The idea for the Exchange House was conceived during a two-day Better Block in the North Hill neighborhood of Akron, Ohio. The project showcased ways in which the neighborhood could be made better—from bike lanes to pop-up shops to rethinking the use of old buildings.

The Better Block team, based out of Dallas, Texas, spent 90 days working with the community to bring its dreams to reality. During that time, Jason Roberts, Founding Director of the Better Block Foundation, got to know several of the Bhutanese refugees. He was inspired by the baby-naming ceremony he was invited to attend and the conversations that took place over tea. “What if,” he wondered, “we could take one of the empty houses in the neighborhood, and show that it can be used as an office space, a cultural exchange, and as a revenue-generating component through renting out rooms.”

The idea was to turn one of the floors into rooms that can be rented out via Airbnb and create a bottom floor that was open to programming—ESL classes, sewing classes, space for board meetings, and even just a space to share conversations over tea.

The Exchange House, sponsored by the John S. and James L. Knight Foundation, is just that. “We aim to show that if you build a space for love and you invite people in, then you make a stronger community,” Roberts says.

The Exchange House demonstrates how an empty space can be converted to have a mix of uses: an office, a cultural space, and a revenue-generating component through renting out rooms. The house serves as a welcoming center for local residents resettling into the neighborhood, provides respite for travelers, and serves as an office to meet the needs of the immigrant population looking to re-establish its roots.

This manual presents insight about how the Exchange House was opened, and how it operates now. It’s important to note that the Exchange House was born out of a unique neighborhood identity. With these tips and best practices, you’ll be able to open your own community-driven house.
Better Block Foundation is a 501(c)3 nonprofit that educates, equips, and empowers communities and their leaders to reshape and reactivate built environments to promote the growth of healthy and vibrant neighborhoods.

What We Do
Better Block focuses on six major activities:

- Develop open-source media to help cities, community groups, and emerging leaders create rapid prototyping in the service of creative placemaking and support of public life.
- Create opportunities for communities and their existing and emerging leaders to gain exposure to and training from urban planning experts, civic innovators and architects from around the world through global symposiums.
- Facilitate community engagement though input and information; employing charrettes, neighborhood meetings, and workshops with residents, stakeholders, and governments about the value of rapid prototyping to enhance public life.
- Host and organize study tours to benchmark successful examples of sustainable initiatives around the world.
- Create new and improve existing modeling tools through experimentation with innovative technologies and scientific solutions.
- Create mentorship programs for emerging leaders and young urbanists.
Mission
The Exchange House is a public space supporting, empowering, and culturally enriching the community.

Vision
The Exchange House seeks to be a regionally recognized sustainable public space that celebrates and showcases North Hill’s cultures through the built environment, programming, and business incubation.

Values
The Exchange House is a welcoming, sometimes unexpected experience valuing North Hill’s cultures through active listening, demonstrating respect, and encouraging growth.
Our First Year by the Numbers (February 2017—2018)

- 23 countries represented by visitors
- 32 community org partnerships formed
- 1800 cups of coffee served
- 268 nights booked on Airbnb
- 6 impromptu Nepali dance parties
- 45 hours of performance
- 150 meetings hosted
- 54 Airbnb guests
- $7163 made on Airbnb
- 250 happenings
The Exchange House was developed with Akron’s history in mind. Jason Segedy, the current Director of the Department of Planning and Urban Development, wrote this introduction in *Planning to Grow Akron*:

“For roughly 80 years, Akron was the center of the global rubber and tire industry. It was home to the headquarters of four of the world’s five largest tire manufacturers—Goodyear, Firestone, B.F. Goodrich, and General Tire. In 1920, it was building half of the world’s tires. By 1982, not a single passenger tire was built in the city. The impact on the city’s economy, culture, and psyche was profound.

Between 1910 and 1920, Akron was the fastest growing city in the entire nation, expanding from a population 69,000 in 1910 to 208,000 in 1920. As a result, much of the city’s housing was built in the 1910s, and is now 100 years old.

