

BUILDING RENOVATION PROJECT

Updated Fall 2022

HISTORY

In 2018,

- The buildings owned and operated by Neighborhood Alliance had fallen into disrepair and were in need of some upgrades.
- There was over \$200,000 in repairs needed throughout all facilities. There was very little budget available.
- The agency had a fleet of 11 vehicles, one new, but most of them were in pretty bad shape and needed either extensive repairs or ongoing repairs, or just needed to be flat out replaced, including one that was on blocks that didn't even work.
- The agency also had 16 passenger vans that were not up to regulations. Changes in childcare forced us to get buses instead of vans.

Neighborhood Alliance's administrative offices were located in a very nice suite in Elyria near Midway Mall. However, this space was costly and the agency had plenty of empty offices in its other buildings. As a cost saving measure, all administrative staff were relocated within the service program spaces.

- Home Me Grow Home Visiting staff was moved into the Elyria childcare center.
- Rising Titans staff office was relocated to the Lorain childcare center.
- The rest of the administrative staff was relocated to the SKE Building in Lorain alongside the homeless shelter, Home Delivered Meals, and the Early Intervention program.
- Finance and Human Resource staff were moved into the Oberlin Senior Center.

Splitting up the administrative staff had some unintended consequences. On one hand it really allowed the administrative staff to get an inside look into each of its programs. On the other hand, team communication and coordination was, and continues to be, quite challenging.

In December 2018, Neighborhood Alliance took possession of 440 West Lorain Ave. in Oberlin, a.k.a. Naomi's House, the location of the now closed Family Promise. Their programming was transferred to Neighborhood Alliance, increasing the agency's state registered capacity from 50 to 64 total beds, with an additional four held for emergencies. But those were not additional beds for Lorain County, just moved from one agency to the next. The shelter started to get more and more crowded. Neighborhood Alliance is now the only family mass shelter in Lorain County.

In July 2019 Neighborhood Alliance received some additional funding that allowed the agency to add positions to the Early Intervention program, but the team had nowhere to go. Early Intervention staff were housed three to an office. Staff came up with creative solutions using tips and tricks from Pinterest; they converted closets into offices.

They literally took off the doors and built in a small desk. Temporary walls have been added in the conference and break rooms to make more offices.

In late 2019, the opportunity came up for the YMCA building.

“I remember driving out of the parking lot the first day and thinking this is home. This is where we belong. This is the location that Neighborhood Alliance needs to be in. It's the right neighborhood, it's close to downtown. It's just really a great location.

And the building, I thought it was beautiful. Everybody else probably didn't see what I did the first time through and maybe not even the second or third time through. But when I looked at that building, I saw a childcare center and I saw a senior nutrition kitchen. I saw storage space, which is something that we were terribly hurting for.

*I saw an admin suite that was functional where all of us could be together in one location again, but still with our programs and still able to have that connection that we had after moving into the program facilities the year before. But the YMCA building was listed at \$750,000. That was just too much for us.” - **Alicia Foss, CEO, Neighborhood Alliance***

At the end of 2019, Neighborhood Alliance reached out to Dick Bonner to discuss YMCA property, thinking he had turned down purchasing it previously and wondering about the reasons why. They then learned that he did, in fact, own the property.

As Mr. Bonner learned about the organization and the populations it serves throughout Lorain County, he knew that he wanted to be a part of the organization's story. “I was blown away by the breadth of essential services that they provide for people of all ages and backgrounds. I learned that at any given moment, thousands of lives are supported in one way or another by this amazing group of people.”

He ultimately gifted the entire building and property to Neighborhood Alliance in what is now one of the largest contributions the organization has ever received. “If you can find the funds to make the building suit you, it's yours,” Bonner said.

The site of the former YMCA, now referred to as Washington Ave. was gifted to Neighborhood Alliance in early 2020.

WHY Neighborhood Alliance

Neighborhood Alliance is empowering the people of our community with the tools to create a better life for themselves. The agency is uniquely positioned to assist local residents when circumstances change and the reality of making some of life's most difficult choices sets in.

- 97% of the population served by Neighborhood Alliance live in poverty.
- Neighborhood Alliance has been compassionately caring for the community since 1927.
- Neighborhood Alliance is **the only emergency mass shelter for families**.
- Neighborhood Alliance is **the only emergency mass shelter for women**, other than Genesis House (a domestic violence shelter).
- Neighborhood Alliance is **the only contracted provider of Early Intervention services** in Lorain County.
- Neighborhood Alliance **already provides senior meals in 80% of the communities** in Lorain County (Office on Aging covers five or six communities and the city of N. Ridgeville provides meals to its own residents.)
- The staff have a rich understanding of the needs in this community.
- The current services are excellent and highly respected. The addition of the Washington Avenue location, along with the renovation of the other locations, will enable the agency to expand already-proven programs.

