



ABERDEEN AREA VETERANS, INC.  
**CAPITAL CAMPAIGN PROSPECTUS**  
**2025**





## A New Era of Veterans' Services

Veterans are a unique population requiring special services and considerations. One of the biggest problems in getting services to veterans is coordination. In many cases, including the Aberdeen area, better communication and coordination among the many public and private programs that serve veterans and their families could help the thousands of veterans in Brown County and the region.

Veterans struggle at disproportionate rates compared to their civilian counterparts with (and combinations of):

- ★ mental health disorders
- ★ depression
- ★ substance/alcohol use disorders
- ★ post-traumatic stress
- ★ traumatic brain injury
- ★ suicide
- ★ military sexual trauma and harassment
- ★ social anxiety
- ★ financial instability
- ★ adjusting to civilian life
- ★ homelessness



Suicide continues to be an alarming fact with 25 to 30 American veterans committing suicide daily. Young veterans ages 18 to 44 and older veterans 60 to 80 are most at risk. A considerable number of veterans who served in Iraq and Afghanistan have suffered traumatic brain injuries (TBIs), with about one in five experiencing a mild form of TBI commonly known as a concussion. Troops from these engagements include more women, parents of young children, and reserve and National Guard troops than in previous conflicts. Troops have been younger, more diverse, and have had a wider range of family backgrounds. They often served longer deployments with shorter intervals at home between missions.

We hear that many veterans don't know how to apply for veterans' healthcare benefits, are unsure if they are eligible, or are unaware that mental healthcare benefits are available. They often fear the stigma of reaching out for help they need.

The greater diversity of recent troops has created new kinds of needs among veterans. For example, women veterans who served in Iraq and Afghanistan have a higher need for mental healthcare compared with women who served in other wars, likely due to the differences in the types of roles they had in the military. They are also more likely than male veterans to believe that they are not entitled to or eligible for veterans' mental health services. Similarly, tailoring treatment to racial, ethnic, sexual minority, and homeless groups has been a challenge.



## Responding to the Need

Aberdeen does well with veterans. A new Community Based Outreach Clinic was recently built, the Aberdeen Area Chamber of Commerce has a Veterans Committee, and many Service Organizations continue to be active with fundraisers and awareness events. However, more needs to be done.

The days of the American Legion halls and VFW clubs are fizzling. Their purpose does not meet the needs of more recent generations. Veterans in Aberdeen do not have a place to congregate that is theirs. There is no central war memorial or place for acknowledgment to our veterans and heroes. Veterans in Aberdeen desire a place where any veteran is welcome. A place where veterans can get help, get started on a better path, be educated, be exposed to programs exclusively for them. Many Aberdeen area organizations have programs to help veterans, but lack a way to reach them.

As a result of this desire to truly serve Aberdeen area veterans, the old, but well-preserved historic Milwaukee Depot will be converted to accommodate a new memorial/service center. After working on a business plan, AAVI secured seed money from each organization to advance the building project. Originally, a farm plot was purchased to build a completely new building, but the Depot's availability, and potential, will serve veterans much better, and draw more people to historic Downtown Aberdeen.



