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**BOOKS to FOOD!**  
**A Proposal to Reinvent Melrose Library**  
**Apple Ridge Farm & Local Environmental Agriculture Project (LEAP)**  
**Food Corridor HQ**



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# BOOKS to FOOD!

## A Proposal to Reinvent Melrose Library Apple Ridge Farm & Local Environmental Agriculture Project (LEAP) Food Corridor HQ

### Vision

A New and Sustainable Food System for Northwest Roanoke!

### Need

- Lack of access to healthy and affordable food contributes to health disparities in low-income communities—obesity, diabetes, high blood pressure & heart disease
- “Food Deserts”—USDA defines as “...a low-income census tract where either a substantial number or share of residents has low access to a supermarket or large grocery store.”
- Northwest Roanoke is food desert
  - No grocery stores
  - Lack of access to nutritious foods leads to health problems
  - Poor health is an underlying cause of entrenched poverty in Northwest Roanoke
- To tackle problem of food access, need:
  - *Education* about importance and availability of healthy foods
  - *Affordability*—fresh healthy foods must fit family budgets
  - *Proximity*—fresh healthy foods must be readily available and easily accessible

### Solution

- Create a new food system for Northwest Roanoke!
- Melrose Library – anchor site of “food corridor” in Northwest Roanoke
- Apple Ridge Farm and LEAP form partnership to:
  - Renovate and repurpose library building and site
  - Create central location for healthy food distribution and education in Northwest Roanoke
  - Shared space for Apple Ridge and LEAP offices = greater collaboration and cost efficiencies
- LEAP
  - New home base for Mobile Market = greater access for community
  - On-site cold storage for produce
  - First Northwest Roanoke site for Farm Share Program
  - SNAP benefits for purchases—makes healthy food affordable!
- Apple Ridge Farm
  - Host community workshops
    - Education about importance of fresh foods
    - Provide information about local fresh food sources
    - Meal suggestions using local produce
  - Operate on-site community garden

### Results

- With Melrose Library reimaged and repurposed, healthy foods will be readily available and affordable in Northwest Roanoke, eliminating food deserts in this community!

## **Partners**

- Apple Ridge Farm
  - 40 years of educating underserved youth
  - 20 years of sustainable agricultural programs
  - Stability in vision and day-to-day operations
- LEAP
  - Since 2011, actively addressing food access in Roanoke
  - Regional and statewide leader--incentive programs for low-income shoppers
  - Extensive experience--local food production and experience

## **Funding**

- Roanoke Women's Foundation—Apple Ridge Farm and LEAP requested funding to renovate building and construct garden
- Meador Foundation--\$100K available for project

## **Summary**

- With City's help we can solve the problem of food deserts in Northwest Roanoke!

