

**STARK COUNTY DISTRICT LIBRARY  
REQUEST FOR QUALIFICATIONS FOR  
CONSTRUCTION MANAGER AT RISK SERVICES  
Dated Sunday, March 26, 2023**

**Project Owner:** Stark County District Library

**Project Name:** 2023-2028 Facilities Construction Project – which may include, but is not limited to, a new Operations Center, a new Main Library, and potentially other renovations at various branch locations.

**Project Location:** The Project is anticipated to include work at various branches/locations within Stark County.

**Delivery Method:** Construction Manager at Risk, in accordance with the Ohio Revised Code

**Deadline to Submit Qualifications:** 12:00 p.m. local time, **Tuesday, April 25, 2023**

**Introduction:**

The Stark County District Library (the Owner) intends to contract for Construction Manager at Risk (CMR) services in connection with its 2023-2028 Facilities Construction Project (the Project). Initially, the Library intends to authorize services for the new Operations Center. Based upon the results of the work, the Library reserves the right to add additional scopes of work to the Project in its sole discretion, via a task order system under a 2023-2028 term agreement for the Project (which time period may be extended by the Owner in writing, in its discretion) or to enter into separate agreement(s) with different design professionals for future Project phases, in its sole discretion.

As required by Ohio Revised Code Section 9.33, et seq., the Owner requests statements of qualifications from experienced firms to provide CMR services to the Owner in connection with the Work for the Project. This Request for Qualifications (RFQ) includes criteria against which qualifications submitted will be reviewed and evaluated to develop the short-list of firms from which proposals will be requested in the second phase of the selection process. The short-listed firms will be asked to provide both pricing and technical proposals, which will be reviewed and evaluated to determine the firm that will provide the best value to the Owner for the Project.

**Submittals:**

Interested firms (Respondents) must submit **5 hard copies and 1 electronic copy in PDF format** on a flash drive of the requested statement of qualifications (SOQ), enclosed in a sealed envelope. The envelope shall be plainly marked on the outside **“STARK COUNTY DISTRICT LIBRARY – 2023-2028 FACILITIES CONSTRUCTION PROJECT CMR QUALIFICATIONS”**.

SOQs must be delivered to the following address, before the submittal deadline:

Stark County District Library  
Attn: Chris Butler, Fiscal Officer  
715 Market Avenue North  
Canton, Ohio 44702

**Hand deliveries must be made to the Main Library located at 715 Market Avenue North, Canton, Ohio 44702 during the Owner's operating hours. Respondents are responsible for confirming current operating hours.**

The Owner reserves the right to waive any defect or technicality in any SOQ received or to eliminate any CMR that submits an incomplete or inadequate SOQ or that is not responsive to the requirements of this RFQ.

SOQs will be received until the deadline set forth above.

Submittals received after this time may be considered solely in Owner's discretion.

**Communication Protocol:**

All questions concerning this RFQ shall be directed in writing via email to Chris Butler at [cbutler@starklibrary.org](mailto:cbutler@starklibrary.org) by **5:00 p.m. April 14, 2023**. Questions will be reviewed and the Owner will determine whether any addenda should be issued as a result of any pertinent or substantive inquiries. Addenda will be issued to all firms that have requested the RFQ for the Project. Firms shall not rely on any oral instructions or answers. Respondents should not seek to discuss any information directly relating to this procurement with any Owner personnel or anyone affiliated with the Project, except during scheduled site visits, or as otherwise provided for in the RFQ. Violation of this provision may result in disqualification from eligibility for selection.

**Project Overview, Schedule, and Owner Budget:**

- A.** This Project is anticipated to include multiple phases, which may be authorized via a task order system under a term agreement for 2023-2028 (which may be extended by the Owner in writing, in its discretion). However, the Owner will determine in its sole discretion whether to award subsequent phases of work to the selected CMR under the term agreement or to enter into separate agreement(s) with different CMRs or contractors for future Project phases, in its sole discretion.

Initially, the Owner intends to authorize the first phase of the Project which is the demolition of an existing structure and construction of a new 15,000 square foot Operations Center located across the street from the existing Main Library. Additional phases of the Project may include the construction of a new 70,000 square foot Main Library on the Library's existing lot (while continuing to operate the current Main Library at its existing location to the extent possible) followed by demolition of the current Main Library building, as well as other renovations at various branches.

The Project is part of the Library's ReImagine plan and information can be found at <https://www.starklibrary.org/reimagine/>. Additional information, including potential building sites related to the demolition and construction of the Main Library phase of the Project can be found in the Report of Master Planning attached as **Exhibit A**. Such information/document(s) are for reference only. The Owner neither makes any representation nor warranty with respect to, nor assumes any responsibility for the completeness or the accuracy of, such document(s). Respondents must not rely upon the completeness of such document(s) for their purposes.

- B.** The Owner's estimated total budget for the new Operations Center and new Main Library phases of the Project (including all construction costs, design fees, and construction manager at risk fees) is **\$54,000,000.00**.

- C. The Owner anticipates that the CMR will assist with planning and developing the program for each phase of the Project and participate in or lead several meetings with the selected design professional Owner's Board and, staff, as well as several meetings with community members, and to the extent feasible, incorporate their input into the conceptual plans and design for each phase of the Project.
- D. The Owner anticipates commencement of construction for the new Operations Center phase of the Project by spring, 2024.
- E. Design professional services have been procured separately, per the Ohio Revised Code.

**Scope of Services:**

For each authorized phase, CMR services for the Project will include, but not be limited to, design review and pre-construction services, participation in developing the budget and updated construction cost estimates, participation in preparing the construction schedule (including identification of significant milestones for completion of the Work), prequalification of subcontractors to perform the required Work, construction, and close-out phases of the Project. CMR services will be defined in an agreement with the Owner; the form of agreement, including general conditions of the contract for construction, will be provided to the short-listed firms during the RFP phase. For each authorized phase, the scope of the selected firm's services will likely include, but may not be limited to, the following:

**A. Pre-Construction Services**

1. Participate in regularly-scheduled design progress meetings with the Design Professional, the various consultants, and the Owner. The CMR shall provide on-going input with respect to constructability, construction costs, material selection/evaluations, construction duration and phasing, sequence of construction, and other scheduling services, along with construction means and methods.
2. Coordinate/participate in meetings with the Owner and Design Professional, utility companies, and regulatory agencies to expedite the design/permit process.
3. Identify and detail construction phasing and scheduling that will minimize interruptions to Owner operations, if applicable.
4. Identify long-lead procurement items and develop strategies to minimize effects of same.
5. Develop comments, suggestions and cost estimates throughout the phases of design.
6. Develop constructability and value engineering suggestions at all design phases – considering different design/material/life cycle elements.
7. Assist with permit acquisition/approval.
8. Develop prequalification criteria for subcontractors and prequalify subcontractors for the Work, in accordance with Ohio law.
9. Develop potential subcontractor bidders' lists.

10. Develop a detailed, open book cost model and updates based on interim submittals for the Guaranteed Maximum Price (GMP) proposal based on the nearly complete Construction Documents.

## **B. Construction Services**

1. Coordinate with the Owner, the Design Professional, and other stakeholders as necessary.
2. Bond and insure the construction per Ohio law and the Contract Documents.
3. Procure materials.
4. Schedule and manage construction operations.
5. Bid, award (with Owner input, per Ohio law), and manage all construction-related subcontracts.
6. Provide quality control and construction supervision.
7. Provide progress scheduling, monitor/enforce compliance with Schedule.
8. Conduct regular progress meetings.
9. Address all construction related permitting requirements.
10. Maintain safe work site.
11. Perform project closeout including documentation (final wage reports, lien releases, O&M manuals, as-builts, etc.)
12. Provide prevailing wage reporting/accounting.

