands outside the ALR and encourage their inclusion into the ALR.

P100 Food Systems and Urban Agriculture [7 policies]

P106 Policy 8.3.21 The City should undertake a review of the zoning bylaw to ensure that farmers markets, community gardens, etc., are permitted use of both public and private realms and that design guidelines support food production.

P123 Policy 8.3.117 The City should support ALR designations within the City's boundaries. Changes to the designation should be supported only if land is shown by a qualified professional to have limited agricultural suitability and where land use changes work to support food and agriculture systems (e.g., farmland dedications of equal or greater value for community trust and/or upgrades to farming or farmland infrastructure).

P175 Opportunities for local food production

P179 Social Development. Policy 11.3.2 The City should consider acquiring land to support sustainable food systems.

P195 Social Development - Food Security

Policy 13.2.31 The City should undertake a review of the zoning bylaw to ensure that farmers markets, community gardens, etc., are a permitted use of both public and private realms and that design guidelines support food production.

Policy 13.2.32 The City should include a comprehensive definition of farmers markets in the zoning bylaw.

P206 Food Security. Policy 13.4.20 To adapt to climate change, projected precipitation and temperature changes should be considered when creating agricultural plans and agricultural land allocations. The City should undertake further study to consider the potential for increased agricultural capacity in the future.

P211 Food Security [6 policies]

Policy 13.5.14 The City should adopt a community generated food charter that sets out a vision for food and agriculture in Prince George.

To Whom It May Concern:

Re: Queensway 5 2019 Queensway, Prince George BC

The Queensway 5 Coalition, in partnership with Everyone at the Table (EAT), has the opportunity to engage interested parties to develop the funding possibilities to purchase 5 acres of the Gilliards' historical farm close to downtown which is a rare opportunity.

The timely availability of this property can be the springboard to build a food hub/food growing and processing teaching centre in the context of a mini-experimental farm/community/urban farm next to a well-established community garden in need of expansion. This would also allow many opportunities for jobs, volunteer experience, therapeutic healing, and many more benefits. The Gilliard Farm current owners wish for this land to continue to be used for agriculture production; this property is in a prime growing area and suitable for growing many types of crops. The proximity to downtown and transportation routes allows easy access to processing and markets.

We fully support the shared vision and recommend Council provide a letter of support for funding applications and participate in joint applications to help meet the funding dollars needed to see the historical farm continue to serve the community.

With kind regards,

Katt Cadieux

Katt Cadieux

E.D. & Founder of UNDU



May 25, 2023

To Whom It May Concern:

Mailing Address:

PO Box 444
Prince George, BC
V2N 2E3
Canada

Physical Address:

Suite 101, 1595 5th Ave
Prince George, BC
V2L 3L9
Canada

phone:
(250)561-7327

fax:
(250)561-7324

email:
garden@reaps.org

web: www.reaps.org

Re: Queensway 5 -1099 Porter Ave. -Prince George BC

Recycling & Environmental Action Planning Society (REAPS) is in full support of the Queensway 5 Coalition with the engagement of interested parties to secure the funding to purchase the 5 acres of the historical homestead currently owned by the Gilliard's.

REAPS sees this as an opportunity to address a much-needed food hub providing educational opportunities, creation of a local food policy, addressing the local needs of providing healthy locally grown foods and an opportunity for food sustainability in Prince George. We all have learned from recent natural disasters of how important this is.

The timely availability of this property can be the springboard to build a food hub/food growing and processing teaching centre in the context of a mini-experimental farm/community/urban farm next to a well-established community garden well used and maintained for 20 years. The Gilliard Farm current owners wish for this land to continue to be used for agriculture production; this property is in a prime growing area and suitable for growing many types of crops. The proximity to downtown and transportation routes allows easy access to processing and markets.

REAPS fully supports the shared vision of the Coalition. REAPS recommends that the Council provide a letter of support for future funding applications and participate in joint applications to help meet the funding dollars needed to see the historic farm continue to serve the community.

