

2025



PARTNERS FOR PROGRESS

Our Dream, Our Home, Our Future

2025 Development Plan for the Partners for Progress
Facility

PRESENTED BY:

Diane Helgeland

About Partners for Progress

Partners For Progress (PFP) is a nonprofit organization dedicated to providing high-quality, equine-assisted therapies to individuals with physical, mental, and emotional challenges. Opening our doors in 2005, PFP services about 1,312 hours every month; per year, that's 15,744 hours we spend helping clients from Northeastern Illinois and Southeastern Wisconsin reach their goals. Our programs are designed to maximize personal potential, welfare, and self-achievement, supported by a 79% success rate in goal achievement over 18 years of documented outcomes. PFP provides the highest quality of care, standing behind our 3Q service delivery: Quality Horse, Quality Program, Quality Life.

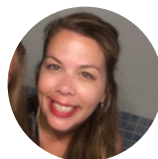
We offer unique, individualized goal-oriented programs with regular evaluations. We are the only therapeutic riding center in Illinois and Wisconsin that sponsors a national traveling show team, we support a Special Olympics competitive riding team, and offer a comprehensive Veterans Program.

Mission Statement: PFP aims to improve the quality of life for individuals with different abilities through innovative equine-assisted programs, focusing on therapy, education, and sport.

ORGANIZATION AND MANAGEMENT



Diane Helgeland
Founder & Executive
Director



Amanda Braden
Director of Operations



Karin Kepski
Program Coordinator



Anne Margaret Huffman
Director of Community
Relations



Jamie Herald
Equine Manager

Mission and Vision

We believe in the transformative power of equine therapy to change lives. As we continue to grow and serve more riders, we request financial support to ensure the funds to purchase the land and building of our facility, and help our facility meet the needs of our expanding community. This renovation plan will not only secure the future of our programs by purchasing the land and building we currently use but also enable critical renovations and expansions that will allow us to provide even greater support to our clients.



MISSION

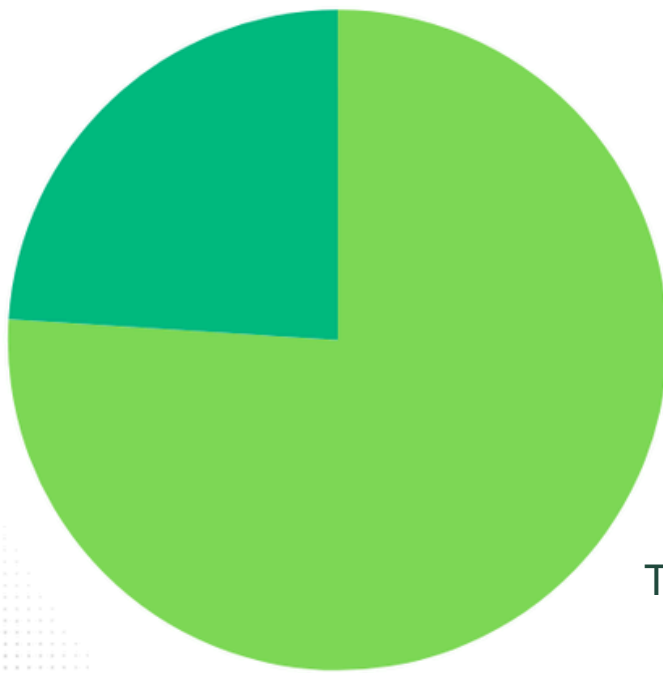
PFP's current location provides everything needed to expand its programs, including 20 acres of serene land, a well-built barn facility with stables, office areas, bathrooms, a heated indoor arena, two outdoor arenas, four pastures, and ample parking. The site also offers the potential for a custom-designed renovation to create an environmentally friendly, fully accessible, state-of-the-art therapeutic equestrian center.



VISION

The renovations and additions outlined will not only enhance the physical structure of our facility but also profoundly impact the experiences and opportunities available to our riders and community. With these additions and development, PFP can continue to scale, offering more diverse programs for a wider range of needs to those with unique limitations. Together, we can build brighter futures—one rider, one horse, one step at a time.

