

# THE *Enolia* APTS

2025 ULI Wavemaker Awards



Alexander Design Studio







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## Project Facts:

Project Address: 4529 Harford Road, Baltimore, MD

Project Completion Date: May 2025

Project Site: 3.3 acre brownfield

Project Cost: \$58,000,000

MCB Real Estate / Alexander Design Studio





# Project Overview

## site plan

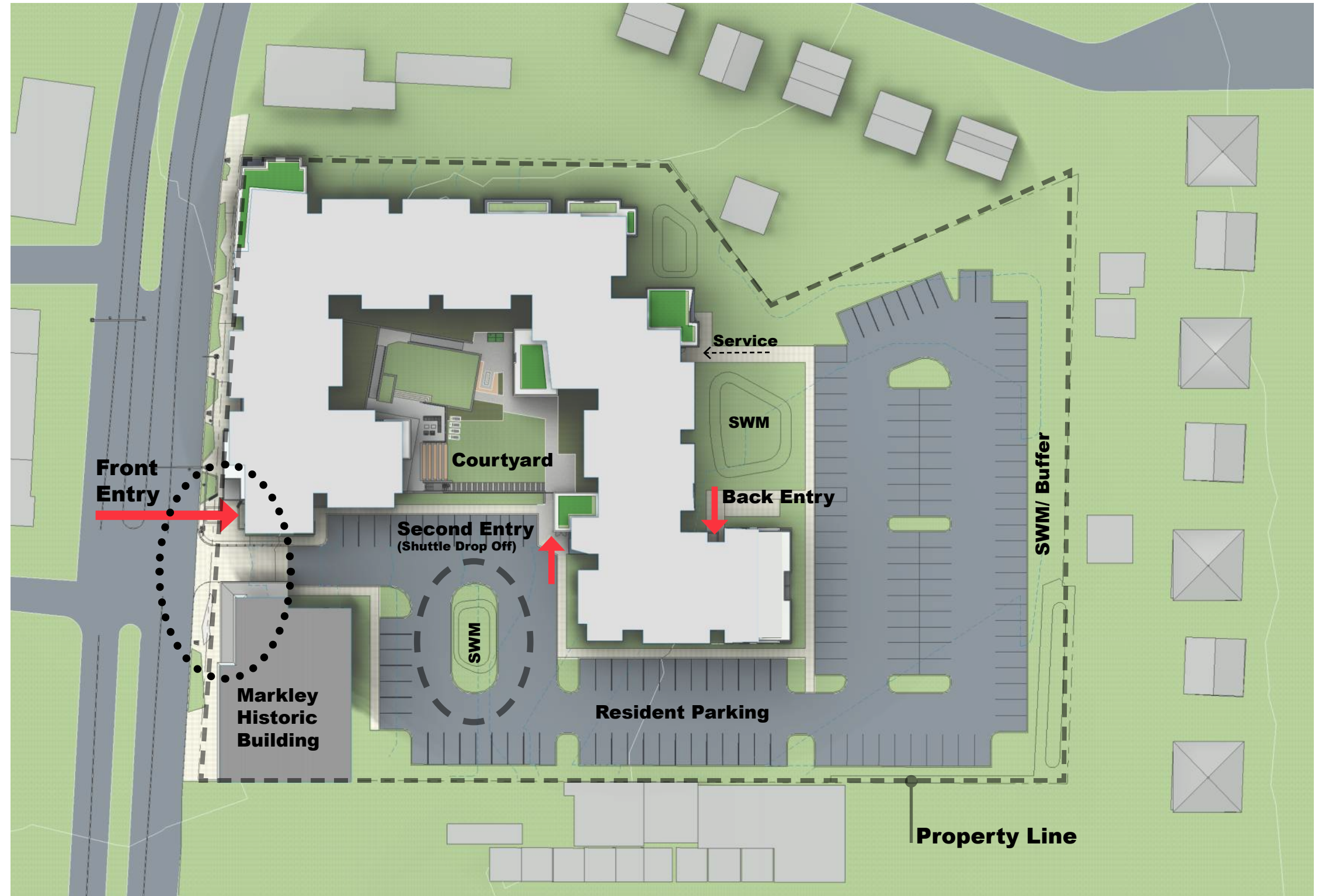
Completed in May 2025, The Enolia is a \$58 million purpose-built student housing development located in the Lauraville and Beverly Hills neighborhoods of Northeast Baltimore. Located on the Harford Road Main Street, the site sits within a Baltimore designated Healthy Neighborhood and State Enterprise Zones—and is conveniently located less than a mile from Morgan State University.