## **C. Post-Construction Services**

1. Fulfill warranty obligations.
2. Perform other post-construction services.

## **Procurement Process:**

As defined in the Ohio Revised Code and Ohio Administrative Code, the selection process will be conducted in two phases.

1. RFQ. The first phase includes review and evaluation of qualifications submitted by firms interested in providing the required CMR services by the Owner's Evaluation Committee, in accordance with Ohio law. The Evaluation Committee will review and evaluate the qualifications received. A minimum of three short-listed firms that are determined to be qualified to provide the required CMR services will be identified, unless it is determined that there are less than three qualified firms.
2. RFP. Technical and pricing proposals will be requested from the short-listed firms, using a request for proposals. The technical and pricing proposals received will be reviewed and evaluated and, considering both qualifications and

technical/pricing information, the firm determined to provide the best value for the Project will be selected.

**Pre-Submittal Site Visit:**

During the RFQ phase, Respondents may visit the site from the general public's perspective. The Owner reserves the right to have a representative present. Additionally, a pre-submittal site visit will be held on Friday, April 7, 2023 at 3:00 p.m. meet at the Main Library, McKinley Room, 715 Market Avenue North, Canton, Ohio 44702.

**Anticipated Procurement Schedule:**

<b>RFQ PHASE</b>	<b>ANTICIPATED DATE</b>
Short-List of Qualified Firms Announced	Monday, May 1, 2023
<b>RFP PHASE</b>	<b>DATE</b>
Request for Pricing and Technical Proposals issued to Short-Listed Firms	Monday, May 1, 2023
Deadline for Submitting Pricing and Technical Proposals	Monday, May 15, 2023
Interviews	Within 7-10 of submittal deadline
Selection of "Best Value" Proposal	On or before Friday, May 26, 2023

All dates subject to change in Owner's sole discretion.

**Rights of the Owner:**

This RFQ constitutes only an invitation to present qualifications. The rights reserved by the Owner, which shall be exercised in its sole and absolute discretion, include without limitation the right to:

1. Require additional information from one or more Respondents to supplement or clarify the SOQs submitted including, but not limited to, conducting interviews with Respondents if Owner, in Owner's sole discretion, deems such interviews to be helpful.
2. Conduct investigations with respect to the qualifications and experience of each Respondent.
3. Visit and examine any of the facilities referenced in the SOQs and to observe and inspect the operations at such facilities.
4. Waive any defect or technicality in any SOQ received.
5. Determine which Respondents are qualified to be short-listed to receive the RFP and submit Proposals in response to the RFP.

6. Eliminate any Respondent that submits an incomplete or inadequate SOQ or is not responsive to the requirements of this RFQ.
7. Supplement, amend, or otherwise modify this RFQ, prior to the date of submission of the SOQs.
8. Issue one or more amendments to this RFQ extending the due date for the SOQs.
9. Receive questions concerning this RFQ from Respondents and to provide such questions, and the Owner's responses, to all Respondents.
10. Cancel this RFQ or the RFP in whole or in part with or without substitution of another RFQ or RFP if determined to be in the best interest of the Owner.
11. Take any action affecting the RFQ process, the RFP process, or the Project that would be in the best interest of the Owner.
12. Make public any and all documents associated with the Project, including documents submitted to the Owner by Respondents.

#### **SOQ Format and Qualifications Criteria, & Evaluation Process:**

The Owner's Evaluation Committee will review the qualifications received and notify firms if they are included on the short-list of qualified firms. Each Respondent's SOQ will be evaluated according to the following qualifications criteria. It is the responsibility of each Respondent to provide sufficient information demonstrating how the Respondent fulfills each particular criterion.

The format of the SOQ must be as outlined below. Narrative pages are to be 8-1/2 inches by 11 inches. All information provided shall be bound into a single volume. The SOQ must be separated into tabbed sections corresponding to the subparts in Section B below.

A clear and concise presentation of information is encouraged with a maximum page limit of 50 single-sided pages (or 25 double-sided pages), not including resumes of key staff, standard brochures, and financial information and supporting data. Audiovisual materials will not be accepted. Sales brochures are not desired unless directly related to the response and referenced in the text. Below is additional information about the submission requirements to this RFQ.

Only those persons or firms who have obtained an official copy of this RFQ from the Owner will receive any official addenda to this RFQ. Receipt of all addenda shall be acknowledged by Respondents in a transmittal letter with the SOQ.

#### **A. Conformance Review**

Respondent shall be considered responsive if the SOQ responds to the RFQ in all material respects and contains no irregularities or deviations from the RFQ. Each Respondent whose SOQ is rejected as nonresponsive will be notified of the finding that it was nonresponsive.

## B. Qualifications Criteria

Provide the following information for consideration by the Owner as part of the evaluation of Respondent's qualifications. The SOQ must be separated into tabbed sections as follows:

1. **Competence and Services.** When providing the following information, if the firm is a national firm with a branch office in Ohio, provide information limited to the firm's Ohio office projects and experience.
  - a. Provide a summary of the firm's history and philosophy. What is the firm's approach to the CMR delivery method? What is it that makes the firm unique? How long has the firm been in business, and how long have key employees and principals been associated with the firm?
  - b. Identify the CMR team (the firm's proposed employees who would be assigned to perform services for the Project) including key consultants, if any.
  - c. Describe the proposed CMR team in more detail – i.e., credentials, technical training, experience with BIM, education, and experience of the CMR team, in-house, full-time employees and in-house professional disciplines. Provide bios for Project Executive/Project Manager, Project Administrator (Site Level), and Construction Technical Staff (Estimating, Budgeting, Scheduling) only. Include consultants to be used for the Project and the firm's experience with each on past projects. Limit bios to one page in length.
2. **Ability to Provide the Required Services.**
  - a. What is the capacity of the firm and members of the CMR team to provide the required services for the Project in terms of workload and availability for the Operations Center phase, and if authorized, over the duration of the Project? Include a list of current projects and the status of each and relevant information (i.e., budget, type of work, stage of completion, committed staff, and consultants).
  - b. Identify the firm's and CMR team members' representative project experience and CMR delivery method on similar projects, including experience with task order/term agreement arrangements, with an emphasis on public library or similar facility projects in the State of Ohio:
    - (1) List the firm's relevant projects within recent history with an emphasis on Ohio library or similar facility experience and other projects of any type that are similar in size or budget, if any. Include a brief description of the project, including size of project (e.g., square footage) and project delivery model (e.g., general contractor, construction manager at risk, design-build, etc.). Describe experience with use of space, technology, and systems that support library or similar facility functions.
    - (2) Identify projects on which a significant number of the individual team members have collaborated previously.

- c. Proximity of the firm's primary office where the majority of the Project work will be managed/performed to the Project site – List distance in miles, straight-line method.

**3. Past Performance.**

- a. Demonstrate budget management success on projects with similar construction costs for which original estimates/pricing were prepared by the firm. Show comparison of original estimates versus actual final construction costs and variance in percentage only, up to 10 projects may be listed.
- b. Demonstrate schedule management success on projects with similar construction costs for which actual completion dates were significantly shortened versus original contracted completion date or original completion dates were held despite a challenging, unexpected schedule issue that occurred. List a brief summary for each of the circumstances, up to 5 projects may be listed.
- c. References for the firm with an emphasis on Ohio public library or similar facility experience providing:
  - (1) Project name, location, completion year
  - (2) Project owner, owner contact name, owner contact phone number/email
  - (3) Design Professional and Owner's Representative, if any
  - (4) Brief description of the project and its relevance to this RFQ – include construction budget, project size (e.g., square footage), and project delivery model (e.g., general contractor, construction manager at risk, design-build, etc.)
  - (5) Individual team members associated with project and their role on the project
  - (6) Construction budget, change order amounts, and actual construction cost
  - (7) Quality of Work performed
  - (8) Dispute Resolution (dealing with subcontractor and supplier issues)
  - (9) Management of subcontractors and suppliers
  - (10) The initial scheduled completion date and the actual date services were completed or the current anticipated completion date

- 4. Financial Responsibility.** Demonstrate firm's bonding capacity as evidenced by a recently dated letter from the firm's surety agent listing current available bonding capacity, as well as total maximum bonding capacity. The letter should also state the surety agent's commitment to provide the required payment and performance bonds in accordance with OAC 153:1-4-02, if the firm is determined to be the firm that will provide the best value for the Project.



