

THE TUBMAN FOOD INNOVATION CENTER



OVERVIEW

Tubman recently completed a feasibility study and plan to renovate the dormant commercial kitchen at the Harriet Tubman Center East located in Maplewood and create a food-focused social enterprise with multiple community partners.

Tubman hired **Food Works Group** and **DCN Strategies** to determine if the 7,638 square foot commercial kitchen could be an asset to the greater community. Last used by the Sisters of St. Benedict in the early 2000s, the enormous kitchen features natural light and an open layout. After engaging with stakeholders from Tubman and the local food ecosystem, we determined that there is a critical and immediate need to renovate this space for a number of food related uses.

To that end, we are pleased to announce the creation of the **Tubman Food Innovation Center Social Enterprise Fund**. Tubman is seeking \$4.54M in one-time funding to renovate the commercial kitchen to be used to prepare meals for people experiencing homelessness AND to create a new contract manufacturing site for entrepreneurs seeking to scale their food businesses.

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OUR PARTNERS



FoodOps is a food manufacturing and operations advisory firm that helps scaling Consumer packaged goods (CPG) food businesses and the facilities that produce their products. FoodOps provides fractional and project-based consulting services with a team of operations experts, food scientists, quality control experts, and engineers. FoodOps will serve as the kitchen operator, ensuring that the kitchen is running safely and efficiently.

“FoodOps, along with the other stakeholders is passionate about breeding success...this facility is being built with versatility in mind. This mindset will enable the Tubman Food Innovation Center to serve dozens of food entrepreneurs, create many jobs, and provide more dollars to our local economy.”
- John Castillo, FoodOps



4 Access Partners is excited to partner with Tubman to create the Food Innovation Center in Maplewood. Our mission is to raise up underrepresented members of local food ecosystems, with a focus on woman- and/or BIPOC-led companies. Our goal is to provide these underserved entrepreneurs with the resources they need to take their companies to the next level. With the Tubman Food Innovation Center, we will be able to help more of our clients expand and scale their food businesses and ultimately create more wealth.”

-John Mendesh, 4AP



Tubman is thrilled to partner with **4 Access Partners (4AP)** as a lead partner. 4AP is a nonprofit organization dedicated to ensuring that entrepreneurs in the food manufacturing industry have the expertise, training, capital, and scale needed to create a successful and sustainable business model. Their goal is to support underrepresented members of local communities, with a focus on women and Black, indigenous, and people of color (BIPOC)-owned retail-ready consumer packaged goods (CPG) food businesses. They achieve results by aggregating and deploying world-class expertise from America's finest food companies to address the challenges and opportunities facing local food ecosystems. They provide expertise, training, capital, and scale.

In addition, we are excited to partner with **Involve MN** as the anchor tenant for the commercial kitchen. Involve MN is a nonprofit organization established with a focus on unhoused, unsheltered, and chronically homeless individuals in the greater Minneapolis and St. Paul area. Involve MN utilizes its commercial kitchen staff and specially trained outreach team to prepare and deliver more than 8,000 meals per week to those struggling with homelessness. With a focus on underserved and marginalized communities, Involve MN emphasizes culturally responsive, supportive services and resource allocation for our Cities' most vulnerable citizens. The Involve MN team works together to deliver 3 hot meals daily, 365 days a year, along with other essentials to preserve people's dignity, ease their struggles and facilitate effective transition to housing. The Tubman facility will allow Involve MN to grow its meal operations to over 12,000 meals per week in response to the growing needs of the community.

"We are thrilled to be partnering with Tubman as part of the Food Innovation Center. Involve MN would be able to grow our impact and make more hot meals for people experiencing homelessness. We would be able to make more than 12,000 meals each week in this state of the art facility."

**- Grant Snyder,
Involve MN**



KEY AREAS OF IMPACT

Food business optimization and economic growth:

Some of the most valuable services a co-manufacturing model provides scaling food businesses are outsourced labor, production, and warehousing; certification and regulatory compliance; withdrawal and recall capacity; bulk ingredient ordering and price breaks;

and perhaps most importantly, the ability to focus on sales and growth—rather than food production. The facility would offer at least 55 production shifts per month and is predicted to support a minimum of 20 food businesses with weekly or bi-monthly production runs. Say a local CPG business wanted to get their product into 100 stores, which is a common threshold for growth. That food business owner would have to

produce more than 2,000 units a week, requiring multiple production shifts in a commercial kitchen, to generate the same potential revenue from one production shift at the TFIC co-manufacturer. In its first full year of operation, the TFIC has the potential to produce over 2,000,000 units of product and assuming a moderately-priced item, generate more than \$7M in sales revenue for under-resourced food entrepreneurs in this building alone.



Regional food ecosystem:

The demand for a food manufacturing facility of this scale and scope is of high demand in the Upper Midwest. Food businesses that are defined as pre-scale or scaling, have a proven market presence and robust sales forecast but produce below the minimum order quantities (MOQ) of standard co-manufacturers, account for a growing number of the successful food businesses in this area. This facility at full utilization could service a food business as it starts to gain critical mass until it prepares for an

exit or acquisition and allows entrepreneurs to plan their next move while sustaining their production. The range of services this facility could provide to Minnesota-based businesses, as well as businesses from neighboring states, means a facility of this caliber and scale would be operationally and financially sustainable long term. Through its vast network of partners, the TFIC team predicts this renovation and reactivation of a commercial food production space is just over one-quarter the cost of a newly-constructed building of its size and scope, estimated to cost upwards of \$15M to develop.

