

VILLAGE OF LOMBARD
REQUEST FOR BOARD OF TRUSTEES ACTION
For Inclusion on Board Agenda


 Resolution or Ordinance (Blue) Waiver of First Requested
 X Recommendations of Boards, Commissions & Committees (Green)
 Other Business (Pink)

TO : PRESIDENT AND BOARD OF TRUSTEES

FROM: Scott R. Niehaus, Village Manager

DATE : July 13, 2021 (BOT) Date: July 17, 2021

SUBJECT: Village Engagement Relative to Private Grant Application

SUBMITTED BY: William J. Heniff, AICP, Director of Community Development 

BACKGROUND/POLICY IMPLICATIONS:

Prairie Food Co-op (PFC) is in the process of fundraising efforts to build out a retail tenant space for their proposed grocery store business at 109 S. Main Street, part of the Lilac Station development. PFC was made aware of the United States Department of Agriculture (USDA) Urban Agriculture and Innovative Production Grant Opportunity. In review of the grant parameters, PFC finds that they are ineligible for making the formal application for the grant but notes that local governments (i.e., municipalities) can do so. To that end, they have requested that the Village do so on their behalf. The grant must be submitted to USDA by July 30, 2021. Funding between \$100,000 to \$300,000 may be available.


This item was considered at the July 12, 2021 ECDC agenda for direction. The ECDC recommend to the Village Board that staff be directed to work with PFC on filing a grant application to the USDA for an Urban Agriculture and Innovative Production Grant for their proposed grocery store. The ECDC also recommended to the Village Board that staff be directed to develop a written policy for this situation to be considered in order to give guidance on similar requests on a going forward basis.

This item is being placed upon the July 15, 2021 Village Board of Trustees, Under Items for Separate Action, for consideration and approval of a motion to direct the Village Manager and staff to facilitate the grant application filing and developing a written policy for such requests should they occur in the future.

Special Note: This request only sets for the steps to completing the grant application effort. Should the USDA award a grant, the grant award and any subsequent acceptance and/or release of funds would be subject to a separate agreement to be considered by the Village Board at a later date.

Fiscal Impact/Funding Source:


Review (as necessary):

Finance Director _____ Date _____
Village Manager  Date 7/13/21



MEMORANDUM

TO: **Trustee Anthony Puccio, Chairperson**
Economic and Community Development Committee

FROM: William J. Heniff, AICP, Director of Community Development 

MEETING DATE: July 12, 2021

SUBJECT: **Village Engagement Relative to Private Grant Applications**

Following a meeting Village staff had with representatives of the Prairie Food Co-op (PFC) on June 29, staff seeks direction and concurrence by the ECDC and the Village Board to facilitate a potential federal grant application by the Village, on behalf of PFC, to secure potential grant construction funding assistance.

BACKGROUND

As the Economic & Community Development Committee (ECDC) members are aware, the Village entered in to a Redevelopment Agreement with Holladay Properties in 2019 which facilitated the sale of the property at 101-109 S. Main Street as the Lilac Station development. The Agreement included economic incentive components based upon Equalized Assessed Valuation (EAV), based upon the construction improvements, as well as a performance-based Sales Tax Agreement for the proposed grocery store approved as part of the development. PFC executed a lease with Holladay Properties and they are in the fundraising stages of their grocery store project.

At the June 29 meeting, PFC stated that they have surpassed initial funding support of over \$1,000,000 for their portion of the approximate \$3,000,000 start-up costs. They are continuing to explore various funding sources to help them meet their funding targets which will allow them to proceed to the next phases of store development.

PFC was made aware of the United States Department of Agriculture (USDA) Urban Agriculture and Innovative Production Grant Opportunity. This program focuses upon "implementation projects that accelerate existing and emerging models of urban, indoor, and other agricultural practices that serve multiple farmers. Projects will improve local food access and collaborate with partner organizations and may support infrastructure needs, emerging technologies, educational endeavors, and urban farming policy implementation." A full Frequently Asked Questions (FAQ) is attached as Appendix 1. For reference purposes, a table of the types of projects that were awarded funds by the USDA is attached as Appendix 2.

In review of the grant parameters, PFC finds that they are ineligible for making the formal application for the grant but notes that local governments (i.e., municipalities) can do so. To that end, they have requested that the Village do so on their behalf. The grant must be submitted to

USDA by July 30, 2021. As noted in the program parameters, they may be eligible for funding between \$100,000 to \$300,000 to help PFC with its implementation.

DISCUSSION

PFC's request is only to help facilitate the filing of a grant application with the USDA. Outside of anticipated staff time preparing the grant filing and administrating the fund disbursement, no direct Village funds would be sought through this effort. If an application is made but not awarded, no additional work will be necessary. If approved, there will be further documents and actions that would likely require binding Village Board action, as part of the award itself. Additionally, if the grant was awarded to the Village, staff would undertake a full review of the parameters and limitations that could be associated with the grant – if the terms of the grant terms would adversely affect the Village, the grant award request could be withdrawn. Village staff has consulted with Village legal counsel on this initial inquiry and would be further engaged in an award is actually made by USDA. Other questions pertaining to the grant may also be subject to further review by PFC and even Holladay Properties, if such awards have covenant restrictions.

PAST PRECEDENT/EXPERIENCE

In consideration of this request, Village staff did facilitate a 2018 grant request by the Lombard Historical Society (a separate 501(C)3 organization) and associated with the filing of a matching grant to the State of Illinois Department of Natural Resources in an amount of \$11,250, for requisite application work for the National Register of Historic Places for Lilacia Park. In this case, the application effort was facilitated through the Village's Historic Preservation Committee.

POLICY CONSIDERATIONS

Staff is introducing this matter in short order as the filing date for the grant is July 30, 2021 and a formal policy pertaining to such requests would not be able to be fully vetted by the ECDC and ultimately adopted by the Village Board. If this initial concept proposal is supported by the ECDC and the Village Board, staff would proceed with this application but would develop a formal policy for future use and guidance pertaining federal and state grant applications for private entities when being done as part of an economic development proposal. Such policies would:

- Minimize Village staff time to process such applications;
- Preclude any Village legal or financial risk;
- Not impact any property tax elements; and
- Not be deemed as an endorsement or recommendation to patronize a given business entity

COMMITTEE ACTION REQUESTED

This item is being placed on the July 12, 2021 ECDC agenda for discussion and direction. For clarity, the only action being sought by the ECDC/Village Board at this time is giving direction to staff to work with PFC in a potential filing of a grant. Should this deem to be appropriate, staff recommends that the ECDC recommend to the Village Board that staff be directed to work with Prairie Food Co-op on a grant application to the USDA for an Urban Agriculture and Innovative Production Grant for their proposed grocery store at 109 S. Main Street.

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Additionally, if supported, the ECDC should also recommend to the Village Board that staff be directed to develop a written policy for this situation to be considered in order to give guidance on similar requests on a going forward basis.

Appendix 1: Urban Agriculture and Innovation Production Grants Frequently Asked Questions

Below is an abridged version of their FAQ. A full version of the document can be found at: <https://www.farmers.gov/manage/urban/opportunities/grants-faq>

Q: What support will USDA be able to offer applicants during the application process?

A: USDA is happy to field any general, high-level inquiries that grantees may have regarding the application process. However, USDA is unable to offer specific guidance or advice on how to craft, structure or write one's proposal.

Q: When will the FAQs be updated?

A: The period to submit questions about this funding opportunity close on July 14, 2021. The Frequently Asked Questions document will be updated and available on [Grants.gov](https://www.farmers.gov) and at [farmers.gov/urban](https://www.farmers.gov/urban).

Q: Who is the awarding agency for this grant program?

A: USDA's Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS) is the awarding agency for this grant opportunity and is leading the USDA-wide Office of Urban Agriculture and Innovative Production.

Q: What is the mission of OUAIP?

A: The Office's mission is to encourage and promote urban, indoor, and other emerging agricultural practices, including -

- community gardens and farms located in urban areas, suburbs, and urban clusters;
- rooftop farms, outdoor vertical production, and green walls;
- indoor farms, greenhouses, and high-tech vertical technology farms;
- hydroponic, aeroponic, and aquaponic farm facilities; and
- other innovations in agricultural production.