5. **History of Performance with goals of diversity and inclusion.** Describe the firm's history of performance with goals of diversity and inclusion. Identify any projects where the firm has been denied a contract for failure to meet goals for Disadvantaged Business Enterprise ("DBE") or other diversity and inclusion participation or to demonstrate good faith compliance towards meeting DBE goals.
6. **Other qualifications consistent with the scope and needs for the Project.**
  - a. **Firm's Average Revenue.**
    - (1) Firm's annual revenue associated with similar construction projects for the past 7 years.
    - (2) Firm's total annual revenue for each of the past 7 years.
  - b. **Insurance Coverage & Claims History.**
    - (1) Identify the Professional Liability coverage of the firm, including claims history for the last 10 years.
    - (2) Identify Commercial General Liability coverage of the firm, including claims history for the last 10 years.
    - (3) Provide specific information about any claims asserted by or against the firm within the last 10 years, including the resolution of the claim(s).
    - (4) Identify any claims asserted against the firm's performance or payment bond(s) on other projects within the last 10 years, including the resolution of the claim(s).
  - c. **Value Added Experience.** Demonstrate the firm's/team's past success in providing past construction manager at risk projects with value added components thru the firm's/team's creative or innovative value engineering, construction technique or other similar methods. For each example, provide a brief one paragraph summary. Include recommendations that enhanced the cost effectiveness and functionality of similar facilities.
  - d. **Prior Performance with the Owner.** Has the firm or any of CMR team ever worked on Projects for the Owner in the past? Was the relationship successful?
  - e. **Familiarity with Local Area.** The Library will consider each CMR firm's experience and involvement with the local community including with subcontractors/suppliers in Stark County. Demonstrate the firm's past success with and describe the firm's successful strategies to encourage local subcontractor/supplier participation in Stark County. Discuss in detail, any knowledge of the local area and working relationships with local subcontractors and suppliers.

**Additional Instructions:**

All SOQs and subsequent Proposals received in response to the procurement documents will become the property of the Owner and will not be returned. Note that all information submitted in response to this RFQ and to any subsequent RFP for CMR services is a public record, which will

be made available for inspection as required by ORC 149.43 upon request at the conclusion of the selection process. Respondents recognize and agree that the Owner will not be responsible or liable in any way for any losses that the Respondent may suffer from the disclosure of information or materials to third parties.

Each CMR firm submitting qualifications or any other information as part of this selection process is responsible for all costs associated with preparing the submission and participating in the selection process.

The Owner may reject any or all qualification statements received or cancel this process at any time for any reason and the Owner will have no liability for taking such action. The Owner reserves the right to waive minor variations in the selection process.

*The Owner appreciates your interest in the Project and looks forward to reviewing your qualifications for the Project.*

**Attachments:**

Exhibit A – Report of Master Planning



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# COMMUNITY VISION PLAN

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**Main Library**

**Mobile Services**

**Branch Libraries**

**New Opportunities**

**2023**

Prepared by:

**Kent State University's  
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**Mobile Services - Analysis and Recommendations**

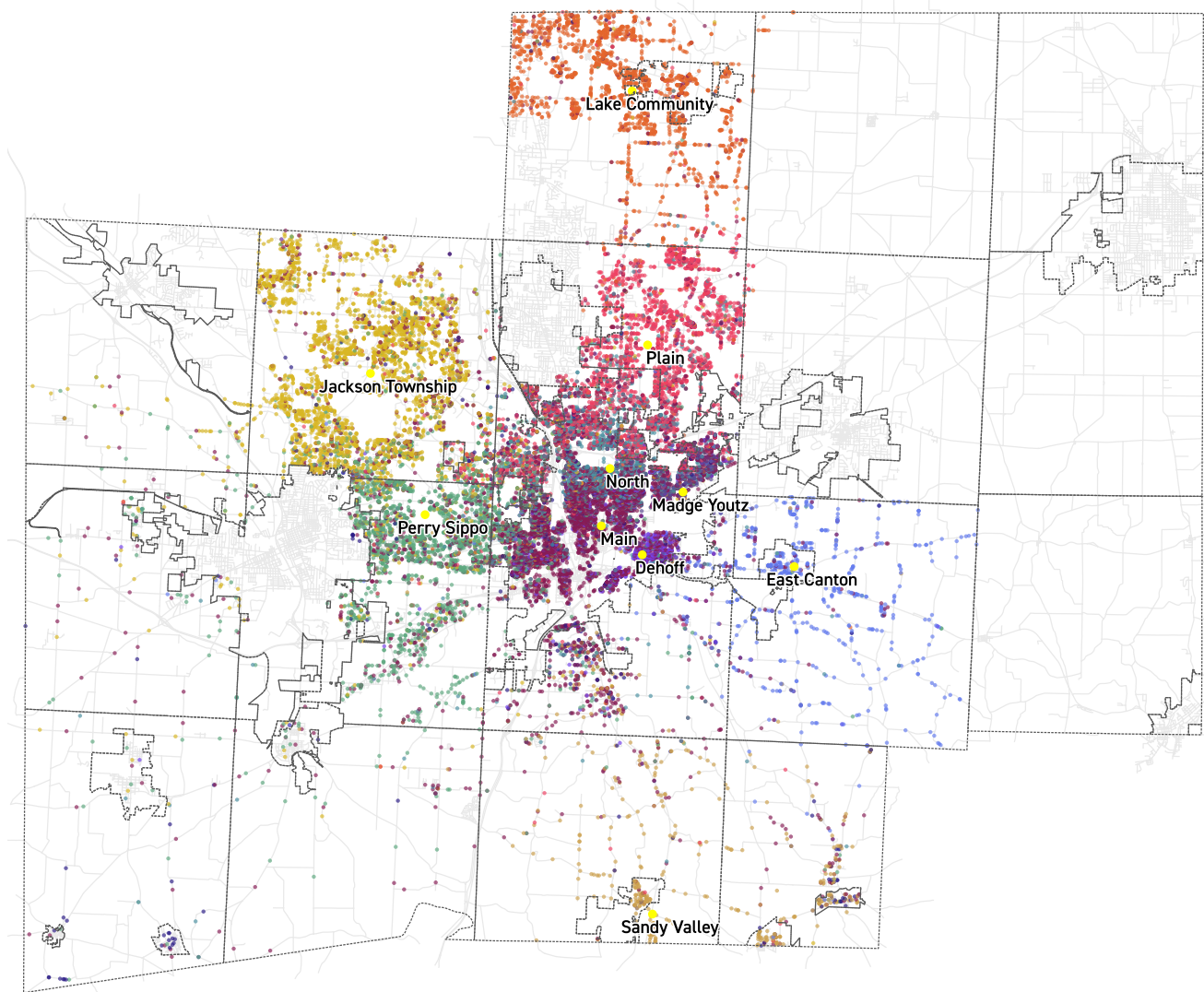
**Branch Library Recommendations**

- 1. Plain Community Branch
- 2. Sandy Valley Branch
- 3. New Opportunities

**On-going Improvements**

- 1. DeHoff Memorial Branch
- 2. East Canton Branch
- 3. Jackson Community Branch
- 4. Lake Community Branch
- 5. Madge Youtz Branch
- 6. North Branch
- 7. Perry Sippo Branch

**APPENDIX**



**FIG 1** Stark County residents tend to use the library nearest their homes, but the Main Library attracts users from throughout the county.

