

# MARYGROVE EARLY EDUCATION CENTER

Detroit, Michigan, USA





AERIAL LOOKING SOUTHEAST TOWARDS DOWNTOWN DETROIT



NORTHERN FACADE AND PARKING FROM ADJACENT FIELD

## 1 EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

In 2008, the Kresge Foundation began to study children's health in relation to the strength of their early education in Detroit. In response, Kresge partnered with numerous local and regional organizations to identify how Detroit could become an exemplar for serving young children and families through early childhood facilities, elevated and transformed through design.

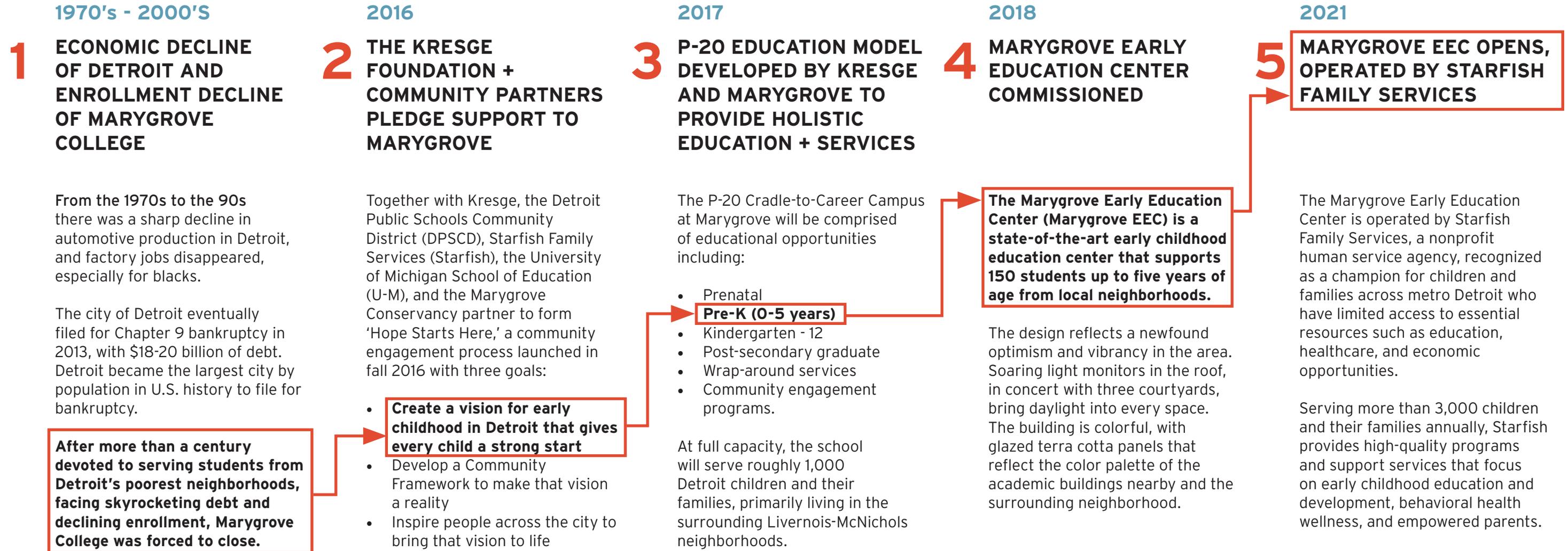
This initiative became part of the transformation of Marygrove College in the Livernois-McNichols district of northwest Detroit into a P-20 education model through a partnership between the Detroit Public Schools Community District, The Kresge Foundation and The University of Michigan School of Education. P-20 is an all-in-one campus offering a continuum of support for families starting with prenatal partnership and extending to K-12 and beyond. While many P-20 programs could be housed in existing campus buildings, the Kresge Foundation wanted to highlight the critical significance of early childhood education through a new building with the highest aspirations for design.

The Marygrove Early Education Center (EEC) is a critical part of the P-20 educational approach that is transforming the campus of the former Marygrove College and the educational landscape in Detroit. Grounded in social justice, equitable opportunity, and commitment to community, the P-20 model provides access to high-quality education and holistic support services so students and families are empowered to define their own futures and that of their own neighborhood. The P-20 Cradle-to-Career Campus at Marygrove is comprised of educational opportunities from prenatal to Pre-K, K-12 to post-secondary graduate, as well as wrap-around services and community engagement programs.

## 2 SCOPE + BUDGET

The Marygrove Early Education Center is set on 3.3 acres within the overall 53-acre Marygrove College campus. The design of the Early Education Center's site includes new dedicated parking, a stormwater retention system to correct drainage and flooding issues, three courtyards, and a large outdoor play area. The Early Education Center has 28,871 square feet at an overall cost including site development of \$19,632,280.

# VISION + REALIZATION



## AT A GLANCE

Owner	Site Area	Outdoor Play Area	Building Area	Ages Served	Students Served	Area per Student	Energy Use Intensity
Marygrove Conservancy	3.3 acres within the overall 53-acre Marygrove College campus	1.25 acres	28,871 square feet	Up to 5 years	150	206 square feet	23 (70% more efficient than similar schools)



### 3 Community Engagement: Stakeholders

The Marygrove Early Education Center serves 150 children and their families living in the immediate Livernois-McNichols neighborhood.

The Livernois-McNichols neighborhood is 90% African American and the per capita income is lower than that found in 99.6% of the neighborhoods in America. 54.8% of the children in this area live in poverty; an extraordinarily high percentage compared to other neighborhoods in the nation. In a nation where approximately one in four children grows up in poverty, this neighborhood stands out for the depth of the problem.

In response, the Kresge Foundation developed 'Cradle-to-Career' education programs at Marygrove that include educational opportunities and support services from prenatal to post-secondary graduate, as well as community engagement programs. At full capacity, these programs will serve roughly 1,000 children and their families, primarily living in the surrounding Livernois-McNichols neighborhoods. A geographically-biased admissions process ensures the Marygrove Early Education Center predominantly serves the local neighborhood, preventing local residents from being priced out of the system.



CENTRAL COURTYARD LOOKING NORTH TOWARDS THE MAIN ENTRY



Detroit's Community Framework for *Brighter Futures*

November 2017

## DETROIT IN DECLINE: 1950-2000

Detroit, in the 1950s, was the richest city in the US, and some say it was the richest city in the world. Detroit at its peak had 1.8 million residents, but a million of these residents left, leaving behind empty homes, empty structures, and spaces. Starting in the 70s to the 90s there was a sharp decline in automotive production, and factory jobs disappeared, especially for blacks. Detroit did not plan ahead with investments in other industries, so there were fewer and fewer jobs in Detroit. Unemployment increased and Detroit became an impoverished city with the highest poverty rate in the country. The city did not have the money for the upkeep of these properties and spaces, and urban blight was the result.

## MARYGROVE COLLEGE CLOSES: 2018

The educational landscape changed drastically in the state of Michigan as elsewhere in the nation. The high school population dwindled such that all colleges and universities were competing for the same smaller number of students. After 112 years, including decades devoted to serving students from Detroit's poorest neighborhoods, Marygrove College was forced to close, facing skyrocketing debt and an enrollment that had fallen from 1,850 in 2013 to less than half that in 2017.

## MARYGROVE REIMAGINED: 2019

Established in 2019 by the Kresge Foundation and its partners, the Marygrove Conservancy is a nonprofit organization that transformed the 53-acre Marygrove College campus into an educational resource for the community. The 'Cradle-to-Career' education program at Marygrove includes educational opportunities and support services from prenatal to post-secondary graduate, as well as community engagement programs. At full capacity, the school will serve roughly 1,000 Detroit children and their families, primarily living in the surrounding Livernois-McNichols neighborhoods.

