

Carmel Clay Public Library Renovation & Expansion

Category: Preservation / Adaptive Reuse / Renovation
Project Type: Public Library
Address: 425 E. Main St., Carmel, IN 46032
Completion: 2022
Original Building: 1998
Original Architect: Meyer, Scherer, & Rockcastle (MSR)





Design Statement

In response to significant population growth, an aging building and evolving library programming, the Carmel Clay Public Library (CCPL) funded a renovation and expansion of their main library to meet the evolving needs of a 21st Century public library. CCPL has served the Carmel community for more than 100 years and has made it their mission to inspire lifelong discovery, facilitate collaboration, and connect people with resources.

CCPL's dynamic vision sought to Be Seen, Be Experienced, and Be Supportive. A re-conceptualized interior layout features enhanced open social areas, additional seating capacity, increased event space for overlapping programs, and a new covered parking structure for vehicles and bicycles.



Site Context

The library had outgrown its building footprint and sought to modernize their facility to meet the evolving needs of the Carmel community. The original building was located on Main Street, situated at the crossroads of the public education campus and the Arts & Design District. With a 5,000+ student high school to the north and a new elementary school to the south, the library serves as a dynamic hub for all ages and backgrounds.

The library prioritized Youth and Teen Services, expanding and enhancing existing spaces into flexible, interactive space that foster adventure, learning and discovery. The Teen Area expanded its footprint 6-fold, providing instruction spaces for group activities, private study rooms for tutoring and music lessons, as well as an artist-in-residency workshop.