Q: What is the purpose of this grant program?

A: UAIP supports the development of urban agriculture and innovative production activities by funding Planning Projects (PP) and Implementation Projects (IP) led by nonprofit organizations, local or Tribal governments, and schools that serve any of the grades K-12 in areas of the United States.

Q: What are the program priorities?

A: Projects – whether Planning Projects or Implementation Projects – should target a single or multiple urban areas, suburbs, or urban clusters in the United States where access to fresh foods is limited or unavailable and should include one or more partner organizations to achieve project goals within the target area(s).

Q: Is this a one-time funding opportunity or will there be future opportunities for this program?

A: NRCS cannot provide an answer regarding funding beyond fiscal year 2021 at this time. Approximately \$4 million is available for UAIP grants in fiscal year 2021.

Grant Types: Planning Project and Implementation Project

Q: What is the purpose of a Planning Project (PP) grant?

A: Planning Projects support the development of projects that will either initiate, build upon or expand the efforts of farmers, gardeners, citizens, government officials, schools, and other stakeholders in urban agriculture and innovative production. PPs may be designed to develop recommendations; facilitate assessments; or support the development of business plans, feasibility studies, strategies, and municipal planning that consider policies and zoning.

Q: What is the purpose of an Implementation Project (IP) grant?

A: Implementation Projects accelerate existing and emerging models of urban, indoor, and other agricultural practices and improve access to local food. IPs may be designed to offer needed resources, such as job training, land, equipment, mentoring, and other business development assistance; increase food production; train students for careers in agriculture; or expand operations of community gardens or nonprofit farms.

Q: Can I submit an application for more than one type of grant (Planning and Implementation) in the same funding cycle?

A: No. Applicants must choose between submitting a grant application for a Planning Project or Implementation Project. If an applicant submits more than one proposal seeking funding for the same project, only one application will be forwarded for review.

Q: What is the expected funding amount for Planning Project grants?

A: Planning Projects will be a minimum of \$50,000 and shall not exceed \$200,000.

Q: What is the expected funding amount for Implementation Project grants?

A: Implementation Projects will be a minimum of \$50,000 and shall not exceed \$300,000.

Q: Can we apply for a one-year Planning Project grant that has a budget of \$150,000?

A: Yes. In FY20 the limit per year for a planning project was \$50,000. This year the limitation was removed. An applicant may only request a minimum budget amount of \$50,000 or up to a maximum budget amount of \$200,000.

Q: Can we apply for a one-year Implementation Project grant that has a budget of \$50,000?

A: Yes. In FY20 the limit per year for a planning project was \$100,000. This year the limitation was removed. An applicant may only request a minimum budget amount of \$50,000 or up to maximum budget amount of \$300,000.

Q: Is the minimum funding an organization can request \$50,000 for PP grants and \$50,000 for IP grants?

A: Yes. The budget range for Planning Project grants is \$50,000 to \$200,000. The budget range for Implementation Project grants is \$50,000 to \$300,000.

Q: What is the time period for execution of Planning Project grants?

A: Projects are expected to be completed within 12 to 36 months (one to three years). Applicants should expect the grant life cycle to include start up activities, execution, and close out activities (final financial and program reports, accounting, etc.). Applicants are expected to plan accordingly in order to achieve project deliverables within the grant period specified.

Q: What is the time period for execution of Implementation Project grants?

A: Projects are expected to be completed within 12 to 36 months (one to three years). Applicants should expect the grant life cycle to include start up activities, execution, and close out activities (final financial and program reports, accounting, etc.). Applicants are expected to plan accordingly in order to achieve project deliverables within the grant period specified.

Q: If we successfully complete the Planning Project grant, will we get an Implementation Project grant in the next round of funding?

A: While you will be encouraged to apply through the competitive process for an Implementation Project grant upon successful completion and close out of a Planning Project grant, there are no guarantees that this grant program will be funded beyond fiscal year 2021.

Q: Can I subaward to a partner?

A: Partners that are not eligible to receive a UAIP grant cannot receive subawards. However, a project partner that is essential to the proposed project may be included in an applicant's budget as a line item under Contractual on the form SF-424A or receive a stipend in an applicant's budget as a line item under Other on the form SF-424A. Remember to include details about the contractor and/or stipend budget and scope in the Budget Narrative. USDA will review applicant's budgets to ensure that all costs are reasonable, allowable, and allocable, and necessary.

Q: If the project is geared towards the urban community, can you work with a non-profit or farm partner in a rural community?

A: The project should target urban, suburban, and urban clustered areas. A project partner does not have to be an eligible entity and can be located in a rural area.

Q: What is the partnership requirement for UAIP?

A: Eligible entities should collaborate with one or more partner organizations to achieve project goals within the target area(s). Partners may be eligible and/or non-eligible entities.

Q: Do I need to partner with others?

A: Yes. To be eligible to receive a Planning Project or Implementation Project award applicants must collaborate with **one or more** partner organizations working in the project target area(s).

Q: Who can be a partner?

A: Applicants are encouraged to seek and create partnerships with public or private, nonprofit or for-profit entities including farms, institutions of higher education (IHEs), academic institutions (including minority-serving colleges and universities), cooperative extension, public and private schools, and/or other appropriate professionals, community-based organizations, and Federal, state, local and Tribal government entities to achieve project objectives and outcomes. Only the applicant must meet the eligibility requirements for a UAIP grant. Eligible and non-eligible entities may be partners on a project.

Q: Can you clarify how "partnership" is defined?

A: The eligible entity that submits the application to the Natural Resources Conservation Service is responsible for receiving and managing the award, if selected. Applicants that apply as "partnerships" or other similar groupings must clearly describe the relationship between the applicant and the "partner" parties in the narrative of the Project Proposal. Each award will ONLY be made to a single entity.

Q: What documentation does NRCS need about the Partnership?

A: Applicants must include information about project partner(s) within the narrative of their Project Proposal. The Notice of Funding Opportunity (NFO) includes the required headings, supporting narrative required content, and format including page limits, structure, font type, and font size of the Project Proposal.

Q: In addition to the narrative, is an MOU or other documentation required to verify the partnership?

A: No. A Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) between the applicant and partner(s) is not required. Letters of intent or support from partners are not required either. However, if an applicant wishes to include them, simply attach the MOU or letters to the application.

Q: Is there a limit to the number of partners that can collaborate on a project?

A: There is no limit. Priority will be given to an applicant that collaborates with **one or more** partners on their UAIP Planning Project or Implementation Project.

Q: How do I identify areas where access to fresh foods are limited or unavailable?

A: Eligible applicants should have experience serving communities where access to fresh foods are limited or unavailable. The USDA Economic Research Service provides a definition for [food access](#) and tools like the [USDA Food Access Research Atlas](#) to measure food access.

Q: Regarding the food access requirement, does serving low-income people living within a high-income community qualify? There are many markets and stores available but we're serving individuals experiencing homelessness in this high rent city.

A: There are many ways to measure food access for individuals and for neighborhoods, and many ways to define which areas are food deserts—neighborhoods that lack healthy food sources. Most measures and definitions take into account at least some of the following indicators of access. Applicants can use any of these measures or others to measure access to fresh foods in their project's target area(s).

- Accessibility to sources of healthy food, as measured by distance to a store or by the number of stores in an area.
- Individual-level resources that may affect accessibility, such as family income or vehicle availability.
- Neighborhood-level indicators of resources, such as the average income of the neighborhood and the availability of public transportation.

Q: Who is eligible to apply?

A: The following entities in any of the 50 States, the District of Columbia, the Caribbean Area (Puerto Rico and the U.S. Virgin Islands), and the Pacific Islands Area (Guam, American Samoa, and the Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands) are eligible to apply for either a Planning Project grant or Implementation Project grant:

- Native American tribal governments (federally recognized);
- Native American tribal governments (other than federally recognized);
- Nonprofits having a 501(c)(3) status with the IRS (other than institutions of higher education);
- Nonprofits that do not have a 501(c)(3) status with the IRS (other than institutions of higher education);
- A unit of local government; and
- Any school that serves any of the grades kindergarten through grade 12.

Q: Are 501(c)(4) eligible for these grants?

