



# Food For Greater Elgin

*Providing food security and access to community resources to stabilize lives.*

March 19, 2021

Franklin Ramierez  
Elgin Township  
729 S. McLean Blvd.  
Elgin, IL 60123

Elgin

MAR 26 2021

Township

Dear Franklin Ramierez,

Thank you for your support of Food for Greater Elgin. Through your financial assistance we provided food to over 85,000 individuals in 2020. That is twice the number of people served in 2019!

Second, I want to share with you news about the plans FFGE is developing for our future work. It is no secret that 2019 was a tough year for us: staff was in turmoil, we faced an uncertain future with a one year lease on a 'for-sale' building and our financial base was steadily eroding. This came to a head in early March, 2020 when we had 14 day's worth of cash on hand, were informed that the building had sold and we would need to be out in August and the impact of the Covid-19 pandemic began to be realized.

Now, a year later our staff situation has stabilized with the addition of Erik Anderson as Director of Development, Christina Gonzales as Director of Community Relations and the action of the Board of Directors to extend my service as executive director (no longer 'interim'). In addition, we now have a ten year lease with a new owner for the building that we use and 14 months of cash on hand. Life is better!

Challenges, however, remain.

- At this time the initial checks are 'in the mail' from the latest Covid relief bill, which will be an embarrassment to some, a relief to many and won't touch many of our neighbors in Elgin. Reports from Northern Illinois Food Bank are that they will cease the mobile mass handouts of food in June and seek to steer people in need of food to local pantries, that is to say, us. While there are no crystal balls that have much accuracy about the future, sadly, we do not foresee a drop in need for food security in our communities.
- Our 10 year lease has a low rent but a requirement that we put in a parking lot, which will cost just over \$400,000. We are working with contractors to get as much as possible of that donated, but there will be cash spent and money to be raised.



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- In 2022 we will lease the entire building, giving us the space we need to expand storage and offer a more wholistic array of services. We hope to bring other agencies into our space and so provide more services to people who need them. That will come with some redesign costs and seeking partners to share some of the space with us. We have a year, this is time to dream, make plans and create our preferred future.

If this past year has meant being on a crisis footing to meet the demands of our mission in extraordinary times, now we continue that mission but will devote considerable focus to furthering our long run stability through maintaining a strong financial position and innovation to meet the changing needs of our communities. Your in-put is appreciated.

By next week, we should have plans in place about this year's version of Pallet to Palate (a mostly virtual event with a locally famous chef teaching us the finer arts of grilling) and an improved Chip in for Hunger Golf outing in the fall.

I thank you for your support. Your compassion and generosity has put food on our neighbor's tables and empowered us for our work in getting food to those who need it. I look forward to the day when we can meet in person!

Sincerely,

Michael H. Montgomery, Ph.D.

Interim Executive Director

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