# MAIN LIBRARY

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Contemporary libraries are evolving, inside and out, to meet the changing needs of their communities. The Main Library has an important role to play in Downtown Canton and Stark County, as a physical space that is open to all, with an expanding range of learning resources, programs, and services.

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## 1. BACKGROUND

Stark Library, through its Re|imagine process is renovating all of the branch libraries, making technology upgrades, and creating more flexible spaces for a wide range of use. The Re|imagine process for the Main Library is more complex, aiming to expand the role of the library in civic life, serve the needs of current library users, attract new users, and anticipate future needs and opportunities.

The Re|imagine process for the Main Library is exploring some central questions, including:

- How does the Main Library function now, as an anchor for the immediate neighborhood and resource for the entire county?
- Can the existing library building be renovated to meet the current and future needs of the community, or should a new building be considered?
- How does the Main Library interact with nearby civic uses, and are their opportunities for greater connectivity?

An analysis of library card data indicates that most library patrons in Stark County use the library branch closest to their homes. However, the Main Library attracts users from the immediate area while also drawing visitors from throughout the county. A Re|imagined Main Library will provide a place where live residents

in urban, suburban, and rural parts of Stark County can come together for programs and services that go beyond what is available in their local branches.

Some community stakeholders have expressed concerns about the safety of Downtown Canton. Safety issues and the perception of crime in Downtown Canton is a deterrent that keeps some county residents from visiting the Main Library. A reimagined Main Library could function as a safe haven in the city, a place that is comfortable and welcoming to all. The library's entrance and internal layout, as well as parking lots, public spaces, and transit connections can be intentionally designed for the comfort, safety, and convenience of community members, library staff and visitors.

In addition to being a regional draw, the Main Library serves as the local branch for downtown residents, a diverse group of people with differing needs. Residents of the nearby Shorb neighborhood, older residents and people with disabilities who live in the Downtowner apartment building adjacent to the Main Library, and residents of newer downtown developments like the Onesto Lofts, Hercules, and the Suites at 400 are all part of the downtown population mix. The Re|imagine process for the Main Library will directly engage with these residents, and also with nearby businesses and students from nearby schools.

In focus group sessions and interviews, downtown stakeholders noted that the Main Library building feels closed-off from the rest of the downtown district. Better integration between the library and the surrounding downtown will increase library usage while helping to draw people from throughout the county to downtown restaurants and amenities.

Downtown Canton is in the midst of several major redevelopment initiatives, including:

*The Cultural Center for the Arts* ArtsInStark owns and operates the 330,000 square foot Cultural Center for the Arts and the covered parking deck that connects it to the Civic Center (which is owned by The City of Canton.) ArtsinStark is in the midst of a master planning process for the Cultural Center campus, which includes the demolition of the ArtsinStark administration building at the northeast corner of 9th Avenue and Cleveland Street, and the construction of a public park on this site.

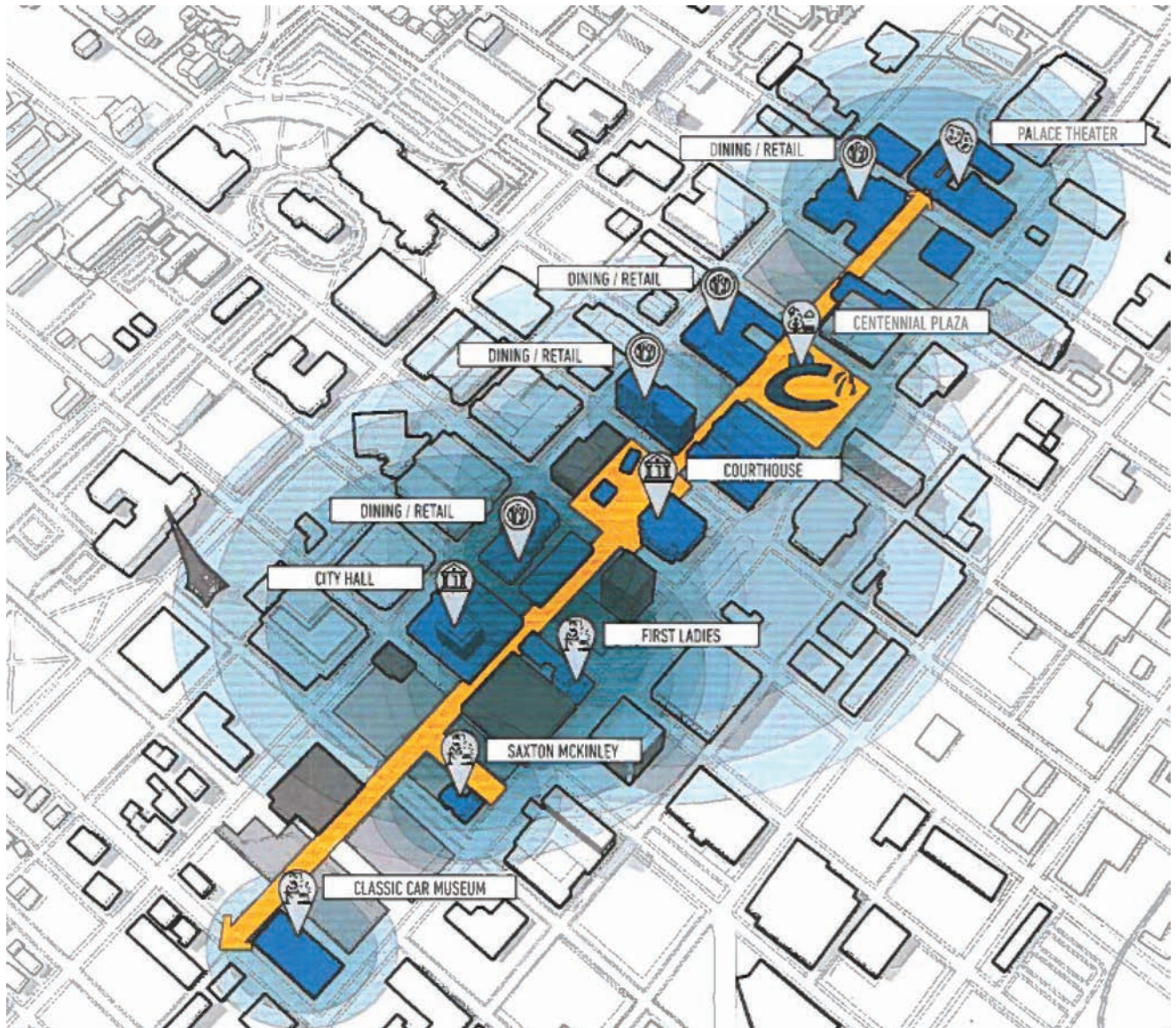
ArtsinStark also owns land along Cleveland Avenue (from 9th to 11th Avenue) just west of their campus. ArtsinStark is working with a developer to build workforce housing on this property, which will diversify the range of housing available downtown. A road diet is planned for Cleveland Avenue to narrow the roadway, widen the sidewalks, and allow for better bike and pedestrian access, additional trees, and street lighting.

*Court Avenue Plan* envisions outdoor dining and cafes along Court Avenue, from Centennial Plaza to the historic Palace Theater. Canton's Special Improvement District would maintain signage and planters along Court Avenue to give this narrow street an inviting, pedestrian-friendly character. The plan envisions pedestrians and bicyclists sharing Court Avenue with continued vehicular access for deliveries, trash removal, and emergency vehicles. A second phase of the Court Avenue plan could extend from the Palace Theater to the Main Library and the Cultural Center for the Arts. However, the location of the theater building and a grade change along Court Avenue will make it difficult to implement a continuous connection between the theater and the library.