The city hit its peak population in 1960, expanding to 290,000 residents. Since 1960, the city has lost 31 percent of its population. Today it is home to approximately 198,000 residents.

Despite losing 73,000 residents between 1960 and 2000, the number of households (90,000) remained consistent for 40 years, due to shrinking average household size. But since 2000, Akron has lost an additional 19,000 people and over 6,000 households. This has led to a growing problem with vacant and abandoned properties.”

Segedy was part of the team that brought the North Hill Better Block to life. His insight and expertise in urban planning helped shape the built environment around the Exchange House.

Another unique aspect in North Hill is the Bhutanese refugee population that lives there.

Since the early 20th century, the North Hill neighborhood in Akron has been a home for immigrants: Italians, Croats, Polish, and Irish. However, over the last decade, thousands of Nepali-speaking Bhutanese have resettled in Akron and all over the United States. They have opened businesses, bought houses, and
founded a number of organizations.

In 1624, the Shabdrung Ngawang Namgyal started a business relationship with metalcrafters in Gorka, Nepal. Since that year, thousands of Nepalese resettled in the southern part of Bhutan. For over 360 years, the ethnically Nepali people grew to be one-fifth of Bhutan’s population and produced most of the country’s agriculture. In 1988, Bhutan had its first census and realized the large number of Lhotshampa (Nepali-speaking Bhutanese). The Bhutanese government enforced a language and dress code while also pushing out the Lhotshampa in the early ’90s. Several thousand Lhotshampa settled in the refugee camps that were set up by the UNHCR in Eastern Nepal. From 2008 to 2017, more than 108,000 Lhotshampa have been resettled (85 percent in the United States).
Finding Home at the Exchange House

Neema Tamang, Exchange House AmeriCorps VISTA, searches for identity.

“What does country mean to you? What does home mean to you?”

Binod Paudel, a Nepalese filmmaker asked these questions to myself and my friends while we were hanging out on a Friday night. The room was silent for a minute. I waited to answer until after my friends shared.

Paudel and Yatin Parkhani, an LA-based film editor, came to Akron to collect stories from the Nepali-Bhutanese Americans who currently live in North Hill. The mission of their project was to find stories and turn them into a script and a documentary. During this process, they stayed at the Exchange House, a public space supporting, empowering, and culturally enriching the North Hill community. During their weeklong stay, I helped them by bringing people from my community to the Exchange House for personal interviews. I also recommended they meet with a dance group called Nepali Saskritic Kala Kendra and with community leaders who are volunteering to help others survive in the new country.

During their stay, I spoke with them at length about my life as an artist. I was a co-founder of the Suruwath Theatre back in Nepal where we did more than 20 productions in Shanichar, a Bhutanese refugee camp. When third country resettlement started, we all divided into eight different countries including the United States. My family arrived in the United States safely on September 9, 2013. I started to go to North High School with a dream to continue to work in theatre. The school had a Culture Fair, and my friends and I created an original play. After that, we did six or seven productions from the Suruwath Theatre. Then, last year, I started to work in Gum-Dip Theatre with “Nepali
Applause: an open air market / performance festival.”

Because of my background, they asked to meet with my friends and me to discuss our stories. While playing FIFA and eating chatpattey, a type of Nepali food, Yatin and Binod started recording and interviewing us. Parkhani asked questions and Paudel took notes as we shared our experiences.

“What does country mean to you? What does home mean to you?”

This question made me think deeply about my identity because I don’t know what country means to me. My parents introduce themselves as Bhutanese, but I don’t want to because I only know things about Bhutan that my parents and elders have shared with me. I was born and grew up in a refugee camp in Nepal. I lived there for 17 years of my life. My tongue speaks Nepali and Tamang languages, and my body loves to wear Nepali costumes. I am proud to share about Nepal with strangers. I have researched about my Tamang ancestor heritage which started in Syabru Besi village in Nepal centuries ago. After knowing this history, I expected that we would become Nepalese citizens but it never happened. Nepal gave us our identity as refugees. Other than that, I don’t think we got anything from Nepal. I don’t have a country.