The project financing leverages a unique public private partnership model that could be replicated at other mid-size universities across the country.

Formerly a 3.3-acre vacant brownfield industrial site, the project has been transformed into a state-of-the-art residential complex offering first-class amenities, including study rooms, a gym and yoga studio, game room, lounges, and vibrant outdoor courtyard spaces.

The five-story building provides 473 beds in a variety of unit types—singles, doubles, and quads. Each unit includes in-unit laundry, a shared kitchen and living area, and private en-suite bathrooms for every bedroom—a rare feature in student housing.

The Enolia not only addresses Morgan State University's urgent housing needs, but also breathes new life into an underutilized site, contributing to the revitalization of the surrounding community.



Site Plan

# Project Overview

## serpentine building plan

To accommodate the required number of beds while maintaining a scale appropriate to the surrounding neighborhood, the design team employed a thoughtful approach that includes building articulation, material variation, and a serpentine form that gracefully steps down the sloped site. By partially burying the lower two levels, the design keeps the building's height along Harford Road in proportion with adjacent structures in the commercial district. This stepped and jogged form not only respects the neighborhood context but also maximizes natural light and enhances privacy within individual units.

Amenity spaces are strategically located along Harford Road and within the internal courtyard to activate the street frontage and foster a vibrant community atmosphere at the heart of the project. These spaces serve as dynamic hubs that contribute both to the liveliness of the commercial corridor and to the daily experience of residents.

In addition, dedicated study rooms with private huddle areas are provided on each level, offering students quiet, focused environments that complement the more social energy of the shared amenity lounges.

- Amenity
- Leasing/ Staff Offices
- Single Unit
- Double Unit
- Quad Unit



Harford Road Level Floor Plan





# Project Overview

building massing and a stepped section



Section Detail - Showing step down the slope of the side



# Context

location & honoring a legacy



*"As Morgan continues to grow, it is imperative that the community we are a part of also flourishes. We are excited about the expansion of housing options for our ever-burgeoning student population and the ability to offer them a modern, comfortable living environment while also paying tribute to a remarkable leader whose legacy of advocacy for education continues to inspire us all."*  
-MSU President, David K. Wilson

The project site is located in the Lauraville and Beverly Hills neighborhoods of Northeast Baltimore, just one block from the Harford Road Main Street corridor. It sits within Morgan State's Morgan Mile, its anchor-institution community development initiative, reinforcing its strategic importance for community-focused redevelopment.

Although Harford Road is home to a variety of vibrant small businesses, this particular block lacked the same walkable, engaging atmosphere due to a concentration of vacant properties. The Enolia plays a critical role in bridging that gap—bringing new residents, vitality, and foot traffic to the area, and helping to reconnect and reinvigorate this stretch of the commercial corridor.



Images Left to Right:  
David K Wilson at the 2024 topping off ceremony.  
Aerial view of Site early in construction.

MCB Real Estate / Alexander Design Studio





# Context

## honoring a civil rights legend

Recognizing that this building would become a place for young minds to rest, recharge, and grow, we knew it deserved a name that embodied the vibrant spirit and aspirations of its residents. The project is proudly named after Enolia Pettigen McMillan, a trailblazing civil rights leader from Maryland and the first woman to serve as chair of Morgan State University's Board of Regents.

Through a close partnership with Morgan State historians, the building honors Mrs. McMillan's legacy with curated historical displays that connect students to her remarkable life and enduring impact.

Mrs. McMillan made an indelible mark over her 102 years, achieving a series of historic firsts and breaking barriers in education and civil rights. MCB Real Estate worked closely with her family to ensure her legacy is meaningfully woven into the identity of the project.

The building's logo features a stylized version of Mrs. McMillan's own signature, showcasing her distinctive "E"—a personal tribute to her legacy. The tagline, "Make Your Mark," appears throughout the building, encouraging students to follow in her footsteps and leave their own imprint on the world.