Sincerely,

Terri McClymont
Executive Director



UNIVERSITY OF NORTHERN
BRITISH COLUMBIA

Research and Innovation

18 May 2023

Queensway 5 Coalition

To Whom it May Concern:

Re: Letter of support for the North Central Regional Food Hub

I am pleased to support the proposal by the Queensway 5 Coalition, for a North Central Regional Food Hub. The coalition is a collection of groups with wide-ranging interests in local food production and food security. The coalition wishes to purchase 5 acres of the Gilliards' historical farm that is located close to downtown which provides a rare opportunity for establishment of a regional food hub in proximity to a food-insecure area.

The University of Northern BC has a strong interest in supporting efforts to develop local food production and processing capacity. The establishment of a mini-experimental farm/community/urban farm next to a well-established community garden in need of expansion will bring many opportunities for educational programs in food systems and significant research opportunities that cross many disciplines. This property is in a prime growing area and suitable for growing many types of crops. The proximity to downtown and transportation routes allows easy access to processing and markets.

We fully support this initiative and are pleased to be part of the coalition. This is a unique opportunity for a historical farm to continue to serve the community, and the project directly aligns with UNBC's mission and goals.

Sincerely

A handwritten signature in blue ink, reading 'Kathy Lewis', is positioned above the typed name.

Kathy J. Lewis
Interim Vice-President Research and Innovation

May 2023

To whom it may concern.

Re: Queensway 5 =1099 Porter. Prince George

On behalf of the Queensway Garden Society.

We are writing to express our full support for the development of the five acres for the purpose of creating educational opportunities, as well as food sustainability endeavors on this beautiful piece of property.

We have utilized an acre of land, generously provided by the Gilliards since 2003, to provide gardening opportunities to all members of our Community. We have approximately 100 growing spaces, including raised beds. From this land many hundreds of pounds of produce are harvested each year, and each gardener shares with their friends, neighbours, senior centres, less fortunate etc, The garden provides our gardeners social opportunities, as well as a serene place to contemplate, while we work on our piece of the land. Health benefits have been experienced by those of us working the soil.

I feel we have a silent impact on the greater community.

Our garden is led solely by volunteers, and at this time we feel we do not have the capacity to expand into this acreage.

We have never advertised our garden, and for the last few years, have held a waitlist with folks wanting a spot in our special place.

The potential opportunity for others to develop gardens, and other agricultural uses is welcomed by all of us who form the Queensway Garden Society.

We fully support the shared vision.

Pat Ellis

Volunteer Garden manager
Queensway Garden Society

Monday, May 29th, 2023

Dear Mayor and Council,

Re: Proposal for A North Central Regional Food Hub: A New Life for a Historical Farm.

We are writing to you today in support of the Queensway 5 Coalition's proposal to purchase the Gillard farm in Prince George for the purpose of building a North Central Regional Food Hub near the downtown area. We recognize the ever-growing importance of food security in the area, as equitable access to safe, healthy, and culturally relevant food is a growing challenge in the community, and particularly in the downtown area. Further, we understand the impact and significance of this 'grassroots' initiative that centres the experiences of those working in the food security spectrum and those populations who will primarily benefit from its outcomes.

A community is "food secure" when all residents can obtain a safe, personally acceptable, nutritious diet through a sustainable food system that maximizes self-reliance and social justice. As part of a multi-pronged and multi-sectoral approach to building food security, community-driven food security programs provide benefits to individuals, families and communities. A community garden can serve as an important short-term point of food access for populations experiencing limited food access, and/or contribute to equitable distribution in times of economic crisis. Additionally, regional food hubs have the capacity to encourage and support local food production, enhance food skills and education, and build toward a robust and sustainable food systems.

Aside from benefits from community food security, community gardens contribute to community health and well-being in many overlapping ways¹, including:

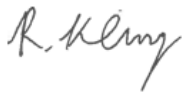
- Environmental - Protective green spaces contribute to improved air quality, increasing biodiversity and attracting pollinators;
- Economic Development – Urban farms/community gardens can contribute to micro-economies through selling of produce and and/or animal-based food products, and through the opportunity to use food hubs as a space for education, training, employment, and innovation;
- Health Promotion - Community gardens provide opportunities for physical activity, social inclusion, and can provide a sense of purpose, all contributing positively towards mental and physical health²; and,
- Education – A regional food hub provides opportunities for education related to gardening, processing, cooking, climate change, and more.