Even though my friends disagreed with me about this, I believe that home would be a safe place to live, but we never had that in the refugee camp. I am still challenging myself to consider Akron as home. I am still questioning how I should introduce myself to people. Bhutanese? I’ve never been there. Nepali? They never claimed us. I wonder how many other former refugees here question themselves like I have.

I work at The Exchange House as a bridge for my community. A lot of elders don’t speak English, and thus, every little thing is a huge challenge for their lives. For example, they need a way to understand the basic laws for driving, going to the hospital, asking for water, or using the phone and buying food. My generation of young people is aware of basic information in navigating American culture but doesn’t necessarily use it to their families’ advantage because they have their own problems. Being aware of my own cultural expectations along with new rules and regulations of a new place makes me aware of the difficulties of the older generation in my community. We need more places like The Exchange House so they can find help and make them feel that Akron is also their HOME.
THE SET-UP
FUNDING

The Exchange House was a winning project of the Knight Cities Challenge grant in 2015. We were a fit for the award as it was seeking new ideas from innovators who were taking hold of the future of their cities.

Knight Cities Challenge

The Knight Cities Challenge seeks new ideas from innovators who will take hold of the future of our cities. The challenge seeks submissions from people who have ideas to make the 26 communities where Knight invests more vibrant places to live and work.

Talent
Ideas that help cities attract and keep talented people.

Opportunity
Ideas that expand economic prospects by breaking down divides and making new connections.

Engagement
Ideas that spur connection and civic involvement.
FINDING THE PERFECT HOUSE

1. Consider the Community’s Needs

What type of programming do you want to implement? What will be the business structure? Whom are you trying to reach?

Since we wanted to host both community events and Airbnb guests, we prioritized finding a house located in a lot with residential and commercial zoning that was central to walking traffic in North Hill. We picked a house and lot across the street from Family Groceries, a major Nepali grocery store. Being across the street from a business district gives us visibility to the North Hill community as well as proximity for any out-of-town guests who stay with us. Both the location and size of house are ideal for working with the community and providing an international hostel.

2. Do Your Research

What type of city restrictions are there in your city? Are there regulations you need to consider before choosing a house? What is the history of the facility?

The Exchange House is over 100-years-old with a history of business enterprise. (In the 1980s, it was a school supply store!) If it had been strictly commercially zoned, then we would have had to follow standard hotel laws, which includes a complete fire/security system and wheelchair accessibility (a limitation we’re considering in our next round of renovations). Because of our mixed-use zoning, we’re able to offer Airbnb as a residence.

3. Take a Tour

What type of aesthetic do you want? Will the house or facility serve your needs? Will it serve the community needs? If not, how can you change your search?

The Exchange House size was the perfect amount of space on the first floor for flexible programming, the correct number of rooms to create an international hostel, and located with the lot facing North Main, which is good for bigger events. Our most successful programs at the house have been ones that utilize the intimate space the best: private health clinics, small panel discussions, and story circles. Even though there were amenities we had to build ourselves, including a first floor restroom and expanding the partial wall between a living room and dining room to make it more open, we recognized the potential of the house’s structure while we were on our search.
THE AESTHETIC
TIME TO DESIGN!

Between the purchase of the property to the final coat of paint, the design changed constantly. Our resources, time, and budget were limited but we prioritized the mission of the house with every step.

The first architect created a beautiful design for the house that we loved. He was also an expert in nonprofit work and had refugee parents—a fit that seemed relevant to our mission. He was also from Cleveland, instead of Akron, so there were many roadblocks in the implementation process. For example, we would try to move forward with a construction choice, but the contractor would warn us of Summit County regulations that the architect was not aware of.

Eventually, many of the artistic choices the architect designed were too costly for the house. Part of this came from the roadblocks of having an architect from a different county and part of it were the surprises of renovating a 100-year-old house. Thus, we decided to scale back and focus on making the house livable.
1. **Expect the unexpected!**
   Nothing is more surprising than the creaks and crevices of an old house. The most important lesson is to stay flexible.

