MOORHEAD COMMUNITY CENTER AND PUBLIC LIBRARY

design brief



JLG architects

A NEW CHAPTER

Going beyond housing rows of bookshelves and archives, Moorhead Community Center & Public Library shows how the next chapter of library design tells a more engaging story, from interactive education to maker spaces, recreation, and resources – all catalyzed by ambitious downtown redevelopment planning over a decade in the making.





CREATING A COMMUNITY CORNERSTONE

When the City, Roers, and Stantec engaged JLG Architects in a partnership to bring the downtown vision to life, it catalyzed transformation. While Stantec led the urban planning components, JLG led the visioning process, presenting concept renderings of a revitalized downtown, including nine blocks of two- to six-story buildings, multi-gabled roofs, colorful wall murals, and rooftop solar arrays surrounding a public plaza that connects to walkable amenities. One of the most prominent structures planned to branch from the public plaza would be the new public library and community center, just steps from Moorhead's City Hall.



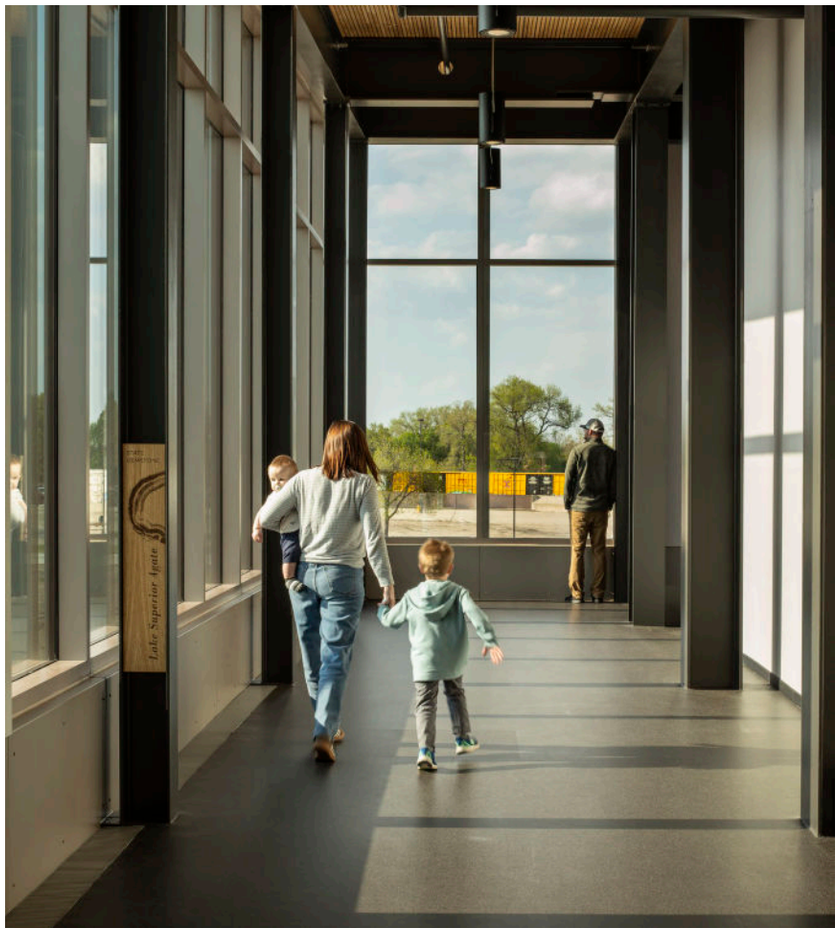
The goal was to "bring back Main Street" with a more vibrant, active, and walkable downtown.

Scan the QR code to read more on how the Moorhead Community Center & Public Library transformed downtown Moorhead.

DOWNTOWN REVITALIZATION

The new library required more than a new building site. It required the removal of the aging Moorhead Center Mall, clearing the way for a revival of the downtown district where civic space, housing, retail, and community life could reconnect.







Yes! 56560

To communicate the project's goals, gain feedback, and build support, JLG worked with local stakeholders and the Mayor's task force to create the 2021 "Yes! 56560" campaign, which engaged community members, City leaders, and local college students in listening sessions via town halls, open houses, public gatherings, and campus conversations. In these sessions, City leaders heard the desire for a more vibrant, active downtown that included walkable amenities, expanded library programming/resources, and attractive housing options.

In late 2022, after a successful citywide campaign, Moorhead voters demonstrated their support for downtown revitalization by overwhelmingly approving a 0.5 percent sales tax increase that would fund the $32 million project.

