



*"Our Neighborhood. Our Choice."*

**BMHA Perry Choice Neighborhood**

The Perry Choice Neighborhood  
**LIFE CHANCES CENTER**

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An Overview Report

*Prepared by*

*The UB Center for Urban Studies*

*June 2012*

# Overview

The Life Chances Center (LCC) is a neighborhood-based multi-service community center, which seeks to create a neighborhood anchor and centralized hub of activity in the Perry Choice Neighborhood (PCN). The Life Chances Center is designed to produce neighborhood cohesion and solidarity and strengthen reinforce the community's identity. The Center will be designed as a neighborhood gathering place and a venue for a variety of education, supportive service, public information, community problem-solving, entertainment and recreation and fitness activities. By concentrating these programs and activities in a single, easily accessible place, we hope to make life better and more enjoyable for neighborhood residents.

The Life Chances Center (LCC) will be a multiservice organization with a dual function. On the one hand, a goal of the LCC will be to forge a set of unique programs and activities that are designed to integrate the different sectors of the Perry Choice Neighborhood by:

- closing the social distance between the various income, racial and ethnic groups living in the Perry Choice Neighborhood, as well as
- **housing a set of supportive services that complement the services offered by other PCN service providers, including those located in the Old First Ward.**

The Life Chances Center will most likely be located on the Lanigan Park site, or in another, more centralized location in district. It will be conceived as a "community hub" and place where every age, racial, ethnic and income group will find something of interest.

This report is divided into several sections. First, the importance of a community center to the neighborhood transformation process shall be discussed, followed by an outline of the different activities and programs that best practices, a literature review, and the neighborhood needs assessment tell us are essential to the effective operation of the Life Chances Center.

# Importance

Aramark's *Building Community Initiative* (2010) stresses the importance of community centers at strengthening and supporting neighborhoods in transition. Community centers function as vital places that bring residents together and that provide them programs and activities that bring enjoyment, relaxation and that help them deal with the complexities of life. Moreover, according to the Families International Survey on Community Centers, 95% of Americans believe that community centers are critical mediating institutions in community undergoing a revival (2009). Aramark argues that community centers are "experts in tailoring their programs to respond to ever changing needs" in neighborhoods, especially those in transition (2010) which often experience the greatest challenges during economic downturns.

## **Closing the Social Distance**

In order to effectively develop a cohesive mixed-income, racial and ethnic community, the LCC will be planned and designed to intentionally bring a diversity of residents together with a shared sense of place. The LCC will attempt to be a place where all residents of the PCN can find common ground. The LCC will also try to accommodate differing needs and demands of various racial, ethnic, and income groups.

## **The Father Belle Center: A Transformative Community Center in Buffalo**

*"It's like a family outside of a family. If you don't have people who believe in you outside, when you come here, it's all positive." ~ Brittney Powell, referring to the Belle Center (WBFO Report)*

Adjacent to the BMHA Lakeview Public Housing Development Buffalo, the Father Belle Center, located on 104 Maryland Avenue on the city's West Side, has had tremendous impacts on the surrounding community. The Belle Center offers a wide range of programs that cover the needs of people of all ages. According to a Buffalo News report, the need is great: the population served by these programs is one of the poorest in the city. WBFO's report notes that 76% of the children in the neighborhood live in poverty and 61% of adults do not have a high school diploma. At the Belle Center, tutoring and after school programs are available for children from "cradle to college," along with adult education, child care for working parents, a GED program and literacy programs that help people with limited incomes to obtain the education they need to get jobs. The facility also offers programs for seniors, including a nutritious lunch program, workshops, field trips and other social activities. The Belle Center has had major impacts on the growing number of residents they serve. From a staff of five in 2006, the Belle Center now employs 100 AmeriCorps volunteers, many residents of the surrounding community, to serve the Center and other public service activities throughout Buffalo.

## **The Life Chances Center: A Transformative Center for Perry Choice Neighborhood**

Today, there is no location in the Commodore Perry District where the residents of Commodore Perry can go to receive the services they need, get help filling out a job applications, have a safe haven after-school, receive daycare for their child, get the training they need to secure a job, participate in recreation activities for all ages, socialize, get a ride to the doctor, receive the tutoring a child needs to do better in school, and the list goes on. While the existing Lanigan Field House and Park provides athletic facilities and limited programming for youth under 18, this programming fails to serve the needs of adults and seniors in the community and does not meet the educational, health, social, or child care support needs of youth. Interaction with residents through focus groups and both formal and informal conversations had made it clear that residents do not have a central gathering place in the community from which to socialize or to acquire desperately needed services, and that a strong demand exists for such a place to be developed in Perry.

