CITY OF
Saint Paul
ALASKA

City of Saint Paul Community Farm Business Plan

DRAFT – December 2025

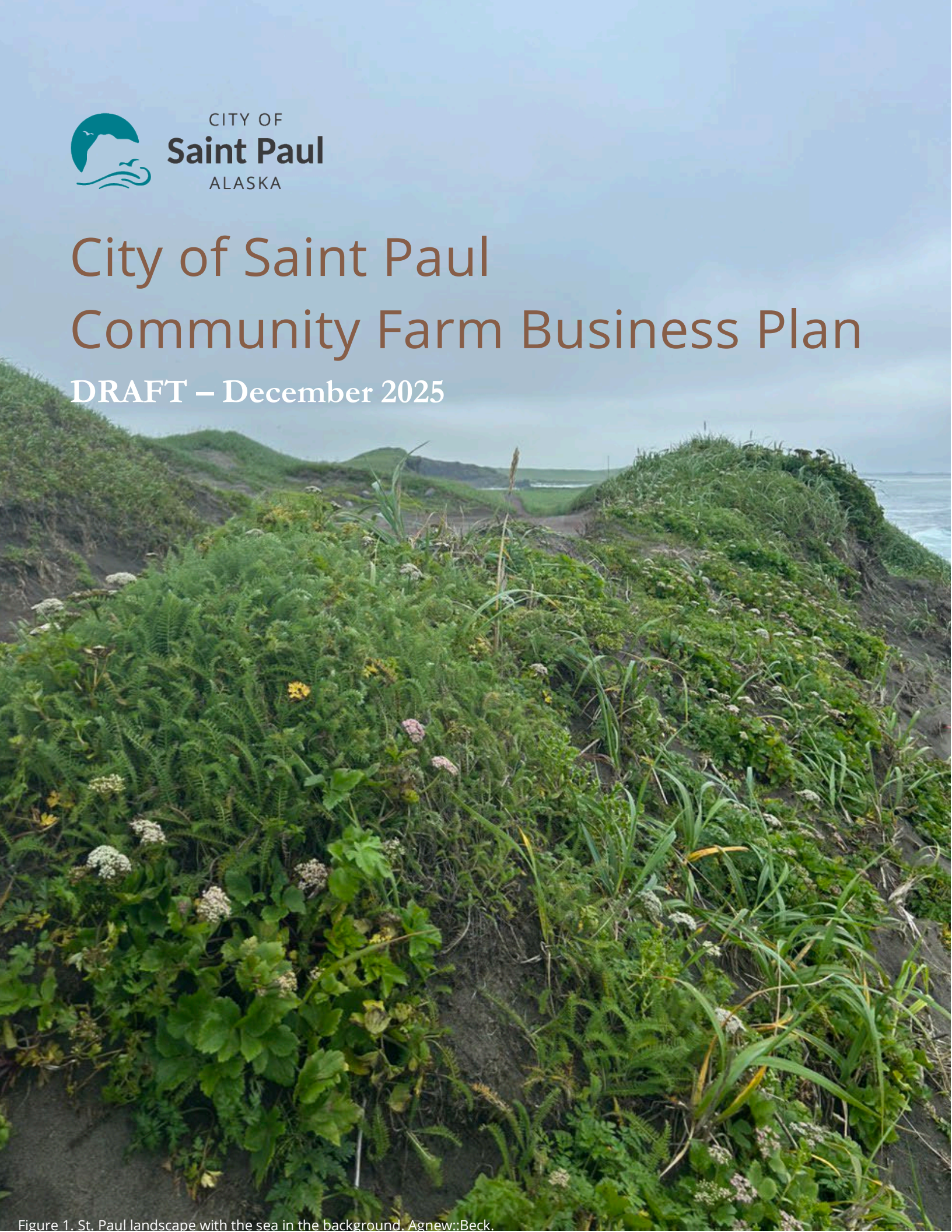

Figure 1. St. Paul landscape with the sea in the background. Agnew::Beck.

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Executive Summary

With funding from the Healthy Food Financing Initiative Planning Grant, the City of Saint Paul is in the planning and predevelopment phase for a Community Farm. Being a remote island with a small resident population, St. Paul is home to a majority Native Alaskan community where there is consistent desire for increased local and fresh food options. The goal of operating a Saint Paul Community Farm is to build self-sufficiency, food security, and supply chain resilience for the Island's food system.

Throughout this business plan development process, the City gathered many different forms of input that now guide the overall Community Farm concept. These inputs confirmed that the Farm should feature a greenhouse, a chicken house, a compost facility, and a retail space where residents can purchase products directly from the Farm. In addition to the retail space, the Farm will develop complementary distribution options in the early years of operations. To deepen its impact, the City can explore opportunities for collaborative programs, events, and activities with partner organizations.

The Farm's success depends on smart inventory and waste management as well as ensuring grown products meet customer demand. Integrating the chicken coop and compost facility with the greenhouse creates closed loop saving opportunities. Greenhouse waste can be used in both the compost facility and fed to the chickens; chicken waste, in turn, enhances the compost, and the compost provides nutrients for better crop yields and reduces compost purchase and delivery expenses.

The startup costs for the full installation of the Community Farm are estimated at $880,850, and pro forma financial modeling indicates an annual operating gap of approximately $100,000. The startup budget included in the plan includes developing the site for the farm, construction of the facilities, starting operations expenses, and purchasing of initial inventory, supplies, and equipment. The pro forma financial model includes sales scenarios, assumptions, and a breakeven analysis to assess feasibility under different circumstances. The plan also includes a phased implementation approach using temporary structures (i.e., growing domes) while the site is being developed and funds are being raised.

This plan includes fundraising recommendations to offset startup costs and operating gaps in early years until the Community Farm is operating at full capacity. The capital stack compiled for the plan identifies $2,250,000 in funding sources from public and private sources – an amount that can cover startup costs and an additional six years of operations.

Figure 2. *Left to right:* Local food bank storage; Ecosystem Conservation Office cold-frames; Aleut Community Store display. Agnew::Beck.

Project Background

Community Farm Project Overview

The City of Saint Paul (the City) was awarded a Healthy Foods Financing Initiative grant from the Reinvestment Fund. This grant provided funds to develop and launch a food retail project that ensures food security through reliable access of fresh, nutritious food; fosters self-sufficiency and reduces reliance on imported foods through increased local food production; and contributes to overall community health and development through improved nutritional intake specifically for children. In March 2025, the City issued a Request for Quote to conduct a market assessment and feasibility study, business plan, infrastructure plan, and a conceptual design for the Community Farm.

Figure 3. Community Farm project timeline

St. Paul Island Community Profile

About the Community

St. Paul Island (the Island) is part of the Pribilof Islands group in the Central Bering Sea and is part of the Alaska Maritime National Wildlife Refuge System. The St. Paul community is located on the southern peninsula of the island and is the largest of the five Pribilof Islands at 43 square miles. According to the 2020 U.S. Census, the community's population was 413 with 87% being Native Alaskan (Unangâx). Census data also shows that there is a higher poverty rate of 24.3% when compared to the statewide average of 10.4%.

Figure 4. Location of St. Paul Island

Existing Conditions

St. Paul Island is one of the most remote and difficult-to-access communities in the nation. Located in the middle of the Bering Sea, it is nearly a 4-hour flight from Anchorage. St. Paul Island faces geographical challenges, extreme weather, and limited freight delivery options to bring fresh food and other goods to the

community. There is no ferry system and there are limited freight and airline services to bring food and general supplies to the Island. Transportation and supply chain complications exacerbated within the past year when Ravn Alaska Air terminated their subsidized Essential Air Service (EAS) to St. Paul Island and withdrew their services. In response, the City Council passed a resolution in August 2025 declaring an economic and social emergency for the Island. As of September 2025, although the U.S. Department of Transportation received limited responses to their request for proposals from air carriers interested in providing EAS to the Island, it is projected that Sterling (Aleutian) Airways will provide regularly scheduled passenger air service to the community.

Figure 5. Cold frame growing containers at Ecosystem Conservation Office. Agnew::Beck.

Limited food shipments have led to decreased availability of fresh food options and increased reliance on shelf-stable foods, all of which contribute to growing health concerns. The 2020 Alaska Physical Activity, Nutrition and Obesity Facts Report shared that 88% of Alaskan adults are eating less than is recommended of daily fruit and vegetables servings.

