



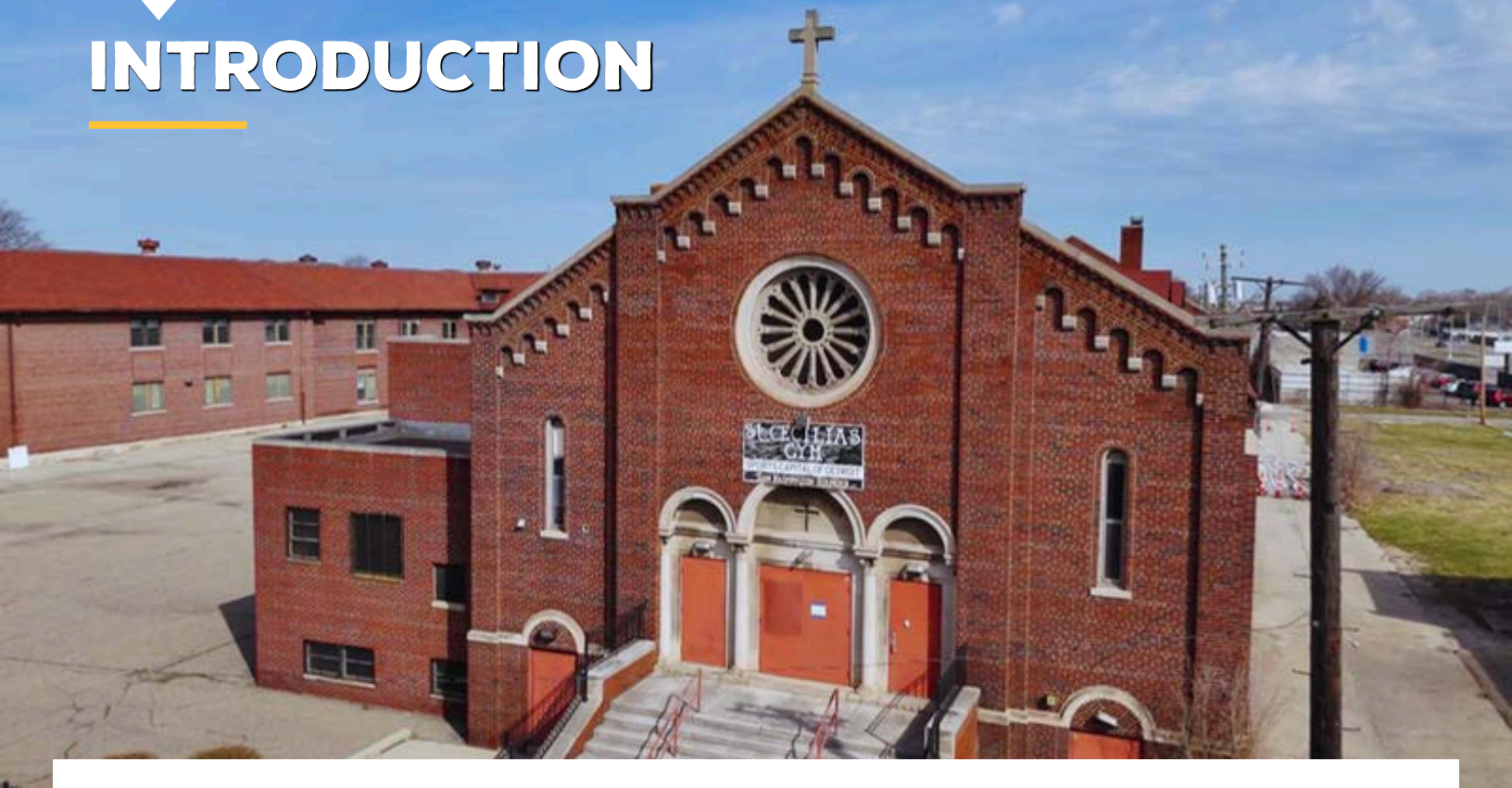
DETROIT SAY IT
PLAY
CENTER
AT ST. CECILIA

A **\$20-Million** Campaign Investing in Detroit's **Next Generation**

Featuring the revitalization of
the historic St. Cecilia campus

CASE STATEMENT BY **DETROIT** SAY IT

INTRODUCTION



SAY Detroit is launching a transformative **\$20-million campaign** to expand opportunity for Detroit's children and families through education and enrichment programming, youth development, recreation, health services, and critical family resources.