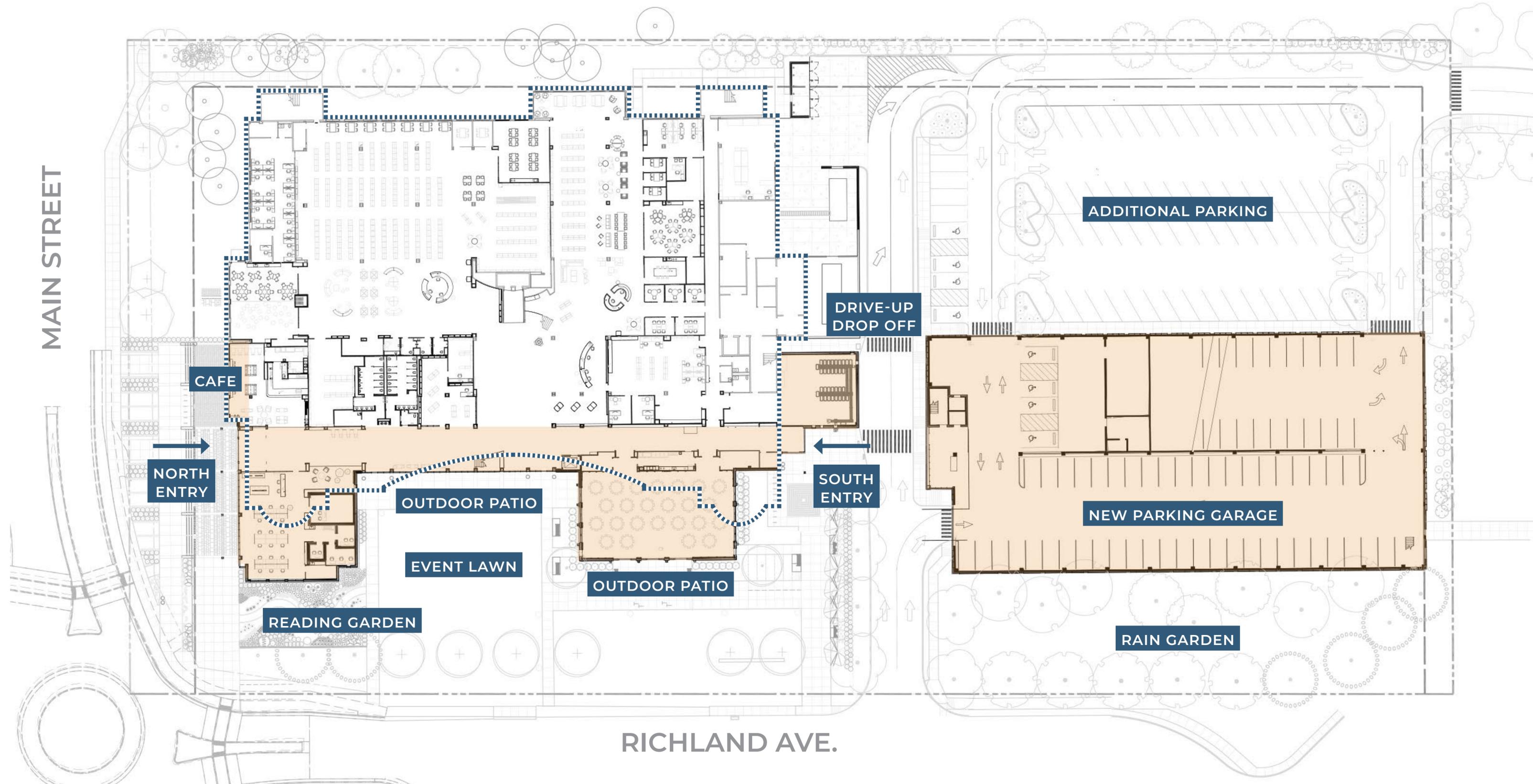
Site Plan



ORIGINAL BUILDING OUTLINE



ADDITION





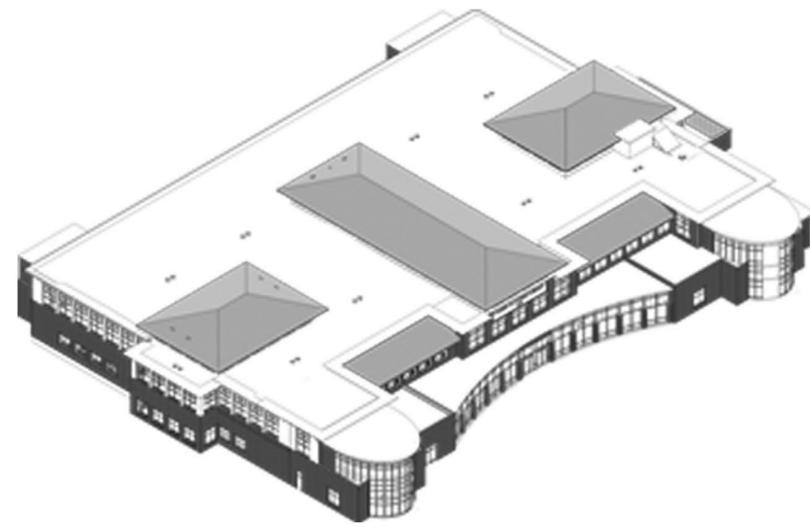
BEFORE

DESIGN FOR CHANGE

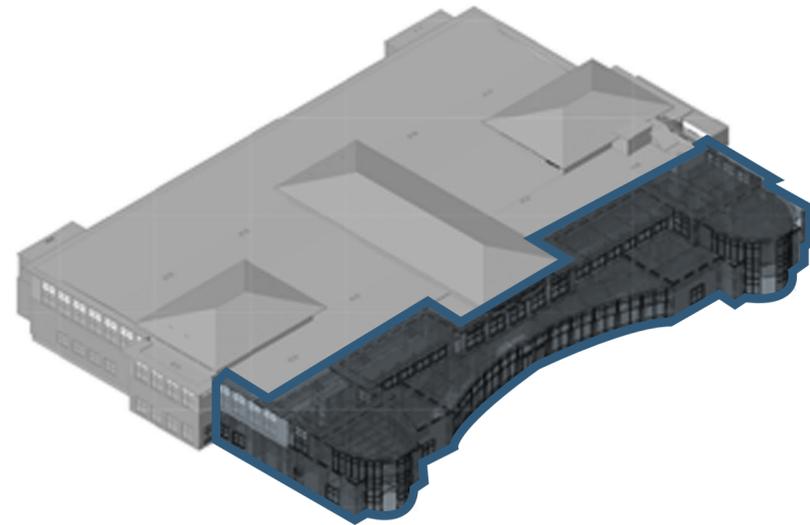
Despite the prominent location, several community members noted they were unaware the building was the library, based upon the building orientation and limited signage. The renovation and addition re-oriented the primary entrance to Main Street, providing a welcoming front porch, transparent façade and views into the Digital Media Lab and new Café. A new reading room overlooks Main Street and a new reflection garden, which includes native plants and comfortable seating for patrons and visitors.