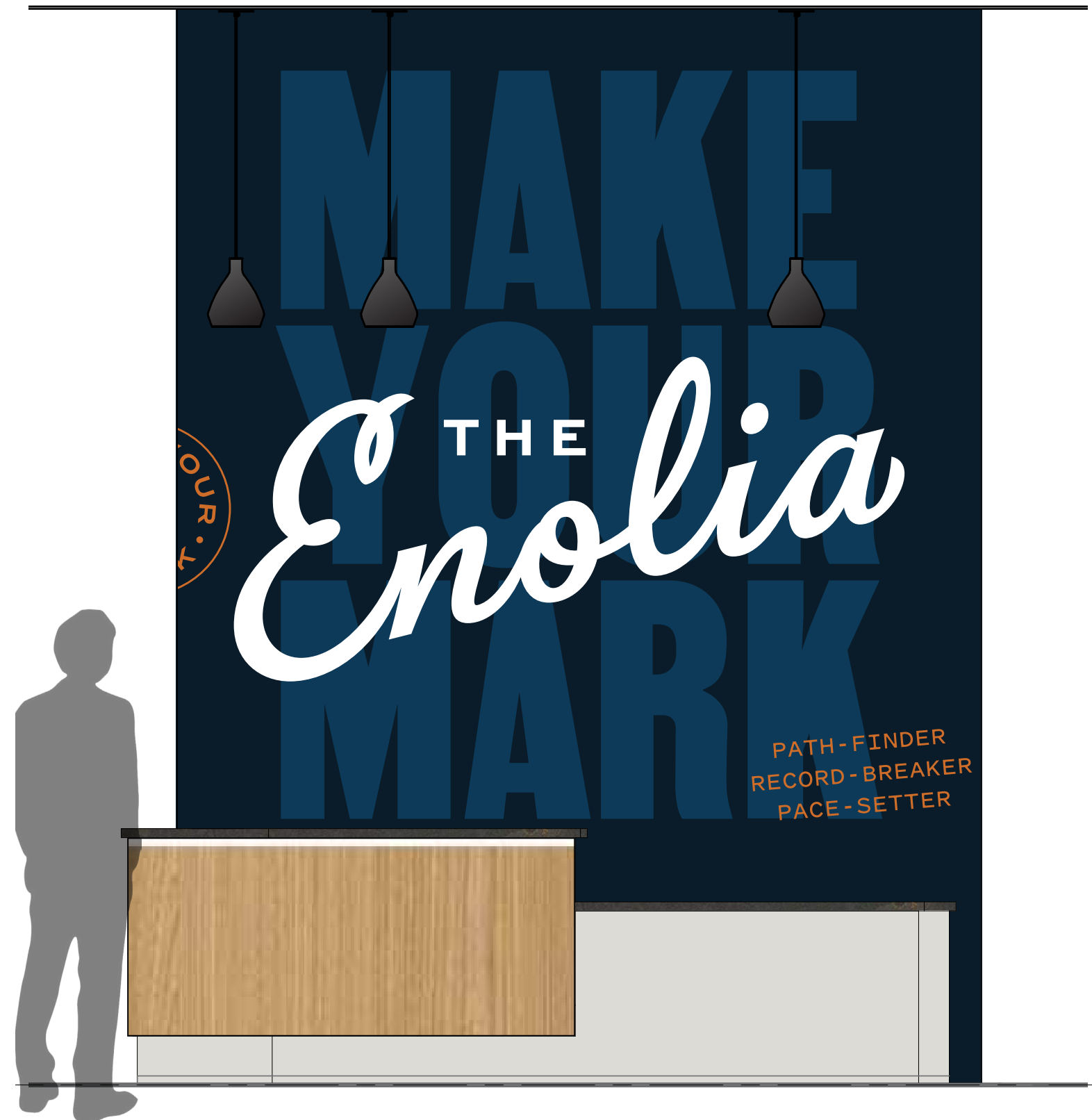
Inspirational and historical graphics are integrated throughout the project. The fitness center features a bold message encouraging students to break boundaries, while the mail-room displays a detailed timeline of Mrs. McMillan's life, historic headlines from her career, and powerful imagery celebrating her achievements—all serving as daily sources of motivation for residents.

