

CAMPAIGN INVESTMENT NARRATIVE

Crooked Forest Institute | Phase 1 Adobe Neighborhood | Mimbres Valley, Grant County, NM | Prepared for NMIIC members, September 2026

AT A GLANCE

Organization	Crooked Forest Institute, a 501(c)(3) in Grant County. Runs a community land trust program, a vocational adobe construction program, and a worker-owned brick cooperative. Bricklebush LLC is its wholly owned development subsidiary.
Project	Phase 1 of a permanently affordable adobe neighborhood program: a trained local workforce, on-site brick production, shared infrastructure, and a 10-unit prototype neighborhood. Full program: 75 homes, roughly \$16M over ten years.
Location	52 debt-free acres in the Mimbres Valley. Approved water rights (5 acre-feet) and well permit. County land with no zoning barrier. Soil on site makes adobe brick without amendment.
Phase 1 capitalization	\$2,500,000 total. \$1,900,000 sought externally. \$320,000 already contributed (land, founder capital, member equity). \$280,000 open.
Immediate need	\$75,000 to \$100,000 bridge capital: licensed general contractor estimate, well drilling, RV site infrastructure, insurance, and grant applications.
Capital structure	Foundation first-loss grant, NM Housing Trust Fund, NMFA loan, impact PRI at 1.5 to 2%, CDFI senior debt at 5%. Milestone-gated release across four gates. Open to recoverable grants and guarantees.
Unit economics	\$120,000 target per 400 sq ft adobe home on a community land trust ground lease, \$10,000 down for the buyer. Target extrapolated from the prototype; to be locked by GC estimate before construction draws.
Design	Joseph Kennedy, earthen architect and author of two books on earth construction. Three home plans complete with construction documents.

THE CASE: WHY THIS, WHY HERE, WHY CFI

Why this. Grant County per capita income is \$31,010. It has no community development corporation and no community land trust. A Grant County mobile home park was just bought by a single out-of-state investor; lot rents rose 75% and residents now pay per-pet fees to live in homes they own. The only affordable housing on offer is rented land under a depreciating asset. A neighborhood the residents build, own, and can pass on is the structural answer.

Why here. The Mimbres Valley sits over shallow groundwater in a state where that is rare; neighboring wells hit water near 50 feet. The site soil was tested by making 4,000 bricks from it this summer; they stood unplastered through the monsoon. County land means no zoning process for the RV revenue already running. The land is owned outright, so the project can scale at the pace capital allows without a lender forcing the timeline.

Why CFI. Land, water rights, insurance, entity structure, home plans, and first production are done. A state apprenticeship placement is on site. A licensed general contractor and developer is advising on site plan and GC selection. The Cabinet Secretary for Housing and Workforce Solutions has a meeting on the calendar. The candid part: the operating budget is small and the organization has to prove cash flow before it is bankable. That is what the bridge raise is for, and why Phase 1 capital is gated behind it.

COMPARABLE PROJECTS AND PRECEDENTS

- + **Community Rebuilds, Moab, Utah.** Since 2010, student interns have built more than 40 energy-efficient straw bale and earthen-finish homes for low-income local workers, under a licensed general contractor, at costs reported as low as \$70 per square foot. The direct precedent for workforce-built affordable natural building in a rural tourism economy.
- + **YouthBuild (US Department of Labor).** National model in which young people build affordable housing while earning credentials, with federal reimbursement of training costs. The template for the state workforce reimbursement line in the Phase 1 model.
- + **Sawmill Community Land Trust, Albuquerque.** New Mexico's established community land trust, with permanently affordable homeownership on trust-owned land. Proof that the land trust ground lease works in this state's legal and lending environment; Fannie Mae and Freddie Mac both purchase land trust mortgages.
- + **Homewise and Anchorum Health Foundation, Santa Fe.** A \$10M program-related investment for affordable housing infrastructure. Local precedent for PRI financing of housing infrastructure by a New Mexico foundation, the structure proposed for the \$500K subordinate tranche here.