2. **Find a contractor who is familiar with your county’s permit laws.**
   When we had our first open house (before renovations), a building inspector from Summit County pointed out several permits that we needed. Unfortunately, our initial contractor did not work in Summit County so he was unaware of the permit laws. Right after, we hired a local contractor who had extensive knowledge of our county’s permit requirements.

3. **Hire licensed professionals for all contracted work.**
   The first installation of our electric system was not completed by a licensed electrician. Because of this, our building inspector required us to take it all out and to reinstall the electricity. This cost us a lot of time and money.

4. **Be aware of your local zoning codes.**
   Akron is strict about its zoning classifications: a location is either residence or commercial. If the city recognized the Airbnb as a hotel (or commercial) location, then we would’ve had to install sprinklers and a 54-foot wheelchair ramp, which was far beyond our budget. The city planning director worked with us to classify the house as a residence.

5. **Sometimes, there’s asbestos.**
   The shingles and siding had asbestos. Because the shingles were intact (and not torn or frayed), we were able to keep the siding. However, this did prevent us from one design choice: moving the front door. Originally, the design included the front and back doors lined up so people could walk straight through. This had to change with cost issues and asbestos considerations.

6. **The angle of a door matters.**
   With the addition of a new bathroom on the first floor, we had to be careful which direction the door was facing. In Summit County, there cannot be a bathroom door that opens directly into the kitchen. Thus we had to angle the door out toward the main space.

7. **Don’t fall through the floor!**
   When renovating the bathroom on the second floor, we found floor joints that were less than an inch of wood. This could have been extremely dangerous.

8. **Air conditioning is necessary.**
   The house had solid ducts so there was no need to work on the heating. We did install an air conditioning unit though. Airbnb guests won’t stay in a house that’s over 80 degrees in July.
INCLUDING THE COMMUNITY

These are some community partners who helped us make the house what it is.

John S. and James L. Knight Foundation
Habitat for Humanity ReStore
Truly Reaching You - Prison Rehabilitation Program
Women’s Interfaith Spiritual Heritage
AxessPointe Health Clinic
  • Received $40,000 grant to continue half-day clinics
Summit County Public Health
Bahai’i Spiritual Group
Tamang Buddhist Society of Akron
Bhutanese Community Association of Akron
Gum-Dip Theatre
  • Received $10,000 grant for “Nepali Applause” festival
League of Creative Interventionists
Project LEARN
International Institute of Akron
  • Received Neighborhood Partnership Program grant for “My North Hill” story circles
African Power - Congolese Dance Group
Developing Alternatives for Women in New Communities (DAWN)
Akron Peace Project
Cross Cultural Solutions
Leadership Akron

Read Family Foundation
Akron Children’s Hospital
House of Kung Fu
Global Ties
North Akron Community Development Corporation
City of Akron
@Play Akron
Big Love Network
Greenleaf
American Diabetes Association
House of Hope
ASIA Inc
Planned Parenthood
Karen Community Association of Akron
Scott Read
OPENING THE HOUSE
Snow Day at The Exchange House
# Checklist for the Airbnb

Here’s a list of things you MUST have done before accepting guests!

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>1. Clean sheets.</th>
<th>11. A profile that features high-quality pictures.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2. Window shades.</td>
<td>12. A nightly price that is reasonable (we started at $27, and now we’re at $35).</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. Bedside tables.</td>
<td>13. A kitchen supplied with pots, pans, silverware, and appliances. Think about registering at a locally owned store in your neighborhood. (We’re mindful of supporting small businesses!)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5. Ironing board.</td>
<td>15. A house manual that describes the ways of the place.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7. Lots of toilet paper.</td>
<td>17. A security system. Our house is equipped with simple security cameras at the front and back doors to ensure safety.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8. More towels than you can imagine.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9. A washer that uses hot water (our first one didn’t!)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10. A pocket door to close between the first and second floors.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

“

**William Nu’utupu Giles**  
*SLAM poet from Hawaii who stayed as an Airbnb guest*

I didn’t really know what to expect, but I was blown away. The room is cute, warm, and well-furnished. The front and back porch are really nice. It was central and easy to get around. The price is phenomenal, and the energy and history surrounding the place make it glowing and a great community energy. Will definitely be back when I’m in Akron.