The goal of the Life Chances Center will be to become a place where residents from all over the PCN target area recognize as the “one stop shop” to access the services and programs they need, and to emerge as the central location for community life in Commodore Perry. The LCC will be a center point from which residents can safely and freely interact and engage one another, and a place where supportive service providers can work together and coordinate to maximize their impact.

### III. Programs and Activities

The following is a list of programs and activity centers that will be located in the LCC. Each of these components will be housed and operated within the Life Chances Center.

#### **The PCN Service Coordination Unit (UB School of Social Work)**

*Case Management for PCN residents and families*

**Overview:** In partnership with BMHA Residential Services and Catholic Charities, the UB School of Social Work will manage a service coordination field unit that will provide residents with comprehensive case management to ensure that residents are successful at acquiring and utilizing all of the supportive services they need. The Unit will also provide thorough follow-up with residents and to ensure their success through all services and programs.

**Primary Partners:** UB School of Social Work (management), BMHA Residential Services (public housing coordination), Catholic Charities (technical assistance and support)

**Staffing Requirements:** The Service Coordination Field Unit will be staffed by 5-8 students in the Master of Social Work (MSW) program and managed by a full-time, licensed social worker.

**Space Requirements:** The space needs for this unit would include an office for the Licensed Social worker who will oversee the unit, 3-4 offices for the UB-SSW team made up of 5-8 (with space for up to two students per office), and 1-2 private meeting offices.

#### **Fulton Street Food Pantry (Catholic Charities)**

*Providing those in need with nutritious, healthy foods*

**Overview:** For decades, Catholic Charities has operated a highly utilized food pantry service in the neighborhood in its office on Fulton Street in Commodore Perry Extension. According to Catholic Charities, about 90% of those currently served by the food pantry are from Commodore Perry Homes and Extension. This service is needed by residents

and would continue to operate in its current form when re-located to the Life Chances Center.

**Primary Partners:** Catholic Charities (management and funding)

**Staffing Requirements:** The existing staff and 70+ volunteers that run the pantry will continue to do so.

**Space Requirements:** The space for the Food Pantry will include multi-purpose room with a serving counter, connected to a large storage room for housing food and supplies. In addition, there will be a lobby area connected to several offices for staff and a multi-purpose meeting room.

We will need to talk to Bill Larson of Catholic Charities, or visit the space in order to determine the size of the space needed for the pantry. It may be too small currently, as there is often a line of people outside of the current Food Pantry, even in bad weather.

A second consideration will be a space to store food that is delivered for distribution. I would imagine that the food is dropped off to catholic Charities at least 1 or 2 days in advance of a pantry day.

### **The PCN Youth Council (and Intervention Program)**

*A leadership conduit for youth in the Perry Choice Neighborhood*

**Overview:** The PCN Youth Council will function as a leadership training program, social, education and public service program for youth in Perry. The Youth Council will play a direct role in managing youth activities at the LCC and will plan social, educational, planning, and service events for youth in the neighborhood.

**Partners:** UB Center for Urban Studies, Community Action Organization, BMHA Residential Services

**Staffing Requirements:** The program will be directly managed by the AmeriCorps Staff in the under the oversight of the PCN Administration Office.

**Space Requirements:** The PCN Youth Council will have a dedicated coordinator through AmeriCorps and will operate out of multi-purpose meeting spaces. Computer desks will be dedicated to Youth Council activities and members in the LCC multi-purpose office space.

### **Computer Lab and Classroom Facility**

*Internet access for residents and space for learning through technology*

**Overview:** The LCC will have a large multi-purpose computer lab that will be used to teach residents different computer-based skills, for youth-based after school programs, and to provide residents with general access to the Internet and computer software.

The lab will also be used to teach adult education classes. The computer lab will be partitioned into two separate classrooms as needed.

**Primary Partners:** BMHA Residential Services, P&I Center Staff

**Staff Requirements:** One or several part-time computer lab assistant should be available to manage the lab and to provide residents with technical assistance as needed. These part-time computer monitors should also be equipped to teach basic computer classes, or separate part-time computer instructors will be needed.

**Space Requirements:** In total, the lab should be large enough that it will accommodate the needs for computer access within the neighborhood during general access hours and require only one computer lab assistant to oversee. The lab will be big enough that it can be sub-divided into two computer classrooms using a partition wall. These classrooms can be used to teach two separate courses as simultaneously or to teach one class while continuing to provide computers for general access use. Space will also be needed for network servers, printers/print stations, and storage areas for paper, toner and other hardware.

## **Recreation and Fitness Center**

*Providing recreation and fitness activities and spaces for residents of the PCN*

**Overview:** The Lanigan Field House and Fitness Center will be a comprehensive recreation and fitness facility located within the Life Chances Center that will meet the needs of both youth and adult residents of Perry Choice Neighborhood.