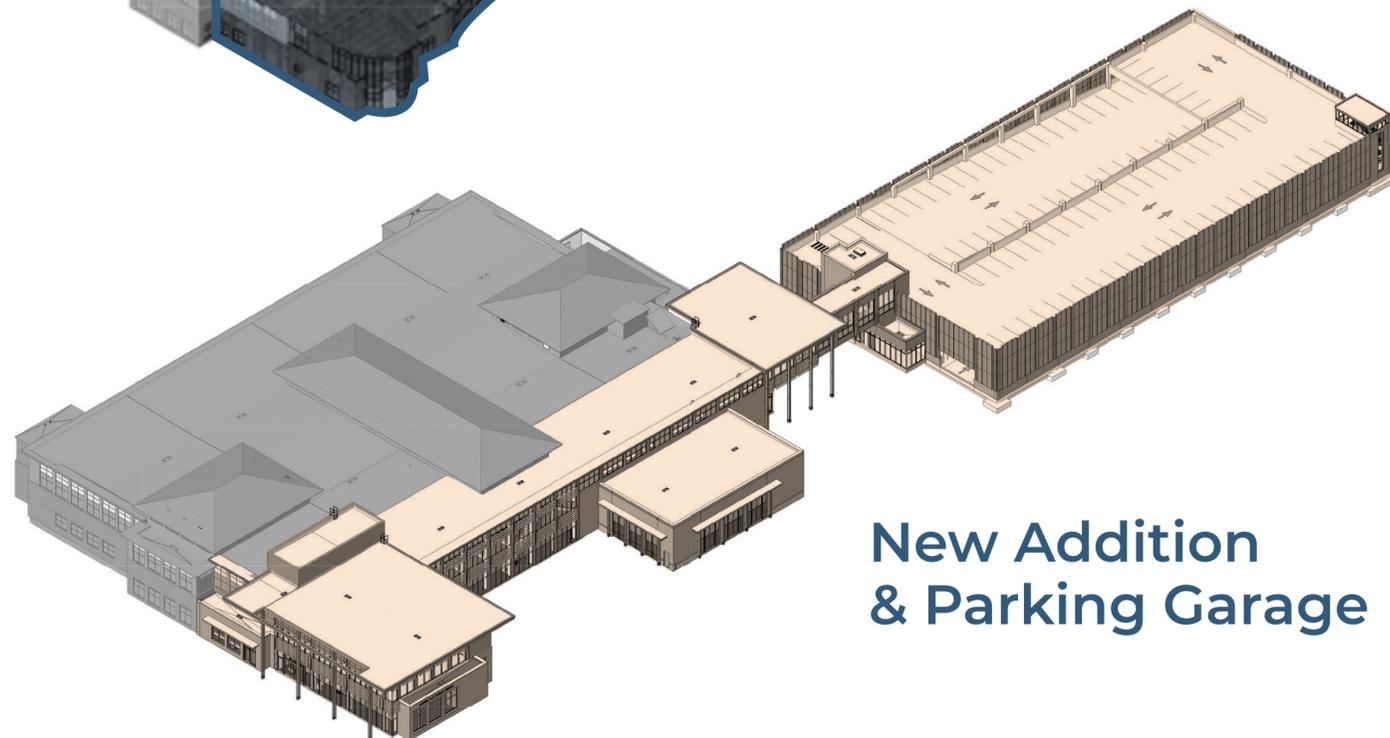
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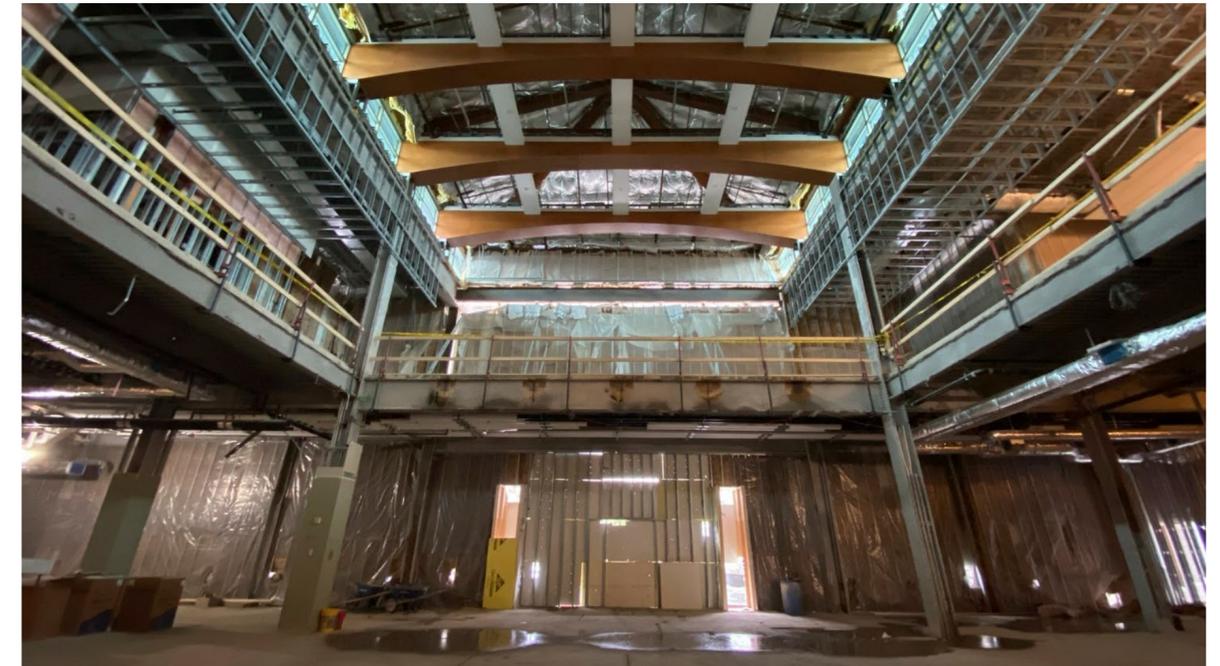
Original Building