¹ These benefits, among others are detailed further in: [Dig It Community Garden Guide: How Local Governments Can Support Community Gardens](#)

² ² M. Soga, K. Gaston, Y. Yamaura (2017). Gardening is beneficial for health: a meta-analysis Prev. Med. Rep., 5 (2017), pp. 92-99
<https://doi.org/10.1016/j.pmedr.2016.11.007>

Healthy communities incorporate and support healthy and sustainable food systems that honour food sovereignty and environmental sustainability. Food Security is a complex, and ever-important public health issue, and a determinant of health. The Queensway 5 proposal aligns with the City of Prince George's Official Community Plan (Bylaw No. 8383, 2011, R. 03-13-2023) strategies related to food security (7.3B) and more broadly with the plan's objectives related to economy (5) environment (6), and social development (7). We believe that this proposal will contribute to improving the overall health and well-being of the residents of Prince George.

Thank you,



Dr. Rakel Kling
Medical Health Officer, MD MSc MPH
FRCPC
Northern Interior HSDA
Northern Health Authority
299 Victoria Street, Suite 500, Prince
George, BC V2L 5B8



Amelia Gallant
Population Health Dietitian, MPH RD
Regional Lead, Food Security
10115 110 Ave, Fort St John, BC V1J 6M9



Jeff Kormos
Healthy Settings Advisor - Northern Interior,
Public Health Observatory, Population &
Public Health
299 Victoria Street, Suite 500, Prince
George, BC V2L 5B8



05.30.2023

To Whom It May Concern:

**Re: Proposal for A North Central Regional Food Hub: A New Life for a Historical Farm at 2039
Queensway, Prince George BC**

The Public Health Association of BC (PHABC) would like to express our full support of the Queensway 5 Coalition's proposal for a North Central Regional Food Hub in Prince George, BC. The Coalition's efforts to support the purchase of 5 acres of urban farm land for community food security and food literacy education aligns with PHABC's food system portfolio of work, which supports BC food systems and food literacy education through our programs including: Farm to School BC, Can You Dig It, BC Chapter of The Coalition for Healthy School Food, and the Food Atlas.

The five acre property is close to the downtown city centre of the Prince George in a prime growing area with transportation routes that allow easy access to growing, teaching, processing and markets.

The Farmland's current owners wish for this land to continue to be used for agriculture production and food education. From the extensive work PHABC has done with the Coalition, we see opportunity through this place as the springboard to build a food hub/food growing and processing teaching centre in the context of an urban and community farm, new farm incubator, mini-experimental farm and food literacy education space. This project has the ability to strengthen food access and resiliency in Prince George.

PHABC fully supports the shared vision and recommends that the municipality purchase this land for the community with a covenant attached that reserves the land's use for activities that improve food security for the community and opportunities for teaching how to grow and process foods.

We further request that following purchase of the land, the municipality actively supports the aforementioned types of projects on the land through letters of support for funding applications, and/or participating in joint funding applications to help meet the funding required to see the historical farm continue to serve the community.

Sincerely,

Shannon Turner, BA, BSc, MSc, PhD(c)

Executive Director

Public Health Association of BC

E: execdir@phabc.org



May 5th, 2023

To Whom It May Concern:

Re: Queensway 5 - 1099 Porter Ave. - Prince George BC

The Queensway 5 Coalition, in partnership with Everyone at the Table (EAT), has the opportunity to engage interested parties to develop the funding possibilities to purchase 5 acres of the Gilliard's historical farm close to downtown which is a rare opportunity.

The Live Well Prince George Society is very excited about the opportunity for food sustainability and education project in Prince George. We all have learned from recent natural disasters of how important this is. We stand behind and beside the Gilliard's Farm concept.

The timely availability of this property can be the springboard to build a food hub/food growing and processing teaching centre in the context of a mini-experimental farm/community/urban farm next to a well-established community garden well used and maintained for 20 years. The Gilliard Farm current owners wish for this land to continue to be used for agriculture production; this property is in a prime growing area and suitable for growing many types of crops. The proximity to downtown and transportation routes allows easy access to processing and markets.