# Proposed Services and Events for New Center

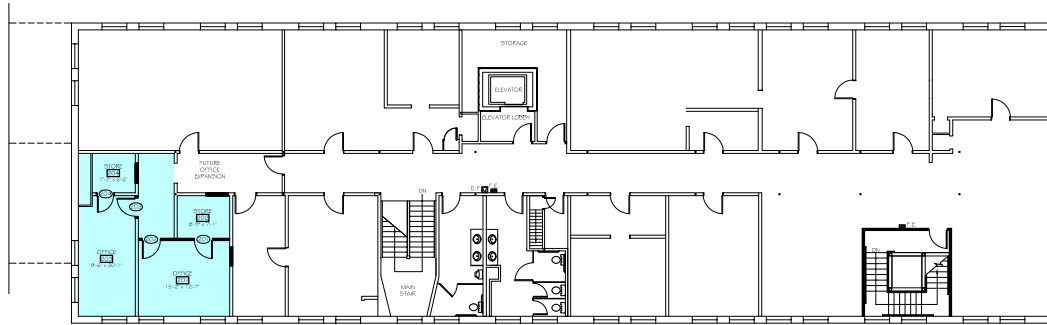
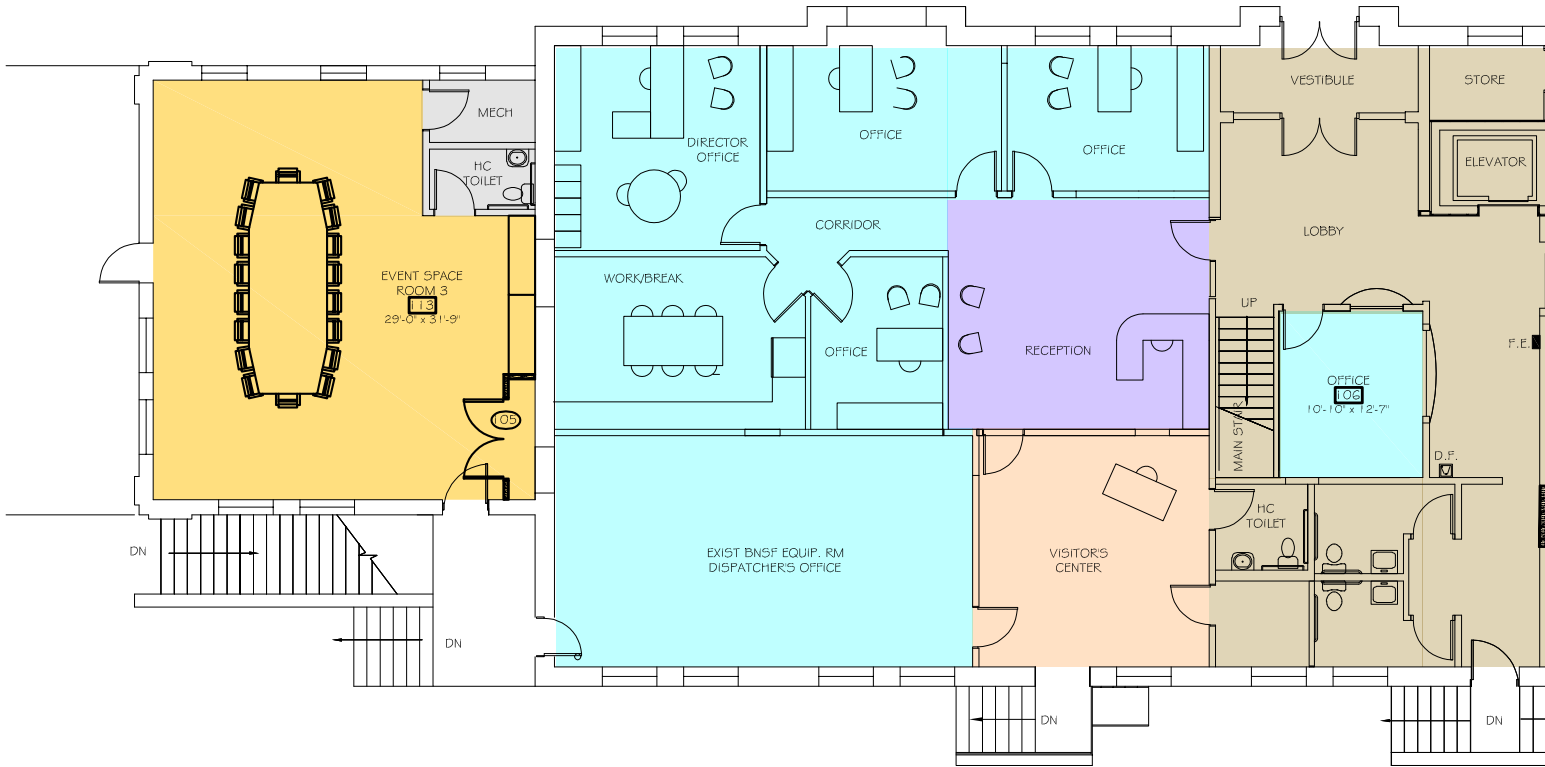
Many Veteran Service Organizations currently offer a wide variety of activities. However, they do not have a home to operate out of, and many veterans in the area are not part of these organizations. The new Aberdeen Area Veterans Memorial Center will become a central facility for services and programs of many kinds for ALL veterans and their families. While the center will not staff experts in the following fields, a program team will fill each month's calendar with community experts affiliated with services for veterans. General public programming will also occur as a way to invite the community at large into the new facility. Such programming will facilitate, teach, or provide awareness of the following resources:

- ★ Access spot for online meetings
- ★ Caregiver classes/assistance
- ★ Clothing for the needy
- ★ Community-based Outpatient Clinic (CBOC) Activities
  - ★ Diabetes Awareness
  - ★ Smoking cessation
  - ★ Drug cessation
  - ★ MOVE! Weight loss
- ★ Compensation and pension guidance
- ★ Computer access and classes
- ★ Cooking demonstrations
- ★ Cornerstone
  - ★ Homelessness help
  - ★ Low-income guidance
- ★ Diabetes awareness and assistance
- ★ Entrepreneurial advice (SBDC)
- ★ Estate Planning and wills
- ★ Family readiness for deployment
- ★ Gardening demonstrations
- ★ Gym (minimal membership or free)
  - ★ Exercise
  - ★ Strength and conditioning
  - ★ Stretching
  - ★ Weight loss
  - ★ Yoga
- ★ Home health equipment
- ★ Home maintenance
- ★ Home remodeling for the disabled
- ★ Homelessness
- ★ Investing
- ★ Lone Survivor Foundation
- ★ Marriage counseling
- ★ Mental health assistance (NAMI and NEMH)
  - ★ Post Traumatic Stress Disorder
  - ★ Traumatic Brain Injury
  - ★ Military Sexual Training
- ★ Military One Source
- ★ Military recruitment
- ★ Mission 22/Project 22
- ★ Meeting space for
  - ★ Exercise drills
  - ★ Readiness preparedness
  - ★ Deployment activities
  - ★ Redeployment activities
  - ★ Holiday parties
  - ★ Yellow Ribbon programs
  - ★ Mental health classes
- ★ Mortgage education
- ★ Motor vehicle safety
- ★ Motorcycle safety courses
- ★ Music Therapy of the Rockies
- ★ Pastoral care
- ★ Rental rights
- ★ Retirement advice
- ★ Substance abuse
- ★ Scouting
- ★ Team Red White and Blue
- ★ Transition Assistance Program
  - ★ Job search help
  - ★ Resume/cover letter writing
  - ★ MOS to resume conversion
  - ★ Interview practicing
  - ★ Training health and life insurance
- ★ Troops to Teachers
- ★ Troops to construction workers
- ★ GI Bill Montgomery Post 911 Loan repayment
- ★ Education opportunities
- ★ Yellow ribbon program (post deployment)
- ★ Til Vahalla Project
- ★ Tele-health and medical services
  - ★ Project Atlas
  - ★ Tele-health consultation opportunities
  - ★ Blood pressure equipment (nurse assisted)
  - ★ Oxygen and temperature monitoring (nurse assisted)
- ★ Transportation recommendations
- ★ Tutoring for vet, families
- ★ VA guidance
- ★ Veterans coffee hour (weekly social)
  - ★ Informative activities
  - ★ Network
  - ★ Mutual support and camaraderie
- ★ Wounded Warrior Project
- ★ WWP Catastrophic long-term care

