



PRELIMINARY CASE STATEMENT

A Safe Gathering Space for Physical, Mental, Emotional, and Spiritual Well-Being

Harambee, a Swahili word, means "all pull together." This unwritten law of generosity is a covenant between oneself and one's community: to uplift one another regardless of class, ethnic group, gender, or religious background. This single word has transformed nations, and it will do the same for our community.

WHO WE ARE ***A COMMITMENT TO COMMUNITY***

The Harambee Initiative, Inc., (THI) is a nonprofit organization that welcomes everyone, irrespective of their personal affiliations, and operates without political or religious bias. We are an organization in Lisle, IL, with a vision inspired by this deep commitment to community. **Founded on the critical work led by Reverend Conitras M. Houston Dickens, a board of 14 community leaders has united as a force for good and as active champions for individuals, families, and communities across DuPage County.**

THI is committed to empowering individuals of all ages to realize their full potential through diverse programs and services in a safe, nurturing environment. We are creating a space where every member of our community is cared for, with a focus on physical, mental, emotional, and spiritual well-being. **Beyond building a community hub, we are shaping a future where every resident of DuPage County has access to the essential resources needed to live a healthy and fulfilling life.**



A VISION FOR TRANSFORMATIONAL CHANGE **TOGETHER, WE SOAR | \$5,000,000+**

The Harambee Initiative continues a legacy of over two decades of community service, now expanding beyond its origins to address community needs through various initiatives such as partnerships with local food pantries, elderly enrichment programs, and providing facilities to several youth and community-serving organizations. **THI is poised to build on this legacy, taking the mantle, expanding existing programs and launching new initiatives to better serve our friends, family, and neighbors.** THI will be more than a community hub - it will be a place where everyone plays a role in fostering and nurturing the well-being of all.

THI is embarking on a \$5+ million fundraising campaign to build a transformative community hub that will meet the needs of individuals of all ages in communities across DuPage County—a place where church, community, and corporations can unite to achieve true social impact.

One of the collar counties of the Chicago metropolitan area, DuPage is the second most populous in the state, where the largest industry sector is Healthcare and Social Assistance. Many of our neighbors are quietly navigating significant and often unseen hardships. Food insecurity, unreliable childcare, social isolation, and barriers to economic opportunity are just a few of the issues impacting their well-being. **Despite these needs, there is no single place where community members can receive comprehensive support—or invest in the holistic well-being of others.** Since its inception in December 2021, THI has been committed to addressing these diverse needs through a range of programs and services designed to enrich the lives of youth, adults, seniors, and families who call DuPage County home.

TRANSFORMING OUR COMMUNITY

Our vision for the future is clear: THI will be a place where holistic support meets tangible action. **We are seeking philanthropic partners to join us in funding the construction and ensuring the sustainability of these vital programs.**

Your support will help address critical needs across our community:

Combat food insecurity – feeding more of our neighbors.

Address childcare gaps – providing support for more families.

Expand access to early education – educating more young learners.

Tackle social isolation and loneliness – enriching the lives of seniors.

Bridge the digital skills gaps – fostering innovation for all.

Restore space for community – connecting and engaging residents.

Drive economic development – supporting local entrepreneurs.





COMBATING FOOD INSECURITY



There are more than 50,000 hungry families in DuPage County who face the daily challenge of accessing nutritious meals. With your support, we can ensure that no one in our community goes hungry. Together, we can expand access to nutritious meals and groceries provided through our community garden and partnership with R.E.A.C.H. food pantry, improving overall health and wellbeing.

SUPPORTING OUR FAMILIES



Childcare costs are increasing across the country. Working-class families and those below the poverty line are hit the hardest, leaving many in our community struggling to find safe and reliable childcare. Our before-school and after-school services will offer a safe and nurturing environment for children, promoting their healthy development and providing peace of mind for the many working parents and guardians in DuPage County.

EDUCATING YOUNG LEARNERS



Effective early education is crucial for lifelong learning and success. However, early learners in our community lack access to quality preschool programs. As of 2019, half of DuPage County's 46,000 children under five have no access to childcare. Our preschool programs will meet a critical need in our community. It will also equip early learners with essential skills and knowledge, building strong foundations and achieving positive outcomes.