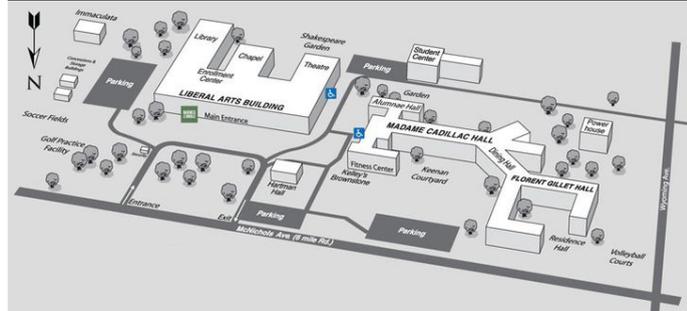
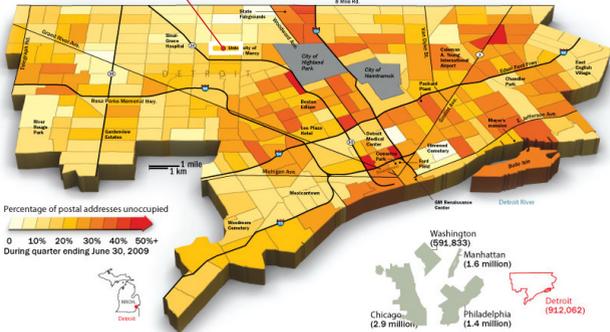
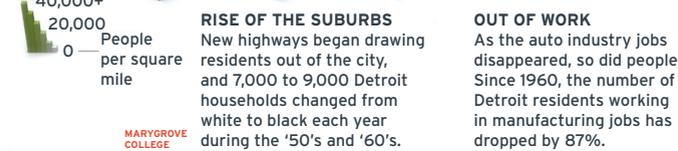
## 3 Community Engagement: Challenges

The decline and renewal of Marygrove College and the surrounding Livernois-McNichols neighborhood is emblematic of challenges faced broadly by the City of Detroit.

In the 1950s, Detroit was the richest city in the US, and some say it was the richest city in the world. Detroit at its peak had 1.8 million residents, but a million of these residents left, leaving behind empty homes, empty structures, and spaces. Starting in the 70s to the 90s there was a sharp decline in automotive production, and factory jobs disappeared, especially for blacks. Detroit did not plan ahead with investments in other industries, so there were fewer and fewer jobs in Detroit. Unemployment increased and Detroit became an impoverished city with the highest poverty rate in the country. The city did not have the money for the upkeep of these properties and spaces, and urban blight was the result.

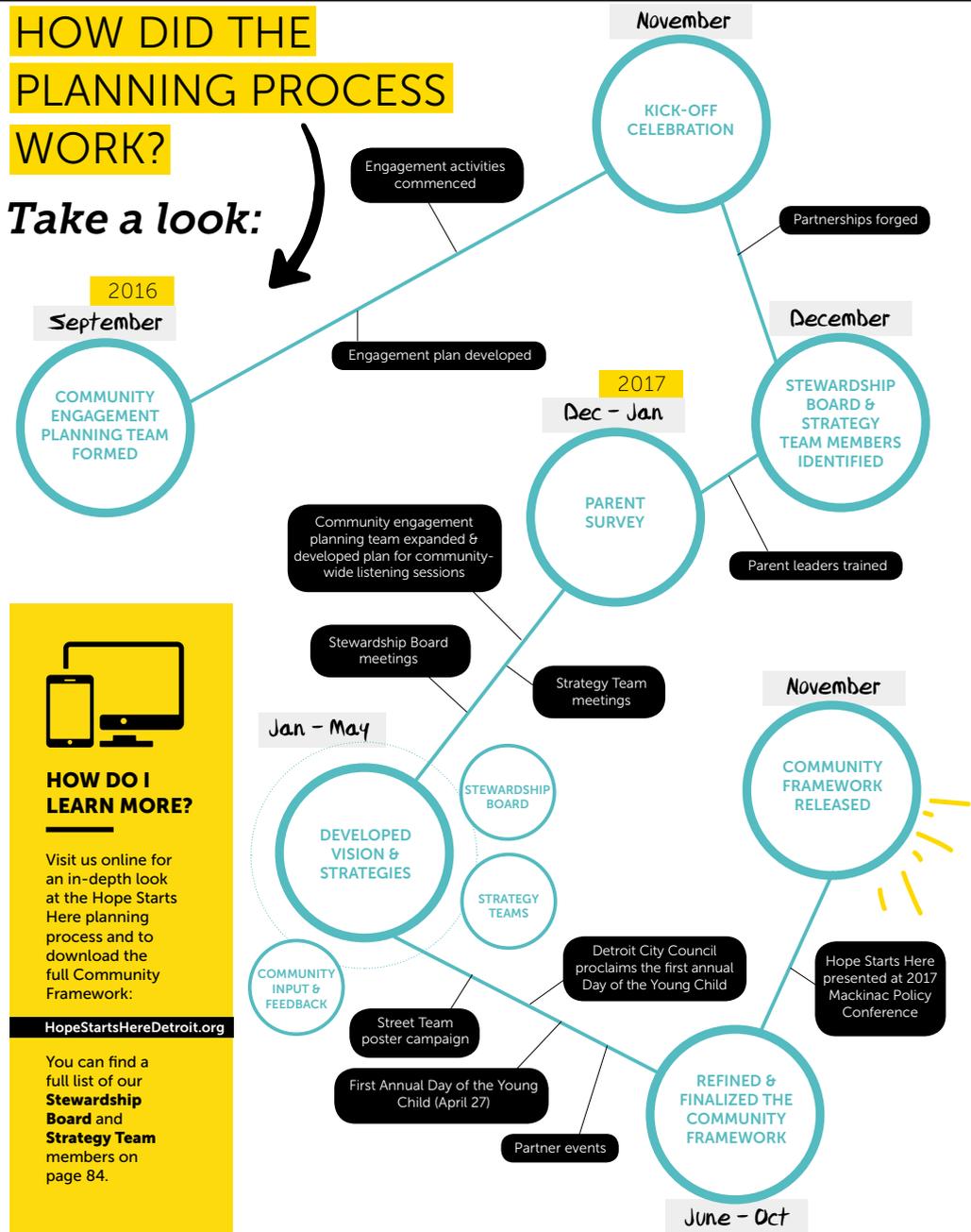
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Two concurrent economic shocks—the 2007 housing crisis and the 2008 Detroit auto crisis—upended the Livernois-McNichols neighborhood and the stability of its residents. In less than a decade, an area known for manicured lawns, block parties, and elaborate Christmas decorations became known for blight and vacancy. Businesses along Livernois Avenue closed and houses north and south of 6 Mile Road lay empty. From 2000 to 2010, the area's population plummeted by 56%, going from 72,110 people to just under 32,000. However, from 2015 to 2020, the area's population rose by 2%—its first increase in two decades.



# HOW DID THE PLANNING PROCESS WORK?

Take a look:



**HOW DO I LEARN MORE?**

Visit us online for an in-depth look at the Hope Starts Here planning process and to download the full Community Framework:

[HopeStartsHereDetroit.org](http://HopeStartsHereDetroit.org)

You can find a full list of our Stewardship Board and Strategy Team members on page 84.

## What happens during the first eight years?

The first eight years of a child's life have a huge impact on their development and set the stage for their future success. A large number of developmental milestones fall within this period. If we make sure children have a strong first eight years, we set them up to continue growing and thriving. If we don't, we risk leaving them behind. Luckily, having positive experiences during this time can dramatically change a child's life — and have big impacts on their family and community.

The first eight years provide a critical window of opportunity to change children's lives — and our communities — for the better. We need to seize it.

## What is early childhood like in Detroit?

Early childhood starts BEFORE BIRTH.

9% of Detroit moms get late or no prenatal care.

80,000 children 8 and under live in Detroit.

13% of Detroit babies are born too early, compared to nine percent nationally.

13% of Detroit babies are born too small, compared to eight percent nationally.

Both of these can have significant long-term effects on a child's health and development.

Detroit ranks near the bottom in child well-being.

Detroit has one of the highest infant mortality rates in the country.

