Albany Park, one of Chicago’s most diverse neighborhoods, has long been an entry point for immigrants and refugees. Many residents lack the resources needed to establish themselves and forge connections. This proposal uses an existing Albany Park Global Garden Farms program as a way to integrate newcomers into their neighborhoods.

The project sits above, around and inside the existing Kimball “L” station, a key transit center for thousands. New spaces include a garden, open-air and enclosed market, public plaza, demonstration kitchen, offices for Global Garden Farms and a public event space.

Half of the garden plots, which will be built above the existing train tracks at grade, will be dedicated to training refugees and helping them gain a foothold in the community. The other half will be open to all as shared space.

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Food Roof Farm, the first rooftop farm in St. Louis, is a model for urban agriculture, stormwater management and community development. The farm was designed to maximize food production while providing a unique community green space and education center. Other design elements include a shaded multi-functional community hub space, greenhouse, chicken house (with a green roof), living wall and hydroponic towers integrated into a beautiful green space for the enjoyment of the surrounding urban community. By placing a farm in the heart of a dense urban neighborhood, the Urban Harvest STL program educates, feeds and inspires people of all ages, raising awareness around issues of health and nutrition, so local residents become empowered to take action in their own lives.