**Key Partners:** City of Buffalo Department of Recreation (management)

**Staffing Requirements:** The Recreational and Fitness Center will require a director of recreation and an assistant director of programming to run, manage and plan the day-to-day recreation activities and programming. One or two part-time physical fitness trainers/educators would also be helpful for managing classes and 2-3 part time life guards will be needed to oversee swimming pool activities.

**Space Requirements:**

- Field House – The field house will be large enough to accommodate full-size basketball courts.
- Fitness Center – This will be a large room that includes both weight lifting and cardio equipment.
- Multi-purpose room – The multi-purpose room will be used for recreation classes, yoga, and other activities.
- Swimming Pool – The swimming pool will be an Olympic-Size swimming pool to meet competition regulations, but will be open for public use and for swimming classes and other activities. The swimming pool should have seating for spectators during hosted swim meets.
- Parlor room – this would include space for activities such as table tennis and pool
- Men's Locker room – complete with showers/restrooms

- Women's Locker room – complete with showers/restrooms

## **Buffalo Swim Racers Program**

*Providing academic and personal enrichment through swimming.*

**Overview:** The Olympic-sized swimming pool in the Lanigan Field House and Fitness Center will be used to develop a swimming based academic support program modeled after the USA Swim Team affiliated club being developed at City Honors High School. The Buffalo Swim Racers are targeted for the PCN and will be the neighborhood's swim-academic support program until the new Life Chances Center is built.

**Partners:** USA Swim Team, City Honors High School, City of Buffalo Department of Recreation

**Staffing Requirements:** Life guards will be used to monitor all pool activities, but swim team coaches and trainers will be managed by the Buffalo Swim Racers.

### **Space Requirements:**

- The Olympic-sized swimming pool will be used for all swim team activities, and will include seating for spectators to use during swim meets.
- A small office space for the coaches and staff will be provided
- The multi-purpose meeting spaces will be used for meetings or classroom activities
- Locker rooms and showers at the Lanigan Field House will be used for swimmers
- A storage room will be needed to store pool supplies

## **Early Learning Center (ELC)**

*Preparatory education for children younger than school age and child care for working families*

**Overview:** The ELC will be built based on CAO's expertise and help to prepare children in the neighborhood for entering school. This will include both a Head Start and an Early Head Start program. The ELC will also serve as an "academic" child day care for working families.

**Partners:** Community Action Organization of Erie County, Buffalo Hearing and Speech

**Staff Requirements:** There will be 1 adult educator or supervisor for every 10 children along with one program administrator to manage the program.

**Space Requirements:** Two multi-purpose classrooms will be used to accommodate the needs of both Head Start programs along with outdoor recreational space for the children, along with one office for the program administrator. Teachers will also have access to the staff lounge. The spaces will accommodate regulations for Head Start and Early Head Start space requirements.

## **Neighborhood-Based After School Program**

*Providing youth with supplemental activities for academic achievement and personal growth*

**Overview:** The neighborhood-based after school program will cater to meeting the supportive and educational needs of school-age children in the PCN. The program will include classroom activities as well as tutoring and mentoring programs.

**Partners:** Community Action Organization of Erie County (management)

**Staff Requirements:** There will be 1 adult educator or supervisor for every 10 children in the program

**Space Requirements:** There will be 1-2 classrooms as well as smaller rooms for meeting and tutoring. This program will be licensed to meet NYS Office of Child and Family Services School Age Child Care space requirements.

## **The Senior Center**

*A social gathering space for elders of the PCN.*

**Overview:** The Senior Center will be a multi-purpose social gathering space for seniors in the neighborhood. It will include a multi-purpose space for various games and activities of interest to the seniors in the community as well as a refrigerator and lounge furniture for day-to-day socializing.

**Staff Requirements:** The Program Coordinator of the LCC will oversee the operation and use of the Senior Center. A volunteer leadership council of seniors from the neighborhood will help to manage the space and plan the programmatic activities that will take place

**Space Requirements:** The Senior Center should be composed of one large multi-purpose room with several spaces for distinct types of uses:

- a lounge space with comfortable couches, tables and chairs for socializing
- a kitchenette space with refrigerator, microwave, and dining area for preparing light meals
- A activity area with a pool table, chess boards, and other activities that meet the interests and needs of neighborhood seniors

## **The PCN Administration Offices**

*The management arm for all LCC and neighborhood-based planning activities*

**Overview:** The PCN Administration Offices will house the governing bodies of the supportive service collaborative, mini-education pipeline, and the Life Chances Center administration staff. These facilities will also include meeting space and other accommodations for the staff of the LCC.



