







# McDonald's Chicago Flagship

Chicago, Illinois

**Description:** McDonald's Chicago flagship radically deviates from a typical prototype restaurant. The building begins to ask new questions about customer experience and impact. While one-of-a-kind, the flagship is generating valuable lessons that can be scaled to an expansive portfolio - impacting communities around the world.

A solar pergola unites the restaurant while also providing 55% of electrical energy needs (2019 production was above projections). Beneath this "big roof," indoor dining areas seamlessly connect to permeable outdoor plazas and a park.

In the dining room, Cross Laminated Timber (CLT) and Glulam beams are celebrated against a backdrop of white birch trees planted in a suspended atrium and hanging "plant tapestries." The restaurant is the first commercial project in Chicago to use CLT.

The flagship is a case study on environmental stewardship, embodying a global brand's commitment to action all while creating a city oasis where people can eat, drink, and meet.

**Collaborative Partners:** Landini Associates, Goodfriend Magruder Structures, Omni Ecosystems, WCW Engineers, Dickerson Electrical Engineers, Schuler Shook, Say and Night Solar, Watermark Engineering, Compass Surveying, Sevan Solutions

**Size:** 19,065 sqft

**Completion:** 2018

**Client:** McDonald's Corporation

**Selected Recognition:** Archmarathon 1st Prize - Sustainability Award. 2020.  
Prix Versailles with UNESCO and UIA, North America Special Prize. 2019.  
Architects Newspaper Best of Design Awards, 2019.  
The Chicago Athenaeum American Architecture Award. 2019.  
The European Centre International Architecture Award. 2020.

**Sustainability:** LEED Platinum Certification



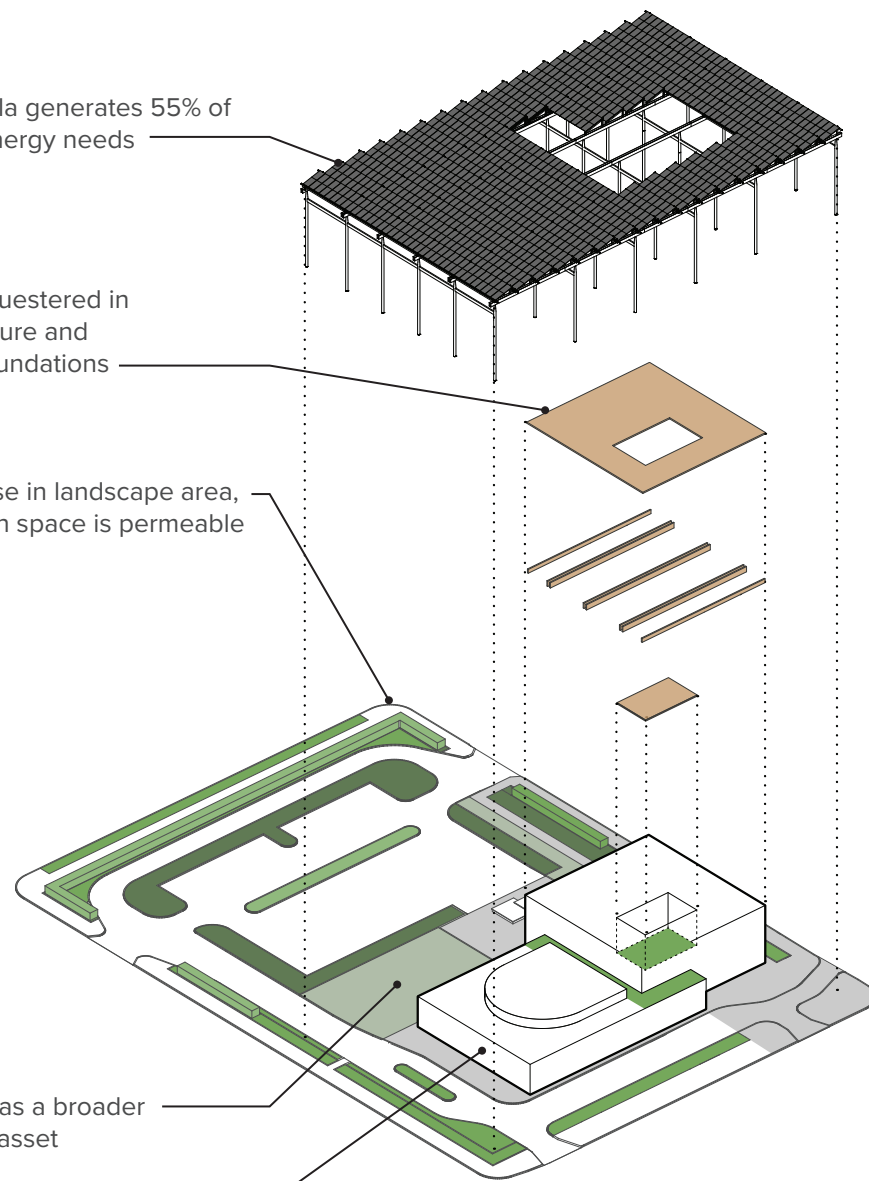
Solar Pergola generates 55% of electrical energy needs

Carbon sequestered in wood structure and concrete foundations

20% increase in landscape area, 92% of open space is permeable

Public park as a broader community asset

65% of existing building re-used







*“The design focuses on the interior by putting it on display. As famously exemplified by Apple, transparency connotes openness and accessibility... The oversized roof canopy, hung with four, tastefully sized golden M’s, is the kind of signage Mies van der Rohe could love.”*

**Mimi Zeiger**

The Architectural Review: Conspicuous Consumption - Fast Food Architecture, October 2018



*“McDonald’s made a conscious decision to turn its back on kitsch. The corporate players on the design team crafted a set of goals, including ‘pure simplicity’ and ‘enduring authenticity.’ Ross Barney’s experience designing public space clearly colored her approach to the project...The architects determined that the best thing a new McDonald’s could do was to provide a bit of greenery in a rapidly redeveloping neighborhood that’s short on parks.”*

**Karrie Jacobs**  
Architect Magazine: Downsizing the Golden Arches, October 2018

