

CLERK OF THE COUNCIL

Dana Brown-Davis, C.M.C.

COUNTY COURTHOUSE

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WHATCOM COUNTY COUNCIL

March 7, 2023

Senator Christine Rolfes, Chair
Ways & Means Committee
Washington State Senate
303 John A. Cherberg Building
Olympia, WA 98504

Rep. Steve Tharinger, Chair
Capital Budget Committee
Washington State House of Representatives
314 John L. O'Brien Building
Olympia, WA 98504

Dear Chair Rolfes and Chair Tharinger,

The Whatcom County Council would like to express our support for the Ejidos Community Farm's 2023 Local Community Projects Capital Budget request for \$824,000. This project is located in the 42nd Legislative District and is led by Community to Community Development (C2C), a not-for-profit organization by and for farmworkers from Skagit and Whatcom counties.

These funds will allow C2C to execute the purchase option they hold on the 65-acre site and ensure that it is operated as a community farm into perpetuity. The Ejidos Community Farm project centers equity, environmental justice, and economic security while supporting our local food systems and farmworkers. Further, this project exemplifies the type of community-led projects and actions that we can empower our Whatcom County residents to take toward building resilience and sustainability into our shared, local food system.

Specifically, the Ejidos Community Farm project:

- 1) Creates a model for building community wealth for farmworkers in Northwest Washington by establishing the first land trust managed by a not-for-profit led "by and for" farmworkers and envisioning the possibility of farmworker owned housing through shared equity cooperatives.
- 2) Facilitates the participation of farmworkers in the economic development of the food system in Northwest Washington through the distribution of locally produced, healthy cultural foods through food banks, food hubs, and other markets.
- 3) Facilitates the equitable participation of farmworkers in collaborations with local governments and community development organizations in the implementation of the Whatcom Climate Action plan and the Whatcom Food Systems Action plan.

Thank you for your time and consideration of this important capital budget request as we work together to invest in our local communities.

Sincerely,

Barry Buchanan, Chair
Whatcom County Council

CC: Senator Mark Mullet
Senator Lynda Wilson
Senator Mark Schoesler
Rep. Lisa Callan
Rep. David Hackney
Rep. Mike Steele
Rep. Peter Abbarno
Rep. Bryan Sandlin
Senator Sharon Shewmake
Rep. Alicia Rule
Rep. Joe Timmons
Senator Liz Lovelett
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Rep. Alex Ramel