**Partners:** BMHA Administration, BMHA Residential Services, Buffalo Americorps, UB Center for Urban Studies

**Staff Requirements:** The PCN Administration Offices will require an executive director along with a program coordinator to assist with the day-to-day administration of the staff and programs. A development coordinator should also be considered to assist with funding acquisition and outreach to donors, along with an outreach coordinator to manage communications with the community as a whole. One administrative assistant should be employed to manage activities for the LCC administration as well as the Collaborative and the Mini-Education Pipeline.

**Space Requirements:**

- 2 Offices for director and deputy director
- Offices for additional administration staff
- 1 large lobby area (preferably at the main entrance to the building) that includes space for the administrative assistant
- 2 large conference rooms to be used as dedicated meeting space for the Supportive Service Collaborative and the Mini-Education Pipeline System Management Team
- A records room for filing, printers, and other storage needs
- 1 large staff lounge (that connects to the main hallway as well as the office) for all staff of the LCC, which would include a small kitchen space as well as couches and other furniture

## **Two General Multipurpose Meeting Rooms**

*For community meetings and social gathering space*

**Overview:** Two multi-purpose meeting rooms will be located near the lobby of the facility for use by residents, community groups and staff for general meetings and community events.

**Staff Requirements:** The Program Coordinator of the Life Chances Center will manage the use of these spaces.

**Space Requirements:** Two large, multi-purpose rooms will be needed with chairs, collapsible tables, presentation equipment, conference phones and other amenities that are useful for meetings and gatherings.

## **The Great Room**

*An income-generating community reception space for the Life Chances Center*

**Overview:** The Great Room will be a large multi-purpose room that can be rented for community events and activities. The purpose of this room will be to provide a large space where larger community functions can take place and provide rental income to the LCC.

**Staff Requirements:** The program coordinator will manage how the space is rented and used.

**Space Requirements:** The Great Room should be a room capable of accommodating no less than 300 people and should have a stage space and commercial kitchen attached to the room to be used for larger social functions.

# Appendix

# EXAMPLES REFERRED FOR FORMULATING THE LIFE CHANCES CENTER

## P1. Yesler Terrace Community Center (Seattle)

917 Yesler Way, Seattle, WA 98122

Yesler Terrace is the oldest public housing development in Washington State, built in 1939, and administered by the Seattle Housing Authority (SHA) since 2005. The organization's mission is to "enhance the Seattle community by creating and sustaining decent, safe and affordable living environments that foster stability and self-sufficiency for people with low incomes." Today, Yesler Terrace houses approximately 1500 ethnically diverse residents in 561 apartments. The vision for Yesler Terrace began taking shape in 2006, when Seattle Housing created a Citizen Review Committee (CRC) comprised of residents, members of the surrounding community and other key stakeholders. The purpose of the CRC is to make recommendations to the Seattle Housing Board of Commissioners regarding Yesler Terrace redevelopment efforts.

### The Old Community Center

The Yesler Community is a low income housing community owned and operated by the Seattle Housing Authority. The Yesler Community Center, on Seattle Housing Authority property, was the smallest center in the City, at 4,700 square feet. The old Yesler Community Center contained a small gym, a small kitchen, and an administrative/lobby area. There were no activity spaces. The main feature of the existing community center, the gym, does not meet standards for regulation play.

### The New Community Center

#### a. Location

The Yesler Terrace development includes an onsite community center that is centrally located on Yesler Way so that all residents have easy access. The community center is built on Seattle Housing Authority (SHA) property at Yesler Terrace along the south side of Yesler Way between 10th Avenue and Broadway.

#### b. The Project

The intent of this project was to replace the existing Yesler Community Center with an approximately 20,000 square foot full service community center that provides users a space for community activities. The Yesler Terrace Community Center includes a computer lab, teen center, fitness room, gymnasium and

basketball court, multipurpose room, childcare center, and a commons area. There are no closed-off areas, with the exception of the fitness room, which has limited hours, and the multipurpose room, which is locked at times as it can be rented for private events. The community center is open Monday through Friday until 9 p.m., and is part of the Seattle Parks and Recreation Department, which operates 28 such community centers in the city. The community center was remodeled in 2005 and is a bright and welcoming space.

c. Sustainability Objective

Design of the building conforms to the City of Seattle Sustainable Building Policy. The work integrates building materials and methods that promote environmental quality, economic vitality and social benefit through the construction and operation of the built environment. The project meets the LEED Silver rating. The intent of this project was to create a great built environment, providing the highest level possible of operational efficiency, as well as comfort and support for community center staff and users.

d. The Project Components

I. Objectives.

The community center project components have been assembled to meet the program needs of the old Yesler Community Center and include the department's standards in terms of approximate square footage to be provided, intended use of the space, functional relationship to other spaces, and any special requirements which the space or that portion of the structure may have.