”
Once the house was finished with renovations, we planned an opening for a Tuesday evening at the end of February in 2017. We had all of our basics finished: clean walls, new floors, and furniture for the bedrooms.

1. **Create a registry.**
   We posted a registry on Target so people could buy housewarming items. We received tumblers, coffee cups, silverware, a toaster, pots and pans, cooking utensils, water filter, and Keurig from community members who cared about our mission.

2. **Collect pictures from the community.**
   The first floor featured black and white photos that were framed. All of the photos were collected from the Bhutanese community to capture family memories and special moments.

3. **Initialize and garner community partnerships.**
   There were a lot of people who wanted to be involved in the house from the beginning. The opening was a great way to build our relationships with community partners, such as the Bhutanese Community Association of Akron. It was a chance for them to see the new space and envision how they wanted to use it.

4. **Buy food and alcohol.**
   We hired a local restaurant to cater Nepali food for us including samosas, chow mein, and pakoras. There was also wine and beer from a local brewery.

5. **Hire musicians.**
   The opening featured two Bhutanese musicians playing throughout the night on harmonium and guitar. They created a calm atmosphere with their instrumental music.

6. **Invite everyone who was involved in the process.**
   There were so many community partners and leaders involved throughout the process that it was hard to keep track (so start keeping track from the very beginning). We sent out an invitation to our working list, but accidentally missed a few important people. Remember to be thorough when creating your guest list.

7. **Consider the flow of the event.**
   We spent some time brainstorming how the open house should flow. The first floor had the musicians, light information, and refreshments. The food was spread out on the counters in the kitchen, but the alcohol was stuck in a corner that was not very accessible. Be sure to think out how attendees will move through your space, and know that it’s okay if you don’t get it exactly right at first. The house will reveal itself to you through use.
IT’S OPEN, NOW WHAT?
Kathy Ress  
*WISH Core Committee Member and Life-Long Mental Health Therapist*

Our Women’s Interfaith Spiritual Heritage Group (WISH), a multicultural interfaith group, met several times for regular Core Committee meetings, and also ran a series of three workshops on how to learn to facilitate groups in “deliberative dialogue” at the Exchange House. Also, as a separate program, Akron Interfaith Immigrant Advocates held a vigil for Father’s Day for those immigrant fathers facing the threat of deportation. We had people of many faiths present, in unity, praying for families in great need.  
As I was waiting on the front porch for members of our group to arrive, I observed a group of girls skipping down the street. I think they were Congolese as they were speaking another language. Then I looked next door and saw what may have been the Bhutanese neighbors. It was heartwarming to observe these small moments and feel part of a web of bustling life that is international and vibrant. And it was wonderful to have our group members react to what they saw as they came in, asking questions, and being present in this environment. It seemed to motivate the whole group to work harder as increasing understanding by others of the immigrant community.
COMMUNITY PARTNERSHIPS

The Do’s and Don’ts of Relationship Building

Do think about community needs
Don’t program around the “well-intentioned”

Many people were interested in teaching ESL classes for refugees and immigrants. However, there are several organizations that offer this service so it seemed redundant to offer our own classes. Instead, we found ways to supplement the need for immigrants to practice English. For example, we partnered with the International Institute of Akron for its Conversational Partner Program. It paired Americans with New Americans to practice English, and we offered the house as a comfortable space for them to meet.

Do create a list of house rules
Don’t be afraid to hold groups accountable

Since the opening, we’ve had many groups and organizations use the house for meetings, events, and performances. About three months in, there was a group that left the house in disarray: the kitchen was messy, the was trash piled high, and the main space was disorganized. One of our consistent groups came to use the house and was very displeased with the shape it was in. They cleaned up after the previous group but expressed discontent with the situation. After this incident, we implemented a list of housekeeping rules that groups must follow in order to keep the house in working shape. Sometimes it’s difficult to hold groups accountable, but it’s the only way to maintain professionalism and efficiency.

