

Neighborhood Resilience Centers:

a case statement for infrastructure investment in Saint Paul's libraries

TRANSFORMING LIBRARIES

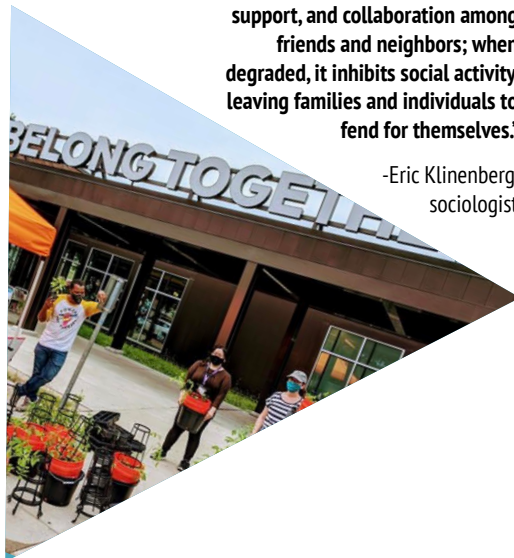
Imagine gathering spaces in our communities for neighbors to meet and connect, for job seekers to access WiFi and resume help, for children to discover and learn through play, and for community members to work, study, and access services. These free, accessible spaces that welcome everyone exist in our public libraries. They are neighborhood resilience centers.

Libraries are essential to our social infrastructure. Through extensive community dialogue, Saint Paul Public Library learned community members—across demographics and age groups—see their library as a space for exposure to new ideas and people and a place to connect with others.

As we emerge from the COVID-19 pandemic, we want to welcome and invite community members back into public spaces and into safe connection with each other. People will need time and space to process, heal, and transform. We have an opportunity to engage community members, across similarities and differences, to redesign the library spaces they want and need—now and for the next generation.

“When social infrastructure is robust, it fosters contact, mutual support, and collaboration among friends and neighbors; when degraded, it inhibits social activity, leaving families and individuals to fend for themselves.”

-Eric Klinenberg,
sociologist



We dream of a library that is reflective of our beautifully diverse communities, a library that says out loud and clear that new and long-time residents, immigrants, LGBTQ+ people, Black, Indigenous, and People of Color, youth and members of the disability community are vital contributors to the story of our community.

We dream of a library that invites participation of people of varying abilities with dignity, accessibility, and ease.

-Hamline Midway Library Association

\$21.1 million capital investment

Transform three well-worn libraries and
improve technology and play and learn space at all library locations

Technology-Rich Spaces

Libraries play a critical role in digital access and equity. Technology within library spaces must evolve to keep pace with the needs of community members.

All 13 Saint Paul Public Library locations and their meeting rooms will be enabled with technology to facilitate work and collaboration with outlets, projectors, video capability, and more.

\$1.5 million



Schaumburg Library



Anoka County Library



Spaces to Play and Learn

Investments in design can transform libraries from “shhh” to vibrant, interactive family learning centers.

All 13 Saint Paul Public Library locations will transform children’s areas to include spaces for quiet and loud play that spark curiosity, imagination, and wonder for children, teens, and all ages, supporting the social and cognitive development.

\$2 million



Free Library of Philadelphia



More on the changing role of libraries:

[TEDx: Reimagining the Public Library to Reconnect Community](#) | [Libraries as the Original Coworking Space](#)
[Brookings: Playbrary: A new vision of the neighborhood library](#) | [Breaking the Model: Community Centered Library](#)

OVER

Neighborhood Library Investments

These three libraries, situated across Saint Paul, are well-loved, well-used, and well worn. The buildings are outdated, struggle to support their high use, and have not been renovated in more than 30 years.

Hamline Midway Library



Built in 1930 | Last renovated in 1990

Continue to engage community to decide whether to renovate/expand or rebuild the Hamline Midway Library, a facility in disrepair, to create a vibrant community hub that works for all neighbors. Create spaces for books and collections, connection and gathering, learning and play, co-working, and more.

A community-informed redesigned library would address the building's space and technology constraints; poorly functioning mechanical, electrical, and plumbing systems; restroom conditions; significant accessibility issues; moisture and water infiltration problems; and more.

\$8.1 million

Hayden Heights Library



Built in 1955 | Last renovated in 1979

Transform Hayden Heights Library, a dated and well-worn building, into a dynamic, technology-enabled community space and resource hub in Saint Paul's Greater East Side neighborhood.

Renovations needed include but are not limited to: new mechanical, electrical, and plumbing systems; windows, lighting, flooring, shelving and other furnishings; redesigned meeting spaces; improved technology capabilities; and exterior facade, parking lot, and landscaping improvements.

\$5.8 million

Riverview Library



Built in 1917 | Last renovated in 1989

Update historic Riverview Library to better meet the community's needs, building upon the cultural history of the West Side. Create a technology-rich, community gathering place and resource hub.

Renovations needed include but are not limited to: mechanical, electric, and plumbing systems; windows, lighting, flooring, shelving, service desk, and furnishings; redesign community room and staff work areas; improved technology capabilities; update restrooms and maintenance area; and improve exterior paving, concrete, and landscaping to better meet community needs today and in the future.

\$3.7 million



For more information, visit our Facilities Direction page at www.sppl.org.