Demolition



**New Addition
& Parking Garage**



DESIGN FOR CHANGE

Community engagement and staff interviews uncovered a growing interest in outdoor space for events and group meetings. Additionally, improved convenience amenities such as covered parking, a drive-up book return and 24/7 material holds pick-up were requested.

Through careful planning and a sensitivity to budget, the renovation and addition selectively demolished portions of the rounded façade and single-story entrance hall to create a clean transition between the original building and expansion. The new addition established a grand entrance hall with multiple entry points, creating a vibrant light-filled public forum connecting the new parking garage to each floor of the library.



DESIGN FOR CHANGE

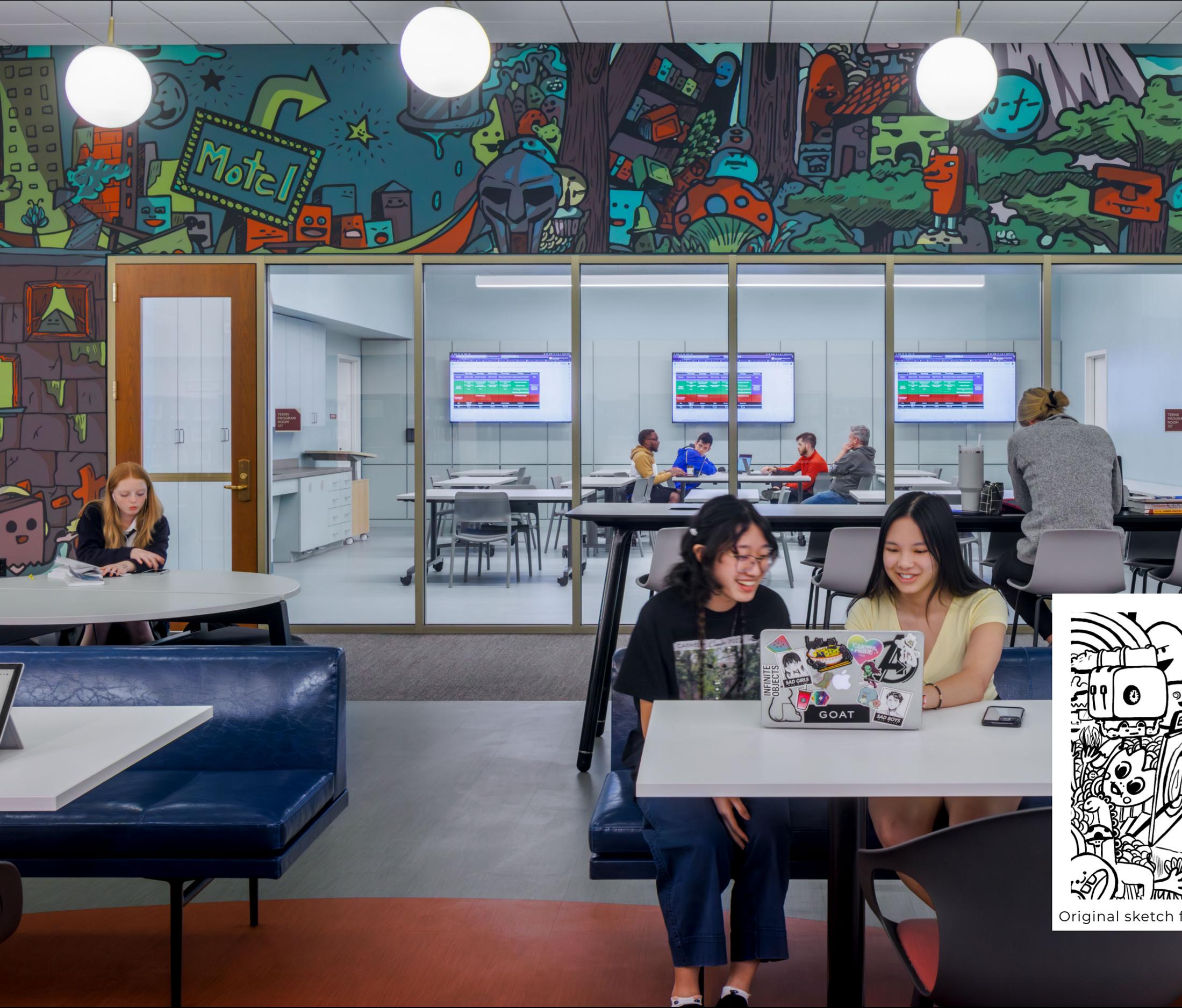
The addition and grand hall were shaped to embrace an outdoor event lawn, which hosts a variety of activities from art fairs and formal galas to individual and small group study. The grand hall incorporated a new monumental stair and elevator, offering the library an ability to close off portions of the library for events outside of normal library operations. The grand hall serves as the active zone, providing access to the café, digital media lab, bookstore, community room, restrooms and art gallery.