II. Elements

<b>ELEMENTS</b>	<b>Dimensions</b>	<b>Area (sq ft)</b>	<b>Use</b>
Gymnasium	97' x 74'	7178	basketball, volleyball, indoor soccer, special events, dances, receptions
Gym Storage		600	equipment for volleyball, indoor soccer goals, gymnastic equipment, balls, nets, space for hanging and drying uniforms, wall pads and tumbling mats.
Multipurpose Space		2700	Dived into two spaces -receptions and small banquets, group meetings and activities (dance, aerobics, or children's games)

Multipurpose storage		100	storage of craft supplies, games, tables, chairs, office supplies, chair dollies, folding portable tables, stackable chairs or tables, dance or aerobics equipment.
Kitchen		450	potluck type functions, include space and equipment capabilities for heating food and preparation areas to service receptions or banquets of 100-150 people; floor space and counter space for potential cooking classes of up to 8-10 students of varying age group
Reception/Lobby (Waiting and Lounge)		1200	reception area and public counter to serve to check out materials; monitor the public coming and going, the lobby/game area; lobby to be used for waiting and lounge area; exhibiting of trophies, awards, announcements, or seasonal displays; vending machine area (two machines) and public telephone.
Administrative Area (Office Space-2)		90 (each)	offices and desk space for Sr. Recreation Supervisor and Recreation Supervisor, file cabinets; storage
Other Office Areas		300	
Activity Rooms			
1. Arts and Crafts Room		550	knitting, weaving, sketching, crafts projects, needlework, beadwork, painting, carving, art projects, sculpture and assemblage, and basket making, meetings of up to 50 people in lecture format, or workshop format (at tables).
2. Fitness room		550	stretching, aerobic, and non-aerobic exercises, weights training
3. Game Room & adjacent Teen Room		700 each	pool, table tennis, and electronic games.
4. Childcare		1045	
5. Library and Computer Room		400	
Restroom/Showers		530	
Custodial Office and Storage		400	space for custodial use and custodial supplies; has shelving and equipment; space for one custodian to move freely within shelving, fixed equipment, supplies, and moveable custodial equipment (buckets, brooms,

			mops, etc.)
Mechanical/Electrical Room		150	

**SUMMARY OF SITE SPACE ALLOCATION**

1. Gymnasium	7,178		
2. Gymnasium Storage	600		
3. Multi-Purpose Room	2,700	Teen Room	700
4. Multi-Purpose Room Storage	100	Child Care	1000
5. Kitchen	450	Computer/Library	400
6. Lobby:	1,000	9. Restrooms and Showers	
7. Administrative Area:		Restrooms (men's & women's)	530
Private Offices (2 @ 90)	180	Outside Restrooms (2)	0
Other Office Area	300	10. Custodial Office and Storage	400
8. Activity Rooms (Note 1)		11. Mechanical/Electrical Room	150
Arts and Crafts	550	12. Circulation	2,512
Fitness	550	<b>Total Area</b>	<b>20,000</b>
Game Room	700		

**Yesler Community Center Sustainable Building Features**

Site Features

- Reduce pervious surfaces by placing over 1/2 of the parking under the building
- Reduced light trespass to adjacent properties using shielded fixtures
- Bicycle storage and changing room
- Public Transportation Access
- Minimal development footprint – reduced site disturbance during construction

Water Efficiency Features

- 30% reduction in overall water use than a conventional building (achieved through water efficient landscaping and efficient fixtures)

Energy Performance

- Energy efficiency that exceeds the national ASHRAE standard by 20%
- Extensive shading on the south side to reduce summer solar gain

Materials and Resources

- Recycling of 75% of demolition and construction waste
- 20% of building materials will be obtained from regional sources

- Maple flooring for gym will be sustainably harvested wood

#### Indoor Environmental Quality

- Low-emitting materials (carpets, composite woods, adhesives, paints and sealants)
- Carbon Dioxide Monitoring
- Increased effectiveness of ventilation (operable windows that have been sized and located using computer modeling)
- Controllability of airflow and lighting
- Extensive Daylight (75% of spaces)
- Extensive Views (exterior views from 90% of the interior spaces)

### **The Stakeholders and Community Partners**

The Yesler Terrace project is administered by the Seattle Housing Authority which has identified and actively engaged the following groups and organizations in the project.

