



City of Northfield

City Hall
801 Washington Street
Northfield, MN 55057
northfieldmn.gov

Meeting Agenda Library Board

Wednesday, January 14, 2026

6:00 PM

CALL TO ORDER AND ROLL CALL

APPROVAL OF AGENDA

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

1. [26-034](#) Approval of The November 12, 2025 Library Board Draft Minutes

Attachments: [Library Board Draft Meeting Minutes Nov 12](#)

PRESENTATIONS

2. [26-035](#) Presentation by Alexus Kreft, Adult Programming & Outreach Librarian.

OPEN PUBLIC COMMENT

Persons may take one opportunity to address the Board/Commission for two (2) minutes (not including interpreter's time) on any topic, even if on the agenda, with the condition that they may not speak on the same item later in the meeting. No notification of the Chair is required. However, speakers are asked to complete a sign up card. Persons wanting a response to a question must submit the question in writing to the recording secretary. Questions must include name and information on how to contact. You may use the back side of the comment cards available in the meeting room. Persons cannot gift their 2 minute speaking time to other members of the public.

CONSENT AGENDA

The proposed consent agenda is included on the Council Chamber screens. The purpose of a consent agenda is to allow for routine motions, resolutions, and ordinances, or those previously discussed with consensus made, to be passed with one motion. These are still important and necessary considerations and full background memo and materials are publicly available on the website and a copy on the table in the room. Board/Commission Members may ask questions for clarification of an item. If a Member wants to discuss an item, our rules request it be made by advance notice by noon on the Monday immediately prior to the meeting date to the Chair and Staff Liaison, or without said prior notice, during the approval of the agenda. The agenda was passed earlier including the consent agenda.

3. [26-036](#) Library Meeting Room Policy.

Attachments: [1-2026 meeting room policy draft](#)

REGULAR AGENDA

Persons that wish to speak on a regular agenda item must provide name and address by completing & submitting a sign up card. Persons may also contact the staff liaison via the City's website no later than 12:00 noon on the day of the meeting. The Chair will call up individuals to speak, based on preregistration and cards submitted, after the staff report on an item. Please be respectful of the public's and the Commission's time. Members of the public wishing to speak must adhere to the following guidelines:

- Speak only once for no more than two minutes (not including interpreter's time) on the topic unless the speaker is addressed by the Commission;
- Identify your relationship to the topic;
- Have a spokesperson or two for your group to present your comments;
- Persons wanting a response to a question must submit the question in writing to the recording secretary, including name and how you would like to be contacted.

4. [26-037](#) Library Landscape Renewal Plans.

Attachments: [2025 11 26 NORTHFIELD LIBRARY FINAL PRESENTATION draft \(2\) \(2\)](#)
[4 - SUPPLEMENTAL 2 - DRAFT local option sales tax PRESENTATION](#)

STAFF UPDATES

5. [26-038](#) Library Strategic Plan Report.

Attachments: [December Stats](#)
[November Stats](#)
[combined staff reports \(nov-dec\)](#)
[Youth Services Report - Amy](#)

BOARD MEMBER AND COMMISSIONER REPORTS

ADJOURNMENT



City of Northfield

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801 Washington Street
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Legislation Text

File #: 26-034, **Version:** 1

Library Board Meeting Date: January 14, 2026

To: Board Members

From: Francisco Murillo Ponciano, Clerical Liaison

Approval of November 12, 2025 Library Board Minutes

Action Requested:

Motion to approve the November 12, 2025 Library Board Minutes

Summary Report:

Attached are draft minutes from the November 12, 2025 Library Board for review and approval

Alternative Options:

N/A

Financial Impacts:

N/A

Tentative Timelines:

N/A

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Meeting Minutes

Wednesday, November 12, 2025

6:00 PM

CITY COUNCIL CHAMBERS

Library Board

CALL TO ORDER AND ROLL CALL

Chair Carlson called the meeting to order at 6:01 pm.