Perishable food is flown to the Island on the Alaska Central Express (ACE) cargo carrier and, while shipments are scheduled three times a week, weather delays often hamper delivery. Weather delays in spring 2025 resulted in the Island going without any new food supplies from May to July 2025. Upon arrival, estimates described that about one quarter of the shipment was spoiled and thrown away. These recent and historic examples demonstrate the deep need for Island food resilience through locally farmed produce to supplement irregular food shipments.

The 2024-2028 Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy (CEDS) identified an expansion of local food production and increased food security as a priority strategy to combat high food costs and imported food dependence. Relevant key actions under this priority strategy included the design and implementation of greenhouse and community gardening operations as well as continued improvements to the reliability, quality, and affordability of goods at the Aleut Community Store. These community-driven strategies and actions demonstrate interest in establishing food sovereignty and increased food security for St. Paul residents.

Community Survey Highlights

In 2023, the Aleutian Pribilof Islands Association, Inc. (APIA) published findings from a local survey in their St. Paul Food Security Assessment – 32 surveys were collected and relevant key takeaways from this assessment included the following.

- All survey respondents get a portion of their household food from the Aleut Community Store. Most respondents supplement getting their food through subsistence activities (72%); online orders from stores such as Amazon, Target, or Walmart (63%); or stores outside the region such as Costco, Walmart, Mr. Prime Beef, Safeway, Target, and Fred Meyer (59%).

- Over half (56%) of respondents noted that they felt that they sometimes or often worry that their household food will run out before they have money to buy more.
- Nearly half (44%) of respondents expressed that they felt low or no control getting the foods they want on St. Paul Island. This indicates that there is food insecurity among Island residents.
- Survey respondents identified top ways to improve local food accessibility within their household, and the highest ranked options included more affordable store-bought foods (56%), more healthy foods at the store (56%), and an operating garden or greenhouse (53%).
- Respondents noted the types of barriers they experience in accessing healthy store-bought foods from the Aleut Community Store and the majority of respondents noted prohibitive costs (97%), poor condition of produce (81%), and limited availability (72%).
- There is a high rate of food sharing (91%) among St. Paul residents.
- Nearly three quarters (72%) of respondents indicated that they felt concerned about future food access and, of these respondents, half (50%) cited that high food costs were their reason for concern.

In 2024, the Fresh Locally Grown Produce survey was distributed to Island residents and 17 people participated. Key findings included:

- Over half of respondents expressed that they would purchase locally grown tomatoes (94%); herbs such as parsley, rosemary, oregano, and others (94%); eggs (88%); leafy greens such as romaine lettuce and butterhead lettuce (82%); berries such as blueberries, strawberries, and raspberries (71%); and sweet peppers (65%).
- Nearly all (94%) respondents noted they would likely or very likely purchase locally grown flowers.
- When asked how they would prefer to get locally grown produce (respondents could select multiple options), 71% of respondents expressed they would like to have it harvested and bagged, 24% said they would like it harvested but would bring their own bag, and 18% would like to harvest it themselves.
- Respondents indicated that they were less likely (41%) to purchase locally grown produce and eggs if it cost more than imported produce.
- Over three quarters (77%) of respondents noted that organic produce is somewhat to extremely important to them.

Interviews held during this process provided additional insights that informed the business plan, see the Appendix for more detail.

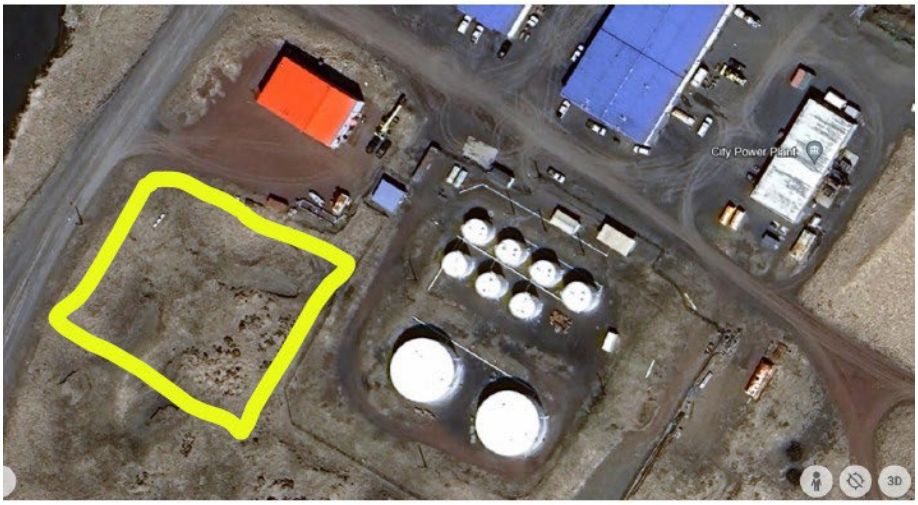
Figure 6. City of Saint Paul. Agnew::Beck.

Proposed Community Farm

The Community Farm will be constructed on a one-acre, City-owned lot located on the City's Public Works Complex. The Farm will include a 3,600 square-foot greenhouse, a 240 square-foot egg production facility, and a compost facility. This year-round greenhouse complex will be divided into several growing sections and will include space for seedling starts, potting, storage, and a retail counter.

Figure 7. *From top to bottom:* Location designated for the Community Farm; location of 1-acre parcel designated for Community Farm at the City's Public Works Complex. City of Saint Paul.

Location designated for Community Farm on the southern peninsula of Saint Paul Island.



Location of 1-acre parcel designated for Community Farm at the City's Public Works Complex.

Project Concept

Project Vision

The intention of developing a Saint Paul Community Farm is to establish a sustainable community food hub that improves access to and availability of staple and perishable foods. This will be achieved by improving food supply chain resilience for this underserved, disadvantaged, distressed, and primarily Native Alaskan community. The Farm's objectives are to ensure food security, promote food independence, improve nutritional intake, strengthen community ties, provide educational programs, and create new job opportunities.

Figure 8. Wall art from the Aleut Community Store. Agnew::Beck.

Community Farm Management and Layout

Community Farm Management

The City of Saint Paul plans to oversee Farm management, which will include the ownership and operations of Farm structures and infrastructure as well as fundraising and fiscal management. The City plans to hire a community greenhouse coordinator who will oversee Farm facilities, operations, and programming and, potentially in the second year of operations, a community greenhouse assistant who will be responsible for onsite tasks like watering, weeding, harvesting, and janitorial services.

Community Farm Layout

The Community Farm's greenhouse, chicken house, and a compost facility will each be arranged in a configuration that considers the path of the sun, utility hook ups, access to the site, and the connection to the Public Works Facility which will provide waste heat to the greenhouse.

Greenhouse Layout

In addition to growing space, the greenhouse will dedicate approximately 600 square feet of the facility to equipment and supply storage; an area for seeding and repotting plants; and a retail counter where customers can purchase items directly from the Farm. Layout options for both the greenhouse and the retail area received community input during the August open house and can be seen in Figures 9 and 10.

Figure 9. Greenhouse draft layout from August 2025 open house. Agnew::Beck.

Figure 10. Retail area draft layout from August 2025 open house. Agnew::Beck.

Composting

The City of Saint Paul and the Aleut Community of Saint Paul Island (ACSPI) are currently pursuing funding through the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) Solid Waste Infrastructure for Recycling (SWIFR) grant program for a composting facility to be located in a building on the Public Works site. The facility would provide compost to the farm and would take waste products from the greenhouse and chickens. This facility would be operated separately from the farm but would play an important role in the success of the farm by offering lower-cost inputs, reducing operational costs, and reducing waste.

The financial models presented here show composting kits that could be integrated into the farm operations as a contingency plan should the EPA SWIFR funding not come through.

Farm Development Phases

The City of Saint Paul plans to develop the farm site in phases, starting small to pilot test products and growing techniques and to introduce the concept with the community. This approach reduces risk in the project by limiting financial exposure and testing market acceptance in the community. As the farm builds customer loyalty and finetunes their growing methods and product mix, they can continue to expand and grow. During years one through three, the City can also be applying for funding to build the greenhouse and begin the work of clearing and preparing the site. The greenhouse is slated to be built during year three and operational by year four.

Phase One, Year 1: Chickens

Eggs are in high demand on Saint Paul Island. Those that are stocked in the store are expensive and often arrive broken, shortening the supply available for sale.

