

Frequently Asked Questions

1. Why is Open Hand moving?

Open Hand has long stretched our organizational capacity to meet the ever-growing need to support at-risk Georgians while navigating the constraints in our current location in Armour Yards. In alignment with our strategic plan, in 2019, we began finalizing a blueprint to scale operations and increase production capacity.

However, in March 2020, the onset of the COVID-19 pandemic brought this reality into greater focus, as we were met with unprecedented urgency for our services further exposing the limitations of our space. During the height of the crisis, Open Hand had to accelerate new and innovative ways to meet the dire needs of communities throughout Georgia. Utilizing temporary freezers, alternating staff and volunteer shifts, and navigating disruptions in the supply chain, Open Hand still successfully provided home-delivered meals to 5,048 medically fragile individuals in 2020, a remarkable increase of 145 percent over 2019. Yet, given our existing space restrictions, which were further compounded by our anticipated ongoing growth, considerations for a more long-term facility solution remained.

Currently, Open Hand operates out of two leased facilities in Armour Yards that share a property line, located at 176 Ottley Drive (which Open Hand previously owned) and 181 Armour Drive. As the need for Open Hand's services has multiplied, the organization has outgrown its space, operating above capacity and with a deficit in cooler/freezer, warehouse, and meal packing space. Further, the current location has never had adequate loading docks for this level of delivery and service, property taxes have risen, and there are no feasible options for Open Hand to expand at its present site as the current campus is landlocked.

Notably, as Georgia's leading provider of targeted nutrition interventions, Open Hand predicts that over the next five years, demand for its meals and services will increase by 50 percent. This projected growth will be the largest Open Hand has experienced to date, propelling the organization from nearly 1.4 million meals served in 2021 to almost 2.1 million annually by 2026, and has heightened the sense of urgency to meet this increased need in this period of time.

2. Why did Open Hand choose 1380 West Marietta Street?

The new home of Open Hand is a 43,000-square-foot building adjacent to the Grove Park Neighborhood and Westside Park, making it centrally located in Open Hand's service area. The new location is uniquely outfitted with an industrial kitchen and will allow Open Hand to double its warehouse space and increase its freezer/cooler capacity by providing 8,000 square feet of cold storage. The new site features eight loading docks, which will dramatically enhance workflow as Open Hand expands its ability to deliver meals locally and ship meals statewide while simultaneously processing incoming deliveries of thousands of pounds of food product on a weekly basis.

Further, the new building will be highly accessible to staff and volunteers as it is close to multiple MARTA bus stations and will include 140 on-site parking spaces. Overall, the additional square footage will allow Open Hand to meet the projected 50 percent increase in demand for its services.

3. How is Open Hand financially supporting this move?

Open Hand launched a comprehensive capital campaign, [The Healing Power of Food](#), to raise \$19.5M from public and private funding sources to enable the purchase, renovation and move into our new home.

The campaign supports the purchase of 1380 W. Marietta Street for \$8.4M with additional funds raised going towards renovation costs (\$8M+), startup costs for new workforce development programming (\$304K), purchase three refrigerated fleet vehicles (\$280K), and initiate a building maintenance fund (\$1.1M). [Click here to learn more.](#)

COST	COST (\$)
PURCHASE COST	\$8,400,000
HARD COSTS	\$6,600,000
SOFT COSTS	\$2,816,000
WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT PROGRAM	\$304,000
INFRASTRUCTURE: VANS ETC.	\$280,000
MAINTENANCE FUND	\$1,100,000
TOTAL	\$19,500,000



4. Can I help support the Campaign and Open Hand's Next Chapter of Growth?

Yes! [Visit here](#) to learn more about how you can financially support Open Hand's move.

5. When is Open Hand moving?

Open Hand is currently projected to move at the end of July or beginning of August 2024. We are in the process of finishing up the last of our construction projects and getting the last of our paperwork from the city. As soon as our move-in date is official, we will let you know! We've prepared a robust changeover plan to ensure no disruption of service to our clients.

6. How do I get to the volunteer area?

Follow signs to Volunteer Parking around the left side of the building near our front entrance. Enter through the sliding glass doors and be greeted by our wonderful Volunteer Services Team!

7. Where do I park?

We have abundant free parking in the surface lot surrounding our building.

8. Will this move affect services to Open Hand clients?

Our Operations team has worked tirelessly for the past several months to formulate a strategy that ensures no disruption of meal delivery for any of our clients as we flip the switch from Armour Drive to West Marietta. We are prepared, and anticipate no disruption of service for our clients during our move.

9. How will the move affect volunteer opportunities?

We will be relying on volunteers throughout this move, and are eager to provide an even better experience to you at our new home! Overall, however, we will still offer the same volunteer opportunities you've come to expect from Open Hand. You will still be able to get the same delivery routes and sign up for packing shifts!

10. How far away is 1380 West Marietta Street from 181 Armour Drive?

Our new home is about 6 miles away, in the Grove Park neighborhood on the Westside. Depending on traffic, it's usually between 15-20 minutes away from Armour Drive.

11. How large is Open Hand's new campus compared to 181 Armour Drive?

In total, we're moving from a 26,000 square foot space to a 43,000 square foot space, greatly increasing our capacity to serve our mission across the state of Georgia. This is approximately how it breaks down:

USE OF SPACE	181 ARMOUR	1380 WEST MARIETTA
COOLER/FREEZER CAPACITY	6,300 SF	11,000 SF
MEAL PACKING & PICKING	2,800 SF	4,500 SF
LOADING DOCKS	1 BAY	8 BAYS
WAREHOUSE SPACE	2,300 SF	5,500 SF
KITCHEN SPACE	4,800 SF	6,500 SF
PARKING SPACES	80	150
COLLABORATIVE NUTRITION CENTER / HEALTHY FOOD PANTRY	0 SF	3,250 SF
TEACHING KITCHEN / WORKFORCE TRAINING	0 SF	2,000 SF
OFFICE / WORK SPACES / VOLUNTEER TRAINING	8,050 SF	7,775 SF
CONFERENCE ROOMS	1,500 SF	2,000 SF
STAFF & VOLUNTEER BREAKROOMS	280 SF	825 SF
TOTAL	26,030 SF	43,350 SF