

To whom it may concern,

I am the Director of Development for Nanaimo Loaves and Fishes Community Food Bank in Nanaimo British Columbia and a Consultant specializing in non-profit development and social enterprise. Loaves and Fishes Food Bank has been operating a successful Empties 4 Food program in partnership with Nanaimo's Regional Recycling for the past two years.

Essentially our program is an ongoing service wherein the community is encouraged to donate their unwanted returnable bottles and cans into one of our 22 donation bins. Our bins are spread throughout Nanaimo and area as a way of donating to our food bank while providing a convenient method for individuals and businesses to responsibly unload their unwanted returnable recycling.

Our warehouse crew empties the bins several times per week and brings the recycling back to our warehouse for sorting. The empties are usually sorted by volunteers with staff assistance. They are then brought to Regional Recycling in large loads for deposit. Many of our bins require daily servicing due to filling up so quickly.

The bins were donated for our use by Nanaimo's Regional Recycling. In the first year of operating this program, Loaves and Fishes Food Bank earned upwards of \$50,000 in deposit money from local people and businesses making use of our bins. This year we are on track to make between \$70,000 and \$80,000 as we continue to grow this social enterprise.

The feedback we have received from the public has been entirely positive. The benefits are a way to donate to local charity while providing a convenience to the community. The healthy environmental impact cannot be understated as well.

Recently I was hired as a consultant and launched a similar program at a smaller scale in Quesnel, BC. We have called it Empties 4 Abilities for the Quesnel Community Living Association. That program has only been running for 2 weeks and they are already experiencing overwhelming support and donations. It is providing employment and opportunities for people with diverse abilities in their community while offering a convenient service to the public. In my initial research

prior to launching Empties 4 Abilities, I discovered that many in the Quesnel area had been throwing their recycling into the garbage primarily because disposing of it appropriately was inconvenient.

In both communities of Nanaimo and Quesnel it has been repeatedly expressed to me that the amount of money earned from recycling was not enough to make up for the time and inconvenience involved in returning it.

The conveniently located donation bins in these two communities are solving this problem while serving their local non-profit too.

You can find more information about these programs on the web links here:

Nanaimo Loaves and Fishes Community Food Bank

<https://www.nanaimoloavesandfishes.org/get-involved/empties-4-food/>

And

Quesnel Community Living Association

<https://www.qcla.ca/>

It is my belief that there are lessons to be learned from the success of these initiatives in both communities as one is urban and the other quite rural. I hope this submission has been helpful.

If you have any further questions regarding Empties 4 Food in Nanaimo please feel free to contact me via email: abby@nanaimoloavesandfishes.org

Alternatively, if you have any questions regarding Empties 4 Abilities in Quesnel please feel free to contact me via my consulting email: abby@inhouseorg.com

Gratefully yours,

Abby Sauchuk

Director of Development (Nanaimo Loaves and Fishes Food Bank)

Development Consultant (Inhouselogic.com)