

## From individual action to systems change: Instituting values-based food procurement

### *Executive Summary:*

## **City of Thunder Bay** (Thunder Bay, Ontario)

### *Aim:*

**To procure food for the City of Thunder Bay in ways that enhance the social, economic, cultural, and environmental well-being of the community.**

### *Introduction:*

In 2006, the City of Thunder Bay was spending 3 million dollars on food for long-term care homes, daycare facilities, and other operations. Purchasing decisions were driven largely by cost and primary vendors were broadline distributors; less than 1% of spending was going to local growers. Committing to the principles of the Thunder Bay Food Charter required the City to pursue values-based, or social procurement.

### *Intervention:*

Procurement manager Dan Munshaw embraced his mandate and an anchor mindset to advance diversity and inclusion through food. His willingness to listen, to learn, to experiment, and to evaluate his interventions allowed him to achieve deeper and broader impacts over time. He began by seeking to increase local purchasing and has since created tools and built relationships that contribute to Indigenous reconciliation, food security, and more.

### **Outcomes:**

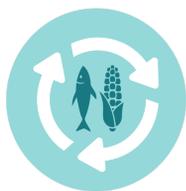
Dan's work with the City of Thunder Bay has yielded numerous successes and innovations:

- **Forward-buy contracts with a customized pricing mechanism facilitate purchasing food from local growers and has influenced demand.**
  - Local food procurement as a percentage of total food procurement has increased from 15% (2012) to 34% (2018).
  - Frontline distributors are doing more business with local growers, so more institutions are gaining access to local food.
- **Food has become a pathway to reconciliation.**
  - New procurement relationships with Indigenous hunters and suppliers respects the nature and spirit of Indigenous foodways and contributes to economic reconciliation.
- **Communities and community organizations are benefiting from City contacts, relationships, and knowledge.**
  - Nishnawbe Aski Nation (NAN) received logistical support to distribute emergency food during the COVID-19 pandemic.
  - Sioux Lookout Meno Ya Win Health Centre was connected to new sources of donated wild meat for their Traditional Food program.
- **Learnings are being embedded in City policies and procedures.**
  - Diversity and inclusion criteria for contracts and RFPs are under development.

### **Conclusion:**

Dan's journey illustrates how an individual can catalyze institutional and systems change, and the extent to which municipal assets can be leveraged for the benefit and well-being of the community.

Visit our website to read this full [Transition Practice Study](#) and explore how it connects to our [Food for Health Levers](#):



[Sustainable Purchasing](#)



[Health Care Food Hubs](#)



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