



Oregon Food Bank – Southeast Oregon Services
Ontario OREGON
Ontario Community Food Center
Western Treasure Valley Food System Partnership

Development Feasibility Report

15 August 2023

Prepared for:



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RESOLVE
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ECONOMICS • FINANCE • PLANNING

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

We would like to give special thanks to members of the Western Treasure Valley Food Systems Partnership, a collaboration of private and public partners working to build capacity and further develop the community food system in the Western Treasure Valley region.

Without them, the contents of this report would not have been possible:

**Community in Action
EUVALCREE**

**Four Rivers Healthy Community
Four Rivers Welcome Center
The Idaho Food Bank**

**Immigrant & Refugee Community Organization
Malheur Council on Aging & Community Services**

Northwest Housing Alternatives

**Bob and Charlee Moore Center for Nutrition and Wellness,
Oregon Health Sciences University,
Nutrition Oregon Campaign**

Ontario Saturday Market

Oregon Department of Human Services

Oregon Food Bank

**Oregon State University Extension
Red Apple Marketplace
Saint Alphonsus
St. Luke's Health System
University of Idaho Extension
Valley Family Health Care**

As well as the
City of Ontario

for their input & support of this project

Thank you!

TABLE OF CONTENTS

Acknowledgement	2
Executive Summary	4
Project Background	8
Intent	
Approach	
Project Preferences	10
OFB - SOS	
Community & Stakeholders	
Community Engagement	
Precedents	13
Reference Examples	
Preliminary Concept Considerations	
Community Outreach	
Programming & Conceptual Design	19
Analysis (Master Planning – Site Fit Test)	
Building Programming Fit Tests	
Economic Feasibility	24
Governance Model Alternatives	
Market Context	
Programming	
Development Budget	
Operating Model	
Economic Impact Dimensions	
Equity and Environmental Sustainability Analysis	38
Equity Dimensions	
Environmental Sustainability Dimension	
Art and Community Engagement	
Recommendations & Next Steps	41
Appendix	42

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

INTRODUCTION

This Development Feasibility Report for the Ontario Community Food Center has been prepared for Oregon Food Bank (OFB), Northwest Housing Alternatives (NHA), and the Western Treasure Valley Food System Partnership (WTVFSP, the Partnership.) The consultant team of RESOLVE Architecture + Planning and ECONorthwest (economists) have engaged with OFB and NHA, as well as the Partnership and the community, since September 2022 to help define goals and vision, create preliminary design iterations, and provide economic context for the proposed Community Food Center.

The project advocates for the creation of a community food center, which will advance the community's goals of promoting a socially, economically, and ecologically sustainable food system. Our approach, throughout the course of our work, has been to rely heavily on engagement with local stakeholders. Each food-focused facility is different and there is no "standard" option for community food centers. Success lies in the local partners that can champion and bring resources to carry out the vision for the facility.

IDEA DEVELOPMENT

Regular meetings with the project team – OFB, NHA, RESOLVE, and ECONorthwest – and the Partnership, as well as special community engagement sessions provided important perspectives and feedback on the development of the vision for the Ontario Community Food Center. The basic idea is for a "mixed use" facility housing:

- the warehouse and receipt/distribution operations of Oregon Food Bank – Southeast Oregon Services (OFB-SOS);
- an on-site pantry;
- a Community Food Center with a kitchen facility for education and training, shared meals, food business incubation and support space for food-related community gatherings, events, and civic engagement opportunities.

The team also spent time examining precedents – food centers that serve a variety of user types and provide a mix of services. This early work included outreach sessions to consider three concept ideas for the kitchen component of the Food Center: 1) community kitchen focused on food distribution (e.g., ready-to-eat meals); 2) community kitchen focused on food nutrition and educations (classes, demonstrations, and resources); 3) commercial kitchen functioning as a food innovation/entrepreneur incubation hub. For the purposes of creating floor plans and budgets for development and operations, the project team used a hybrid of concepts 2 and 3 with scenarios for a 600-square-foot community kitchen and a larger 1,050-square-foot commercial kitchen.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Market research also informed the economic analyses and programming scenarios contained in this report. Three valuable research takeaways provide key considerations for programming and the financial feasibility of the project.

- 1) Significant retail traffic and per capita spending in Ontario suggest we have a leverage point for expanding opportunities for local food businesses to thrive.
- 2) There is community awareness of its unique market position and appetite for food systems development in the region.
- 3) There is a need for flexible, accessible, and culturally resonant opportunities and resources; a need for a space for existing and fledgling partnerships that cultivate equitable food systems.

PRELIMINARY DESIGN WORK

Site planning and preliminary concepts for the facility were studied in parallel with stakeholder outreach and the examination of economic feasibility. RESOLVE began with concepts they had prepared in a previous concept design investigation for this project. OFB-SOS provided a list of site and operational requirements. As envisioned, the new warehouse will be larger and better equipped than their current facility to respond to a growing demand for hunger relief in Malheur and Harney counties. Also envisioned in the facility is an on-site food pantry, adding an additional access point for free food in an underserved area. The Food Center had been initially proposed as a refurbishment/ make-over of the existing (abandoned) commercial kitchen building. However, site size constraints and Food Bank operational requirements soon made it clear that the overall project design would benefit from a “clean slate” approach, demolishing the existing structure and placing the Community Food Center closer to the nexus of the neighboring affordable housing Community Room and outdoor common areas and the newly constructed neighborhood health care clinic and pharmacy.

The team also worked with Ontario’s City Manager and the Department of Public Works to determine how best to meet the city’s Planning and Zoning Development standards. Site planning efforts addressed parking needs, loading dock operations, landscape buffer requirements, and pedestrian circulation issues. The team’s concepts received favorable feedback from the City of Ontario as the project moves forward with design.

Within the building, RESOLVE’s design efforts focused on integrating OFB-SOS branch operations with the program preferences for the Community Food Center. Stakeholders expressed desires for a kitchen facility that can be used for education and training, shared meals, food business incubation and support as well as appropriately sized cold and dry storage. Spaces for food-related community gatherings, events, and civic engagement opportunities are also important aspects of the Food Center. There were requests for shared work environments, meeting, and office space. Consequently, the concept drawings seek to communicate a flexible floor plan that can be further developed as Food Center programs and priorities crystallize.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Another significant project goal for the design of the new facility is to advance sustainable practices in both the building's construction and its operations. The Partnership has expressed interest in renewable power generation through solar panels, energy efficient building systems, and minimizing food, water, and other resource waste.

ECONOMIC FEASIBILITY

In terms of economic feasibility, the project team began by looking at different potential governance structures for the Food Center as an operating entity. This important conversation for the core team suggested that, at least initially, OFB may act as the fiscal sponsor for the Food Center, taking into account the desires of all stakeholders and the realities of the market. This interim arrangement will allow the Partnership to investigate the possibility of creating its own nonprofit entity with independent governance.

Using input from the project team and stakeholders, and following market research and programming efforts, ECONorthwest prepared a preliminary budget for development and construction for two programming options: 1) a small community kitchen with capability for classes and demonstrations, along with flex space/extra dry storage; and 2) a larger commercial kitchen with capability for classes and demonstrations, along with flex space/extra dry storage. Both options are based on the same premise of a multi-purpose kitchen with a focus on classes and demonstrations, available for rent to local food entrepreneurs. The preliminary budget for project development and construction phases (Food Center and OFB-SOS facility) is \$8 million.

The operating model identifies income and expenses on an annual basis to explore potential gaps in feasibility. The goal is to create an operational model for a financially sustainable facility that meets the community's objectives. ECONorthwest's model suggests that the Community Food Center, as currently conceived, would require approximately \$200,000 to \$260,000 annually to operate and maintain.

ECONorthwest also quantified the economic impact of the proposed development. As would be expected, the largest economic impact comes from the "one-time" construction of the \$8 million project. For long-term economic impact, the program for the Food Center identifies a range of shared space without a specific revenue source, so the economic impact analysis focused on the rental utilization of the community/commercial kitchen. For the larger kitchen scenario, the estimated economic impact is more than \$500,000 in direct economic output annually, between the operations of the kitchen itself and the economic activity of an estimated five annualized kitchen renters. This economic activity equates to between 4 and 5 full-time employment positions in the local food economy, with potential to scale as the number of renters increases.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

EQUITY AND ENVIRONMENTAL SUSTAINABILITY

Finally, the project team examined issues of equity, economic, and environmental sustainability. Significant input during Partnership meetings and outreach sessions underscored the goal for the project to explicitly benefit and/or involve Black, Indigenous, People of Color, and immigrant/refugee communities. This is a goal that may be addressed utilizing a Racial Equity Implementation Framework as identified in this report.

Environmental sustainability will come from opportunities that new building systems offer. As previously noted, solar panels, energy efficient building systems, and minimizing food and water waste are directly achievable through the development of this project. But the team also considers the educational- and resource-focus of the Food Center as means of influencing environmental and ecosystem benefits derived from agriculture production and food system operations.

CONCLUSION

In conclusion, this report makes several observations and recommendations for next steps in realizing this important opportunity.

- it is clear that there is a keen need and desire to create a Community Food Center that will serve Ontario and its vicinity;
- there is a workable development opportunity with the proposed site and programming;
- economic analysis indicates positive economic impact to the region and benefits to the local/regional food system.

Equally important to all these observations is the strength that the Partnership, through its network and relationships, can bring to realizing this facility and all that it can do for the Ontario community.

This project seeks to improve the quality of life and economic opportunities for people in the Western Treasure Valley community. It is not just a project of the Oregon Food Bank, or a project of Northwest Housing Alternatives, or even the collaboration of partners that has been brought together as the Western Treasure Valley Food System Partnership. This goals of this project are broader than captured by any of the individual organizations; it is a project to explore the potential for a food-focused business incubator—a place where food-based business ideas can spark; where existing businesses can grow; and where the unique agricultural culture of Ontario and the Western Treasure Valley can be celebrated.

It is anticipated that this report can be used by the core team – OFB, NHA, and WTVFSP – to develop action plans geared toward achieving the goals addressed in this Feasibility Study. The Partnership can prioritize community engagement and outreach strategies, and develop a fundraising plan. OFB and NHA can craft a Designated Development Agreement (DDA) to secure the tax parcels initially proposed. Should OFB choose to champion this project through the development and construction phases, they will assemble the architectural and engineering team to begin the design and documentation of the new facility.

The entire Development Feasibility Study team sincerely hopes that this report generates the enthusiasm and momentum necessary to take this project to the next phase of realization. We look forward to your feedback and comments.

PROJECT PREFERENCES

The driving entities behind this feasibility study for the Ontario Community Food Center are Oregon Food Bank (OFB) and its partners - Northwest Housing Alternatives (NHA) and the Western Treasure Valley Food System Partnership (WTVFSP.) The project team is comprised of this group, RESOLVE Architecture + Planning, and economic consultant, ECONorthwest. The team sees the development of the Ontario Community Food Center as an opportunity to improve the quality of life and economic opportunities for people in the Western Treasure Valley community.

In 2018, a number of contiguous tax lots on a single “super block” in the north neighborhood of Ontario were acquired by Northwest Housing Alternatives. The former adult care facility occupying most of the property was renovated by NHA to become River Bend Place, 56 units of much-needed affordable housing. Remaining parcels on the property were designated as opportunities for synergistic community support facilities. The southwest corner of the property has become a new clinic for Valley Family Health Care (VFHC) and the middle-west parcels have been offered as a new home for Oregon Food Bank – Southeast Oregon Services (OFB-SOS) and the new community food center.

The project team advocates for the creation of a community food hub, which will advance the community’s goals of promoting a socially, economically, and ecologically sustainable food system. Eliminating hunger is a key goal, but the benefits of the food hub extend far beyond that. A successful food hub promotes a sustainable food system overall by not only supporting the financial well-being of farmers and other food producers, but also the physical and mental well-being of workers and eaters, in a way that promotes sustainability through conserving, protecting, and regenerating natural resources and biodiversity.

INTENT

This feasibility study is not the community’s first step towards a food-oriented community facility in Ontario; it is preceded by three years of collaboration and analysis of the regional food system, after which the WTVFSP identified the creation of a community food center as a key strategic priority for **a)** improving the health and well-being of communities disproportionately impacted by food insecurity in the region, and **b)** creating abundant opportunities for stakeholders across the food system to grow and thrive. In January of 2022, concept diagrams for a community food center and food bank facility were prepared by RESOLVE Architecture + Planning. The overall objective of this current project is to extend this excellent basis of work and further refine the program and business planning through a project approach that is both comprehensive and inclusive.

PROJECT PREFERENCES

APPROACH

The Feasibility Study envisions a collaborative, multi-use facility that offers community gathering and training spaces, flexible kitchen and prep facilities for small business growth and support, a free food pantry, and food banking facilities necessary for supporting the 25+ community partners distributing food across Malheur and Harney counties.

As the project continues to move from concept to reality, the approach should emphasize local partners and creating a solution that is not just about quantifying market demand and financial feasibility, but one that is grounded by the partners and their relationships that will ultimately create the food center.

The project approach has been to seek solutions that are based on the strengths of the Western Treasure Valley region and leverage the experiences and knowledge of local stakeholders to ensure that the work reflects the capacities and culture of the local community. The community's goals and desired outcomes have been incorporated into the programming work, and in the team's analyses.

WORK PLAN OUTLINE FOR THE PROJECT TEAM

Task 1 Project Concept & Vision

- 1a – Site dynamics & due diligence relevant to local jurisdictions
- 1b – Project design concepts, massing and spatial models
(including examination of salvage/re-habilitation of existing commercial kitchen building vs. demolition & all-new construction for community food center)

Task 2 Stakeholder Needs Compilation

- 2a – Stakeholder surveys (community needs & wants)
- 2b – Visualizations and/or potential stakeholder research

Task 3 Precedents and Support

- 3a – Research on precedents and comparative analyses
- 3b – Sustainability applications & opportunities (identify relevant applications)

Task 4 Economic Feasibility

- 4a – Governance models
- 4b – Development Budget
- 4c – Operating model
- 4d – Economic impact dimensions

Task 5 Equity, Economic, and Environmental Sustainability Analysis

- 5a – Equity Dimensions
- 5b – Environmental sustainability dimensions

PROJECT PREFERENCES

OFB

OFB-SOS currently operates in Ontario at 773 S Oregon Street. Oregon Food Bank's Southeast Oregon Services branch has served Malheur and Harney County out of its current facility in Ontario for several years. And while communities in Southeast Oregon experienced a dramatic spike in food insecurity at the onset of the COVID-19 pandemic, OFB has long been aware that the current OFB-SOS facility does not offer adequate operations capacity to serve Malheur and Harney counties. A comprehensive list of site and facility requirements for a new OFB-SOS facility can be found in the Appendix.