We fully support the shared vision and recommend Council provide a letter of support for funding applications and participate in joint applications to help meet the funding dollars needed to see the historical farm continue to serve the community.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "M Jackson".

Margaret Jackson, President

Live Well Prince George Society

101-1584-7th Ave

Prince George, BC

V2L3P4

www.livewellpg.org

To Whom It May Concern:

Re: Queensway 5 2121 Queensway, Prince George BC

The Queensway 5 Coalition, in partnership with Everyone at the Table (EAT), is in the process of requesting that the City of Prince George purchase the Gilliards' historic farm and hold it in covenant so the Coalition and its non-profit organizations may build a food hub and urban farm. The farm will support experimental learning and grow a well-established community garden in need of expansion south of Prince George's downtown. The Gilliard Farm current owners wish for this land to continue to be used for agriculture production; this property is in a prime growing area and suitable for growing many types of crops. The proximity to downtown and transportation routes allows easy access to processing and markets.

The Queensway food hub aligns with the Eco Living Community's three goals: The uptake of climate change mitigation, individual and community self-sufficiency, and the strengthening of connection between land and community. We have been honoured to work alongside Everyone at the Table and other passionate organizations and community members to implement the Gilliard's vision. As such, the Eco Living Community (ELC) wholeheartedly supports the shared vision and recommend Council provide a letter of support for funding applications and participate in joint applications to help meet the funding dollars needed to see the historical farm continue to serve the community.

Sincerely,

The Eco-Living Community

A large, stylized handwritten signature in black ink that reads "S Monroe". The "S" is very large and loops around the first part of the name.

Scott Monroe, Director at Large

A handwritten signature in black ink that appears to read "Ann Duong". It is a more compact and fluid signature compared to the one on the left.

Ann Duong, Vice-Chair

Prince George Native Friendship Centre



May 25, 2023

To Whom It May Concern:

Re: Letter of Support for Queensway 5 Coalition

The Queensway 5 Coalition, in partnership with Everyone at the Table (EAT), has the notable opportunity to purchase 5 acres of Gilliard historical farm. This location is close to downtown which provides a rare opportunity to begin implementation of expanding our community's accessibility to a prominent food hub.

The timely availability of this property will provide an opportunity to build a community food hub and processing teaching center next to a well-established community garden which is in dire need of expansion. This property is in a prime growing area and suitable for growing many types of crops. The proximity to downtown and transportation routes allows easy access to processing and markets.

We, at Prince George Native Friendship Center understand the barriers that many community members face trying to access safe and nutritional food sources. Economic disparity, rising food costs, inflation and countless more contributing factors have left many people unable to purchase fresh fruits/vegetables. It is for these reasons that new initiatives which encompass low barrier access to nutritional food sources continue to be supported.

Prince George Native Friendship Center would like to take this opportunity to fully support the EAT and Queensway 5 Coalition to expand their community garden hub through their acquisition of the 5 acres of Gilliard farm area.

In friendship,

PRINCE GEORGE NATIVE FRIENDSHIP CENTRE

BARB WARD-BURKITT, M.Ed., O.B.C.
Executive Director

Royal Roads University
2005 Sooke Rd
Victoria, BC, Canada
V9B 5Y2

City of Prince George
1100 Patricia Boulevard
Prince George, BC, Canada
V2L 3V9

To Mayor and Council,

RE: Proposal for A North Central Regional Food Hub: A New Life for a Historical Farm

Please accept this Letter of Support for the proposal for a North Central Regional Food Hub. I am in strong support of this project as it will support resilient food systems, community and population health outcomes, and drive community economic development in the City of Prince George and the broader Fraser Fort-George region. The creation of a regional food hub that can serve the North Central area of BC is critical to supporting food security and building food sovereignty for rural, remote, and Indigenous peoples currently reliant on distant food supply chains.