DESIGN FOR EQUITABLE COMMUNITIES

The children's area sought to modernize their space with refreshed flooring, lighting and furniture, while adding a Quest Lab for STEM activities, an expanded dividable story time room, dedicated children's restrooms and a mothers nursing room. In an effort to re-use portions of the existing building, the design team brought new life to the service desk by introducing fresh mosaic tiles, new countertops, accent lighting and a local artist mural overhead. The new interior lighting and interactive elements encourage exploration and structured play.





DESIGN FOR EQUITABLE COMMUNITIES

The teen library sought to significantly expand the space offered for youth programming and tutoring. Dedicated meeting rooms, a flexible program room, an artist-in-residency space, as well as music practice rooms and comfy seating invite teens for after-school exploration and socializing.

A design competition among high-school students was organized to develop a wallcovering within the teen area, bringing creative community input into the building interior. The high school artist developed a sketch, which was scaled and digitized to incorporate colors from interior elements to compliment the renovation and create an imaginary vista for all to enjoy.



Original sketch from design competition



DESIGN FOR DISCOVERY

Modern libraries have evolved beyond just a place for books – they've become places to experience, discover, create and participate in individual and group settings. To promote the new offerings and improve the user experience, the off-site Digital Media Lab was incorporated into the Library building, anchoring the corner storefront at Main and Richland. The street front presence encourages the curious visitors to peak in, stop by and try out traditional tools and state-of-the-art technology.

Audio and video recording rooms with sound isolation, rotating backgrounds and editing computers offer full-service options for all ages and abilities.