At the center of this effort is the redevelopment of the historic St. Cecilia campus widely known as "The Saint." For generations, St. Cecilia has been a neighborhood anchor and symbol of Detroit pride. Its gym is iconic with NBA legends such as Dave Bing, Magic Johnson and Chris Webber turning the court into a performance stage, but its importance extends far beyond basketball.

With demand exceeding capacity at the east side SAY Detroit Play Center at Lipke Park (SAY Play), **a second location is essential to advancing SAY Detroit's mission.**



**St. Cecilia is the
necessary next step.**



Founded in 2006 by author and philanthropist Mitch Albom, SAY Detroit has built a proven record of delivering meaningful outcomes for youth, families, and communities. Today, SAY Detroit serves as an array of charitable initiatives addressing critical needs across the city from education and health care to housing, food security, and essential support. These initiatives include SAY Play, the SAY Detroit Family Health Clinic, Working Homes/Working Families, Mi-Cycle, Better Together, and other programs creating greater opportunity, stability, and pathways forward for thousands of Detroiters.



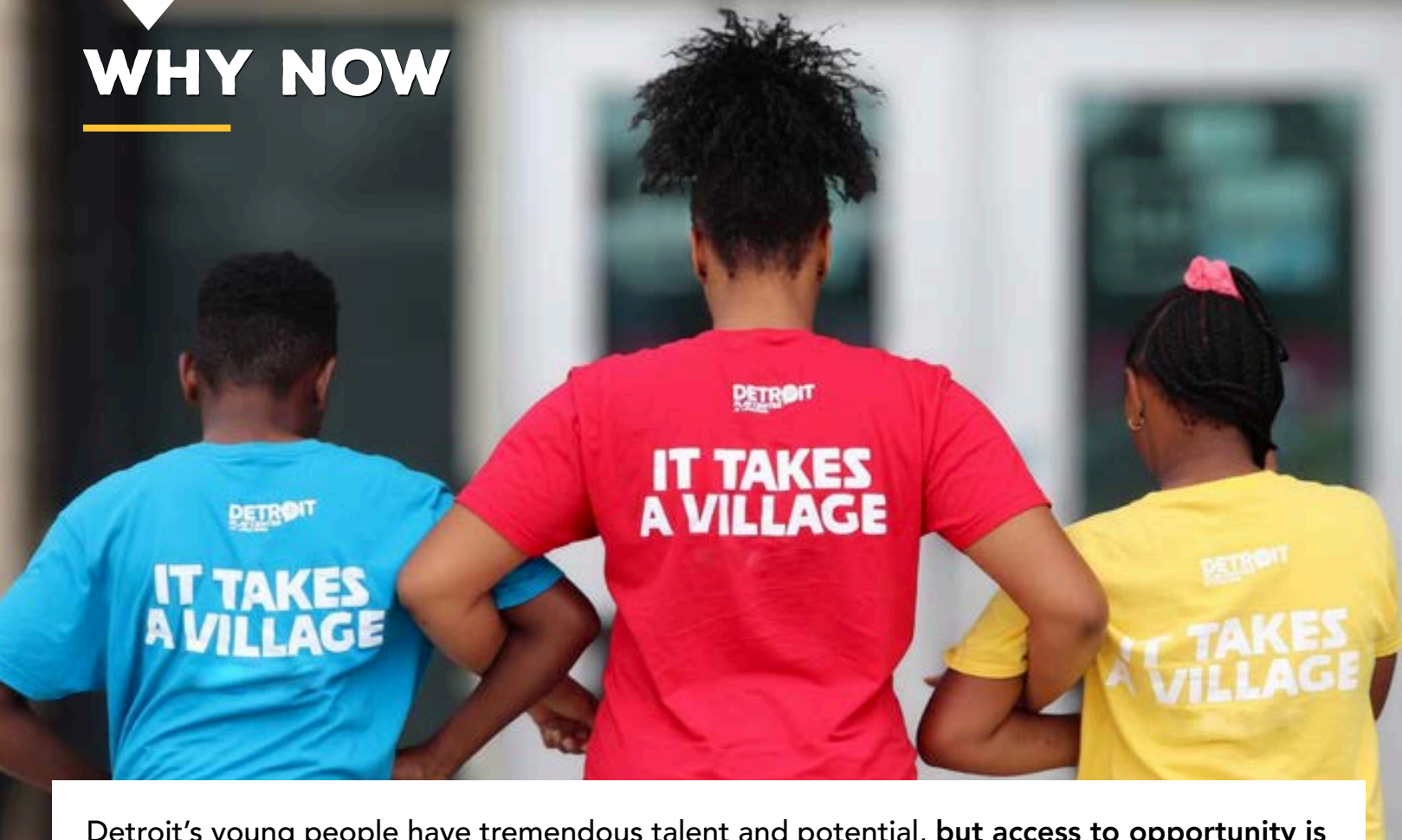
**A safe place to learn, play,
create, and build new
pathways to a new world.**