Prince George's future as a livable and healthy region based currently rest on the assumption that there will be consistent and timely foods arising from global supply chains. However, supply chain disruptions during the COVID-19 pandemic and resulting from environmental impacts of climate change (i.e., floods in the Fraser Valley region, wildfires) are expected to increase in their frequency and severity¹. These shocks have resulted in bare grocery shelves, impacting the quantity of available foods. As well, the centralized, and distant control over food prices and food availability results in reduced quality of produce and a dramatic increase in food prices. These impacts are not shared equally across the community². Food insecurity in Northern BC is higher than the rest of the province at 16.4% of the population³. This number increases for families with children, 24.8%, almost 1 in 4 families². This situation is made worse by the rising cost of living without an increase in incomes and the unique cost of living in the North (e.g., vehicle maintenance, cost of fuel, distance between communities). The situation is exacerbated by the availability of farmland and the viability of farming.

The protection of farmland is of vital importance and must be linked to local food security to demonstrate citizen support. My doctoral research, and ongoing research program, examines local government planning and community development for food and agricultural futures. I have shown that agricultural land access and production should serve as a public good that is integrated in local markets, supply chains, and community initiatives (e.g., food banks, community

¹ IPCC, (2022). Summary for Policymakers [H.-O. Pörtner, D.C. Roberts, E.S. Poloczanska, K. Mintenbeck, M. Tignor, A. Alegría, M. Craig, S. Langsdorf, S. Löschke, V. Möller, A. Okem(eds.)]. In: Climate Change 2022: Impacts, Adaptation and Vulnerability. Contribution of Working Group II to the Sixth Assessment Report of the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change [H.-O. Pörtner, D.C. Roberts, M. Tignor, E.S. Poloczanska, K. Mintenbeck, A. Alegría, M. Craig, S. Langsdorf, S. Löschke, V. Möller, A. Okem, B. Rama (eds.)]. Cambridge University Press, Cambridge, UK and New York, NY, USA, pp. 3–33, doi:10.1017/9781009325844.001.

² Dring, C., Topley, A., MacKechnie, M., Edwards, G., Lepile, T., Freel, K., & Newell, R. (2022). *Food System Planning and Its Climate Justice Implications*. <https://doi.org/10.13140/RG.2.2.26441.62560>

³ BC Centre for Disease Control (2016). Household food insecurity in BC. http://www.bccdc.ca/pop-public-health/Documents/Household%20food%20insecurity%20in%20BC_full%20report.pdf

meals, seniors' centres)⁴. Local governments need to build their capacity to work on food and agricultural issues as citizens will increasingly be faced with challenges to food access, availability, and affordability. This includes applying a food lens to city and regional development and being responsible to the needs of present and future generations. The proposed food hub site, and activities, can support the development of municipal capacity to coordinate and support a resilient food supply that services citizen needs.

Local governments play a key role by convening the necessary stakeholders, investing in staffing (either within the City or externally) and investing resources into the acquisition of public assets (similar to parks development)⁵. For example, the City of Richmond provides access to 5 acres of a municipal park for a community farm social enterprise that grows food for the food bank and other meal programs. This municipality also owns several acres of farmland and has been working with a local university to develop farmer training programs and production for local markets. This is a similar vision to the proposed here. A vital component, included in this proposal, is the inclusion of a food hub, providing the food infrastructure necessary to aggregate, process, and distribute foods across the region. Much of the existing food infrastructure in BC is privatized, a key barrier to land access. This kind of infrastructure is minimal elsewhere in the province and has been actively dismantled over the past twenty years in favour of centralized supply chains. This represents a key risk and ongoing struggle for food system resiliency and self-sufficiency where Northern communities rely on distant producers, distributors, and retailers.

This moment is timely to invest in the creation of a regional food hub that prioritizes community food security and building self-sufficiency for Prince George and the rest of the central North of BC. In particular, the provincial government will be continuing to invest in food hubs, with local governments and organizations across BC⁶. Initiating a regional food hub begins with obtaining land that can be integrated with food growing activities that are intentionally linked to public outcomes (e.g., health and well-being, community connectedness and sense of place, protection of green space and biodiversity)⁷.