13.5 out of every 1,000 babies born in Detroit dies before their first birthday. That's more than twice the national number.

African American babies have a 40% higher infant mortality rate than white babies in the city.



MORE THAN 60% of Detroit's children 0-5 live in poverty.

(That's more than in any of the country's 50 largest cities.)

Kids who grow up in poverty are at higher risk for health and academic problems.

Sources: See endnotes 7-14

## 3 Community Engagement: Visioning Process

Building on the vision established by 'Hope Starts Here,' a community engagement process built relationships with various stakeholders for the P-20 Cradle-to-Career Campus at Marygrove. The process is an open, inclusive, ongoing, two-way dialogue between stakeholders and community members working together to move the P-20 campus forward and to elevate the following goals:

- BUILD TRUST** Foster trust between Marygrove partners and the community.
- DIALOGUE** Develop and nurture a longstanding, robust community dialogue.
- KNOWLEDGE SHARING** Involve stakeholders in the process of knowledge sharing to inform and shape programs that reflects stakeholders' priorities in the implementation phase.
- CHAMPION** Build a coalition of residents and district stakeholders who will help communicate the Marygrove Campus vision to the community.
- COLLABORATE** Inform a governance structure that empowers shared decision making and ensures all campus partners are held accountable to keep residents' concerns as a priority in long-term planning.
- INTEGRATE** Develop a clear feedback loop that demonstrates how community voices have been integrated into the process.

The Design Team visited numerous similar early childhood education facilities, evaluating their strengths and weaknesses, looking for opportunities to design a beacon for the community that is welcoming and demonstrates generosity and dignity. Ultimately, the design for the Marygrove Early Education Center was informed by community neighbors, parents, and children, along with best practices in behavioral health and early childhood education.

The result is the Marygrove Early Education Center (Marygrove EEC), a state-of-the-art early childhood education center that supports 150 students up to five years of age from local neighborhoods, which reflects the diversity of the community, extending the legacy of Marygrove as a beacon of education and contributing to ongoing efforts to revitalize the surrounding neighborhood.

These are the children the Marygrove Early Education Center serves.

# MARYGROVE COLLEGE CAMPUS

## AN EDUCATIONAL CONTINUUM



The School at Marygrove Elementary

Marygrove Early Education Center

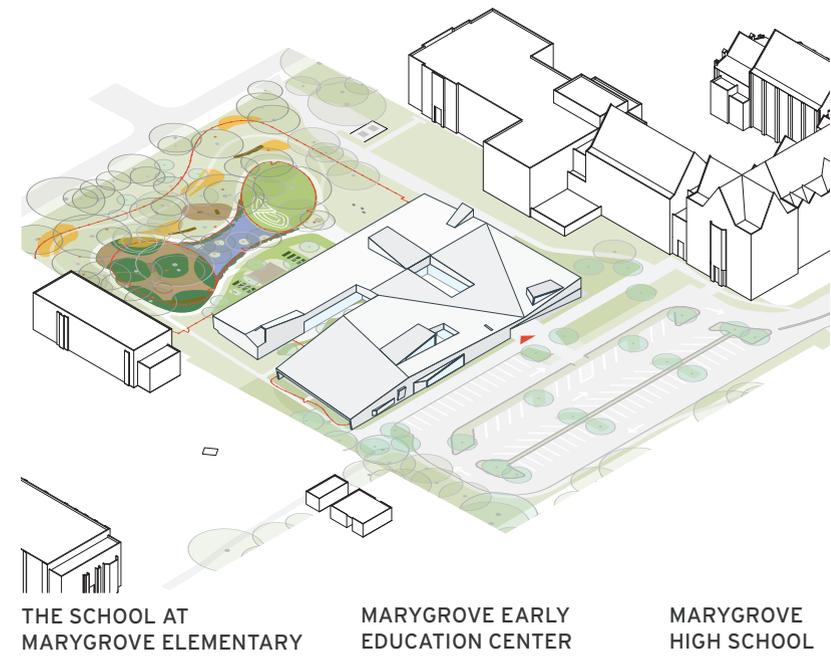
Marygrove High School

### 3 Community Engagement: Assets

Marygrove’s beautiful 53-acre campus has been a not-so-hidden jewel on Detroit’s northwest side for most of a century. The spacious grounds feature manicured lawns, vibrant landscaping, and 19th-century Gothic-styled architecture. Within Marygrove’s campus, there are a variety of open spaces suitable for adding new facilities such as the Marygrove EEC.

Marygrove has a special place in Detroit history. Founded in 1905 by a religious order known as the Sisters, Servants of the Immaculate Heart of Mary—or the IHM nuns—it moved to the city in 1927 from its original location 40 miles south. It quickly became a hub for progressive education, prioritizing service and social justice while serving many non-traditional college students. It nurtured generations of leaders, especially African-American women, with a focus on the fields of teaching and social work.

Existing buildings on either side of the Early Education Center have been repurposed as part of the P20 program. To the east, one existing building has been transformed into the elementary school, while the Liberal Arts Building to the west has become the high school.



THE SCHOOL AT MARYGROVE ELEMENTARY

MARYGROVE EARLY EDUCATION CENTER

MARYGROVE HIGH SCHOOL



# PHILANTHROPIC SUPPORT

Wendy Lewis Jackson  
Managing Director, Detroit Program  
The Kresge Foundation

Rip Rapson  
President and CEO  
The Kresge Foundation



## 3 Community Engagement: Assets

In 2018, The Kresge Foundation, which has an active presence in Detroit and a focus on equitable development, announced that it was committing \$50 million to a program on the Marygrove campus, an unprecedented intervention in land use and education. The money will build a “cradle to career” school, or what’s sometimes called a P-20 (as in, preschool through graduate education). It is one of the first of its kind in the nation and the foundation’s largest investment ever for a single neighborhood revitalization project, and one of the largest gifts in its history and the largest by any foundation in a Detroit neighborhood.

The \$50 million commitment from the Kresge Foundation followed \$16 million in grants that it had provided to Marygrove College over the previous two years to support restructuring of the debt-choked college. The prospect of the college closing and becoming a burden rather than a boon to the neighborhood was deemed unacceptable, as the damage to surrounding home values, small businesses, and other anchors in the district would have been calamitous. Other foundations provided bridge funding as well, including the McGregor Fund, the Community Foundation for Southeast Michigan, and the W. K. Kellogg Foundation.

To establish financial order, these early partners created the Marygrove Conservancy in 2018, adopting a management model that’s long been used to move private parks to public use.

Though the visioning and design progress engaged an array of organizations and stakeholders, our primary contacts throughout the process were **Rip Rapson** and **Wendy Lewis Jackson**. Rip Rapson is the President and CEO of the Kresge Foundation, while Wendy Lewis Jackson is the Managing Director of the Detroit Project within the Kresge Foundation. Their constant presence and engagement was instrumental in ensuring the overall success of the project at every scale.



# COMMUNITY PARTNERS

The future of Detroit depends on an investment in its youngest residents. Eight partners are currently supporting the P-20 Campus initiative and share one primary goal: To educate children.

