

**Funding Opportunity:**

Grow North Farm: Small Business & Kitchen Incubator in the heart of the Mountain View neighborhood of Anchorage, Alaska

Organization:

Anchorage Community Land Trust (ACLT), a 501c3 nonprofit organization

Funding Need:

\$3,225,000

Use of Funds:

Funds will be used to match investment in the development and construction of a 10,000 sf. two-story commercial building. The first floor will house rentable commissary kitchen space with facilities for food processing, manufacturing, cold & dry storage and on-site retail. The second floor will house administrative space for community organizations offering shared services.

Current Project Status:

ACLT owns 3601 Mountain View Drive, a two-acre site that operates as Grow North Farm. Grow North Farm is Anchorage's only urban farm, opened in 2019 for its first season of operations. Located in the heart of Mountain View, the Farm serves as a growspace for refugee and immigrant entrepreneurs, who are able to hone their agricultural and entrepreneurial skills in one place, with vending opportunity on-site through a daily farmstand. In 2020, farmers earned over \$77,000 in income directly from Grow North Farm, with many new sources of revenue developed including spice blends, hot food sales, and CSA subscriptions. At the same time, the Farm provides access to affordable, fresh food for low-income and food-insecure communities through programs like SNAP and WIC, and partnerships with local food pantries.

Organizational Ability and Description of Need:

In addition to Grow North Farm, ACLT operates Set Up Shop, a pipeline of support for neighborhood entrepreneurs looking to start or grow their businesses. Since the program's inception, 80% of Set Up Shop clients are BIPOC, 70% women and 70% low-income. Roughly 60% of these clients operate food-based businesses. ACLT also acts as a real estate developer in the Mountain View neighborhood, investing to date more than \$15 million in 9 different properties in the neighborhood's commercial corridor, many of which we still own and operate today. Each property is developed in partnership with residents, stakeholders, and community members to ensure it meets neighborhood needs.

The need for a commissary kitchen incubator has long been identified in economic development plans in Anchorage. This need is particularly exacerbated among early-stage and low-to-mid-income entrepreneurs. In addition, the need for business development and a vibrant business district in Mountain View has long been identified, a top priority of the Mountain View Neighborhood Plan. This investment will vastly upgrade the entrepreneurial ecosystem in our city. Entrepreneurs need space to develop their value-add goods and





expand their product lines and offerings. Kitchen incubators are vital, common economic development tools used nationwide but not yet deployed in Anchorage.

Most business models for this type of incubator require a non-profit operator to manage it successfully. Our joint work in real estate and small business support as well as decades of experience working in these target communities makes ACLT the ideal operator of a kitchen incubator. ACLT owns the land that can be developed, has a team prepared to run the facility and support the entrepreneurs using it, and has spent the time vetting the project in response to local needs. A kitchen incubator will enable business owners in our target commercial corridors to become prosperous and see their businesses grow and thrive.

Kirk Rose

CEO, Anchorage Community Land Trust

krose@anchoragelandtrust.org; 907.274.0181