Neighborhood Alliance has the capability, the programming, the expertise, and the desire to meet the ever-growing need. **The only impediment to growth is lack of space.**

BY THE NUMBERS

In the last twenty years, Neighborhood Alliance has been able to serve:

- **2,155,240 meals** prepared and delivered to 11,017 Lorain County nutritionally-at-risk and disabled seniors.
- **10,396 men, women and children** with 348,007 shelter nights provided in Lorain County's only 24/7 extended stay 68- bed homeless shelter.
- **5,003 children with 432,357** half-days of child enrichment programming and after-school services.
- **10,433 children** with parent education programming, support and developmental services for prenatal to three year olds.
- **12,024 seniors** with 177,750 opportunities for seniors to remain socially active and engaged in their community.

Why NOW?

Neighborhood Alliance has a waitlist in almost every program. Add to that, there is an ever-increasing demand for almost every service. The caseloads for every program remain high. The agency has the capacity to grow to meet the community need, but not the space to house additional staff.

The pandemic highlighted the existing need for more space. Staff are already sharing offices and building desks in closets. Childcare students are in small classrooms and shelter residents are sharing two common bathrooms. There is a critical need to separate people to protect clients and staff.

Waitlists by Program:

Emergency Shelter

The Haven Center does not have a waitlist though it's clear there are more homeless people than beds in Lorain County, as Coordinated Entry reports more calls than shelter availability consistently month after month. After hours, Neighborhood Alliance is flooded with calls for help. If the agency doesn't have a bed, arrangements are made for a hotel room.

This capital project will increase Haven Center capacity from 68 to 80 beds, giving the agency much-needed 12 emergency (after hour) beds. The Washington Avenue location could double as a warming center if needed during the bitter cold winters. That would be enough space for an additional 10 to 15 people.

Family Services

- Help Me Grow Home Visiting - this program will double in capacity. This will help clear the waitlist, which is county-wide.
- Ohio's Early Intervention - While this program does not have a wait list due to program design, the caseloads remain high, which necessitates additional staff to bring the case loads into a more manageable number. This will allow each family to receive the proper support needed.

Child Enrichment Services

- Childcare is currently at 50% capacity.
- Childcare has a waitlist. This waitlist is expected to grow exponentially as parents start to go back into the office.
- **The childcare program could increase from 55 students to 110 with larger space** that is more conducive to learning and allows for better spacing.
- Neighborhood Alliance has the potential to add a third childcare center in the Washington Avenue location. That could result in two (2) childcare centers available in the city of Elyria.
- Rising Titans is limited only by the number of people on staff and office space. Right now, there is only one staff person in one office, which is located inside the Lorain Child Enrichment facility. The renovation will create additional office and meeting space. This will allow for program expansion and the addition of one staff person to assist with program offerings to serve children and families in the City of Lorain; the program currently provides services to 100 children per month.

Senior Nutrition and Services

The senior population is expected to dramatically increase with the aging baby boomers. Additionally, consensus in the field is that because of the pandemic and the mass outbreaks in nursing homes, more seniors will opt to age in their homes. The demand for senior meals and enrichment (socialization, well-check calls, supportive services) is expected to skyrocket. Proper nutrition for the older population is crucial not only to stay healthy but to work toward lowering disease risks, such as diabetes, stroke, and heart disease.

What we do know is that in 2035 we must be prepared to address the population shift for the first time in the nation's history, when the population of adults 65 and older will outnumber children younger than 18 according to AARP Livable Communities.

- The Senior Nutrition program provided:
 - 1,381 meals the week before COVID
 - 2,750 meals per week by August 1, 2020
 - 2,900 meals per week by late March 2021 - *maxing out the capacity of the current kitchen facility.*
- Before the pandemic, this program had a waitlist of over 550 people. Supplemental pandemic funding and support of local foundations allowed Neighborhood Alliance to acquire four new HotShot delivery vehicles, hire additional drivers, and provide additional meals. The wait list was cleared until recently.
- The current waitlist for Home Delivered Meals is down to 30 (as of 6.30.21), however the agency receives approximately 40 to 50 calls per month from additional seniors requesting help.
- Increasing the number of meals provided was only possible with emergency funding support from Western Reserve Area Agency on Aging and other community stakeholders.
- *Emergency Meals and Food Rescue* - Neighborhood Alliance's ability to store and distribute donated food will be dramatically increased, making expansion of the Food Rescue program possible. The agency will increase cold storage from four free-standing refrigeration units to a large commercial walk-in freezer and walk-in cooler.

OUR MISSION

Helping communities grow stronger by meeting critical needs and empowering individuals and families. Neighborhood Alliance is a unique agency with a 94-year legacy of fostering strong individuals and strong families; the resulting strength of community is a source of pride for the organization.

THE VISION

Washington Avenue (former YMCA building) will be renovated to allow:

- Neighborhood Alliance staff to be centralized to this one location with socially distant offices and team meeting spaces, eliminating excess locations.
- Expand the childcare program which provides high-quality, affordable enrichment to area children as well as indoor gymnasium and outdoor physical activity area. (This potentially could be a third childcare center for Neighborhood Alliance - if the Wesleyan Village location can be renovated and maintained.)
- A large commercial kitchen which would enable the agency to eliminate the waitlist for the senior Home Delivered Meals and cater its own nutritious meals for children and homeless clients at a significant cost savings while also providing the space to continue expanding Home Delivered Meals for seniors in Lorain County.
- Expansion of programming including Help Me Grow Home Visiting and Early Intervention.
- Open a community resource in the heart of Elyria for Lorain County residents to receive services, gather, take classes, and more.

