AGENDA

• Mini-grant Program Overview
• Case Studies
• Lessons Learned
• Next Steps
LOCAL FOOD MINI-GRANT PROGRAM

• Goal: Empower Anchorage residents to increase their community’s access to fresh, locally-grown produce
• Modeled after Cities of Service Love Your Block program
  • $500 - $1000 mini-grants
• School indoor and outdoor garden projects, edible landscaping, church gardens, etc.
• $7000 provided by Mayor’s Office Cities of Service grant; distributed by Alaska Food Policy Council
• After success of first round, received $7000 match from Alaska Dept. of Health and Social Services
BY THE NUMBERS

- Received **35 applications**
  - Ranged from mushroom growing kits to food forests
- **17 mini-grants** awarded
  - 8 during first round; 9 during second round
- Approximately **560 people** ate food grown as a result of the projects
- More than **415 volunteers** participated in these projects
- Lutheran Church of Hope donated **3640 pounds** of produce to Lutheran Social Services Food Pantry

Airport Heights Gardeners
PROGRAM OVERVIEW

- Eligibility
  - Individuals, community groups, churches, schools, nonprofit organizations, etc.
  - Had to involve community volunteers and benefit the public
- Accessible application process
- Applications prioritized based on:
  - Benefit to low-income neighborhoods
  - Impact on community resilience and food security
  - Demonstrated community interest and volunteer involvement
  - Quality of metrics and expected outcomes
- Outreach and Grant Workshops
Case Studies
SPENARD COMMUNITY GARDEN

- Collaboration between Yarducopia, Anchorage Permaculture Guild, CIHA’s Church of Love, Anchorage Community House, Anchorage Community Land Trust, and Spenard residents
- Result of over two years of planning and activism
- Communal garden based on classes and groups rather than individual plots
- Produce went to garden participants and Lutheran Social Services

Permablitz--Built 1500 ft² garden in 6 hours!
WOODLAND PARK BOYS AND GIRLS CLUB GARDEN

- Revamped club garden
- UAA Nursing student led garden club; provided nutrition classes and taught how to “grow, troubleshoot, harvest, cook, and eat vegetables”
- 50 Boys and Girls Club members participated throughout the summer
WILLIWAW ELEMENTARY SCHOOL GARDEN

Williwaw, UAA’s School of Public Health, and NeighborWorks Alaska partnered to bring a garden curriculum program to Title 1 schools.

89% of students (135 out of 152) said "yes" or "maybe" when asked if they would garden this summer. At the time of the pre-test, 32% of students had not gardened before, and likely would not have this upcoming summer.

“We got to eat lots of food I did not think I would like. My favorite thing about garden lessons was planting radish seeds. We got to check on our plants and learn more about them.”
ALEUTIAN PRIBILOF ISLANDS ASSOCIATION
ELDERS AND YOUTH GREENHOUSE

• **60 youth** ages 5-10 attended gardening lessons during June 2018 culture camp
• Provided lettuce, carrots, tomatoes, and cabbage for **45 Elders**

“We are excited to plant again next year and watch our strawberry plants produce in year two! We feel this project was impactful in teaching and in providing food to our Elders.”
ALASKA MENTAL HEALTH CONSUMER WEB GARDEN

- The Web provides “peer support to individuals in Anchorage that experience mental health issues and/or homelessness”
- **Expanded garden** that they’ve used since 2005
- Volunteers and clients tended the garden, hosted a weekly cooking class, and used produce in *meals for 20-35 people per week*

"It gives hands on experience…bringing us back to nature and the earth, and ultimately **limiting our dependence on store bought foods.**"

"It promotes healthy communication and coming together in the community which **encourages healthy lifestyles and relieves stress**. The garden is a space which makes people feel awesome, peaceful, quiet, at ease, relaxed and comfortable."
LESSONS LEARNED

• $500-1000 can go a long way to launch/expand community projects
• Served as important catalyst for several groups
• Expect lots of applicants!
• Create scoring rubric at beginning of process and make available to applicants
• Think about valuable metrics
• Applicants that didn’t understand appropriate permitting for projects on state/city land

Government Hill
Elementary students building a grow tower
LESSONS LEARNED

• Awarded projects that didn’t pan out (i.e. Loussac Library)
• Be prepared for management workload
• Less rigorous reporting process
• Coordinate promotion of awardee projects
  • Summer social media plan
• Have a plan in place to replicate program
NEXT STEPS/DISCUSSION

• Expand Anchorage program
  • Included in draft Anchorage Climate Action Plan
• Statewide program
  • Securing long term funding
• How to encourage other types of projects
  • i.e. gleaning, food waste recovery, etc.
THANK YOU!

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Special thanks to the rest of the Local Food Mini-Grant Selection Committee:

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