*McKinley High School relocation:* Canton City Schools are exploring the relocation of McKinley High School from its current location near the Pro Football Hall of Fame to a proposed new location on the Timken Career Campus in downtown Canton. This move is likely to occur within approximately five years.

While these developments will not directly impact the Main Library, there may be opportunities to collaborate with and connect the library with other downtown investments.





**FIG 2:** Court Avenue Plan showing connection between Centennial Plaza and the Palace Theater, with potential extension to the Main Library and the Cultural Center for the Arts. (MKS and the City of Canton)

## 2. GOALS & OBJECTIVES

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The Main Library is reimagined as a downtown anchor—a lively hub of technology and activity, with areas for research and study, social activities, and community connections.

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### MAIN LIBRARY GOALS

- The Main Library will be the standard-bearer for the entire Stark Library system, a unique county-wide resource that serves existing patrons and attracts new ones.
- The Main Library will be a local resource for residents of nearby neighborhoods, workers, and visitors in Downtown Canton.
- The Main Library will function as a freestanding public resource but could also be integrated into development initiatives in Downtown Canton as they emerge.
- The Main Library will be a flexible space that can accommodate a wide range of programs and be readily adaptable to changing community needs.

### MAIN LIBRARY OBJECTIVES

- To strengthen the identity of the Stark Library system with a highly visible and prominent downtown landmark.
- To improve circulation and navigation, inside and outside of the library building.
- To support library staff by making it easier for staff to deliver library services and collaborate with each other.
- To expand outdoor public space in ways that support library programs and enhance Downtown Canton.
- To allow for possible integration with emerging plans for Court Avenue and the Cultural and Civic Center campus.



### 3. EXISTING CONDITIONS

The CUDC toured the Main Library with the Library leadership team, documenting existing conditions and diagramming library functions. The existing building is approximately 114,409 square feet. Although the building is large, its unusual configuration limits how it can be used and results in some challenges, described below::

***First Floor:*** The entry to the library from the parking lot is sunken and has a low canopy that might seem unwelcoming, especially to new library users. Once people are inside of the building, the library feels bright and inviting, with a well-staffed main desk and greenery in the central atrium.

The Friends of the Library store is an active presence near the front entrance. The entry area has space for community groups to set up and share information. The location of the McKinley Room near the main entrance is convenient for

community meetings, although it is not readily visible from the front entrance. The New Book Room, visible from the front entrance, has an appealing layout that is popular with library users.

However, the elevator is somewhat far from the front door, which could be a challenge for older visitors and people with disabilities. Internal columns and walls cut off sight lines to some areas on the first floor, creating potential security issues and increased staffing needs. The concrete structure of the building makes it difficult to reconfigure spaces for new programs and possibilities. The children's area does not have many open areas for activities and play.

Staff offices on the first floor have little natural light. The lack of windows on the Market Avenue side of the building also presents a blank wall to pedestrians and drivers on this major downtown corridor.

## Existing Building



**FIG 3:** Existing Layout - First Floor

## Existing Building

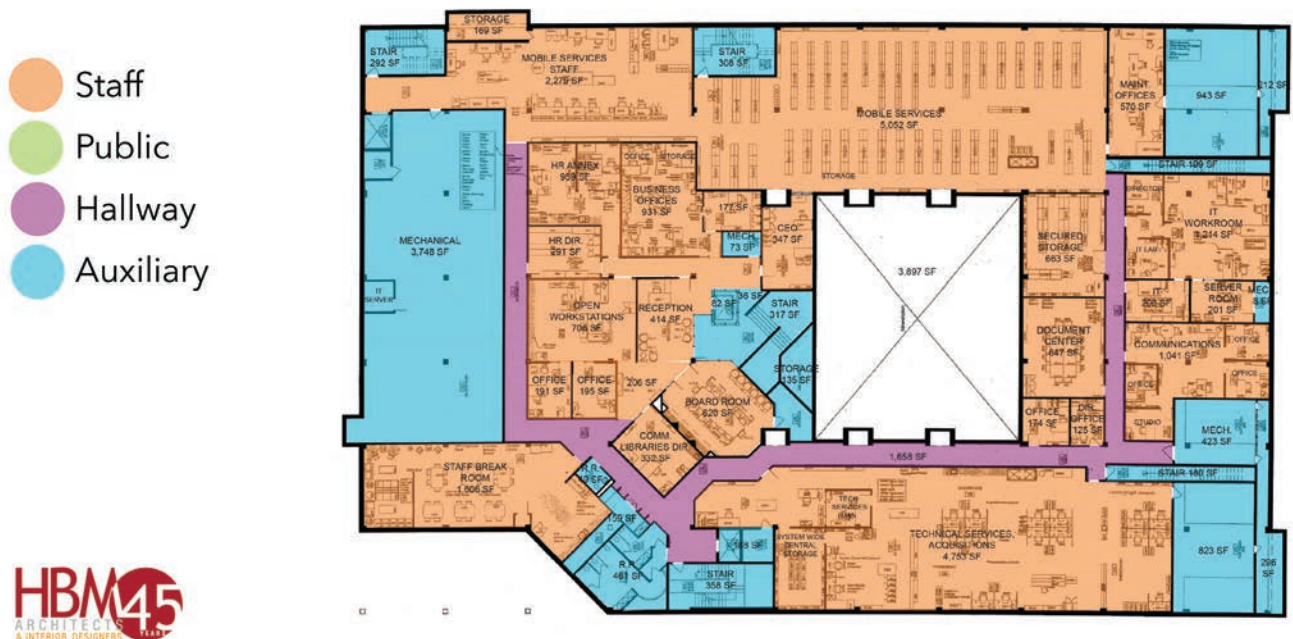


FIG 4: Existing Layout - Lower Level

*Lower Level:* The lower level has ample office space for staff and a well-equipped board room. However, staff offices lack natural lighting and the workspaces are fragmented in ways that limit staff interaction and collaboration. The donut shape of this floor limits flexibility. The mechanical rooms are large and may be oversized for new equipment.

## Existing Building



FIG 5: Existing Layout - Upper Level

Upper Level: The Genealogy Department on the second floor is a regional resource. The upstairs location enables library staff to keep important reference materials secure, but it also makes the Department almost invisible, except to users who already know it is there. Genealogy collections are projected to grow so more space may be needed. Highlighting some of the activities of the Genealogy Department and displaying interesting historical materials on the first floor would increase awareness and help to celebrate the community's heritage.

The Young Adults area gives teens a place to meet, study, and interact. However, the area feels dark and cut off from the rest of the building. And since this area is open to the floor below, noise can be an issue. An enclosed place would allow teens to make noise without distracting others.



## 4. Design Features and Programming Ideas

Through innovative design features and expansive programming, libraries can reach new audiences and play an essential role in community revitalization.



**FIG 7:** The existing, sunken entrance is somewhat hidden and unwelcoming, especially for first-time visitors.



**FIG 8:** In comparison, the landscape features at the entrance to the St. Joe County Library in South Bend, Indiana draw people in. (2022 Library Design Showcase)



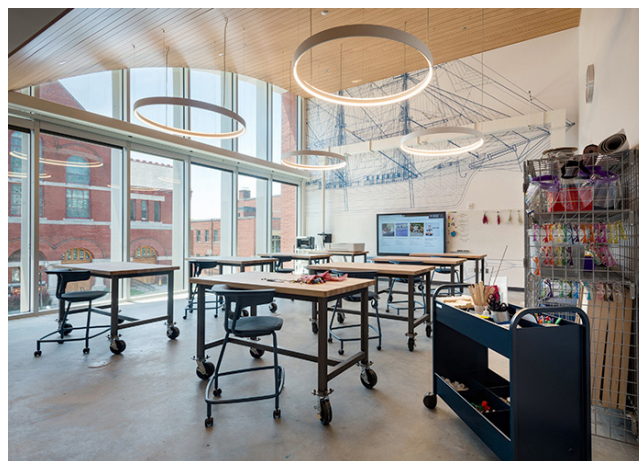
**FIG 9:** Public art would strengthen the Main Library's presence in Downtown Canton, like this installation for Norman Public Library Central in Oklahoma. (Unbound | Paul Cocksedge, artist)

Stakeholder interviews, focus groups with library staff and community members, and a work session with the Library Board explored a range of physical improvements and programming ideas for the Main Library. Input from this process is compiled in the Appendix.

