

Agency: Commerce, Community and Economic Development

Grants to Named Recipients (AS 37.05.316)

Grant Recipient: Palmer Emergency Food and Community Services, Inc.

Federal Tax ID: 94-3164090

Project Title:

Project Type: New Construction and Land Acquisition

Palmer Emergency Food and Community Services, Inc. - Construction of New Facility

State Funding Requested: \$1,500,000
One-Time Need

House District: Mat-Su Areawide (25-30)

Brief Project Description:

Construction of new Palmer Food Bank facility. The current aging structure is inadequate in size and design for the current needs of the community and surrounding area.

Funding Plan:

Total Project Cost:	\$1,500,000
Funding Already Secured:	(\$0)
FY2025 State Funding Request:	<u>(\$1,500,000)</u>
Project Deficit:	\$0

Detailed Project Description and Justification:

The Palmer Food Bank (PFB) is a 501(c)(3) non-profit organization that distributes food to community members in need. Currently, the PFB is located at 221 S. Valley Way in Palmer, Alaska and distributes food from an 1800 square foot, wood frame structure built in 1940. PFB has been operating out of this building since 1991. The PFB building is used to warehouse food, administer client services, and provide clients with a food selection area.

Given the age and condition of the building, cramped interior, inefficient interior layout for food storage and distribution, inadequate amenities for volunteers, insufficient exterior access for volunteers and clients, and the ever-increasing client demand, the PFB board of directors and staff have undertaken the mission to secure funding for a larger building to meet current and anticipated future demand.

The need for a larger alternative space was confirmed by third-party expertise (recommended by the MatSu Health Foundation) of the current PFB facility that included the following findings:

- 1) PFB facilities do not meet current operational needs to provide food assistance to clients.
- 2) An undersized existing facility results in inadequate capacities for food storage and refrigeration making day-to-day logistics very challenging and inefficient.
- 3)The facility is crowded and undersized for the food needed on hand for the current client base.
- 4)There is a significant and time sensitive need to move the PFB into a facility that is safe, has adequate storage and allows for efficient distribution of food.
- 5)Lack of space throughout the building requires food stacking, multiple moves of food, decreased

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\$1,500,000
Approved

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efficiency of food distribution and limits clients' access to "shop" for items.

6)A single restricted entry and exit access into the building limits food deliveries into and food distribution out of the building.

7)Limited interior and exterior space frequently result in crowded, congested, and compromised individual security.

8)Structure and building systems are past their service life and not suitable for upgrade to current codes.

9)New construction at the current location is not likely due to the lot size and current right of way encroachment.

10) Volunteers have a heavy burden of managing and moving inventory multiple times.

The new building will be located at 404 S. Denali Street in Palmer. This lot is owned by PFB and is two blocks from the current PFB location. The new PFB building will be 4400 square feet and include sufficient warehouse space for current and future anticipated needs, dedicated office area(s), appropriate support facilities for staff and volunteers and reasonable client access. The proposed location of the new building will also have ample exterior drive areas and parking to enable staff, volunteers, and clients to safely access the facility. The estimated cost for the new building is \$1,500,000.

Project Timeline:

Design in Summer/Fall of 2024 with construction beginning in the Spring of 2025

Entity Responsible for the Ongoing Operation and Maintenance of this Project:

Palmer Emergency Food and Community Services, Inc.

Grant Recipient Contact Information:

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Has this project been through a public review process at the local level and is it a community priority? Yes No

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