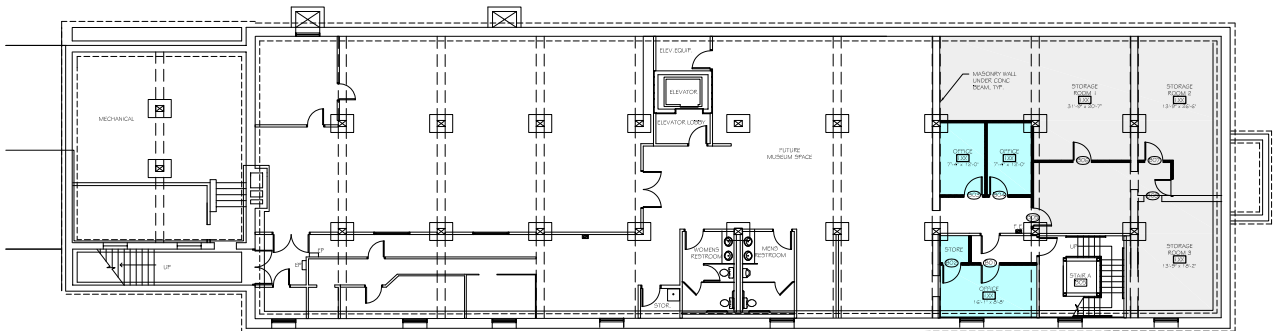
## Team/League Activities Can Include:

- ★ Corn hole
- ★ Darts
- ★ Weightlifting
- ★ Pool
- ★ Video games

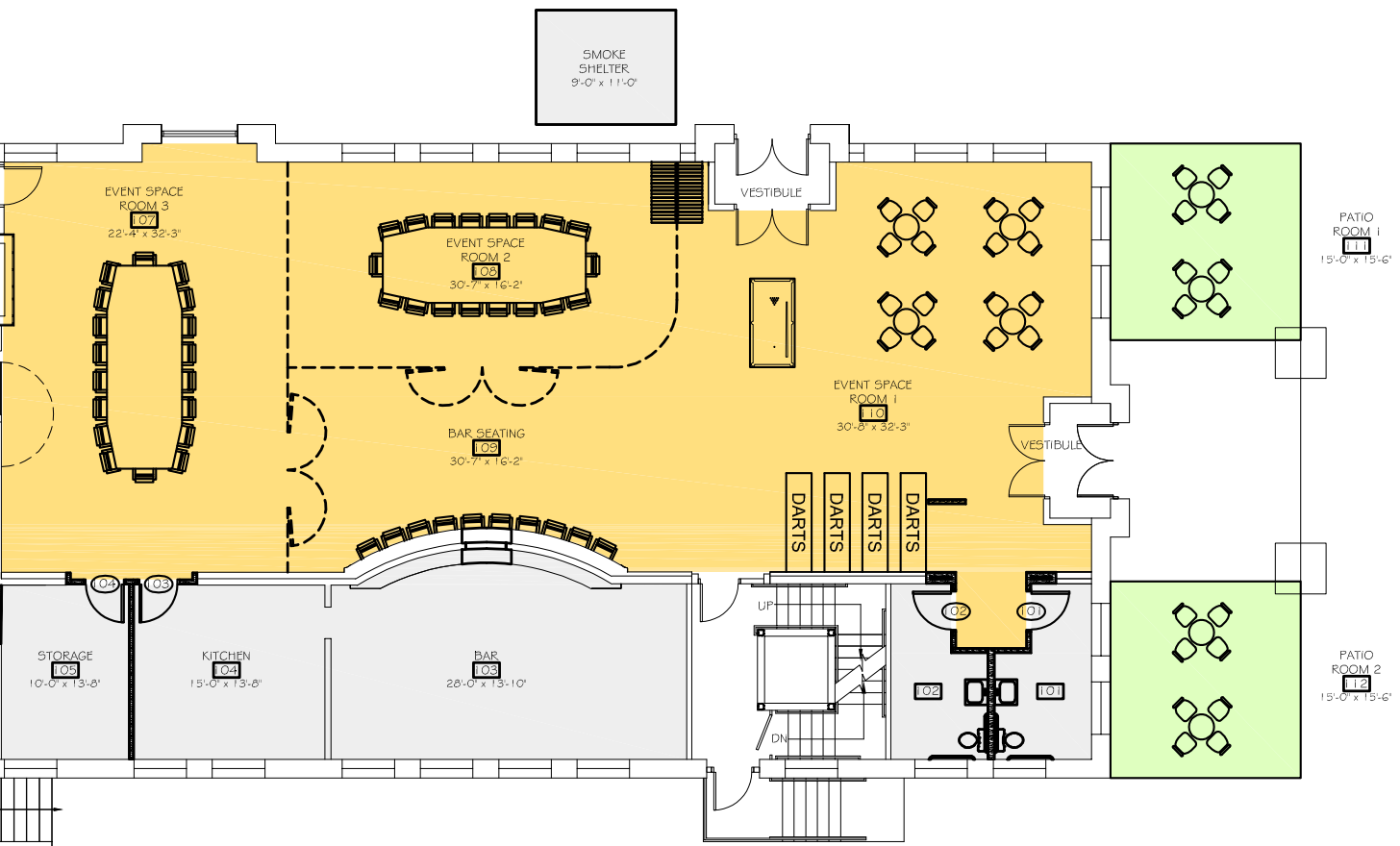
# 1ST FLOOR



# 2ND FLOOR



# BASEMENT



# The Plan

The proposed remodel designed by HKG Architects, is intended to draw people together for a variety of reasons. Most importantly it will provide a trusted, welcoming haven for vets struggling with PTSD, suicide, depression, or loneliness. Getting them out of their home and into a place with familiar faces can provide guidance to help with personal struggles.

The new center will:

- ★ Be approximately 26,000 square feet.
- ★ Include offices for each partnering organization.
- ★ Provide needed meeting space for Veterans.
- ★ Foster camaraderie among veterans and their families.
- ★ Offer large convention space for weddings, conferences, etc.
- ★ Facilitation of healing for unseen wounds.
- ★ Be available for the 5,000 and growing number of vets in Brown County and upwards of 10,000 in the region.
- ★ Be available to the 900 veterans engaged in the four partner organizations.
- ★ Be a gathering place for Family Support Groups while members are deployed.
- ★ Contain memorabilia of divisions, service people, and Pheasant Canteen exhibit.
- ★ Allow rural vets to stay active when small town posts dissolve.
- ★ Be attractive to new vets struggling to belong.
- ★ Include a fitness center.
- ★ Include a Pheasant Canteen, open to the public.
- ★ Welcome outside instructors, therapists, and other professionals to offer helpful advice and services.

# Building Common Ground

## \$3 Million Goal

The number of vets is increasing as well as the number of struggling vets, so demand for a community center has become vitally important. At the start of 2020, the AAVI team launched a capital campaign to fund the construction of the new community center. After intense planning, and the pandemic, plans changed and the campaign has shifted to fund the remodel of the Milwaukee Depot. The estimated cost, and amount needed to be raised to purchase and remodel the building is \$3 million. *Building Common Ground* has been selected as the theme of the project because they are embarking on an unprecedented effort to merge the interests of four different veteran organizations under one roof. The public will be invited to use the facility for their own uses, and engage in various veteran activities.



**PLEASE NOTE: This project is not affiliated with the VA or any other government project.**

## Memorials and Naming Opportunities

Remember a living or deceased veteran with a naming, memorial and/or tribute gift. Opportunities are available to not only veterans, but also to individuals, families, businesses, and foundations contributing \$75,000 or more to the campaign. Recognition plans are still in the works for gifts of all levels.

BUILDING AREA	AMOUNT NEEDED
The Building	\$1,000,000
Pheasant Canteen	\$500,000
Event Spaces (3) each	\$250,000
Fitness Center	\$250,000
Museum	\$250,000
Kitchen	\$250,000

BUILDING AREA	AMOUNT NEEDED
Conference Room	\$100,000
Pre-function Space	\$100,000
Armory	\$75,000
AAVI Office	\$75,000
Patio/Pergola	\$75,000
Offices (6)	\$75,000

## Partnering Organizations

In an unprecedented effort, four area veteran organizations have agreed to pool resources and work together to help veterans live their best lives. As times change and more veterans appear on the landscape, a different approach is needed for addressing the needs of our fellow vets. The newly formed Aberdeen Area Veterans, Inc. (AAVI) is comprised of, but not limited to, representatives from VFW, American Legion, and 40 and 8.