A full financial model, milestone schedule, and use of proceeds follow on the next two pages. We welcome NMIIC members' perspective on which structures best match their mandates.

Phase 1: \$2.5M Total Capitalization

Build the crew. Make the bricks. Prove the neighborhood. Workforce training, on-site adobe production, and shared infrastructure for a 10-unit prototype neighborhood on 52 debt-free acres.

Crooked Forest Institute · 501(c)(3) · 52 debt-free acres · Mimbres Valley, Grant County, NM · Revised September 2026 · Draft v2 for board review

WHAT PHASE 1 BUILDS

Phase 1 establishes three things in order: a trained local workforce, on-site adobe brick production, and the shared infrastructure (one well, one septic system, one microgrid) that makes a 10-unit neighborhood affordable. The 10 units are training builds first and revenue units second. Once online they host visitors and retreats and carry site operations while the community land trust homeownership pipeline develops. Lodging is bridge income, not the reason the neighborhood exists.

15 to 20 training graduates per year workforce pipeline target by 2029	13K bricks per year initial production capacity	11 units Phase 1 builds 10 prototype units + 1 workforce housing / classroom unit	\$1.90M external capital sought seeking / applied for
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WHY WORKFORCE FIRST

Trainees build → state workforce programs offset trainee wages → units come online → visitor revenue carries site operations → crew and bricks are ready → community land trust homes. Housing and workforce capital (NM Housing Trust Fund, HUD HOME funds, impact program-related investments, the state Opportunity Enterprise program) fund workforce and housing outcomes, not guest nights. Sequencing the workforce first makes the capital stack eligible.

USE OF PROCEEDS

Use	Amount	%	What it delivers
10 adobe prototype units, built by trainees	\$1,200,000	48%	Neighborhood online; per-home cost proven
Horizontal infrastructure: well, septic, microgrid	\$400,000	16%	Site can support construction
Brickyard + mobile mixing equipment	\$250,000	10%	13,000 bricks/yr capacity
Vocational training program (pilot)	\$150,000	6%	Workforce pipeline launched
Workforce housing + classroom unit	\$120,000	5%	Crew and trainees on site
Predevelopment + soft costs	\$200,000	8%	GC estimate, CHDO, legal, design
RV / camping infrastructure + operating reserve	\$180,000	7%	Early revenue + runway
TOTAL	\$2,500,000	100%	

Unit cost (\$120,000 per 400 sq ft home) is a target extrapolated from the prototype build. Predevelopment funds a licensed general contractor's estimate that locks it before construction capital is drawn.

PHASE 1 CAPITALIZATION

The \$2.5M figure is total Phase 1 capitalization, not a \$2.5M new-money raise. \$1.9M is sought externally. \$320K is already in. \$280K remains to be closed.

Category	Amount	Status / treatment
Identified external capital	\$1,900,000	Seeking / applied: \$375K foundation first-loss · \$375K NM Housing Trust Fund · \$220K NMFA PPRF loan · \$500K impact PRI · \$430K CDFI senior loan
Land, 52 acres	\$250,000	Secured · Tides Foundation grant (\$200K) + founder (\$50K) · noncash contribution · no liens
Founder loan, operations	\$40,000	Deployed · 0% · repayment deferred until operating cash is demonstrated
Co-op member equity	\$30,000	Building
Remaining capitalization need	\$280,000	Open · additional grant capital and/or validated retained operating cash
TOTAL PHASE 1 CAPITALIZATION	\$2,500,000	

Financial treatment: future gross operating revenue is not counted as capital available at closing. Only cash remaining after operating costs and debt service is treated as a source. The land is debt-free and stays community-owned; Phase 1 debt is secured at the project level.

Phase 1 Revenue and Workforce Plan

Four operating streams during Phase 1, stated at what the current model supports.