## Marygrove Conservancy

Managing campus operations and stewarding the campus as a resource for high-quality uses in the community



## The Kresge Foundation

Private, national, foundation funding the P-20 project



## IFF

Supporting the development and programmatic design of the Marygrove Early Education Center



## Starfish Family Services

Operating the Marygrove Early Education Center

## University of Michigan School of Education

Hosting a new Teaching Residency program



## Marygrove College

Prior to its December 2019 closure, Marygrove College was instrumental to the evolution of the Marygrove P-20 partnership



## Detroit Public Schools Community District

Operating the School at Marygrove, a public school offering grades K-2 and high school

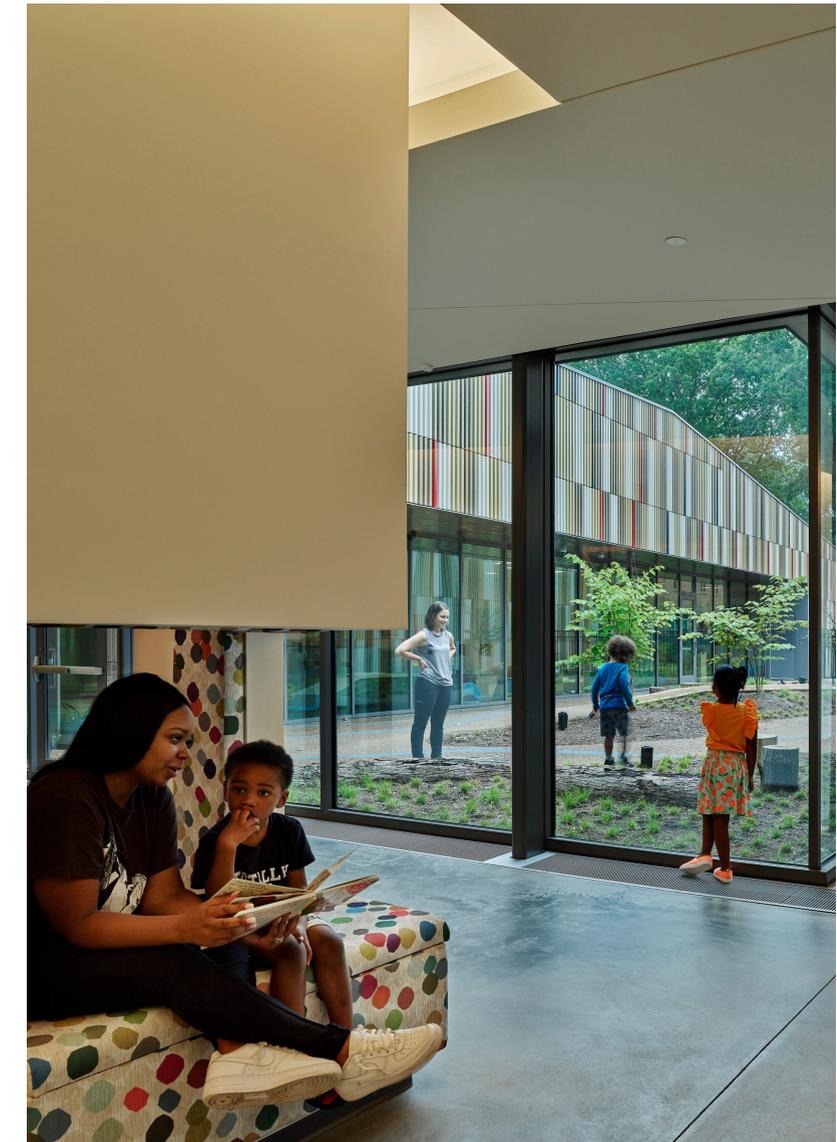


## Detroit Collaborative Design Center

Facilitating community engagement for the partners

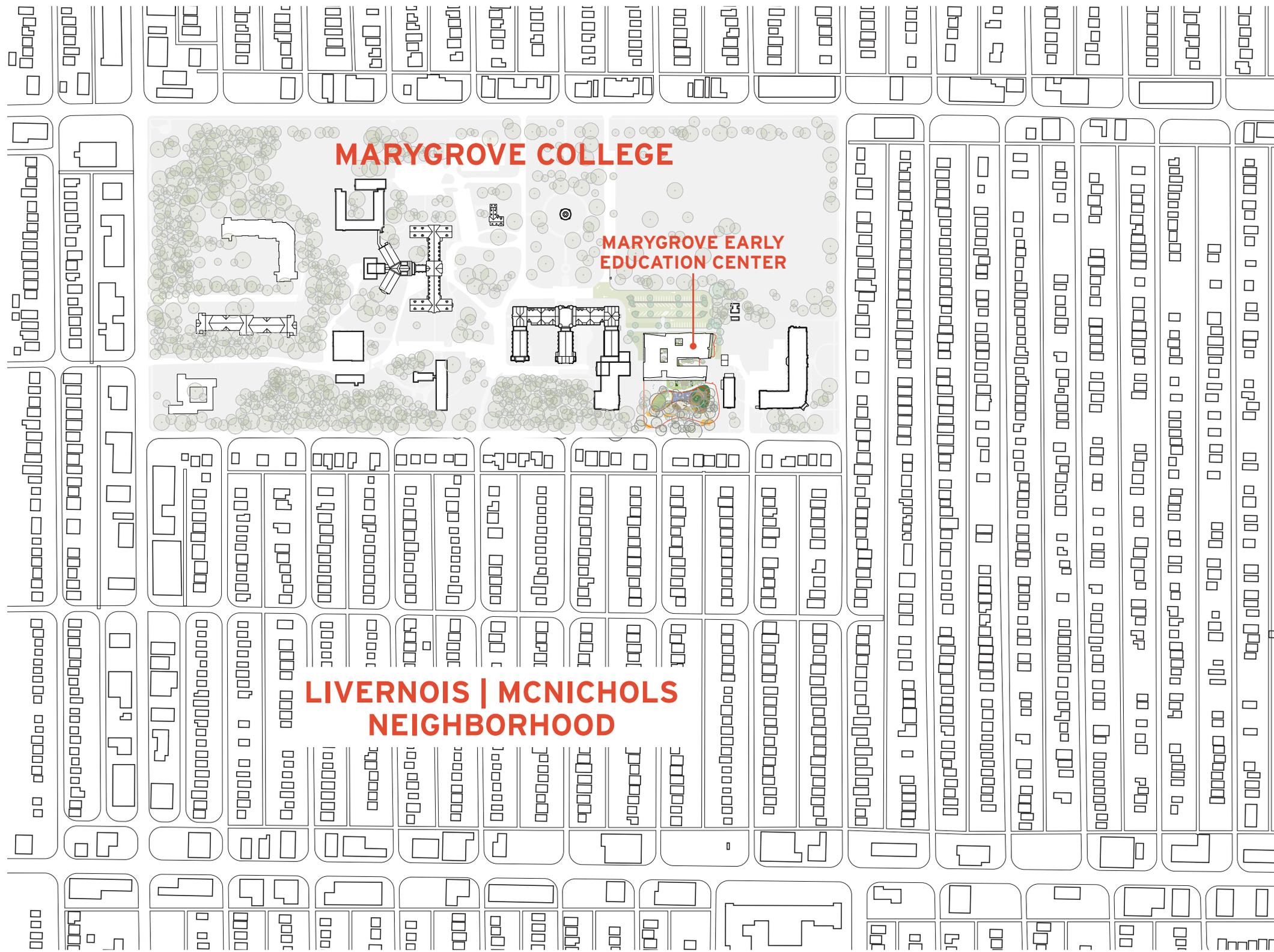
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The P-20 Cradle-to-Career Campus at Marygrove will be comprised of educational opportunities from prenatal to Pre-K, K-12 to post-secondary graduate, as well as wrap-around services and community engagement programs. At full capacity, the school will serve roughly 1,000 Detroit children and their families, primarily living in the surrounding Livernois-McNichols neighborhoods. The initiative represents a \$50 million community investment on the campus of the former Marygrove College in northwest Detroit, which is the largest philanthropic investment into a Detroit neighborhood in the city's history.





