



Lillooet Area Community CONNECT Hub

**WE ARE
STRONGER
TOGETHER!**

IS IT POSSIBLE? CAN WE DO IT?

**VANCOUVER FOUNDATION
INVESTMENT READINESS PROGRAM
APPLICATION SUPPORTING DOCUMENT: FEBRUARY 2020**

BACKGROUND

During 2018-2019, the Lillooet Area Library Association explored the idea of a Social Enterprise with the community through research and workshops. Following this work, ideas have been discussed and constructed over the last year with many non-profit organizations. Funding through the Vancouver Foundation Investment Readiness Program will allow us to explore this new social enterprise business idea, test for feasibility, understand what will work and what may not, and then develop a business plan and marketing materials to take the idea to the next level – to approach potential investors. We believe this is an excellent opportunity to hire a consultant familiar with social enterprise development to help move these ideas forward, and to build capacity in our community around innovative project development, facilitation and communication. It is important to us that any contractor working on this project includes local volunteers, staff and contractors in the process so that knowledge is transferrable, thereby enabling us to facilitate and grow other innovative projects in our region in the future.

Lillooet Area Community CONNECT Hub – Is it feasible? What is feasible?

The Community CONNECT Hub could provide the space, the staffing and programs to support multiple sectors of our community. We envisage a collaborative space with the following components that work hand-in-hand to provide a social good while generating income to ensure self-sufficiency:

- **Apprenticeship/Mentorship Training Program** to support at-risk, unemployed or underemployed people, while learning skills in all aspects of the agriculture, art/craft, food service and small business industries. A unique hands-on learning environment that gives participants the skills to go out into the workforce and/or to start their own businesses. A place, also, where potential workers can be on-call to provide service to local farmers, and small businesses as needed, again learning while doing.
- **“Storefront”** – professional art and natural history gallery, local food coop, local art/craft sales, tourism bookings, reuse it store.
- **Farmers Cooperative** – farm-work, delivery, processing, sales at “storefront” and within community (done by apprentices under the direction of trained staff thereby supporting farmers)
- **Art Cooperative** – space for artists to work, be paid to train apprentices, showcase their skills to the public and sell products in the “storefront” (artist-in-residence programs)
- **Chamber of Commerce** office and small business incubator
- **Lillooet Volunteer/Community Connect** office
- **Event Café and Collaboration Space**– used for Community Conversations, meetings, workshops, etc
- **Co-working Space** – workspaces, meeting rooms, call booths, supports
- **MakerSpace** – community space to explore STEAM projects
- **Communication Centre** – newsletters, social media, podcasts, filming, radio
- Stand-alone facility or possible exploration of ground floor of new housing complex

Each component of the Hub will have a way to generate income from the sale of goods and services, and through rental and/or registration fees. Membership in the Hub will also be offered to community members and partners in the project. The Hub will bring together St’at’imc and settler communities to work on innovative projects together by ensuring the space has strong representation from all communities, is inclusive, respectful and exciting. The Hub is situated on the traditional and unceded Territory of the Northern St’at’imc Nations. Our hope is to put Truth and Reconciliation into action in Lillooet.

NEXT STEPS TO REACH INVESTMENT READINESS STATUS



IDENTIFIED PARTNERS to date

- Lillooet Area Library Association
- Lillooet Volunteer Connect
- Lillooet Learning Communities Society
- Lillooet Tribal Council
- Lillooet Chamber of Commerce
- Lillooet Friendship Centre Society
- Lillooet Agriculture and Food Society
- Lillooet Naturalist Society
- Mile Zero Housing Society
- Local Artists
- Local Not-for-Profit Organizations
- Work BC
- Indigenous Skills and Employment Training (ISET)
- Thompson Rivers University (TRU)
- Community Adult Learning Centre (CALC Lillooet)
- Local Businesses

CURRENT CONCEPT



FRONT OF HUB:

- Art and Natural History Gallery (high quality museum-type gallery showcasing local art and local natural history)
- Community HUB Store – produce, art/craft goods and supplies, place to book tourist opportunities
- Reuse It Store – good quality unique 2nd hand items