The first phase of the project will be to build a 30' dome Chicken House for laying hens. They will start with 30 laying hens and begin selling eggs through an ordering service. Setting up the first phase of the project will take an initial investment of approximately $90,000 (this estimate includes ~$37,000 installation estimate to fly an installation crew out for four days to build the dome). (See "Operations" section for detailed start up costs.)

Phase Two, Years 2-3: Roosters + Popular Greens and Vegetable Staples

In year two, the farm will add two more domes. One will be used for starting and growing staple greens and vegetable staples. In this growing dome, they can also start some of the berry bushes as these take a couple years before they start bearing fruit. Recommended products to start with are below:

- Greens: lettuces, spinach, arugula
- Herbs: rosemary, oregano, basil, mint, cilantro
- Tomatoes
- Peppers
- Berry starts: strawberries, raspberries, blueberries

The other dome will be used for roosters, as well as tool and equipment storage. Adding this phase to the project would require an investment of approximately $58,000. (See "Operations" section for detailed start up costs.)

Phase Three, Years 3-4: Preparing for the Greenhouse and Increasing Operations

As the City secures funding for the greenhouse and larger scale operations, the site can be prepared, and basic infrastructure can be installed. This includes the waste heat, water, and electric hookups as well as site leveling, pouring concrete, and other site clearing projects that need to be completed before the greenhouse can be installed. The chickens will remain in their domes, while the third dome can be repurposed into an experimental growing space and teaching garden.

During this phase the greenhouse can be erected and set up during year three, with a target of the first harvests and sales in year four.

Farm Activities

The City of Saint Paul intends for the Community Farm to provide educational opportunities and community connection alongside their objectives of improving food security and supply chain resilience. In the August open house, participants considered the most valuable farm activities for the community. The presented options were sourced from successful models around Alaska with opportunity to share additional ideas. The most popular ideas included "providing volunteer opportunities" and "programming for young people" and a further breakdown of the results is shown in the bulleted list and Figure 11 below.

Results are listed by vote count, largest to smallest:

- Volunteer Options: *11 votes*
- School and Youth Programs: *10 votes*
- Apprenticeship and Training: *8 votes*
- Community Events: *8 votes*
- Nutrition Education: *6 votes*
- New ideas:
  - Cooking classes
  - Gratitude / eat together

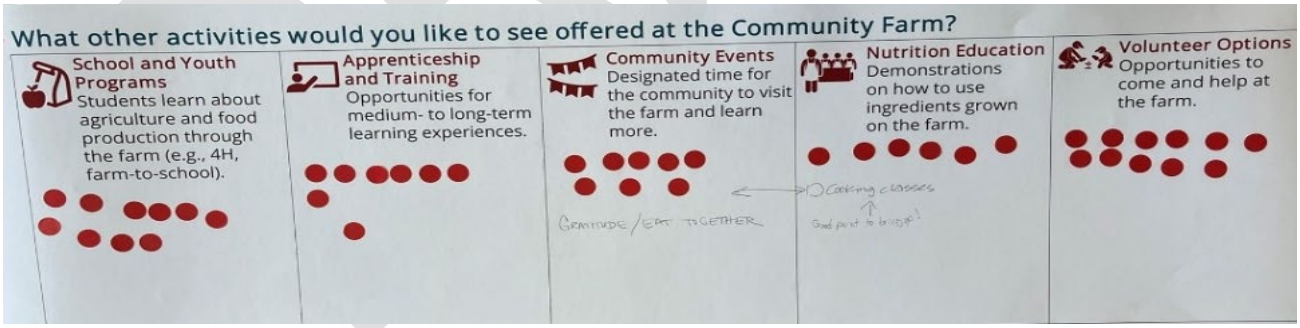


Figure 11. Results from August 2025 open house exercise, "What other activities would you like to see offered at the Community Farm?" Agnew::Beck.

School and Youth Programs

Establishing a youth development program like 4-H or Future Farmers of America (FFA) on St. Paul Island could provide valuable opportunities for youth to connect and learn about the Farm. 4-H offers flexible program options, from clubs to short-term or virtual programs, and could build on activities already relevant to St. Paul, such as food security, natural resources, and applied arts. Alaska has examples of off-road system 4-H chapters (Nome, Dillingham, and Kodiak), showing it can be accomplished in smaller, remote

communities, though success depends on having trained adult volunteers and community interest. Organizing a St. Paul 4-H program through the Nome chapter might reduce startup barriers. FFA, by contrast, would be more difficult to establish. Since FFA is an intracurricular program, it requires a school-based agricultural curriculum and significant teacher involvement, which may be burdensome for the St. Paul school and could lack cultural relevance. While FFA provides leadership and career development linked to agriculture, the requirements for coursework, constitutions, and state applications make it less accessible compared to the more flexible 4-H structure. Overall, 4-H is the more feasible option for St. Paul, though both programs would require local commitment and resources to succeed.

Apprenticeship and Training

Training programs will be key in ensuring long-term sustainability of the Community Farm. Implementing a training program for high school students or other young adults in search for opportunities to expand their skillset creates a potential pipeline for Farm staff and involves the community in the care and upkeep of the Farm. This can be a collaborative effort explored between the City, school, and the Alaska Tribes Extension Program to identify interested participants, develop a basic curriculum, and set up a pilot program.

Other Programs and Farm Activities

Requested community-driven activities at the Farm included community events and nutrition education programs which could occur for a small fee or the City could donate the event space when appropriate. At the August community visit, participants indicated interest in volunteering at the Farm. Volunteer activities could include harvesting, weeding, cleaning, stocking, planting, collecting eggs, and other activities. Another potential opportunity could be a work exchange program where residents can donate their time at the Farm in exchange for product vouchers (e.g., work a certain number of hours and earn a $10 voucher).

Distribution Options

One of the Community Farm goals is an expansion in the accessibility of healthy locally grown food. Purchasing behaviors and preferences are key to ensuring that the Farm-grown food gets into the homes of St. Paul residents. Participants at the August 2025 open house shared ways they prefer to access Community Farm products, see the bulleted list and Figure 12. Options were sourced from successful models around Alaska and there was a space to write in ideas.

The most popular ideas are described in more detail in Figure 13. Case studies from farm and greenhouse operations around Alaska also offer opportunities to learn from peers and to design programs that are likely to appeal to the community (see the Appendix for more details).

Results are listed by vote count, largest to smallest:

- Farmers Market: *10 votes*
- Pick myself: *10 votes*
- Pre-selected boxes: *6 votes*
- Order ahead: *5 votes*
- Other ideas: *3 votes - "delivered to my house"*

Figure 12. Results from August 2025 open house exercise, "How would you like to get products from the Community Farm?" Agnew::Beck.

Figure 13. Distribution options

Direct-to-Consumer Sales or U-Pick

These models operate like a farm stand or farmers market with designated days to purchase produce and/or allow residents to buy or harvest directly from the farm. Both options tied as the most popular with residents who attended the August 2025 open house.

Alaska examples

- Youth Agriculture Projects in Emmonak and Nunam Iqua

More details in Appendix B: Case Studies

Subscription Boxes

A subscription box model or community-supported agriculture (CSA) relies on farm staff to pick and package a variety of products that can be available for pick-up or deliveries. This option was the second most popular among attendees at the August 2025 open house. Subscription boxes require diverse amounts of produce being available throughout a subscription period and may require additional staff resources.

Alaska examples

- Calypso Farm & Ecology Center
- Igiugig Community Greenhouse

More details in Appendix B: Case Studies

Partnerships

Establishing partnerships with local entities can improve produce distribution through existing programs such as the store, local food bank, clinic, or school; this model depends on produce consistency and volume. Partnering with the store would have financial considerations and depend on existing supplier pricing, quality, and demand. Organizations like the clinic and school have expressed interest in these partnerships but emphasize that consistency could be a challenge.

Alaska examples

- Marvin Gardens
- Kenaitze Indian Tribe Greenhouse

More details in Appendix B: Case Studies

Market Analysis

Market Overview: Food System on St. Paul Island

Figure 14. Herbs from the Ecosystem Conservation Office. Agnew::Beck.

The food system on St. Paul Island faces challenges due to its isolation, reliance on imported goods, and logistical difficulties. The community's food system consists of a small local grocery store, subsistence harvests, online retailers like Amazon, and a local food bank. Transportation is a major hurdle, with freight arriving either by infrequent barges from Seattle or more costly air cargo, both of which are subject to delays and weather disruptions that affect the quality and availability of food. While subsistence-harvested foods are a significant part of many residents' diets, those harvests are under threat from climate change, species decline, and erosion of traditional knowledge.