Additional cold and dry storage, transportation capacity, office and meeting space, and an on-site pantry have long been priorities for a new branch facility. In concept, this project presents a strategic opportunity to integrate aspects of food banking operations with a community food center facility for the purpose of both addressing hunger in the short term, while advancing efforts to create a strong, thriving food system as a whole.



PROJECT PREFERENCES

COMMUNITY & STAKEHOLDERS

While the Community Food Center project is inclusive of the new OFB-SOS branch facility, the Western Treasure Valley Food System Partnership includes the Idaho Food Bank, which holds responsibility for hunger relief activities in the Idaho portion of the region. While this project naturally creates opportunities for cross-border collaboration to strengthen the region’s food system, the project will not alter or change the food banks’ service areas or responsibilities around hunger relief activities.

Conversations about a community food center began years ago. The following is a timeline highlighting a few of the Partnership-related activities within the community.

Partnership Timeline of Activities

2019	NOV	Nutrition Oregon Campaign (NOC) Ontario Hub Members convened to align around a goal, focus, and key shifts and determine actions required to meet their goal: All people in the Western Treasure Valley have access to the resources they need to enjoy a healthy and nutritious diet for themselves and their families. We commit to 100% of community members being food secure by 2030			
2020	MAR <i>covid hits!</i>	APR.....		2021 JLY	
	NOC Hub forms a Food Insecurity & Nutrition Access Working Group. Collaborates with OFB-SOS to host mass emergency food distribution events	NOC Hub forms relationship with NHA who owns River Bend Place with existing commercial kitchen. Hub explores interest and funding sources for a community kitchen			
2021	2020 APR.....JLY			NOV-DEC	
	...NOC Hub engages food systems members & applies for RFSP grant as the Western Treasure Valley Food System Partnership (WTVFSP)			Partnership & Project Team formed; Partnership structure, group norms, & decision making process established	
2022	JAN	APR	MAY	JUN-JLY	AUG-OCT
	Project Coordinator job description developed & position posted; MOUs drafted; Education & Engagement WG formed	Project coordinator hired; Communications streamlined; MOUs signed; Existing food systems training resources & Partnership learning needs identified	Partnership Food Systems Training Event; Food Hub Consultant RFP drafted for community food center feasibility study	Food Hub WG formed & consultant interviews complete.. EE team designs strategy for inclusive community engagement	Food Hub Consultant hired, series of community engagement activities planned. Feast event in Ontario Sept.9
2023	'22 NOV–MAR	'22 NOV–JUN	JLY	AUG	
	Additional community input gathered through a series of community led workshops (WTV Food System Summit, focus groups, key informant interviews)	Development & economic feasibility study taking place	Draft feasibility report complete. Partnership reviewed and made recommendations. Consensus given to move forward with on the project with proposed budget	Development Feasibility Report complete. WTVFSP grant extension approved. Communications plan and follow up community engagement planned to gather additional input on concept design	

PROJECT PREFERENCES

COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

The following captures the needs/wants explorations through various community outreach efforts led by the Partnership.

Objectives of community outreach:

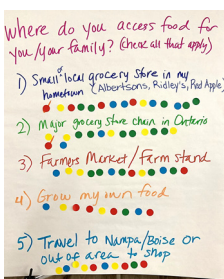
- Generate interest in the project
- Understand nuanced need of specific audiences/users of the space
- Determine what food center services and programs best align with community needs and desires
- Understand design needs for each of the concepts

Process:

- Held two large community conversations
 - Ontario, OR with over 50 in attendance representing social service organizations and area residents
 - Payette, ID reaching over 40 individuals representing food system stakeholders and area producers
- Held 3 focus groups reaching 26 individuals representing local food businesses, farmers, market vendors and producers, residents living in low-income housing near the future site, non-traditional students and ESL learners of Treasure Valley Community College, Hispanic/Latinx families
- Gathered input through a variety of digital and dot surveys of the broader community and residents living in subsidized housing near the future site

Results/Outcomes:

- Need/desire for shared use kitchen flexible enough to use for both teaching/education as well as use by food business entrepreneurs
- Food access is a concern in the community and access to free/affordable food is important
- Producers are interested in opportunities to increase/lengthen sales to local markets



PRECEDENTS

The project team has explored numerous established food centers (see list in Appendix) and we have highlighted the following four examples that have characters and operation models that we see are of relevant references to the project in Ontario.

REFERENCE EXAMPLES

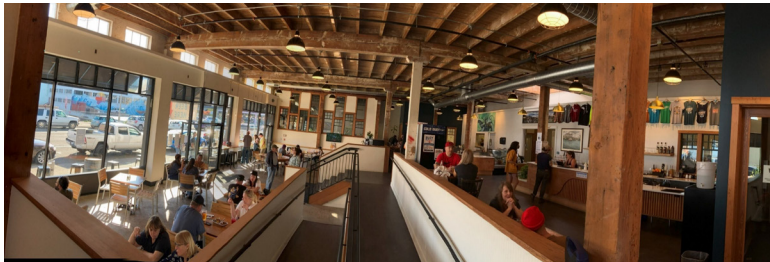
Bloom Community Food Center (Blaine County, Idaho)

- non-profit, privately funded
- numerous services and educational programs and community engagement events
- on-site pantry
- on-site multi-purpose community kitchen with adjacent community meeting space
- small warehouse operation
- greenhouse and community garden facilities on site
- on-site composting “digester”
- artwork/murals – interior and exterior primarily from local artist



Astoria Food Hub (Astoria, Oregon)

- for profit, entrepreneur-focused facility
- incubator opportunities for start-up food producers
- public dining hall

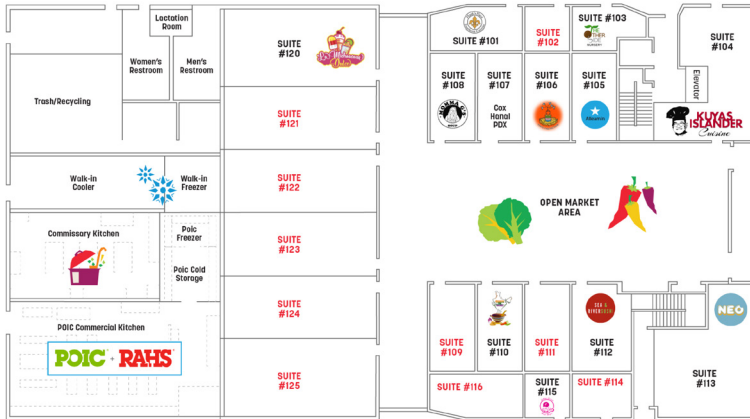


PRECEDENTS

REFERENCE EXAMPLES (cont'd)

Rockwood Market Hall (Gresham, Oregon)

- food hall with stalls for start-up entities (equity/diversity-focused)
- common commercial kitchen for tenants (POIC+RAHS)
- additional commissary kitchen available for rent and food-education programs
- public dining hall and event plaza



Columbia Gorge Food Bank (Dalles, Oregon)

- primarily warehouse w/ large cooler and freezer and declined loading dock
- flex space for repacking and pantry events
- community room with minimal food serving capacity
- artwork/murals – interior and exterior primarily from local artists



PRECEDENTS

PRELIMINARY CONCEPT CONSIDERATIONS

The project team presented three preliminary concepts at a community outreach Summit in November 2022. The participants were to comment on their initial take on the pros, cons, and preference out of the three concept ideas. The project team also introduced the differences between the GOVERNANCE structures within the three concept ideas.

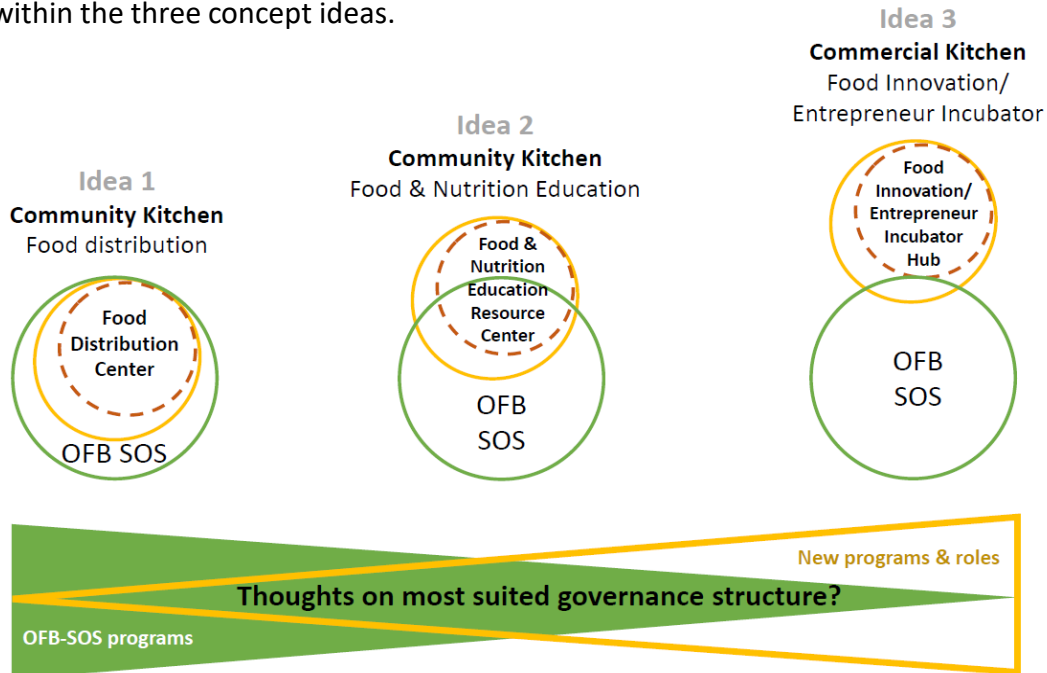


Diagram of the governance structures of the three concept ideas

Concept Ideas (what we've heard so far & what questions do we have)

"Focus Group Questions & Audience" – link appears in Appendix

Concept Idea 1 (Community Food Center serves primarily as a food distribution site where food moves in and out; both retail and emergency food)-

- Lack of transportation, rising cost of food, language barriers, & limited time make it more difficult to access/eat fresh/local food
- Emergency food hours and shared meal site options are limited
- Community members are not sure where/how to buy local foods

Concept Idea 2 (Community Food Center serves as an Education/Resource Hub where community members gather to grow and prepare food, food entrepreneurs learn how to start/grow their businesses, and people are connected to the resources that they need)-

- Community members want safe, welcoming gathering spaces
- Community members have an interest in community garden space and hands on cooking classes to help increase their confidence with preparing healthy meals for their family
- Food-focused businesses are interested in marketing, networking with other professionals & food business start up education
- Community members need help accessing social services

PRECEDENTS

PRELIMINARY CONCEPT CONSIDERATIONS (cont'd)

Concept Idea 3 (Community Food Center serves as a place for local producers, food focused businesses, and FFA/Culinary Arts programs to grow, develop, process, preserve, and store products and expand their sales to local markets).

- Local producers do not have access to a commercial kitchen locally to develop/prepare value-added products
- Local producers need food storage space
- Local farmers markets are not as profitable for selling local food.

COMMUNITY OUTREACH

In addition to two large community events, targeted focus groups also included:

- Small-mid scale producers, farmers market vendors, and food businesses
- Hispanic/Latinx community
- Residents of River Bend Place and the neighboring subsidized housing of the future site
- Additional input was gathered for specific populations through key informant interviews: elder population (Malheur Council on Aging & Community Services), new immigrants and refugees (IRCO), youth (4H/FFA leaders), and food businesses (Small Business Development Center)



Partners' preference on the three concept ideas

PRECEDENTS

COMMUNITY OUTREACH (cont'd)

Besides the Summit events, additional outreach and preferencing opportunities took place by collecting bilingual surveys in FEAST events and the ongoing monthly Partnership meeting.