Present: 7 - Board Member Mason Randall, Vice Chair Laura Turek, Chair Kate Carlson, Board Member Anna Runestad, Board Member Joe Hargis, Board Member Judith Schotzko and Board Member Cedric Cusack

APPROVAL OF AGENDA

A motion was made by Board Member Randall, seconded by Board Member Schotzko, to approve the . The motion carried by the following vote:

Yes: 7 - Board Member Randall, Vice Chair Turek, Chair Carlson, Board Member Runestad, Board Member Hargis, Board Member Schotzko and Board Member Cusack

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

A motion was made by Board Member Randall, seconded by Chair Carlson, to approve the . The motion carried by the following vote:

Yes: 7 - Board Member Randall, Vice Chair Turek, Chair Carlson, Board Member Runestad, Board Member Hargis, Board Member Schotzko and Board Member Cusack

1. Approval of September 10, 2025 Library Board Minutes

OPEN PUBLIC COMMENT**CONSENT AGENDA****REGULAR AGENDA**

2. 2026 Library Board Priorities.

Won't have to have a December sub committee meeting, just a couple members to read over and comment on the policies. Carlson and Randall will read over and give feedback on the library polices. Turek is interested in the warming and cooling shelter conversation when that comes up. Due to the government shutting down for a while, we still haven't received the money we were awarded.

STAFF UPDATES

We will work on bringing in staff to present on what they have been working on. We will not be doing the Summer Concert Series this next summer.

3. Library Strategic Plan Report.

BOARD MEMBER AND COMMISSIONER REPORTS**ADJOURNMENT**

Meeting was adjourned at 7:10 pm, with the motion coming from Commissioner Randall, seconded by Commissioner Hargis and passed by the following vote.

Yes: 7 - Board Member Randall, Vice Chair Turek, Chair Carlson, Board Member Runestad, Board Member Hargis, Board Member Schotzko and Board Member Cusack



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Legislation Text

File #: 26-035, **Version:** 1

Library Board Meeting Date: January 14, 2026

To: Library Board Members

From: Natalie Draper, Library Director

Presentation by Alexus Kreft, Adult Programming & Outreach Librarian.

Action Requested:

The Board receives an update on departmental activities from Alexus Kreft, Adult Programming & Outreach Librarian.

Summary Report:

Alexus moved to full-time status on December 22nd. She will give a brief update on departmental activities and her role as a passport agent, and take questions from the board.

Alternative Options:

N/A

Financial Impacts:

N/A

Tentative Timelines:

N/A



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Legislation Text

File #: 26-036, **Version:** 1

Library Board Meeting Date: January 14, 2026

To: Library Board Members

From: Natalie Draper, Director of Library Services

Library Meeting Room Policy.

Action Requested:

The Library Board adopts a new meeting room policy.

Summary Report:

Previously the library was included in the City's meeting room policy alongside City Hall and Police Department spaces. Due to recent additions to the library's reservable spaces and a considerable increase in reservations overall, library staff felt it would be wise for the library to have a policy that specifically addresses the library's spaces and aligns with the library's stated mission and values. The Library Board policy review committee made suggestions on a drafted new meeting room policy which is included as a consent agenda item for board adoption.

Alternative Options:

Financial Impacts:

N/A

Tentative Timelines:

N/A



X.XX MEETING ROOM POLICY

LIBRARY

Enabling Legislation:

Date Adopted:

Revised:

PURPOSE

In keeping with its mission, Northfield Public Library offers meeting room space to the public for educational, cultural, civic, and recreational purposes, subject to the rules outlined below. Northfield Public Library supports and endorses the American Library Association's Library Bill of Rights, which states, "Libraries which make exhibit spaces and meeting rooms available to the public they serve should make such facilities available on an equitable basis, regardless of the beliefs or affiliations of individuals or groups requesting their use." The Meeting Room Policy outlines expectations for use of library meeting rooms.