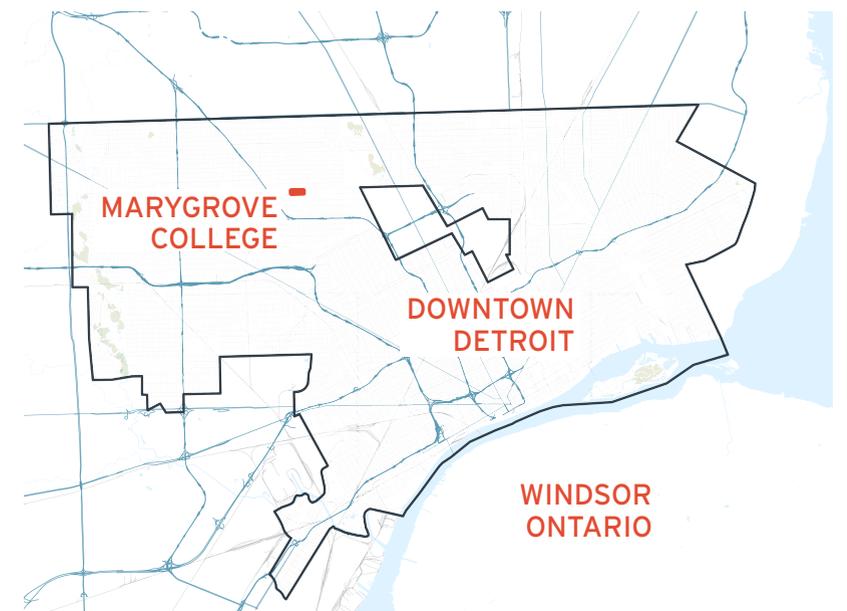
#### 4 Physical Environment



## 4 Physical Environment

Located 8 miles northwest of downtown Detroit, the Livernois-McNichols neighborhood surrounds the 53 acre Marygrove College campus. The northern and western edges of the campus are framed by commercial districts, while the southern and eastern edges join the neighborhood directly. Both the commercial and residential context are almost entirely one and two story. Only a few buildings on the campus itself are more than two stories, such as the four-story Liberal Arts Building just to the west of the Early Education Center.

The campus itself is a mix of open lawns and groves of mature hardwood trees. These trees are clustered most densely along the southern and western edges of campus. One such grove passes across the southern side of the site of the Early Education Center along the street.



REGIONAL MAP



LIVERNOS - MCNICHOLS COMMERCIAL DISTRICT

"The Marygrove Early Education Center has a very prominent, historical, and immediate neighbor that is quite vertical, but the ECC is emphatically horizontal and measures itself, instead, against this extraordinary found landscape and nestles into a grove of trees. The Marygrove center needed to be a magical building, and it is. The design is powerful, and the clients are thrilled."

Maurice Cox  
Former Director of Planning and Development, City of Detroit

## 4 Physical Environment

The Marygrove Early Education Center (EEC) is the first new building on the campus of the former Marygrove College in decades, one specifically built to house early childhood programs to benefit the surrounding neighborhood, one that has suffered from an array of economic and education problems related to the decline of Detroit. As such, Marygrove EEC is designed to integrate into the community, not just the campus, though the context of the campus is considered carefully. The result is a spreading, one story, mat building that is deliberately accessible in every sense, making the community more equitable.

Set just east of the flagship building on the Marygrove campus, Marygrove EEC, the four-story Tudor Gothic Liberal Arts building from 1927, is both resonant and deferential, clad in terra-cotta within a low but distinct profile. Referring to the detail and heft of materials used in the Marygrove EEC's neighbors and the broader memory of historic masonry structures in Detroit, the facade represents a progressive twenty-first-century application of a traditional building material. Colorful highlights are interspersed throughout the facade, providing a second layer of articulation that reflects the vibrancy of the children inside and the diversity of the surrounding community.

The overall form reflects the newfound optimism and vibrancy that is emerging in the area, one of new life and recovery. The low pitched roof is occasionally punctuated by soaring light monitors that, in concert with three courtyards, bring daylight into every space. The exuberance of the form is complemented by the cladding - colorful, glazed terra cotta panels that gather the color palette of the stone in the academic buildings nearby, but also the colors found in the surrounding neighborhood.

## 4 Physical Environment

Through careful design and planning, the Marygrove EEC serves families and provides a safe, nurturing, and inspiring environment for children to grow socially, physically, and intellectually.

The EEC offers a place for children to experience the rhythm of the days and seasons, inspiring their imaginations, empowering them to learn through play and creativity. It imparts dignity, grace, and joy to the children, families, and community members that the center serves.

Three courtyards bring abundant natural light inside and highlight the journey from the entrance to the classrooms. Adjacent to the building entrance are resources for families and the community of caregivers within the neighborhood, including a Parent Lounge and Community Room. At the heart of the building, beside the central courtyard, is an informal community gathering space for school performances, meetings, and events. Each classroom has a view to the landscape, and south-facing rooms open directly onto a grove of trees that is now a large natural play space.

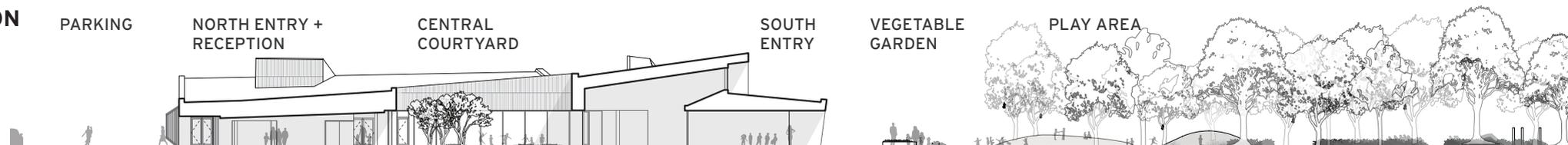


### PLAN



- 1 ENTRY
- 2 COMMUNITY ROOM + FLEX CLASSROOM
- 3 PRESCHOOL
- 4 KITCHEN
- 5 ADMINISTRATION
- 6 COURTYARD
- 7 GROSS MOTOR ROOM
- 8 LIBRARY
- 9 INFANT + TODDLER
- 10 STAFF WORK AREA
- 11 STAFF LOUNGE
- 12 VEGETABLE GARDEN
- 13 OPEN LAWN PLAY AREA

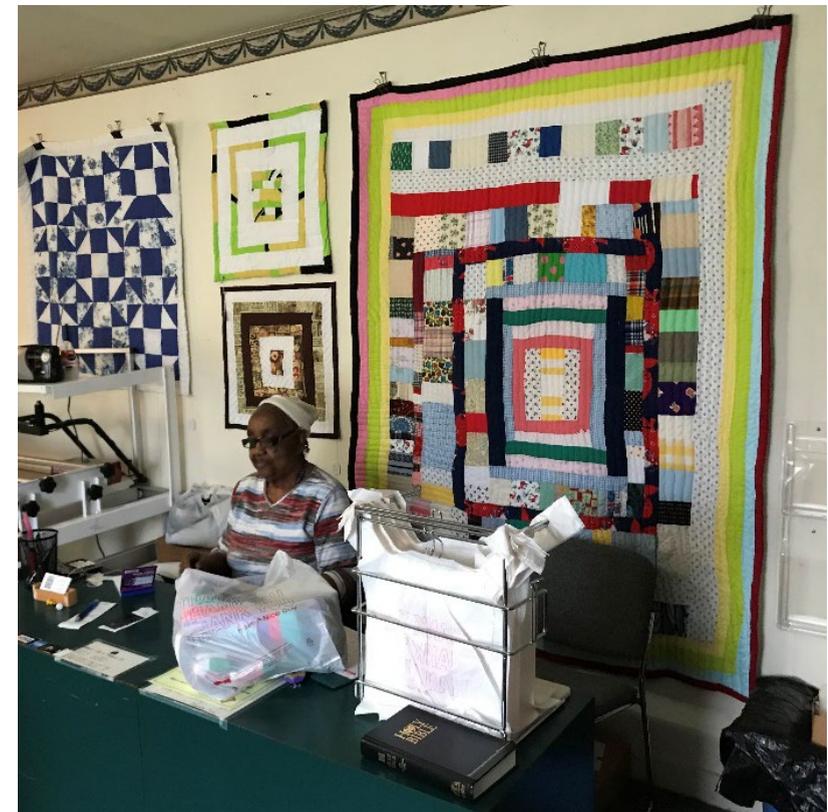
### TRANSVERSE SECTION THROUGH ENTRIES





NORTHERN ENTRY FACING MAIN MARYGROVE  
CAMPUS LIBERAL ARTS BUILDING

Emblematic of the deeply varied community it serves, the Marygrove Early Education Center wears a “coat of many colors,” a quilt of vibrant terra cotta. Stitched together with the love Dolly Parton sang of in her iconic song of the same name, hues and hopes come alive in this incongruent collective, reminiscent of the iconic quilts of Gee’s Bend, Alabama.