Possible physical improvements and programming ideas discussed for the Main Library include:

- *Prominent landscaped entrance* - to make people welcome and to increase the visual prominence of the library in the downtown district.
- *Transparent building facade / active street presence* - currently, the library does not attract much attention from Market Avenue. People can drive past the library without noticing it. Although it is a large building with good signage, it is perceived as a blank wall from Market Avenue. Also, the building turns its back on Court Avenue. A more glassy building facade would offer views into the library, to engage passersby with the exciting activities happening inside. More windows would also give the building a glow at night, energizing the street presence after dark.
- *Green building features* - which could include a green roof, solar panels, stormwater rain gardens for the parking lot, energy-efficient light fixtures, and other building and site features that reduce energy consumption and the library's impact on the environment.
- *Outdoor public space* - for library programs and as a downtown amenity.
- *Public art* - could include outdoor sculptures and murals, and indoor artwork, from local, regional, or nationally known artists.

- *Flexible workspaces for patrons* - for home-based workers, local entrepreneurs, students, and anyone else who needs a quiet, comfortable place to work.
- *Flexible workspaces for staff* - to enhance opportunities for collaboration.
- *Small meeting spaces* for individual study, small groups, and meetings with community service providers.
- *Large on-site book collection* - the library has an efficient process for transferring books from other branches or from storage. But many patrons enjoy having a large collection of books to choose from physically on the shelves. The Main Library is seen as a repository for the whole collection, a place where people know they can find what they are looking for.
- *Classroom space* - for continuing education classes, school programs, and other events.
- *Career exploration center* - a dedicated space for workforce development, job training programs, and employment assistance.
- *Gamer Space* - for children and young adults interested in playing video games and participating in e-sports.
- *Auditorium* - for hosting speakers and special events.
- *State-of-the-art maker space* - the existing Maker Studio in the library offers a range of tools along with guidance for how to use them. An enhanced maker space could become a county-wide resource for beginners and for people interested in the most advanced fabrication tools and techniques.
- *Video production facilities* - for people to make and edit movies and video clips for social media, business promotion, family memories, etc.
- *Recording studio* - for musicals, podcasters, and people interested in oral histories.



**FIG 10:** Flexible work spaces, like this example at Medford Public Library in Massachusetts, offer a range of community benefits. (2022 Library Design Showcase)



**FIG 11:** Physical access to lots of books is important to many library users. The 53rd Street Library in New York maintains an area feeling between the book stacks. (TEN Arquitectos, photo: Michael Moran/Otto)



**FIG 12:** Video production facilities, like this one at Hale Library in Manhattan, Kansas, are increasingly popular with library users. (2022 Library Design Showcase, photo: Randy Braley)





**FIG 13:** SAME (So All May Eat) Café operates as a social venture in the Downtown Toledo Library. (ConecToledo)

- *Indoor active play area for children* - learning takes many forms among young children and physical activity can enhance the learning process. Given the long winters and unpredictable weather in Ohio, an indoor play space could provide a needed amenity for children and their parents/caregivers.
- *Café* - a dedicated space in the library for a small coffee shop, either run by a local business or operated as a social venture.
- *Features and programs that go beyond the requirements of the Americans with Disabilities Act* - all public facilities are required to be accessible to people with disabilities. Generally, these requirements are addressed through accessible parking spaces, wheelchair accessible buildings, ramps and other investments to ensure that people with physical limitations have full access to a facility. But some libraries have taken accessibility a step further to include resources for people with vision and hearing impairments, and for people with cognitive impairments including autism and dementia.

There was no clear consensus on features and programs the Main Library must have, but stakeholders and focus groups members agreed the Main Library needs significant investments to meet the needs of current and future patrons.

Some ideas had more support than others and everyone agreed that the success of any idea would depend on how it was implemented. For example, a state-of-the-art maker space would need on-going investment to keep the equipment in good shape and to purchase new technologies as they become available. A cafe could be a good addition to downtown, but only if it was well-managed and highly visible, with hours that align with downtown activities.



All of the input from the focus groups is located in the appendix. In summary:

The Library Board thought that the Main Library needs to have flexible work spaces for patrons. Board members also expressed strong support for a prominent landscaped entrance and outdoor public space, as well as a state-of-the-art maker space and classroom space in the library. Support was mixed for the other ideas.

Among library staff members, there was strong support for having a large collection of books, videos, and other materials available on-site. Staff members noted that patrons expect to find lots of books on the shelves and they are frustrated when materials are not immediately available. Staff members had mixed support for the other ideas, raising questions about which investments would be most likely to increase library usage.

In the community focus groups, there was strong support for video production facilities and a recording studio. Participants noted that many young people are skilled at digital production and are active on social media. They have video production and recording facilities in their schools, but on the weekends and in the summer, many young people lack access to the technology they need.

In all of the focus groups, there was significant support for public art, although the forms that public art could take inside the library building and on the site are yet to be determined. There was also support for outdoor public spaces, provided that these spaces could be maintained and controlled by the library. There was some discussion of courtyard spaces and roof gardens that could be open during library hours.

Concerns were raised about loitering, but also a deep understanding that library patrons come from all walks of life. Focus group members also recognized the need to take an expansive view of the Americans with Disabilities Act, as the library is well-positioned to set a high standard for accessibility and inclusion.

There was little support for an auditorium in the Main Library. Many library programs currently take place at the Palace Theater. The nearby Cultural Center for the Arts also has auditorium facilities. Collaborating on programming with institutional neighbors helps to weave the library into the downtown district.

There was limited support for green building features. Some focus group members noted that visible features like green roofs and stormwater rain gardens could enhance the Main Library's physical presence and also serve as teaching tools about environmental issues and climate change.

## 5. Aligning Design Features and Programs with Goals

In order to best meet the needs of the community and the align with the goals of the Re|imagine process, the Main Library either needs a large scale renovation, or to be completely rebuilt.

Specific design features and programs can advance goals for the Main Library as follows:

**Goal 1:** The Main Library will be the standard-bearer for the entire Stark Library system, a unique county-wide resource that serves existing patrons and attracts new ones.

- *Large on-site book collection* - The branch libraries can request books and other materials for patrons, but the Main Library is seen as a repository for the whole collection, a place where people know they can immediately access what they are looking for.
- *State-of-the-art maker space* - As digital technologies become more widely pervasive and easy to use, a maker space may become a common feature in many libraries, in much the same way that photocopiers and wi-fi access are widely available in libraries. The Maker Studio in the Main Library could set the standard for the Stark Library system, offering easy access and training to the latest tools and technologies.
- *Video production facilities and recording equipment* would be costly to incorporate into all of the branch libraries, so comprehensive facilities located in the Main Library could serve residents county-wide.
- *Green building features* would demonstrate the library's commitment to a healthy environment and foster learning opportunities in science, technology, engineering, and math. Prominent green building features

on the Main Library could inspire smaller but impactful green features adapted for the branch libraries.

- *Features and programs that go beyond the requirements of the Americans with Disabilities Act* - accessibility investments at the Main Library could underscore the Library's commitment to serving all people.

**Goal 2:** The Main Library will be a local resource for residents of nearby neighborhoods, workers, and visitors in Downtown Canton.