HEART OF HUB: Also open to public

- Farmers Coop – (Commercial Kitchen) delivery area, processing of foods (drying, canning, etc), packaging for sale, sale in store and delivery program (staff/farmers mentor apprentices in all aspects of agriculture including work on farm days and pop-up cafes on farms)
- Artist Coop – work space for artists to make wares where public can also watch, train apprentices, and host workshops (possible partners: Emily Carr; Kootenay School of the Arts)
- Chamber of Commerce Office/Business Incubator
- Lillooet Volunteer Connect Office/Community Connect Hub administration
- Shared Co-Working Spaces & Training Space
- MakerSpace – for providing STEAM programs in Lillooet
- Event Café and Community Conversation Space
- Communications Centre –Radio, Podcasts, Film, TV (possible partners: Radio Lillooet/Shaw Cable)

CURRENT LOCATIONS EXPLORED:

- Old Lillooet Foods on Main Street (currently empty and in foreclosure)
- Old Lillooet Feed Store (currently empty and for sale)
- Old A&W Store (currently empty and for sale – possible offer presented)
- Opportunity: New building developed with Mile Zero Housing Society (who is currently planning affordable housing units). Ground floor Community CONNECT Hub, upstairs housing units (with 2 units left for contractors/artist-in-residence space).



SUPPORT LETTERS

- Lillooet Tribal Council
- Squamish Lillooet Regional District
- Lillooet Agricultural and Food Society
- Lillooet Chamber of Commerce
- Lillooet Naturalist Society



LILLOOET TRIBAL COUNCIL

814 Highway 99, P.O. Box 1420, Lillooet, BC V0K 1V0
T: 250-256-7523 F: 250-256-7119 info@lillooettribalcouncil.ca

February 10, 2020

Vancouver Foundation
Suite 200, 475 West Georgia Street
Vancouver, BC V6B 4M9

RE: Lillooet Area Community CONNECT Hub

The Lillooet Tribal Council would like to provide its support for Lillooet Area Community Connect Hub/Lillooet Area Library Association grant application to the Vancouver Foundation Investment Readiness Program.

During 2018, the Lillooet Area Library Association explored the idea of a Social Enterprise with the community through research and workshops. We believe this is a good opportunity to obtain funding to move these ideas forward, and to build capacity in our community around innovative project development, facilitation and communication.

The social enterprise idea being presented to the Vancouver Foundation Investment Readiness Program by the Lillooet Area Library Association will be developed further during the feasibility and community engagement process. We encourage the discussion and involvement of St'át'imc communities throughout the entire process, from research and planning to final completion of this first phase of the project.

The Lillooet Tribal Council is currently working in partnership with the Lillooet Area Library Association on the Community Adult Learning Centre, and this new Community CONNECT Hub concept provides an additional avenue for education and training, by creating apprenticeship and mentorship programs that support employment readiness and entrepreneurial skills. St'át'imc farmers, artists and entrepreneurs could all benefit from this project.

During the initial stage of the project the community will be exploring whether the Lillooet Area Community CONNECT Hub is feasible, in what format is it feasible, who will be the partners, and best practices for moving forward.

We strongly recommend the Vancouver Foundation support this project.

Sincerely,

Andrea Leech
Administrator



FROM THE DESK OF:

Vivian Birch-Jones
Director, Electoral Area B of the
Squamish-Lillooet Regional District

778-209-0066 vbjones@slrd.bc.ca

February 7, 2020

Vancouver Foundation
Suite 200, 475 West Georgia Street
Vancouver BC
V6B 4M9

RE: Lillooet Area Community CONNECT Hub

Please accept this letter of support from me as Area B Director, Squamish-Lillooet Regional District. The Lillooet Community CONNECT Hub project being proposed by the Lillooet Area Library Association (LALA) is a wonderful proposal that will offer many solutions and activities for our population. LALA has a demonstrated track record of many accomplishments in our community and they are enthusiastic and forward thinking and could make this a reality to the benefit of many in Lillooet and the surrounding areas.

The Community CONNECT Hub feasibility study, community engagement, and business planning process will assist in developing a collaborative framework that will ensure the diverse voices of our community are heard, and that respectful and inclusive partnerships are established.

The Investment Readiness Program of the Vancouver Foundation is an ideal vehicle for assisting the community in moving this project from an idea to a reality.

