



## 5. *Assessment of Existing Conditions*

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### **Overview**

The assessment of the existing condition of the sites and facilities at MCC is an important step in understanding the challenges and opportunities for future change. This baseline knowledge, when combined with instructional programming goals, enrollment goals, and space utilization goals provides a solid foundation for creating an effective and meaningful master plan.

For Muskegon Community College, the facilities were assessed on a range of criteria and given an overall score. The individual facility assessment tools are included in the Appendix to this master plan. Following is a narrative discussion of the observations and comments related to individual existing MCC facilities:

#### Campus Site

- . Open Space
- . Athletic Fields
- . University Park Golf Course
- . Kasey Hartz Nature Trail

#### Main Academic Building

Bartels-Rode Gymnasium

Technology Building

Frauenthal Foundation Arts Center

Arts Building

James L. Stevenson Center for Higher Education

Hendrik Meijer Library Information Technology Center

## 5. **Assessment of Existing Conditions** (continued)

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In general, the campus-wide quality and condition of the original structures is good, due primarily to good maintenance and consistent attention over time. Interior remodeling projects in the past ten years have made selected spaces better equipped to meet the needs and expectations of modern higher education curricula and campus life experiences. The addition of the Hendrik Meijer Library Information Technology Center in 2006 not only brought new levels of media and technology access to students, but created a convenient location for student interaction.

However, not all spaces and building systems at MCC have been improved, and some existing spaces and facilities are unchanged or only modestly changed from four decades ago. This affects all students, faculty and staff. While some issues are being addressed under ongoing maintenance budgets (i.e., roof replacement, technology upgrades, etc.), others appear in this master plan as priorities for the future.

From the 2000 MCC Master Plan:

*“Students have more choices for higher education programs and locations. Students are willing to travel greater distances to reach specific programs designed to meet career goals. Students look for cost-effectiveness, service, quality curriculum, and convenience in selecting colleges. Technology has changed the way education is delivered, accessed, and received. In a real way, higher education institutions are in a constant process of re-creating themselves to remain relevant, vital, and competitive.”*

The same is true today. Making higher education more accessible, more affordable, more convenient, and more relevant are core priorities. In addition, reaching MCC’s goals as a community leader, the college of choice and an economic driver for the region are important to consider as future priorities are defined and implemented.

## 5. *Assessment of Existing Conditions* (continued)



### Campus Site

The original 111-acre campus (not including the University Park Golf Course) is bounded on the west by Harvey Street and US 31; on the north by Stebbins Road; on the east by Quarterline Road; and on the south by Marquette Avenue. Recently, the 6+ acres of land occupied by the Intermediate School District Career Tech Center was deeded to the ISD and is no longer owned by MCC. Also, there are several houses on the south side of Stebbins Road that are not owned by MCC. There is no direct access from US 31 to the College at Marquette Avenue or Harvey Street.

The campus site is comprised of wooded uplands cut east to west by a ravine, where Four Mile Creek flows. The northern and western portions of the campus are wooded with tall trees creating a deep woods environment. The southern and central portion of the site is mainly open land with scattered trees, lawns, sports fields and paved surfaces. A dense stand of trees on the southeast corner of the site adds to a sense of enclosure and screening from the roads surrounding it.



The campus site, as well as the orientation of the original buildings on campus, reflect a longstanding core value for the College to promote and maintain a close relationship with the natural environment. The building is carefully constructed to span Four Mile Creek and to complement its woodland surroundings. Views to the enclosed courtyard in the center of campus provide a natural reference from virtually anywhere in the main building. This sensitivity to the natural site contributes to Muskegon Community College as an outstanding and unique educational environment both within and beyond the classroom.

Athletic fields and physical education facilities are located south and west of the **Bartels-Rode Gymnasium**, comprised primarily of a competition baseball field, a competition softball field, archery range, and six tennis courts.

## 5. *Assessment of Existing Conditions* (continued)



The nine-hole **University Park Golf Course** is located east of Quarterline Road (at 2100 Marquette) and includes a clubhouse building and a maintenance building. The course is bisected east/west by Four Mile Creek, and the land is gently rolling and is covered with scattered trees.