Key takeaways from community outreach activities (Ontario and Payette):

Challenges: Access (hours of operation, food desert, transportation, language barriers), lack of volunteers, impacts of poverty (rising food costs, housing), lack of marketing/communications related to local food system, USDA/state regulations, labor costs, lack of labor, profitability for local producers
Strengths-social capital & services, knowledgeable people committed to this work, local producers, diverse cultures

Project interests: Community/commercial kitchen as education/resource hub and food/business incubator, community gardens, mobile food distribution

Input on Focus group questions

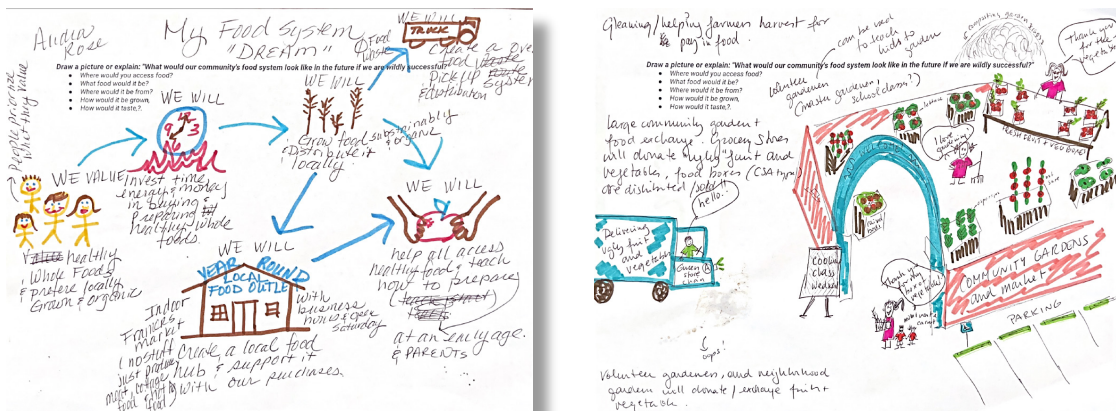
The project team also asked questions that provide clarity on types of segments potentially offered as part of the OCFC i.e. event vs. market hall or ready to eat/community meal site or other distribution, dry storage vs. cooler/freezer (capacity needed)

OFB will be unlikely to commit to full scale commercial kitchen/equipment and suggested we lean towards something that will meet 70-80% of producer needs while also helping to support community kitchen needs i.e. one flex use/stations kitchen, but not 2 entirely separate kitchen types in that space. May be worthwhile to review Iowa State's shared use kitchen toolkit document:

[2014_09_shared_use_kitchen_planning_toolkit.pdf](https://www.ias.edu/extension/food-systems/2014-09-shared-use-kitchen-planning-toolkit.pdf)

Need the space to be flexible enough that we can change with the needs of the community

- Can be a blend of concepts 2-3 (education + innovation)
- Concept 1 will exist, but with less partnership involvement



A sampling of visual comments collected from a community outreach event FEAST

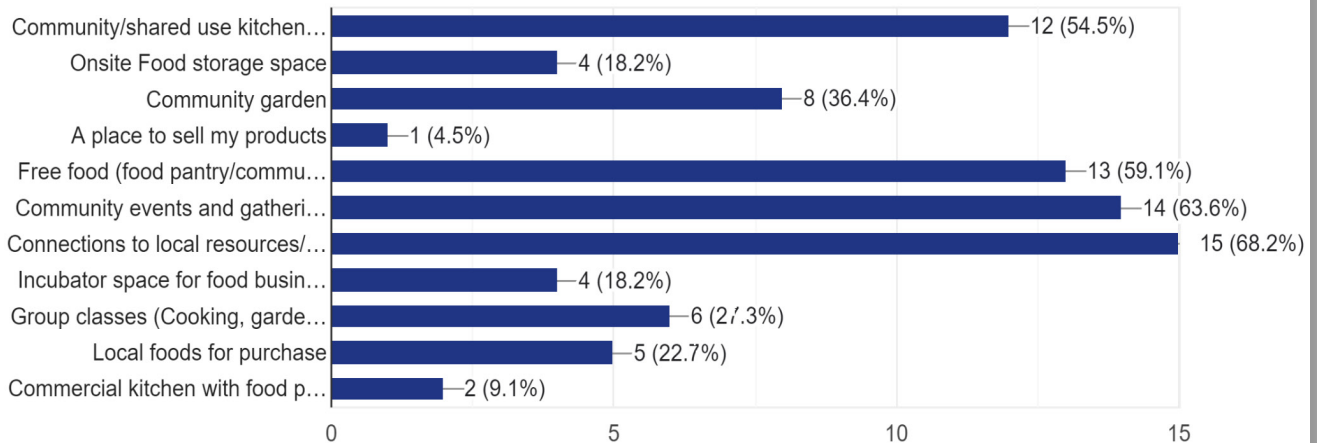
PRECEDENTS

COMMUNITY OUTREACH (cont'd)

The project team also noticed that in the comments collected through the bilingual surveys (English vs. Spanish), the English surveys focused more needs for community event space. Whereas the comments collected through the Spanish surveys lean more toward the need for storage (dry goods/freezer/cooler) and educational programs/classes as well as on-site child-watch for parents who are occupied in classes.

What aspects of a community food center would be most beneficial for you and/or this area?
(select all that apply)

22 responses



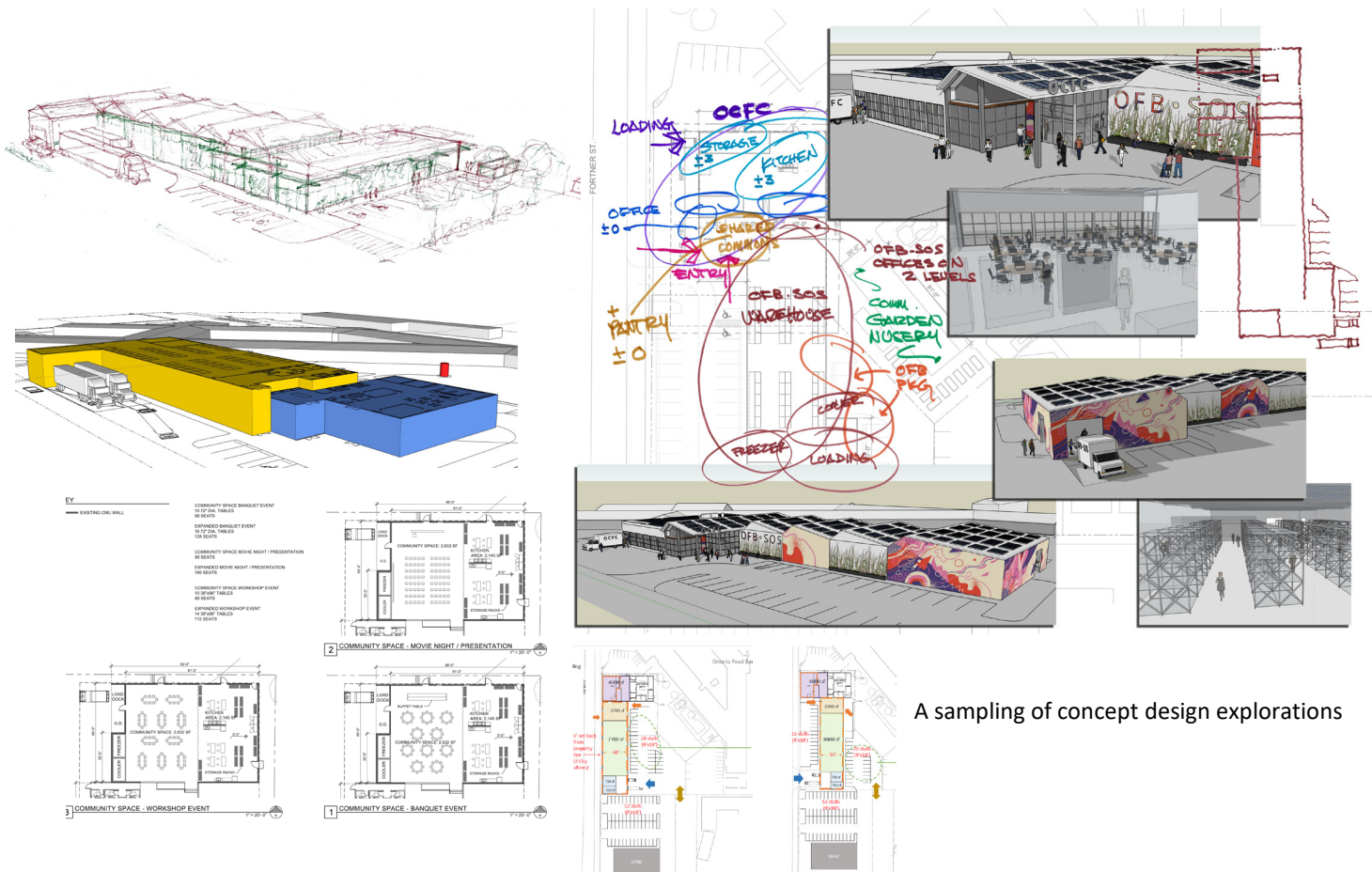
An example of a survey question and responses

PROGRAMMING & CONCEPTUAL DESIGN

In early 2022, RESOLVE Architecture + Planning assisted Oregon Food Bank in generating several concept design ideas for this particular site. Space planning layouts and programmatic adjacencies were examined with the intent of creating a new home for OFB-SOS and using the existing (abandoned) commercial kitchen building as a location for a community food center.

For this feasibility study, the project team used the previously generated diagrams as a point of departure for further studies. After initial fit tests and space planning layouts, the project team determined that the spatial constraints and site location of the existing structure were not allowing for the best possible placements of the warehouse, with its related loading/unloading activities, and the community food center. As well, the elevated floor level of the existing building posed accessibility and operational challenges. RESOLVE generated a new set of “clean slate” diagrams that proposed the demolition of the existing commercial kitchen building, thereby allowing for the placement of the community food center at the south end of the site, closer to the Valley Family Health Care site and the proposed community garden areas of River Bend Place.

The site planning portion of RESOLVE’s preliminary design efforts engaged the City of Ontario’s planning and public works personnel for input on development standards and requirements. Valuable information and preliminary agreements with the City of Ontario regarding parking, large truck maneuvering, landscape buffers, and pedestrian requirements informed the final site plan for this report.



A sampling of concept design explorations

PROGRAMMING & CONCEPTUAL DESIGN

ANALYSIS MASTER PLANNING – Site Fit Tests

- **Loading Dock location and large truck maneuvering**

The loading dock serving the OFB-SOS warehouse needs to accommodate semi-trucks as long as 73-feet. Due to the shape and dimensions of the site boundaries and the programmed area requirements for the warehouse, the loading dock needs to be placed at the northwest corner of the development parcels. The City of Ontario requires that all truck maneuvering needs to take place on site – no trucks can back into a loading berth from the street.

RESOLVE’s drawings show how the frontage length of the site can be used for large truck maneuvering. This “costs” the design several parking spaces and requires a larger-than-allowed curb cut at Fortner St. However, Ontario’s planning and public works bureaus have acknowledged that the design as proposed is a workable solution.

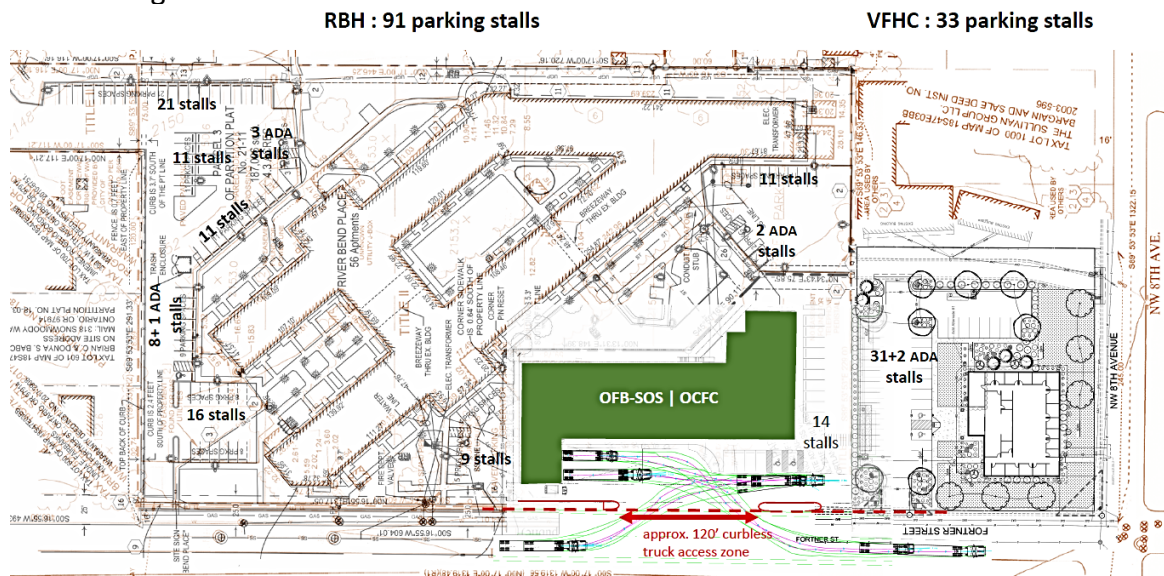
- **Parking**

The footprint of the proposed building (relative to the overall area of the development parcels) and the required maneuvering area for large trucks combine to limit the number of parking stalls to 19. This is well under the number that would be required by Ontario’s Development Code for the combined uses of warehouse and community food center.

The solution is to utilize available parking on the super block that is otherwise dedicated to River Bend Place and VHFC. OFB-SOS and the Community Food Center will need to coordinate activities and event with the usage requirements for their super block neighbors.

- **Landscape buffers and pedestrian walkways**

The Ontario Development Code sets standards for percentage green space and safe pedestrian pathways for all new projects. RESOLVE’s proposed site plan shows landscape buffers and other greenery opportunities along Fortner as well as a clearly marked sidewalk extending the length of the development parcels. The City has acknowledged that this is a workable solution that meets the intent of the Development Code and still accommodates the need for larger-than-allowed curb cuts for large trucks.