Mrs. McMillan's pioneering achievements include:

- First and only woman to serve as Chair of Morgan State University's Board of Regents
- First female President of the NAACP
- First African American female principal in Baltimore County
- Lifelong civil rights advocate and leader

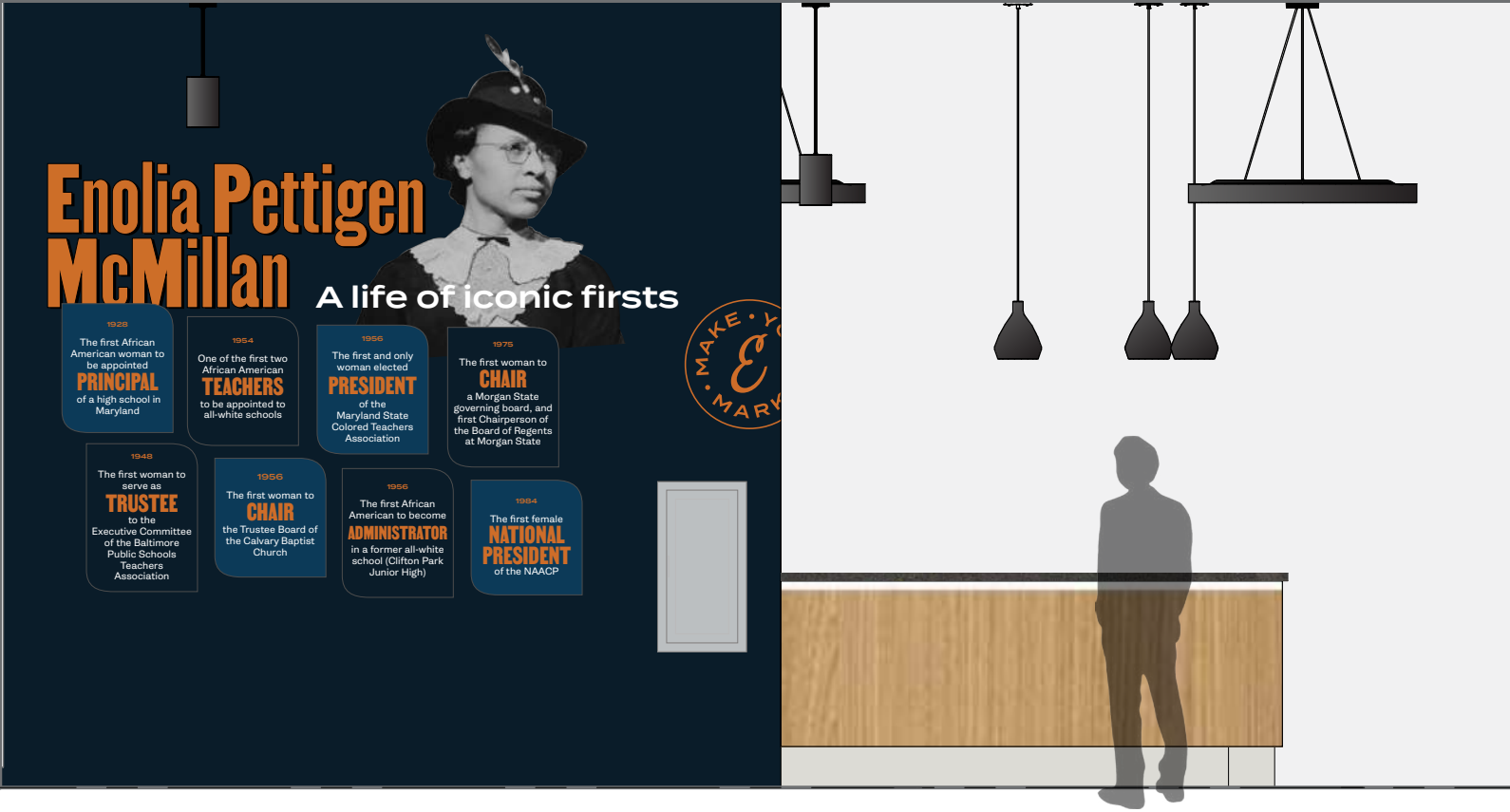


Images in clockwise order:  
Mrs McMillan defending civil rights, date unknown.  
Younts design for branding with signature "E", elevation of lobby.  
Mrs McMillians grandchildren at the topping off celebration in 2024.



# Context

honoring a civil rights legend



Images in clockwise order:  
Younts design for the Enolia McMillan timeline at the courtyard entry/ mailroom.  
Photo of finished timeline at mailroom.  
Younts design for Enolia McMillan wall of firsts in main lobby.