ENRICHING THE LIVES OF SENIORS



One in three adults aged 50-80 reported feeling isolated from others. Our elderly enrichment programs foster social connections and provide vital support services. By expanding our programming, we can coordinate more engaging activities and continue enhancing the overall well-being and quality of life for our most storied residents.

FOSTERING INNOVATION FOR ALL



33% of the workforce lacks the digital skills required for 92% of jobs due to historical underinvestment and, in many cases, structural inequities. Our S.T.E.A.M. courses will equip DuPage County residents of all ages with the valuable tech skills needed to access new opportunities and drive innovation across our community.

CONNECTING AND ENGAGING COMMUNITY



There is a growing need for spaces that encourage collaboration and dialogue among residents, as traditional places for community (i.e., libraries and community centers) are disappearing across the U.S. Community spaces can positively impact social connectedness, mental health, and other aspects of society. Our facilities already host several events and organizations, many of which are eagerly anticipating new spaces that are more tailored to their needs. We plan to add event and classroom space, a multipurpose room, a gym, and a café. By doing so, we can amplify our role as a hub for community gatherings, workshops, and events, providing critical support to new and existing partners. We can also foster deeper connections, dialogue and collaboration among residents.

SUPPORTING LOCAL ENTREPRENEURS



Small businesses are the backbone of our local economy, creating jobs, fresh perspectives, and a kaleidoscope of possibilities. However, local businesses often face challenges in gaining visibility and accessing resources. According to the Small Business Association, only 15% of newly established businesses are operating ten years after they're started. Our Entrepreneur Storefront will empower local businesses to showcase their products and services, stimulating economic growth and fostering a more vibrant and economically robust community.

EARLY RENDERINGS AND DESIGN CONCEPTS
THE HARAMBEE INITIATIVE, INC. (THI)