1. Planning Commission
2. Cascade Land Conservancy
3. Central District Community Council
4. Seattle Design Commission
5. East District Council
6. First Hill Improvement Association
7. Great Cities Initiative
8. Harborview Medical Center
9. International District Forum
10. King County
11. Seattle Central Community College
12. Little Saigon stakeholders
13. Neighborhood House
14. Seattle Chinatown International District PDA
15. Seattle School District
16. Seattle University
17. Squire Park Community Council
18. Squire Park Neighborhood Association
19. Swedish Medical Center
20. Urban League
21. Vietnamese Chamber of Commerce
22. 12th Avenue Group

### **Programs and services offered to residents**

1. Tenant Information
2. Job Programs
3. Education Programs
4. Self-Sufficiency Programs
5. Computer Access
6. Community Involvement



7. Health & Social Services
8. Pest Control
9. Resident Newspaper

### **Management Structure**

Seattle Housing Authority

City of Seattle, Parks and Recreation Department

Yesler Community Center

Staff

## **2. Gulfport Multipurpose Senior Center Foundation, Inc. (5501 27th Ave. S. Gulfport, FL 33707)**

The Gulfport Multipurpose Senior Center Foundation, Inc. Is a charitable non-profit organization that exists to raise and distribute funds that support and enhance the recreational, educational, social and health related programs and services of The Gulfport Multipurpose Senior Center.

The Foundation's primary mission is to aid, assist and enhance the services, programs and activities offered by Gulfport's Nationally Accredited Senior Center, one of only a handful so designated in the State of Florida.

- It offers innumerable opportunities for regular social interaction making seniors less vulnerable to depression, isolation and loneliness.
- It is a special place where community is found and friendships are formed.
- It provides opportunities for lifelong learning and education.
- It helps maintain independence.
- Involvement in programs and services such as those offered by the Senior Center are known to delay the progress of disabilities and institutionalization.
- **PROGRAMS and SERVICES** designed to address needs of seniors – intellectual, physical and social – to foster independence, personal growth, and to enrich their lives.
- **PHYSICAL HEALTH AND WELLNESS**– programs that delay disabilities, assist in maintaining independence, in general terms preventative care as their outcome:
  - Fitness Center, Blood Pressure Screening, Stretch Exercise, Yoga, Line Dancing, Tai Chi,

- Telephones for Hearing Impaired  
Support Groups – Caregivers, Diabetes, Hearing Loss, Visually Impaired
- Seminars on health and wellness issues
- SHINE counseling
- **EDUCATIONAL PROGRAMS** – offering mental stimulation:
  - Art Classes, Bridge Instruction, Computer Classes, Investment Club, Knitting, Quilters Club, Writers Club
- Foreign Language classes – Italian and Spanish  
Seminars – social services, housing, legal issues
  
- **B. COMMUNITY SERVICES** – educate residents of Gulfport about services offered by the Senior Center
  - Food Pantry – serving low income Gulfport seniors age 50 & up
  - Reassurance Telephone Program
  - Community Law Program – pro bono legal services – participants must qualify (low income)
  - Harmonica Club and Big Band
  - GEMS\_- Gulfport Extended Minibus Service for residents 55 & up
  
- **C. SOCIAL ACTIVITIES**
  - Seasonal and celebratory dinners, luncheons and socials  
entertainment – instrumental & voice  
flea markets
  - Neighborly Care Network Lunch program  
Cards – Bridge, Canasta, Pinochle, Euchre, Mah-Jongg  
Bingo

<http://gulfportseniorfoundation.org/>

### **3. The Belle Center (Buffalo, NY)**

#### **Organizational Description**

The Belle Center's aim is to "not have a break in service". The Belle Center is the home of Erie Regional Housing Development Corporation. They are a multi-purpose community center located on the Lower West Side of Buffalo, NY that provides comprehensive programs and services to the citizens in Western New York. It is host to over 15 programs and services that have been implemented to effectively meet the needs of the 350 persons who frequent the Center on a daily basis.

The Belle Center offers programs that have a solid structure with the flexibility to grow as the youth who attend programs at the Center grow.

The core programs are:

- Early Childhood: ERHDC-The Belle Child Care Center is for children ages 6 weeks to 4 years old
- Elementary: SACC-School Age Child Care is for children ages 5-12
- Middle/High School: 21st Century Learning Center is for youth ages 13-17
- College & Trades: The Portal ensures that every individual has a plan for the future
- Buffalo AmeriCorps Program is for persons ages 17 and above
- Family, Community and Health Programs and Services

Each of these programs works to strategically meet the needs of their youth and young adults. They provide opportunities for advancement in the areas of education, character development, job training and employment, while allowing the chance for real life exposure to fun and cultural activities inside and outside of the city.

Also, through the Family, Community and Health Programs and Services offered, they have strategically moved to offer a greater number of comprehensive services that are aligned with our goals. These services work to further meet the needs of the community as it is the center's vision "to improve lives, create opportunities and foster self-sufficiency" for those in the community.

The Belle Center is seen as a potential model to adapt in the design and programming of the Life Chances Center. The following information was derived from the spatial data of its floor plans.