# Completeness

public private partnerships for greater impact

Bringing The Enolia to life required a collaborative effort across public, private, and nonprofit sectors. Building on MCB Real Estate’s successful partnership with Morgan State University at Northwood Commons, this 3.3-acre vacant site near campus presented an ideal opportunity to develop much-needed off-campus housing and address the university’s growing housing shortage. In recent years, the lack of quality student housing had become a barrier to Morgan’s record-breaking enrollment growth.

While the project initially appeared straightforward, traditional capital and financing models posed challenges due to Morgan’s mid-size status compared to larger institutions in the region. To overcome these obstacles, MCB secured a mix of private debt and social impact capital to deliver the \$58 million project on time and on budget.

A significant portion of the social impact funding was raised through a combination of national and regional foundations, a strategic partnership with Hamilton-Lauraville Main Street (HLMS), and Morgan State’s access to a special funding pool dedicated to anchor institutions involved in community development. These funds, administered by the Maryland Department of Housing & Community Development, helped offset high infrastructure and brownfield remediation costs.

HLMS’s new partnership with Morgan State laid the groundwork for ongoing collaboration, which has already resulted in additional state funding to support the revitalization of two other vacant buildings along Harford Road.

Originally envisioned as market-rate apartments leased directly to students, the project took a pivotal turn when Morgan State opted to enter into a master lease agreement five months before completion. This decision further cemented the university’s commitment to the project. The Enolia was fully leased for the 2025–2026 academic year on the first day it became available—quickly becoming the most sought-after housing option among students.

The project team’s innovative financing approach, driven by social impact capital, represents a forward-thinking model in student housing development. The Enolia stands as a “wave maker”—setting a new precedent for how university-private sector partnerships can successfully deliver projects that are both financially sustainable and socially impactful.



Images Left to Right:  
Curb Side Commons on Main Street.  
Morgan State University Graduation.  
Aerial view of Harford Main Street one block away.



Images Top to Bottom:  
Morgan Students.  
Morgan State Entrance Sign.  
Morgan Students on main campus.





# A Sense of Place and Quality

## connecting morgan to the local community

The project is thoughtfully designed to foster a strong sense of community—both within the building and in connection with the surrounding neighborhoods and commercial corridor. While not a commercial development, key programmatic elements such as the two-tiered gym, yoga room, and main entrance were strategically located along Harford Road to activate the street edge and support pedestrian and cyclist access.

The building massing is carefully articulated with varied setbacks, helping it respond to the scale and character of the surrounding context. This design approach enhances the corridor's vibrancy while ensuring the building feels integrated and approachable.

To further strengthen ties with the established walkable street-scape along Harford Main Street, the design includes upgraded paving, landscaping, and the addition of street trees to enrich the public realm.

A vibrant color palette was selected to create a warm, welcoming atmosphere that encourages engagement from students, visitors, and the broader community.



Images Left to Right:  
Harford Road elevation.  
The new gym with "breaking barriers" mural by Younts Design.  
Gym from the lower level rendering.  
Harford Road main lobby with reception lounge.