West of the Main Academic Building is the **Kasey Hartz Nature Trail**, including a trail-head gathering area and a winding natural trail through the woodlands and creek areas. The trail is not easily visible or noted with signage in high use areas of campus and therefore may go unseen by many visitors. Barrier-free access is limited.



Southwest of and adjacent to the main campus is a developed single-family residential area. South of Marquette Avenue, Baker College occupies the majority of land, along with higher density apartment-style housing.

The land north of the College is owned by Muskegon Township and includes a solid-waste landfill. Concept plans for a West Michigan Regional Public Safety Training Center have been developed, though the project remains unfunded to date.

### **Existing Vehicular Circulation**

The primary access to the site is from the Marquette Avenue entrance. Two secondary entrances are located on Quarterline Road, one on the south side of the creek, and one on the north side. The main academic building is hidden from easy view from both Marquette and Quarterline due to natural foliage cover.



These entrances serve two large primary parking lots. The primary south lot is located south of the main academic building and may be entered from Marquette Avenue or from Quarterline Road. The primary north lot is located north of the Stevenson Center, and is entered from Quarterline Road. Additional parking lots are located south and west of the Bartels-Rode Gymnasium, near the Marquette Avenue entrance.

## 5. *Assessment of Existing Conditions* (continued)

Four Mile Creek and its surrounding ravine create a natural barrier to internal road circulation. Maintenance equipment must use Quarterline Road for access from the Maintenance Building to the golf course and the south campus area.

From a site perspective, stormwater drains directly into Four Mile Creek, including drainage from roof areas, parking lots, and walks. This complies with current codes and regulations for the existing building. However, future buildings and expansions of existing buildings will require retention of stormwater before it is released into Four Mile Creek.

### **Existing Pedestrian Circulation**

Primary pedestrian traffic occurs between the main south parking lot and the main academic building. Pedestrians must cross the main road circulation pattern to reach the building. Once crossed, there are paved walks leading to building access points, and some seating is available. Visibility is relatively clear for both pedestrians and vehicles.



From the north parking lot, pedestrian movement is simple and safe. Walks pass through landscaped areas and offer seating opportunities and access to quiet areas.



Pedestrian access to the central courtyard (streamside) is limited. An accessible, Outdoor Learning Center has been installed above the administration offices, and this area provides seating and opportunities for gathering for groups in a quiet setting.

## 5. *Assessment of Existing Conditions* (continued)

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### **Existing Utilities to MCC Campus:**

Sanitary Sewer  
Primary Electric Service  
Telephone  
Natural Gas  
Storm Sewer

In general, public utilities serving the campus are adequate for today's needs as well as anticipated future growth and expansion. A sanitary sewer line runs east/west through the campus along the valley floor. Major feeds for electric, telephone, and natural gas come off Quarterline Road north of Four Mile Creek and enter the north end of the main building. Storm water for the large, central parking lots discharges into the creek along the edge of the slopes. Future improvements or expansion to the storm water system should include an improved filtration network to control sediment and other pollutants such as salt and oils from discharging directly into the creek.

### **Recommendations:**



1. Preservation and stewardship of natural environment should remain guiding priorities for all changes, expansion and development within the campus.
2. Exterior signage enhancement was largely implemented under the 2000 Master Plan. However, additional enhancement of the Marquette / Quarterline intersection signage is recommended in terms of a more developed landscaping backdrop to each sign, particularly at the University Park Golf Course.
3. Development of stormwater retention and filtered discharge system to improve the quality of Four Mile Creek.

## **5. Assessment of Existing Conditions** *(continued)*

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4. Campus safety and security are increasingly important to the sense of well-being for students, faculty, staff, and community members. Additional exterior security cameras will enhance this sense of well-being.
  5. Reserve land for potential future on-site student housing. While the implementation of housing may be questioned, it is prudent to identify and reserve property at this time for possible use in the future.
  6. Create building additions, not stand-alone buildings in order to conserve the natural landscape, provide greater energy efficiency, and enhance the connections among stakeholders in the MCC community.

Following are two campus site plans. The first displays existing site features. The second displays site improvement opportunities, as well as recommended locations for future additions to existing buildings.