- *Small meeting spaces* are useful for residents looking for a quiet place to work, social service providers, tutors, small business owners and entrepreneurs, students collaborating on projects, and other users. The ability to combine or reconfigure small meeting spaces will make them more adaptable to neighborhood needs.
- *Career exploration center* would help downtown residents find employment opportunities and develop new job skills. It could also provide a platform for downtown businesses to recruit and train employees.
- *Gamer space* could provide a fun and free recreational opportunity for downtown residents and a gathering space for students from nearby schools.
- *Indoor active play area for children* would be an appealing, four-season amenity for families in the Shorb neighborhood and attract visitors from surrounding areas.

**Goal 3:** The Main Library will function as a freestanding public resource but could also be integrated into development initiatives in Downtown Canton as they emerge.

- A prominent landscaped entrance will reinforce the Main Library as an important downtown anchor and help connect and integrate the Main Library with nearby destinations.
- A transparent building facade and active street presence will make the library a more prominent presence in the downtown district and invite people to take part in what is happening inside. If interior lighting and activities are visible from the street, the library will generate more foot traffic and this part of downtown will feel safer and livelier, day and night.
- Outdoor public spaces could extend the library's programming into the surrounding downtown area, enhance the Court Avenue corridor, and make new connections to the Civic Center for the Arts.
- Murals and other public art are abundant in Downtown Canton. By investing in public art, the library could increase its visibility in the downtown district and become more integrated into downtown revitalization efforts.
- Cafe could be operated as a private venture by a local business, or as a donation-based, fair exchange nonprofit cafe that serves healthy food to everyone, regardless of ability to pay (SAME Cafe at the Toledo Public Library operates under this model)
- Auditorium, if needed, could be designed to complement, rather than compete with other downtown venues.

**Goal 4:** The Main Library will be a flexible space that can accommodate a wide range of programs and be readily adaptable to changing community needs.

- Flexible workspaces in the Main Library can be designed to meet today's needs and adapt to as new preferences emerge.
- Classroom spaces could provide swing space for the school district during construction projects.

# 5. Building and Site Alternatives

Can the existing Main Library building be transformed into a contemporary library that meets community needs, now and in the future? Or would it be easier and more cost-effective to build a new Main Library building? This section looks at both alternatives.

## Remodeling the Existing Building

*Advantages of remodeling the existing building include:*

- The building appears to be structurally sound.
- It is in a good location between the core downtown district and the Cultural Center.
- The building is architecturally interesting and possibly eligible for landmark designation
- The building has a lot of space / floor area.
- There is ample parking and access for the bookmobile fleet.

*Disadvantages of remodeling the existing building include:*

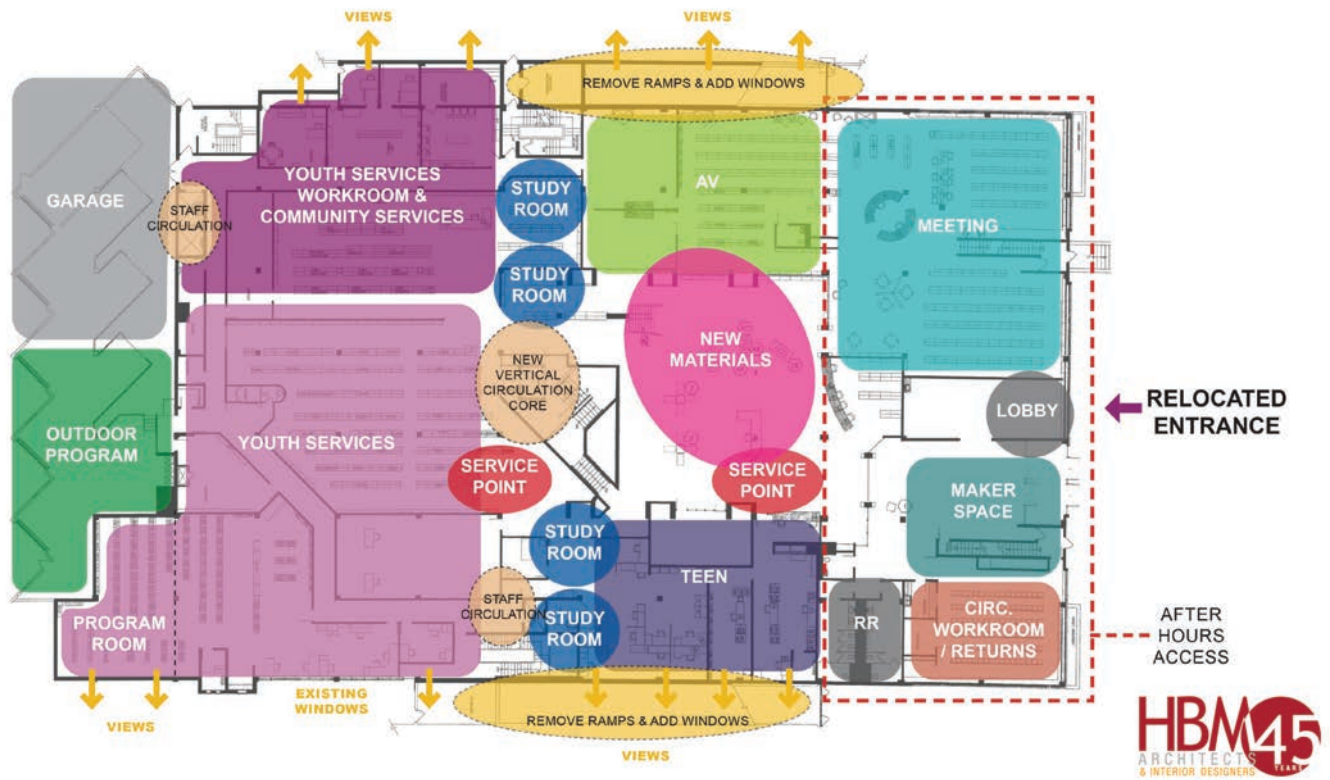
- The structure and floor plan are not flexible. It could be difficult and expensive to make major modifications.
- The building’s mechanical systems are outdated and need to be replaced. Installing all new mechanical systems will be expensive.
- Existing staff work spaces are fragmented, which limits opportunities for internal collaboration.

- The large, complex floor plan creates some security challenges.
- The building is perceived as a physical barrier in the downtown district and is not well-integrated into the surrounding area.
- Activities inside the library are not visible from the outside.

The existing building is approximately 114,409 square feet. This large, inefficient space may become increasingly expensive to operate over the long term. A new main library building could include the features and services desired by the community in approximately 70,000 square feet.

In addition to updating all of the mechanical systems in the existing building, some major modifications would be needed to give the Main Library a contemporary appearance and improved functionality. These modifications would include redesigning the main entrance, removing the existing parking ramps, and adding green space and outdoor program space.





**FIG 14:** Proposed improvements to Reimagine the first floor of the Main Library.



**FIG 15:** Existing main entry.



**FIG 16:** Concept for a brighter, more welcoming main entry, with a higher canopy and landscaping that extends slightly into the existing parking lot.



**FIG 17:** Existing garage bays for bookmobile fleet.



**FIG 18:** Garage bays could be transformed for community use.

***Court Avenue:*** The Main Library could help to anchor the planned pedestrian district along Court Avenue in Downtown Canton. The parking ramps on the existing building could be removed to allow for windows and possibly public art on the Court Avenue facade of the building, anticipating the implementation of the City's plan for Court Avenue.

***Transforming the garage bays:*** The library's fleet of bookmobiles could be relocated to the Cleveland Avenue (CAB) building and the existing garage bays could be remodeled for small meeting rooms and workspaces, looking out onto a small cafe and outdoor space.

***Downtown Connection:*** The southeast corner of the Main Library building on Market Street is an important connection point between the library and the downtown district. Currently, this area has a drive-through book drop. Relocating the book drop and opening up this corner with a sidewalk cafe or other active, pedestrian-friendly use would reinforce the relationship between the library and downtown.