DISCLAIMER

Granting permission to use library facilities does not constitute endorsement by The City of Northfield, the Library Board, or the staff of the Northfield Public Library. No advertisement, announcement, or promotional material may imply such endorsement.

All promotional materials must include the following statement:

"Use of the Northfield Public Library meeting spaces does not constitute endorsement of the beliefs, viewpoints, policies, or affiliations of the user by the library board or staff."

POLICY

Meeting Room Use Agreement

Library meeting rooms are available free of charge for nonprofit, for-profit, and community organizations seeking to hold free meetings, training, and workshops.

Reservations may not be made more than sixty (60) days in advance. The library may limit the number of reservations per group to ensure equitable access.



X.XX MEETING ROOM POLICY

LIBRARY

Enabling Legislation:

Date Adopted:

Revised:

Meeting rooms may be released for use by another organization if the initial group reserving the meeting space does not arrive within 30 minutes of the initial reservation.

Meeting rooms are available during hours when the library is open and must conclude 15 minutes before closing time.

Meeting room capacity is posted and may not be exceeded.

The library offers two small-capacity meeting pods.

- The four- person pod may be reserved up to one week in advance and is limited to 90 minutes per day, with extensions permitted based on availability.
- The one-person pod is available for drop-in use only, limited to 90 minutes per day, and may not be reserved.

Groups using the meeting room are responsible for setting up the room and for returning the room to the standard room arrangement.

Groups using the meeting room will inform the library staff when the meeting has ended and state the number of people who attended.

The group reserving the room is responsible for any damage to the room or its contents.

Refreshments may be served; no food may be cooked or prepared on site.

Additional cleaning costs may be charged to the booking organization. Users must supply all items, including paper products, food, coffee, and other beverages.

Commercial programs listed or presented as informational, educational, or instructional must remain so, and presenters shall make no direct solicitation of attendees to secure clients or customers for their commercial purpose.

With prior approval, groups may post signs in library-approved locations.



X.XX MEETING ROOM POLICY

LIBRARY

Enabling Legislation:

Date Adopted:

Revised:

No alcohol use, tobacco use, or intoxicating cannabinoid or cannabis use is allowed anywhere in City buildings.

Exclusions/Request Denials

Library or City of Northfield programs and sponsored events have priority in the use of meeting room spaces. The library reserves the right to reschedule confirmed meeting room reservations to accommodate library- or City-sponsored programs and events.

Library meeting rooms are not to be used for celebratory events such as weddings, anniversaries, showers, or birthdays.

Fundraising on Library property is prohibited except for efforts benefiting Northfield Public Library, such as activities by the Friends and Foundation of the Northfield Public Library.

No admission or other fees may be charged to individuals attending meetings or programs; no products or services may be advertised, solicited, or sold except for tuition or fees for classes sponsored by tax-exempt educational institutions.

Activities in the room must not disrupt regular Library operations, including, but not limited to, soliciting or conducting surveys, excessive noise, or blocking entries, fire lanes, or walkways.

Meeting Room Use by Other Government Agencies (e.g., City, County, State, and Federal)

The library makes its meeting rooms available to other government agencies or their contractors when possible. Library and city programs and sponsored events have priority for use of meeting room space, and public demand for meeting room space may also affect how frequently library meeting rooms are available to other government agencies. Use by other government agencies is subject to the above rules, with some exceptions:



X.XX MEETING ROOM POLICY

LIBRARY

Enabling Legislation:

Date Adopted:

Revised:

1. Reservations of meeting rooms may be made four (4) months in advance.
2. Government agencies holding meetings or programs that are open to the public are permitted only during normal hours of operation when the library is open to the general public. Internal meetings for government agencies may be scheduled during hours when the library is staffed but not open to the public. An agency that wishes to use a library meeting room during hours the library is not staffed will be referred to the Library Director.

