



Members,

Thank you again for taking the time to join us at the 45<sup>th</sup> Annual Meeting for your co-operative.

2020 has been a difficult year for our members and our community. We are incredibly grateful to our staff and manager for their dedication to the co-op in this difficult time. As essential workers, our staff have been courageously facing new risks every day, and the board is hugely appreciative of their efforts and sacrifices to keep the store going – even while so many others were staying at home.

We'd like to take a moment to share some of our highlights from the past year:

- 1) This pandemic has shown us the importance of community and collective action, and we have been proud to be one small, constructive part of the larger community response. Whether working with members to support volunteer-driven efforts providing groceries safely to the most vulnerable in our communities, or providing new delivery options for our own members, we are committed to offering a safe way to access the food and household items you need.
- 2) Following difficult financial circumstances in recent years, we are pleased to report that your co-op has been operating profitably this year to date. This is a result of better control on our costs, and the overwhelming vote of support and loyalty we have received from our members over the past six months. A big thank you to all the members that are shopping co-op first and helping us emerge stronger.
- 3) At the 2019 AGM, a member resolution asked the board to pursue expansion of the co-op and the creation of an expansion committee. The board and expansion committee have been diligently working to assemble the resources and capacity needed to successfully execute an expansion project. Earlier this year, we were successful in securing a \$30,000 grant from the Vancouver Foundation to support these activities, and we have hired Scott Hughes to work with us on the development of an expansion plan. Scott will be presenting the results of this work later in this meeting.

We would now like to make a few important points about the expansion project:

First, the intent of the project is to identify a location for a new, additional location for the co-op. A new, additional co-op location will support the existing membership and the existing store in a couple important ways. Most obviously, members will have another location to shop in and access to a greater assortment of products. But a new, additional location will also significantly improve the resilience and financial sustainability of our current store, by allowing more bulk purchasing and also by sharing some administrative costs across both stores.

That said, your co-op's financial resources are currently limited. In order to enable this project, we will require significant new investment. After a legal review of our existing governance documents we have determined that a number of changes will be needed to permit the scale of investment we require. This is about both enabling member and institutional investment, and using those funds to qualify for the



scale of financing that we need to pull this project off. More detail on this effort will also be forthcoming later in this meeting, as well as a vote on proposed Rule changes.

In recent years, we have seen our store face significant financial challenges and the threat of closure. A significant response and renewed commitment from members and co-op partners has afforded us the opportunity to continue operating today. As Vancouver's only consumer-owned grocery store, we aim to seize this moment to grow our impact across the city, and build our co-op's resilience. We'd like to say thank you again to all staff and all members for your loyalty and dedication in this difficult time, and we hope you will join us in doing what you can to support the expansion of our co-op.

Thank you,  
EEFC Board of Directors