## 4 Physical Environment

### INSPIRES AND MOTIVATES

The design of the Marygrove Early Education Center was informed by community neighbors, parents, and children, along with best practices in behavioral health and early childhood education. As described in the visioning document, the Marygrove EEC space is intended to be:

Welcoming, Peaceful, Inspired  
 Friendly, Playful, Open  
 Mindful, Holistic, Healthy

By embracing a deeply collaborative design process, these qualities are embedded in every aspect of the design, and immediately evident to everyone who visits. For instance the main, northern entry is welcoming by offering a large porch first, ample glass to see inside, and once inside, a lush, peaceful courtyard frames the open lobby.

### WELLNESS

Every aspect of the ECC is designed for wellness, growing out of the mission and program of the building. More than simply housing wellness programs, the design offers an inspiring, light-filled environment that is welcoming to everyone. All the classrooms have direct views to the landscape, especially those on the south side which open directly into a grove of trees and the play area. This direct connection to the landscape encourages students to play and learn outside while interior materials and finishes selected for their low VOC content and overall sustainability.

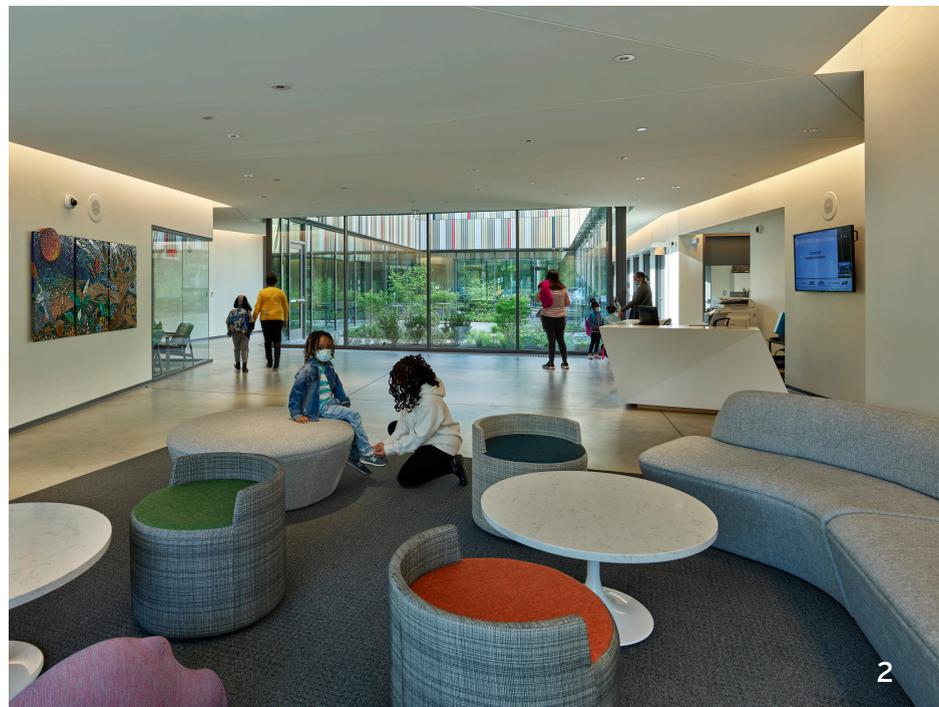
### DIVERSITY AND INCLUSION

All of the valued Marygrove campus partners, including Starfish Family Services, are committed to diversity, equity, and inclusion. Student enrollment priority criteria ensure a diverse student community within a diverse Marygrove campus community. The curriculum is based on social justice and was crafted to uplift a diverse spectrum of little learners in an urban setting. The staffing plan focuses on recruiting the most passionate and talented employees and educators who represent the families the EEC serves.

1 OUTSIDE NORTH ENTRY

2 INSIDE NORTH ENTRY LOOKING SOUTH TO CENTRAL COURTYARD

3 CENTRAL COURTYARD LOOKING NORTH TOWARDS NORTH ENTRY



# Post-Construction Stormwater Ordinance

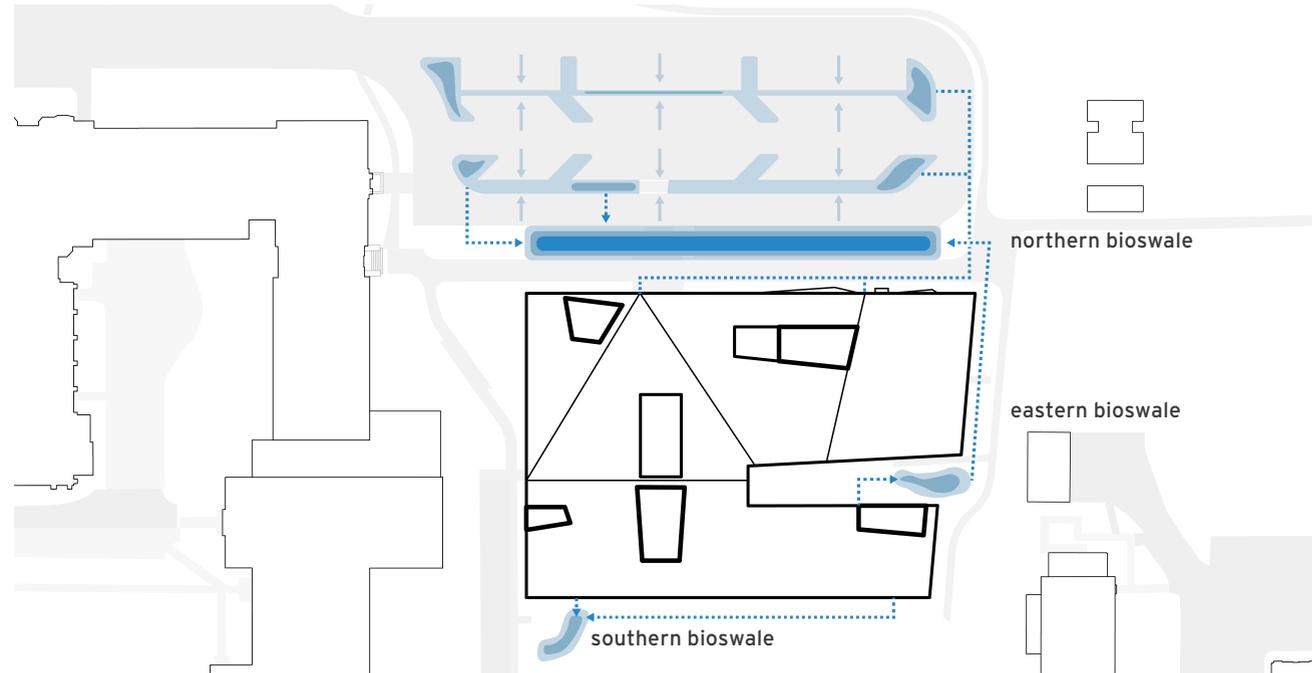
Developers creating or replacing one-half acre or more of new hard surface in Detroit are required to offset it with stormwater management practices.

