

Bethlehem Community & Care Center: executive summary

Planning phase. An independent plan; nothing is funded or built yet.

In short

A planned community and care campus in Bethlehem, PA, where anyone can get food, water, clothing, a clean restroom, a tool to borrow, care for their pet and a friendly handoff to existing services, with no fees, no account and no ID. About half of it is outdoors, with a garden that feeds the food hub, in an existing building reused with solar power. Planning phase: no building, operator, partners or funding yet.

What it is. A community and care campus in Bethlehem, Pennsylvania, where anyone can get help, meet, learn and grow food, with no fees, no account and no ID. About half is outdoors: a community garden whose fruits and vegetables go to the food and water hub, a courtyard, a covered pavilion and outdoor work areas. Indoors, in a reused building: a food and water hub with shared fridges and a free refill point; clothing and hygiene items; modern, accessible restrooms; a tool lending shelf; learning and meeting rooms; offices; a volunteer hub; animal care with its own entrance and outdoor run, run by a licensed vet or rescue; and referrals to existing health and social services, with no health records kept. Showers, laundry, licensed child care and a warming and cooling room are options if feasible.

Who it helps. Neighbors who need essentials today, people who want to learn, garden or volunteer in short shifts of 2 hours at most, and the organizations that already serve Bethlehem.

Where. A walkable Bethlehem neighborhood near buses and the planned e-bike network, powered by on-site solar and the planned energy hubs. Pets are welcome outdoors where it's safe.

Status. Planning phase. No building, operator, partners or funding yet.

What it needs. A building and outdoor space with the owners' agreement, an operating nonprofit, partner organizations, a licensed design study and named funding.

Next step. Listening conversations with existing organizations and neighbors, then a site shortlist.