Current administrative office building in Lorain will be renovated into the new Haven Center, a three-floor homeless shelter and related emergency services, to include:

- A secure, dedicated floor for families *that feels like home*, including a dedicated play area for children, a living room and kitchenette.
- A reduced number of persons per bedroom to comply with social distancing guidelines. Currently there can be up to seven people sharing a dorm room.
- Socially distant offices for mental health counselors to meet with clients and for clients to privately attend medical appointments via telehealth.
- Separate dormitory wings available for single individuals and families.
- Expanded physical space and service offerings for PATH (Projects for Assistance in Transition from Homelessness) clients to come in from the elements, shower, and have a hot meal.
- Offices/spaces for partner agencies to provide support and transition services for clients.
- Upgraded security and camera systems for the safety of all staff and clients.
- Ability to transition shelter dorms, if needed, into apartments.
- Upgraded locations (Elyria and Lorain) to now meet ADA compliant guidelines.
 - *Currently clients who use a wheelchair cannot access all services, and in the shelter, he/she must eat separately from the rest of the group because of the stairs.*

Child Care at Wesleyan Village, Elyria and the Cityview Center building, Lorain

- Maintain high quality children's programming in both locations.

PHASED RENOVATION PLAN

“Every move is necessitated by another move.”

COMPLETED

- All administrative staff have been moved to various offices within the Washington Ave. location
- Help Me Grow Home Visiting staff have been moved to the Washington Ave. location.
- Temporary partial occupancy of Washington Ave. location has already been approved by the city of Elyria.
- Necessary upgrades totaling more than \$50,000 included emergency lights, toilets, doors, fire exits, sprinkler system, fire alarm wiring, filled holes, ceiling tiles, electrical boxes and outlets, suppression system, heating, cooling were completed as part of the occupancy inspections.

Phase ONE

- Build out a full-service catering kitchen on the first floor of Washington Ave. (former YMCA) and relocate all nutrition services to this site to create the new *Neighborhood Nutrition Kitchen*.
- Floor resurfacing to make use of all available space for administrative and program offices.
- Centralize all staff to this office suite including Help Me Grow Home Visiting and Senior Enrichment Services.
- Build a 9,262 sq ft. extension onto the existing Sina K. Evans (SKE) building to include dorms and bathrooms in line with new state requirements.

Phase TWO

- Renovate the 2nd floor of the Washington Ave. location and move the Help Me Grow Early Intervention program from the 3rd Floor of SKE building in Lorain to the 2nd floor of Washington Ave.
- Renovate floors two and three of the Sina K. Evans (SKE) building in Lorain to create a three-floor homeless and emergency shelter with capacity for up to 80 beds, private meeting spaces, educational classrooms, and family dedicated space, including an elevator for ADA compliance.
- Move the PATH offices to the 3rd Floor of the SKE building and build out PATH drop-in center and food pantry space.

Phase THREE

- Renovate the gymnasium to allow for childcare and public use.

Phase FOUR

- Renovate the childcare center in Lorain to include a separate office for the Rising Titans program and meeting space for both programs to share.

Potential Future Phase

- Potentially open a childcare center on the first floor of Washington Ave. Build out additional classroom space on the second floor of Washington Ave. over the old racquetball courts. *(It is still to be determined if this will either be a third childcare center or the center from Wesleyan Village relocated to this space.)*

Repair, Renovate, and Reimagine is a six-phase multi-site building renovation project, beginning with the renovation of the former YMCA building in Elyria and transformation of the current shelter building in Lorain.

Neighborhood Alliance has the capability, the programming, the expertise, and the desire to meet the ever-growing need. The only impediment to growth is lack of space.

Total estimated project cost = \$8,820,094

Washington Ave. (Elyria)	\$4,125,094
Haven Center (Lorain)	\$4,105,000
Cityview Center (Lorain)	\$590,000

Funds already received

State Development Department	\$ 1,050,000
Neighborhood Alliance Internal Funds	\$ 781,710
State Capital Budget for Phase I Washington Ave.	\$ 500,000
Lorain County Commissioners - Kitchen	\$ 500,000
Individual Donors	\$ 115,000
Private Foundations & Organizations	\$ 83,776
Meals on Wheels	\$ 32,329
City of Lorain Community Development Block Grant	\$ 30,000
Second Harvest CARES Funds	\$ 12,416
Connect to a Cause (2021)	\$ 17,045
Corporations	\$ 7,000
Neighborhood Alliance employees	\$ 2,335

Total to Date: \$ 2,886,611*

**excludes donated goods and services*

Pending requests

\$1,400,000 City of Lorain for the Haven Center *(have letter of commitment)*

\$150,000 City of Elyria – Neighborhood Nutrition Kitchen

\$30,000 City of Lorain Community Development Block Grant for Playground Equipment for Haven Center and Lorain Childcare Center *(approved, waiting on construction completion)*

Total Pending: \$ 1,580,000