A: Yes. Nonprofits that do not have a 501(c)(3) status with the IRS are eligible for UAIP grants, which includes nonprofit organizations with [501\(c\)\(4\) status](#) such as social welfare organizations and local associations of employees.

Q: Who is not eligible to apply?

A: Individual such as a farmer or gardener, for-profit organizations and small businesses, Federal agencies, state governments, Institutions of Higher Education including extension programs, and foreign applicants are not eligible to apply for UAIP grants. It is important to note that non-eligible entities can be partners on a project.

Q: I am a for-profit entity, am I eligible for this grant?

A: No. For-profit organizations and small businesses are not eligible to receive a UAIP grant. However, for-profit organizations and small businesses can be partners.

Appendix 2: Past USDA Grant Applicants

Planning Project Selected Applicants

Organization Name	State	Project Name	Project Description
City of New Haven	Connecticut	The New Haven Urban Agriculture Master Plan - Creating a Blueprint for Equitable Urban Agricultural Growth in New Haven, Conn.	The plan will be used to access land and opportunities to increase the production and sale of locally grown foods, build community, improve public health and well-being, and provide economic opportunity, particularly in areas with vacant land and limited food access.
Center for Land-Based Learning	California	Urban Agriculture Assessment and Recommendations: Connecting Urban Farmers with Broderick/Bryte Community to Improve Community Food Access, Nutrition Education, and Economic Development	The Center for Land-Based Learning will produce a comprehensive urban agriculture assessment of West Sacramento. It will map and document current activities, identify opportunities for growth, and include recommendations to bolster the layers of positive impact urban agriculture has on communities.
Feast Down East	North Carolina	Community Learning Farm Planning Project	The project supports a strategic planning process, including a feasibility study and stakeholder assessment, for the development of a community learning farm.

Implementation Projects Selected Applicants

Organization Name	State	Project Name	Project Description
NY Sun Works	New York	Urban Hydroponic Agriculture in NYC Public	NY Sun Works will work with Brooklyn public schools: three elementary, three middle schools, and three high schools. The project will implement a year-round urban farming program, integrate a hands-on urban farming

Organization Name	State	Project Name	Project Description
		School Classrooms	program into school curricula, launch a Harvest program to engage the greater community, and create a hands-on hydroponic farming job training certification program at the high schools.
Association of Africans Living in Vermont	Vermont	New Farms for New Americans: Improving Lands, Improving Lives	The project will build upon the existing garden infrastructure to improve local food access, offer a 48-week agriculture program for refugee farmers focusing on food systems and nutrition, and establish a leadership/mentorship program with the Vermont Community Garden Network. Over 250 people of multiple ages, over seven languages and five ethnic groups will be reached.
Arkansas Interfaith Power and Light	Arkansas	Building a Network of Growers to Improve Access to Local Food	Arkansas Interfaith Power and Light will collaborate with partners to improve access to local food, foster a network of urban gardeners and farmers who share resources and knowledge, assist local growers with building infrastructure, expand and improve community gardens to become self-sustainable, educate the community on food systems and the nutritional value of plant-rich diets, share knowledge of environmental benefits of local agricultural production, offer hands-on learning in organic farming, mentor youth and young adults interested in urban agricultural occupations, and engage more people in local food production.
Famicos Foundation	Ohio	Grow Glenville	The project will reinvigorate the garden at the Michael R. White STEM School using emerging technologies to produce healthy, fresh food for area residents, provide a STEM education opportunity, offer jobs to local youth, and generate income at Famicos' Gateway 105 Market.
The Greenleaf Foundation	Georgia	Eastside Hyper-Local Food System Project	The project includes a community farm, a payflex farm stand, and a community gathering space to connect and educate residents. It will also expand the Edible Neighborhoods program to provide equitable access to fresh produce, educate residents on edible landscaping, and serve as an entry point into the food system.

Organization Name	State	Project Name	Project Description
Common Ground Producers and Growers	Kansas	Common Ground Urban Innovation Project	The project will facilitate entrepreneurial projects through job training, use of farm equipment and land, mentoring and other business development assistance to new and beginning farmers. The mobile market will partner with the K-State Extension Growing Growers program, which provides an apprentice to help with the market and offer training in farming and gardening.
Parkside Business & Community in Partnership	New Jersey	The Camden Urban Agriculture Leadership Pipeline Project	The project will build a "pipeline" of programs that guide residents of the low-income, low food-access City of Camden on a pathway from resident, to gardener, to farmer, and eventually to community urban agriculture leader.



Village of Lombard

June 29, 2021

Contents

- Community Investment Program
- Economic Impact
- 109 S. Main
- How to Learn More



