



Rooted in History Building for Tomorrow

“The only thing you absolutely need to know is the location of the library.”
– Albert Einstein

The Case for Revitalization

The Glencoe Public Library is the **heart of Glencoe**: a sanctuary and a source of community pride. Patrons feel a sense of welcome and belonging. A gathering space, a center for enriching speakers and activities, a place where ideas intersect, where minds young and older find inspiration, and a haven for socializing and solace.

The library was built in 1941. Perfect for its time, it has not kept pace with how people live, learn, and connect today. Revitalization is necessary for it to remain relevant. While features like the Park Avenue facade and Johnson Room are iconic, cherished, and will remain as is, others are cramped, inaccessible and problematic. Some spaces are dimly lit, narrow and unfriendly to patrons with mobility challenges. Temperatures are uneven, impacting comfort. Collections are often hard to browse and explore, with limited display space and shelving that’s out of reach. Spatial flow is unnecessarily challenging and non-intuitive. Staff members lack necessary work, meeting, and storage areas. And with a shortage of meeting and program space, the library must turn away community groups, and forgo programming opportunities.

Over the years, library leaders have been responsible stewards. The library has never sought funding through a referendum and has kept up with the building’s capital needs through its annual operating budget and ad hoc bonds. But costs to maintain and improve the building have been a constant challenge, and pose a growing strain. Systems in the 84-year-old building are outdated, disjointed and deteriorating.

A 2021 Capital Needs Assessment identified over \$2 million in needed repairs to preserve the building, ensure safety and replace obsolete fixtures. Nearly \$1 million deemed critical repairs just to bring electrical systems up to code, repair aging windows, doors and roofing without making any cosmetic changes or upgrades. Delaying improvements is no longer an option; now is the moment to create a library that meets today’s needs and beyond.

Our Village is a place where people grow up and then return to start their own families. The library deserves to receive the care and attention it has provided to countless families over the years. With sustainable new systems and features, and flexible, thoughtful, revitalized spaces, library programming and community involvement will flourish.

The Rooted in History, Building for Tomorrow campaign envisions an airy, bright, efficient, and above all, welcoming community cornerstone. The plan preserves the library's nostalgia and historic charm while enhancing comfort, accessibility, security, and sustainability for years to come.

This revitalization will meet the evolving needs of patrons of all ages and abilities, transforming the library into a vibrant space that serves the community today and inspires the next generation.

The design features intuitive, community-focused spaces where people can gather for innovative programming; collaborate or work independently; learn, reflect, dream and play.

At the heart of the campaign are three areas of focus:

- **Versatile Spaces**
- **Improved Accessibility**
- **Smart, Sustainable, and Safe Systems**

Versatile Spaces

Versatility will inform every element of the new design. The plan will transform each part of the library into a usable, comfortable, multi-purpose, welcoming space, embracing the needs of *all* patrons.

- **State-of-the-Art Community Room**

Today, the library is often forced to repurpose key spaces, rely on outside community venues, or even turn away patrons due to fire code capacity limits or availability. In 2024 alone, the library offered 600 public programs but space limitations forced it to turn away many more opportunities including 75 program reservation requests, not to mention the chance to pursue bigger, more ambitious programming. **With the right space, the library can deliver the innovative, engaging programs this community not only wants, but deserves. The new Community Room will be an open space filled with natural light, and spacious enough to accommodate up to 150 people comfortably.** With technology like remote-controlled window shading, dedicated and automated audiovisual components, supports for people with limited sight and hearing, and the flexibility to easily partition into smaller spaces for simultaneous programming, the library will finally be able to offer its dynamic programming with ease, comfort, and efficiency.

- **Expanded, Welcoming Children's Space**

Children, families, and caregivers cherish the existing children's space, but the area's current footprint makes it hard to comfortably run programs and offer space for quiet reading and play, especially during key after school hours. **The Children's Addition will expand the space by nearly 40%**, providing children of various ages and their caregivers space to spread out and enjoy their time at the library. Even in this digital age, there is simply no substitute for engaging with physical materials, roaming freely among right-sized furnishings, exploring kid-friendly displays, picking out books and finding new authors, all while interacting with other children and

Librarians in a safe, screen-free space. An additional private patron room can be reserved for nursing parents and anyone needing a sensory break.