Yours Truly,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Vivian Birch-Jones". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Vivian Birch-Jones
Regional Director,
Electoral Area B of the Squamish-Lillooet Regional District

February 9, 2020

To Whom it May Concern at the Vancouver Foundation,

The Lillooet Agriculture and Food Society (LAFS) is a non-profit society whose purpose is to enhance the agricultural viability of the region, to promote awareness, education and research around local agriculture and food security, to advance sustainable agricultural practices and to assist in localizing all aspects of the food system.

LAFS has been involved in conversations regarding a social enterprise business for our community that could support our farmers through local sale of goods, local processing of goods, and strengthening of the agriculture workforce. The social enterprise idea being presented by the Lillooet Area Library Association's grant application to the Investment Readiness Program is an exciting and collaborative project that could definitely benefit our farmers, small businesses, non-profit sector and unemployed/underemployed citizens.

This is the initial stage of the project and will explore whether the Lillooet Area CommunityCONNECT Hub is feasible, in what format is it feasible, and best practices for moving forward. LAFS has committed to being one of the partners in the Lillooet Area Community CONNECT Hub feasibility study. LAFS will provide input during the research and planning process and will actively engage in the Community Conversations. LAFS's focus will be on designing a workable Farmers Cooperative model that includes all aspects of the production, processing, and sale of products and services (farming skills, produce sales, farm tours, etc).

We will also ensure any apprenticeship or mentorship training programs established meet the needs of both the participants and the farmers.

LAFS will work in collaboration with Lillooet Area Library Association, St'at'imc, regional and municipal governments, and the non-profit sector. LAFS requests your support of this project.

Sincerely,



Sarah Petznick

Executive Director



Lillooet & District Chamber of Commerce

PO Box 650 Lillooet, BC V0K 1V0

Ph 778-858-2651 Email: lillooetchamberofcommerce@gmail.com

www.lillooetchamberofcommerce.com

February 10, 2020

Vancouver Foundation
Suite 200, 475 West Georgia Street
Vancouver BC V6B 4M9

RE: Lillooet Area Community CONNECT Hub

The Lillooet Chamber of Commerce is a non-profit society that supports local businesses, promotes tourism opportunities and makes a visible and valuable difference in our community.

The Chamber has been involved in discussions around the social enterprise business idea presented in the grant application being submitted to the Vancouver Foundation Investment Readiness Program by the Lillooet Area Library Association. We support the feasibility study as proposed. The study will include time to engage with our community, to research similar projects in other small rural communities, to understand the feasibility of the project as presented, to adapt as needed and to generate a Business Plan that allows us to move forward confidently.

The Lillooet Chamber of Commerce has committed to being one of the partners in the Lillooet Area Community CONNECT Hub feasibility study. We will be involved in the research and planning process, will help facilitate Community Conversations, and assist with reporting requirements. The Chamber's focus will be on designing a small business incubator. We will also ensure any apprenticeship or mentorship training programs established meet the needs of the participants, existing businesses and up-and-coming businesses.

The Chamber will work in collaboration with St'at'imc, regional and municipal governments, and the non-profit sector to ensure we develop an innovative, cohesive and well-managed Hub. We strongly request your support of this grant application.

Sincerely,

Debra Neufeld, President
Lillooet Chamber of Commerce
Cell: 604.897.8807



February 9, 2020

Vancouver Foundation

Suite 200, 475 West Georgia Street

Vancouver BC V6B 4M9

RE: Lillooet Area Community CONNECT Hub

The Lillooet Naturalist Society strongly recommends you support the Lillooet Area Library Association's grant proposal to the Investment Readiness Program.

The Lillooet Naturalist Society is a non-profit society whose purpose is to promote the enjoyment and understanding of nature, and to encourage and engage in the protection and restoration of threatened and endangered species, with special attention to the preservation of essential habitats. As such, we are interested in the concept of having a Natural History Gallery housed in the Community CONNECT Hub.

Lillooet Naturalist Society members are interested in being involved in the planning, research and community engagement stage of the project, and will bring our knowledge of the natural world, and the skills of our members, to make the process both informative and enjoyable.

Thank you for your consideration of this worthwhile project.

Sincerely,

Colin Vidian-Jones, Lillooet Naturalist Society
Box 1065, Lillooet BC, V0K 1V0 www.lillooetnaturalistsociety.org