Procedure

All groups must complete and [submit an online room reservation request](#) on the library's website. Please review the meeting room rules, and library staff will review and approve or deny all requests based on the Meeting Room Policy.

Any request denied use of a library meeting room may appeal the denial in writing to the Library Director. The Director will review the request and respond in writing to the applicant.



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Legislation Text

File #: 26-037, **Version:** 1

Library Board Meeting Date: January 14, 2026

To: Library Board Members

From: Natalie Draper, Director of Library Services

Library Landscape Renewal Plans.

Action Requested:

The Library Board reviews the current landscape renewal plans.

Summary Report:

A number of significant and minor site issues have developed since the remodel a decade ago. Elevation changes, major erosion and stormwater issues, snow removal expense and hazards, tree loss, water pooling, building maintenance challenges, heat accumulation, accessibility issues, and a lack of space for programs that are competing with workforce and community use of spaces led us to develop a site plan that could address these challenges with solutions that maximize the utility of the library's site, protect our investment, and serve a growing 21st century community for the next 115 years downtown.

In 2024, the Friends of the Library funded engagement efforts with landscape architects from Ten X Ten to work with the community at outreach events to identify priorities for community use of the site. In 2025, federal grant funds made available through the Minnesota Department of Education allowed us to further explore integrating input into a site plan and gather more input throughout 2025. The preferred concepts are included in the attached presentation. The overarching goals of the site renewal plans are Sustainability, Accessibility, and Safety. With the preferred concept we reduce stormwater runoff, reduce site hazards, shore up the eroding west slope and activate the upper level, increase wheelchair accessible, shaded patio space, minimize concrete and expand access to nature.

During budget work in 2025, as staff and council discussed alternate funding sources, interest was expressed in pursuing Local Option Sales Tax as an alternative revenue source to fund the library's site renewal, alongside other essential CIP projects. The moratorium on local sales taxes expired on May 31, 2025, and cities may submit requests to the legislature during the 2026 legislative session. On January 6th, the City Council heard a presentation by Director Draper and City Administrator Martig on local options sales tax (LST) and projects to consider funding by LST. That presentation is attached for your information.

To view the item presented to council on January 6th:

<https://northfield.legistar.com/LegislationDetail.aspx?ID=7789757&GUID=CE64CC50-6104-460B-AE47-889E1AC79877>

Staff will present the preferred concept from Ten X Ten and seek support from the board.

Alternative Options:

Financial Impacts:

N/A

Tentative Timelines:

1/20/2026: Council resolution in support of local option sales tax request to state

1/31/2026: Deadline to submit request to state legislature to include local option sales tax options on general election ballot

Winter/spring 2026: council resolution

Spring/summer/fall 2026: communications/engagement informing voters about local option sales tax options