Aleut Community Store

Figure 15. Aleut Community Store refrigerated milk and eggs. Agnew::Beck.

The Aleut Community Store is the only grocery store on St. Paul Island and is owned and operated by the Tribal government. It stocks basic foods such as produce, meat, frozen goods, and shelf-stable foods like canned goods and other non-perishables. Offerings change based on availability, affordability, and shelf life. The 2023 Food Security Assessment found that 97% of residents identified high costs and 81% cited poor condition of produce as barriers to getting healthy food from the store.

Online and Alternative Vendors

Residents utilize online shopping to supplement local options. The 2023 Food Security Assessment indicated that 63% of residents purchase at least some of their food online. Amazon Prime and Costco orders from Anchorage are the most popular options. Some residents take part in Full Circle, a weekly community-supported agriculture (CSA) share box of produce and other food via mail. Air freight service disruptions result in delayed deliveries and spoiled food and limit the success of this option.

Food Bank

The Tribal government operates a food bank in the community; it serves approximately XX households and packs 12 Elder boxes weekly. It accepts requests each weekday from 8 am to noon and boxes are available for pick up in the afternoon. Clients sometimes make special requests for food products that the food bank tries to fulfill. When this happens, each recipient receives the requested item(s). In conversations with the food bank coordinator, there is interest in partnering with the Farm to supplement the boxes, especially with eggs and fresh produce.

Figure 16. Canned and boxed goods available at the local food bank. Agnew::Beck.

Subsistence

According to the 2023 Food Security Assessment, 72% of residents obtain food from subsistence harvests, including: laaqudaxˆ (northern fur seal), qawaxˆ (Steller sea lion), itayaxˆ (domesticated reindeer), chagixˆ (Pacific halibut), qimgiitan (various crab species), and other foods such as sea urchins, berries, seabirds, and eggs.

Demographics and Local Demand

Demographics

Understanding the demographics of St. Paul Island is helpful in assessing Community Farm market opportunities. The population base, household income, and participation in food assistance programs all influence demand for locally grown products.

Caution in Using Demographic Data

Because of the City's small resident population, the available demographic data come with significant limitations. For communities the size of St. Paul Island, demographic data from the American Community Survey (ACS) and other surveys often have large margins of error because the estimates are based on a small number of survey respondents. This means that while the data provide a general picture, the exact numbers should be viewed as approximate, not precise. For planning purposes, these data are best used to establish broad trends and provide context rather than exact benchmarks. *Specific data limitations are described in italics in the sections that follow.*

Population

According to the 2020 U.S. Census, St. Paul Island had a total population of **413 residents**. Population estimates compiled annually by the Alaska Department of Labor and Workforce Development show some year-to-year variability: 392 residents in 2021, 380 in 2022, 353 in 2023, and 375 in 2024.

The difference between decennial Census counts and annual state estimates is important to note. The decennial Census provides an official headcount conducted every ten years, whereas the State of Alaska produces annual estimates using administrative data such as school enrollment, Permanent Fund Dividend applications, and other records. These sources use different methodologies,

which can result in slightly different figures. For small populations like St. Paul's, even a handful of residents moving in or out of the community can create noticeable swings in the estimates.

Households and Employment

ACS 2019–2023 5-year estimates report **61 households** on St. Paul Island, with an employment rate of **45%**.

Employment levels in small, seasonal economies like St. Paul's can vary widely throughout the year, and ACS data should be treated as an average estimate.

Income and Poverty

Median household income on St. Paul Island is relatively high compared to many other Alaska rural communities but comes with a wide margin of error due to the small sample size. According to ACS 2019–2023 5-year estimates:

- Median household income: **$98,750 ± $44,287**
- Median family income: **$105,625 ± $45,298**

Poverty data are especially difficult to interpret. 2020 ACS 5-year estimates reported **28.6% of individuals** and **13% of families** below the poverty line. The 2023 ACS estimates suggest **24.3% of individuals (±25.2%)** and **3% of families (±8.3%)** are below the poverty line. The drop in the family poverty rate between 2020 and 2023 is difficult to understand given the individual poverty rate stayed nearly the same.

The large margins of error - so large that they encompass zero in the case of family poverty - make it difficult to rely on these numbers with confidence. In practice, this means that while the general picture suggests both low median incomes for some households and significant poverty, the exact rates should be interpreted with caution.

Food Assistance Programs

The ACS provides some information on household participation in food assistance programs. In 2023, the ACS estimated that **11 households on St. Paul Island received Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) benefits**, with a margin of error of ±8 households.

Data on **Women, Infants, and Children (WIC) program participation is not available at the community level**. The Census Bureau does not publish WIC data below the state or, in limited cases, the county level, and the U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) only releases participation data at the state level. As a result, there is no published source for estimating WIC participation specifically for St. Paul Island.

Table 1. Quick St. Paul Island demographics

Indicator	Data Source	Estimate	Notes / Margin of Error
Population	2020 U.S. Census	413	Official decennial count
	Alaska Department of Labor (2024 est.)	375	Annual estimate; varies year to year
Households	ACS 2019–2023	61	5-year sample estimate
Employment Rate	ACS 2019–2023	45%	Reflects average across seasons
Median Household Income	ACS 2019–2023	$98,750	± $44,287

Median Family Income	ACS 2019–2023	$105,625	± $45,298
Individuals Below Poverty	ACS 2019–2023	24.3%	± 25.2%; wide error range
Families Below Poverty	ACS 2019–2023	3%	± 8.3%; error range includes 0
Households Receiving SNAP	ACS 2019–2023	11	± 8 households
WIC Participation	USDA / Census	Not available	Only reported at state level

Figure 17. St. Paul coastline. Agnew::Beck.

Operations

Startup Costs

Total startup costs for development of the Saint Paul Community Farm are estimated to be in the range of $880,850. Startup costs include installation of growing domes, greenhouse development, retail store equipment and set-up, chicken house dome, and all associated site improvements and construction efforts. The tables below show a rough breakdown of startup costs for each major development component.

Table 2. Greenhouse startup costs

Greenhouse Infrastructure	Cost Estimate
Decloet Grow Max Freestanding Greenhouse kit 30' x 120'	$ 120,350
Greenhouse supplies (dirt, fertilizer, tools, etc.)	$ 12,000
Benches (growing tables, beds, raised beds)	$ 7,200
Hydroponic kits	$ 9,000
Custom Living fabric bed and fittings	$ 2,100
BioTherm heating system	$ 15,500

Lighting	$	61,100
Composting Centers	$	20,000
Greenhouse Elements Total	**$**	**247,250**

Table 3. Chicken domes startup costs

Chicken Domes	Cost Estimate	
Chicken dome approximately 30-foot diameter (Phase 1)	$	36,000
Rooster dome approximately 18-foot diameter (Phase 2)	$	16,000
Initial chicken supplies (feed, medication, veterinary care, etc.)	$	10,400
Installation (including cost of travel)	$	37,200
Chicken Elements Total	**$**	**99,600**

Table 4. Retail space startup costs

Retail Space (integrated with greenhouse)	Cost Estimate	
Retail counter	$	500
Retail space displays	$	1,800
Glass door refrigerator display	$	1,500
Point of Sale system	$	200
Retail area supplies (bags, receipts, pens, etc.)	$	500
Retail Space Elements Total	**$**	**4,500**

Table 5. Additional startup costs

Construction, Site Development, and Freight	Cost Estimate	
Project design, contractual, and permitting costs	$	409,600
Site improvements labor (grading, debris removal)	$	4,900
Concrete, rebar, anchors, insulation, and drainpipes	$	50,000
Freight (greenhouse, domes, construction materials, etc.)	$	50,000
Construction Administration	$	15,000
Additional Elements Total	**$**	**529,500**

Operating Expenses

In addition to initial development and construction costs, the City of Saint Paul should anticipate annual operating expenses associated with greenhouse management, staffing, and upkeep. The first year of operation has some additional expenses including costs to relocate a greenhouse manager and the need to purchase a larger quantity of seeds, plants, and other expendable items associated with running the greenhouse. The tables below show estimates of operational costs for year 1 ($212,200) and subsequent years ($208,000).

Most of the costs associated with operating the greenhouse come from the salaries, wages, and benefits associated with the greenhouse community coordinator position as well as the part-time greenhouse assistant.