Sincerely,

Colin Dring

Colin Dring, Ph.D., M.Sc.
Department of Environment and Sustainability,
Royal Roads University,
Colin.Dring@royalroads.ca
778-859-1148

⁴ Dring, C. C., Newman, L., & Wittman, H. (2023). Assessing governability of agricultural systems: Municipal agricultural planning in Metro Vancouver, Canada. *Frontiers in Sustainable Food Systems*, 6. <https://doi.org/10.3389/fsufs.2022.855684>

⁵ Blay-Palmer, A., Santini, G., Dubbeling, M., Renting, H., Taguchi, M., & Giordano, T. (2018). Validating the City Region Food System Approach: Enacting Inclusive, Transformational City Region Food Systems. *Sustainability*, 10(5), Article 5. <https://doi.org/10.3390/su10051680>

⁶ Government of BC (2023). Historic investment in food security support British Columbians. <https://news.gov.bc.ca/releases/2023AF0016-000277>

⁷ Public Health Association of BC (2021). Urban Foodlands: Case Studies of Kamloops, Vancouver, and Victoria. <https://cydi.ca/wp-content/uploads/2021/06/PHABC-Urban-Foodlands-Report-Provincial-Report.pdf>

David. J. Connell, PhD
Professor, Ecosystem Science and Management
University of Northern British Columbia

May 9, 2023

Re: Gilliard farm property, Prince George

To whom it may concern,

I am writing to express my support for the Gilliard farm property to be developed into a regional food hub. The vision for this property is ambitious and will help address substantial gaps in our regional food system.

I have been involved with the development of and as an advocate for our regional food system since arriving in Prince George in late 2004. As a faculty member at the University of Northern British Columbia, my primary research program centres on local food systems, in all its dimensions from field to fork.

The need to enhance our regional capacity to support the local food system has been discussed for many years. Throughout this time, the farmers markets in the City of Prince George have been the most visible and most viable successes. But we need to move ‘beyond the market,’ which was the driving aim of the Beyond the Market economic development initiative of several years ago.

The opportunity to enhance the capacity of the local food system is evident in the City’s current Official Community Plan, which includes extensive coverage of the local food economy and household food security. Yet progress to address these items has been slow.

The agricultural strategy recently developed by the Regional District of Fraser-Fort George is a valuable asset. There are direct opportunities to advance elements of this strategy by supporting the development of the Gilliard property into a regional food hub.

Moving forward, the vision of possible uses of the Gilliard property captures the kind of ‘on the ground’ commitments that will transform years of discussion into reality.

Regards,
David Connell

May 24, 2023

To Whom it May Concern:

Re: Letter of Support for Queensway 5 Coalition's Land Development Initiative

On behalf of Community Futures Development Corporation of Fraser Fort George (CF FFG), I am pleased to offer a letter of support for the Queensway 5 Coalition's request to the City of Prince George to work in partnership in developing the 5 acre parcel of land adjacent to the 21-year-old Queensway Garden; legal PID number 031- 831-966 - Lot 2 District Lot 931 Cariboo District Plan EPP 113616.

The concept proposed in the email outline, dated May 17th, 2023, includes having the City of Prince George designate the property for agriculture with a covenant that would ensure the use of the designated property is available and utilized for improving regional food security, sovereignty and resiliency for all people while breathing new life into a piece of land that once was a vibrant space to grow food. In addition to growing local food, the Queensway 5 Coalition's aspiration to enhance this property with a food hub for the northern interior that offers educational opportunities, knowledge sharing and food sustainability; all align with CF FFG's and Regional District of Fraser Fort George's Agricultural Strategies and collectively lead to food security for our region and beyond.

At this stage, the concept is dependent on the City of Prince George's decision to designate the noted parcel of land to support the endeavours of the Queensway 5 Coalition for the purpose of food security within the design of a knowledge exchange among growers to enhance the opportunity of food sustainability into the unforeseen future. CF FFG supports this request and reiterates the voice of the Queensway 5 Coalition that this is one solution towards establishing food security in our beautiful city.