OUR NEEDS



■ Capital Needs

76%

TOTAL NEED: \$7,516,000

■ Program Needs

24%

TOTAL NEED: \$2,484,000

Total Required: \$10,000,000

76% of the required needs will go towards the physical renovations and upgrades needed to strengthen and expand our organization. This includes additions like new indoor arena footing, outdoor paddocks, a new parking lot and carport, an outdoor covered event space, and more. Moreover, we plan to expand our offerings and services with new additions like a small animal barn, a Horticultural Garden, a Sensory Trail, new therapy rooms, a new staff kitchen area, and more, (listed on page 5).

24% of these funds will go toward Program Expansion. PFP prioritizes opportunity creation for all, providing job opportunities through our Job Skills program, and offering scholarships to those in need, however we want to amplify these offerings of our organization.

We plan to create an occupational life-skills program, job training for individuals with special needs, continue to provide state-of-the-art CHA instructor training, establish a mentoring program for trainees, and host workshops for instructors, therapists, and volunteers to expand on our training.

\$10 Million Need

CAPITAL NEEDS (76%)

Project and Initiative	Value	Percentage
Purchase Land & Building	\$3,900,000	52%
Barn Renovation	\$1,500,000	20%
Covered Outdoor Event Space	\$1,000,000	13%
Parking Lot/Car Port	\$500,000	7%
Equipment (Bobcat, Tractor, etc.)	\$225,000	3%
Small Animal Barn	\$200,000	2%
Outdoor Paddocks	\$80,000	1%
Electronics & Upgrades	\$80,000	1%
Indoor Arena Footing	\$25,000	0.3%
New Drag & Water Tank	\$6,000	.07%
TOTAL	\$7,516,000	100%

PROGRAM EXPANSION (24%)

Project and Initiative	Value	Percentage
Established Endowment	\$1,816,000	73%
Program Expansion & Budget for 2 years	\$500,000	20%
Job Skills	\$168,000	7%
TOTAL	\$2,484,000	100%

The Impact

Stability and Security

The first, most foundational benefit of this developmental plan is purchasing the land and facility we currently operate on. Ownership provides stability and gives us the freedom to customize the space to perfectly suit the needs of our riders, staff, and volunteers. In the long run, it allows us to focus resources on serving more clients and expanding programs without worrying about fluctuating rental costs or the potential loss of our location.

Expanded Capacity for Service

The renovations, particularly the barn overhaul, will allow us to increase our capacity for hosting therapy sessions. With new indoor arena footing, we'll create a safer and more comfortable environment for horses and riders alike. A cushioned and stable surface minimizes injury risks and ensures that sessions can run smoothly. The addition of an outdoor covered event space will allow us to host sessions and events throughout the year, regardless of weather conditions, ensuring no therapy time is lost. More available space and year-round flexibility will directly result in more therapy hours and better outcomes for our riders.

Improved Accessibility and Inclusivity

At Partners for Progress, inclusivity and accessibility are at the core of everything we do. By adding a new parking lot and carport, we will create a more welcoming and accessible environment for all. These upgrades will ensure that clients, volunteers, and families with physical challenges or limitations can arrive here with extra support and help remove some of the complexities of transferring clients to the arena, enhancing the experience for every diverse visitor. Accessibility isn't just about physical spaces—it's about removing barriers and ensuring every child, regardless of ability, can benefit from their time at PFP.



The Impact

Better Care for Our Horses

Our therapy horses are at the heart of our program, and the new outdoor paddocks will provide them with ample space to roam, exercise, and relax when they aren't working. Healthy, happy horses are essential to the quality of our programs, and by investing in their well-being, we ensure that they are always ready to deliver their best during therapy sessions. The new equipment—such as the Bobcat, tractor, and other maintenance tools—will allow us to keep the barn and paddocks in top condition, ensuring that our horses' living and working environments are clean, safe, and well-maintained.