Table 6. Year 1 operational costs

Year 1 Operational Costs	Cost Estimate	
Farm Coordinator (salary and benefits)	$	167,200
Farm Coordinator relocation expenses	$	6,000
Greenhouse Assistant	$	24,500
Cost for plants, starts, and seeds	$	4,500
Chicks and chickens	$	1,000
Layer pellet, chicken scratch, other food, and veterinary care	$	4,000
Electric, gas, internet, and other utilities	$	5,000
Cost Total	**$**	**212,200**

Table 7. Year 2 and beyond operational costs*

Year 2 and beyond operational costs	Cost Estimate	
Farm Coordinator (salary and benefits)	$	172,300
Greenhouse Assistant	$	25,000
Costs for plants and starts	$	1,500
Layer pellet, chicken scratch, other food and veterinary care	$	4,000
Electric, gas, internet, and other utilities	$	5,200
Cost Total	**$**	**208,000***

** Operational costs will increase annually with inflation, changes to staff wages and benefits will also influence annual operating costs. These details are reflected in the pro forma. The tables here are meant to provide snapshots of costs.*

Operating Revenues

Revenues associated with operating and managing the greenhouse and chicken house facility will come primarily from egg and produce sales and distribution. Revenues associated with sale and distribution of consumable goods are limited and constrained by the following parameters:

- **Produce and egg yields:** The total amount of produce grown and successfully harvested is calculated as a factor of the space available in the greenhouse/chicken house. Initial greenhouse plans should result in approximately 2,160 square feet of growing space and space for around 30 chickens.
    - **Produce yields:** Based on the preliminary planting plan, the greenhouse should produce about ~16,000 units of produce annually (berries, greens, herbs, etc.).
    - **Egg yield:** After the chickens reach laying age, it is estimated that 30 chickens could produce approximately 625 packages of 12 eggs annually.
- **Pricing structures:** The total amount of potential revenue generated by the sale of produce and eggs is influenced by the unit price per item. Currently the model assumes that greenhouse prices will attempt to be 90% of what a consumer might find at the Aleut Community Store. Prices will need to be evaluated and adjusted based on consumer demand and purchasing habits – it may be that some items need to be priced well below store prices to be competitive, while others may be able to sustain a higher price due to product availability and quality.
- **Market Demand:** There are approximately 335 individuals across 131 households on St. Paul Island. If the greenhouse operation achieved maximum yield potential as identified in the model, each household needs to purchase an average of 126 items (pounds, cartons, etc.) to maximize revenues.

Capital Considerations

Funding Sources and Strategy

The analysis examined funding sources available to local governments for similar community development projects to develop a potential capital stack for Community Farm construction.

Strategy Shift 2025-2026

The funding landscape for capital projects changed significantly in 2025, with significant reductions in federal grant funding opportunities. For example, a reliable funding source for community agriculture projects historically came from U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) Rural Development programs. However, the FY2026 USDA budget eliminated all grant funding, shifting Rural Development focus to its low-interest loan programs. Private foundation funding is less available and more competitive due to increased need.

Capital Stack

Grant Funds and Local Support

A summary of grant and donation sources is provided in the table below. Grant funds are listed at maximum request amounts for eligible projects similar in scope and size. The City of Saint Paul estimated a tolerance for 25-30% of the project cost in financed capital to meet remaining funding gaps after grant opportunities are pursued and awarded. The total potential available funding, including from project-aligned grant funders, is 255% of the total project cost and exceeds the project cost by an estimated $1.36 million. The funding potential is fairly balanced across sources. This is a strong fund development position; the project is not overly dependent on a single funding category.

Project Funds	Possible Amount	% of Total Cost
Local and State		
State of Alaska Community Development Block Grant	$850,000	85%
Subtotal	**$850,000**	**85%**
Federal		
Congressionally Designated Spending	$500,000	50%
Other Federal	$0	
Subtotal	**$500,000**	**50%**
Foundation and Loan Funding		
Rasmuson Foundation	$250,000	25%
Other Foundations	$250,000	25%
Low-Interest or Revolving Fund Loan	$250,000	25%
Subtotal	**$750,000**	**75%**
Local Fundraising	**$100,000**	**10%**

Total Funding Sources	**$2,250,000**	**225%**
Total Project Cost	$880,850	
Surplus (Gap) Funding Opportunities	$1,369,150	

Grant opportunities and low-interest or revolving fund loan programs are included in the Appendix. Local fundraising opportunities are limited to support from Central Bering Sea Fishermen's Association, a nonprofit organization that supports independent fishery development on St. Paul Island and contributes local community funding and partnership with the focus of improving residents' quality of life.

The charts below (Figures 18 and 19) provide an overview of the non-financed capital stack for City of Saint Paul Community Farm project cost compared to the potential capital stack for a community facility of similar cost for a nonprofit organization. As a municipality, the City of Saint Paul will have greater access to state and congressionally designated funding opportunities, and a narrower range of foundation grant opportunities than a nonprofit. Rasmuson Foundation is the primary foundation that prioritizes community development partnerships with nonprofit and local government entities. Partnerships with a 501(c)(3) nonprofit may open more funding opportunities for either this project's capital construction or future programming to pursue operating funds but may also require restructuring of the Farm's ownership.

Grant opportunities should be pursued once the project demonstrates project readiness, an achievable timeline for completion, and a feasible budget.

Figure 19. $1M Local Sports Facility Sources

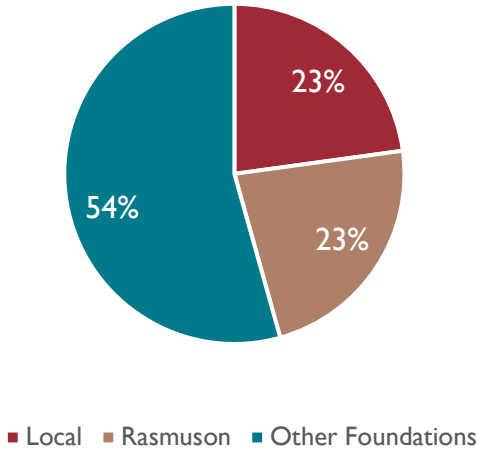
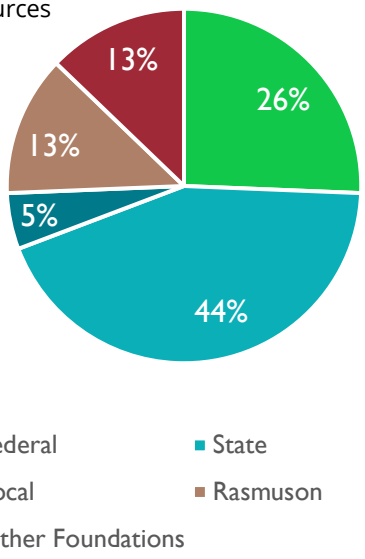


Figure 18. $1M City of Saint Paul Community Farm Funding Sources



Low-Interest Capital Access

To fill project funding gaps, the City of Saint Paul is eligible for multiple long-term, below-market rate and low-interest loan opportunities.

While St. Paul Island is considered Disadvantaged and Distressed by the Denali Commission's 2023 Distressed Communities Report, typically an advantage for grant applications, that designation is offset by U.S. Department of Treasury's formal designation of the Aleutians West Census Area as an Opportunity Zone. An Opportunity Zone designation, however, can provide a competitive advantage for increased federal funding and blended financing opportunities.

- **U.S. Department of Treasury Community Development Financial Institution Fund New Markets Tax Credit (NMTC)**: The NMTC Program incentivizes community development and economic growth using tax credits that attract private investment to distressed communities. Alaska Growth Capital is one of several Community Development Entity (CDE)-awarded NMTC funds to finance eligible projects in Alaska. CDEs sell tax credits to private investors in exchange for a cash investment, which can be used to provide a low-interest loan or equity investment. NMTCs typically involve multiple funding sources in a project capital stack. Opportunity Zones attract greater investment from eligible investors.
- **U.S. Department of Agriculture Community Facilities Direct Loan Program:** Available to small communities with a population of 5,500 or less and an area median income below 80% of state non-metro median household income. If combined with commercial lenders backed by USDA's Community Facilities Guaranteed Loan Program, an Opportunity Zone status improves borrower eligibility.
- **Program Related Investments (PRIs):** Commonly structured as long-term, below-market rate loans, PRIs refer to a collection of financial instruments that support a charitable project or activity. PRIs also include equity investments, linked deposits, loan guarantees, recoverable grants, and more. Rasmuson Foundation looks for PRI opportunities in family, workforce, and senior housing; community and economic development; and nonprofit facilities.