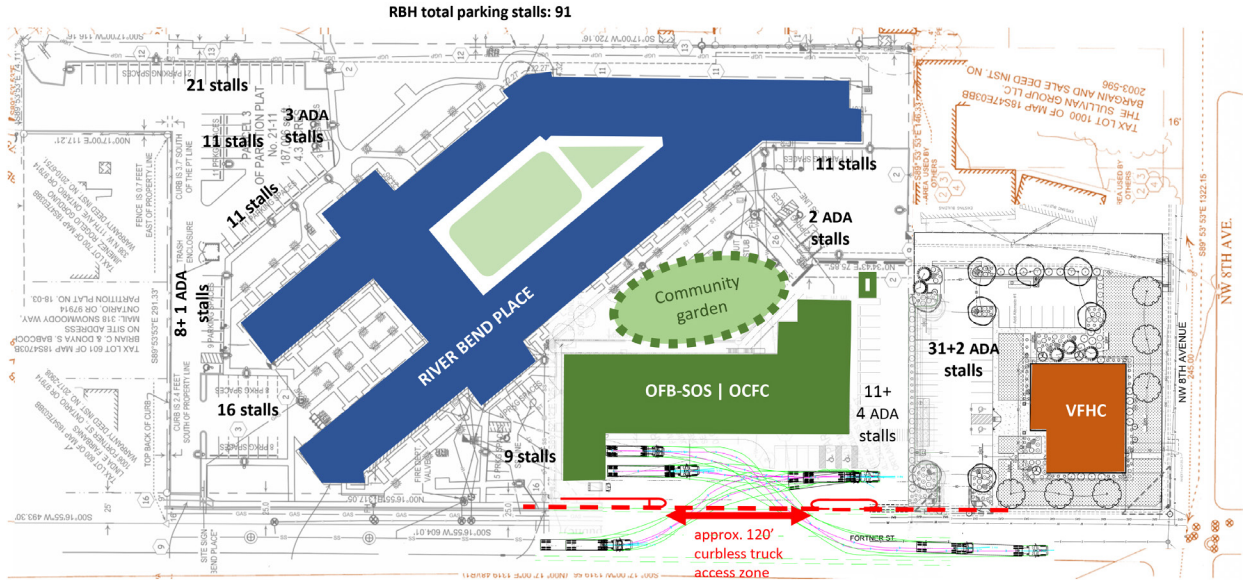


OFB | OCFC building footprint inserted into As-Built Survey (2022), VFHC Site Plan (2022) lay over ALTA survey of super block (2018)

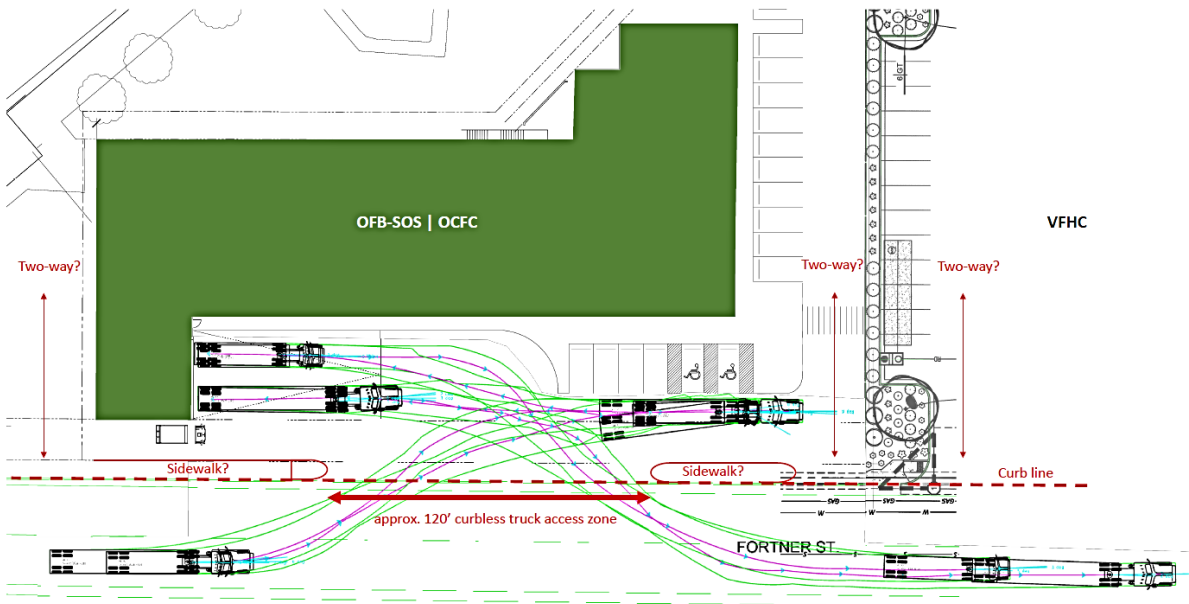
PROGRAMMING & CONCEPTUAL DESIGN

ANALYSIS MASTER PLANNING – Site Fit Tests (cont'd)

The concept plan diagrams organize the two main program components of the project – the OFB-SOS warehouse with related food pantry and the Ontario Community Food Center – in a way that maximizes the use of the site. The linear form of the warehouse extends parallel to Fortner Street, while the community food center “caps” the south end of the building and provides south facing frontage (with a potential for a pedestrian connection) to the VFHC clinic. The project team envisions community activities at this area of the site that will engage with River Bend Place neighbors and VFHC users.



Super-block master plan



OFB | OCFC building footprint and Truck Access clearance fit test

PROGRAMMING & CONCEPTUAL DESIGN

BUILDING PROGRAMMING - Fit Tests

PROGRAMMED AREAS

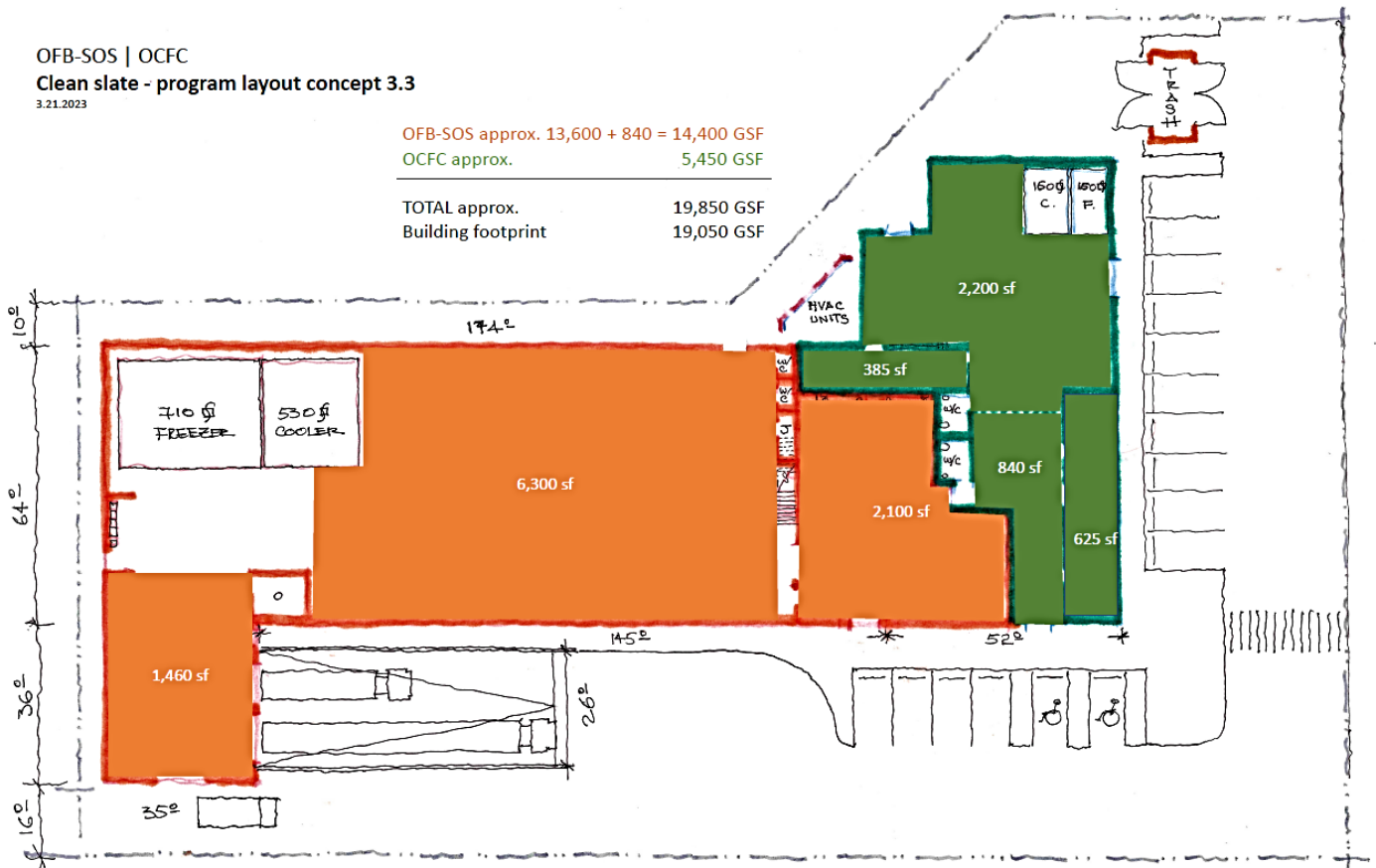
OFB-SOS

Warehouse	18,000 sf
...including	loading dock
	freezer
	cooler
	offices
	staff areas and restrooms
	potential mezz. level spaces
Pantry	700 sf

OCFC

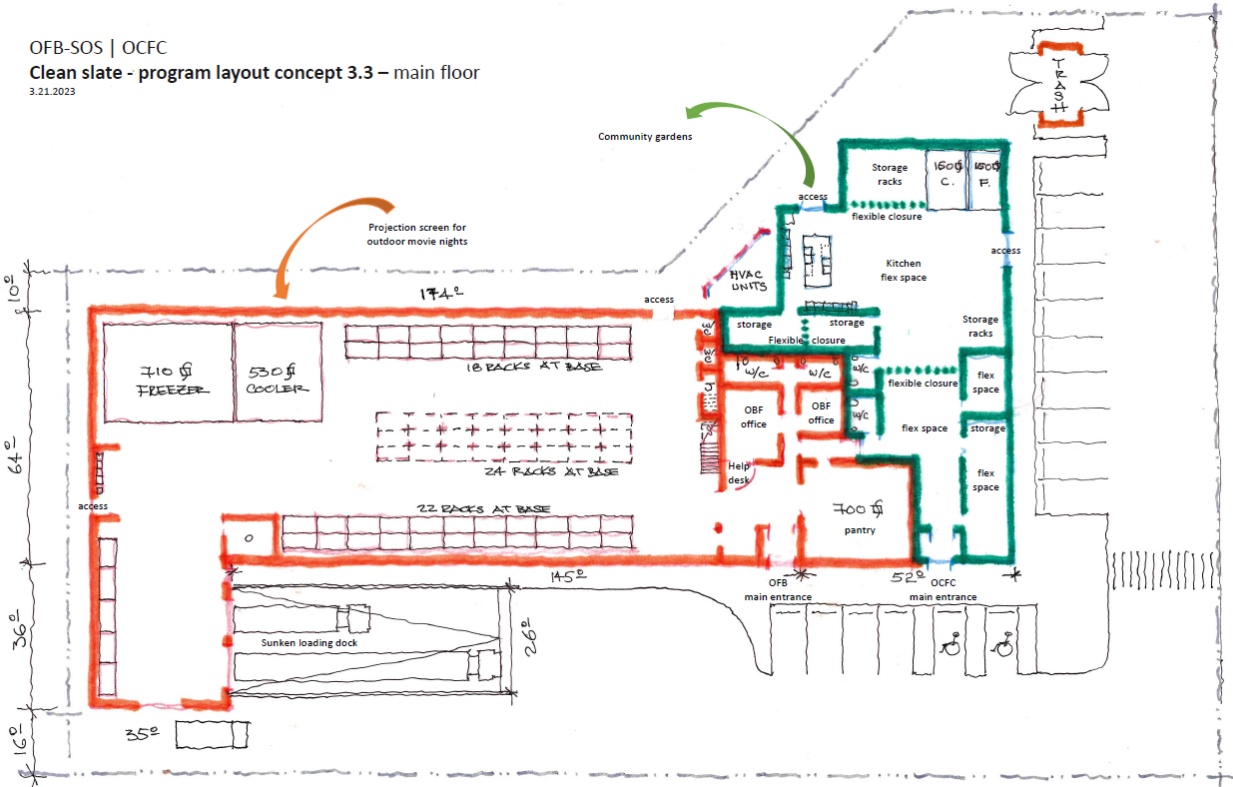
Community Kitchen
600 sf (minimum build-out)
1,050 sf (enhanced build-out)
Flexible Space
Offices (if required)
Support spaces and restrooms

In the following diagrams, the orange-colored area symbolizes OFB-SOS operations. The green colored area symbolizes the area under the community food center’s operations. The general square footage of the food center intent to capture the general square footage of the old kitchen facility.

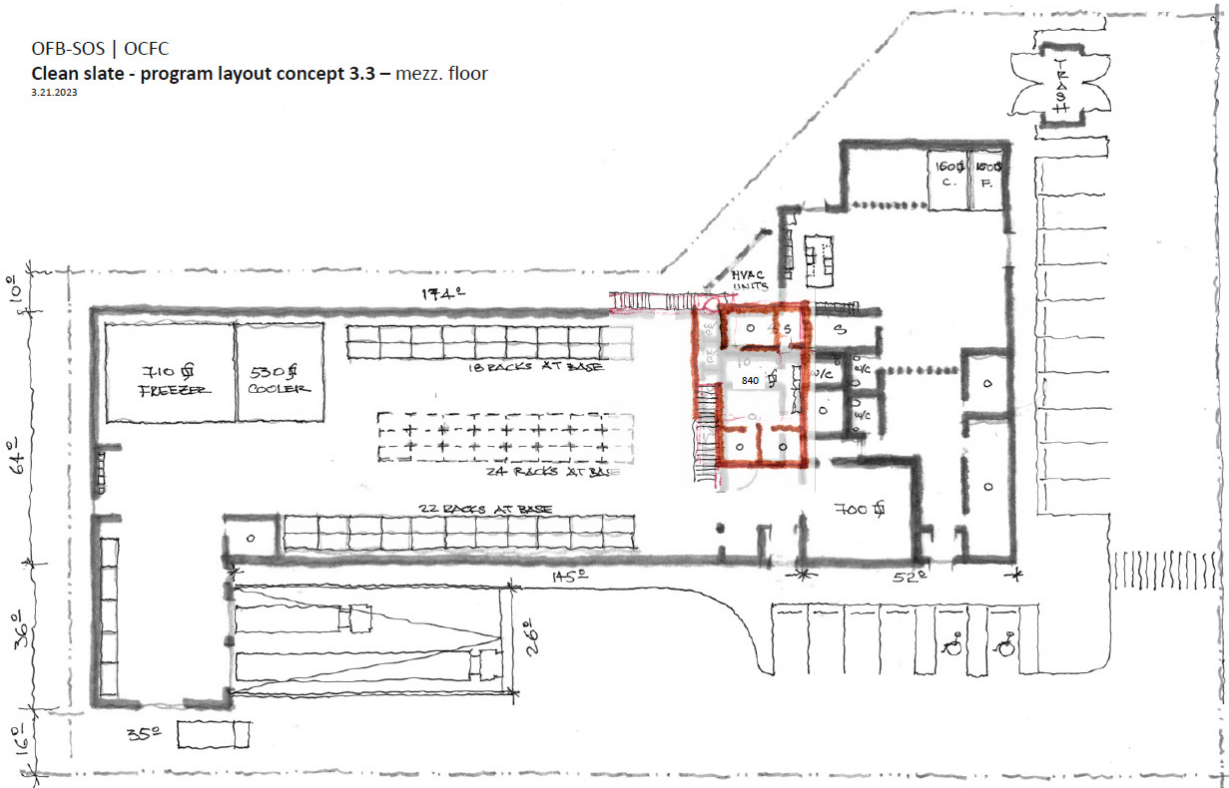


PROGRAMMING & CONCEPTUAL DESIGN
BUILDING PROGRAMMING - Fit Tests (cont'd)

OFB-SOS | OCFC
 Clean slate - program layout concept 3.3 – main floor
 3.21.2023



OFB-SOS | OCFC
 Clean slate - program layout concept 3.3 – mezz. floor
 3.21.2023



ECONOMIC FEASIBILITY

This project seeks to improve the quality of life and economic opportunities for people in the Western Treasure Valley community through this project. It is not just a project of the Oregon Food Bank, or a project of Northwest Housing Alternatives, or even the collaboration of partners that has been brought together as the Western Treasure Valley Food System Partnership. This goals of this project are broader than captured by any of the individual organizations; it is a project to explore the potential for a food-focused business incubator—a place where food-based business ideas can spark; where existing businesses can grow; and where the unique agricultural culture of Ontario and the Western Treasure Valley can be celebrated.