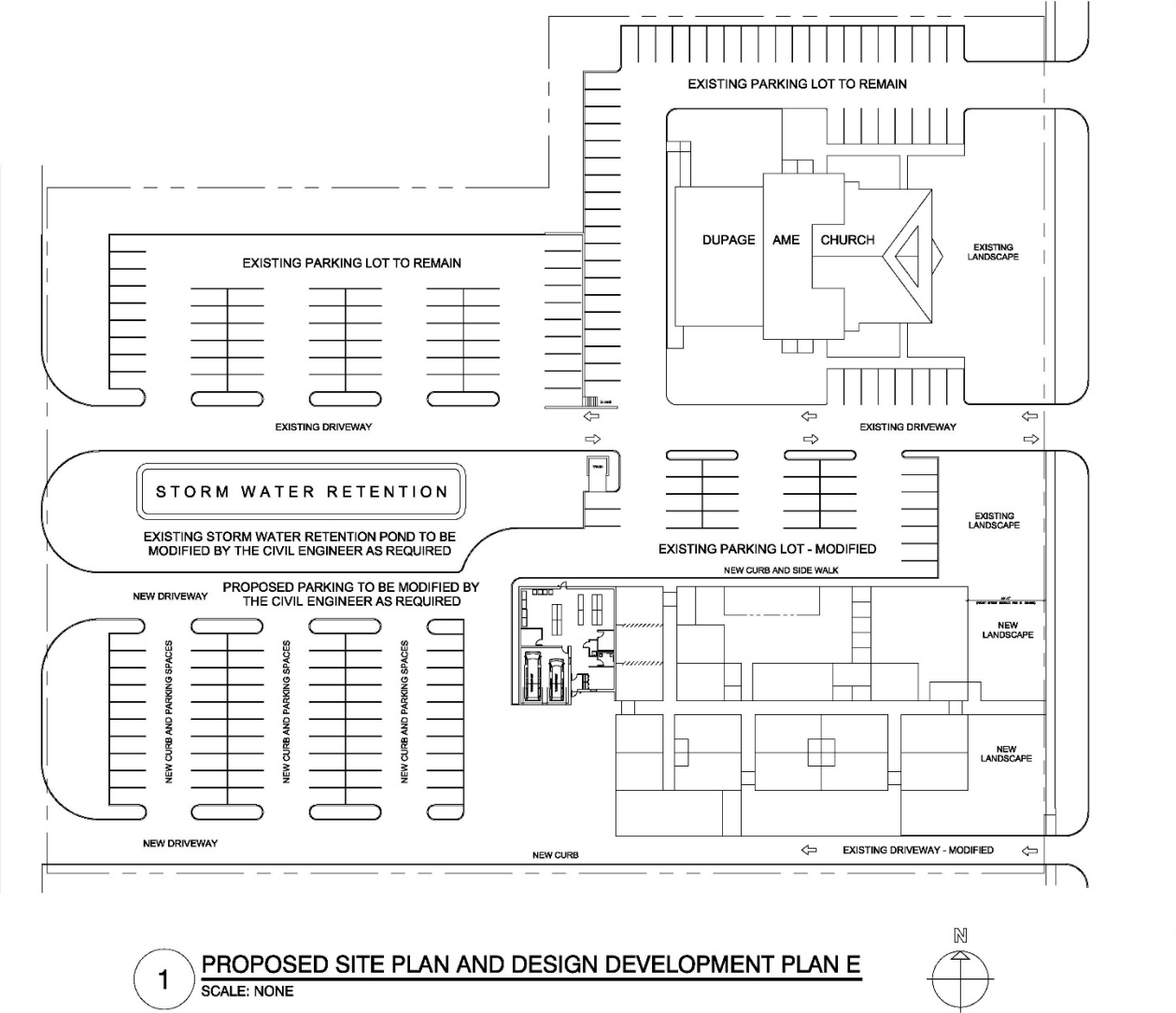


Aerial and front-facing view of THI



Rear-facing view of THI

PROPOSED SITE PLAN AND DESIGN DEVELOPMENT
THE HARAMBEE INITIATIVE, INC. (THI)



5150 BURNHAM STR
LISLE, ILLINOIS 60532
P. 630-417-7155 F. 630-417-7156
www.risingsunarchitect.com
info@risingsunarchitect.com