It is recommended to expedite outreach to Alaska Growth Capital, USDA, Rasmuson, and organizations such as RurAL CAP to understand and compare currently available low- and no-interest lending programs.

Startup Work Plan

The Work Plan below provides a framework for bringing the business plan to life. The detail in each "lane" is based on content in the current business plan, but some of the actions are illustrative. It is not an exhaustive list of actions or a final work plan; it is meant to serve as a starting point and can be updated as elements of the plan evolve.

The timeline shown in the table below is dependent on many external factors including federal and private funding sources, weather, shipping and transportation, contractor availability, supply chain and material availability, permitting and regulatory delays, energy and utilities, seasonal livestock and agricultural cycles, community and cultural engagement, and project management and communication.

Table 8. Startup work plan (draft)

Timeframe	Funding and Finance	Facilities and Maintenance	Inventory and Logistics	Operations and Staffing	Marketing and Communications	Partnership Development
January 2026	Determine potential funding sources from business plan resources State of AK Community Development Block Grant potentially released Reinvestment Fund Food Access and Retail Expansion Fund application potential release	Order dome for chickens and arrange installation Order chicks	Determine where to source supplies and materials for dome and chickens Order long-lead-time materials		Develop communications plan for sharing project development updates	Coordinate with local food bank to establish agreement on Elder box subscription program
February 2026		Arrange temporary brooding space for chicks Mark dome foundation areas Set up temporary storage for materials	Continue ordering and staging materials		Announce chicken plans	Coordinate with the school for potential youth apprenticeship programs

Timeframe	Funding and Finance	Facilities and Maintenance	Inventory and Logistics	Operations and Staffing	Marketing and Communications	Partnership Development
March 2026		Begin clearing dome site and access		Identify staff and plan to harvest eggs and manage sales	Announce arrival of chicks and share photos	
April 2026	RurAL CAP Small Grant deadline - Apr 30	Install chicken fencing Complete dome installation			Share updates on dome construction and chicks	Coordinate with Alaska Tribes Extension program to gauge interest in apprenticeship program
May 2026	Reinvestment Fund potential application deadline	Set up security and monitoring systems			Offer chicken naming promotion (e.g., sponsor a chicken)	Coordinate with the store to develop purchasing agreement
June 2026			Prepare for first egg harvest and sales		Share photos of chickens	Explore options for partnering with Alaska Food Policy Council
July 2026		Estimated first egg harvest Begin egg collection and small sales			Announce first egg harvest Holiday promotions	
August 2026	RurAL CAP Small Grant deadline - Aug 31		Prepare first planting schedule		Promote egg sales	
September 2026			Begin record-keeping systems	Finalize overall business structure and confirm site layout		
October 2026	Reinvestment Fund potential application deadline	Arrange purchase / pick up of ACSPI dome (growing dome) Arrange installation of dome		Create logistics plan for deliveries including an updated budget and project schedule	Holiday promotions	

Timeframe	Funding and Finance	Facilities and Maintenance	Inventory and Logistics	Operations and Staffing	Marketing and Communications	Partnership Development
November 2026	RurAL CAP Small Grant deadline - Nov 30			Evaluate harvests, maintenance, and operations of egg production	Holiday promotions	Host community open house
December 2026		Plan seed inventory, order initial inventory for dome Order growing materials and supplies	Plan year 2 production schedule	Work with engineer / architect to finalize greenhouse design including determining any solar, heating and water systems	Holiday promotions	

Appendix

Appendix A: Interview Summary

Interview Purpose

Project staff conducted interviews with food retailers, nonprofits, community organizations, and other partners to identify potential partnership opportunities and determine the types of fresh produce the community would support at the Community Farm. All information shared informed the market assessment for the Farm and shaped onsite retail operations, as well as deepened understanding of the community's desire for local, fresh produce.

Interview Key Themes

Overview

Project staff conducted seven interviews with a mix of St. Paul Island-specific organizations and broader Alaskan farming operations. St. Paul Island-specific organizations interviewed included the local food bank, Aleut Community Store, St. Paul Island Tours, Ecosystem Conservation Office (ECO), and the South Central Foundation. The two interviewed farms included the Kenaitze Indian Tribe and Calypso Farm. One participant submitted a written response to interview questions, bringing the total responses to eight.

Key Themes

- **Fresh, local produce is highly desired.** Because there are limited fresh produce options, nearly any fresh produce would be appreciated.
    - **Most requested items were:** Potatoes, carrots, onions, lettuce (esp. romaine, kale), celery, cabbage, broccoli, spinach, tomatoes, apples, oranges, green onions, cilantro, basil, dill, melons, berries (especially strawberries, raspberries, blackberries), peppers, cucumbers, squash, avocados, sweet potatoes, and garlic.
- **Need cooking and nutrition education opportunities for all ages.** While fresh produce is highly desirable, the community has more consistently practiced a heat-and-eat culture of prepackaged foods and would benefit from targeted educational programs to increase purchase of locally farmed food. This said, ECO noted challenges in their own education efforts and met a lot of disinterest and lack of community momentum. This could be offset by involving the community in designing programs / opportunities that best fit their needs and / or placing locally farmed produce in trusted locations such as the clinic to build familiarity.
- **Need for a reliable, affordable food supply.** To offer affordable prices for residents, food costs would need to be comparable to suppliers or lower, although some organizations would be willing to pay more for dependable local food. There is also desire for local food to consistently supplement other food supplies.
- **Strong community support and desire for engagement.** A common theme was desire to integrate meaningfully with the community through programming and creating an inviting space for others to visit.

- **Interest in compost and egg production.** Need large, sealed containers for food waste / compost as well as pickup support to participate in composting. There would need to be education / training to support correctly sorting materials. Eggs are desired if they are Occupational Safety and Health Administration (OSHA) compliant and affordable.
- **Openness to collaborate / participate in pilot.** All interviewees expressed interest in collaborating with the farm to develop impactful programming and operations to build a farm that is successful and sustainable.
- **Labor availability.** The limited labor force consistently came up as a barrier. One consideration is to initially hire off-island seasonal growers for the first couple of years to build consistency.
- **Transportation is a large barrier.** The unreliability of current transportation leads to unpredictable food availability and food waste / spoilage.

Appendix B: Case Studies

IGIUGIG, ALASKA

Igiugig Community Greenhouse

Igiugig, Alaska

A community-run greenhouse and local food initiative producing fresh vegetables, eggs, and chickens to supplement traditional subsistence harvests. Efforts underway to supply nearby sport-fishing lodges and reduce reliance on imported produce.

What they grow: Various vegetables and eggs

Lessons learned and success stories:

- Remote location demands proximity and attention to microclimate (sunlight, wind).
- Creative reuse of materials for infrastructure - "innovation is a necessity."
- Pest management is critical and includes companion planting, deterrent plants, airflow, and habitat for predators.
- Automated systems must be maintainable; ensure manual fallback systems.
- Community input is important - plant what people know and will cook, but add novelty (e.g., purple potatoes, rainbow carrots).
- Start small and stagger planting for even harvests.
- Weekly produce distribution via community table plus Elder and school donations; educational use of leftovers to teach cooking unfamiliar foods; edible flowers increased interest and engagement.
- Community involvement includes teens assisting with plant and animal care; composting is communal; greenhouse serves as a site for relaxation, painting classes, counseling sessions via local programs.

www.igiugig.com/tribal-government/11-igiugig-greenhouse

Marvin Gardens

Haines, Alaska

Managed by the Takshanuk Watershed Council, Marvin Gardens in Haines is sustained primarily through grants and donations and operates in partnership with the local school.