Kathy Nash

Co-Founder, Board President
Lombard



Jessica Buttimer

Glen Ellyn



invest@prairiefood.coop
630-446-0010



Community Investment Program

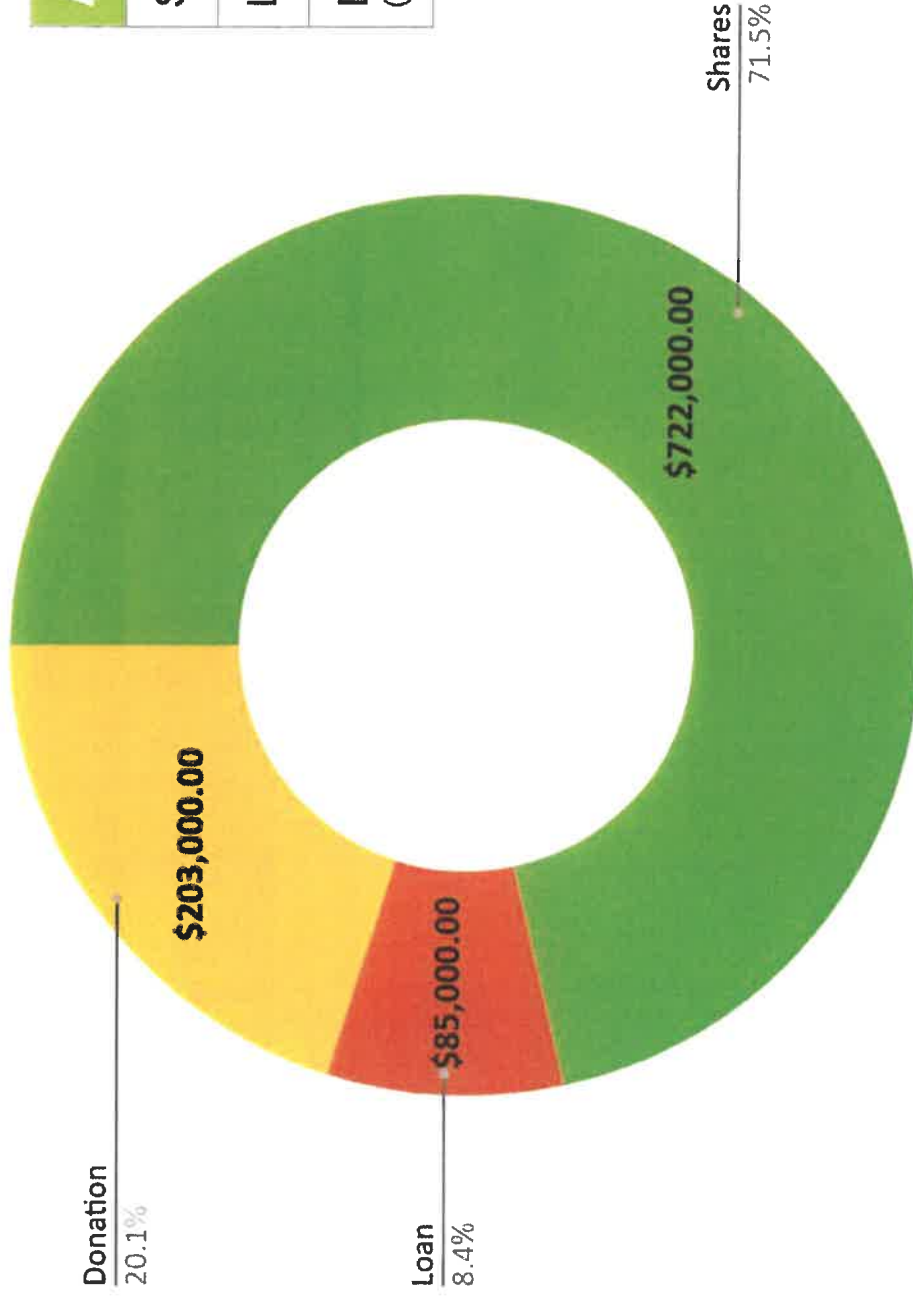
Phase 1 Campaign: March 15 - May 15

COMMUNITY INVESTMENT PROGRAM

\$1,008,050



Contribution Types



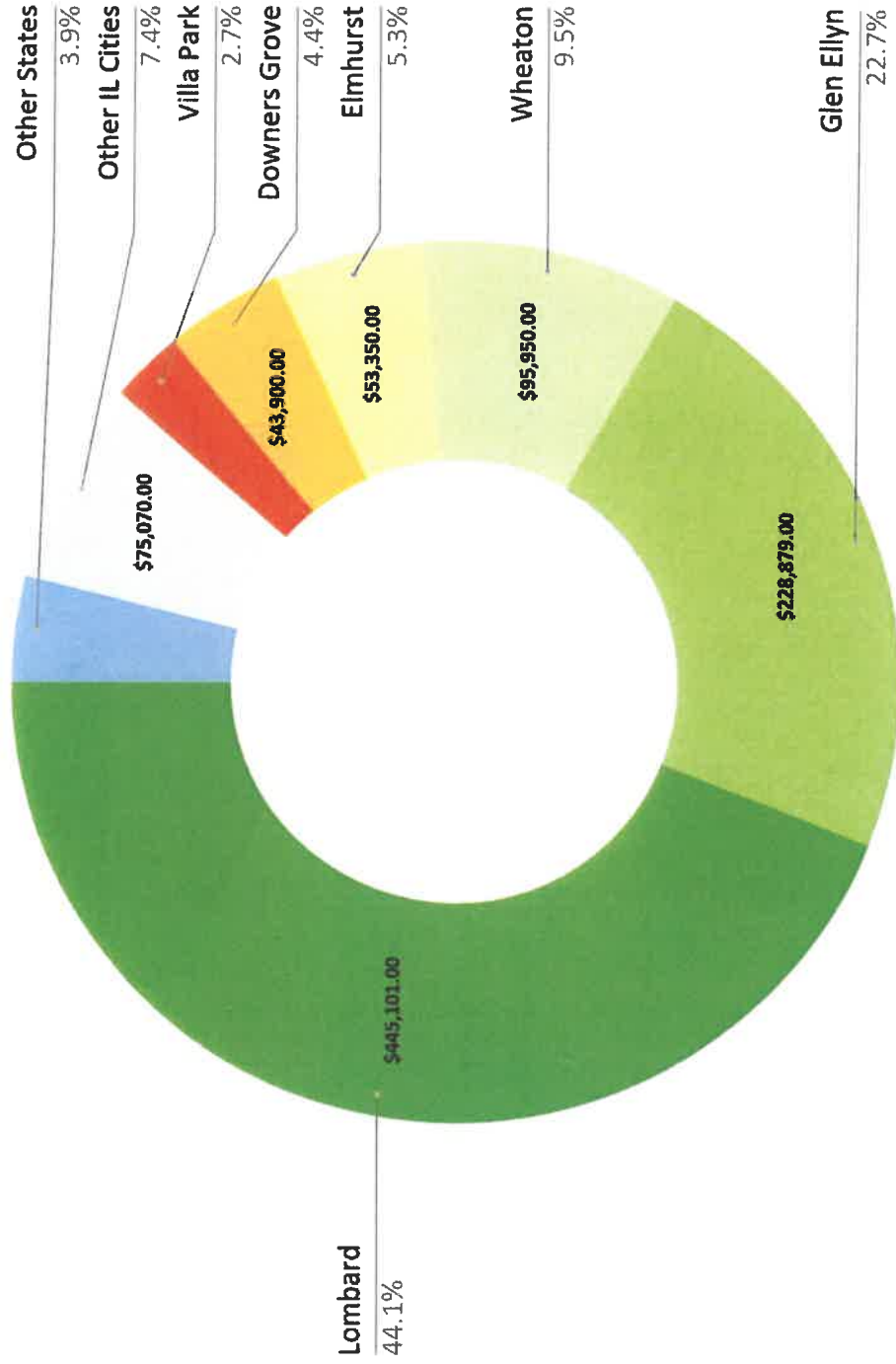
Average Pledge = \$2,542

Shares \$2,865

Loans \$10,000

Donations (\$20-\$25,000) \$1,140

Contribution Communities



Average Pledge	
Wheaton	\$3,998
Elmhurst	\$3,557
Downers Grove	\$2,927
Glen Ellyn	\$2,861
Lombard	\$2,226
Villa Park	\$1,827

Accelerated Owner Growth



- May 2014 - 139 (+139)
- May 2015 - 298 (+159)
- May 2016 - 480 (+182)
- May 2017 - 657 (+177)
- May 2018 - 830 (+173)
- May 2019 - 962 (+132)
- May 2020 - 1108 (+146)

Owner Count Now: 1455

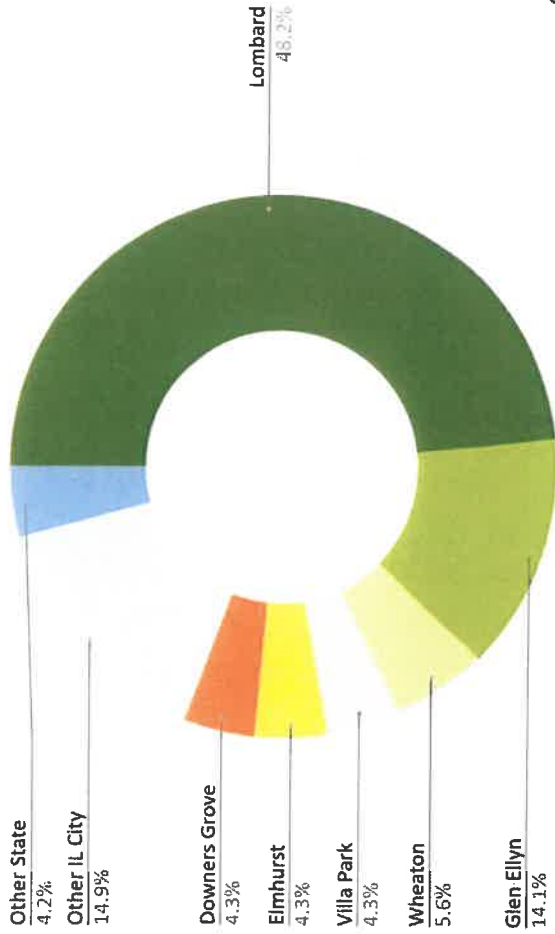
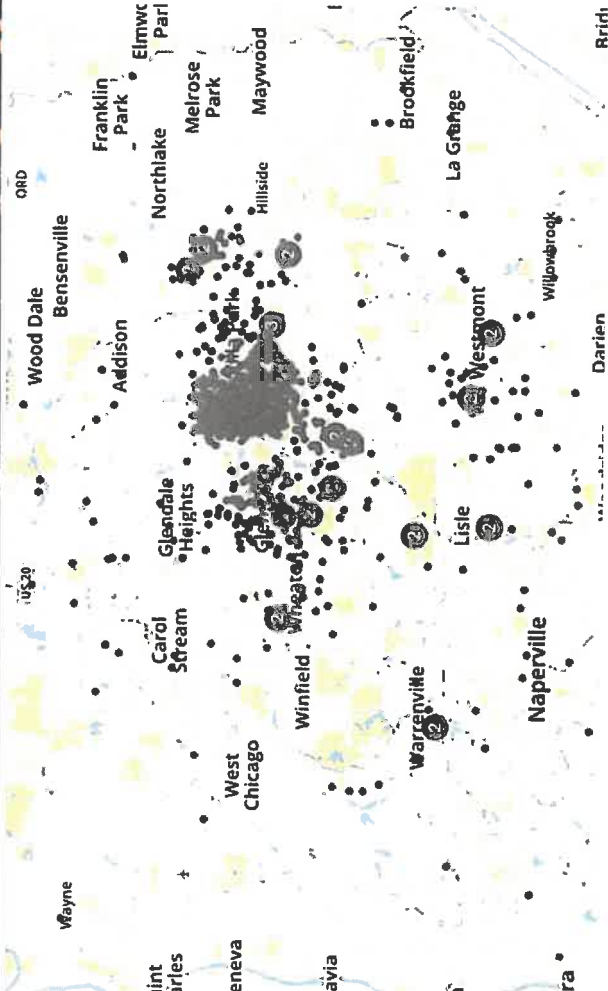
+347