The Harambee Initiative, Inc. Project
43xx Yackley Avenue
Lisle, IL 60532

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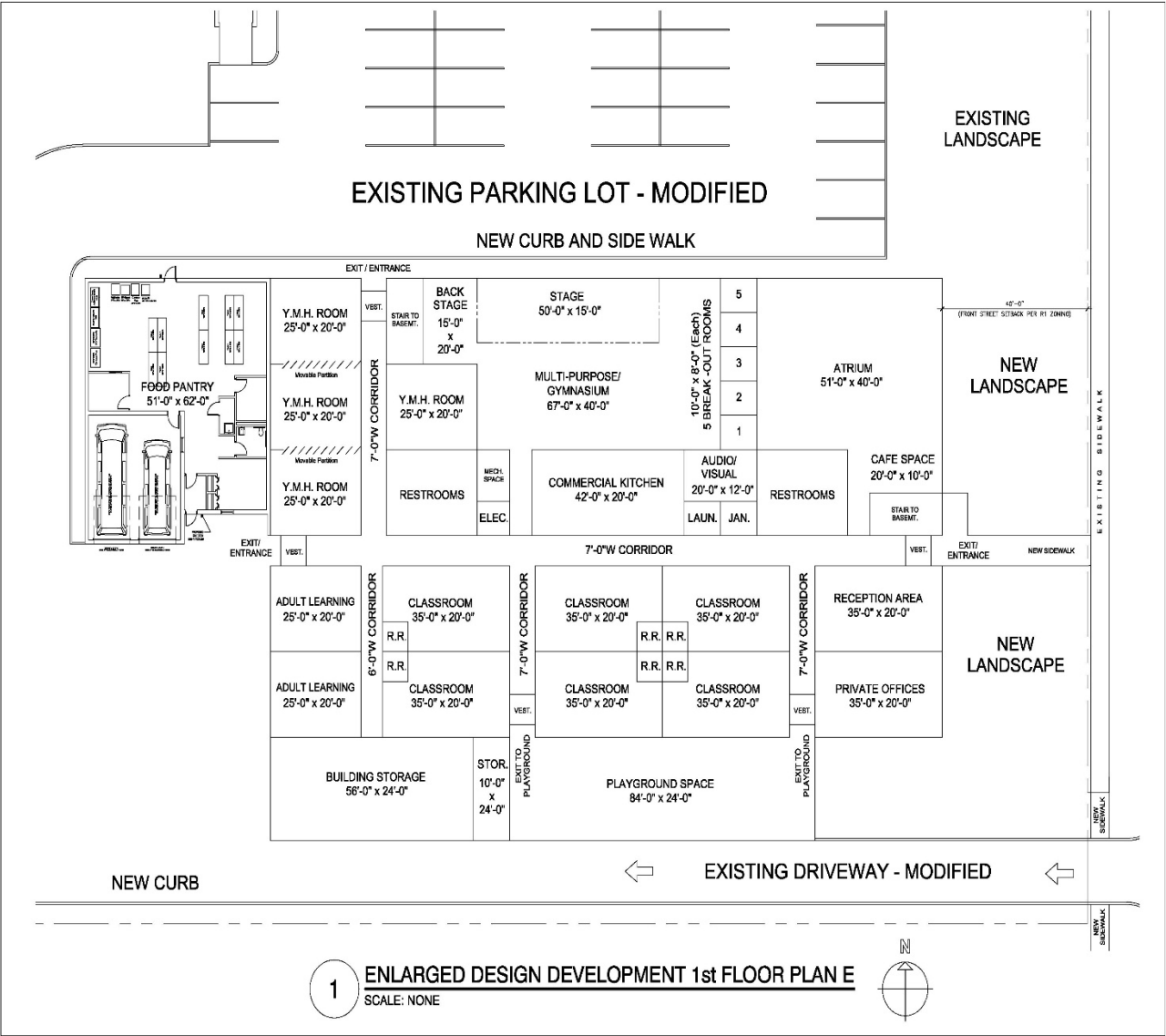
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A donor has generously donated land valued at \$600,000 for the future site of The Harambee Initiative, Inc.

PROPOSED FLOOR PLAN FOR THE FIRST FLOOR
THE HARAMBEE INITIATIVE, INC. (THI)



RIISING SUN
ARCHITECTURE, LLC

5150 BURNHAM STREET
LISLE, ILLINOIS 60532
P. 630-417-7155 F. 630-416-9746
www.risingsunarchitecture.com
info@risingsunarchitecture.com

The Harambee Initiative, Inc. Project
43xx Yackley Avenue
Lisle, IL 60532
ENLARGED DESIGN DEV. PLAN E

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Number Description Date

Project Number RSA 18323-05
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THE PATH FORWARD

By investing in this community hub, you are helping to create a place where everyone can flourish, residents can engage with one another, and individuals in our community can gain access to new opportunities. **THI represents a unique opportunity for DuPage County — a comprehensive resource for meeting community needs, catalyzing economic opportunity, and building meaningful connections.** Housing these programs in one place reduces barriers to access and amplifies our potential for impact. Your support can make a tangible difference in the lives of individuals and families across DuPage County.



Since initiating this vision, we've achieved significant milestones: selecting a design architect, defining our vision for the space, developing a detailed floor plan, and embarking on the critical work of turning this vision into a reality for families in our community. **We partnered with a strategic fundraising consulting firm to conduct a campaign planning study, and have hired David M. McGowan, CFRE of Dave McGowan Consulting LLC to provide campaign counsel.** Now, we are excited to take the next steps forward with you.

OUR REQUEST OF YOU

Your feedback and engagement will play a critical role in shaping the future of this project. As we move forward with this transformational initiative, your input will help us better understand how we can meet the needs of the community and secure the resources necessary to make this vision a reality. **Together, we can build a brighter future for DuPage County.**

Thank you in advance for your partnership and support.

www.harambeenow.org
admin@harambeenow.org