## 5. *Assessment of Existing Conditions* (continued)

### **Main Academic Building**



The Main Academic Building opened in 1967 and is the centerpiece of the MCC campus. As the primary location for most academic and administrative services on campus, it occupies three floors and features an outdoor courtyard in the center of the building, with Four Mile Creek flowing under the building and through the courtyard.



As in virtually all MCC facilities, this building is a steel-frame structure, with brick exterior. It has a standing-seam metal mansard roof element that unites every component of the first floor of the building. Interior corridors feature brick walls, and at corridor corners, large expanses of single-pane glass provide a visual connection to the outdoors, often to the creek flowing under the building. This element of an interior courtyard visible from many places on campus is common to several community colleges in Michigan designed by Alden B. Dow, who had a special affinity for the integration of architecture and nature.

One of the most unique features of the building is the system for numbering rooms. Entering the building, the rooms are numbered in the 100's, with even numbered rooms on the right side of the building and odd rooms numbered on the left. At the next level down, rooms are numbered in the 200's. The bottom level is below this, with rooms numbered in the 300's. Rooms in the former library complex are numbered in the 400's. Four-digit room numbers are reserved for the Stevenson Center for Higher Education, with the numbering strategy similar to the Main Academic Building.

#### *Room numbering*

This interior numbering system has been a source of interest and frustration from the beginning, and MCC has tried a number of ways to make the system more intuitive and simple, with limited success. In the previous master plan, the recommendation for improved exterior signage and wayfinding was implemented with successful results. While improvements are still being made, the



## 5. *Assessment of Existing Conditions* (continued)

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### *Improvements since 2000*

exterior system is greatly improved. Recommendations for improving interior wayfinding were not implemented, primarily due to the anticipated high cost. They are recommended again in this master plan.

It should be noted that several important improvements have been made at the Main Academic Building since the 2000 Master Plan:

- . Development of the new Hendrik Meijer Library, Information Technology Center. The relocation of the main library functions at MCC allowed the former library to be repurposed for more effective use.
- . Development of the former library as the new administration center, the new Board of Trustees Board Room and for a rejuvenated Student Success Center. In addition, the installation of a new barrier-free elevator has made the building more accessible to all, and a recently-installed rooftop garden has given the former library new purpose and functionality, as well as making a statement about environmental stewardship and MCC's commitment to sustainable design.
- . Redevelopment of the main lobby and first-floor entrance area, including Gerber Lounge, for a Student One-Stop, where students can do all functions related to registration, counseling, academic advising, financial aid, etc, in one convenient location. Student Organizations are also now located in a more visible and welcoming location on the first floor. This remodeled area is highlighted by natural light, transparency and ready access to technology.
- . Remodeling of the Student Union, including revised food service and access to technology, has energized this area. In general, the introduction of a variety of food venues has had a positive impact throughout campus.



## 5. *Assessment of Existing Conditions* (continued)

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### **Assessment**

The Main Academic Building totaled a composite score between the “satisfactory” and “borderline” categories of the assessment instrument. While the building is generally in satisfactory condition, and has been maintained well, there are several reasons for the lower composite score.

Structurally, the building scored lower due to the poor condition of the existing roof. The College is currently engaged in a program that will result in the replacement of the roof of the entire Academic Building and Frauenthal Fine Arts Center, so the recommendation for a new roof is not included in this master plan.



The building envelope scored low because of the poor insulative quality of the existing roof, walls and glass areas, in addition to the condition of the existing exterior doors and frames. Many of these elements are original or in excess of twenty years old.

Interior finishes scored in the “satisfactory” range overall, but in significant locations of the Main Academic Building, finishes and casework are original and need upgrading, particularly within teaching spaces and office spaces. The Carr-Fles Planetarium requires total replacement of all equipment, fixtures, and finishes to achieve relevance into the future.

Regarding life safety and security, the building scored in the “poor” category, due primarily to the lack of these features in the building:

- . Fire sprinkler system throughout the building
- . Card access control system throughout the building
- . Comprehensive security system throughout the building

## 5. *Assessment of Existing Conditions* (continued)

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It should be noted that MCC has stepped up security surveillance recently through the use of an outsourced security service, whose presence has had a positive impact on campus.