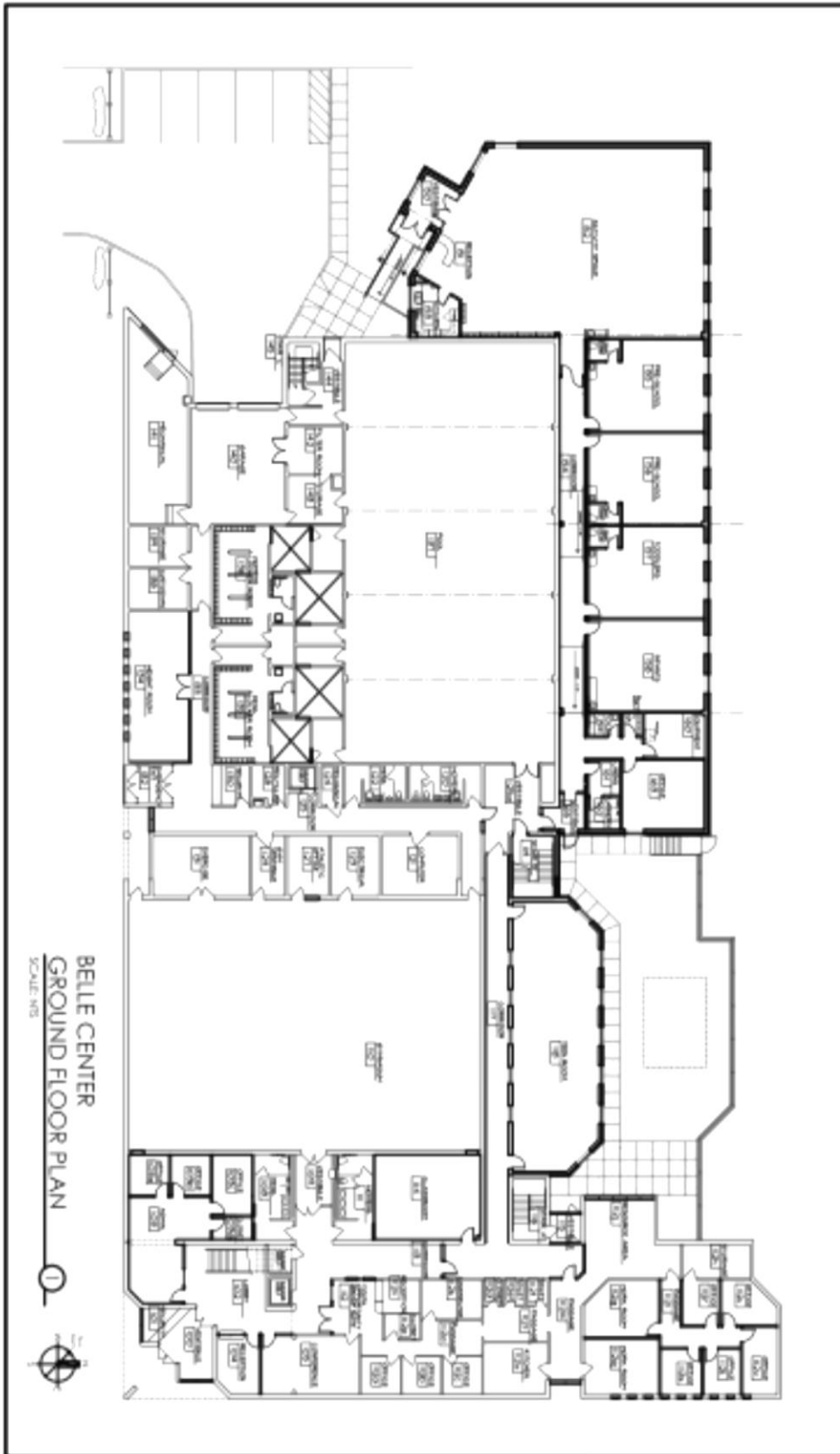
#### Ground Floor – 1<sup>st</sup> Floor Plan