Economic Impact

Lombard, IL 60148

1455 Owners and growing...



Food Shed

Elgin Shared Harvest Co-op

Rogers Park

Chicago Market

Dill Pickle Food Co-op, est. 2004

Sugar Beet Food Co-op

Prairie Food Co-op
Lombard
coming 2022

Chicago Southside

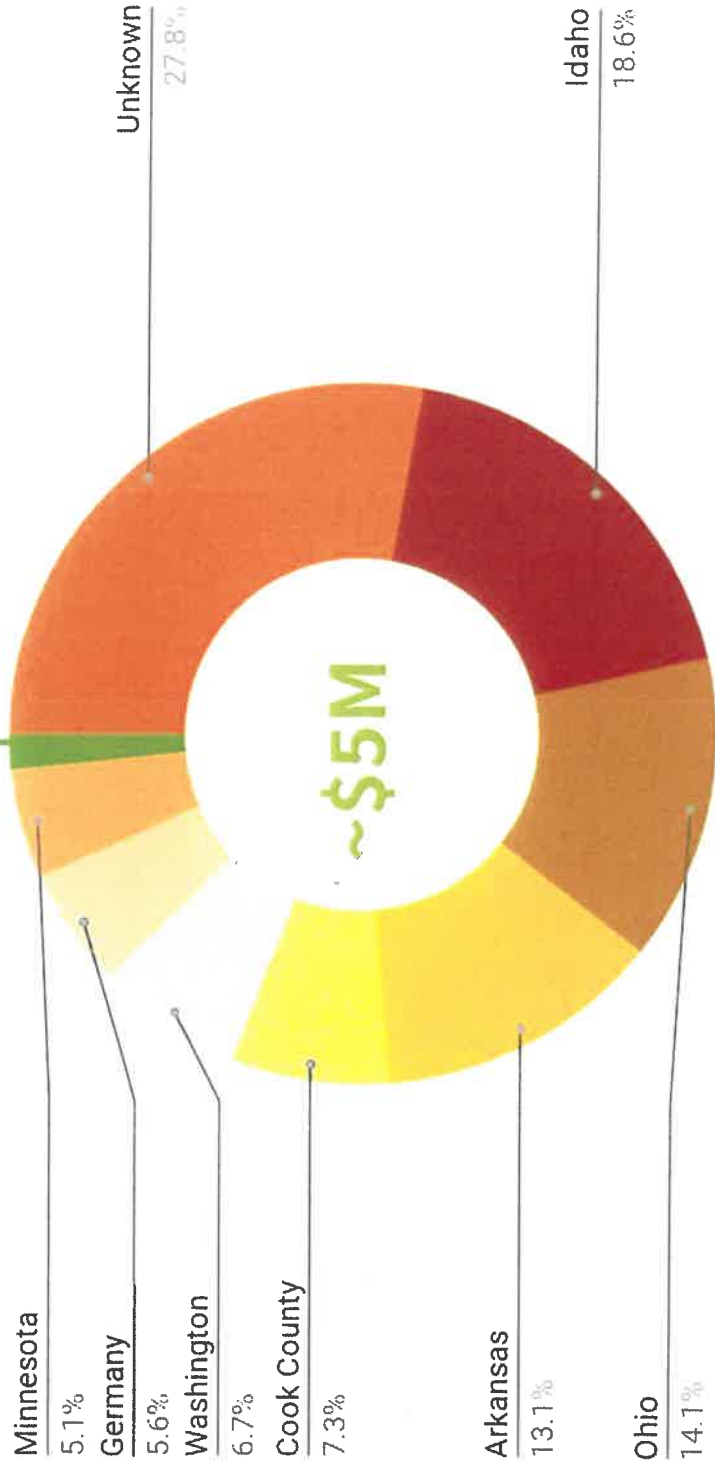
Sugar Beet
Oak Park
est. 2015

Economic Multiplier

Where Our Food Dollars Go

with Prairie Food Group

\$5M Stays Right in Lombard and Generates \$8M in economic activity



Business Incubator



- Food Co-ops provide a consistent market for small, local food businesses
- PFC Vendor Form has over 75 submissions from LOCAL businesses
- PFC expected to stimulate creation of 8-12 micro-businesses

Co-ops Make a Powerful Impact

Generates

\$1604 in local economic activity for every \$1000 spent.



Features

157 local farmers and food producers.

Donates

24,100 pounds of healthy food to pantries.



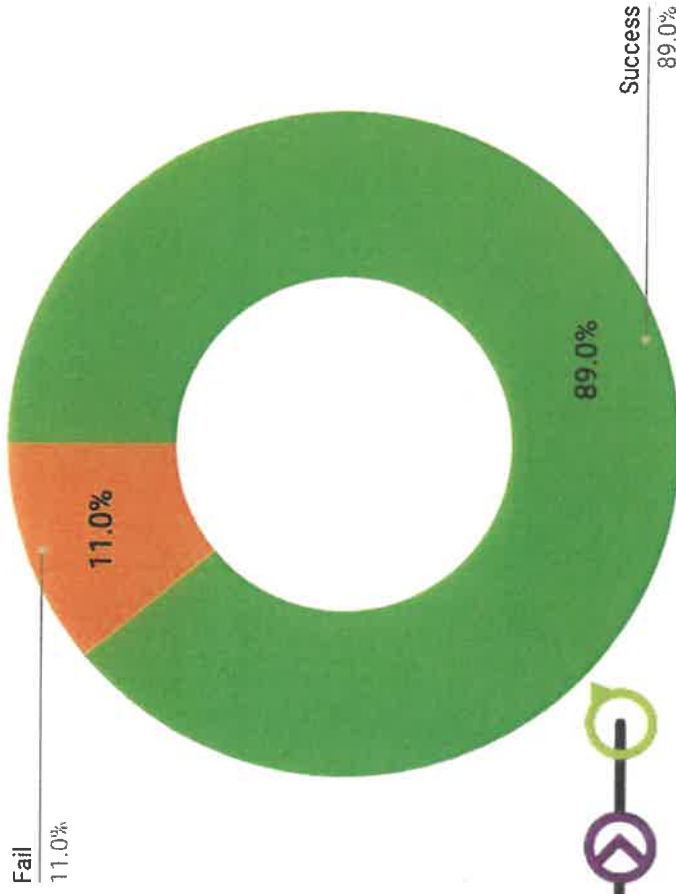
Offers

92 community workshops each year.

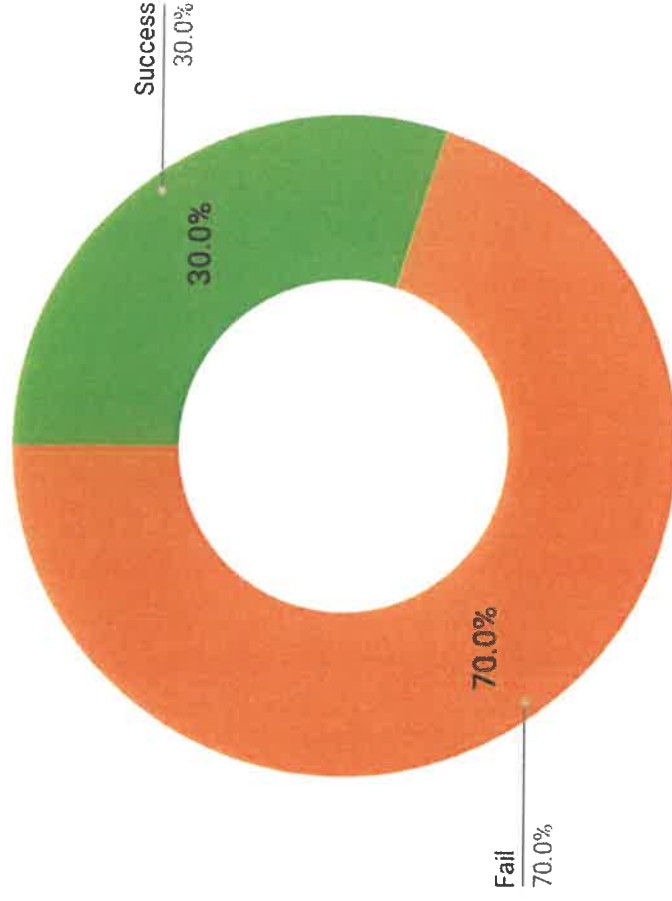


Food Co-ops Are Successful

Food Co-ops



Small Business



**FOOD COOP
INITIATIVE**

New co-ops start here.