Holistic Therapeutic Approach

One of the most exciting components of this plan is the creation of a Small Animal Barn and an Outdoor Horticultural Garden with a Sensory Trail. These additions will allow us to expand beyond equine therapy into other forms of nature-based therapeutic experiences. The Small Animal Barn will give our riders a chance to interact with a variety of animals, promoting sensory engagement, emotional connection, and responsibility. This variety of animal interactions can be particularly helpful for children who may be hesitant around horses or those who benefit from different types of animal-assisted therapy.

The Sensory Trail will create a serene, outdoor space where riders can relax, reflect, and connect with nature. It will engage their senses in new and calming ways, allowing them to process emotions, build self-awareness, and develop a deeper connection to their surroundings. The garden will stimulate touch, sight, smell, and sound, providing unique opportunities for emotional regulation and mental health support. This peaceful environment will promote mindfulness and reduce anxiety, offering riders a holistic therapeutic experience that goes beyond the barn and arena.

Mental Health and Emotional Growth

By offering these additional therapeutic spaces and experiences, we are addressing not just physical therapy needs but also emotional and mental health challenges. Children with special needs often face high levels of anxiety, stress, and difficulty processing emotions. The addition of nature-based therapy, through both the Horticultural Garden and the Sensory Trail, gives riders the space and tools to better manage these feelings. Nature has a well-documented calming effect on mental health, and combining it with therapeutic riding helps children feel more at ease, fostering emotional growth, improved mood, and resilience.



Sequence of Events

The renovation will be conducted in several phases:

Phase I focuses on securing the funds necessary to purchase the former Fallen Oaks Equestrian Center.

Phase II involves finalizing all aspects necessary to conduct a custom-designed renovation that will allow for efficient and effective therapy rooms, classrooms, meeting space, dry storage, an additional indoor viewing area, a kitchen area, and upgraded administrative offices.

Phase III aims to secure funds necessary to conduct the expansion and improvement of outdoor facilities including sensory trail, garden area, upgraded accessibility, upgraded facility maintenance equipment, additional facility maintenance equipment, and expanding outdoor watering abilities.

Phase IV requires fundraising necessary to establish a self-maintaining Horse Care Fund to offer stability through tough weather times, like the 2012 drought, a self-maintaining Scholarship Fund that will increase the availability of financial aid for those participating riders in need, and a Planned Giving Program to strengthen the future of both funds.

1

Property Acquisition

2

Renovation

3

Program Expansion

4

Sustainability

5

Growth





Program Expansion



Property Acquisition

Secure funds to purchase the facility, ensuring stability and growth potential.



Program Expansion

At Partners for Progress, we service about 1,312 hours every month. These hours of service include our program, Hippotherapy, Power Hour, Sports Riding, OLS, campers, Horse Shows, Volunteers, and occasionally group sessions. Within those hours, we fine-tune each session to our client's needs, addressing every client as an individual and assessing their goals to create a plan towards achievement. The success of our client and their achievements directly correlates to our amazing staff and the extensive training they undergo, as well as incredible patience and care for others.

Enhancing Therapeutic Programs

We are expanding our therapeutic programs to offer more diverse and impactful experiences for our clients. Key to this expansion is the development of a Horticultural Sensory Integration Program, made possible by the addition of a Small Animal Barn and an Outdoor Horticultural Garden and Sensory Trail. These new elements will provide a rich, sensory-based environment where clients can engage with nature and animals, offering new therapeutic pathways to enhance emotional regulation, sensory stimulation, and connection with their surroundings.

These additions will also allow us to increase occupational therapy (OT) and physical therapy (PT) hours, while expanding cornerstone programs like Equine Experiential Learning and Heroes on Horses. We will also introduce new educational initiatives such as an occupational life skills program and job training for individuals with special needs. These offerings will provide clients with practical, real-world skills that promote independence and foster personal growth.

Investing in Training and Education

To maintain our commitment to excellence, we are also investing heavily in the training and development of our staff and volunteers. We will be offering state-of-the-art CHA instructor training, as well as creating a mentoring program to ensure that new trainees receive hands-on guidance and support from experienced professionals.

In addition to these certifications, we will host workshops for instructors, therapists, and volunteers, providing continuing education opportunities to keep our team informed on best practices, safety, and innovative therapeutic techniques. By equipping our staff with the best training available, we will ensure that our programs continue to meet the highest standards of care and safety.

