



## Blue Ridge Area Food Bank Cold Storage Expansion Project

**Program Year:** 2023-24  
**Community Partners:** The Blue Ridge Area Food Bank  
**City Investment:** \$215,000  
**Funding Source:** Community Development Block Grants Program

**Scope of Work.** The Blue Ridge Area Food Bank (“BRAFB”) is a vital contributor to the well-being of our community, providing essential nutritional supports to an ever-growing number of individuals and families in need. Aging infrastructure, notably a small, aged commercial cooler and electrical components, limited their ability to accept donations of fresh produce and was costly to maintain.

**Community Impacts.** CDBG funding made possible the removal of old cooler and replacement with a new, much larger and yet more efficient cooler, more than tripling the Food Bank’s capacity for storing and providing high quality fresh produce to their food kitchen/pantry partners. CDBG funds also supported: the replacement of aged electrical components with new, more efficient ones; the extension of an existing roofline to cover the new electrical components, thereby protecting them elements and significantly extending their useful service life; and significant reductions in the amount of electricity required for the maintenance of safe food storage temperatures. The city’s investment also leveraged more than \$19,800 in private funds that supported an expanded scope of work.

**Learn More & Get Involved.** This new cold storage capacity brings the added benefit of significantly strengthening the ability of the Charlottesville distribution center to support the work of the Food Bank’s entire 25-county food network. Learn more at <https://www.brafb.org/about-us/>



The Office of Budget & Grants Management coordinates the City of Charlottesville’s Community Development Block Grant program (“CDBG”), through which funding made available by the U.S. Department of Housing & Urban Development supports a broad range of community development and planning activities. Learn more about this work at <https://www.charlottesville.gov/678/CDBG-HOME-Programs>. Charlottesville residents seeking to get involved in this work can learn more about the CDBG/HOME Taskforce here: <https://www.charlottesville.gov/235/Boards-Commissions>.

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Construction of the new cooler involved significant demolition work to remove the old unit and to repair the cracked foundation it had rested on to make way for construction of the new unit.



Not only are the existing freezer and the new cooler protected by the new roof, volunteers and staff are now sheltered from the sun, rain and snow as well!



The new roof also protects the electrical equipment and cooling units from the sun and elements, thereby reducing the amount of electricity needed and significantly extending their useful life.



Blue Ridge Area Food Bank was able to begin accepting new deliveries of fresh produce as soon as the final inspections were completed, with food deliveries beginning the very next day!



The community came out to celebrate the ribbon cutting of the new cooler, including Charlottesville's Mayor, the Honorable Juandiego Wade, himself a longtime volunteer with the food bank.

Mayor Wade shared in the celebration of the launch of the new commercial cooler, together with BRAFB's Grants & Stewardship Manager, Anna Isserow, by wheeling in the first pallet of fresh produce.

Learn more about the state of hunger in America and get involved at <https://www.feedingamerica.org/>