The mechanical system of the Main Academic Building is in satisfactory condition, due to recent improvements in the HVAC system related to the Administration and Student Success Center, as well as in replaced unit ventilator units in some rooms. But problems still persist that go beyond maintenance issues:

- . Domestic hot water recirculation through the building
- . Outdoor air intake odor and humidity control
- . High humidity in third floor classrooms and corridors
- . Heating and cooling control throughout the building.

Electrically, the building ranked in “borderline” condition, due to the following:

- . Condition of the electrical service and capacity of the distribution and branch panels
- . Lack of comprehensive lighting controls to meet the energy code
- . Lack of emergency lighting in non-renovated areas
- . Lack of emergency power generation capacity

## **5. Assessment of Existing Conditions** *(continued)*

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### **Recommendations**

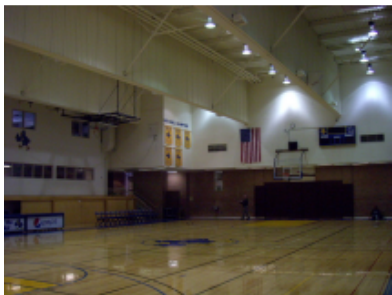
1. MCC should implement a comprehensive interior wayfinding and signage program, capitalizing on the principals identified and implemented for site signage in the previous master plan, as well as lessons learned for interior wayfinding since then. The program should be flexible and should account for space changes and expansions in the future.
2. Security improvements, including card access and security camera enhancement will increase the sense of personal well-being and safety on campus.
3. HVAC improvements are required in the main academic building for better control of air quality and heating / cooling of the building.
4. The domestic hot water recirculation system throughout the building should be renovated to provide on-demand hot water where needed.
5. MCC should renovate the planetarium, including replacement of all existing technical equipment with state-of-the-art digital systems, as well as replacement of all seating and enhancement of patron amenities.
6. Remodel selected teaching spaces and faculty offices to enhance comfort, privacy, contemporary work patterns, and increasing numbers of adjunct faculty members.

## 5. *Assessment of Existing Conditions* (continued)

### **Bartels-Rode Gymnasium**



The Bartels-Rode Gymnasium opened in 1967 and is a separate building from the Main Academic Building. It is located south of the main parking lot. In addition to housing a large, multipurpose gymnasium, this building also houses the physical education and athletic offices, a fitness center and several teaching stations. Six outdoor tennis courts are located west of the building. Outdoor volleyball courts are east of the gymnasium. The competition baseball and softball fields, as well as the archery range are located south of the gymnasium.



The building is a steel-frame structure, with brick exterior, matching that of the Main Academic Building. Originally, the entrance to the gymnasium was designed to be on axis with the entrance to the Main Academic Building, connected by a broad pedestrian tree-lined walk that exists today. However, when built, the building was re-oriented to its current configuration, with the main lobby facing east, rather than to the north.

As in the 2000 master plan, the Bartels- Rode Gymnasium is the most heavily utilized facility at MCC in terms of hours of usage. It is a major resource for students, faculty and the community.

#### **Assessment**

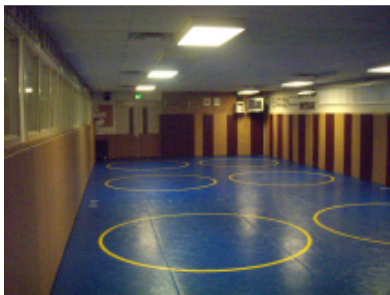
Overall, the building scored in the “borderline” category of the assessment.

The site for this facility scored well on the assessment instrument. The condition of the outdoor fields is good, though there are signs of deterioration beginning to show in the condition of the dugouts. The archery range should be lengthened to meet instructional requirements, and the tennis courts all display significant cracking of the playing surfaces.

## 5. *Assessment of Existing Conditions* (continued)

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Because the entrance faces east, the building's exterior does not have an easily-identified entry and is beginning to reflect its age in terms of its condition and overall curb appeal.



Structurally, the condition of the roof is poor and is planned for replacement as part of the program involving the Main Academic Building. Also, the condition of some interior and exterior walls caused the facility to be in the "borderline" category.

The Building envelope scored in the "poor" category due to similar reasons to the Main Academic Building: poor roof insulation, poor wall insulation, poor quality of exterior windows, and the condition of exterior doors and frames. In addition, there is little natural light that penetrates this building.



