

*Growing with you
and with our
community*

**Krause
Memorial
Library**





Libraries expand our world. They ignite curiosity, invoke inspiration, encourage exploration, and generate ideas, questions, wonderings and opinions. The library is a place where you can get lost or found, be carried away or become more firmly rooted.

Libraries give us a place to belong. They are the heart of a community and are beloved like a second home. They are today's town square and one of our most democratic institutions. They are an essential part of who we are as a community and what we value as a society.

Today's libraries are bridges. They are books *and* technology, information *and* engagement, public programs *and* private research. They offer room to read, places to study and areas to gather.

Libraries are all these things and more. They belong to *the people* – no matter age, demographic or economic status – and exist *for the people*, to meet their needs today and grow and evolve with them and for them long into the future.

***Your Krause Memorial Library
is all this and more.***



The Problem

The Krause Memorial Library has long been a source of pride for the Rockford community and surrounding areas. It is a beloved institution that is heavily used and enjoys great support. It provides not only reading and viewing materials, but also programs for all ages, as well as technology resources such as public computers, Wi-Fi, mobile hotspots, iPads and a robust digital collection.

But for the past 20 years, patrons have been asking with increasing frequency when the library would be expanded. It is one of the smallest libraries in the Kent District Library (KDL) system. Yet, it regularly has the highest circulation per square foot of any branch, often double the system-wide average, while visits per capita have been triple the average.

Built in 1937, the library was expanded twice, in 1963 and 1989. The population in the area has nearly doubled since the last expansion, but the library hasn't. We have outgrown our 9,500 square feet, and staff and patrons alike are feeling the squeeze.

Krause Memorial Library was built in 1937, expanded in 1963 and expanded again in 1989 (33 years ago).

Since 1989...

Population of the service area has doubled

Number of visitors to the library has doubled

Eight public computer workstations, Wi-Fi and digital resources were added



203,296 1989 481,812 2019*

Circulation of physical materials increased 237%

*Last pre-pandemic year.

Collection:

With such limited space and so much demand, the Krause Memorial Library cannot physically house a collection large enough to meet the needs of the nearly 41,000 residents it serves in the City of Rockford and Townships of Algoma, Cannon and Courtland. This means that too many items requested must come from other branches, resulting in longer wait times for patrons and higher transportation costs for the library. The Krause Memorial Library can house less than half of the physical collection it should for its service area population.



Space:

The library is also in desperate need of more programming space, such as rooms for group study and collaboration, community gathering areas and quiet reading or homework spots.



During our most popular summer reading programs, the one community room is so crammed with bodies that some children must sit outside in the adjoining area hoping to catch a glimpse of the activity.



During the school year, older students and teens struggle to find a place to do homework or work on assignments. The only study room closely resembles a storage closet and must be used to store tax forms and summer reading prizes that have nowhere else to go.

Rooms are also in high demand for adults. More people are working remotely and seeking places to collaborate or meet with clients and co-workers. Community groups have few available options for meeting.



Further, the few comfy chairs and tables strewn around are highly-coveted and rarely free, giving people no other option but to collect their materials and leave.

The shortage of space is felt everywhere. For the past three summers, KDL has partnered with Feeding America West Michigan and the state to provide healthy lunches to kids while school is not in session. Krause Memorial Library has proudly participated in the program, and response has been great. However, storing the meals for so many children has become an ongoing challenge.



“As a tutor, I love that the Krause Memorial Library supports students and teachers, but we need more study and collaboration rooms.” – Emma, tutor





Accessibility:

In 2015, the Disability Advocates of Kent County conducted an audit of the Krause Memorial Library and found barriers throughout the building. Doorways to many rooms do not meet the minimum ADA standards. Aisles are narrow and there is little room to turn. Restroom doors are heavy and lack automated door openers, and accessible parking is not near the entrance ramp. Accessibility issues affect not only patrons in wheelchairs, but seniors who struggle with mobility and parents of young children with strollers.

A library should be a welcoming place for all. One expects to be able to have room to wander the aisles, find desired materials, have space to join a program, or simply sit and look through a book. This is no longer possible given our large service footprint, highly engaged residents and current facility.

Simply put, we have not kept pace with our growing community, and it shows. Instead of welcoming patrons in, we are pushing them out.

“My husband uses a walker and needs places to sit and rest and more room to move. An expansion would mean people with walkers, wheelchairs and strollers could finally access all areas of the library.” – Miriam, Rockford senior





The Plan

Preliminary concepts, subject to change.

Over the past five years, city and township officials, along with KDL leadership, have been engaging the community in conversations about the expansion of the Krause Memorial Library.

Together we've dreamed, analyzed, prioritized and perfected a plan to address the imminent needs and create a library that will serve our community well, both today and long into the future, while remaining in the heart of downtown Rockford.

