

# Restoring Detroit by Restoring Lives

Neighborhood Service Organization is rebuilding Detroit by empowering the city's most vulnerable neighbors.

**S**ince 1955, Neighborhood Service Organization (NSO) has made it a mission to change lives in the Detroit community. While best known for its efforts to end homelessness, the core of the nonprofit is its mission to provide a holistic approach to address housing, health, and well-being needs for metro Detroit's most vulnerable populations.

In terms of housing, NSO provides a continuum of services for those experiencing homelessness. By providing shelter, the team can address the physical and mental health concerns and trauma that stem from the toxic stress that at-risk individuals experience due to housing instability.

In addition to housing and physical care, NSO addresses the social determinants that impact one's well-being such as food insecurity, insurance, and employment.

"You can have your health needs met and receive shelter, but that doesn't mean that the primary issues have been addressed," explains Linda Little, president and CEO. "We strive to help clients find solutions to address the psychosocial and economic factors that prevent them from being successful."

NSO approaches each client from a whole-person perspective in order to connect at a level where it can help those in need achieve their best lives on their own terms. "When somebody comes to us, they've tried everything else, and their disappointment sets up mistrust," Little explains. "Sometimes they've reached a point where they've given up. In those cases, we continue to support and uplift them. We love on them until they can learn to love themselves. When they're ready, they might accept our help."

## The Clay Center

In the fall of 2020, NSO opened phase one of its \$20 million Clay Center. In addition to providing supportive services for the community, the two-story building includes a 42-unit permanent housing apartment complex designed to transition anyone experiencing homelessness from temporary shelters to permanent supportive housing. Once stabilized, residents are supported with the goal to transition to affordable housing.

The center's second phase is set to include a 56-bed shelter primarily focused on women and those who are medically



LINDA LITTLE  
President and CEO, NSO

fragile. "We're creating more than just a safe place to sleep every night," Little explains. "Rather than release individuals in the morning, we will provide them with the tools, resources, and education needed to connect them with job opportunities and permanent housing."

"The continuum of care includes shelter services for homeless individuals with complicated medical needs," she continues. "By offering medical respite and shelter services for those individuals, we are closing a gap that has long contributed to hospitalizations and emergency room visits for this population."

The second phase will also include a fully integrated community health center accessible to the Detroit community for primary care, behavioral health, dental services, and a pharmacy all on one campus. It's the first facility of its kind and will deliver solutions not only for the homeless, but for the entire Detroit community.



To learn more or donate, call 313-961-4890, text "NSO" to 56651, or visit [nso-mi.org](http://nso-mi.org).

