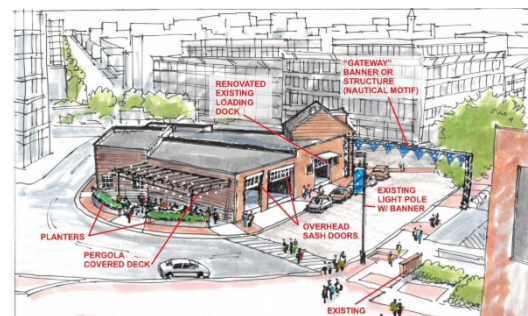
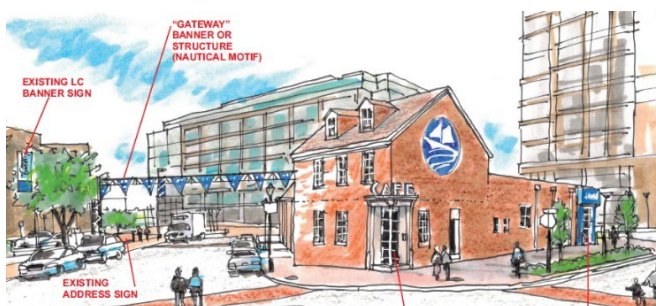


The Living Classrooms Opportunity Center

For 35 years, we have been delivering highly effective workforce development programming to residents who face the greatest challenges in securing living-wage sustainable employment: disconnected youth, previously incarcerated individuals, and those residing within the Baltimore Target Investment Zone. Living Classrooms' newest campus, the Living Classrooms Opportunity Center, located at the corner of S. Caroline and Thames Streets in Baltimore's Fells Point, aims to build upon our foundation of transformative programs and create an integrated campus that will allow us to empower an even broader section of Baltimore's future workforce. Southeast Baltimore has experienced some economic growth over the past few decades with new development transforming the landscape of Harbor East and Fells Point. Meanwhile, economic exclusion and disinvestment in nearby neighborhoods has left many residents no better off, fueling a continued cycle of crime and violence with effects that stretch across the city. With Baltimore's homicide rate reaching 300 for the fifth year in a row in 2019, we are committed to using every tool available to recognize the potential of Baltimore's untapped citizens and change the odds for a generation of residents.



The Living Classrooms' Opportunity Center will serve as a central workforce development facility and empower us to scale up existing programming, while incorporating new skills trainings designed to fit the landscape of Baltimore's biggest employment sectors. Specifically, our partnerships with area apprenticeship programs, Johns Hopkins and affiliated hospitals, and Under Armour will position the Center as a feeder facility that delivers specialized training for construction trades, healthcare customer service and maintenance, and warehouse and distribution careers. Additionally, by offering all elements of our comprehensive workforce development, intensive case management, and wraparound support in one central location, we will remove barriers for both our program participants, staff, and partners.



Sketches of the Opportunity Center show the building's exterior from the Caroline and Thames Street corner (right) and from the Maritime Park (left).

Features of the Opportunity Center

Situated diagonally from Living Classrooms Headquarters at the Fredrick Douglass-Isaac Myers Maritime Park Museum (1417 Thames Street) and only a block south of Living Classrooms East Harbor Campus, the Opportunity Center will serve as a natural extension of our programming in and around the Maritime Park. Easily accessible by two bus routes and cross-harbor service from the Harbor Connector, the Center will become a crucial resource for bridging the access gap faced by many of our program participants.

The 8,000 square foot property was formerly home to the Ferndale Fence and Awning Company and the heart of the historic workshop dates to 1850. The building's existing warehouse space, loading dock, and storefront will become core educational tools by allowing staff to recreate workplace settings found in some of Baltimore's fastest growing industries.

Providing hands-on training in a facility that looks and functions like a real-world jobsite is central to our approach to workforce development. The expanded space and features of the Opportunity Center will allow Living Classrooms staff to model several workplace environments and provide comprehensive individualized training to a greater number of participants. Renovation at the Center will add 2 training classrooms, a large workshop for pre-apprenticeship skills training, case manager office space on the second floor, and a fully outfitted social enterprise café in the historic corner storefront of the building. This one-stop-shop approach is critical for many of our participants who struggle with transportation and amplifies the impact of other nearby Living Classrooms programs.

By preserving one of Fells Point's historic industrial spaces and incorporating workforce programming that targets unemployed and underemployed communities in Southeast Baltimore, The Opportunity Center aims to build a bridge between commercial development and the communities historically disenfranchised from employment.



Renderings show the Center's functional use of the combined workshop space.