The vast research on the strength of consumer preference for local food is well documented. And this demand for local food is critical for rural economies. Smaller and midsize farms are struggling against consolidation and large-scale agri-businesses for commodity products as younger farmers face record-high land prices and older farmers retire and exit the business. The sales of local foods—especially the potential opportunity to sell to higher-volume customers such as restaurants and institutional buyers—are seen as one way to support small and medium-scale farmers by providing a vehicle to deliver fresh local food from a trusted, known source.

Food centers strengthen rural economies by lowering entry barriers to market for food producers and improving infrastructure to create or expand regional food markets. As job producers, they can also expand opportunities and encourage skilled workers to remain in or relocate to rural areas. Food centers can facilitate the aggregation, marketing and/or distribution of products from local farmers and ranchers to consumers (households, retailers, restaurants, institutions, and wholesalers) by developing scale efficiency and improving distribution networks.

One of the goals of this community food center is to advance the community's goals of promoting a socially, economically, and ecologically sustainable food system. Eliminating hunger is a goal, but the benefits of the food hub extend far beyond that. A successful food hub can go a long way toward promoting a sustainable food system overall by not only supporting the financial well-being of farmers, but also the physical and mental well-being of workers and eaters, in a way that promotes sustainability through conserving, protecting, and regenerating natural resources and biodiversity.

This section of the report documents the exploration of these aspects of the community food center, from an overview of the range of governance options, to quantifying market demand for various types of food-based opportunities, developing a concept for a program grounded in experiences of actual burgeoning local food entrepreneurs, framing assumptions for operating model, quantifying the economic impact of the proposed operations, and strategies for extending the equity and sustainability of the proposed development.

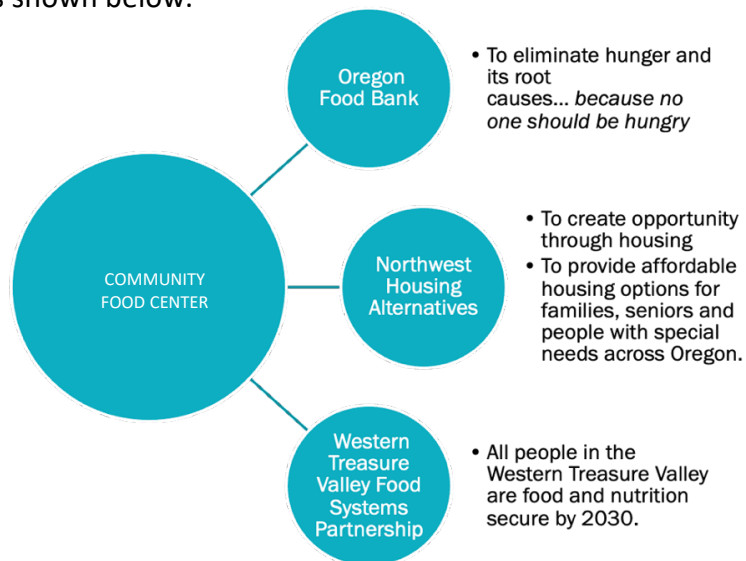
ECONOMIC FEASIBILITY

GOVERNANCE MODEL ALTERNATIVES

That said, successful community food centers have taken a variety of governance models including for-profit companies, nonprofit entities, cooperatives, and those run by public entities or with no formal legal structure. Readers interested in the range of options in place are encouraged to review the National Food Hub Survey Report produced most recently in 2021 as a collaborative effort between Michigan State University and the University of Michigan’s School of Social Work¹.

The Nutrition Oregon Campaign introduced a vision statement that has been embraced by Oregon Food Bank, Northwest Housing Alternatives, and the Western Treasure Valley Food System Partnership. “All people in the Western Treasure Valley are food and nutrition secure by 2030.” A synergy has emerged between these three distinct entities that is integrated into overall mission/vision for the food center as shown below.

This shared mission/vision of the partnership can serve as a north star for the community food center, as its program and develop evolve.



Governance is an important aspect of the future food center facility with its multiple stakeholders and multiple goals. With input from key stakeholders, we identified and discussed a range of alternative governance models with OFB, NHA, and the partnership. The ultimate model chosen should reflect and honor the desires of stakeholders and the financial realities of the market.

Key considerations for the governance model include the partners’ need and appetite for the following factors:

- **Access to capital:** different types of entities (i.e., public, private, nonprofit) will have different sources of capital that they can access at different costs and legal limitations.
- **Financial exposure:** tax exempt status and ability to realize economies of scale or leverage in-kind contributions are both factors which influence the financial viability of the proposed Center and differ among ownership and operating models.
- **Operational flexibility:** the ability to deliver activities via contracts, partner with other academic and peer institutions, and engage in a mix of public and private activities.
- **Accountability:** each entity will have unique success metrics and accountability mechanisms.

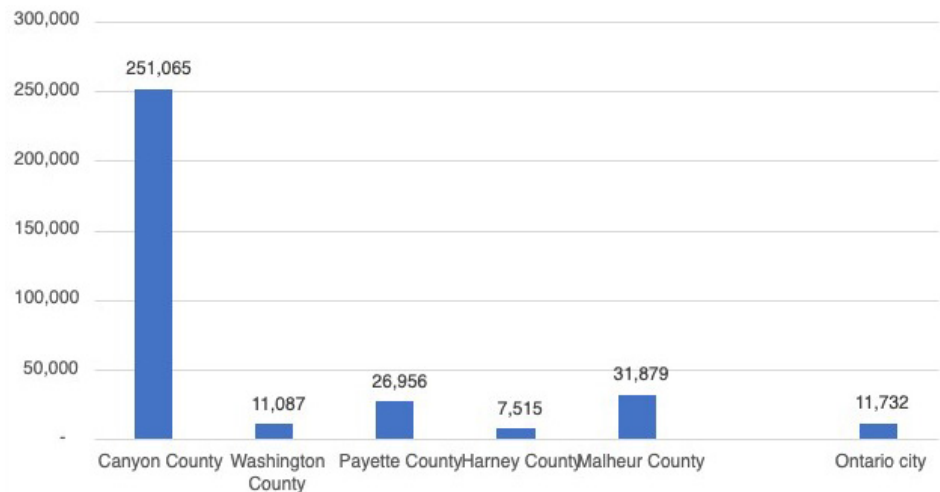
¹ Bielaczyc, N., Colasanti, K., Atwell, E., & Bomstein, E. (2023). Findings of the 2021 National Food Hub Survey. Michigan State University Center for Regional Food Systems. <http://foodsystems.msu.edu/2021-food-hub-survey>

ECONOMIC FEASIBILITY

MARKET CONTEXT

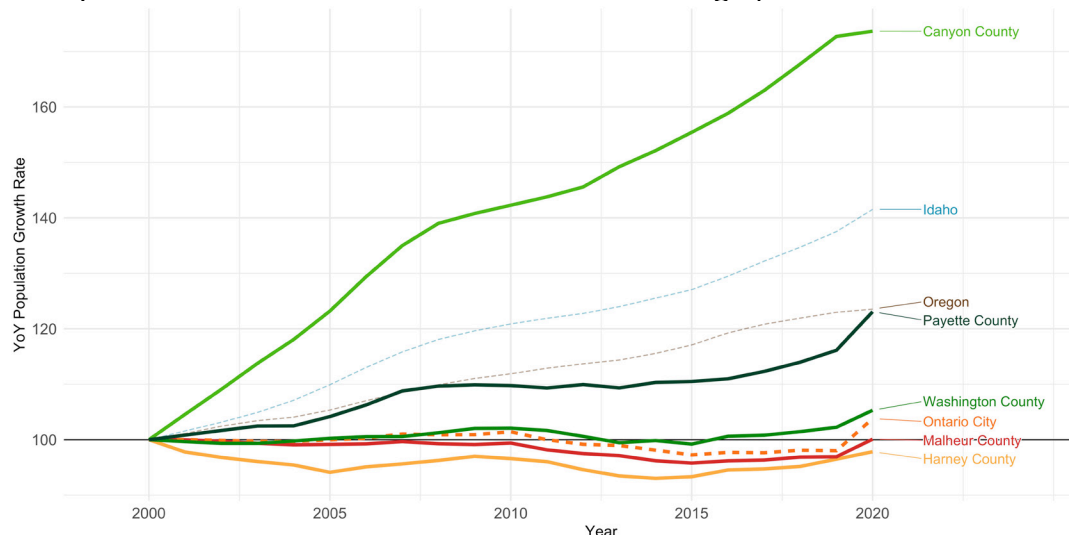
Oregon Food Bank-Southeast Oregon Services provides food to 25 partner agencies in Malheur and Harney counties. The population of the Southeast Oregon area has been relatively stable for the last few decades, with Malheur County home to about 31,570 people and 7,495 in Harney County. Also, there are an estimated 11,645 people who call the eastern Oregon town of Ontario home.

Ontario’s location, immediately adjacent the Oregon-Idaho border, and the site of the new Community Food Center, within one-half mile of that border, strongly indicates that any analysis of market context should consider the communities on the Idaho side of that border. The partnership considers Canyon, Washington, and Payette counties to be within the relevant market area for any community food center. Canyon County is by far the most populous county in the market area in either Oregon or Idaho, with a 2022 population estimated at over 250,000 people, compared with Payette County’s population of just under 27,000, Washington County’s of just over 11,000, Malheur County (in Oregon) of just under 32,000 and Harney County’s of just over 7,500.



Population Estimates, 2022
Source: U.S. Census Bureau

Not only is Canyon County the most populous county in the region, but its population growth has also been most rapid. As a state, Idaho has been growing at a faster rate than its neighbor Oregon, but Canyon County’s growth rate is even faster than the statewide average. Malheur and Harney County’s population has been relatively stable for the last few decades as shown in the graphic below.

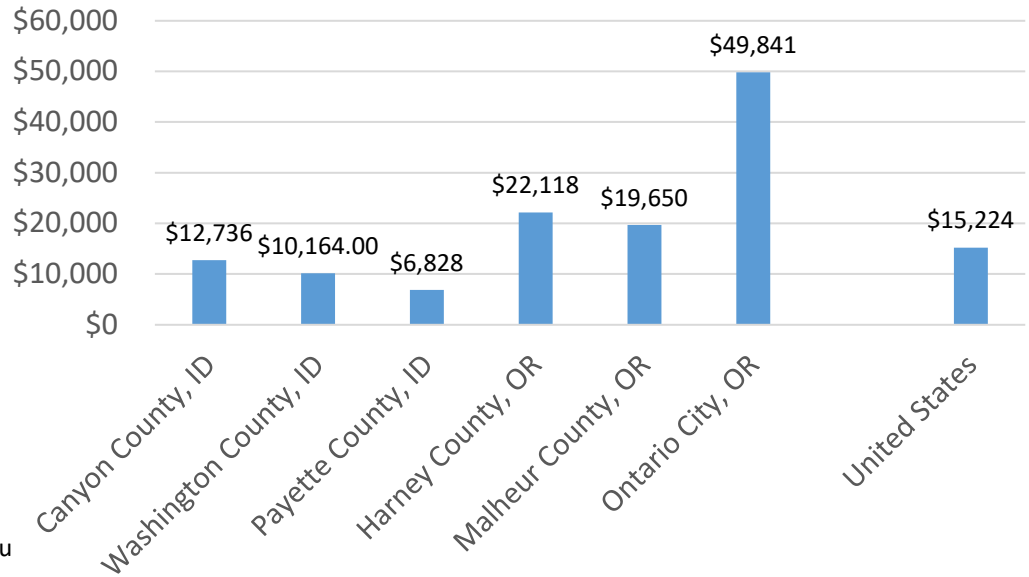


Population Growth Rate, 2000-2020
Source: U.S. Census Bureau

ECONOMIC FEASIBILITY

MARKET CONTEXT (cont'd)

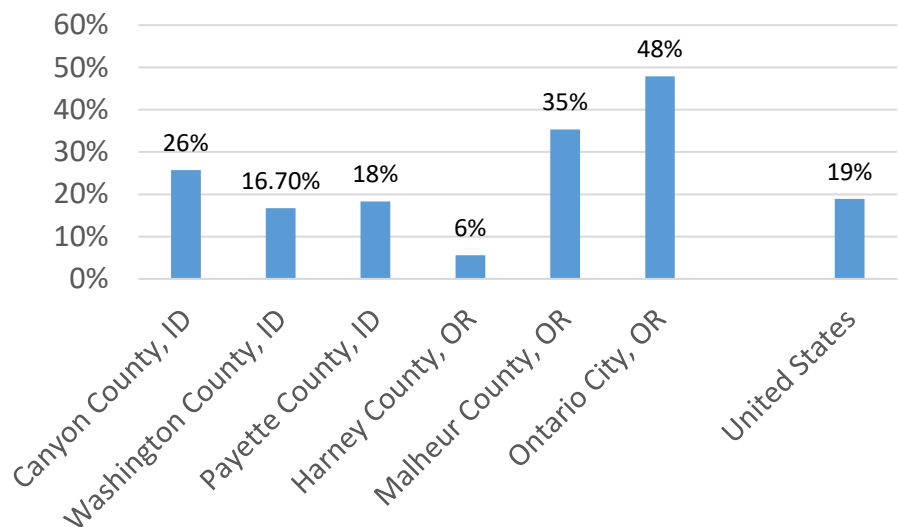
The retail sales in Ontario belies its population, with total retail sales in the City aggregating to an average of nearly \$50,000 per person, over three times the national average of just over \$15,200 per person. This mathematical phenomenon is due in part to the City’s role as a retail hub for the outer lying community, and in large part the serendipity of Oregon’s sales tax-free situation and its adjacency to the much larger population on the Idaho side of the border.



