



Frequently Asked Questions about Next's Pending Move to 400 E. Lincoln:

Q 1: Why does Next have to move?

A: The Birmingham Public Schools, which provide in-kind space for Next, would like to transform the Next portion of the Midvale building into additional space for their preschool. At the same time, Next has long outgrown their current space as the senior population continues to be the fastest growing demographic in our area and across the state and country.

Q 2: Why does Next serve communities outside of Birmingham?

A: The genesis of Next came from the Birmingham Public Schools dating back to 1978. It was created by BPS to offer life-long learning to seniors in the municipalities the schools served, primarily Birmingham, Beverly Hills, Franklin and Bingham Farms. Forty-seven years later, with continued support from the Birmingham Public Schools, Next continues with that mission and is proud to serve seniors from our valued partner communities. All four of these communities financially contribute proportionately to Next.

Q 3: What is the membership of Next?

A: Next currently serves 2,300 members, 40% residing in Birmingham, who enjoy over 250 offerings each month in a warm and welcoming space where friendships are cultivated daily. With weekly life-long learning opportunities, art, fitness and enrichment classes, and many ways to socialize, Next provides a wide variety of offerings tailored to the 50 plus community.

Next also serves hundreds of additional residents through their Support Service Department, the vast majority from Birmingham, where membership is not required to receive services. These services are offered at no cost to clients with the exception of a very nominal fee for transportation. As an example, Next offers meals delivered M-F, reliable transportation, blood pressure clinics, support groups, advice and counseling, family guidance for an aging loved one, and works as a liaison to many county and state organizations. For income qualified residents, Next also provides minor home repairs, lawn maintenance, snow removal, and no interest loans for larger home improvements.

Q 4: How is Next currently funded?

A: As a small, local 501 c 3 that is, and has been, the designated senior service provider for Birmingham, Beverly Hills, Franklin and Bingham Farms for over 47 years, Next relies on a diverse revenue stream to fund its day-to-day operations; municipal and in-kind support, fund raisers, sponsorships, grants and member/program fees. In addition, numerous volunteers are critical to the operations and success of Next.

Q 5: How do other senior centers operate?

A: Oakland County has 39 senior centers. All but two are under the authority of the municipalities they serve. Many have an on-going senior millage to support operations, others receive funding through the municipalities' general fund or through their Parks and Recreation budgets. With Next operating as a 501 c 3, Next is considerably less expensive to operate than other municipalities while providing exceptional service. This financial model saves our communities, and by extension taxpayers, significant money.

Q 6: How did the purchase of the former YMCA building come about?

A: In 2022, the Birmingham City Manager was directed by the City Commission to find a new home for Next. After a very thorough search throughout the community, the city manager learned the YMCA was selling their building in order to consolidate costs and membership with the Royal Oak YMCA.

Q 7: Has Next financially contributed to this move?

A: Yes. Next contributed \$500,000 to the purchase price of 2 million dollars for 400 E. Lincoln and an additional \$250,000 in preliminary facility studies and other professional services.

Q 8: Will Next be contributing to the on-going expenses of the building at 400 E. Lincoln?

A: Yes. Next will occupy the first floor during Phase I. Next will pay the operating costs of the leased space as well as many other expenses that are needed to run an efficient and successful senior center.

Q 9: Can Next afford to pay the operating costs that BPS currently provides?

A: Next has developed a funding model that will provide the additional funds needed to occupy the new space. With increased contributions from the Villages, thoughtful shifts in membership rates and some programs fees, as well as additional fundraisers and fund development goals, Next is strategically positioned to continue to serve the senior community.

Q 10: How will the first floor of 400 E. Lincoln be made ADA compliant and be reconfigured to better suit senior programming?

A: In 2023, 69% of Birmingham voters approved a senior millage to be used exclusively for renovations to the building which will include ADA updates and code compliance.

Q 11: If the seniors millage was through the City of Birmingham, why are other communities included and how will that be equitable for Birmingham residents?

A: The four resident communities as identified by the Birmingham School boundaries, are part of an Interlocal agreement that financially supports Next; Birmingham, Beverly Hills, Franklin and Bingham Farms. Since operational costs will increase for Next by shifting away from the in-kind school support, the Interlocal agreement will be updated to reflect a greater and equitable financial contribution from the other three communities. In addition, Birmingham residents will receive a sizable reduction on membership fees.

Q 12: Is Next open to members from outside the four resident communities?

A: Yes. Because of Next's unique programming, Next attracts members from outside the area. Next is proud to welcome these members, as non-resident members, making Next even more inclusive. Once Next moves into their new space, the current non-resident member rates will be altered to reflect changes in municipal support and increased operational expenses.

A: What is the time line to move into the new facility?

Q 13: Next has a lease with the Birmingham Public Schools that will expire in May of 2027. Over the next several months, Next will work with the city and the Neumann Smith architectural firm, to design program space better suited to senior activities and bring the first floor of the building up to ADA compliance. After the design changes have been completed and approved by the City Commission, a construction firm will be hired. Renovations will likely begin sometime this summer. During Phase 1, this new space will provide 50% more space than Next has currently, with a larger, dedicated gym.