New Additions

Community Center

Expanding Our Vision for a More Inclusive Future

As Our Dream, Our Home, Our Future continues to grow in scope and support, we have listened closely to the voices of our client families, donors, and community members. Through these conversations, one clear theme has emerged: there is a profound need for a dedicated Community Center, a welcoming hub where connection, education, and inclusion can flourish.

The Partners for Progress Community Center, which we now plan to include, pending fundraising success, will serve as a multi-purpose gathering space designed to meet the evolving needs of the individuals and families we serve. It will provide:

- **A safe, sensory-friendly space** for riders and families to gather before and after lessons or therapy sessions.
- **A flexible event area** for life-skills workshops, volunteer trainings, support groups, and educational programs, fostering collaboration, engagement, and education.
- **An inclusive social hub** where individuals with different abilities can engage in shared activities, fostering friendships and community belonging.
- **A resource and respite space** for parents and caregivers, offering comfort, conversation, and connection with others who share similar journeys.

By creating this Community Center, Partners for Progress will further its mission to not only transform lives through equine-assisted therapy but also to nurture the broader ecosystem of support that sustains every rider, volunteer, and family who walks through our barn doors.

Thank you to everyone for your input on this most important addition!

An Evolved Campaign Goal

Our original campaign goal of \$10 million remains the foundation of Our Dream, Our Home, Our Future, dedicated to purchasing our facility, renovating our barns and arenas, and expanding our therapeutic spaces. However, to meet the growing need for community connection and accessibility, we will seek to raise an additional \$1 million to bring this new vision to life.

This expansion will ensure that Partners for Progress remains a place where healing extends beyond the saddle, a true community center for growth, inclusion, and lifelong support.

Together, We Build More Than a Barn...We Build Belonging.

New Additions

Hay Barn

Strengthening Safety, Health, and Long-Term Sustainability

As Partners for Progress continues to refine and expand the Our Dream, Our Home, Our Future renovation plan, we remain deeply committed to creating a facility that prioritizes the safety, health, and long-term well-being of both our riders and our equine partners. Through ongoing evaluation and consultation with equine professionals, safety advisors, and supporters, it has become increasingly clear that a dedicated Hay Barn is not just beneficial; it is essential for the future of our programs.

The Hay Barn will be constructed along the south side of the existing Large Barn and will serve as a critical improvement to our operational safety and horse care standards.

Why a Hay Barn Is Essential

A separate, purpose-built Hay Barn will allow PFP to store and manage hay in a safer, healthier, and more efficient manner.

This addition will provide:

- **Fire Prevention & Facility Safety:** Storing hay outside the main barn dramatically reduces the risk of fire, one of the most significant concerns for equine facilities. This simple change offers powerful protection for our horses, our riders, our volunteers, and our entire facility.
- **Improved Respiratory Health:** Hay stored inside a working barn contributes to dust, mold spores, and airborne particles that can negatively impact respiratory function in both horses and humans. A separate hay structure will help keep the barn cleaner and the air significantly healthier.
- **Reduced Dust & Allergens:** By relocating hay storage, we decrease dust levels within the barn, supporting safer breathing environments for riders with sensitivities, volunteers with allergies, and horses with respiratory conditions.
- **Proper Ventilation & Storage Conditions:** A dedicated structure allows for better airflow, clean stacking, and safer management of hay throughout the year. Proper ventilation will extend the quality and longevity of our hay supply, ensuring consistent nutrition for our herd.
- **More Favorable Insurance Rates:** Reducing fire risk and improving overall facility safety has the added benefit of lowering insurance premiums, supporting PFP's long-term financial sustainability.

A Smart Investment in Safety and Care

The addition of the Hay Barn represents a thoughtful and necessary step in our broader vision to modernize and elevate our facility. It reinforces our promise of delivering the highest-quality care to our horses and the safest, healthiest environment for our community.

As we continue advancing toward our campaign goals, the Hay Barn stands as a strategic investment, one that protects our equine partners, strengthens daily operations, and enhances the overall experience for every rider and family who depends on PFP.

CONTACT US




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