Example of the Checklist
The Exchange House is a share space. Please help us to maintain the house by:
• Washing any dishes used
• Wiping down counters
• Sweeping up the floors
• Folding chairs and tables and putting them in the bathroom
• Taking out trash or recycling
• Turning off lights before leaving
• Keeping temperature at 71 degrees
• Locking all doors upon departure

Do be flexible
Don’t be afraid of last-minute events

Throughout our scheduling, we’ve had many last-minute events, which are events that are organized less than two weeks out. This can be stressful and unexpected. However, most of our last-minute events tend to be the most successful. For example, we hosted an Israeli entrepreneur and art educator for a performance/dialogue. The event was organized one week before she arrived in the U.S. We didn’t have enough time to advertise and mobilize our community, but we had an amazing turn out that resulted in an impactful experience. For the Exchange House, it’s about creating intimate events that value the heart and soul of the neighborhood. In this instance, we facilitated a space that was welcoming but relevant.
Do support the community in times of need
Don’t be afraid to take a stance

Before we opened, there was a refugee/immigrant march to support the community in light of federal administrative choices. There was a group of 400 people who met at a park in North Hill to march in solidarity and support of the refugees and immigrants who built Akron in the last several years. The march ended in the lot behind the Exchange House, where folks were welcomed to step on the back deck and share their story of immigration. Even before the house was open, we found a way to participate in an important cultural and social event. We weren’t known or acknowledged, but we knew that providing a space like this was essential to supporting our community. It may not have been popular with everyone, but it was necessary for our identity as the Exchange House.
PROGRAMMING
Nepali Applause was a multi-disciplinary performance that illustrates the rich history of the New American population in North Hill. The project collected works of art, dance, music, and performance by professional and New American artists to create a bilingual variety show. This open air market/performance festival activated the lot behind, as well as inside the Exchange House.

Gum-Dip Theatre is a community-based theatre company that celebrates, challenges, and invents community identity in the Rust Belt. Through neighborhood story circles and PAY-WHAT-YOU-CAN theatrical performances, they aim to enhance civic engagement and participation.

About 20 percent of participants returned surveys during the festival with the following results:

- 100% experienced something new at the event
- 83% were exposed to a new culture
- 63% were at the Exchange House for the first time
- 100% would come to another event hosted by the Exchange House
- 100% would like to see more culturally centered events like this in Akron
- 96% are more likely to attend other cultural events after experiencing Nepali Applause
- 95% reported a better understanding of Nepalese/Bhutanese culture
- 98% felt that Gum-Dip Theatre was offering a new avenue for the immigrant community to express themselves in a healing way
Participants were asked to rate the level of importance (on a scale of 1 to 10) they place on cultural competency before and after the event. The average rating before the event was 8.5 with an increase to an average of 9.2 after the event.

Follow-up to Nepali Applause

Project Description
Nepali Natak is an ensemble of Nepali theatre artists who continue to create original productions after the success of the “Nepali Applause” festival. Gum-Dip Theatre proposes to partner with Exchange House as a semi-permanent residence for rehearsals, events, and performances.

Project Goals/Outcomes
• Raise awareness of artistic diversity through public performances
• Train and develop professional theatre artists
• Contribute to economic development for Nepali artists through stipends
• Cultural exchange between North Hill residents through performance
• Increase Exchange House visibility and number of visitors
• Promote cultural tourism in Akron by offering “experiences” through Airbnb
• Invite guests to watch rehearsals weekly