## **Questions?**



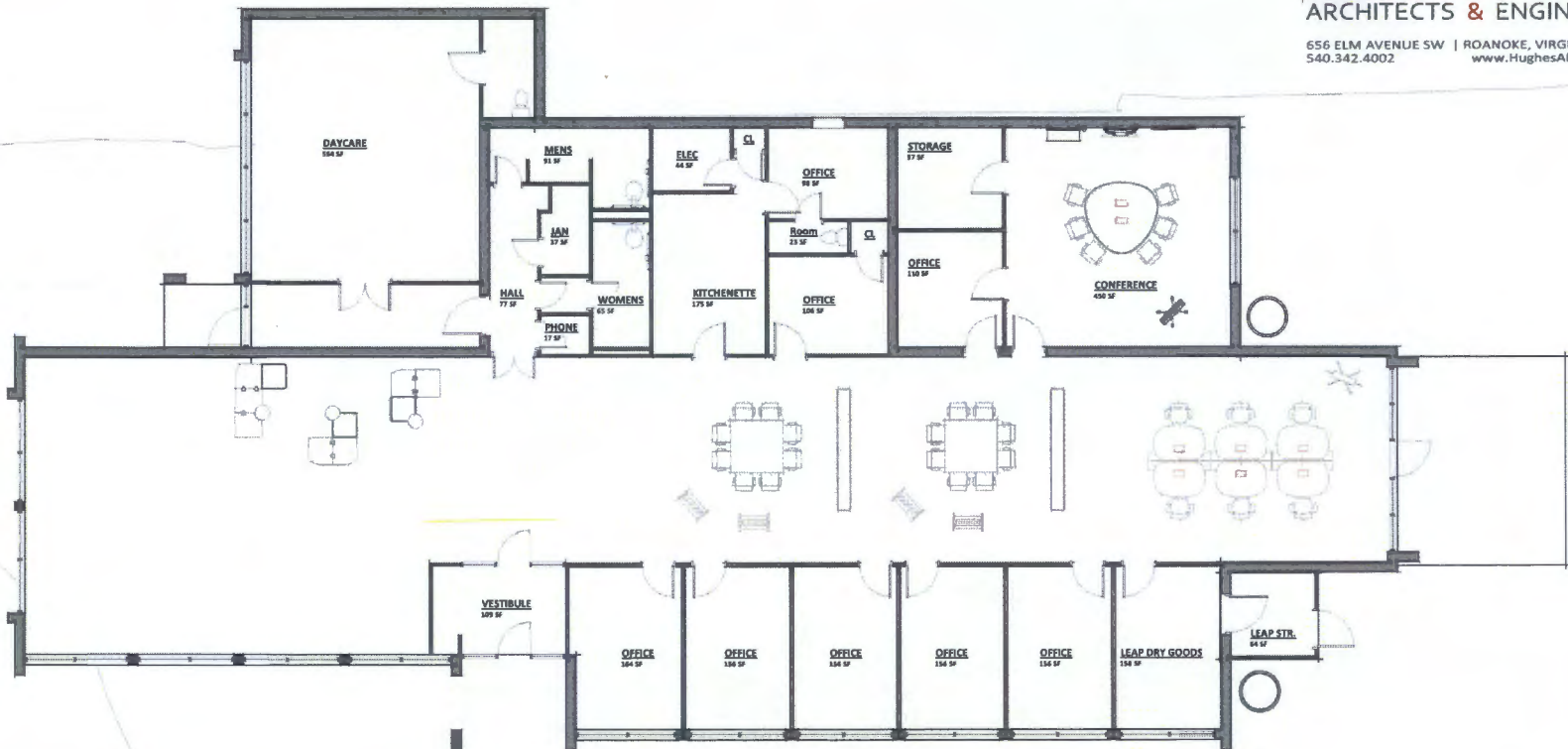
Renovation of

## Melrose Library

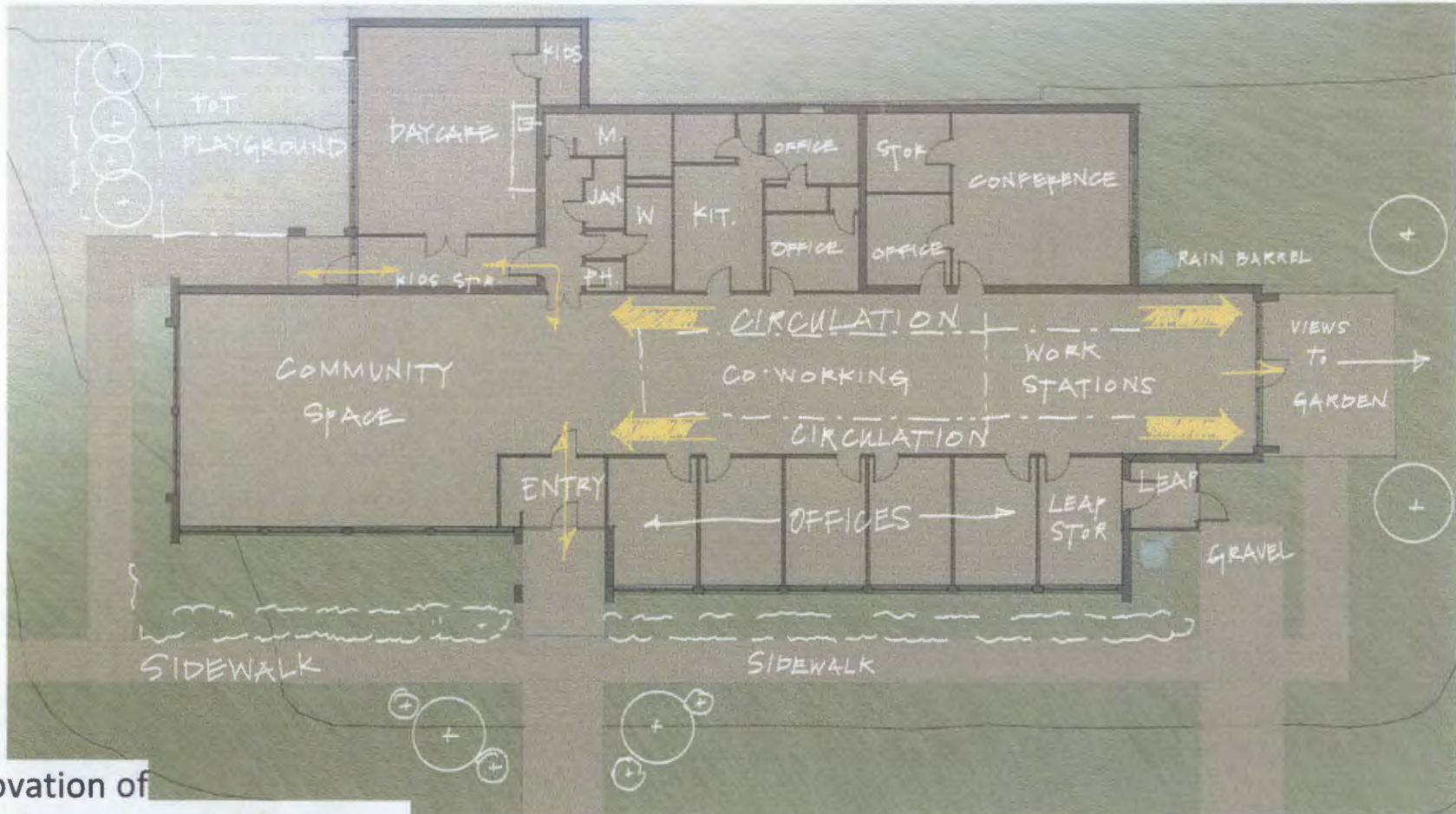
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