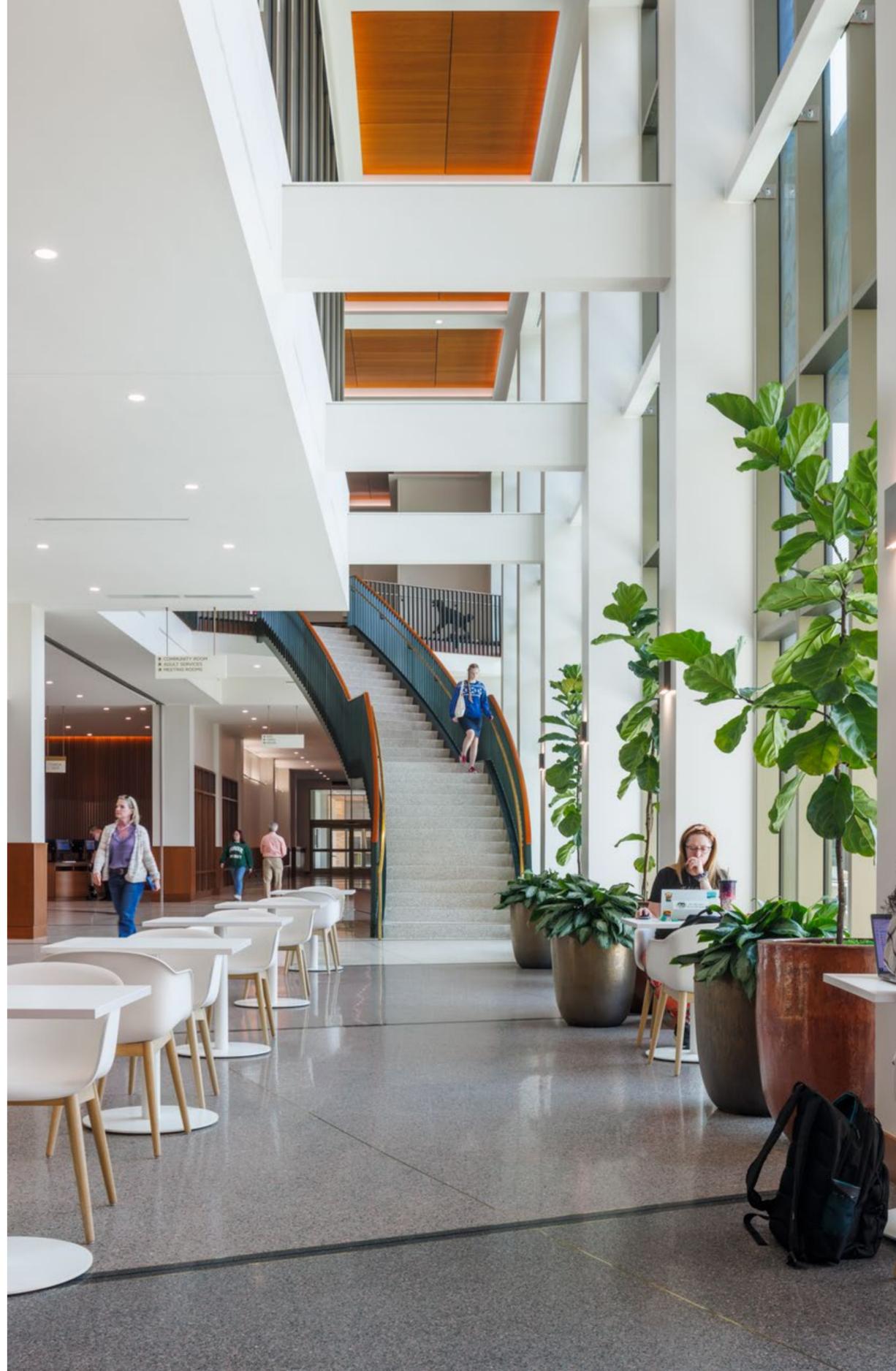
DESIGN FOR DISCOVERY



A glance through the structure illustrates the importance of well-lit, open spaces to support collaboration, inspire lifelong discovery, and connecting people with resources. Balancing open spaces with private study spaces was critical to meeting today's work-from-anywhere model post-pandemic. Inviting stairways promote efficient movement throughout the structure and showcase all patrons to the unique programs offered throughout the year. New furniture with a variety of seating styles and types provides options for all body types and posture.

DESIGN FOR WELL BEING

The building addition and renovation included replacement of all interior lighting to dimmable LED, providing enhanced user comfort and text legibility. To brighten the upper floor, the design team uncovered existing clerestory windows from behind finished ceilings to expand the Grand Hall into an awe-inspiring, civic space.