Retail Sales per Capita
Source: U.S. Census Bureau

The City of Ontario is also more racially and ethnically diverse than its Harney and Malheur county peers or the national average. Official Census figures show that nearly one-half of City residents identify as Hispanic, compared to a national average of less than 20 percent.

These market observations will provide key considerations for the programming and financial feasibility of the project. For example, the strong population growth in the area means more households in need of not only food, but also jobs and economic opportunity. And the different tax structures and regulatory environments between Oregon and Idaho will continue to provide a potential opportunity.



Percent of Population of Hispanic/Latinx Ethnicity, 2020
Source: U.S. Census Bureau

ECONOMIC FEASIBILITY

PROGRAMMING

The programming conversations took place iteratively with partners over the course of many months, including presentations on the market context, unique strengths of the community, and conceptual designs. Key opportunities and challenges of this community include:

- Community members who live outside the City of Ontario traveling to Ontario for their retail and food service needs
- Strong Hispanic/Latinx community may provide a unique opportunity for culturally-specific food products
- Strong retail environment provides stable jobs not only in retail, but also in warehousing, distribution, delivery



Considering the needs of the community, OFB, NHA, and other partners, and the location's unique opportunities and challenges, the Partnership has developed a vision of a mixed-use facility with the following elements:

- Food Bank branch
 - Warehouse, storage, receipt/distribution, and related activities to replace the existing leased facility – serving 35+ partners in Malheur and Harney counties and expanding food access for communities most at risk of hunger
 - Expansion of branch to include on-site pantry
- Community Food Center
 - Kitchen facility for education and training, shared meals, food business incubation and support
 - Space for food-related community gatherings, events, and civic engagement opportunities
 - Cold and dry storage
- Shared Office and Meeting Space
 - Food-based community meetings and grassroots organizing
 - Shared work environment – opportunity for partners to co-locate and cross-pollinate

This vision was further refined to a general program for a multi-purpose kitchen with additional flex space potentially shared with partners, and extra space for potential dry and cold storage with room to grow and develop, dependent upon specific users.

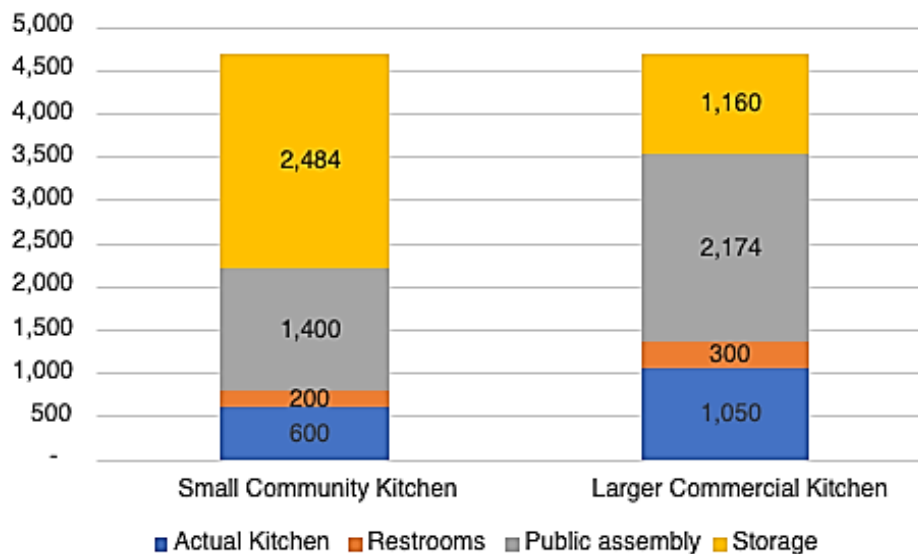
ECONOMIC FEASIBILITY

DEVELOPMENT BUDGET

Using the unique strengths and input from the partners, the vision was developed into two programming options:

- Option 1: Small community kitchen with capability for classes and demonstrations, along with flex space/extra dry storage
- Option 2: Larger commercial kitchen with capability for classes and demonstrations, along with flex space/extra dry storage

Conceptually, these options are based on the same premise of a multi-purpose kitchen with a focus on classes and demonstrations, but also available for rent to local food entrepreneurs. The key differences will be the square footage of the primary commercial kitchen.



Square Footage Summary of Two Kitchen Options for the Ontario Community Food Center

Using the assumptions from RESOLVE and others, a preliminary budget for project development and construction phases is as follows:

Warehouse (18,000 sf) (\$300/sf) = \$5.4 M

OCFC (4,600 sf) (\$400/sf) = \$1.8 M

Site Development cost –

10% of \$7.2 M = approx. \$800,000

TOTAL = \$8,000,000

ECONOMIC FEASIBILITY

DEVELOPMENT BUDGET (cont'd)

In addition to private support of individuals, corporations, and foundations, support for food system infrastructure and community economic development has resulted in funding options for kitchens and related facilities. Although they may be competitive and be associated with trade-offs, these potential funding sources may be available for the development and initial operational expenses. These include:

USDA grants: The US Department of Agriculture has funded a variety of shared kitchen projects, including food incubators, food hubs, and general-use shared kitchens. The Guide to USDA Funding for Local and Regional Food Systems provides an overview of USDA resources, with the USDA website offering the latest information, including a summary of the latest local food promotion projects funded including \$496,036 awarded to the North Coast Food Web project in Astoria, OR and \$231,680 awarded to the Open Food Network in Portland.

The **Local Food Promotion Program** offers Planning Grants that can be used for feasibility work, needs assessment, business plan development, as well as Implementation Grants for actual development, with a 25 percent local match requirement. **Farmers Market Promotion Program** funds development, coordination, and expansion of direct producer-to-consumer markets through outreach, training, and technical assistance to farmers markets and other direct-market channels, also with a 25-percent local match requirement. The Rural Development Department provides grants for economic, community and business development in areas with populations of less than 50,000 Rural Development Loan and Grant Assistance

Sustainable Agriculture Research and Education grants are available to farmers and ranchers, researchers, and extension agents and other educators. Administered regionally, these grants cannot be used directly for kitchen development, but have been used for education efforts related to shared kitchens and kitchen incubators.

Department of Commerce/EDA Grants: The Economic Development Department provides funding for projects that stimulate economic growth and improve competitiveness or create jobs in communities with a long track record of funding incubators in a variety of industrial sectors including food-related industries. EDA grants are awarded throughout the year, with a multi-step application process, coordinated through the regional EDA representative offering support and technical assistance.

Additional Federal Funding: The partnership with Northwest Housing Alternatives and the adjacent affordable housing provides additional opportunity through HUD. Although HUD does not specifically support shared kitchens but has supported shared kitchens developed with housing projects at Flatbush Caton Market redevelopment in Brooklyn, NY, Shreveport Culinary Hub in Shreveport, Louisiana, and City Kitchen West Denver, Colorado. In addition, there may be opportunities with Health and Human Services as well as Foundation Grants, which the OFB and NHA fundraising teams may wish to catalog and analyze the partnership viability and competitiveness to access those sources.

² <http://sustainableagriculture.net/wp-content/uploads/2010/06/6.18-FINAL-Food-System-Funding-Guide2.pdf>

³ <https://www.usda.gov/topics/farming/grants-and-loans>

⁴ <https://www.ams.usda.gov/sites/default/files/media/LFPPFY22DescriptionofFundedProjects.pdf>

⁵ <https://www.ams.usda.gov/services/grants/lfpp>

⁶ <https://www.ams.usda.gov/services/grants/fmpp>

⁷ <https://www.sare.org/grants/>

⁸ <https://www.eda.gov/grants>

ECONOMIC FEASIBILITY

OPERATING MODEL

For this sub-task, we developed an easy-to-understand Excel-based operating model with income and expense analyses with a primary purpose of testing variations of the development program to better understand the scale of any potential gaps in feasibility. The ultimate goal is to define a set of model assumptions and inputs that, together, will foster a financially sustainable facility.

Key assumptions include:

- Total square footage of the Community Center of 4,684 square feet
- Two or three restrooms
- Public assembly space of 1,400 to 2,147 square feet with the balance being storage or flex space
- Electricity and natural gas assumptions
- Per-square-foot costs (construction/TI+FF&E)
 - Kitchen (\$76+\$117/sf)
 - Assembly/flex/storage (\$50+25/sf)
- Share of short-lived capital expenditures
 - 30 percent for kitchen equipment
 - 20 percent for assembly/flex/storage FF&E
- Personnel (2.0 FTE for the larger commercial kitchen)
- General operating expense (supplies, utilities, misc.)

	Small Community Kitchen	Large Commercial Kitchen
Capital repairs and replacements:		
equipment, short-lived	\$15,470	\$20,440
equipment, long-lived	14,550	17,500
building	8,030	8,800
Labor	89,590	109,720
Utilities	11,270	14,970
Supplies	5,740	11,490
Insurance	11,490	17,230
Marketing	8,620	17,230
G&A	17,230	22,980
Paid services	5,740	11,490
Misc. expenses	5,740	8,620
Total cost to cover	\$193,480	\$260,460

Estimated Annual Cash Outflow, Excluding COGS, assuming a January 2025 opening, Small and Large Kitchen Options

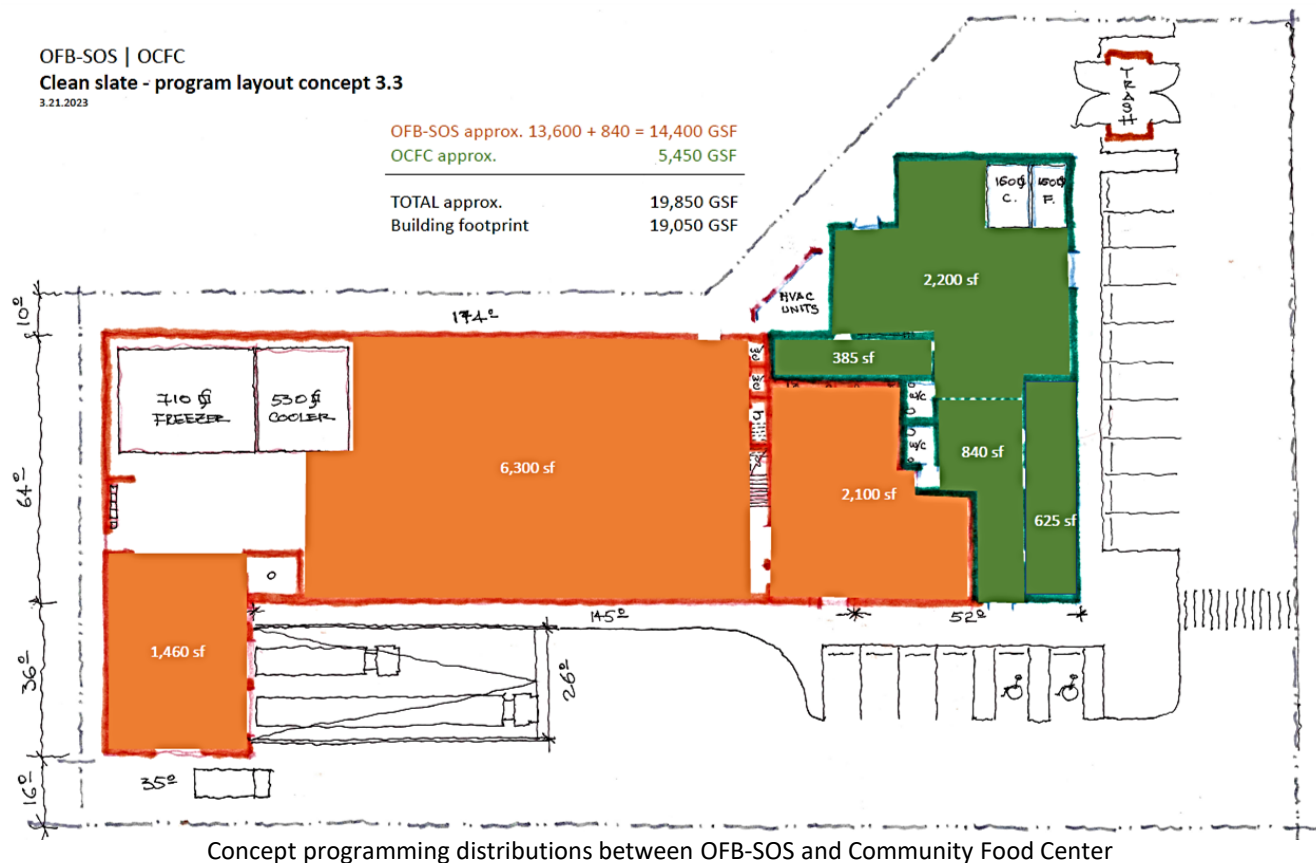
ECONOMIC FEASIBILITY

OPERATING MODEL (cont'd)

These assumptions were discussed and vetted with the partners and others, and they will continue to be refined as the project moves through design development. Based on these initial assumptions, the estimated capital expenditure totals just under \$500,000 to \$566,000 specific to the community food center and associated development although that budget may inclusive within the combined facility of \$8M.

And in terms of ongoing annual costs, the community food center is expected to require around \$200,000 to \$260,000 annually to operate and maintain. These cost estimates are shown below for both the smaller community kitchen and the larger commercial kitchen, with assumptions regarding the proportion of capital equipment which would require repair and replacement on an annual basis, labor/personnel costs, expected utilities, supplies (not including food purchase costs, which instead are included among the costs of the kitchen users/renters in the section on the economic impact section), insurance, marketing, general and administration, and other miscellaneous expenses.