*This ordinance was approved by the Detroit Board of Water Commissioners on August 15, 2018 and unanimously approved by Detroit City Council on November 13, 2018. A revision was approved by Detroit City Council on November 24, 2020.*



www.detroitmi.gov/ DWSD

DETROIT STORMWATER ORDINANCE COVER



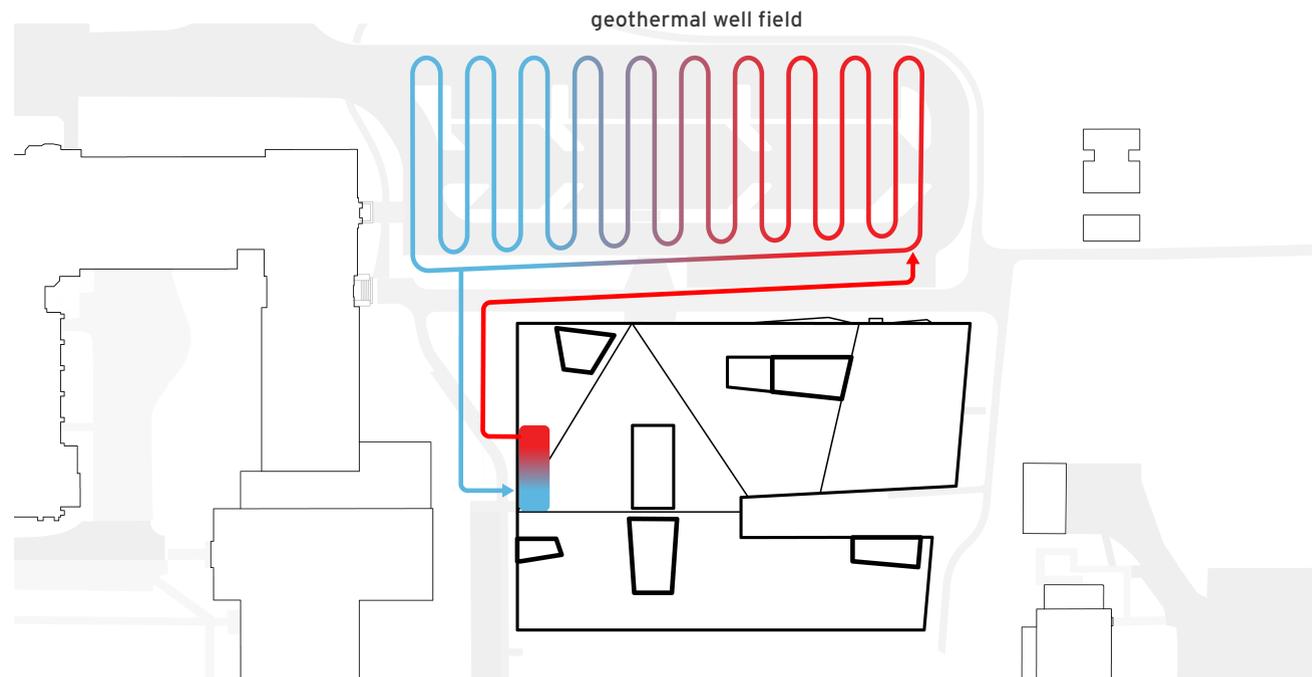
STORMWATER COLLECTION STRATEGY DIAGRAM



FLOODING IN NEIGHBORHOOD NEARBY



NORTHERN BIOSWALE



GEOHERMAL SYSTEM DIAGRAM

## 4 Physical Environment: Sustainability

### WATER

The Detroit area endures significant storm and flooding events that have increased steadily in severity due to development and climate change. Marygrove EEC was one of the first projects in the City of Detroit to follow the Post-Construction Stormwater Management Ordinance, which reduces costs to construct treatment or combined sewer overflow control facilities for compliance with federal and state regulations. The Design Team embraced the spirit of the ordinance by directing most roof runoff to bioswales to the east and south.

The southern bioswale is part of the learning landscape seen from the southwest classrooms. An underground detention system supplements the bioswales, taking water from the parking lot and a portion of the building's roof, storing it before sending to the city system. Water collected by the roof and parking area is retained on site before being returned to the local stormwater system. Restoration of the landscape also corrected previous drainage problems associated with existing parking. Together, the site provides a healthy, functioning landscape with a wide variety of activities and vegetation including, a garden used to grow fresh vegetables for student meals, irrigated by water collected on site.

### ENERGY

The EEC exceeds energy code requirements and employs a variety of sustainable building systems, including a geothermal system that provides radiant floor heat while significantly reducing energy usage. Classrooms and workspaces are set along the perimeter of the building to ensure ample daylight while courtyards bring daylight into the interior, further reducing the need for artificial lighting. Energy consumption within the systems of the building is automatically controlled based on occupancy and amount of daylight.

“The spaces support creativity, critical thinking, problem solving, encourage children to ask questions, and helps them connect with the world around them.”

Celina Byrd  
Principal, Marygrove Early Education Center

## 5 Educational Environment

### EDUCATIONAL VISION AND GOALS

Academic and social success is achieved through a whole-child focus. This means offering high-quality early childhood education and addressing behavioral health needs. To achieve this, the Marygrove Early Education Center provides comprehensive early childhood programming that connects families with infants, toddlers, and preschoolers to the services they need to flourish.

The curricula, known as ‘Great First Eight’ (for infants and toddlers) and ‘Connect4Learning’ (for preschoolers) are brand-new, high-quality curricula customized specifically for EEC little learners.

- Developed in collaboration with nationally recognized University of Michigan education scholars
- Culturally responsive and aligned to the latest research and standards
- Priority is placed on diversity, equity, and inclusion
- Aligned to national standards in science, social studies, mathematics, literacy, social and emotional learning, and social justice
- STEM & social studies emphasis
- Focus on interactive, hands-on learning and individual creativity
- Crafted for a seamless transition as children graduate from preschool to K-12 on the same campus.

### SUPPORTING THE CURRICULUM

The environment of the Marygrove Early Education Center was informed by community neighbors, parents, and children, along with best practices in behavioral health and early childhood education in order to fully support the innovative curriculum. The design provides flexible learning environments that go beyond classrooms, using walls with ample storage and built in seating to complement the primary learning spaces.