**– CARINA (14)
SAY PLAY STUDENT**

Carina's words capture the heart of this campaign. It is not simply about restoring a nearly century-old school building and gymnasium. It is about creating a place where young people are seen, supported, challenged, and inspired to imagine and pursue brighter futures.



WHY NOW



Detroit's young people have tremendous talent and potential, **but access to opportunity is not always equitable.** Academic support, trusted mentors, and exposure to college and careers can shape a young person's future.

At SAY Play, academics are the cornerstone.

Year-round learning is strengthened by enrichment, recreation, mentorship, and experiences that help young people discover their strengths, build confidence, and imagine what is possible.

A Day at SAY Play

Free Pick-up from School
Nutritious Meal

Academics

Electives

Support

Free Drop-off at Home

**The demand is there.
The model is proven.**

SAY Detroit is ready.



THE VISION

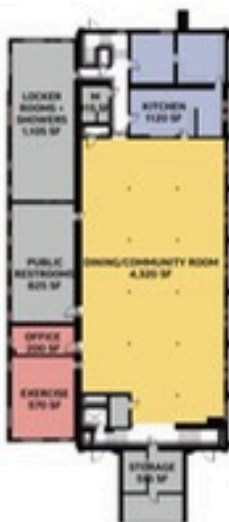
PROPOSED SITE

SCHOOL	
BASEMENT	1,310 SF
LEVEL 1	13,180 SF
LEVEL 2	13,180 SF
TOTAL	27,670 SF
GYM	
BASEMENT	10,100 SF
LEVEL 1	9,640 SF
LEVEL 2	620 SF
TOTAL	20,360 SF
ADDITION	
LEVEL 1	2,060 SF
LEVEL 2	485 SF
TOTAL	2,545 SF
TOTAL SF AVAILABLE	50,575 SF
PARKING PROVIDED	63 SPACES
PARKING REQUIRED	63 SPACES

PROGRAM TYPES	
ACADEMIC	7,210 SF
INNOVATION	2,855 SF
ARTS	3,925 SF
ATHLETICS	10,935 SF
COMMUNITY	5,410 SF
ADMIN	2,285 SF
SUPPORT	4,435 SF
TOTAL PROGRAM	
+ CIRCULATION	
TOTAL PROPOSED	
46,270 SF NET	



LEVEL 1



BASEMENT LEVEL



LEVEL 2

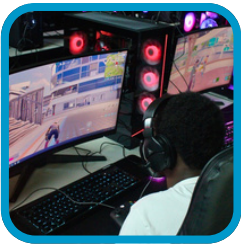
Sample proposed renderings subject to change. Updated plans available upon request.