As noted above, there may be a variety of potential funding sources available not only for initial capital expenditure for development, but also to support the operational expenses.



ECONOMIC FEASIBILITY

ECONOMIC IMPACT DIMENSIONS

Though not specifically called out in the RFP, the economic impact of proposed developments or policy actions are often of interest, not only to project partners, but also community members, and potential funders. For example, prior work conducted by members of the ECONorthwest team quantified the much greater economic impact of food purchases at farmers markets and other direct-market channels, compared to the same food purchases made at traditional grocery markets.

As noted earlier, the program of the new Food Center includes:

- Food Bank branch (moving the location of the existing OFB-SOS), including:
 - Warehouse, storage, receipt/distribution, and related activities to replace the existing leased facility
 - Expansion of branch to include on-site pantry
- Community Food Center
 - Kitchen facility for education and training, shared meals, food business incubation and support
 - Space for food-related community gatherings, events, and civic engagement opportunities
 - Cold and dry storage
- Shared Office and Meeting Space
 - Food-based community meetings and grassroots organizing
 - Shared work environment – opportunity for partners to co-locate and cross-pollinate

Given that the program includes a range of shared spaces without a specific revenue source, this analysis focuses on the rental usage associated with the shared kitchen. A major consideration relating to the economic impact of the Ontario Food Center is the Southeast Oregon Service branch of the food bank moving from another location in the community. As such, the continuing operations of the OFB-SOS would not represent net new economic activity, although the construction of the new facility would.

Based on the currently envisioned program and their potential for expected revenue generation, there will be three general categories of economic impact:

- Construction and Site Development
- Annual Operations of Food Center Kitchen
- Annual Activities of Kitchen Users/Renters

The construction and site-development impacts comprise the economic activity associated with development of the new OFB-SOS and Ontario Community Food Center. They are expected to take approximately 18 to 24 months, but for the purposes of simplifying this analysis compressed to a single year.

ECONOMIC FEASIBILITY

ECONOMIC IMPACT DIMENSIONS (cont'd)

As noted in the Development Budget section, the development budget of the overall project is approximately \$8M with the OFB-SOS comprising approximately \$5.4M and the Ontario Community Food Center approximately \$2.64M, for the total one-time construction budget for the modeling as shown below.

Event Title	Event Type	IMPLAN Sector	Input Type	Value
OFB SOS	Industry Output	56	Output	\$5,400,000
CFC - Construction & Site Dev	Industry Output	56	Output	\$2,640,000
Total				\$8,040,000

Estimated Construction and Site Development Costs

Impact	Employment	FTE	Labor Income	Value Added	Output
1 – Direct	52	51	\$2,990,200	\$3,141,200	\$8,040,000
2 - Indirect	13	12	\$694,900	\$1,110,400	\$2,347,200
3 - Induced	13	11	\$522,900	\$1,018,600	\$1,860,400
Total	78	74	\$4,207,900	\$5,270,200	\$12,247,600

Total economic impact from the construction and development of the new OFB-SOS and Ontario Community Food Center

Source: IMPLAN 2021, modeled by ECONorthwest using Canyon, Washington, and Payette counties in Idaho and Harney and Malheur counties in Oregon

The annual operations of the food center and annual activities of the kitchen users/renters are ongoing. The annual operations of the OFB-SOS are not net new so not included in these analyses.

To develop estimates of revenue and economic activity associated with the built-out food center, our OFB partners connected with community partners at the two local Farmers Markets as well as at the Ontario Saturday market and SBA advisors with the TVCC and SBA business center. The small business center is currently in conversation with approximately 8 food entrepreneurs who might make use of a shared commercial kitchen, with an estimated 20 food entrepreneurs utilizing their small business services annually.

ECONOMIC FEASIBILITY

ECONOMIC IMPACT DIMENSIONS (cont'd)

As noted in the programming and operating model sections above, there were two options provided for the kitchen development: a smaller community kitchen and a larger commercial kitchen. These have slightly different capital expenditure and operating costs. We expect the kitchen users/renters to be involved in the production of both ready-to-eat meals (potentially food trucks, caterers, shared meal providers), as well as small-scale food manufacturing of products such as salsa and bottled sauces, baked goods, other types of small-scale food manufacturing, and some co-packing/labeling. The annual operating costs for these two options are shown below.

	Small Community Kitchen IMPLAN Inputs	Larger Commercial Kitchen IMPLAN Inputs
Intermediate Inputs	\$103,886	\$150,743
Labor Income	\$89,592	\$109,720
Employment	1.6	2.2
Output	\$193,479	\$260,463

Estimated Annual Cash Outflow, Excluding Cost of Goods Sold

These inputs include a variety of inputs, including the purchase of a range of food inputs, packaging, and other services needed for the kitchen users/renters to produce their products.

This analysis assumes a starting occupancy of 5 kitchen renters/users at average usage rates, which we foresee the potential to ramp up to 10 users, in acknowledgement of the average success rate of 50 percent (from the 20 annual queries reported above).

These initial five food entrepreneurs will be estimated as though two of the users are in food service (NAICS code 722 and IMPLAN sector 511) and the other three users/renters are in food manufacturing which is NAICS code 311. IMPLAN disaggregates the food manufacturing to a variety of subsectors; and based on the discussions with small-business services, we selected the following subsectors: Bread and Bakery Product (except frozen) which is NAICS code 311821 and IMPLAN Sector 93, tortilla manufacturing (NAICS 311830 and IMPLAN Sector 96), and mayonnaise, dressings, and other sauce manufacturing (NAICS 311941 and IMPLAN Sector 101).

ECONOMIC FEASIBILITY

ECONOMIC IMPACT DIMENSIONS (cont'd)

We used the U.S. Census Bureau's Economic Survey of non-employer entities to estimate revenues for these kitchen users/renters, as shown in table below.

User Type	NAICS	IMPLAN Sector	IMPLAN Description	Annual Revenue (\$ 2019)	Annual Revenue (\$ 2025)
Food Service	722	511	All other food and drinking places	\$38,929	\$51,191
Food Manufacturing	311821	93	Bread and bakery product, except frozen, manufacturing	\$41,334.63	\$54,353
Food Manufacturing	311830	96	Tortilla manufacturing	\$41,334.63	\$54,353
Food Manufacturing	311941	101	Mayonnaise, dressing, and sauce manufacturing	\$41,334.63	\$54,353

Estimated Annual Revenue Generated by Various Types of Kitchen Users/Renters

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, Economic Surveys, Non-employer Statistics by Legal Form of Organization and Receipts Size Class for the U.S., States, and Selected Geographies: 2019 (NONEMP2019)

Using the estimated impacts from the larger commercial kitchen, the estimated impacts of the kitchen operations and the activities of the kitchen users/renters yields total annual estimated economic impacts of over \$500,000 in direct economic output (about half of which is from the kitchen operations and about half from the kitchen users/renters) made possible through the work of just over 4 full-time equivalents in terms of jobs, as shown in the table below.

Impact	Employment	FTE	Labor Income	Value Added	Output
1 - Direct	4.6	4.2	\$181,700	\$219,750	\$520,180
2 - Indirect	0.9	0.7	\$46,430	\$75,250	\$176,900
3 - Induced	0.7	0.4	\$30,170	\$58,690	\$107,190
Total	6.3	5.4	\$258,300	\$353,700	\$804,260

Estimated Annual Economic Impact, Large Kitchen Plus Renters

Source: IMPLAN 2021, modeled by ECONorthwest using Canyon, Washington, and Payette counties in Idaho and Harney and Malheur counties in Oregon

ECONOMIC FEASIBILITY

ECONOMIC IMPACT DIMENSIONS (cont'd)

The total aggregated new economic impact of both (short-term) construction-related and (long-term) operational activities of the food center and its kitchen users/renters is summarized in the table below.

	2024	2025	2026	2027	2028
1 - Direct	\$8,040,000	\$520,200	\$536,400	\$553,800	\$590,200
2 - Indirect	\$2,347,200	\$176,900	\$182,400	\$188,300	\$200,700
3 - Induced	\$1,860,400	\$107,200	\$110,500	\$114,100	\$121,600
Total	\$12,247,600	\$804,300	\$829,300	\$856,200	\$912,600

Total aggregated economic impact from the construction and new operations of the new OFB SOS and Ontario Community Food Center

Source: IMPLAN 2021, modeled by ECONorthwest using Canyon, Washington, and Payette counties in Idaho and Harney and Malheur counties in Oregon

The largest impacts are associated with the relatively large construction budget for the new OFB-SOS and associated Ontario Community Food Center, with an estimated \$8M in construction and site development producing an estimated 51 direct jobs, with an additional 23 indirect and induced jobs. The new community food center with its rental kitchen are expected to produce a smaller number of ongoing jobs, presented estimated at 1.5 to 2 full-time jobs associated with the operation of the community food center, along with another estimated 2.2 estimated full-time equivalent jobs produced by the kitchen users/renters for every 5 kitchen renters. If those five renters do succeed in doubling to 10, we would reasonably expect the resulting jobs to double as well.

It's important to note that the other non-revenue-generating activities hosted by the community food center, such as for food-related community gatherings, cooking classes and demonstrations, other food-focused events, and civic engagement or grassroots organizing, will also likely generate new economic activity, but these economic impacts are more difficult to quantify, given their lack of specific revenue generation. That said, the food center represents vast opportunities to potential food entrepreneurs and other community members to enhance their own food-related economic activity, whether through increased ability to purchase and prepare their own food, opportunity to launch or grow food-related burgeoning businesses, or other types of economic activity.

EQUITY AND ENVIRONMENTAL SUSTAINABILITY ANALYSIS

This project aspires to explore its impact across a variety of other dimensions. Some of those dimensions the consulting team considered include equity and environmental sustainability, which we developed in cooperating with OFB, NHA, and partners, and we expect to continue to develop as the project moves forward.

EQUITY DIMENSIONS

One goal of this project is to seek ways that the project can explicitly benefit and/or involve Black, Indigenous, People of Color, and immigrants and refugee communities in food systems and food-related economic opportunities in the Western Treasure Valley region. Some approaches to this type of work typically include applying community-benefits principles such as aspirational goals for the percent of development-related work contracted to COBID-certified firms, preferential local hiring, multi-lingual pay premiums, and other approaches we can explore with OFB, NHA, and partners. The general concept of local food systems already shifts resources and power away from an industrial agriculture system that perpetuates inequities. But recognizing that this project can do more, this project considers the range of ways it can focus on a Racial Equity Implementation Framework⁹ that includes the following principles:

Equitable access - considers how this project can use its distribution channels to increase the availability of healthy, affordable food to communities of color.

Equitable contracts - seeks to maximize opportunities to formally engage producers, suppliers, and businesses owned by people of color on terms that reflect fair and just principles.

Equitable decision-making - affirms the importance of having communities of color play some role in the center's decision-making process, recognizing the many ways in which the center's decisions and activities can impact the community.

Respectful land use – considers the impact of the center's land decisions on adjoining communities of color.

Equitable governance - uplifts people of color to formally serve on the center's governance body at a level that reflects their representation in the center's service area.

Equitable ownership - looks to actively increase the number of people of color in the supply chain who are owners and financially viable.

Mutual growth - ensures that business owned by people of color scale up along with the center's growth and success.

Fair and living wages - commits to economic justice by fighting against a "race to the bottom" when it comes to paying employees and suppliers, recognizing that the food and farm sector continues to have a disproportionately high percentage of people of color at the low and middle levels of its labor pool who are generally among the lowest paid.

Just working conditions - recognizes the need to overcome the systemic abuses that continue to define the experiences of many food and farm workers, including those within this food center.

Regenerative investments - dedicates a portion of this center's profits and capital to be (re)invested in local communities of color in ways that contribute to their economic, social, political, and cultural betterment.

Movement building - embraces the call for this food center to be social change agents and seeks to connect with local, regional, and global efforts to transform the conventional food system and to shift power to benefit communities of color.

As this project continues to move toward implementation, applying these and other principles will allow its economic and social impacts to benefit the community equitably.

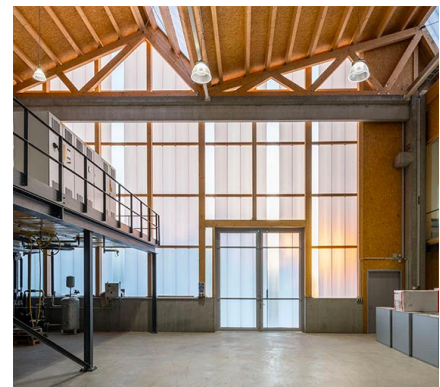
⁹Adapted from *Racial Equity Implementation Guide: A Framework for Translating Value into Organizational Action*, June 2018

EQUITY AND ENVIRONMENTAL SUSTAINABILITY ANALYSIS

ENVIRONMENTAL SUSTAINABILITY DIMENSION

This project has an additional goal of advancing sustainability practices that can be implemented in the operations of the facility to divert waste streams, reduce food waste, and prolong the lifetime of the building and materials within. Although most of the environmental/ecosystem service benefits would likely derive from agricultural production, rather than the development and operation of this facility, consideration for this facility can help to inform and ensure these issues are considered more broadly system-wide. Some approaches discussed with the partnership include inclusion of solar panels for renewable power generation, minimizing food waste, composting, developing systems to ease use of compost as soil amendments, and similar initiatives.