November 2026: general election

NORTHFIELD LIBRARY

Final Presentation

- 01 Existing Issues
- 02 Proposed Designs



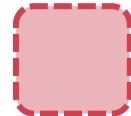
01 EXISTING ISSUES



Guiding Principles



Site Issues by Principles



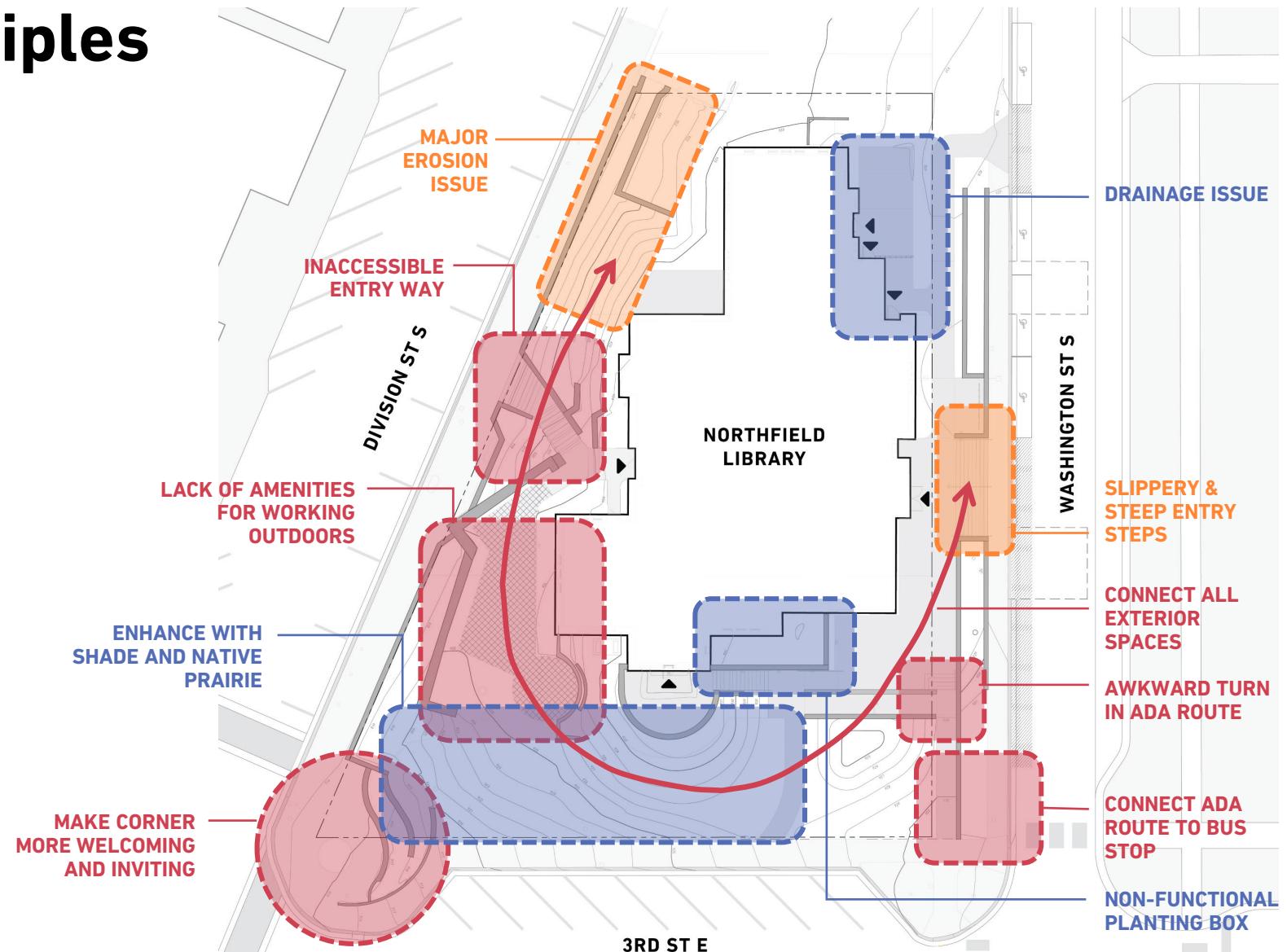