What they grow: Various vegetables

Lessons learned and success stories:

- Strong school partnerships – students participate in planting, composting, and harvesting.
- Summer camp integration introduces youth to gardening.
- Produce supports school cafeteria and lunch program, strengthening food access and education.

www.takshanuk.org/about-1

Youth Agriculture Projects

Emmonak and Nunam Iqua, Alaska

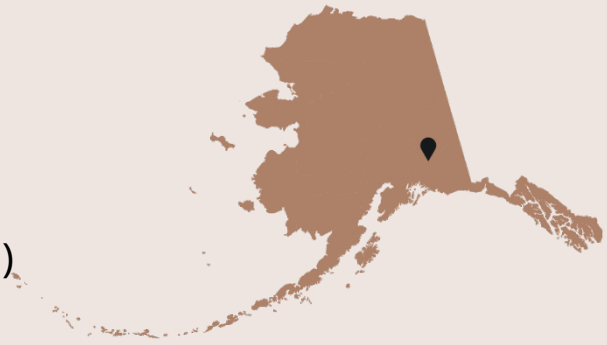
After years of low salmon returns, the Yukon Delta Fisheries Development Association and Kwik'pak Fisheries launched greenhouse projects in Emmonak and Nunam Iqua to boost local food security. The projects continue to experiment with new crops to match local preferences, making fresh food more accessible and resilient in the region.

What they grow: Kale, potatoes, turnips, green onions, peas, squash, leeks, tomatoes, lettuce, and more. Also operates a chicken coop with about 35 chickens supplying eggs.

Lessons learned and success stories:

- Youth engagement is central, who assist with direct planting and maintenance.
- Diversifying produce through trial and experimentation responsive to climate and local preferences.
- Community open houses and markets educate and inspire self-reliance in gardening.
- Affordable local eggs (about $4/dozen) stocked at local fisher store improve access and cost.

COPPER RIVER
NATIVE ASSOCIATION



Permaculture Garden
(Copper River Native Association)

Glennallen region, Alaska

A Tribal permaculture greenhouse/garden emphasizing climate-resilient design, food sovereignty, and subsistence supplements.

What they grow:
Native plants, flowers, and some food crops: cranberry, yarrow, chamomile, Jacob's Ladder, sunflowers, cucumbers, and cabbages.

Lessons learned and success stories:

- Permaculture design helps integration with local ecosystem and resilience.
- Native species attract wildlife and are planted strategically to balance consumption by animals.
- Cultural healing and joy through gardening supports mental and community health.
- Must-have a modestly paid coordinator for sustainability because volunteer-only models can fall short.
- Funding often relies on the U.S. Department of Agriculture and grant cycles; recent cuts highlight fragility of support.
- Gardening seen as both necessity due to subsistence food decline and reclamation of traditional plant stewardship.

Tyonek TRIBAL CONSERVATION DISTRICT

Tyonek Grown
(Tyonek Tribal Conservation District)

Tyonek, Alaska

Community garden established in 2010; expanded over a decade to a 1.5-acre, high-tunnel greenhouse/hydroponic operation. Winter growing enabled, dedicated to food security.

What they grow: Cherry tomatoes, onions, potatoes, carrots and more.

Lessons learned and success stories:

- Garden began with Elders lunch program; built community connection and prioritized Elder nutrition.
- Youth involvement – student interns build skills and confidence.
- Acts as a central community hub, incorporating cultural events (spring blessing, fall harvest celebration).
- Garden seen as revival of traditional Indigenous gardening; supports cultural continuity.
- Peer-to-peer learning – Tyonek shared composting lessons with visitor from St. Paul Island to help overcome soil limitations.
- Infrastructure and water access are challenges; remote communities require innovative support.

ttcd.org/community-agriculture

KENAITZE INDIAN TRIBE

Kenaitze Indian Tribe Greenhouse (Wellness Program)

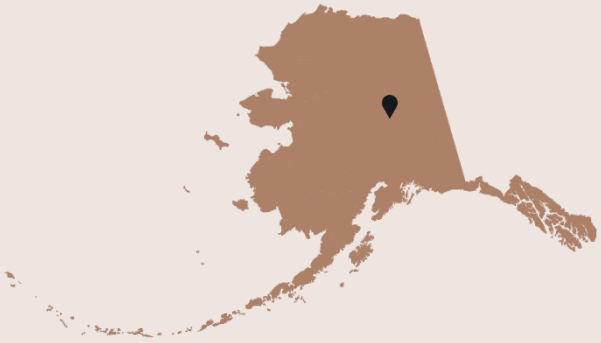
Kenai, Alaska

On a 2.5-acre site in Kenai, the Kenaitze Indian Tribe operates two greenhouses and hydroponic systems as part of its Wellness Program that wase established with a U.S. Department of Agriculture Community Foods grant. Rather than focusing on selling the produce commercially, most of it going straight into school lunches, Elder meals, and family support programs.

What they grow: Hydroponic buttercrunch and red leaf lettuce, tomatoes, cucumbers, broccoli, corn, radishes, herbs, rhubarb, horseradish, ground cherries, apples, plums, chokecherries, crab apples, berries, flowers.

Lessons learned and success stories:

- Research contracting carefully; vendors may go out of business (hydroponic supplier experience).
- Year-round growing possible with heated greenhouse (break only in December).
- Strong Tribal Council support critical - approved funding for backup generator and ongoing operations.
- Pest management is major barrier (aphids) - integrated strategies include ladybugs, potential praying mantises.
- Composting in progress; exploring fish compost system.
- Community programming: arts workshops, foraging events, Elder/kid's potlucks, recovery support groups.
- Space constraints and wildlife (ravens) require creative solutions.



Calypso Farm & Ecology Center

Fairbanks, Alaska

Founded in 1999, Calypso is a nonprofit educational farm focused on food sovereignty, farmer training, and community engagement.

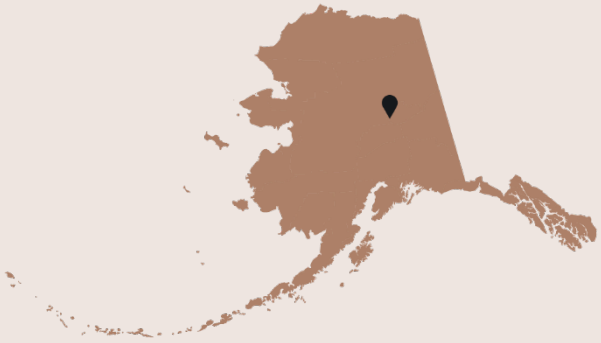
What they grow: More than 80 crops, including carrots, cabbage, beets, potatoes, turnips, Asian greens, cauliflower, Brussels sprouts, herbs, flowers, and tobacco (as a pest management tool).

Lessons learned and success stories:

- Diversity is essential - across crops, crop varieties, and programming.
- Structures should be adapted to local climate (Yakutat example: snow-load greenhouses).
- Build greenhouses with reused/local materials; avoid expensive "lower-48 kits."
- Rotating greenhouse use seasonally (seed starts in March → summer crops later).
- Composting with local resources (peat, tundra soil, fish waste, seaweed, kitchen scraps).
- Chickens can be valuable but require costly imported grain, supplement with local feed when possible.
- Strong community-supported agriculture (CSA) program (approximately 100 families) with low-income "pay what you can" option.
- Focus on training farmers, not just growing food, to build long-term food sovereignty.
- Hosts educational events, weddings, music, and harvest celebrations to strengthen community connections.

calypsofarm.org

Stone Soup Community Garden



Fairbanks, Alaska

Urban community garden operated by Stone Soup Café, offering open plots and free pickings for community and organizations.

What they grow: Beans, snap peas, nasturtiums, kale, kohlrabi, cabbages, dill, herbs, squash.

Lessons learned and success stories:

- Community planting thrives in favorable weather (sun-rain balance).
- Informal access model - passersby harvest fresh produce; supports those needing food.
- Surplus directed to senior centers, Meals on Wheels, assisted living facilities.
- Simple educational signage and access encourage engagement.
- Challenges: mis-harvesting (e.g., pulling immature potatoes) indicates need for community gardening education.

Goosefoot Farm / Permafrost Farms

Interior (near Fairbanks), Alaska

Small-scale farms navigating permafrost challenges; includes Goosefoot Farm and broader Nenana Totchaket Agricultural Project.