109 S. Main Street

Lombard, IL 60148

MISSION STATEMENT

Prairie Food Co-op is a community-owned and democratically operated grocery store dedicated to strengthening our economy and creating a marketplace for transparently labeled, local, organic and sustainable food.

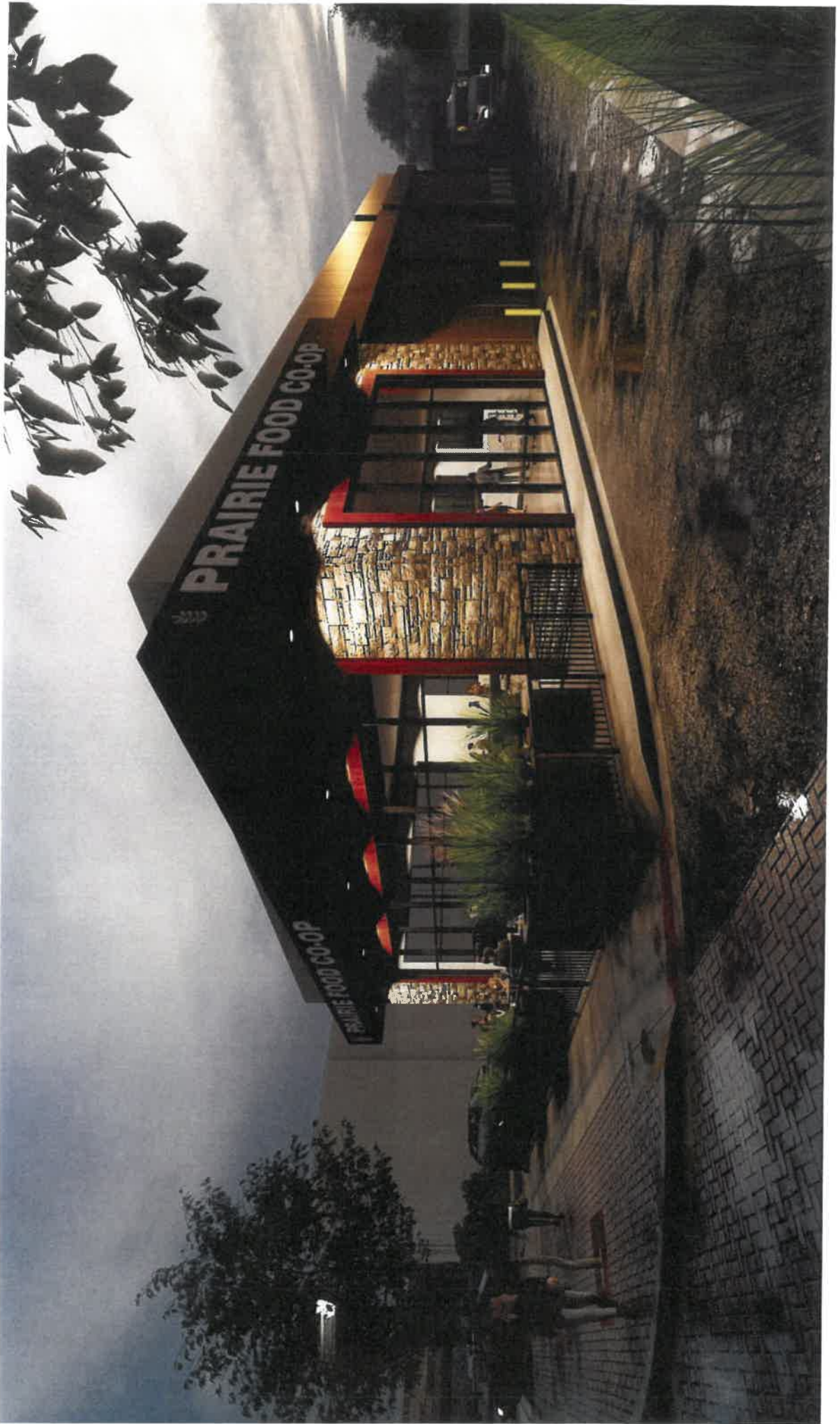


Downtown Lombard

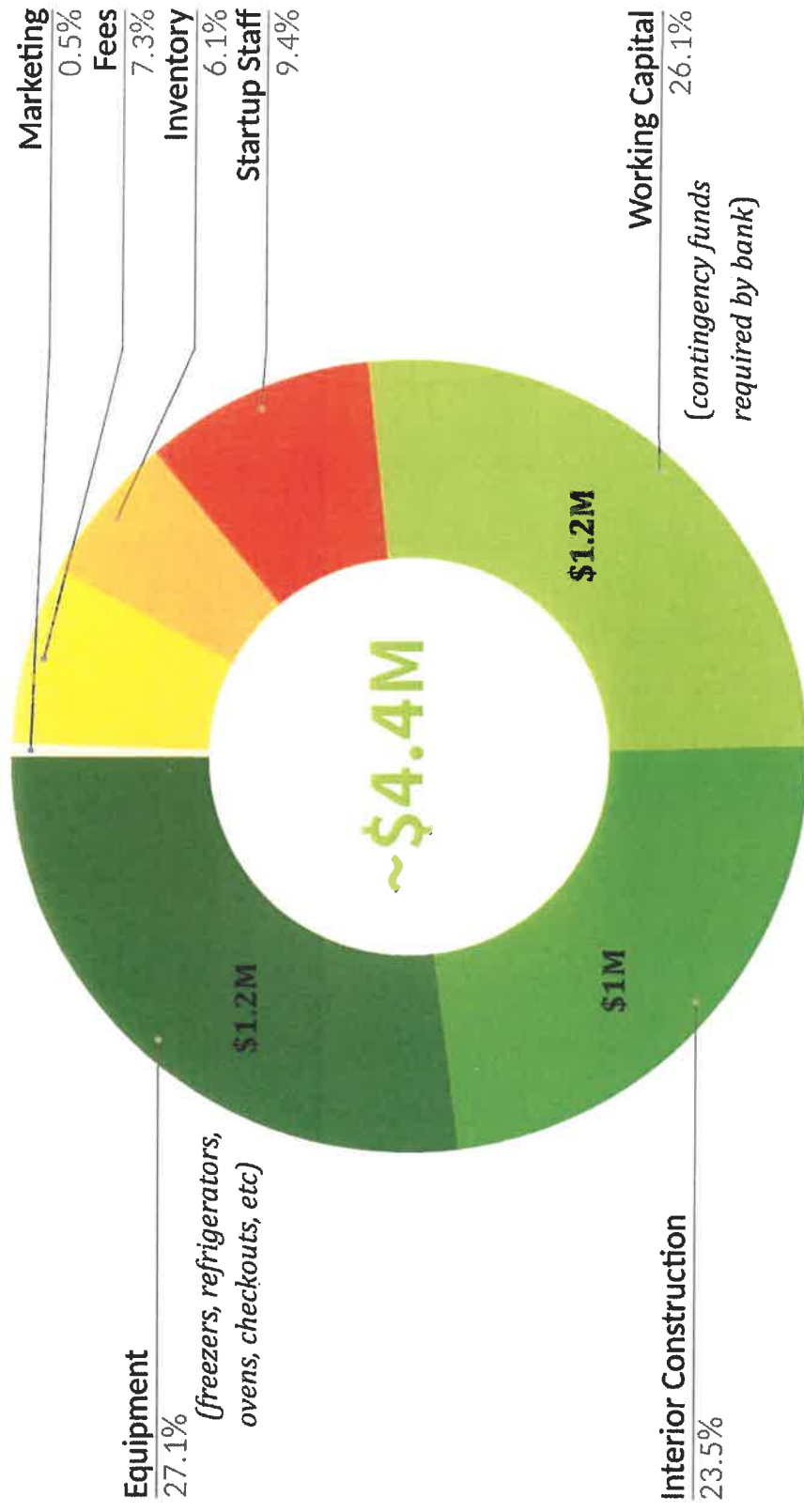


- 109 S. Main Street Lombard
- Accessible via Bike Path, Metra, and Pace
- **Within 1-mile:**
 - 15k Residents
 - 2.5k Daytime Workers
 - 1.2k+ Daily Commuters
 - 469 Businesses
 - No other grocery stores