Partnership Structure with Exchange House

Gum-Dip Theatre requests to use the Exchange House as the central site for development and implementation of the Nepali Natak ensemble. The indoor space will be used for rehearsals two to four times a week (very flexible with other evening events). When using the space for ticketed (pay-what-you-can) performance, GDT proposes to donate 15 percent of sales to the Exchange House. GDT also proposes to provide two show tickets and two drink tickets per room to Airbnb guests attending an “experience.” If this proposal is accepted, the Exchange House will be listed as a partner and will be included in all publicity surrounding every event.
The Exchange House is supposed to be whatever the community needs at that time. I have been at the Exchange House to watch Gum-Dip Theatre put on a performance about cross-cultural experiences. I have been there to negotiate translation contracts, and to help a young entrepreneur set up his business. I have been there to sit on the couch drinking La Croix working on presentations for my training business surrounded by a wildly diverse group of other young professionals and artists. I have been there while a driver’s training course was conducting classes in three different languages on each floor of the building, fitting in-between equipment for a musical performance scheduled for that same night. I have seen this place fill wide-spread community needs and fill my individual social needs. Most institutions are too large to be responsive to community needs but Exchange House provides opportunities for grassroots problem solving with low barriers to entry.
APPENDIX

Interest Form

Exchange House Interest Form
This form is for individuals or organizations who are interested in using the Exchange House for an event. Please fill out with as much detail as possible and the program director will be in contact with you shortly after.

Name *
First
Last

Email *

Phone Number *
### - ### - ####

Organization (if applicable)

How would you like to use the Exchange House *
- Meeting
- Private Event
- Public Event
- Performance
- Class
- Other

Briefly describe the event, program, etc. you would like to have. *

How many people do you anticipate to participate / attend? *

What is your first preference of date? *
MM / DD / YYYY

Second preference *
MM / DD / YYYY

The Exchange House has several amenities available for your use. Check all that apply: *
- Folding tables (sitting or standing height)
- Folding chairs (up to 40)
- Movable soft furniture (seats up to 8)
- Bluetooth speaker
- Small projector (with HDMI cord)
- Shared kitchen (with basic cooking gear)
- Front porch
- Back deck
- Coloring books
- High seat for a baby
- Whiteboard and draw erase markers
- Wifi
Strategic Plan

DRAFT STRATEGIC PLAN

GOAL 1: CREATE A DESTINATION EXPERIENCE

Create and implement a marketing plan

- Develop means to encourage guests to spread the word
- Create Exchange House marker to leave behind in highest trafficked areas of Akron
- Explore listing on Airbnb as experience option
- Advertise in local papers (e.g. Devil Strip)

Design the built environment with destination experiences in mind

- Provide continual access to some portions of property
- Develop regular campaigns and exhibits

Develop programming to support destination experiences for local, regional, national, and international audiences

- Showcase community’s talents
- Develop talent exchanges
- Invite thought leaders, lecturers, cultural figureheads, storytellers, etc.
- Develop “sister” community center/Airbnb
- Create programs around experiences

GOAL 3: INVEST IN PROPERTY ENHANCEMENTS
## GOAL 4: TRANSITION TO NACDC OWNERSHIP

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Develop sustainability plans and guiding documents</th>
<th>Begin hiring process</th>
<th>Implement guiding documents' recommendations</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Finish strategic plan</td>
<td></td>
<td>Implement strategic plan</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Finish draft business plan (including fee structure)</td>
<td></td>
<td>Implement business plan</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Build development plan</td>
<td></td>
<td>Implement development plan</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Create organizational structure</td>
<td>Hold year 2 VISTAS/Staff</td>
<td>Implement organizational plan</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### Develop and implement pre-transition tactics
- Align ourselves with NACDC
- Formalize operations

### Develop transition process
- Hold transitional meetings

### Begin transition
- Hold transitional meetings
Exchange House Feedback Form

We appreciate your complete and honest feedback. This will help us create systems that help the house run smoothly.

Name

Email

Phone Number

What did you use the Exchange House for? Briefly describe the program, event, class etc. *

What worked well? Did the House accommodate your needs? *

What didn't work well? What could we do to make your experience better? *

If you have one, please share a short story about a meaningful moment you witnessed in the Exchange House.

Any other feedback you’d like to share?