## Why a New Space for Women and Children at the YWCA?

### Current Shelter

**Space Constraints**
- 22 tiny rooms can house only 50 people
- Families crowd into 97 square foot rooms
- More than 200 monthly requests for shelter are denied due to space limitations
- Very large families are too big for the YWCA’s tiny rooms
- Children have no desks for homework
- Only 3,400 square feet of safe residential space

**Communal Living Limitations**
- No privacy: 50 residents share two kitchens and two bathrooms
- Families can’t enjoy the benefits of conversation over a family meal
- Studies show crowding increases dropout rates, causes cognitive delays, increases blood pressure, and increases feelings of hopelessness (Center for Housing Policy, July 2007)
- Families with pets suffer even more crowded conditions
- Crowded shelter life does not simulate independent living

### The Wilsonion

**Increased Capacity**
- Increase of 25 beds (50% increase overall) to 75
- Each family unit has its own kitchen and bathroom
- An increase in bed space of 50% allows more clients to be served
- Several apartments will house larger families of up to 9
- Individual apartments have built-in desks
- 11,475 square feet of safe residential space

**Benefits of Private Space**
- Families can live as families in the privacy of their own space and the dignity it affords
- Units have kitchens and tables for family meals
- Crowding stressors are eliminated amid a time of family crisis
- Pet owners fleeing from violence have more space for their beloved animals
- Private living conditions mirror independent life outside the shelter with the benefit of 24-hour support

At the Wilsonion, families can live as families in the privacy of their own space and the dignity it affords.

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**For more information, contact YWCA at 253.272.4181 ext. 243**

**www.ywcapiercecounty.org**

**Mission:** To transform the lives of women and children through safety, healing, and empowerment

**Vision:** A safe, just, and equitable community

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Rev. 1/22/10

It’s Time to Support the YWCA
It's Time For Action

Violence behind closed doors hurts families—women, men, and children. From 2002 to 2006, women killed by a domestic partner in the U.S. outnumbered soldiers killed in Iraq by 33 percent. The YWCA pioneered safe housing for domestic violence victims. Still, due to space constraints, over 200 requests for shelter are denied monthly, despite the fact that the YWCA offers the largest domestic violence emergency housing in the county.

For over three decades, the YWCA has brought safety and hope to families fleeing violence, 24 hours a day, seven days a week, 365 days a year.

It's Time to Grow

The YWCA's current building was not designed to house women and children fleeing violence for up to 90 days. The building was intended to offer a safe overnight stay for single, traveling women. As its focus shifted to providing safety to women fleeing violence, a building designed in 1927 for another purpose was adapted to meet client needs:

- The YWCA houses up to 50 women and children under cramped conditions
- 50 people share two floors, two kitchens, and two bathrooms
- The rooms are small: 97 square feet on average (smaller than a standard bedroom in most homes)
- Lack of privacy counteracts healing
- The plumbing has failed three times in three years
- The electric wiring system is old: Alterations are cost prohibitive
- The current space is too small; the building is too tired. It's time to grow.

Why Is Space an Issue?

In the YWCA's current building, women and children receive safety, but they need so much more. They need to thrive, not just survive. Studies show crowded living conditions cause:

- Reduced graduation rates for youth
- Delays in children’s cognitive development, particularly ages 1-5
- Increased blood pressure
- Increased feelings of hopelessness
- Impaired parent-child relationships
- Increased psychological distress

The bottom line: Families can’t live as families in the YWCA’s crowded, inadequate existing building.

It's Time to Move

To more effectively meet clients’ needs for family living, as well as safe housing, the YWCA has found a new space. The YWCA purchased a renovated apartment building adjacent to its existing property — the Wilsonion. This space provides individual apartments and much-needed privacy. The new space’s close proximity to the current YWCA facility makes it easy for clients to take advantage of other vital YWCA services such as child care, legal services, and support groups.

It’s Time to Improve!

- 50% more bed space than the current building
- Quiet, private space to accommodate children’s development and academic achievement
- Individual kitchens enable families to eat meals together at a kitchen table, contributing to better family relationships
- Private bathrooms for each family
- Living conditions that lead to enhanced self-sufficiency

The bottom line: Families can live as families in this new space.

Other Benefits

The relocation allows the YWCA to expand non-housing services as we maximize use of our current facility:

- The Children’s Program will have improved space more centrally located to the indoor gym for play
- Private office space will be available for clients to meet with legal advocates to discuss sensitive details of their legal concerns
- Outdoor play space will increase from 1,350 square feet to 6,000 square feet

Cost Breakdown

The total cost of the project is $4.5 million.

The YWCA has received a 40-year, no-interest loan from the Housing Finance Commission, a full 30% of the total campaign.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Category</th>
<th>Amount</th>
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<tr>
<td>Acquisition</td>
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<td>Construction</td>
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<td>Transition Costs</td>
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We need your donation to improve the lives of women and children.

The significance of the Wilsonion purchase and what it means for future residents is most clearly illustrated through the words of past shelter residents. After hearing about the purchase, former residents share their thoughts:

Peace  “The new building will offer time for reflection—I had so many problems I was trying to figure out. There were always people around me, but I often didn’t feel like talking at all.”

Courage  “When women find out they can have their own apartment, they will be encouraged to seek help. Living in a shelter seems so hard that many people might not leave (the abuse).”

Confidence  “It will help women learn how to be independent in their own space and it will be a more realistic test for living on their own.”

Family  “It will give people a chance to act like a family, to sit at the table together, and not have to share family time with 50 other people who are also going through tough times.”