Should you have any questions on CF FFG's support for this initiative, please do not hesitate to contact the undersigned at: susans@cfdc.bc.ca or via phone: 250-561-6428

Yours in people, business and community,



Susan Stearns
General Manager



School of Access
& Continuing Education

May 11, 2023

Dear Everyone At The Table,

Through this letter the College of New Caledonia wishes to express its support for increased funding and collaboration to improve food sustainability in Prince George and our surrounding region.

The College of New Caledonia (CNC) has over 50 years of experience delivering adult and post-secondary education in northern British Columbia. Serving an area approximately 117,500 square kilometres in size, or about 12 per cent of the province, CNC plays an important role in training and educating students in health sciences, trades and technologies, social services, developmental, business, and university studies. CNC offers over 90 programs across six (6) campuses. In the 2021 – 22 year, CNC had 6606 students and 22% of domestic students identified as Indigenous.

As stated in our strategic plan, CNC is committed to working with local partners to understand and support education and training needs. We respond to community needs, using community insights and rigorous labour market analysis to guide the development of new programs. In 2023 CNC completed a study entitled, “It Takes a Community to Feed a Student” in collaboration with the University of Northern BC (UNBC) about the food security of students. This study builds upon the “Who’s at the Table: A Community-based Exploration...” (Booth, A. and Healy, T., 2022). In it, we learned that 27% of our students expressed that they are food insecure. It is for this reason that CNC is eager to engage with the “Everyone At the Table” (EAT) network to strengthen food security and food sustainability.

CNC’s capacity in food security and food sustainability is growing. We have a research and teaching greenhouse that is 42 feet in diameter and is suitable for Northern B.C.’s climate and local snow loads. It features cutting edge horticulture technologies in four areas: lighting, heating, growing systems and greenhouse management.

With funding from the government of Canada and British Columbia (Canadian Agricultural Partnership), in 2021 CNC researched a number of solutions to extend the growing season in northern climates. The project tested “mini-domes” (also referred to as “geodomes” or “geodesic domes”) within combination supplemental light. The results of this study contribute to food security, giving small growers additional mechanisms to produce further into the off season. (See <https://www.northerndevelopment.bc.ca/explore-our-region/success-stories/cultivating-a-learning-environment/>)



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In 2023, CNC developed an 8-week pilot program in Sustainable Food Production. With funding from Connective, a community-based social services non-profit operating in BC, twelve (12) students who have experienced multiple barriers to education and employment are learning essential employment skills through the introduction to local, sustainable, small-scale food production for “Zone 4b”. The program is hands-on in the greenhouse and emphasizes Indigenous food systems, permaculture and nutrition. Students are also learning about food reclamation, gourmet recipes and will be making their own, self-grown food products to add to local food sharing networks.

The College of New Caledonia sees an opportunity to expand access to relevant education and training to support our region meet food sustainability and food security needs. We are well positioned to offer education and training that will strengthen local food production, food supply chains and food availability. This will make our region more resilient to the impacts of climate change and extreme weather events. CNC has strong partnerships with First Nations and Indigenous organizations. CNC is eager to offer effective and engaging curriculum; however CNC seeks additional funding to conduct a situational analysis, contextualize existing curriculum for our northern climate (zone 4b) and create new curriculum that reflects our economic system and context.

CNC is hopeful that through our partnerships with the “Everyone At the Table” (EAT) network, REAPS, the Queensway Garden Society, UNBC, Eco Living Community Society and Master Gardeners, UNDU (Uniting Northern Drug Users UNDU'ing Stigma) and with additional funding, we can create targeted, effective programs that better prepare our region for rising inflation, climate events and supply-chain shocks.

Thank you for considering this request,

Dr. Amelia Merrick
Acting Dean, School of Access and Continuing Education
College of New Caledonia

May 5, 2023

To Whom It Might Concern:

I have been asked to submit a letter of support for the Queensway 5 Coalition's proposal for A North Central Regional Food Hub. I am enthusiastically in favor of seeing this initiative move forward, with the support of the multiple levels of government necessary for success.