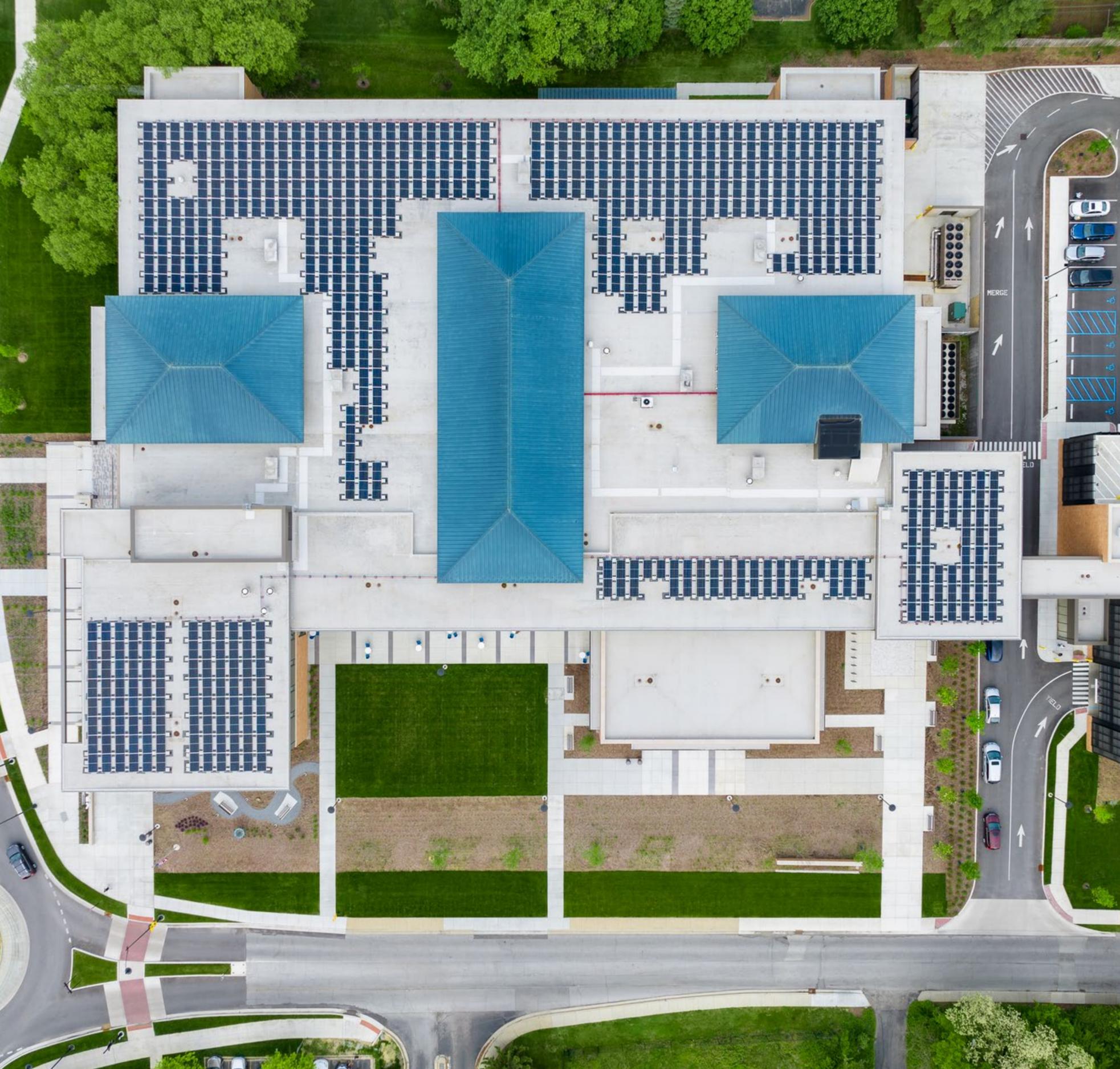


DESIGN FOR WELL BEING

The library also sought to expand social spaces that create a unique synergy between intellectual stimulation and social comfort. An expanded, full-service café encourages library patrons to grab a drink or snack and stay awhile.

The large, 300-person community room includes an operable partition, allowing for various sized events and concurrent programs.





SUSTAINABILITY

Reuse Existing Building, Materials & Elements

Renovating the facility was a logical choice to maintain its prominent location within the community while preserving natural resources and reducing both operational and embodied carbon. The decision to avoid complete demolition and replacement, or the construction of a new branch elsewhere, led to a more cost-effective capital investment. This approach achieved an efficient and timely renovation.

The project prioritized sustainability by reusing existing library shelving components, including the steel shelving and the wood end panels and canopies. This not only reduced raw material use but also captured carbon. Additionally, the design team worked to utilize the original wood details, further enhancing carbon capture and respecting the original design intent. The Children's and Teen's circulation desks were also reused, but reclad to give them a new appearance and rebrand.

The new addition seamlessly blends with the original building, incorporating similar materials like brick and high-performance glazing, resulting in a modern, energetic campus that respects the existing architecture.

Energy Efficiency

The addition of solar PV array to the roof further reduced the library's carbon footprint, offsetting a significant portion of their annual electricity usage. The energy efficient solutions for this vibrant community hub serve as a model for responsible use of public funds to reduce energy consumption and carbon emissions.

Baseline EUI:
105 kBTU/sf

Reduced EUI:
45.3 kBTU/sf

**Percent Reduction
from Baseline: 57%**

Project Details

✓ CONSTRUCTION TYPE

Type I-B Construction (non-combustible), steel frame with exterior metal stud framing, continuous insulation and brick veneer, curtain wall and metal paneling.

✓ MECHANICAL SYSTEM

Replaced major mechanical equipment of the 4-pipe boiler and chiller system with high-efficiency condensing boilers. Optimized temperature controls to reduce energy consumption. Expanded the chiller plant to provide redundant cooling.

✓ ELECTRICAL SYSTEM

Re-used existing primary building service components. Replaced existing lighting with LED throughout the library building and property.

✓ SUSTAINABLE FEATURES

New solar PV array on the roof. Increased facade transparency to harvest daylight and create a stronger connection inside and out. Indoor air quality and low-emitting interior materials. Native plantings that require minimal irrigation. Sun shade devices and large overhangs to minimize heat gain.