# How You Can Help

Gifts to the campaign will be sought in the form of cash, appreciated marketable securities, land or other assets that can be readily converted to cash. Veterans, individuals, families, foundations and businesses will be invited to participate in this campaign effort through a three to five year pledge or one time gift. Gifts from Qualified retirement assets will also be welcomed. Technical assistance will be available to those considering gifts that involve real estate, farm equipment or other assets that may provide tax burden relief.

Needed Gifts-in-kind such as construction materials will also welcome subject to approval by construction leadership.

## This Is What It Will Take!

In order to subscribe the \$3 million campaign goal, the following gifts and in the quantities listed will need to be received from donors:

1 gift	\$400,000	\$400,000
2 gifts	\$250,000	\$900,000
2 gifts	\$150,000	\$1,200,000
2 gifts	\$100,000	\$1,400,000
3 gifts	\$75,000	\$1,625,000
4 gifts	\$50,000	\$1,825,000
8 gifts	\$25,000	\$2,025,000
15 gifts	\$15,000	\$2,250,000
30 gifts	\$10,000	\$2,550,000
50 gifts	\$5,000	\$2,800,000
80 Gifts	\$2,500	\$3,000,000
Total		\$3,000,000

## Donor Levels

**Friends:** \$0 – \$999

**Patriots:** \$1,000 – \$4,999

**Brothers & Sisters-in-Arms:** \$5,000 – \$9,999

**Commandant:** \$10,000 – \$24,999

**Chief:** \$25,000 – \$49,000

**Heros:** \$50,000 – \$99,999

**Distinguished Service:** \$100,000 – \$149,999

**Medal of Honor:** \$150,000+

# Frequently Asked Questions

## **Who is the Aberdeen Area Veterans, Inc.?**

The Aberdeen Area Veterans, Inc. (AAVI) is a newly incorporated non-profit governing board organized with equal representation (5 members at large) of each of the three partner Veterans organizations: VFW, American Legion, and 40 and 8. This facility is not associated with the VA.

## **Is this project part of the VA?**

No. This facility will not be funded or have any ties to governmental agencies or the VA. It is a completely separate organizational board and building.

## **How many Veterans are in Brown County?**

There are 5,000 military veterans in Brown County, 10,000 in the region, and their families. AAVI only has contact with 900 of them through the member organizations. Your help is requested in helping us reach more veterans in our area.

## **Will the Center be open to the public?**

Yes! Anyone in the community can frequent the Pheasant Canteen, rent the convention space, or participate in any publicly held events. Veterans will have priority for their own organizational and family events.

## **How will the Center operate?**

A program/facilities manager will be hired to coordinate the services veterans need as well as all the social activities at the Center. Support staff will be retained as needed. A comprehensive business plan illustrates the Center will sustain itself with charitable grants to support the services programming as well as with revenue from the Pheasant Canteen and facility rental. Our non-profit status requires that charitable income be required for a significant portion of the operation. An endowment/planned giving strategy will also be implemented.

## **Will there be a restaurant inside?**

No. Although the plans include an industrial kitchen, this will be reserved for event usage such as pancake feeds and burger nights. Pheasant Canteen patrons will be able to order easy-prep style bar food such as pizzas and nachos.

## **The VFW and American Legion halls have closed. Why will this succeed?**

The reality is, no one can go it alone anymore. By combining the resources and membership of three different veteran groups and 5 members at large, the business plan illustrates that this concept will work, and sustain itself. Plus, the accountability of the board of directors comprised of three members of each of the three groups provides oversight and accountability to the operation.

## **Is this only for Aberdeen Veterans?**

No. The name of the building is Aberdeen Area Memorial Community Center. The services provided will be offered to all small town veterans organizations in the entire region, we will welcome their members into our groups and Center. Camaraderie and inclusiveness is what aging, injured, depressed, and ailing veterans need to feel connected and part of a bigger community.



# Do you know other Brown County Veterans who need to know about this project?

Please provide us name(s) of military veterans or family members who should be receiving information about this project. Our only source of names and contacts at this time is the roster of each of the four partner organizations. That leaves more than 4,000 veterans in Brown County off the contact list! Email a list (including address and other contact information) to [shelley\\_y\\_ochsner@hotmail.com](mailto:shelley_y_ochsner@hotmail.com).



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