



Request For Proposals

(RFP)

**MARKET ANALYSIS AND
FEASIBILITY STUDY FOR
NEIGHBORHOOD FOOD
MARKET**

*HEALTHY FOOD FINANCING
INITIATIVE (HFFI) 2024
PLANNING GRANT*



About Connected Communities

Founded in 2015, Connected Communities is a nonprofit organization serving the EMMA and Beechwood neighborhoods in Rochester, NY. Our mission is to partner with Beechwood and EMMA residents to break the cycle of poverty through antiracist community revitalization and equitable resource coordination. Guided by the Purpose-Built Communities model, we focus on four pillars of development: Mixed-Income Housing, Cradle-to-Career Education, Community Wellness, and Economic Empowerment. We believe neighborhoods are ecosystems where focused and holistic investments can create transformational change. As the designated Community Quarterback, Connected Communities collaborates with residents, local leaders, and organizations to align resources and ensure strategies are driven by the community's vision.

Visit Our Website:

www.connectedcommunitiesroc.org

Target Audience

Connected Communities' target population is the Beechwood and EMMA neighborhoods in Rochester, NY, serving approximately 10,370 residents. 42% of all residents and 57% of children in Beechwood and EMMA live in poverty. Considering that Rochester is the poorest city of its size in America, the immediacy of need cannot be overstated. EMMA and Beechwood have a high density of young families: 40% of households have children under 18 compared to the city average of 25%. Our collaborative serves a majority-minority population; only 27% of residents are non-Hispanic white. Poor health outcomes are elevated with higher rates of obesity, lack of insurance, cancer, and blood lead levels in children than the city and county averages. Current conditions stem from a history of disinvestment, aging housing stock, structural racism, and underemployment that are all too common in post-industrial American cities. Limited access to transportation and a high level of uninsured residents see barriers to economic success and physical and mental health.

Beechwood and EMMA Comprehensive Neighborhood Plan

The Beechwood and EMMA Comprehensive Neighborhood Plan (CNP), revised in 2024, serves as a 10+ year roadmap, outlining strategies to address economic inequity, health disparities, and barriers to upward mobility. This feasibility study is a critical step toward realizing one of the CNP's identified goals: expanding access to healthy, affordable food while building local economic opportunity. [Please review the CNP here.](#)

Project Outline

Reinvestment Fund has awarded Connected Communities a Neighborhood Market Planning Phase grant, supported by the Healthy Food Financing Initiative (HFFI). The planning phase must be completed within one year and will assess the feasibility of establishing a nonprofit or cooperative grocery store at 359 Webster Avenue in the Beechwood Neighborhood.

Currently, the Beechwood neighborhood has limited grocery options, with a Save-A-Lot in Goodman Plaza and the Rochester Public Market adjacent to the Beechwood neighborhood. The planned market will be located at 359 Webster Avenue in the Beechwood neighborhood of Rochester, NY, with adjacent parcels acquired to support potential expansion or market operations. These neighborhoods are considered both a food desert and a food swamp.

This project falls under the Economic Empowerment Pillar, advancing our vision of leveraging neighborhood resources to create inclusive, sustainable economic ecosystems. The idea was born out of community engagement efforts in 2015, during which charrettes, based on resident input, highlighted the urgent need for accessible fresh food. These early efforts, along with a St. John Fisher University capstone project surveying residents, revealed a strong community desire for a grocery store offering fresh foods and fostering a welcoming atmosphere. Community engagement continues to play a vital role, with ongoing outreach and facilitation managed by our internal team.

The initiative seeks to evaluate the need and marketability of a non-BLT (beer, lottery, tobacco) grocery store designed to prioritize customer service and attract community members. A component of the plan should include hiring residents to enhance community investment and create employment opportunities.

Project Goal

To evaluate the feasibility of a sustainable nonprofit or cooperative grocery store, considering community needs, market demand, and operational viability. The consultant will also assist in engaging residents and stakeholders to ensure alignment with the neighborhood's vision.

Scope of Work

1. Conduct a comprehensive market analysis, including an assessment of current grocery options, community demographics, and food access challenges in Beechwood.
2. Develop a community engagement strategy to gather input from residents and stakeholders, ensuring the proposed grocery model reflects neighborhood priorities.
3. Provide a feasibility study, evaluating:
 - a. Governance and ownership models (e.g., cooperative, nonprofit, private enterprise).
 - b. Financial viability and funding opportunities.
 - c. Economic and social impact projections.
4. Present findings and recommendations in a final report and presentation, designed for both stakeholders and community residents.

