

Press Release June 2024 Building for the Future Campaign

The Cowichan Valley Basket Society (CVBS) was started in 1988 by a broadly based group of Cowichan Valley residents who saw a great need for a coordinated answer to hunger in the area.

With the valuable support of the community and the dedicated work of staff and volunteers, the CVBS has served the Cowichan Valley for 36 years. The society has moved several times over the years and have been settled at its current location on Garden Street since 2001. Because of the ever increasing need, in 2022, the CVBS purchased the land and building next door in order to expand services. A section of the neighbouring building is dedicated to assisting our guests with modified full-choice food selection and the main site's basement is used to assemble the hampers. The main floor of the original building is used as a kitchen and dining room to serve hot meals 6 days a week as well as office space for the management of the CVBS. Sunday Sandwiches provides lunch on Sunday and Holidays

Recent reports show that over 20% of families in our community are experiencing food insecurity, leading to a 200% rise in monthly hamper distributions in the Cowichan Valley over the last 18 months. In May, CVBS distributed 570 hampers, supporting over 1,200 individuals with food worth more than \$82,000, and serving an average of 195 hot meals daily in the dining room.

Despite maximizing the current space, it has become evident that we need to do more in order to address the ever increasing demand.

Today, we unveil a comprehensive plan to meet the growing community needs while assisting those seeking relief from food insecurity:

- Phase 1: involves linking the two buildings with a new 250 sq. ft lobby, enhancing site electrical service including a backup generator, and site preparation.
- Phase 2: focuses on constructing a 3000 sq. ft hamper store, food recovery processing, and storage facilities to offer full-choice shopping for hamper recipients, alongside some 2nd-floor program space.
- Phase 3: includes revamping the current kitchen and dining area.



We are deeply grateful for the ongoing support from volunteers and donations of food and funds over the past 36 years. With the escalating demand for hampers, every contribution is crucial and appreciated. Community support is vital to finance this project. Our goal is to raise \$950,000 to cover the cost of this essential expansion.

We are thankful for your contribution to the CVBS Hamper Building Project. Your donation is valued. For more details, please visit CVBS.CA. To become a significant donor for this project, please reach out to Richard Currie, the Board Chair, at cvbs_boardchair@cvbs.ca, or Henry Wikkerink, the CVBS manager, at henry@cvbs.ca