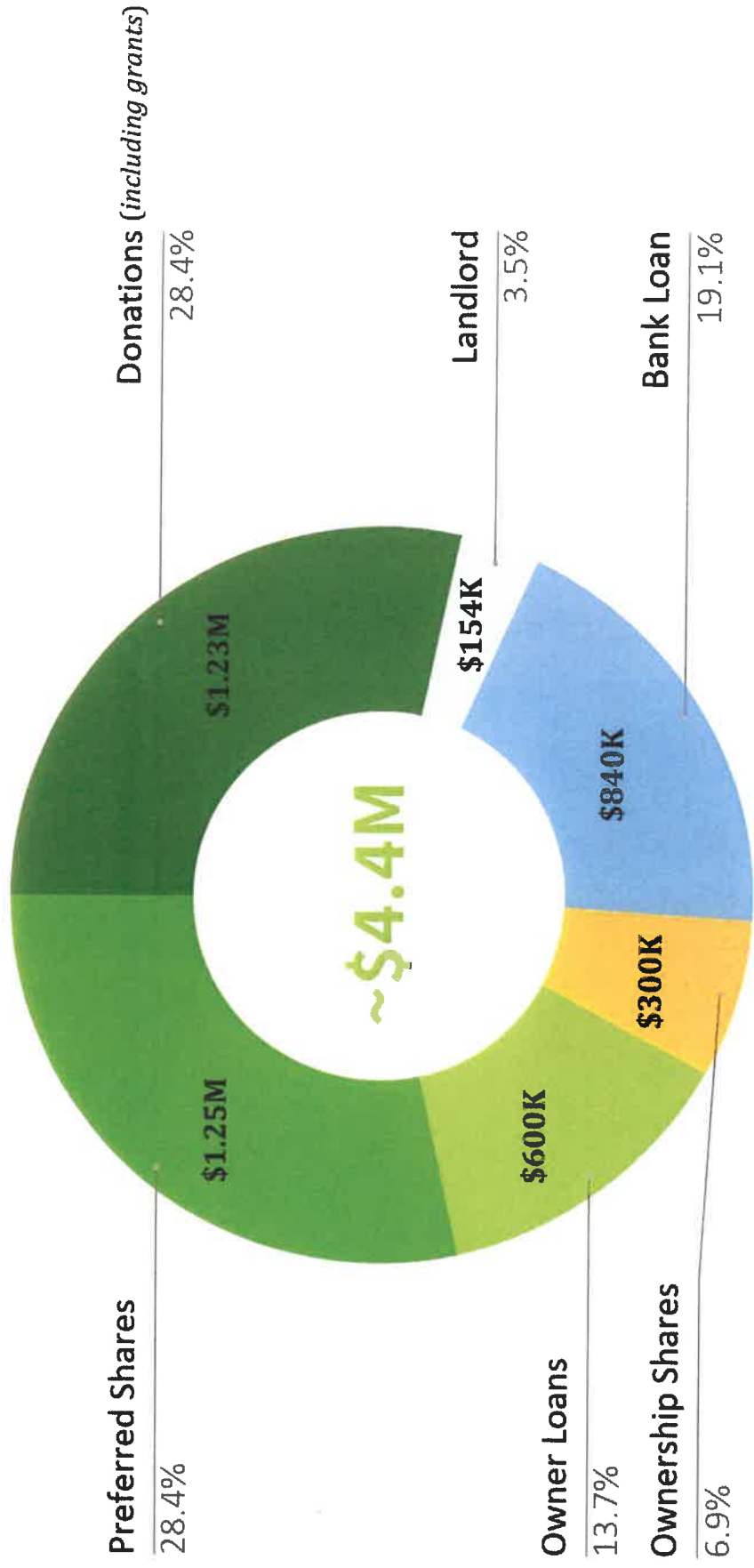




Projected Startup Expenses



Startup Income Sources



Timeline



Learn More

- www.prairiefood.coop
- Follow us on Facebook
<https://www.facebook.com/PrairieCoop>
- Join our newsletter
http://www.prairiefood.coop/newsletter_sign_up
- We will speak to your group!

Thank You!



Kathy Nash
Co-Founder, Board President
Lombard



Jessica Buttimer
Glen Ellyn



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USDA Urban Agriculture and Innovative Production Grant Opportunity

The Notice of Funding Opportunity (NFO) for the USDA Urban Agriculture and Innovative Production (UAIP) grant details **evaluation criteria (in bold)**. Below are *Prairie Food Co-op's draft responses (in italics)* to those criteria requirements for review by the Village of Lombard Economic and Community Development Committee.

Applicants meeting the following four criteria will be given higher consideration:

1. Experience in the area of:

- a. agriculture and/or innovative production for three years or more; and**
- b. serving communities in urban areas, suburbs, or urban clusters where access to fresh foods are limited or unavailable, such as listed in the USDA ERS - Food Access Research Atlas**

Prairie Food Co-op (PFC) was founded in 2012 and formally incorporated in February of 2013. For the past eight years, PFC has worked to expand access to local foods in suburban DuPage County through community education, local farm family and business outreach/promotion, and partnerships with community organizations like Faith in Place Markets, The French Market, Chambers of Commerce, Food Pantries, Libraries, The GardenWorks Project, Farm Bureau, and more.

Since the beginnings of the Covid -19 global pandemic, Prairie Food Cooperative Grocery store has connected 30 rural and suburban food producers to suburban communities through its Virtual Farmers Market, creating a portal for suburban families to support and benefit from nearby rural food producers while directly funding farmers and small scale value added food producers operations through community supported agriculture.

The PFC storefront will be located in the heart of downtown Lombard, which is designated as a Low Food Access area by the USDA ERS - Food Access Research Atlas, with no grocer within one mile. Within that mile, approximately 28% are low-to-moderate income and 12% seniors. The store will be steps from the train station, bus stop, and bike trail. This area has not had a grocery store in 40 years, despite frequent resident requests and being featured as an economic generator in the Village of Lombard's Comprehensive Economic Development Plan.

2. Demonstrate competency to implement a project, provide fiscal accountability, collect data, and prepare reports and other necessary documentation;

Prairie Food Co-op will partner with the Village of Lombard and their staff to collect, analyze, and report on any required documentation. When awarded, Prairie Food Co-op will hire a Grant Project Manager to manage the grant timeline, data collection, and reporting as required.

Our competency has been demonstrated through eight years of highly organized and sustained momentum in building our ownership base to nearly 1500 Owners, a history of monthly and annual reporting, and recognition by industry leaders.

Our Board of Directors meets monthly to review committee progress and financial reports. Our Board Treasurer is highly qualified and regularly updates fiscal information for board approval. On an annual basis, PFC transparently reports financial and project information to all Owners at an in-person open meeting that is recorded and posted online.

Our Board has been recognized and awarded for our organizational strength, skilled leadership, and positive impact by the Food Co-op Initiative, a leading organization in the cooperative grocery industry, on multiple occasions.