***Interior Reconfiguration:*** Office spaces and book stacks on the first floor of the existing Main Library could be reconfigured to accommodate a co-working space and a cafe. Staff offices for Tech Services, Collection, Inventory, Mobile Services, Maintenance, and IT could be moved from the basement of the Main Library to the CAB building (remodeled) or to a new building on the site of the CAB building.

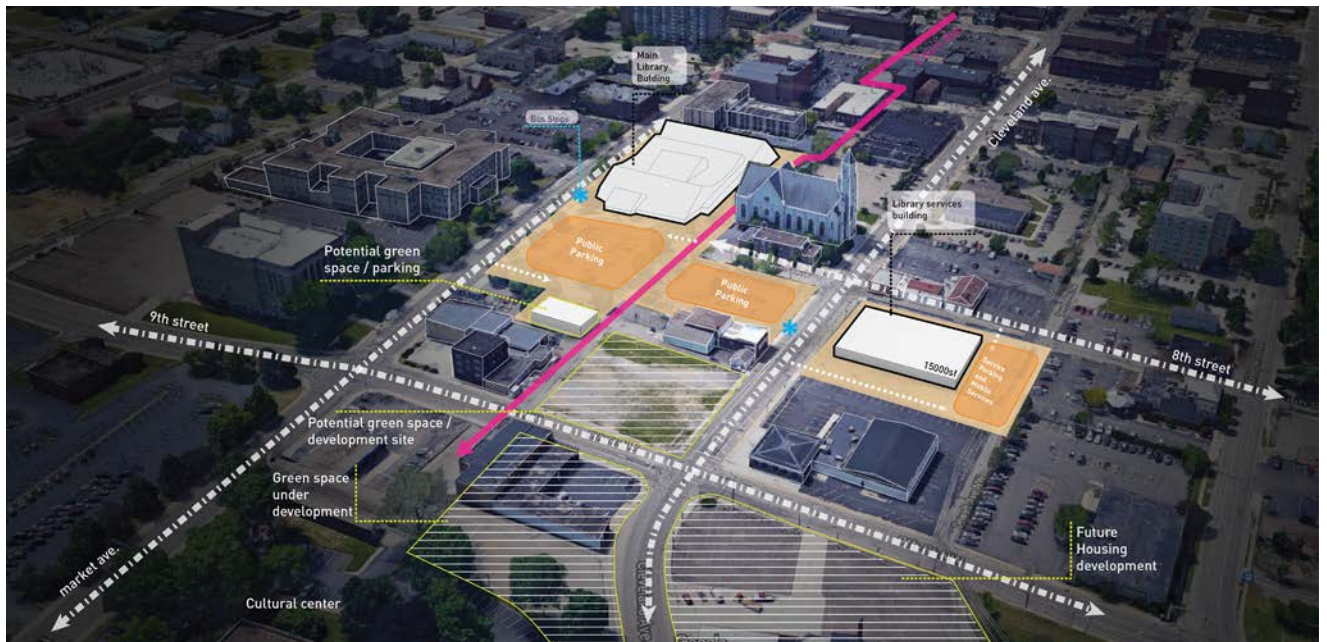




**FIG 19:** View of library from Downtown.



**FIG 20:** Opening up this corner of the library with a sidewalk cafe or other active use to draw downtown workers, residents, and visitors to the library.



**FIG 21:** Remodeling the Main Library; relocating Mobile Services and other library services to the Cleveland Avenue Building (renovated) or a new building on the CAB site.

### **Building a New Main Library**

The alternative to major renovations is to construct a new Main Library building. A new building would be approximately 70,000 square feet, about half the size of the existing building.

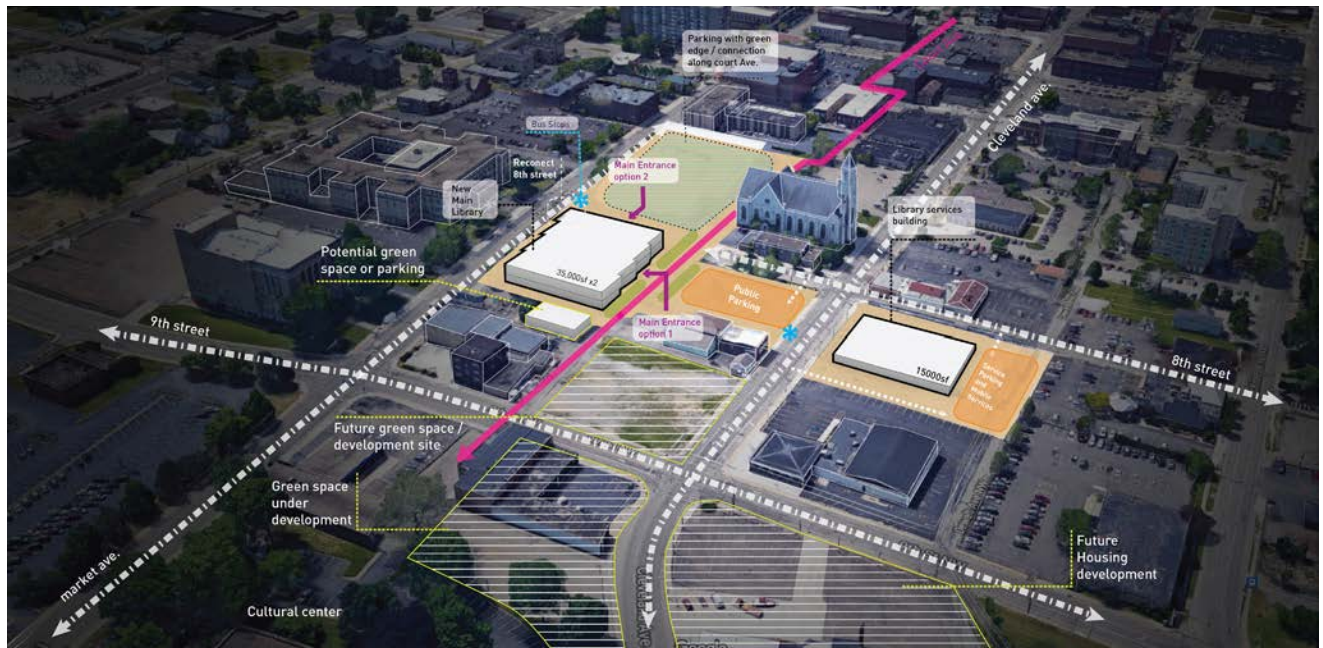
#### *Advantages of a new building include:*

- A new building would be purpose built and designed for the specific needs and priorities of library staff and the community.
- A smaller footprint would be more energy-efficiency and have lower long-term operating costs.
- The existing building has a distinct look that reflects the 1970s era when it was built. A new building will look and feel more contemporary.
- Library operations could be maintained in the existing building while a new building is constructed, resulting in less disruption for library patrons and staff.
- A second, smaller building could replace CAB Building, to house Library Services and the bookmobile fleet.

#### *Disadvantages a new building include:*

- Site preparation expenses and cost of new utilities.
- Design and construction costs of a new building.
- A new library building could be constructed on the site of the existing library or on other land the library already owns.





### **New Library Building Option 1 - Activating Market Avenue and Court Avenue**

Construct a new, two-story, 70,000 square foot on the library's existing parking lot on Market Avenue, just south of the existing library building. Demolish the existing library building and use the site for a parking lot and green space. Demolish the CAB Building and new, 15,000 square Library Services building and Book Mobile garage on the CAB Building site.

In this option, the Market Avenue facade of the new library could be designed for maximum visual impact. The Court Avenue facade could have a mural or other public art installation to help activate the Court Avenue connection to downtown and the Cultural Center. When the new library building is complete, the existing library could be demolished. The site could be used for parking or for a community green space that integrates the library to its surroundings and provides an amenity for residents of the adjacent apartment building.