The City of Prince George and the surrounding region are in a precarious state of low food security for a number of reasons: limited investment in food production capacity and resources over decades, physical isolation from imported food sources and easily threatened access routes (fires, mudslides and winter weather, as well as the recent pandemic, have routinely cut critical highway access into the city and region over the last decade, resulting in significant food shortages in stores), and the high cost of imported food.

A regional food hub would be a very necessary and critical investment in laying the groundwork for creating greater regional food security through supporting food growers, secondary producers and in building consumer knowledge and support. Dr. Theresa Healy and I produced a report on regional food security needs, identified through interviews with growers, secondary producers, food providers to the food insecure and local activists. The report, *Who's at the Table: A Community-Based Exploration and Mapping of Regional Food Security Initiatives and Structures in a Northern Context*¹, documented a number of needs, but the most pressing was the food hub.

I urge support for this critical structure that will be a foundation for regional food security.

Sincerely,



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¹ This research has been subsequently published:

Healy, T., C. Callihoo, A.L. Booth. Forthcoming. Who's at the Table: An Exploration of Community-Based Food Security Initiatives and Structures in a North-Central Canadian Context. [Community Development Journal](#).

Callihoo, C., T. Healy, A.L. Booth. Forthcoming Summer 2023. Why Community-Based Food Security is Relevant to Registered Professional Planners and the Roles We Play In Support. [Plan Canada](#).

District C Farmers' Institute

Letter of Support

May 2023

District C Farmers' Institute is a collective of local Farmers' Institutes representing Prince George, McBride and surrounding regions. We are working to build capacity in order to provide a stronger voice for the agricultural community in the region and support producers in a variety of ways. District C Farmers' Institute (DCFI) supports the vision outlined from the Queensway 5 Coalition to move forward in developing a Northern Central Regional Food Hub on a 5 acre parcel of local historical urban farmland in downtown Prince George.

Prince George is in desperate need of increased food security as the majority of our food is shipped in from far out of our community. Increased risk of food shortages in our city is evident with the changing climate and was emphasized during the COVID 19 Pandemic. The proposed food hub will support an increase in local food knowledge and access, while also supporting local farmers. Farmers in the north are facing extreme bottlenecks and excessive costs when it comes to food processing and transport. Awareness about local food and education to the public can increase the demand of the products from our local farmers, which reduces the need to search farther and store food longer in order to sell. We foresee a potential for this hub to provide a central support system and facility for producers to reach out to in regards to access to the community and processing of certain products. The institute will benefit and happily support further education and collaboration for the public on local food, farming and the importance of agriculture.

The owners of this land are passionate about the importance of this land remaining in agricultural use and as a supporter of agricultural history, community connection and improving local food security DCFI stands behind the Coalition's proposal. Local producers will benefit from the actions of this initiative and we look forward to working with the Coalition to enhance agriculture in and around Prince George.

Michelle Miller
District C Farmers' Institute President

May 20, 2023

To Whom It May Concern:

Re: Queensway 5
at 2121 Queensway, Prince George BC

The Queensway 5 Coalition, in partnership with Everyone at the Table (EAT), has the opportunity to engage interested parties, to develop the funding possibilities for purchasing 5 acres of the Gilliards' historical farm, which is close to downtown and is a rare opportunity to keep agriculture active near the Prince George downtown.

The timely availability of this property can be the springboard to build our shared vision of a food hub, which will allow for food growing, processing, and a teaching center in the context of a mini-experimental farm/community/urban farm next to the only well-established community garden in the City of Prince George. The Gilliard's Farm wish to continue to be used for agriculture production. This property is in a prime growing area and suitable for growing many types of crops. The proximity to downtown and transportation routes allows easy access to household and community processing and markets and for people.

We, Local Food PG Society, fully support the shared vision and recommend that the municipality purchase this land for the community with a covenant attached that reserve the land's use to activities that improve food security for our community, growing and processing food and teaching how to grow and process. We further request that following purchase of the land the municipality actively support these types of projects on the land with letters of support for funding applications and participate in joint funding applications to help meet the funding dollars needed to see the historical farm continue to serve the community.

The acquisition of this property will show that the City of Prince George supports the ideals and importance of local food.

Del Myers

President
Local Food PG Society