- **Reimagined Collections Areas**

Currently a significant portion of collections are crowded into non-ADA-accessible stacks on the west side of the library, a low-ceiling area with narrowly spaced aisles and tall, dense shelving. The revitalization plan will transform how the community experiences these collections.

Materials will be redistributed into inviting areas throughout the library for better browsing, discovery, comfort and accessibility. **At the heart of this reconfiguration is the exciting, spacious new 1000-square-foot Collection Addition adjoining the Forte Room on the library's southeast corner, a stunning, open, light-filled space with large windows, and cozy seating.**

- **Breathing Life into the Lower Level**

The lower level will be transformed from a dark, uninviting and disjointed, multi-level labyrinth into a fully accessible, open floor concept with inviting sightlines, comfortable seating and three new meeting rooms. An open staircase design with a bright skylight will illuminate the level and will create usable space within the library's existing footprint. The staircase, along with a newly relocated elevator will seamlessly connect the lower level to the rest of the library. At 1900-square-feet, the lower level Collections, Study and Teen Area will serve as the focal point, lined with thoughtfully curated collections and flexible seating for studying.

- **Small Group Meeting Rooms**

Currently, the library has just one meeting room, and it is in high demand during peak hours from patrons of all ages, as well as staff who lack a dedicated space to collaborate. Students need a space to hatch their group science fair project or learn from their tutors; patrons a space to work on community projects or join virtual meetings. With moveable walls and configurable layouts, **the three new lower-level Meeting Rooms will offer flexible, reservable spaces that adapt to the needs of individuals or groups.**

- **Behind-the-Scenes Space for Staff**

The beloved library staff team are currently working in tight spaces scattered throughout the building, crowded together without areas to collaborate or plan programming, and storage space is sparse and haphazard. **With dedicated offices and meeting rooms, the new staff suite will make smart use of a low-ceilinged area not ideal for public use but perfectly suited to support staff operations.** The design will enable the team to efficiently create and deliver the programs and materials patrons love best. It will also accommodate future staff needs in anticipation of expanded programming made possible by the addition of new program space.

Improving Accessibility

When the library was built, accessibility for all patrons was not the priority it is today. Over the years, ad hoc adjustments were made to meet pressing needs, but limited finances hampered a more strategic and holistic approach to accessibility.

- **A New Way In.** Currently the Park Avenue entrance is the sole public entrance to the library. With the proposed community space addition located at the southwest corner, a new entrance at the south side of the building will enable more convenient access. Both entrances will be fully ADA-accessible.
- **Central Elevator.** Tucked away, the current elevator is difficult to find. The existing elevator has required frequent repair, and does not stop on every level of the current library. On some levels, the access to the elevator is encumbered by narrow passages and non-ADA compliant clearances and corners. A new roomier, central elevator will afford easier access to the entire library, including the newly reimagined lower level.
- **Better Browsability.** Some of the library's current aisles are too narrow for people in wheelchairs to navigate. Many stacks are too tall with books shelved beyond easy reach, whether up high or near the floor, resulting in underutilized collections. A new user-friendly, ADA-compliant configuration will assure everyone can easily browse collections.
- **Easier Navigation.** A single circulation desk will be repositioned so patrons see a friendly face at a single point of contact, immediately upon entering. A combination of enhanced wayfinding signs and a central elevator and staircase will intuitively guide patrons where they want to go.

Assuring Smart, Sustainable, and Safe Systems

Smart, Sustainable, and Safe Systems

- **Up-to-Date Systems**
Updates and repairs include electrical, HVAC, plumbing, fire prevention, roof and windows, ensuring the building can serve the community for the generations to come.
- **Sustainability**
Design and development featuring low-carbon, eco-friendly materials and energy-efficient systems.
- **Security**
Additional camera surveillance and a new central circulation desk that enables clear views of both entrances.
- **Technology**
From expanded self-checkout stations to built-in automated audiovisual systems, new technology decisions will be chosen to reflect real-world needs and opportunities.
- **Up-to-Date Systems**
The Glencoe Public Library deserves up-to-date systems, with the best state of repair and operation to ensure the building exists for the next generations.
 - Electrical. The original cloth-covered wiring installed in 1941 is not only outdated, but a hazard in any modern building. The main electrical panel is located in a space that has

been plagued by occasional flooding. The plan calls for a complete rewiring of the building.