Career development pathways and job creation:

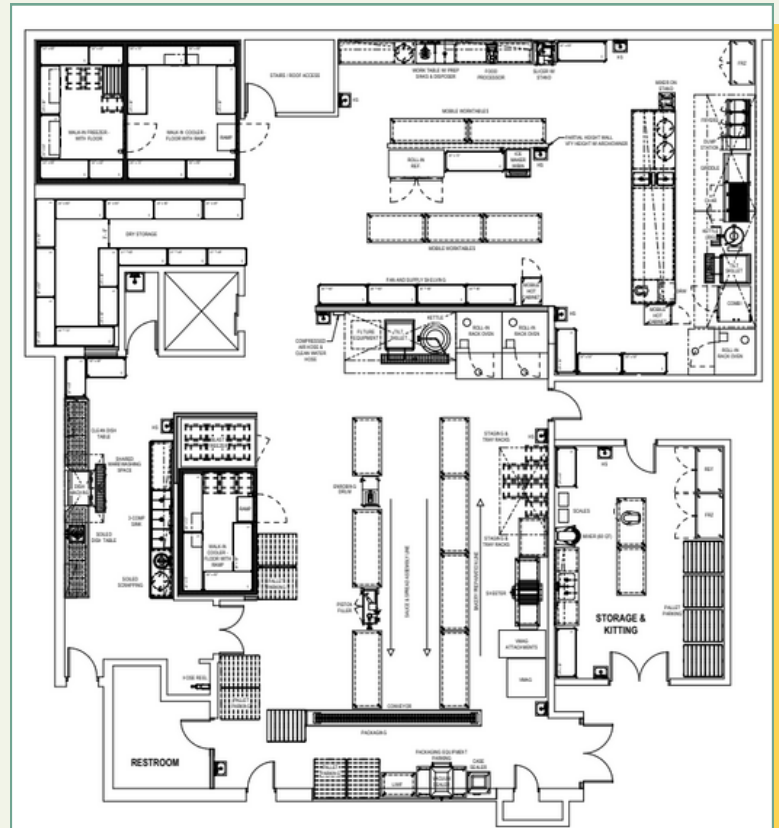
The facility will support the upskilling, reskilling, and leadership development for a minimum of 18 full-time, living wage food manufacturing and food skills jobs, and numerous part-time positions with the anchor facility operators/lessees. In addition to onsite jobs, strategic partnerships with food manufacturing workforce development programs such



as the partnership between 4 Access Partners and Summit Academy could create a pipeline for new recruits through their food manufacturing workforce development program. Furthermore, Involve MN prides itself on being a workforce re-entry point with several members of their team having experienced homelessness prior to becoming a cook or outreach worker.

Meal preparation for underserved community members:

The Tubman kitchen would have the ability to prepare more than 12,000 hot, ready-to-eat meals per week for myriad community members for whom access to healthy, high-quality meals is infrequent, unpredictable, or not possible. InvolveMN travels to nearly 40 encampment sites throughout the Twin Cities metropolitan area delivering three hot meals per day directly to people experiencing homelessness. Expanding meals production capacity would also allow more hot meals to be produced for other community organizations servicing those with housing and food insecurity, with opportunities for culturally-connected meals as well expand distribution out-state to neighboring counties in southern, western, and northern Minnesota. While Tubman is not looking to create or manage food-related programs, there is a



significant connection between entrepreneurship and the ability for people to leave abusive relationships. For some people who have suffered physical, emotional and financial abuse by their partners, entrepreneurship offers an effective path to economic independence, safety and healing. During the project team's two facilitated focus groups with Tubman residents and program participants, many of the participants cited their positive relationships with food making, and their past experiences with commercial food production.



Capital improvements to launch the Tubman Food Innovation Center

We are grateful for the bipartisan support that secured state and federally appropriated funds for Great Dreams capital projects in 2023 and are returning to the state legislature to request the remaining \$2.5M to help underwrite this project.

Capital improvements include:

- New commercial kitchen & food production equipment (commercial ovens, stoves, steam kettles, etc.)
- Updated HVAC systems
- Specialty equipment for food manufacturing & packaging (securing used and donated equipment)
- New flooring
- Reinforced loading dock
- New exterior windows
- Fire suppression system
- Utility upgrades
- Additional freezer & cooler space

ABOUT TUBMAN

Tubman's mission is to advance opportunities for change so every person can experience safety, hope, and healing. This year, we'll serve approximately 16,500 people in the Twin Cities metro area of Minnesota who have experienced relationship violence, sex trafficking, homelessness, addiction, mental health challenges, and other trauma.

Tubman's comprehensive services include safety planning; shelter and housing; legal services; addiction-informed mental health assessment, treatment, and support; parenting education and child care; youth outreach, mobile case management, and in-school violence prevention education; job readiness and financial education; community education; and professional training for service providers.

THE GREAT DREAMS CAMPAIGN

The Great Dreams Campaign is a three-year campaign raising dedicated funds to accelerate our programs and make critical long-lasting investments in our facilities, programming, and staff that will strengthen our ability to meet people where they are in their journey from fear to freedom.

We look forward to talking with you about this critical work. Please reach out to:

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