While the building has been maintained well, many of the interior finishes are original, or have been only modestly addressed over the years. All finishes and the condition of equipment, etc. put the building's interior in the "borderline" category, although new bleachers are planned for the gym.

The original fire alarm panel still exists, with a new panel installed in 1997. The entire fire alarm system is currently being upgraded. There is no fire sprinkler system in the building and there is a lack of security cameras.

Consistent with other assessment categories, the mechanical system scored as "borderline". Although the boilers and water heaters are new, the gym has original air-handling units that are noisy. The controls are a hybrid of DDC and pneumatic. The rooftop units serving the wrestling and exercise areas are short on cooling and should be replaced.

Similarly, the electrical system scored in the "borderline" category. Although a new PA system was installed within the last four years, and lighting controls are being updated as part of another project, egress lighting meets code only in renovated areas.

## 5. *Assessment of Existing Conditions* (continued)

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### Recommendations

1. Renovate existing outdoor tennis courts.
2. Expand the outdoor archery range.
3. Renovate the existing Bartels-Rode Gymnasium building, including new selected HVAC and electrical equipment, improved lighting, improved finishes and renovated locker facilities.
4. Expand the existing building by providing the following spaces:
  - . New non-competition gymnasium or recreation area
  - . New locker rooms
  - . New training room
  - . Five office spaces
  - . Three instructional classroom spaces
  - . New fitness center for student use
  - . Climbing wall
  - . Indoor and outdoor storage for equipment
  - . Laundry facility
  - . New common lobby uniting the existing building with the new addition.

## 5. *Assessment of Existing Conditions* (continued)

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### Technology Building



The Technology Building was the first building to open on the new MCC campus in 1966. It largely serves the same functions today as originally designed – the teaching and training of vocations requiring large bay spaces for equipment and circulation – automotive machinery, welding, materials science, etc.

It is a steel-frame structure, with brick exterior. It has a standing-seam metal mansard roof element, similar to the Main Academic Building.

### **Assessment**

The site of the Technology Building is generally satisfactory, except for the size of the outdoor parking and circulation facilities on the west, which are limited. Vehicular circulation from the north parking lot to the Technology Building divides east and west at the boiler room that is the primary heating source for the campus.



The building has a “satisfactory” exterior rating. Brickwork at the parapet level of the boiler room is showing moisture penetration and spalling, however.

Accessibility to the building is satisfactory, as is the condition of the structure though the roof is planned to be replaced as part of the maintenance program. Similarly, the building envelope lacks insulation and upgraded exterior glass and exterior doors and frames.

Inside the building, the interior is in good condition, with high marks in every category except the condition of equipment, casework, some teaching surfaces and selected flooring surfaces.



## 5. *Assessment of Existing Conditions* (continued)

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The category of life safety and security received a “poor” score, due primarily to the lack of a fire sprinkler system in the building, and the lack of a comprehensive security system.

The assessment of the mechanical system is “satisfactory”. The campus boilers are located in this building, and the water-cooled chiller serves the Technology Building and the Stevenson Center for Higher Education. There is a need for a quieter mechanical system for instructional spaces.

Because of the lack of adequate emergency lighting, and lack of emergency generator capability, the electrical system received a “borderline” score.

### **Recommendations**

1. Renovate the existing building to enhance its energy efficiency, including new selected electrical systems.
2. Renovate selected instructional spaces with new finishes and equipment.

## 5. *Assessment of Existing Conditions* (continued)

### *Frauenthal Foundation Fine Arts Center*



The Frauenthal Foundation Fine Arts Center opened in 1967 and includes the 344-seat Overbrook Theater and adjacent art gallery, where works by students, faculty and guest artists are exhibited. The center also includes a rehearsal room for band, orchestra, and chorus, practice rooms, a dance studio, and a piano lab.

#### **Assessment**

From a site perspective, the Frauenthal site is satisfactory in its existing condition, though it lacks parking for theater staff and delivery vehicles. The sculpture court adjacent to the entrance appears neglected and little used.



The building exterior is “borderline”, with a need for more prominent signage, an enhanced entrance, and overall curb appeal. Similarly, the facility is “borderline” in terms of accessibility.