REVENUE LOGIC

Revenue stream	Current / modeled basis	Status
Workforce training reimbursement	State workforce programs offset trainee wages on each build. Reimbursement rate and program eligibility to be confirmed with NM Workforce Solutions.	Being scoped
Lodging / retreats, 10 units	10 units × \$125/night × 65% stabilized occupancy = \$296,563/yr, after units are online. Rate and occupancy need local comparables.	After build
RV / camping	Six sites live via Harvest Hosts and RV Overnights. \$25 to \$30/night boondocking today. Grows with signage, marked sites, and basic services.	Live · first guests
Brick production	\$15K (2026) → \$38K (2027) → \$75K (2028) modeled. Bricks from site soil stay on site; outside sales use brought-in material at distributed locations.	4,000 produced

Debt coverage, open item: at the modeled September 2027 run rate, cash available for debt service is roughly \$76K per year against roughly \$112K per year of modeled debt service. Coverage improves with confirmed workforce reimbursement, a smaller senior debt share, or first-loss capital covering the gap. The model shows this directly.

PROOF OF CONCEPT, ALREADY COMPLETED

Land and water	Production and operations
✓ 52 acres owned debt-free (Oct 2024), fee simple, no liens	✓ 4,000 adobe bricks produced from site soil (summer 2026); unplastered through the monsoon without damage
✓ Water rights approved: 5 acre-feet, no protest; well permit issued	✓ 150 sq ft prototype cabin built (2025); now housing the first on-site apprentice
✓ Three home designs with construction documents (Kennedy)	✓ RV hosting live: six sites on Harvest Hosts and RV Overnights; county land, no zoning barrier
✓ Brickbush LLC formed as the development subsidiary	✓ Liability, D&O, and volunteer insurance in place; first apprentice placed through NM Workforce Solutions

MILESTONE-GATED CAPITAL

Gate	Release condition	Target
1 · Site + production	Well drilled. Brickyard operational. RV sites marked and serviced. GC estimate locks the per-unit cost.	Mid 2027
2 · Units online	Construction verified. First units placed into service. Training cohort active on site.	Early 2028
3 · Revenue validation	Lodging occupancy at or above 65% for three consecutive months. Debt coverage verified against the model.	Late 2028
4 · Workforce + housing	First training cohort graduated. CHDO designation obtained. First community land trust home under contract.	2029

Tranche sizes follow the use of proceeds and are locked after the general contractor’s estimate. Targets reset from the original April 2026 schedule.

THE ASK

Now, bridge capital of \$75K to \$100K: funds the GC estimate, well drilling under the approved permit, RV site infrastructure and signage, insurance through May 2027, and the Opportunity Enterprise and Housing Trust Fund applications. It proves the organization can execute and generate cash before the larger raise.

Next, Phase 1 external capital of \$1.9M: a foundation first-loss grant funds Gate 1 and absorbs early risk; state grants and NMFA fund infrastructure and predevelopment; an impact PRI at 1.5 to 2% over 10 years funds units and production; CDFI senior debt at 5% is sized to coverage verified at Gate 3.

TEAM

Holly Noonan	Executive Director	Operations, land trust program design, compliance, community partnerships. Lincoln Institute Fellow 2025.
Anthony Martinez	Workforce Director	Vocational trainer for the youth build program; 10 years of Grant County youth programs; GC license in progress
Josh Montoya	Construction Systems	Mobile mixing rig and distributed brick supply chain
Coakee Wildcat	Foreman + Ecological Restoration	On-site build lead; land restoration planning
Joseph Kennedy	Architectural Partner	30-year earthen architect and author; designed all three home plans; advises remotely
WolfHorse Joe Saenz	Cultural Advisor	Chiricahua Apache Nantan; the campus sits on ancestral Chiricahua Apache land
Dan Antonioli	Development Advisor	Licensed general contractor and developer; site planning and GC selection