

HF3908--Ethiopian Community in Minnesota

Project Description: This is a project to purchase a building which will serve as an Ethiopian Community Center in the heart of the Twin Cities. The Ethiopian Community in Minnesota is currently operating out of an eight foot by ten foot office space. A dedicated Ethiopian Center would allow the Ethiopian Community in Minnesota a gathering space to connect with

It is estimated that there are 45,000 to 50,000 individuals in and around the Twin Cities who identify themselves as Ethiopian Americans or Ethiopians. Coming to Minnesota just in the last four decades, the Ethiopian community is one of the youngest immigrant communities in Minnesota.

The center would serve as a hub for Ethiopians residing in Minnesota as well as facilitate the interactions between Ethiopian Americans and the larger Minnesota communities and pave the way for easier integration. This is a big deal as new immigrants are known to suffer from cultural isolation and associated social problems. The reward is huge as it assists the new Ethiopian American immigrant's foundational support to make smooth transitions to becoming contributing participants in their new community. The center will assist children, the young, the elderly, women, job seekers, students and newcomers as a foundation for fulfilling civic duties, and becoming contributing members of their new home and attain the American dream.

The Center will specifically serve the following purposes:

- As a collective address where those who seek to find Ethiopians and Ethiopian Americans
- As a cultural center where Ethiopian Americans share our languages, cultures, and traditions with the larger Minnesota.
- As a place where we teach our languages, cultures, and traditions to our children
- As a venue where we gather in good times to celebrate cultural and national holidays as well as wedding, graduation, and artistic and cultural shows)
- As a source of support and strengthening one another in bad times (mourning, counseling etc...)
- As a library to house historical artifacts, valuable books and literature pertaining to Ethiopia
- As a place where the young, adult and seniors hang out to avoid isolation, build connections, friendship, storytelling, and transfer cultural values
- As a center for family, social and job-related counseling, mentoring, job training, Computer skills training, interviewing skills, workshops on small and large business start-up, hosting job fairs.
- As a center for support groups for women, the youth and as well as adults to address the various societal and economic issues
- A center for translating documents, school transcripts, certificates, diplomas, and legal documents.
- As a center for connect with the surrounding communities and actively participate in community affairs.

Our future Center is the property on 1630 University Avenue

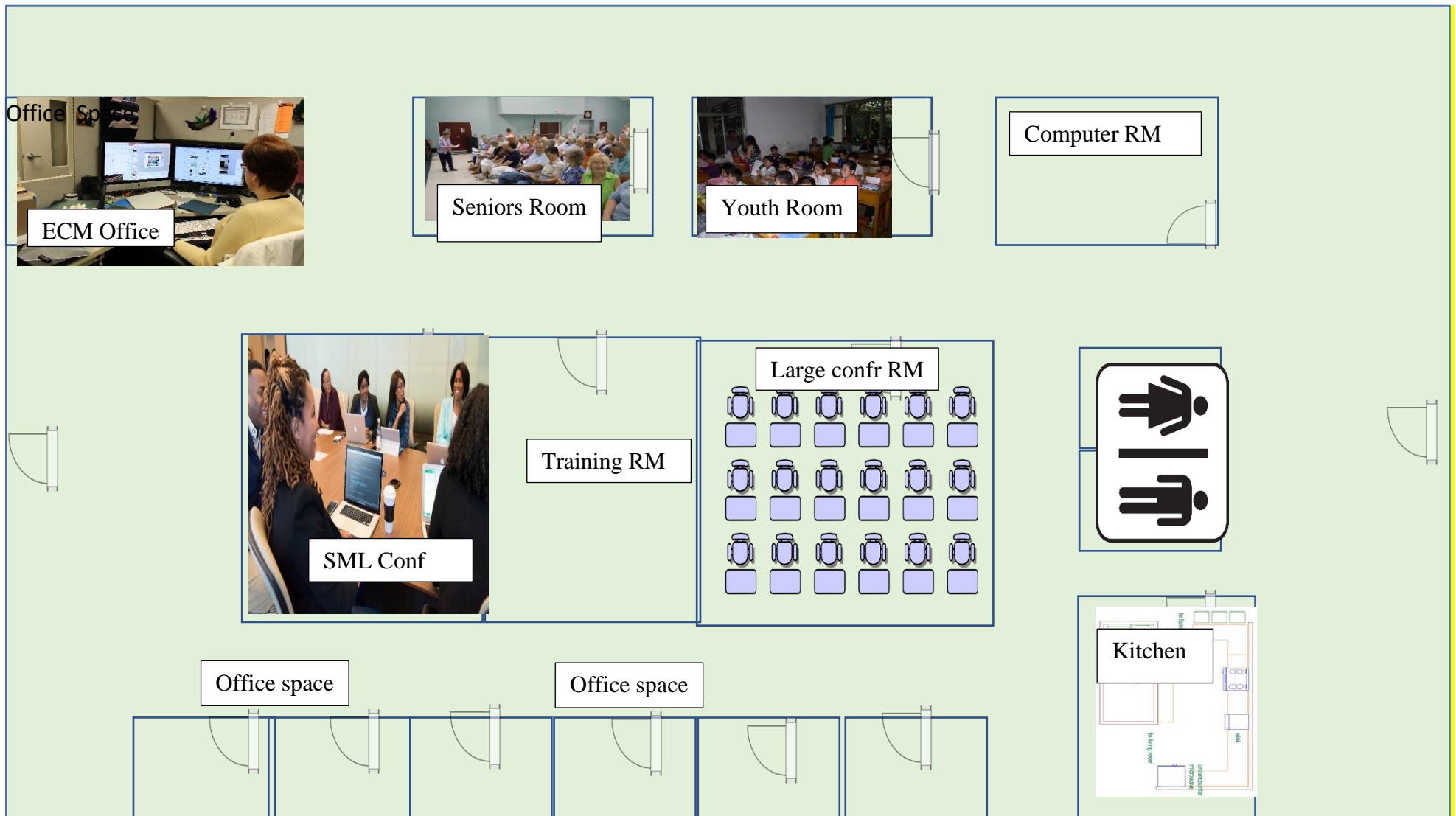
- A survey conducted among Ethiopians identified that the Midway area as the top choice for the Ethiopian Community Center. The reason is that many Ethiopians are familiar with midway area. It is also accessible to the various forms of transportation.
- The property is listed for 1.75 million dollars. Estimate repair cost \$0.75 million.
- We are requesting a cash grant of 2.5 million from the state of Minnesota.