The revitalized eight-acre St. Cecilia campus, located in the Russell Woods/Nardin Park neighborhood on Detroit's west side, will feature purpose-built spaces supported by **free daily transportation, meals, and other essential services to ensure participation for all.**



Academic Success & Enrichment

- Tutoring and homework labs
- Literacy, numeracy, and test preparation spaces
- Small-group intervention and mentoring areas



STEAM & Digital Innovation

- Dedicated makerspace, robotics, coding, and engineering spaces
- Computer labs with modern technology equipment
- Digital media, podcasting, and production studios
- Future-ready learning spaces



Visual, Performing & Cultural Arts

- Music production and recording studio
- Specialized rehearsal and practice spaces
- Space for youth-led showcases, workshops, and creative expression



Athletics, Health & Wellness

- Revitalization of the legendary St. Cecilia gymnasium
- Year-round athletics, recreation, and leadership development across a variety of sports and activities
- On-site wellness and behavioral health support



Workforce, Leadership, and Life Skills

- College and career navigation
- Workforce readiness and mock interview spaces
- Exposure to careers, apprenticeships, and higher education



Family & Community Empowerment

- Parent workshops in education, financial literacy, and digital skills
- Flexible spaces for community gatherings, trainings, and partner collaboration
- Community Resource Hub providing food, clothing, and other essential supports

GOAL: \$20 MILLION

The campaign will support **five strategic investment priorities**, preserving the original scope of SAY Detroit's broader growth plan while placing St. Cecilia at its center.

1. St. Cecilia's Transformation

Property acquisition, architectural and engineering services, construction and renovation, building systems, technology infrastructure, furnishings and equipment, site improvements, athletic and recreation spaces needed to open the new St. Cecilia campus.

total
\$12
million

2. Youth Development & Educational Opportunity

Program staffing, curriculum and instructional resources, academic intervention and tutoring, mentoring, STEAM and arts programming, workforce and career readiness, athletics and recreation, transportation, summer programming, and expanded year-round enrollment at both SAY Play campuses.

total
\$3.5
million

3. Health, Wellness & Family Support

SAY Detroit Family Health Clinic services and pharmacy; clinical and support staffing, medical equipment and supplies, health and wellness programming, food and nutrition assistance, family resource services, and increased access to essential supports for youth and families.

total
\$2
million

4. Innovation, Sustainability & Operating Reserves

Start-up costs for new programs, technology and equipment replacement, staff and program capacity needed for expansion, evaluation and continuous improvement, and operating reserves to support long-term financial stability as SAY Detroit grows.

total
\$1.7
million

5. Community Impact & Program Growth

Housing and neighborhood initiatives, community-based partnerships, pilot programs, responsive assistance, and flexible funding for emerging needs and opportunities across SAY Detroit's broader network of programs and services.

total
\$800
thousand



THE IMPACT

100%

of registered high school seniors in Class of 2026 **graduated**

100%

of youth in literacy programming advanced **one grade level or more**

50+

Detroit schools refer students for after-school support

3.1

cumulative GPA for 2025 - 2026 academic year

Building on 20 years of impact, SAY Detroit is guided by leaders with decades of experience across business, civic leadership, philanthropy, and community development. Its mission features diverse and exceptional programming that will bring the vision for St. Cecilia to life.

**St. Cecilia is more than a building;
it is a Detroit institution.**

*Since 1967
Where Stars Are Made, Not Born
Founder Sam Washington*

**SAY Detroit honors the legends who
walked through St. Cecilia's doors by
opening them to the next generation.**

AN OPPORTUNITY FOR LEGACY



At this pivotal moment, donors can help transform one of Detroit's most storied landmarks into an enduring investment in the city's future.

A gift to the SAY Detroit Play Center at St. Cecilia will expand the capacity to reach thousands more young people and families while securing this historic campus as a vibrant community asset for generations to come. **Naming and recognition opportunities are available across a wide range of giving levels. Recommended signature investment options are highlighted below; the full list is available at saydetroit.org/thesaint.**



**Academic Success
Wing**
\$1.5M



**Visual & Performing
Arts Center**
\$1.5M



**STEAM & Digital
Innovation Center**
\$1.5M



Muti-Sport Field
\$1M



St. Cecilia Gymnasium
\$3M



Hall of Honor
\$1M



**Family & Community
Empowerment Center**
\$1M

Few investments allow us to honor what a place has meant to a city while helping determine what it can mean for its future.

THE MOMENT IS NOW

WATCH ▶

**Build the Future
at "The Saint"**



**St. Cecilia shaped Detroit's past.
SAY Detroit will shape its future.**

This is a **once-in-a-generation opportunity** to reimagine a Detroit institution and ensure its next chapter belongs to Detroit's young people.

saydetroit.org/thesaint

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SAY DETROIT AND SAY SOMETHING AMAZING!