The structural condition is “borderline”, due primarily to the condition of the existing roof, which is scheduled for replacement.

The building envelope lacks the insulative quality expressed in all the other original buildings on campus, and as a result, received a “poor” score.

Interior finishes received a “satisfactory” assessment, though improvements should be made to doors, hardware, casework, and general finish condition, including the refurbishment of auditorium seating and auditorium space finishes.

Life safety and security was assessed at a “borderline” level, due primarily to lack of comprehensive security systems.

## 5. *Assessment of Existing Conditions* (continued)

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The mechanical system received a “borderline” assessment, due in large part to the need to replace the original air-handling units, as well as ongoing problems with the hot-water recirculation system.

The electrical system received a “poor” assessment, for several reasons: condition of the electrical service and distribution panels, the level of emergency lighting, the lack of lighting controls to meet the energy code, the lack of emergency power, condition of theater-related equipment, and full connectivity to MCC technology resources.

### **Recommendations:**

1. Renovate the existing Frauenthal Theater, including refurbished seating, finishes, lighting, electrical service, mechanical systems, technology connectivity, and systems related to theater production, rigging, acoustical control, and sound booth equipment.
2. Expand the “back of house” spaces of the Frauenthal Theater, including expanded scene shop, costume storage, dressing rooms, and prop storage.
3. Renovate the music instruction area, including new finishes and lighting in rehearsal spaces, and enhanced instruction in the piano lab.

## 5. *Assessment of Existing Conditions* (continued)

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### **James L. Stevenson Center for Higher Education**

The James L. Stevenson Center for Higher Education was opened in 1995 and contains 93,500 square feet over three floors. It is the home to a partnership between Muskegon Community College and Western Michigan University, Grand Valley State University, and Ferris State University. The center contains 40 classrooms / conference rooms including a computer classroom and laboratory, a large conference room and a science room.

A catering kitchen on the second level accommodates food service needs for banquets, meetings, conferences, and receptions.

Each teaching space is equipped with advanced technology capability. The MCC graphics design department, media services department, and the television studio are also housed in the Stevenson Center.

Consistent with the other construction on campus, the building is a steel-frame structure, with a brick and stucco exterior.

### **Assessment**

As this is a newer facility at MCC, the overall rating was “satisfactory” for the Stevenson Center. With respect to the site and the building exterior, the facility rated “satisfactory” with no glaring deficiencies, considering a building that is now 15 years old.

In terms of accessibility and the structural condition of the building, the facility rated an “excellent” score. It should be noted, however, that the life span of the roof at the Stevenson Center is nearing its end and should be planned for replacement in the next several years.

## **5. Assessment of Existing Conditions** *(continued)*

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The building envelope rated a “satisfactory”, because of its insulative value, and because of the amount of daylighting available to interior rooms at the lower levels.

Due primarily to lack of a comprehensive security system in the building, the facility received a “borderline” rating for life safety and security.

The mechanical system is “satisfactory”, citing the graphics lab exhaust system as deficient. The electrical system is rated “borderline”, due to lack of adequate lighting controls to meet the energy code, and the lack of emergency power available to the building.

### **Recommendations**

1. Renovate the mechanical system in the graphics area, and make improvements to the electrical system in terms of lighting controls and emergency power.
2. Provide an enhanced security system throughout the building.
3. Plan for replacement of the existing roof.

## **5. Assessment of Existing Conditions** *(continued)*

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### **Hendrik Meijer Library Information Technology Center**

The Meijer Library Center opened in 2006 and contains 42,000 square feet of space and it provides instructional materials and information services to support the curricula offered by MCC. Internet is available on the main floor and on the second floor information commons. The current book collection exceeds 60,000 volumes. Other resources include magazines, newspapers, videocassettes, and CD's.

#### **Assessment**

As you would expect for a building this young, it scored well, posting an overall rating of "excellent".

The building is highly accessible, and its structural condition is excellent, as is the building envelope and the interior finishes.

The life safety and security rating ranked only "borderline", due to the lack of security systems in place. The electrical system is "satisfactory" because of the lack of emergency power capability.

#### **Recommendations**

1. Add emergency power capacity to the building
2. Enhance the security system.