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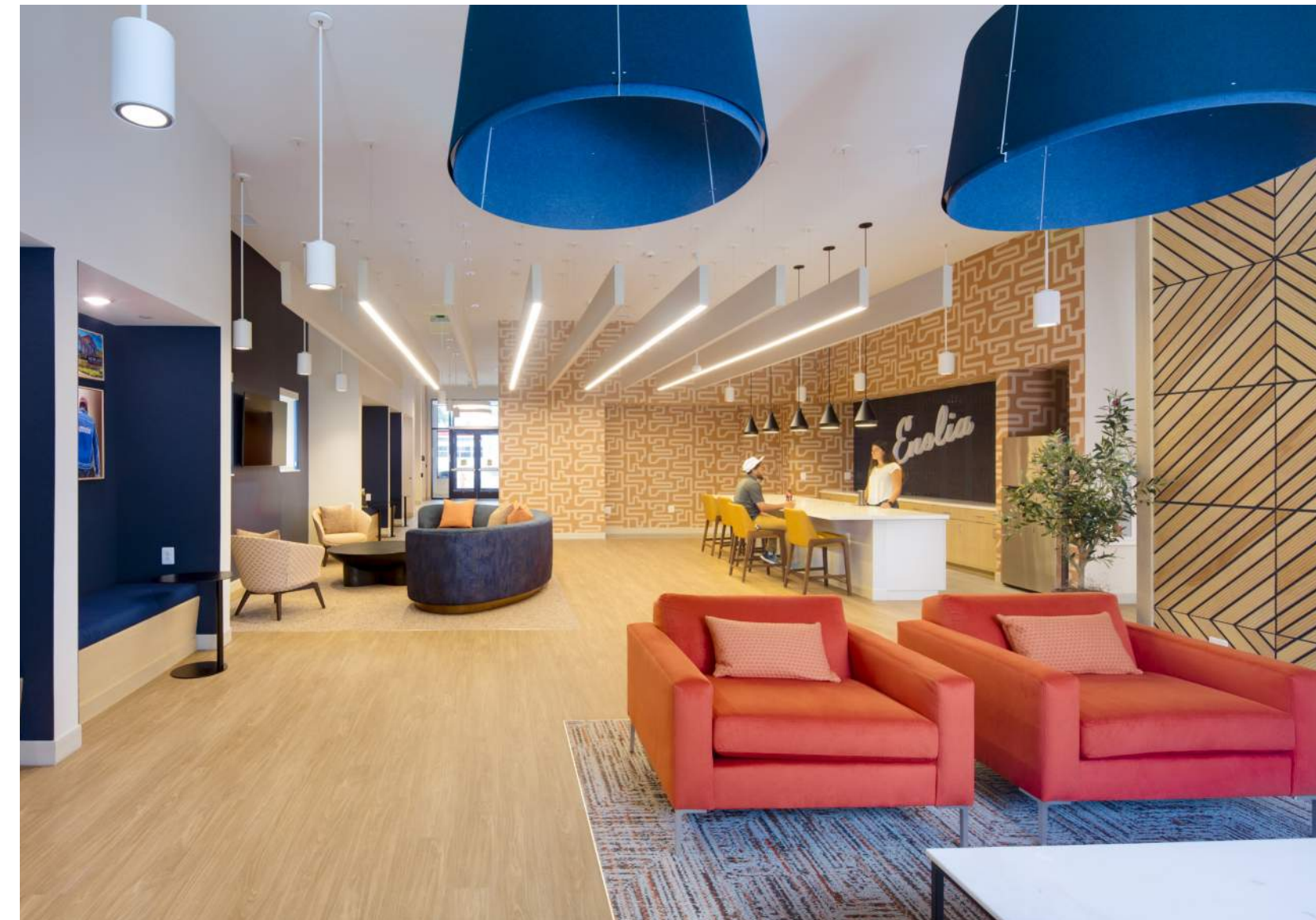
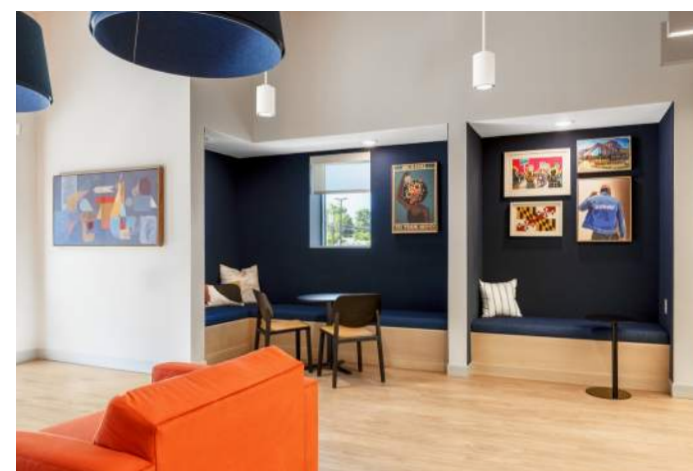
# A Sense of Place and Quality

## community centered amenities

Unlike many traditional apartment buildings, The Enolia offers a wide range of student-focused and community-oriented amenities. Just off the main lobby, a spacious lounge serves as a vibrant hub for residents. It features a mix of individual and group study areas, comfortable banquettes, a cozy fireplace, a kitchenette with vending machines and a large island, as well as a gaming area complete with a pool table.

Abundant natural light and clear views into the central courtyard create a seamless connection between indoor and outdoor spaces, with two convenient doorways providing direct access to the courtyard's outdoor living areas. Throughout the lounge, youthful patterns, textures, colors, and curated artwork bring energy and personality to the space. Thoughtfully integrated acoustic treatments—such as felt-wrapped walls and oversized light fixtures—help manage sound while also visually defining different zones within the lounge.

Together, the lounge and adjacent courtyard form the heart of the project, fostering a strong sense of connection and community among residents.