Library Elevations

Full color reflects building addition

NORTH



WEST



SOUTH



EAST



Parking Garage Elevations

EAST



NORTH



SOUTH



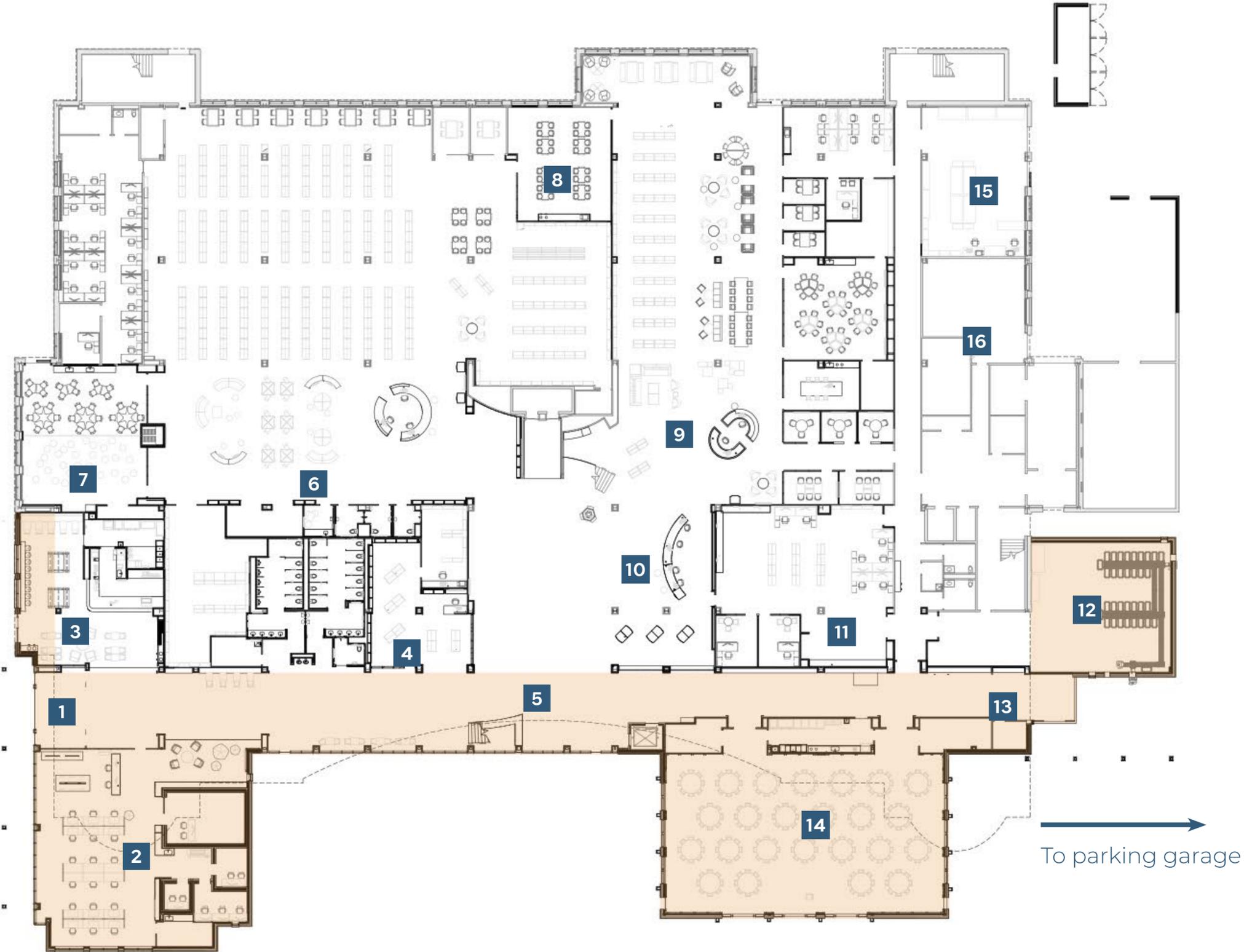
WEST



First Floor Plan

KEY

- 1 North Entry
- 2 Digital Media Lab
- 3 Cafe
- 4 Library Bookstore
- 5 Entry Hall
- 6 Youth Services
- 7 Storytime Room
- 8 Quest Lab
- 9 Young Adults
- 10 Welcome Desk
- 11 Circulation Services
- 12 Drive Up Book Drop
- 13 South Entry
- 14 Large Program Room
- 15 Loading / Receiving
- 16 Mechanical



Second Floor Plan

KEY

- 16 Mechanical
- 17 Reading Room
- 18 Adult Collection
- 19 Second Level Lobby
- 20 Program Room
- 21 Board Room
- 22 Administration
- 23 IT Services
- 24 Tech Services
- 25 Communications
- 26 Adult Services
- 27 Audio / Video Collection
- 28 Study Rooms
- 29 Public Computers