# STUDENTS



# STAFF



# COMMUNITY



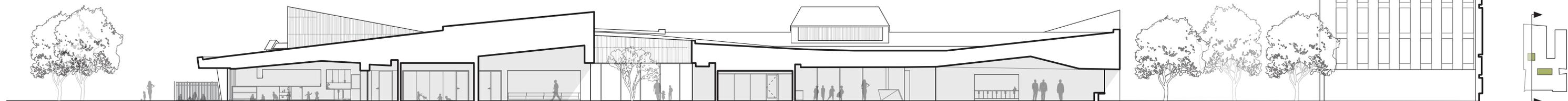
READING NOOKS OUTSIDE  
INFANT AND TODDLER  
CLASSROOMS



STAFF LOUNGE AND  
COURTYARD



COMMUNITY ROOM / FLEX CLASSROOM  
LOOKING EAST TOWARDS NORTH ENTRY



INFANT + TODDLER  
CLASSROOM

GROSS MOTOR  
ROOM

STAFF  
LOUNGE

STAFF  
COURTYARD

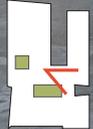
PARENT  
LOUNGE

NORTH ENTRY  
+ RECEPTION

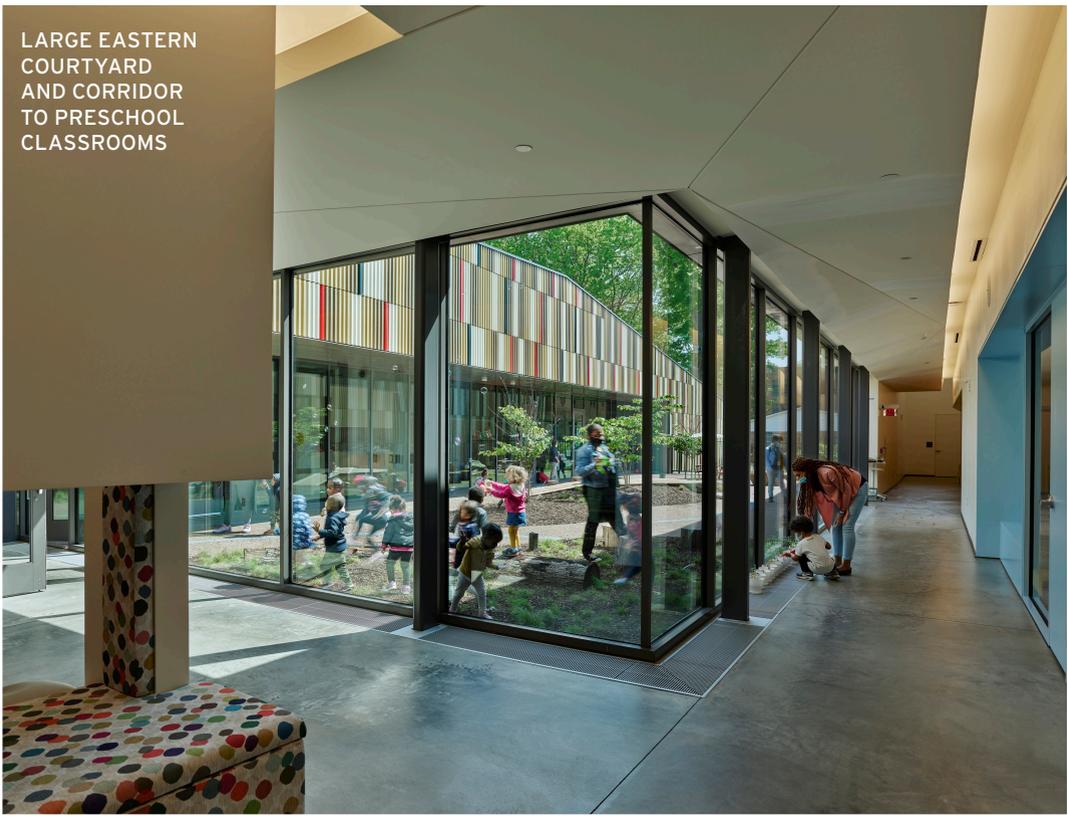
COMMUNITY  
ROOM / FLEX  
CLASSROOM

GROVE OF  
TREES

LONGITUDINAL SECTION



READING NOOK LOOKING SOUTH TO CLASSROOM AND PLAY AREA



LARGE EASTERN COURTYARD AND CORRIDOR TO PRESCHOOL CLASSROOMS



SOUTH ENTRY TOWARDS PLAY AREA



## 5 Educational Environment

### VARIETY OF LEARNING & TEACHING STYLES

The design of the EEC supports each child's individual development to reach their highest potential, by recognizing that little learners have individualized lesson plans that are responsive to each child's interests, strengths, and needs. Classrooms and corridors all have a variety of opportunities for teachers to tailor students' environments as needed for the most effective learning. This can be through reading in a small group, working one on one in a comfortable nook away from the classroom, or by allowing the classroom to flow outside into one of the courtyards or play areas.

### INNOVATIVE ADAPTABLE AND FLEXIBLE

The Early Education Center, while completely new construction, should be seen as part of a broader effort to reuse and revitalize a campus and its existing buildings, many of which have been in service since the 1920's. The plan of the EEC quickly reveals a series of flexible spaces that can be configured in a variety of ways, adapting readily to future needs. As a result, the Early Education Center can expect to have a long and productive life, being used for a wide variety of functions by the school, including as classrooms, offices, or even an event space.



- 1 STAFF WORK AREA FACING NORTH TOWARDS PARKING AND LAWN
- 2 STAFF WORK AREA WINDOW ON NORTH FACADE
- 3 EASTERN COURTYARD WITH PLAY AREA AND STORMWATER BIOSWALE
- 4 GROSS MOTOR SKILLS ROOM BETWEEN CENTRAL AND EASTERN COURTYARDS



GROSS MOTOR ROOM  
ADJACENT TO CENTRAL  
COURTYARD



PRESCHOOL CLASSROOM  
LOOKING SOUTH TO  
OUTDOOR PLAY AREA



LONGITUDINAL  
SECTION

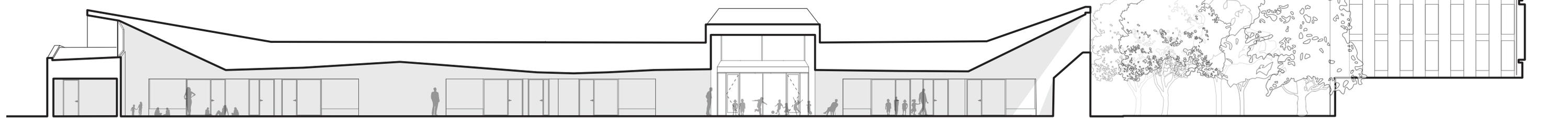
PRESCHOOL  
FOCUS SPACE

PRESCHOOL  
CORRIDOR

CHILD + FAMILY  
COMMUNITY SPACE

FLEX ROOM  
CORRIDOR

FLEX ROOM  
FOCUS SPACE





## 6 Results

### STEWARDSHIP OF FINANCIAL RESOURCES

There was certainly a high “opportunity cost” for Kresge’s investment into the project, but the risks of failure - if the campus shut down and deteriorated - would have been enormous. The Kresge Foundation continues to see Marygrove as a flagship investment and a model of neighborhood-based development in Detroit.

Marygrove’s EEC was required to meet the budget established by the clients, with the understanding that the facility was expected to be exceptional and to set the standard for the entire P20 program. Throughout the design process, the contractor was involved to ensure constructibility and value. At the end of each phase, a pricing exercise was completed, allowing the design and client teams to make timely and effective decisions together.

The result is a highly efficient design with a very long lifespan, built with durable, high quality finishes that require very little maintenance. By considering life cycle costs rather than just first acquisition cost, the project team made a long term investment into the building’s sustainability.

### EDUCATIONAL + COMMUNITY GOALS AND OBJECTIVES

The Marygrove Early Education Center has been a motivating and rallying point for Starfish Family Services as an organization, especially during the challenges of the Covid-19 pandemic. Opening the EEC has also prompted Starfish to continue to learn and adapt to new approaches, from blended models with tuition to offering extended day and full-year care. As Ann Kalass, the CEO of Starfish Family Services, explains, “It’s not just families at Marygrove that need an extended day, so now how can we expand it at more of our centers?” Effectively, the success of Marygrove EEC in achieving educational and community goals and objectives is causing a ripple effect across other facilities in the region operated by Starfish.



NATURAL PLAY AREA  
WITHIN GROVE OF TREES

## 6 Results

### UNINTENDED RESULTS AND ACHIEVEMENTS

Marygrove Early Education Center was always intended to be an innovative venture which is what a problem as complex as the situation in Detroit required. Any time there is a first attempt at a solution, the results are difficult to predict, but it is clear that the EEC has met and exceeded all expectations. Seen as a pilot project rather than a true prototype, the underlying premise and principles of the EEC have proven to be portable and are now the basis, inspiration, and standard for two new Early Education Centers in Detroit. With one currently under construction and another in the planning stages, the model established at Marygrove has already had an impact beyond the immediate McNichols-Livernois neighborhood it was dedicated to serving.

In more immediate terms, the EEC has become a hub for the community, with local organizations and groups using the community room and other amenities inside for a variety of special events and meetings. While planned to have a life beyond the school day, the evenings were more of a question and a hope. In particular, families regularly walk to campus from the south side, which is easily accessible and scaled to the surrounding neighborhood.

Wendy Lewis Jackson of the Kresge Foundation reflected on the project's impact: "This project has captured the minds and hopes of the entire Foundation... This is the first big project in which we looked at the city exclusively through the eyes of a child. We're responsible for getting them the highest quality educational experience. There simply isn't a comparative project in Detroit that has had the same transformative impact."



SOUTHERN CLASSROOMS OPEN TO THE  
NATURAL PLAY AREA

"I tear up every time I'm there because it is a dream come to life for a young child in Detroit. The design team Imagined what a transformational space would look like, one that would demonstrate dignity for young children. It's just magnificent and an integral part of a neighborhood trying to revive."

Wendy Lewis Jackson  
Managing Director, Detroit Program  
The Kresge Foundation