Images Left to Right:  
Kitchenette and seating area.  
Game room with pool table and views of the courtyard.  
Niches for quiet reading and conversation.  
View back towards the lobby from the fireplace seating area.



# A Sense of Place and Quality

## central courtyard for gathering

At the heart of The Enolia is a dynamic outdoor courtyard, designed as a central gathering space that brings residents together. The layout unfolds in a pinwheel configuration with three terraced levels, creating a graceful and accessible descent through the site while encouraging movement and exploration.

The upper terrace extends the main lounge to the outdoors, offering tables and chairs for dining, studying, or socializing. Just below, bleacher-style seating with wooden slats provides a comfortable perch overlooking the large artificial turf lawn—an ideal spot for casual games like cornhole, oversized connect four, or chess.

The middle terrace features a real grass lawn, cozy lounge seating, and flexible space for group gatherings. A fire-pit adds warmth and ambiance, adjacent to the entrance of a secondary indoor lounge that offers another inviting place to relax.

Residents can enjoy views of the courtyard from surrounding units, fostering a sense of connection to the activity below. The building's serpentine form and multiple setbacks not only enhance visual interest, but also ensure abundant natural light and exterior views for all apartments.



Images Left to Right:  
Central Courtyard from lower level.  
Rendering from the mid-level.  
Lower artificial turf field in action.



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# A Sense of Place and Quality

## dorm style apartment living

The Enolia offers a range of unit types—including singles, doubles, and quads—designed in a modern dorm-style layout with a unique twist: each of the 473 bedrooms features its own private en-suite bathroom, a rare amenity in this category of student housing.

Every unit includes a shared kitchen with generous pantry storage, a comfortable living room, and in-unit laundry, giving students a true taste of independent living while still enjoying the benefits of a university housing environment. Units are partially furnished and finished with high-end materials such as quartz countertops and stainless steel appliances.

For added convenience and security, all units feature key-card access, and each bedroom can be individually locked to ensure privacy and peace of mind.



Images Left to Right:  
Shared kitchen and living room within unit.  
Layout of a representative quad unit.  
Layout of a double unit.  
(Singles are also available - all unit layouts are available to view on the project website.)



# Sustainability

## new life for a brownfield site

The Enolia is a transformative brownfield redevelopment located within a Maryland Priority Funding Area and Maryland Enterprise Zone in Baltimore City. As an urban infill project, sustainability has been a core focus since its inception. Once complete, the development will bring more than 473 new residents and users to the Harford Road Main Street—the longest designated Main Street in Baltimore City—supporting increased foot traffic, bolstering local businesses, and contributing to a safer, more vibrant corridor.

The building meets the International Green Construction Code (IgCC) standards through the use of energy-efficient systems, a high-performance building envelope, and sustainable materials. The site features advanced stormwater management infrastructure and extensive native landscaping—including edible plantings—to promote environmental resilience and biodiversity. A central courtyard serves as both a recreational amenity for residents and a potential venue for neighborhood events.

Thanks to infrastructure funding from the State of Maryland, the project was also able to relocate the surrounding electrical grid underground, improving long-term utility reliability for the community.

Transportation sustainability is another key element of the project. A dedicated shuttle service connects residents directly to Morgan State University, while indoor and outdoor bicycle storage—including repair stations and electric bike charging—encourages non-vehicular commuting. The project also supports regional mobility efforts with its contribution to the extension of the protected bike lane along Harford Road, providing students and community members with a continuous and safe route to destinations such as Morgan’s campus and other neighborhood anchors.

With the rise in electric vehicle use, the development includes three EV charging stations on site and is pre-wired to support up to ten additional chargers as demand grows.



Images Left to Right:  
One of several storm water retention ponds around the property.  
Drone photograph showing Courtyard as well as another storm water retention pond by the shuttle drop off.



# Visionary and Emulation

## a new community asset

This project strengthens the connection between Morgan State University and the surrounding community by bringing students into the heart of an established neighborhood along one of Baltimore City's oldest Main Streets. It transforms one of the largest assemblages of vacant and blighted properties in the area into a vibrant, high-density development that supports the community and fosters new connections with nearby anchor institutions.

By introducing a thoughtfully designed, amenity-rich residential environment, the project provides a valuable asset to the neighborhood—already catalyzing additional investment, including the opening of two new local businesses along the block.