JLG ARCHITECTS + MILLER HULL

Moorhead's approved sales tax referendum led to a pre-design for the new Moorhead Community Center & Public Library, created in partnership with JLG and Miller Hull's library planners. This pre-design defined programming for a new downtown core and activated public space to replace Moorhead Center Mall's aging infrastructure. The project's programming meetings invited the vested voices of Library leadership, community forums, government representation, and local businesses – groups that expressed interest in community and entrepreneurial resources, connective gathering space, maker space, and a place for year-round activity.



According to the City, within just two weeks of the soft launch, library staff had already issued 300 new library cards.



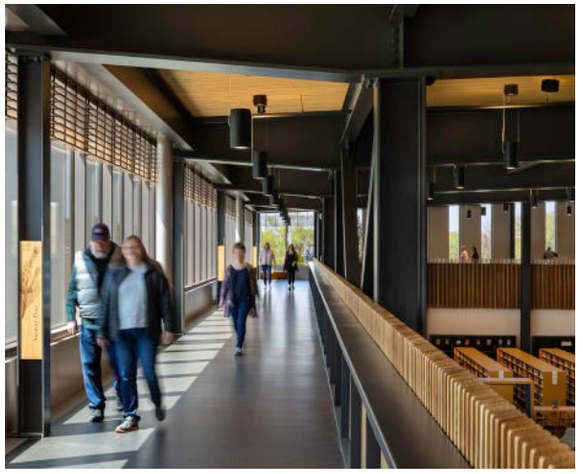


JLG and Miller Hull's programming catalyzed neighborhood development through an "All Under One Roof" design concept that supports library functions, community engagement, and unique indoor activity. The 48,000-square-foot program not only creates space for the Lake Agassiz Regional Library and Moorhead Public Library offices, but also community program rooms and the Spark Center for Entrepreneurship.



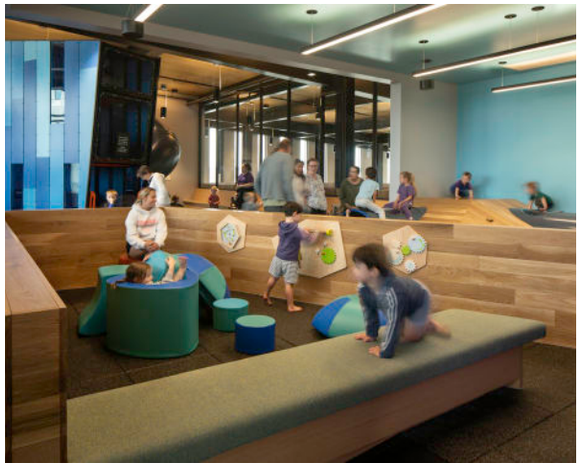
Spark Center

The Spark Center offers free co-working space, fireside chats with founders, practical workshops, and a supportive environment for entrepreneurs and small business owners. This space is designed to strengthen Moorhead's innovation community through collaboration and accessible resources.



Walking Loop

The library's elevated 1/8-mile walking loop, a feature identified as a community need, creates an inviting place for movement, mindfulness, and year-round wellness. The track wraps the perimeter on the second floor and overhangs onto the first floor on the exterior, providing natural, integrated solar protection.



Indoor Play Spaces

On the second floor is a community loft with tables, games, and direct access to the walking loop and outdoor playground. This elevated floor also features a vibrant children's library and indoor play space, altogether providing cozy reading nooks, an activity corner, platform climbers, interactive wall panels, and a toddler zone.

READY FOR THE FUTURE OF MOORHEAD

After nearly six years of discussion, community engagement, and partnerships, the collective team's efforts have successfully catalyzed a walkable downtown with the remodel of City Hall, an all-season open plaza, street-level retail, downtown housing, and the new Moorhead Community Center & Public Library at The Loop. This long-awaited downtown master plan and redevelopment have reimagined an aging downtown as a vibrant destination to live, learn, and gather – all at the heart of new Downtown Moorhead that's ready to grow.





A COLLECTIVE EFFORT

This transformative library is the result of a dedicated, multidisciplinary project team led by the Architect of Record, JLG Architects, and the Design Architect, The Miller Hull Partnership. Together, the team provided specialized expertise in library planning, community engagement, sustainability integration, interior design, and construction management.

The Moorhead Community Center & Public Library is an inclusive, adaptable destination that supports learning, connection, discovery, and evolving community needs.

DESIGN FOR LIFE

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