



Volunteer Opportunity: Food Advocate Council Members

Are you passionate about your community and interested in exploring how food can contribute to its development? North York Harvest is looking for three community members to join the Food Advocate Council for the Food and Distribution Hub Feasibility Study.

About the Food Advocate Council

The Food Advocate Council is a group of residents, neighbourhood agency representatives and experts who will play a crucial role in advancing and promoting this project with both partners and in the community. Food Advocate Council members will also play an advisory role to the project team, providing feedback and support as the project vision and feasibility study takes shape.

Responsibilities:

- Attend four Food Advocate Council meetings over the next 15 months
- Review, discuss and comment on the development of the feasibility study
- Lend support to other project activities and events such as partnership building and community consultations
- Solicit and bring feedback from the community to the project team
- Utilize your community connections to talk to people about the Food and Distribution Hub concept and advance food ideas in the neighbourhood

Qualifications:

- Knowledge of Lawrence Heights and surrounding neighbourhoods and familiarity with local resources and issues
- Knowledge of hunger and poverty issues in northern Toronto
- Strong interpersonal and communication skills and the ability to work with diverse groups
- Sensitivity and respect for different perspectives
- Commitment to social justice and equity
- Problem-solving and critical thinking skills
- Experience working on a committee is an asset

To apply:

In a paragraph or two, tell us about yourself and how you think food can play a role in developing inclusive communities to:

Daniel Liadsky, Senior Manager, Community Engagement
North York Harvest Food Bank
640 Lawrence Ave West
Toronto, Ontario M6A 1B1

416-635-7771 ext. 32
hub@northyorkharvest.com

An honorarium will be provided for Food Advocate Council meetings.

Deadline:

Monday, April 25, 2011

A Food and Distribution Hub in Lawrence Heights

Starting in 2011 and over the next 18 months, the North York Harvest Food Bank will embark on a feasibility study for a Food and Distribution Hub in a revitalized Lawrence Heights. The Hub imagines a food security solution that will bring people together across the income spectrum and pull back the curtain on the food system and hunger and poverty relief in Toronto.

The feasibility study, funded by the George Cedric Metcalf Charitable Foundation, is the first step towards realizing a new facility that will house North York Harvest's food distribution centre and community food programs such as a local food bank, community gardens, community kitchens and market space. The study will also explore the potential for additional features such as complementary food programs (e.g. communal dining or greenhouse space) and other facilities (e.g. small-enterprise kitchens or processing facilities that support urban agriculture).

This vision builds on a substantial body of work that advocates for community hub planning and endorses a closer look at the "food centre" model. It also capitalizes on the assets within Lawrence Heights which includes residents who are engaged and active around food issues and a strong community agency network that is committed to collaborative relationships. Furthermore, Lawrence Heights is ideally situated adjacent to major transportation arteries including transit and within a short distance of the Greenbelt. Finally, the timing coincides with the Lawrence Heights Revitalization process, a 20-year plan to redevelop the neighbourhood's social housing stock and surrounding lands.

The feasibility study for the Food and Distribution Hub has three primary objectives:

- (1) to build partnerships that will support the project into the next phase of development;**
- (2) to establish a Food Advocacy Council that will advance and promote the project with both partners and community members; and**
- (3) to produce a report detailing the feasibility of the Food and Distribution Hub, and pointing to a way forward to the completion of the project.**

North York Harvest will be assembling a Food Advocacy Council of about 15 members that will include residents, other stakeholders and leading thinkers in Toronto.

Also joining the project team are du Toit Allsopp Hillier, a well-known and respected Toronto-based interdisciplinary design firm of architects, landscape architects and urban designers, and Public Interest, a consulting group that works with public, not-for-profit, and labour organizations to support social change, improve the environment, facilitate community development and promote progressive public policy.

For further information about the feasibility study, please contact Daniel Liadsky at 416-635-7771 ext. 32 or daniel@northyorkharvest.com or visit www.northyorkharvest.com/hub.

About North York Harvest

The North York Harvest Food Bank is one of Toronto's largest food banks, distributing 1.6 million pounds of food last year to 60 community programs, including neighbourhood food banks, prenatal programs, shelters for women and youth, and community kitchens.

About du Toit Allsopp Hillier

du Toit Allsopp Hillier specializes in interdisciplinary design and consultation projects. They have worked on Toronto landmarks such as the Artscape Wychwood Barns and Evergreen Brick Works.

About Public Interest

Public Interest specializes in developing strategies to reach complex communities in meaningful and appropriate ways. They have designed a tenant engagement strategy for the proposed redevelopment of Regent Park, Lawrence Heights and Alexandra Park and led the community engagement process for the development of three United Way community hubs.