The development supports the growth of Maryland's premier HBCU by offering much-needed, high-quality off-campus housing. Students gain independence while remaining closely connected to campus life, benefiting from both community integration and university support.

Built with the future in mind, the project incorporates sustainable design strategies and resilient infrastructure to reduce environmental impact. It serves as a model for economically viable, environmentally conscious student housing that meets the needs of both students and the broader community.



Images Left to Right:  
Aerial of the property prior to development.  
Pre-development drone view showing vacant buildings, dumped vehicles, etc.



MCB Real Estate / Alexander Design Studio





# A Need

## bridging the gaps

Morgan State University, Maryland's flagship HBCU, has faced a growing student housing shortage in recent years—resorting to renting off-campus apartments and hotel rooms to meet demand while working to expand its on-campus housing capacity. During the topping-off ceremony for The Enolia, Morgan State University President David K. Wilson remarked, *"Morgan is one of the fastest, if not the fastest growing institutions right now in our state. We cannot accept any more students—we have reached capacity. We expect that this fall of 2024, we will have somewhere between 10,400 to 10,600 students. That is 3,000 more students than we had five years ago."*

Located just five minutes from campus, The Enolia significantly reduces commute times for many students, some of whom currently travel from as far as downtown Baltimore or Towson. By living closer to campus, students are better able to immerse themselves in the academic, cultural, and extracurricular life that defines the Morgan experience. This initiative supports student success and aligns with the University's broader goals for engagement, well-being, and access.

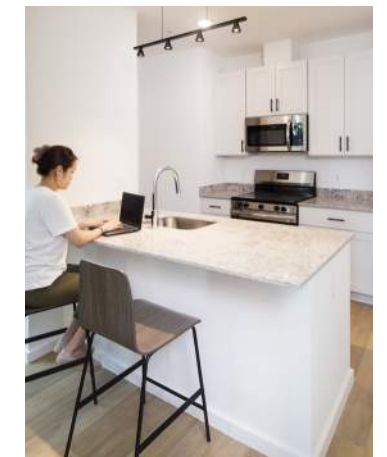
A key feature of the University's master lease agreement for The Enolia is that students can apply their financial aid toward housing costs. This removes the burden of securing individual leases and eliminates a major barrier to affordable, quality housing. By simplifying access and improving affordability, the project helps ensure that students have stable, convenient accommodations close to campus.

Beyond serving student needs, the development also transforms a 3.3-acre vacant brownfield site along a once-overlooked stretch of Harford Road in the Hamilton-Lauraville Main Street corridor. Once seen as a "dead zone," the area is now revitalized and better connected to recent investments throughout Greater Lauraville, both north and south of the site.

Bringing hundreds of students to the neighborhood, The Enolia bolsters local businesses, strengthens Morgan State University's presence along Harford Road, and delivers the type of Class-A off-campus housing typically found at Tier 1 universities nationwide. This redevelopment not only addresses a critical housing need—it reactivates a key commercial corridor and supports Baltimore City's broader efforts to enhance and reinvest in the Hamilton-Lauraville community.



Images Left to Right:  
Morgan students.  
Morgan students on campus.  
The central courtyard.  
Lounge + study room, there is one on each level.  
Drone view of complex.  
Morgan band.  
Typical unit kitchen island.



*The Enolia is the first privately built off-campus housing project to serve Morgan students in 20 years*

MCB Real Estate / Alexander Design Studio





# Team

Owner

**MCB Real Estate**

Architect

**Alexander Design Studio**

General Contractor

**LF Jennings**

Structural Engineer

**ONYX Design and Consulting, LLC**

Mechanical/Electrical/Plumbing/ Fire Protection

**Henry Adams, LLC**

Civil Engineer

**Morris Ritchie Associates, Inc & DMW**

Landscape Architect

**Core Studio Design**

Geotechnical Engineering

**Hillis-Carnes Engineering Associates**

Environmental Engineering/ Brownfield

**Urban Green Environmental**

Building Envelope

**Simpson Gumpertz & Heger**

Fire/ Accessibility

**Cosentini**

Interiors

**MSA Interiors**

Environmental Signage

**Younts Design Inc**

Archival Research

**Dr. Larry Gibson & Morgan State University**

Legal

**Ballard Spahr**

Property Management

**Greystar**

Sustainability Consulting

**Lorax Partnerships, LLC**

Photography

**Karl Connolly Photography & Ray Cavicchio**



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