What they grow: Varied

Lessons learned and success stories:

- Permafrost subsidence creates cultivation challenges; requires local knowledge and adaptation.
- Small farms can be highly productive - three acres feeding 200 people.
- Indigenous-led agricultural networks and passive-solar greenhouse designs show promise.
- Community-scale, knowledge-driven farming may be more suitable than large industrial models in Alaskan context.

goosefootak.com

Appendix C: Community Visit Summary Report

[shared separately, full PDF will be added in final pdf report]

Appendix D: City of Saint Paul Greenhouse Funding Opportunities

Federal Programs Update: USDA	FY2026 budget eliminated funding for the Local Food Promotion Program, Farmers Market Program, Micro-Grants for Food Security, Community Facilities Grants, NRCS High Tunnel Initiative (EQIP).
Funding Priorities	Greenhouse funding, community development and capital projects, sustainable agriculture, food security, farm-to-school. All research was focused on the capital funding aspect of the CSP project.
Eligibility:	Research was focused on grants open to local government applicants.
Minimum Potential Award:	>$25,000

Federal, State and Private Foundation Grant Programs

1. **Community Support Grants**

Funding Agency: Rasmuson Foundation

Deadline: Applications are accepted online year-round from an established 501(c)(3) organization, or a local or Tribal government with a track record of successful community collaboration and project management. Applications for capital projects from prior Foundation grant recipients are reviewed quarterly and will typically receive a decision within three to six months. Applications for programmatic projects, or from partners who are new to the Foundation, are reviewed semiannually by the Board and will receive a decision within six to twelve months.

Award Information: $35,000 - $250,000

Description: Community Support grants fund capital projects and projects with broad community impact.

Additional Notes: Recent mid-sized Community Support grants include a community garden and kitchen.

2. **Community Development Block Grant**

Funding Agency: State of Alaska

Deadline: Typically released November – January annually, 2025 not yet released.

Award Information: Maximum award of $850,000.

Description: Alaska Community Development Block Grant Program (CDBG) are to provide financial resources to Alaskan communities for public facilities and planning activities which address issues detrimental to the health and safety of local residents and to reduce the costs of essential community services. The program may also fund Special Economic Development activities which result in the creation of jobs for low and moderate income persons.

Additional Notes: This qualifies as a Community Facility project, but may also qualify as a Special Economic Development project, because it provides overall economic benefit to low- and moderate-income communities. Application guidelines may change for 2025.

3. **America's Healthy Food Financing Initiative (HFFI)**

Funding Agency: Reinvestment Fund (on behalf of USDA Rural Development)

Deadline: Inquiry Form Deadlines are typically October, March and August. Application deadlines are typically January, May and October.

Award Information: Program Funding: $9 million annually, Award Max: $250,000 for implementation grants

Description: Competitive grants and technical assistance will be available for eligible food retail and food retail supply chain projects in the predevelopment and implementation stages. The HFFI FARE Fund could assist a variety of organizations, business models, and capital needs of ventures that process, distribute, aggregate, market, and sell healthy, fresh, and affordable foods to underserved communities and markets. Funding is designed to support catalytic projects that aren't able to access traditional financing and may be used for predevelopment activities, equipment, construction hard costs, acquisition of land or buildings, and other one-time soft costs such as community engagement and environmental assessment. Eligible applicant entities include for-profit business enterprises (including a corporation, limited liability company, sole proprietor, public benefit corporation); cooperatively-owned businesses; tax-exempt nonprofit corporations; institutions of higher education; state and local governments and governmental agencies, authorities, commissions and food policy councils; tribal governments and tribal governmental agencies, authorities, and food policy councils.

Additional Notes: At least $16,000,000 is available for loans. This program is funded through 2026.

4. RurAL CAP Small Grants

Funding Agency: RurAL CAP Foundation
Deadline: Deadline periods are April 30, August 31, November 30.

Award Information: $500 - $25,000. Large award amounts are considered on a case-by-case basis.

Description: Managed by Rural Energy Enterprises, Inc., the RurAL CAP Foundation funds a limited number of small grants for educational and charitable purposes that support low-income individuals and rural communities. Focus areas include culture, community, leadership, food security and environment. Types of funded projects include:

- Projects that encourage the sharing of knowledge and engage volunteers and community members;
- Events where community members learn skills for life, such as a youth music camp or Elders teaching youth how to subsistence hunt or fish;
- Projects that have long-term impacts on a community, such as building a garden or recycling center; and
- Events that build the capacity of local government, such as workshops on project design and proposal writing.

Additional Notes: Food security grants support work that protects and enhances subsistence practices, learning to grow food or supporting food banks. NV of Port Lions received a $7,500 grant for a hydroponics unit at the Port Lions farm.

5. Equitable Food Systems

Funding Agency: W.K. Kellogg Foundation

Deadline: Rolling

Award Information: Typical range of $25,000 - $600,000 with multi-year awards possible

Description: This funding priority's purpose is to support projects that help children grow up healthy, protect and respect the natural environment, and help communities access the nutrition they need. W.K.K.F supports efforts to address challenges and transform food systems to better serve communities, farmers, workers, businesses, families, children and our natural environment.

Additional Notes: This is a very competitive grant-maker, with only 17% of grants awarded to new grantees. Program funds may be used for programming, direct food costs, food education and food distribution concepts.

6. **Quarterly Grants Program**

Funding Agency: Northwest Area Foundation

Deadline: Quarterly and annual grants are by invitation only. To submit a general inquiry with project information, reach out to grantseekers@nwaf.org or Cody Stalker, Program Coordinator, at (651) 225-3888

Award Information: Typical award range is $25,000 - $500,000.

Description: Grantmaking supports organizations building racial, social, and economic justice—helping communities within our region of eight states and 76 Native nations thrive on their own terms. They're advancing long-overdue change in deep connection with the land they inhabit and communities they serve—Native Americans, communities of color, immigrants, refugees, and people in rural areas.

Additional Notes: Past awards supported varied organization types and a range of development and capital projects.

7. **Community Change Grants**

Funding Organization: Annie E. Casey Foundation

Deadline: Solicited invitations only.

Award Information: Average grant sizes are $75,000 with an award range of $50,000 - $950,000 for capital projects.

Description: The Annie E. Casey Foundation is committed to building a brighter future for children who face significant obstacles on the road to adulthood. We invest in innovative ideas, practices and policies that have the potential to help millions thrive. Community Change strategies include improving food security in communities with limited food access in the U.S.

Additional Notes: Outreach to this funder would be required. Applications are by invitation only, with few open application grants available.

Low and No-Interest Lending Programs

1. **Community Facilities Direct Loan Program - Alaska**

Funding Agency: U.S. Department of Agriculture

Deadline: Open Year Round

Award Information: current interest rates for the 1st Quarter of Fiscal Year 2025, effective July 1, 2025 – Sept 30, 2025 for Saint Paul are 4.5%, which may change for FY2026.

Description: This direct low-interest loan program provides affordable funding to develop essential community facilities in rural areas. An essential community facility is defined as a facility that provides an essential service to the local community for the orderly development of the community in a primarily rural area, including local food systems such as community gardens, food pantries, community kitchens, food banks, food hubs or greenhouses.

Additional Notes: for small communities of 5,500 or less and AMI below 80% of state non-metro median household income.

2. CDFI Fund New Markets Tax Credit

Funding Agency: U.S. Department of Treasury

Description: NMTC Program incentivizes community development and economic growth through the use of tax credits that attract private investment to distressed communities. Alaska Growth Capital is one of several Community Development Entity awarded NMTC funds to finance eligible projects in Alaska. CDEs sell tax credits to private investors in exchange for a cash investment, which can be used to provide a low-interest loan or equity investment. NMTCs typically involve multiple funding sources in a project capital stack. Opportunity Zones attract greater investment from eligible investors.

Additional Notes: Use the Opportunity Finance Network's CDFI locator for more Alaska-focused CDFIs.

3. Rasmuson Program Related Investments (PRIs)

Funding Agency: Rasmuson Foundation

Description: Commonly structured as long-term, below-market rate loans, PRIs refer to a collection of financial instruments that can support a charitable project or activity. PRIs also include equity investments, linked deposits, loan guarantees, recoverable grants, and more. Rasmuson Foundation looks for PRI opportunities in family, workforce and senior housing; community and economic development; and nonprofit facilities.

4. America's Healthy Food Financing Initiative (HFFI)

Funding Agency: Reinvestment Fund (on behalf of USDA Rural Development)

Deadline: Rolling

Description: Financing could assist a variety of organizations, business models, and capital needs of ventures that process, distribute, aggregate, market, and sell healthy, fresh, and affordable foods to underserved communities and markets. Applicants may be a variety of different kinds of organizations or businesses, but applications should demonstrate how funding will support the creation, expansion, or retention of a food retail or food enterprise business model. Interest rates may range between 0 to 6%, fixed with 3% being a typical rate. : Applicants may be expected to contribute no less than 10% of project budget (not including HFFI FARE Fund grants) as equity contribution.

Additional Notes: All loans will be subject to USDA regulations regarding use of funds.