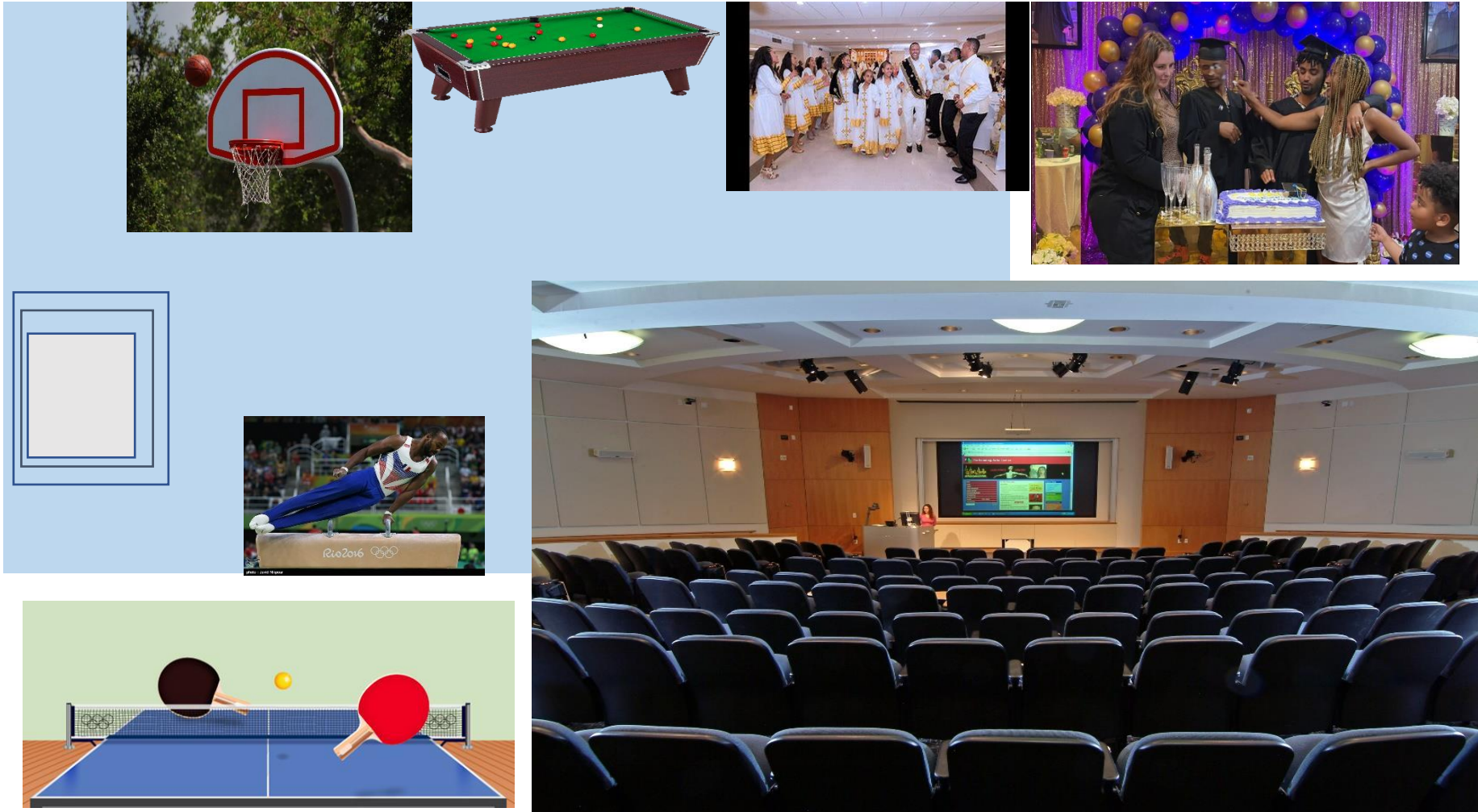
Excellent location at the heart of St Paul, with multiple means of public transportation as well as on a main artery Highway 94.

LAYOUT OF THE UPPER FLOOR



The upper level would be organized to have office spaces, small and large conference rooms. There will be dedicated computer training rooms, senior rooms and youth rooms. The center will not be a silo but rather partner with the neighbourhoods activities and issues towards collective work for the common good.

LAYOUT OF THE LOWER FLOOR



A cultural center that is flexible to house job training, art and entertainment, counseling, mentoring, health and civic training and self-support programs. A variety of programs and events scheduled. A variety of diverse entertainers would be entertaining the community.

The center would also have a library as well as a collection of the rich historical artifacts.