In 2018, we purchased the lot next door for a future expansion. Through this campaign, we will add over 13,000 square feet along the south end of the current building, almost doubling the library's footprint, as well as renovating the existing space.

"The Krause Memorial Library is more than books – it's meeting spaces, a place for events, programs. It's a draw and helps keep downtown businesses vital." – David, Rockford resident

Our New Library:

The new main entrance will lead directly into our library hub where people will have room to gather. The space will be flooded with natural light and places to sit. The adult section will be a few short steps away, essentially taking over the current library footprint.

The new children's room will nearly double the space for materials and literacy-based activities. A large program room will be adjacent to the children's space for easy access and will include folding partitions to create multiple spaces.

Outside both rooms will be a fenced outdoor area where additional activities and programs can be offered.

We will finally have a large quiet room designated for reading or studying along with six study rooms of various sizes, including one in the new teen area where there will also be a room for teens to socialize, collaborate and engage with one another.

We will significantly improve all forms of accessibility, including:

- Widening doors and aisles.
- Moving accessible parking closer to the entrance.
- Adding barrier-free and family restrooms equipped with baby and adult changing stations, all with electronic door openers.
- Adding more seating opportunities and places to rest.

Additionally, with more space, we will:

- Significantly increase the size of the on-site collection.
- Add a mother's room.
- Modernize the HVAC, plumbing and electrical systems for cost efficiency.
- Design three outdoor spaces for programming, gathering and reading.
- Provide a designated media area by the public computers.
- Add storage for tax forms, summer reading materials and meal distribution.

With the additional space, we can enhance our collaboration with all area schools to further the education of our young people. We can meet the needs of more community groups seeking places to gather. We can even more profoundly impact businesses and restaurants in downtown Rockford by driving additional foot traffic to the area.