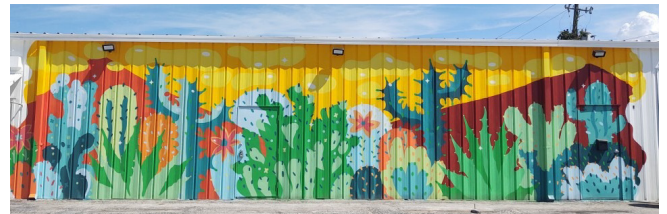
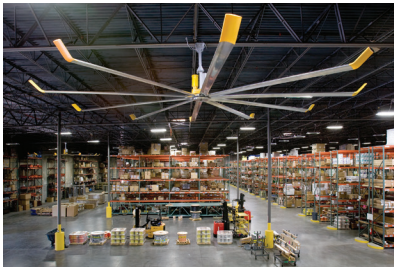
- **Solar energy production:** The partners are interested in installation of solar panels to generate renewable energy on-site. The team was able to reference NHA’s experience incorporating solar power into the River Bend Place development and contacted Energy trust of Oregon and Solar Oregon, two non-profits that can assist as the project develops. The orientation of the main volume of the building is ideal for solar panels and there are numerous programs that provide incentives for incorporating solar energy into new building projects.
- **Energy efficient integration of refrigeration equipment with building exterior wall systems:** Building envelop design is crucial in saving on energy use and costs. The team has made some preliminary inquiries with insulated metal panel manufacturers that produce wall and roofing systems that are highly energy efficient. The idea of integrating these exterior envelop systems with the insulated metal panels required for refrigeration equipment is an opportunity to increase the building’s overall energy performance at less cost than traditional construction.
- **Natural Lighting:** As the building design develops, the project will benefit from roof profiles and high window placements that allow natural light to replace light fixture usage during daylight hours. North facing windows, perhaps achieved by a saw-toothed roof profile, can maximize the amount of “cool” natural daylight entering spaces.



EQUITY AND ENVIRONMENTAL SUSTAINABILITY ANALYSIS

ENVIRONMENTAL SUSTAINABILITY DIMENSION (cont'd)

- **Natural Ventilation:** Heating, ventilating, and air conditioning systems create huge energy demands on conventional large buildings. The team advocates working with passive systems that minimize energy usage and allow the building to “cool itself” or, conversely, retain its heat depending on the season.
- **Minimizing Food Waste:** The partners were especially supportive of including staff who would have an eye toward rescuing food—not only ensuring that compostable items are diverted from landfills—but also to rescue food that might be ideal for food processing. An example cited by the partners was the idea of converting over-ripe fruit to dried or dehydrated product, in addition to ensuring that trimmings are appropriately composted and returned to the production cycle as soil amendments. Partners acknowledged that this type of food rescue would require investments in staff who had not only knowledge and ability in food manufacturing and production, but also the capacity to devote to diverting raw products from the waste stream.
- **Minimizing Water Waste:** Operations within the building should take advantage of plumbing systems that can reclaim grey water for use in irrigation systems and other non-potable uses. This minimizes overuse of domestic water and imposes less effluent on civic sewer systems.



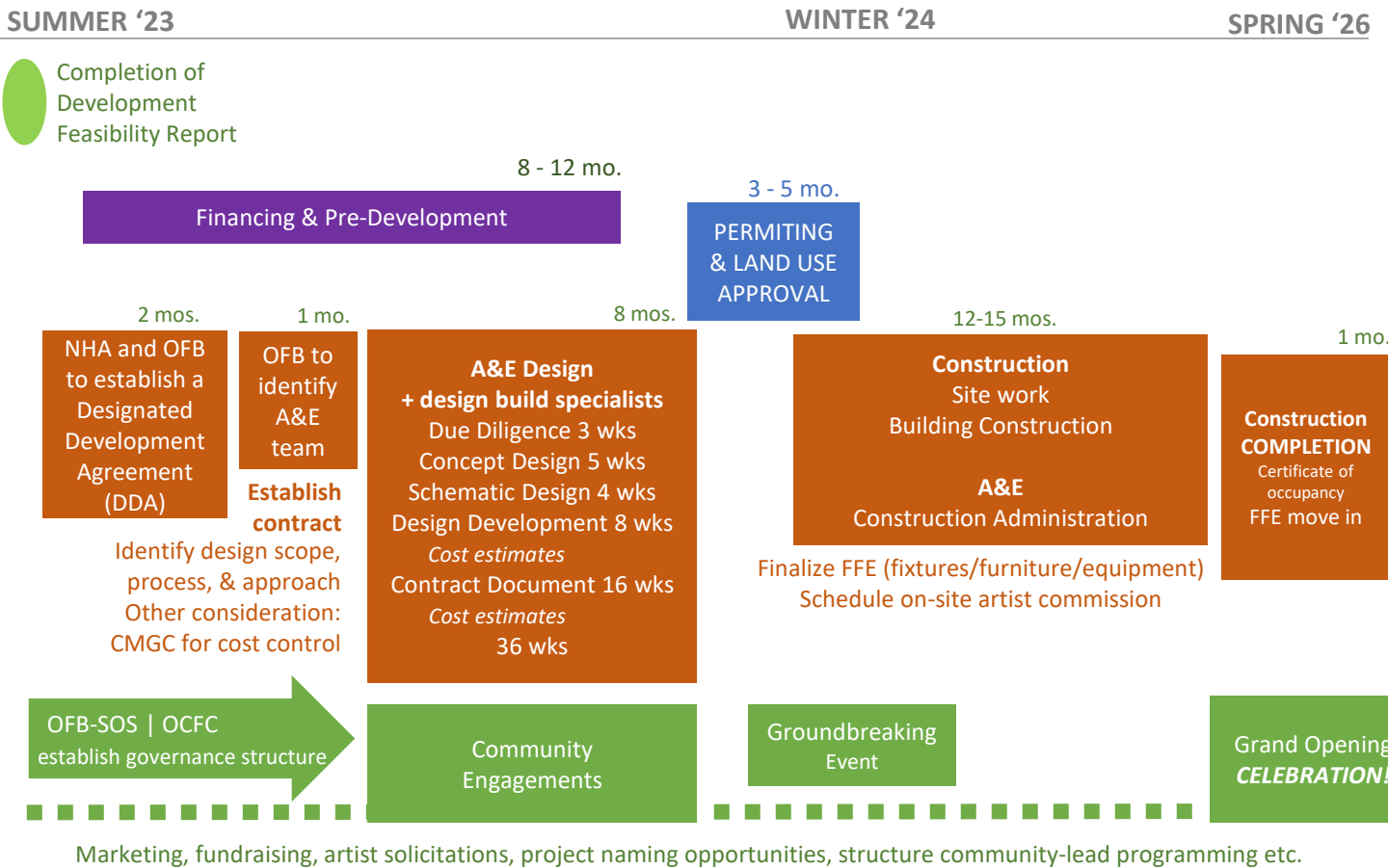
ART and COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

An additional goal for the project centers on the desire for artwork and programs that embrace and celebrate the community. In partnership meetings and outreach sessions, participants envisioned a variety of art opportunities – murals, outdoor art installations, gardens and other outdoor gathering spaces – that could enhance community engagement with the Food Center. Donor recognition artwork would be another opportunity to tell the stories of the community.

Community-led programs that support the mission of the Food Center are also worth considering. Some suggestions that came up during the course of the study included community vegetable gardens, vertical green walls, food fairs, movie nights, and other community celebrations. Areas to the south and east of the Food Center portion of the building could be used for such events and programs.

RECOMMENDATIONS & NEXT STEPS

In conclusion, this report makes several observations and recommendations for next steps in realizing this important opportunity. First, it is clear that there is a keen need and desire to create a Community Food Center that will serve Ontario and its surrounds. Second, there is a workable development opportunity with the proposed site and program. Third, economic analysis indicates that this is a financially feasible addition to the local/regional food system. But equally important to all these observations is the strength that the Partnership, through its network and relationships, can bring to realizing this facility and all that it can do for the Ontario community.



It is anticipated that this report can be used by the core team – OFB, NHA, and WTVFSP – to develop action plans geared toward achieving the goals addressed in this Feasibility Study. The Partnership can prioritize strategies and identify potential funding sources. “On the ground,” OFB and NHA can craft a Designated Development Agreement (DDA) to secure the tax parcels initially proposed. Should OFB choose to champion this project through the development and construction phases, they will assemble the architectural and engineering team to begin the design and documentation of the new facility.

APPENDIX

PRECEDENTS

SOLAR RESOURCES IN OREGON

COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

OFB-SOS PROGRAMMING – top list needs & wants

ECONOMIC IMPACT DETAIL

APPENDIX

PRECEDENTS

<https://www.oregonfoodbank.org/find-support/food-support-network>

<https://www.oregonfoodbank.org/about-us/locations/southeast-oregon-services>

<https://thehungercoalition.org/about/> (Bloom Community Food Center)

<https://fic.oregonstate.edu/> (Food Innovation Center, Portland)

<https://foodtopowerco.org/> (formerly Colorado Springs Food Rescue)

<http://www.delanceystreetfoundation.org/facsf.php> (San Francisco)

<https://www.benjerry.com/whats-new/2022/07/new-avenues-for-youth> (Portland)

[AFH Home – Astoria Food Hub](#) (Astoria)

<https://cfccanada.ca/en/Home> (Community Food Centres Canada)

[food-hub-gwin.pdf \(oregonstate.edu\)](#) (list of Oregon Food Hubs)

SOLAR RESOURCES IN OREGON

[Energy Trust of Oregon](#)

[Solar | Energy Trust InsiderEnergy Trust Insider](#)

[Home | Oregon Clean Power Co-op](#)

APPENDIX

PARTNERSHIP COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

Community Engagement Synthesis:

<https://app.mural.co/t/wtvfsp9438/m/wtvfsp9438/1675882126403/ab2898d88843a0dc5f262b9edc88231a23279c61?sender=uc61cb0055fae0a27ab236263->

Focus Group Questions:

https://docs.google.com/document/d/1zoY8yV1qPTcn_WZohW1YdHT2FeHpuTDDyKlCqUjDYF0/edit?usp=sharing

Focus group notes summary:

https://www.google.com/url?q=https://docs.google.com/document/d/1K1OULT8-vBX9DwShytFw9ds_DFBYMG0I4GVAqhrQKok/edit?usp%3Ddrive_link&sa=D&source=editors&ust=1691101740665203&usg=AOvVaw1R1kKqZOinmmbEtbRw3H1f

WTVFSP 1-pager:

https://docs.google.com/document/d/1MBCA7RD3ULcmom8v5ue4dD_Xg9NY9TmL/edit?usp=sharing&ouid=101258926677146924469&rtpof=true&sd=true

Commercial kitchen interest survey:

<https://docs.google.com/document/d/1cC1tFDuRZ0wnbek7pf3Hfp8cQDOQ9fr-hYbB7lbzji4/edit?usp=sharing>

Partnership community engagement – Press Release for Ontario Community Feast:

<https://drive.google.com/file/d/1QcC0cAUQhrTJhTMZmyxBy8VZXUgdNZ-N/view?usp=sharing>

Partnership community engagement – WTV Food System Summit-Argus Observer new article:

[Local food systems summit is Nov. 15 at Payette Community & Senior Center | Local News Stories | argusobserver.com](https://www.argusobserver.com/local-news-stories/local-food-systems-summit-is-nov-15-at-payette-community-senior-center/)

APPENDIX

OFB-SOS PROGRAMMING – top list needs & wants

FOOD BANK priority items	Current Space	Future Space
Total Warehouse Square footage	5700	18000+
Cooler	232	570+
Freezer	346	760+
Dry Storage (# pallet spaces)	48 Racking Space & 55 Approx Floor Space	Approx 200 Racking Spaces & 75 Approx Floor Space
Generator	No	Yes
Solar	No	Yes
Equipment	1 Box Truck, 1 Van, 1 Forklift, 1 Electric Pallet Jack, 2 Hand Pallet Jacks	Box Truck, Mobile Pantry Truck, Forklift, 2 Electric Pallet Jacks, Hand Pallet Jack
Work Spaces	2 Closed Door Offices & 1 Large Open Office	8-10 Office/Flex Space
Meeting/Community Spaces	No	Yes
On-site Food Pantry	No	Yes
Max. # Visitors/Event Capacity	< 5	30-50

OFB-SOS Warehouse wish list/Current-future state:

<https://docs.google.com/spreadsheets/d/1emnh02CIEtowO2dr9wwjIEkKv8DhrMAGyyLVPkPYcTI/edit?usp=sharing>

APPENDIX

ECONOMIC IMPACT DETAIL

Construction-Related Impacts **OFB SOS**

Impact	Employment	FTE	Labor Income	Value Added	Output
1 - Direct	35	34	\$2,008,300	\$2,109,800	\$5,400,000
2 - Indirect	9	8	\$466,700	\$745,800	\$1,576,400
3 - Induced	9	8	\$351,200	\$684,200	\$1,249,500
Total	52	50	\$2,826,200	\$3,539,700	\$8,226,00

Construction-Related Impacts **Ontario Community Food Center**

Impact	Employment	FTE	Labor Income	Value Added	Output
1 - Direct	17.2	16.7	\$981,800	\$1,031,400	\$2,640,000
2 - Indirect	4.2	3.9	\$228,200	\$364,600	\$770,700
3 - Induced	4.2	3.6	\$171,700	\$334,500	\$610,900
Total	25.6	24.3	\$1,381,700	\$1,730,500	\$4,021,600

Annual impacts Small Kitchen Operations

Impact	Employment	FTE	Labor Income	Value Added	Output
1 - Direct	1.6	1.5	\$88,500	\$88,500	\$191,200
2 - Indirect	0.4	0.3	\$19,300	\$33,900	\$71,900
3 - Induced	0.3	0.2	\$14,200	\$27,600	\$50,400
Total	2.3	2.0	\$122,100	\$150,000	\$313,600

Annual impacts Large Kitchen Operations

Impact	Employment	FTE	Labor Income	Value Added	Output
1 - Direct	2.2	2.0	\$108,400	\$108,400	\$257,400
2 - Indirect	0.6	0.5	\$27,100	\$46,700	\$100,600
3 - Induced	0.4	0.3	\$17,800	\$34,700	\$63,400
Total	3.2	2.9	\$153,400	\$189,900	\$421,400

Annual Impacts-- Five Kitchen Renters (Two Food Service Providers and Three Food Manufacturing)

Impact	Employment	FTE	Labor Income	Value Added	Output
1 - Direct	2.4	2.2	\$73,300	\$111,300	\$262,700
2 - Indirect	0.4	0.2	\$19,400	\$28,500	\$76,200
3 - Induced	0.3	0.1	\$12,300	\$24,000	\$43,800
Total	3.1	2.6	\$105,000	\$163,800	\$382,800