- *2015 - \$10,000 Seed Grant*
- *2017 - Citizenship Award for being a resource mentor to other co-ops*
- *2020 - Innovation Award for creating an Owner Management System that can be used by other co-ops on any platform*
- *2021 - \$2,000 Bill Gessner Grant for exemplary application of the FCI Development Model*

3. Demonstrate a willingness to share information with researchers, evaluators, practitioners, and other interested parties, including a plan for dissemination of results;

Prairie Food Co-op demonstrates a willingness to share information with interested parties by openly sharing progress and financial reports at our yearly Owners meeting. The Annual Owners Meeting is open to all of our Owners, funders, collaborating organizations, and other stakeholders. All Owners are invited to attend our monthly board meetings.

Additionally, Prairie Food Co-op is a participating member of the National Co-op Grocers Association, a business services cooperative for retail food co-ops located throughout the United States. The National Food Co-op represents 147 retail food co-ops operating over 200 different stores in 38 states. National Co-op grocers began collecting data in 2012 measuring the social, environmental and economic impacts of food co-ops out of commitment to the cooperative business model which Prairie Food Co-op embodies.

4. Collaborate with one or more partner organizations working in the project target area(s).

The Village of Lombard will be partnering with Prairie Food Co-op, which is sufficient to fulfill the requirements of the UIAP Grant. We will also request a letter of support from Holladay Properties to show our strong partnership with our leaseholder.

In addition, Prairie Food Co-op has connections with over 300 local farmers and food producers that supply their goods to the two existing co-ops in Cook County. We are also proud to have over 65 local business owners as Prairie Food Co-op Owners, which we list on our website.

Merit/Technical Criteria

The weights and evaluation criteria below will be used in reviewing applications submitted in response to this NFO:

1. Consistency with the UAIP's purpose and priorities presented herein (20%);

The purpose of IP is to accelerate existing and emerging models of urban, indoor, and other agricultural practices that serve multiple farmers or gardeners. IPs should improve access to local food in the target area(s). No single IP award will exceed \$100,000 in any single year or \$300,000 over three years.

Prairie Food Co-op will ensure access to healthy and nutritious food in our suburban community by creating a new year round brick and mortar location, creating streams of income for over 300 local urban, suburban and adjacent rural farmers and producers.

The trade area to be served by the Prairie Food Co-op would extend north to North Avenue/State Route 64, east to Robert Kingery Highway/State Route 83, and south to the I-88 corridor in suburban Chicago located in Lombard Illinois. In addition, the trade area extends westward (just across I-355) to include eastern Glen Ellyn.

Given the patterns of accessibility that exist within the market area, it is estimated that about 77.5% of the proposed co-op's sales will emanate from this trade area. The remaining 22.5% of the proposed co-op's volume will come from beyond the trade area, as well as from travelers, tourists, and visitors to the market from nearby Villa Park, Elmhurst, Addison and Wheaton, Illinois. Within the trade area, there reside an estimated 75,700 persons. This trade area population is projected to remain relatively stable throughout the forecast period, and doesn't include additional destination shoppers who will be arriving from all over DuPage County.

Operating Food Co-operatives are scarce in the Chicagoland region, with just two existing co-ops in Cook County. However, Prairie Food Co-op is among a cohort of five cooperatives on schedule to open in the next one to three years. We will be the first and only cooperative in DuPage County.

2. Quality of the plan presented to effectively support the development of urban agriculture and innovative production activities such as gardens and farms, rooftop farms, urban agroforest, food forests, orchards, outdoor vertical production, green walls, indoor farms, greenhouses, high-tech vertical technology farms, and hydroponic, aeroponic, and aquaponic farm facilities within the targeted area(s), including a plan for ensuring fiscal accountability (20%);

- ***Our 1450+ Owners are committed to our success, investing \$200 in a vision for a better grocer, rooting for us since 2012, and ready to do what it takes to finally open our doors!***
- ***Our Board is recognized and awarded with a prestigious \$10K grant in 2015 for our organizational strength, skilled leadership, and positive community impact.***
- ***Our development model from the Food Co-op Initiative has an 89% success rate (vs a 30% success rate for small businesses).***
- ***Our market study projects a solid sales forecast for a sustainable foods cooperative that suits our community and cultural trends.***
- ***Our robust pro forma reflects market projections, local estimates, and data from Combined Cooperative Financial Statements (CoCoFiSt), a vast historical repository of grocery cooperative financial performance.***
- ***Our location is highly visible in the heart of downtown Lombard and is pedestrian, biker, and commuter-friendly with ample parking.***
- ***With no other grocery stores within a mile, Prairie Food Co-op will be a vital hub for the 15k residents, 2.5k daytime workers, and 1.5k daily commuters that will shop our store.***
- ***As the first and only co-op in DuPage County, we will draw curious values-driven shoppers from surrounding communities.***

3. Potential for positive impact in targeted urban and suburban areas where limited access to healthy affordable food is an issue as listed in the USDA Food Access Research Atlas (20%);

- ***Expand access to safe, healthy, and sustainable foods that are transparently labeled, ethically sourced, and accessible to all***
- ***Support 200-300+ local farmers & food producers***
- ***Encourage sustainable practices to reduce energy consumption, pollution, contamination and our carbon footprint***
- ***Create 35-50 local jobs that pay fair wages with benefits***
- ***Capture \$5M that would otherwise leave our county or state***
- ***Generate \$8M in local economic activity annually***

Once open, Prairie Food Co-op will establish comprehensive food accessibility programs and expand its education and outreach effort to offer:

- *An average of 97 Educational Workshops each year about local foods, nutrition, food preparation, meal planning, using bulk foods to keep costs low, health and wellness, lifestyle workshops, and more*
- *SNAP Benefits and other food accessibility programs*
- *Partnerships with our local food pantry to stock their shelves with healthy foods and reduce food waste*
- *"Round up at the Register" and other fundraising opportunities to support local organizations as determined by our Ownership*

4. Internal and external organizational support for execution of the project, including experience and expertise of key personnel in agriculture and innovative production (20%);

Development of Prairie Food Co-op is overseen by an elected Board of Director with several volunteer teams. The Board and planning team has, collectively, many decades of experience in the food industry. Our team includes the former front end manager of Sugar Beet Food Co-op in Oak Park, the current General Managers of the two local food co-ops, business owners, real estate professionals, marketing professionals, attorneys, accountants, IT experts, designers, and writers. Throughout the planning process, the co-op Board has utilized the vast expertise of consultants representing decades of co-op operations, marketing, management, store design, and financial forecasting experience.

5. Quality of the plan for information sharing and creating partnerships with public or private, nonprofit or for-profit entities, including links with academic institutions (including minority-serving colleges and universities), and/or other appropriate professionals, community-based organizations, and local government entities to achieve project objectives and outcomes (10%); and

Prairie Food Co-op Owners include 65 area small business owners, 15 Elected Officials in the Illinois House of Representatives, DuPage County Board, DuPage Forest Preserve, Lombard Village & Library Boards, and area school boards, members at 9 area churches, staff at local food pantries and Northern IL Food Bank, and volunteers at many nonprofits dedicated to food insecurity, environmental advocacy, health, education, and cultivating community.

6. Projects with budgets not including the purchase of special-purpose equipment, vehicles, land, and building space during the length of the grant (10%).

Cost	Description	Date
		1) Grant Project Manager Hire Oct 2021
\$10,000	Grant Project Management	Hire part-time consultant to manage grant project timeline, data collection, and reporting during the grant period
		2) Building Pre-Construction Jan 2022
\$30,000	Pre-Construction	Pre-construction Design (Architecture, Electrical, Mechanicals, Plumbing, Structural)
\$20,000	Construction Manager	Construction Manager to consult on pre-construction design process to align with costs and practice
		3) General Manager Hire Mar 2022
\$2,000	Training	Board training to transition from a working board to Governance. Includes ends policy development.
\$3,000	Hiring Prep	Consulting for Hiring GM including access to GM database
\$70,000	GM Salary	1 Year's General Manager Salary and Benefits
\$15,000	GM Mentor	A highly qualified GM mentor for 6-month transition period and to consult on pre-construction details
		4) Interior Construction Jun 2022
-		Prairie Food Co-op has raised \$1,000,000 from it's Owners to cover the costs of interior construction
		5) Startup Staffing and Promotion Nov 2022
\$23,000		Promotion prior to store opening for Grand Opening
\$94,000		One month of labor prior to store opening
		6) Store Open Jan 2023
\$267,000	Total Project Budget	