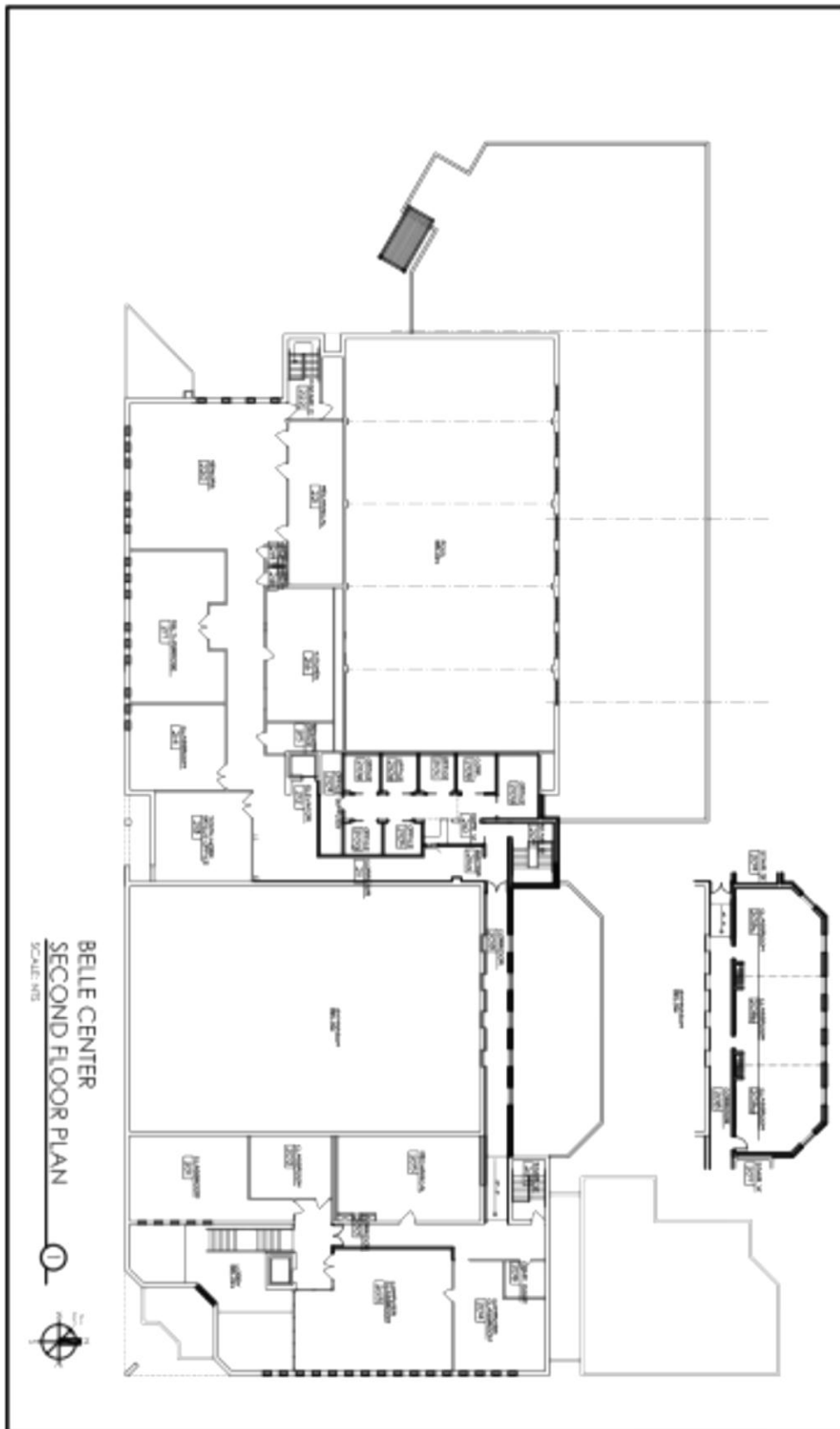
1. Classroom Spaces
  - Pre School – 2 nos.
  - Toddlers
  - Infants
  - Teen room
  - Activity Space
2. Pool
  - Pool
  - Women's Locker Room
  - Men's Locker Room
3. Gymnasium
  - Gym
  - Athletic office
  - Exercise
  - Weight Room
4. Administration Space
  - Reception
  - Office – 3 nos.
5. Resource area office space

- Office – 5 nos.
  - Storage
  - Work room – 2 nos.
  - Kitchen
6. Youth Opportunity Group Suite
- Office- 3 nos.
  - Counseling Room
  - Conference Room
7. Utility Spaces
- a. Near classroom spaces
    - Kitchen
    - Linen , Laundry
    - Equipment
    - Office
  - b. Near the Pool
    - Storage
    - Custodian
    - Mechanical
    - Garage
    - Filter room
  - c. Near the Gym
    - Electrical
    - Mechanical
    - Recycling
    -
8. Toilet Cubicles – four (4) nos.

#### Second Floor Plan

1. Office Space
  - Office- 6 nos.
  - Conference
  - Office Supplies
  - Waiting Area
2. Senior Facilities
  - Seniors
  - Multipurpose Room
  - Classroom
3. Youth Work Skills Office
4. Classroom Area
  - Classrooms- 2.
  - Computer classrooms- 2 .
  - Computer Equipment
5. Toilet Cubicle- 1 no.





# Organizational Chart of the Belle Centre

The Belle Center  
Organizational Chart

