

Kresge Foundation Headquarters

Troy, Michigan, U.S.A.

The Kresge Foundation is a private philanthropic foundation that outgrew its suburban Detroit facility and needed to expand. To accommodate its growth, the foundation invested in a redevelopment project that added more office space and restored the native landscape on its 2.74-acre corporate campus. The new facility incorporates sustainable design practices into nearly every aspect of its construction. The buildings and landscape work in harmony to minimize any negative impact on the environment. At its core, the landscape functions to ecologically manage and re-circulate stormwater, restore biodiversity, re-use materials, and promote the well-being and productivity of workers.

The foundation occupies land that once supported a thriving prairieland habitat, typical of southern Michigan. Years of agricultural-use gradually stripped the site of its biodiversity. A major goal of the project is to restore the landscape to its original state. To accomplish this, buildings are clustered together so that they only occupy one-third of the total land. The remaining two-thirds of the land is dedicated to restoring native wildlife habitat. The constructed prairieland and wetland pond now include more than 100 native and adaptive species of grasses and wild flowers. The dense green space is now home to numerous species of animals and insects.

The project uses a sustainable stormwater management system, which treats water as resource rather than waste. All the rainwater that lands on the site is treated by the landscape systems, allowing it ample opportunity to naturally infiltrate into the ground. When possible, the designer incorporated green roofs and porous pavement into the project to minimize hard surfaces and stormwater runoff. During heavy rain storms, excess water collects in a constructed wetland pond located on the lowest point on the property. When the water level

of the pond rises above a certain level, a pump system pipes the water to a large storage tank. During droughts, this water is used to irrigate the green roofs and refill the wetland pond. Harvested rain water accounts for all the irrigation water needed to sustain the expansive landscape, preserving the city's supply of drinking water.

The new complex re-uses existing structures and materials to preserve the cultural heritage of the site and also reduce construction costs and materials. An old farm house is one of several historic buildings that are integrated into the design. These agricultural remnants give the foundation a distinct sense of place. The project also incorporates recycled materials that were recovered from the demolition of the former Kresge office building and parking lot. For example, new retaining walls were built using wire baskets filled with recycled concrete rubble. Re-use of salvaged materials helps divert waste from landfills.

As a whole, the new Kresge Foundation headquarters creates a restorative and healthy workplace environment for staff and visitors. Panoramic views from the buildings provide a strong connection to the living landscape as they look out onto the colorful prairie, wetland pond, green roofs, and central courtyard. Walking paths and benches situated throughout the site encourage employees to enjoy the landscape and fresh air. Short breaks in this calm and soothing environment help reduce stress and increase worker productivity.

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Project Resources

LANDSCAPE ARCHITECT/PROJECT MANAGER

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