



St. Agatha Church

November 29, 2016

Mr. Thom Alcazar
EATS Groceries
c/o talcazar@eatsgroceries.com

Dear Mr. Alcazar:

Please accept this letter of support for the proposed development of EATS Groceries (EATS). As a pastor serving on the west side for 10 years, I have seen a great need for an innovative grocery store that will not only serve the community with quality food, but will encourage healthy eating in a neighborhood where the population continues to struggle with obesity, diabetes and heart disease.

The EATS model offers a social enterprise committed to harnessing the power of private enterprise for the public benefit of improving health outcomes in primarily underserved and low-income communities. EATS is prepared to develop an established chain of sustainable grocery stores for the much needed food deserts that plague areas such as the West Side of Chicago.

The ideologies of their core beliefs are not only to confront the issue of food deserts, but also the absence of work opportunities for youth and ex-offenders. EATS emphasizes these priorities in providing opportunities to hire local residents and partner in contracting with local vendors in the communities.

EATS is planned to be a competitive and community contributing enterprise that considers the interests of stakeholders, employees, vendors and customers. As a community-first approach, they clearly see the value of engaging core institutions in the community, such as faith based organizations. At a recent presentation to over 50 clergy in North Lawndale, there was overwhelming support expressed by the faith community.

Unlike specialty or convenience grocery outlets that cater to underserved communities, EATS offers a broad selection, at reasonable prices, while providing high quality products. EATS plans to accomplish these goals by improving access to healthy foods, providing nutrition education, cooking instruction, and health-screening services to the local communities.

I am hopeful that EATS will find a welcoming home on the west side of Chicago... and soon! Promises have been made about bringing a quality grocery store to our North Lawndale community. Why not make it EATS?

Be assured of my prayers for the success of your efforts. Your success will be our success. Glad to support the effort!

Respectfully,


Fr. Larry Dowling, Pastor