- Drainage. The library has experienced frequent flooding over the years due to a compromised foundation and insufficient drainage system. In the last decade alone, lower level water influx has threatened the library's microfilm collection and electrical panels, required mold remediation in the staff work area, and ruined lower level staff workspaces, forcing a minor renovation. The original clay drain tile, still in place since the building's construction, will be fully replaced, along with aging water pipes that have long exceeded their lifespan.
- HVAC. Because financing was an obstacle, only an ad hoc upgrade to the HVAC system took place in 2018, the latest of several "Band-Aid" solutions over the years. The Library has cobbled together a system comprised of 20 separate units, including 10 residential-grade units. The cobbled-together system is loud and the temperature is inconsistent both from room-to-room, and within rooms throughout the day. A new efficient, carbon-neutral system will keep patrons and staff comfortable sustainably all year long.
- Fire Prevention. The building lacks an automatic fire suppression system and alarms are in need of replacement.
- Roof. While the roof is in good condition for the present, maintenance is necessary to gutters and other areas to reduce ice damage and to protect the roof from accelerated aging.
- Windows. Exterior windows and sealants are damaged and/or inefficient and require replacement.

- **Sustainability**

The revitalization plan pays meticulous attention to responsible design and development, featuring low-carbon, eco-friendly materials and energy-efficient systems. Elements include zero operational carbon, and sustainable thermal comfort with new windows, greater insulation and exterior shading. Solar and LEED certification will also be evaluated.

- **Security**

Current security surveillance is limited and insufficient. While staff have improved the building's overall safety, there is still a strong need for further improvements. The master space plan calls for open spaces on the ground and lower levels with clear sightlines. A new central circulation desk will enable clear views of both entrances, there will be additional camera surveillance and the new south entrance connecting the library to Wyman Green will double as a safety enhancement.

- **Technology**

From expanded app-based self-checkout stations to built-in automated audiovisual systems, real-world needs and opportunities will drive technology decisions and upgrades. The library's new spaces will support creativity, collaboration and modern day conveniences such as plentiful

charging stations and power outlets, access to tools like 3D printers, as well as expanded space for borrowable technology including Roku sticks, a telescope, and large-screen projector.

Why Support the Glencoe Public Library's Capital Campaign?

Since 1941, the cherished Glencoe Public Library has held a special place in the heart of the community. Within the walls of Glencoe Public Library, new worlds and possibilities have opened to generations upon generations of patrons.

This community cornerstone deserves a building that warmly welcomes all who enter. The revitalized Glencoe Public Library will be designed for how people work, learn, and interact, incorporating features requested by patrons, staff, and community members.

A library is a living institution, evolving with its patrons. The hallmark of the plan is its ability to anticipate and embrace change. To achieve the goals, the library aims to raise \$17.3 million through a combination of private and public funding and grants. The Rooted in History, Building for Tomorrow campaign funds will provide the resources necessary for the library to meet current needs, with the agility to anticipate the challenges and possibilities to come.

Glencoe Public Library Usership At-a-Glance

- Library visits continue to rise year over year with a 12% increase from 2023. In 2024, the library welcomed nearly 100,000 visits.
- More than 205,000 items (physical and digital) circulate each year. The number of digital items has increased each year, but physical items remain the library's bread and butter, accounting for twice as many checkouts as digital items.
- The library's collections have evolved beyond books, offering items for creativity and exploration like a 3D printer, tools, Roku sticks pre-loaded with popular streaming services, a sewing machine, telescope, gardening seeds, and even a ukulele.
- Each year, the library offers more programs, and each year, the number of people attending programs rises: 2024 participation was 16% higher than 2023, and 2023 was 10% higher than 2022.
- The library held 320 synchronous children's programs in 2024 with 9,977 total participants.
- In 2024, the library could not accommodate 75 reservation requests for the Hammond Room larger programming space