

# Your Guide to Low Impact Developments in Greater Grand Rapids

## Marywood Health Center

2025 East Fulton Street, Grand Rapids, Michigan



### History

Marywood is the home of the Grand Rapids Dominicans. The Sisters value and enjoy nature as a gift of God's creation, and have preserved and enhanced the property to enjoy the park-like setting in the city. The first land was purchased in 1917, and other parts were acquired in the next few decades until the property was 25 acres in size. The Dominican Sisters built a Motherhouse on the land, which was once farmland and had many natural areas. Coldbrook Creek runs through the land on its way to the Grand River, and the natural course of the stream has never been changed.

When the new Marywood Health Center was designed and constructed, care was taken to make a building and setting that met the needs of the Sisters, preserved the natural beauty of the area, and protected the creek.

### LID Features

The design and construction of the health center building preserved the natural topography. The storm water from the roof of the new health center has been diverted to create a pond landscaped with native perennial wildflowers, and the storm water from the health center parking lot is conveyed along a series of wildflower-planted swales and small ponds to a storm water prairie that matured in 2007. An additional feature is a rain garden and detention pond next to the parking lot at Aquinata Hall, 153 Lakeside Drive, N.E.

### Other Green Features

The new Health Center uses natural light, green building features, and native plants for landscaping. The building features water management, high-efficiency heating and cooling units, and HVAC units with variable speed drives, frequency drives, and heat pumps.

### Marywood Health Center Grand Rapids Dominicans

Grand Rapids, Michigan  
2004

#### LID Features

Grass swales

Storm water prairie

Storm water pond

Rain garden

#### Building Features

Constructed with green  
building practices

Natural topography of  
land preserved

#### Awards

Published in AIA/AAHSA  
Design for Aging Review  
and received an Award of  
Merit (2006)

Gold and Innovation  
honors from the National  
Association of Home  
Builders, Best of Seniors  
Housing Awards

#### Design, Construction

Perkins Eastman  
Architects PC

#### Landscaping

Design: Wolff Clements &  
Associates Ltd.  
Installation: Twin Lakes  
Nursery



[www.grdominicans.org](http://www.grdominicans.org)

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## Marywood Health Center

Page 2

### Other Green Features (cont.)

Cork floors, natural lighting, LEED® design, building automation/energy management, insulated double panel low-E windows with tinting, LED exit signs, natural lighting, T-8 fluorescent/electronic ballasts, and compact fluorescent light bulbs are also included. It has constant air exchange with the heat recovery wheel air exchangers. Timed low voltage electronic lighting saves energy. The landscaping features many low-maintenance native plants.



### Social and Economic Benefits

The new Marywood Health Center is a home for the Grand Rapids Dominicans Senior Sisters. It is an 80,000-square-foot residence that blends assisted living, skilled care, and dementia care. It provides a serene and peaceful environment for the sisters, who have spent their lives caring for others. The new residence helps the sisters age gracefully as they continue their service through prayer for those whose lives they have touched.

The storm water features on the campus have created wildlife habitat and natural beauty, enhancing the grounds for the residents and local community to enjoy. The large prairie only needs to be mowed every other year to maintain the planting, reducing the cost of grounds keeping. The storm water systems have become a regional attraction, as this is the first storm water prairie planted in Grand Rapids.

### LID Lessons Learned

It takes three years for a prairie to mature, and until that time, it is not as attractive as it will be once flowers and grasses reach full size. During the first years of growth, the area can be beautifully enhanced with annual, non-invasive wildflowers such as cosmos, and the soil stabilized with annual ryegrass.

This project has been funded wholly or in part by the United States Environmental Protection Agency under the assistance agreement to the Michigan Department of Environmental Quality. The contents of this document do not necessarily reflect the views and policies of the Environmental Protection Agency, nor does the mention of trade names or commercial products constitute endorsement or recommendation for use.



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