Key deliverables include:

- **Market Analysis:** Recommendations based on community demand, competition, and potential market share.

- **Operational Feasibility:** Financial modeling, cost analysis, and governance structures.
- **Community Engagement Plan:** Strategies for incorporating resident input into design and decision-making processes.
- **Implementation-Ready Plan:** Clear steps to move the project from feasibility to implementation, including potential funding sources.

Budget

The total budget for this project, including all consultant fees, travel, materials, and other expenses, is \$75,000. Proposals should include a detailed budget that aligns with the scope of work and timeline.

Submission Requirements

To be considered, proposals must include:

- **Background of the Organization/Firm:** Overview of relevant experience, including previous work in food access, feasibility studies, and community engagement.
- **Proposed Process and Timeline:** Detailed approach to fulfilling the scope of work. Projected timeline for completing the deliverables within one year.
- **Budget:** Cost required to fulfill project scope and meet deliverables.

Decision Timeline and Process

- **RFP Information Webinar:** December 17, 2025, at 10 AM EST. Please register here: [Bit.ly/grocerwebinar](https://bit.ly/grocerwebinar)
- **Proposal Submission Deadline:** February 3, 2025, at 5 PM EST. Proposals must be submitted via email to Davis Craig at davis@connectedcommunitiesroc.org.
- **Decision Announcement:** February 28, 2025.

Contact

For questions or additional information, please contact:

Davis Craig

Director of Economic Empowerment

Email: davis@connectedcommunitiesroc.org

Glossary

- **Antiracist** - An approach to actively oppose racism by challenging systemic inequalities, biases, and discriminatory practices. It involves recognizing, addressing, and dismantling structures that perpetuate racial disparities, while promoting equity and justice for all racial and ethnic groups.
- **Community Quarterback** - An organization that is locally connected, deeply invested, and committed to a specific neighborhood and the people who live there. The CQ guides the vision and strategy, builds relationships, coordinates resources, and centers residents.
- **Community Revitalization** - The process of improving the physical, social, and economic conditions of a community through initiatives that address housing, infrastructure, public spaces, education, and employment opportunities, with the goal of fostering a thriving and sustainable environment for residents.

- **Community Wellness** - A holistic approach to improving the physical, mental, social, and environmental health of a community. It involves initiatives that promote access to healthcare, mental health support, recreational activities, and a clean and safe environment.
- **Comprehensive Neighborhood Plan (CNP)** - A strategic and detailed roadmap for the sustainable development and improvement of a specific neighborhood. It addresses various aspects, such as housing, transportation, public spaces, economic development, and social services, to enhance the quality of life for residents.
- **Cradle-to-Career Education** - An educational framework that provides continuous support and opportunities for learning from early childhood through adulthood. It integrates academic, social, and career development resources to ensure individuals are prepared for lifelong success.
- **Economic Empowerment** - The process of enabling individuals and communities to take control of their economic future through access to education, employment, entrepreneurship, financial literacy, and resources. This leads to increased financial stability and reduced economic disparities.
- **Food Desert** - areas that have limited access to food that is plentiful, affordable, or nutritious.
- **Food Swamp** - areas with a high density of establishments selling high-calorie fast food and junk food.
- **Healthy Food Financing Initiative (HFFI)** - A program that provides funding and support to increase access to healthy, affordable food in underserved communities. HFFI supports the development of grocery stores, farmers' markets, and other food retail outlets in areas with limited access to fresh and nutritious food.
- **Mixed-Income Housing** - Residential developments that include units for people across various income levels, combining affordable, workforce, and market-rate housing. This model promotes socioeconomic diversity and aims to reduce housing segregation.
- **Neighborhoods** -
 - **Beechwood Neighborhood** – Located in the southeast quadrant, its boundaries reach Bay Street to the north, Atlantic Avenue to the south, Culver Road to the east and North Goodman Street to the west. It is a diverse, primarily residential neighborhood, with many of the homes built in the 1920s. It is known for its tree-lined streets, community gardens, and welcoming community.
 - **EMMA Neighborhood** – Adjacent to Beechwood, also in the city's southeast quadrant and named after East Main and Mustard streets and Atlantic Avenue, EMMA extends from East Main Street, south to Atlantic Avenue with Culver Road as its eastern boundary and North Goodman on its west. Many people who live in EMMA regularly walk or bike to work, local businesses, libraries, parks, or the Rochester Public Market, or use the Rochester Transit System (RTS), whose headquarters bridge the EMMA and Beechwood neighborhoods. You'll find many of EMMA's other amenities along East Main Street and Culver Road.