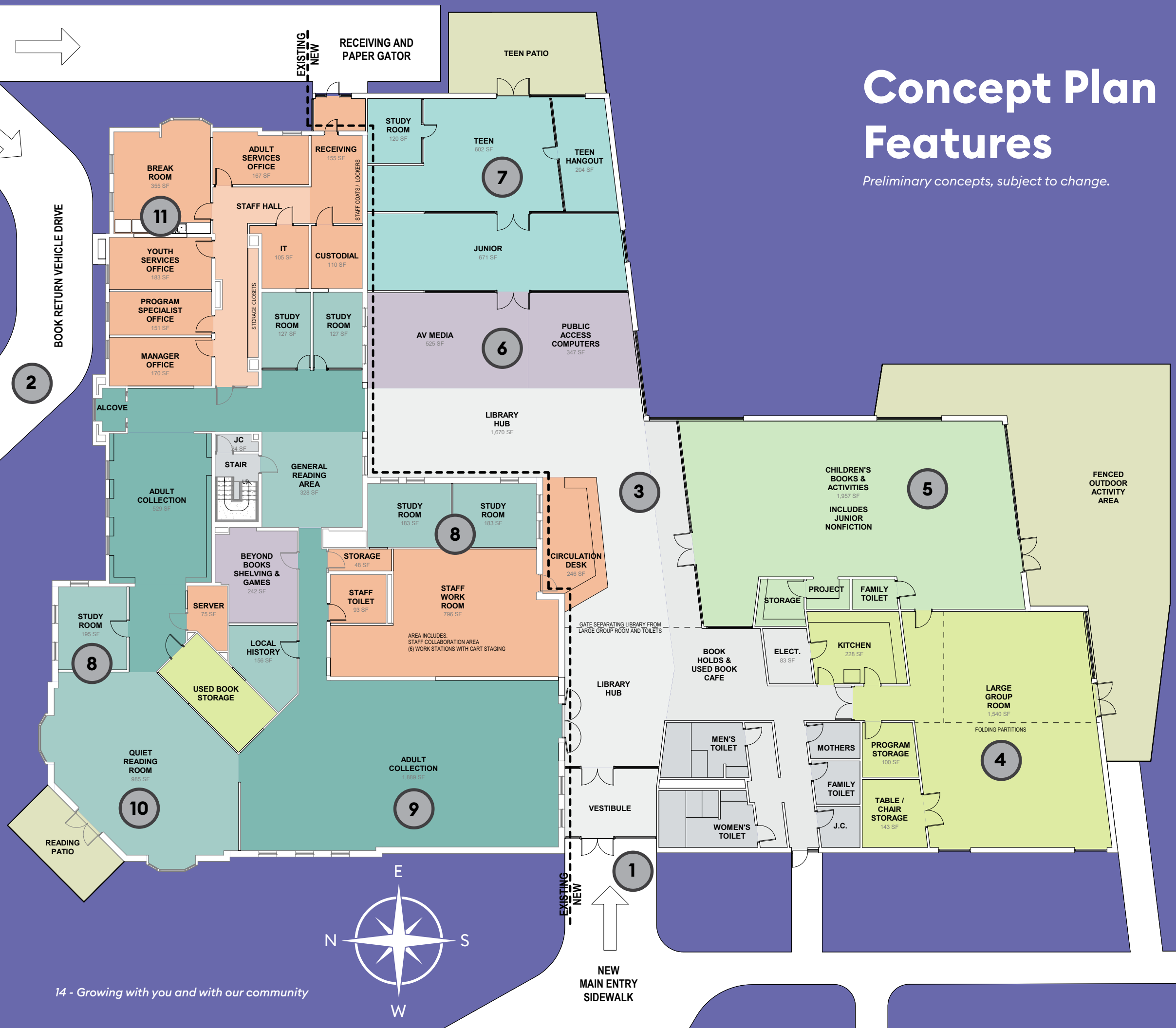


Preliminary concepts, subject to change.

“Early literacy activities are essential for young children. I love that the Krause Library offers programs starting with infants and moms. Imagine what could be accomplished with more space!” – Rita, retired teacher

Concept Plan Features

Preliminary concepts, subject to change.



- 1 New barrier-free main entry with access to library and large group room secured separately
 - 2 New drive-thru book return
 - 3 New library hub with direct access to all major library functions and activities. Circulation desk with line of sight into children's, junior and teen program areas
 - 4 New large group activity room with kitchen, storage and access to secure outdoor activity area
 - 5 New children's library with family restroom, project zone and access to secure outdoor activity area
 - 6 New public access computer terminals, business center and AV materials shelving
 - 7 New junior and teen library areas with study room and teen community area
 - 8 New quiet study or tutoring rooms for groups of six to eight people
 - 9 Adult collections with soft seating interspersed
 - 10 Quiet reading room with soft seating and access to outdoor reading patio
 - 11 Staff offices, break room and support services
- Library hub and public support
 - Children's books and activities, with junior nonfiction
 - Teen and junior books and activities
 - Quiet reading and study rooms
 - Adult collection and periodicals
 - Public access computers and AV media
 - Large group room and community use
 - Outdoor activity area
 - Staff work and support



Costs

The expansion of the Krause Memorial Library will require a public-private partnership for funding. As with other branches of KDL, the library building is owned and operated by the local municipality.

The City of Rockford, in conjunction with the Townships of Algoma, Cannon and Courtland, are leading this project with philanthropic support from the community.

The land for expansion has already been acquired through an investment of financial resources by the City of Rockford and the Krause Memorial Library Board Endowment.

Funding for the expanded collection has been defined and will be included in future library operational budgets.

While this campaign includes three years for maintenance, we plan to build an endowment fund to assist in managing and caring for the enlarged facility long-term.

Working Campaign Budget

Expansion and three outdoor spaces	\$5,800,000
Renovations, including modernizing water, electrical and HVAC systems	\$2,200,000
Three-year maintenance of the building	\$300,000
Campaign costs	\$200,000*
*Any funds not expended here will be added to the maintenance fund.	
Project total	\$8,500,000



Please join us in this important project.



Libraries open doors to endless worlds of possibilities. But in order for the Krause Memorial Library to continue to help expand our universe – and our minds – we must first expand its walls.

The Krause Memorial Library expansion is long overdue. It has remained the same size for nearly three decades while our community and our service numbers have grown astronomically.

Our community has been patient, but increasingly persistent, in demanding more from their library. Given the large geographic service footprint, the incredibly high volume of patron activity and the limited size of our current facility, this is not unreasonable. It is imperative.

To continue being a welcoming place for all residents of the greater Rockford community, including our surrounding townships, we must expand.

Today we move forward to make sure our beloved library is growing with us in order to meet our needs today and long into the future.

Please join us in this important project that will transform our community and shape our next generation of leaders.

“I love my library. I love that the librarians greet me and remember my name. They seem to appreciate me being there.” – Jack, Rockford resident

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PRE-CAMPAIGN PLANNING COMMITTEE

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Bobbi Jo Blanton
Jennifer DeVault
Joe Gavan
Jennifer German
Marcia Haas
Matt McConnon

Gordon Pickerd
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Gordon Pickerd, Board Trustee
Elizabeth Johnson, Board Trustee

Courtland Township:
Matt McConnon,
Township Supervisor

Cannon Township:
Steve Grimm, Township Supervisor
David Spencer, Board Trustee

City of Rockford:
Ed Ross, Mayor
Thad Beard, City Manager

EXPLORATORY COMMITTEE

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Cannon Township:
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Krause Memorial Library Board:
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Laura Weld

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