ACCESSIBILITY



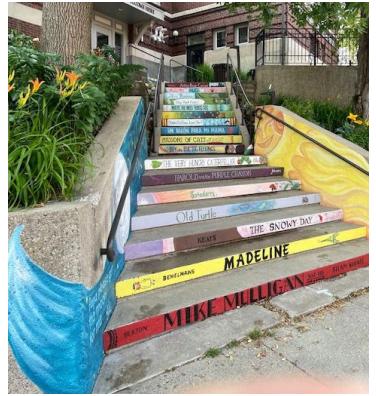
SUSTAINABILITY



SAFETY

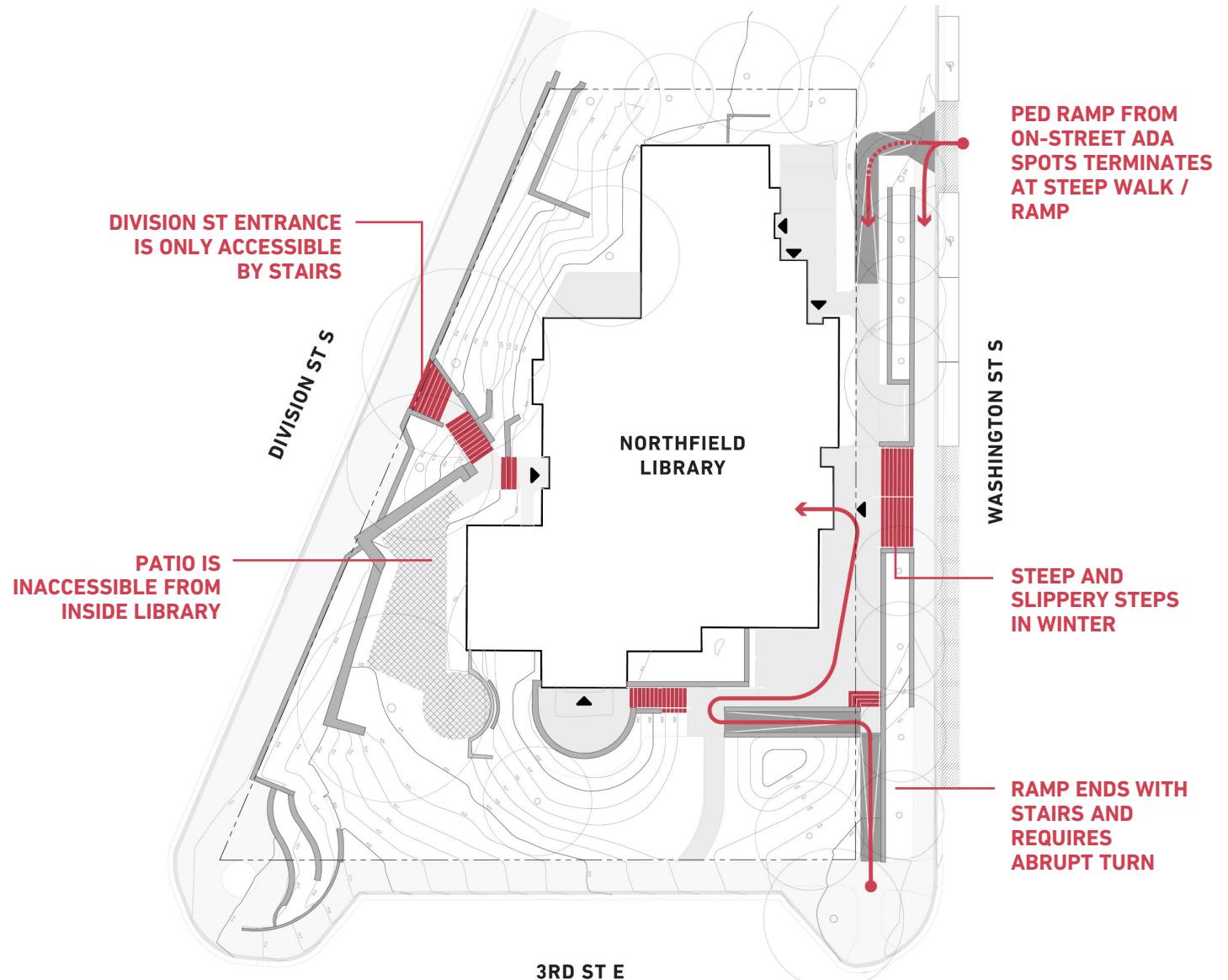


Accessibility



KEY

- Property Line
- Library Building
- Entrance
- Wall
- Minor Contour
- Major Contour
- Ramp
- Stair
- ADA-Accessible Route



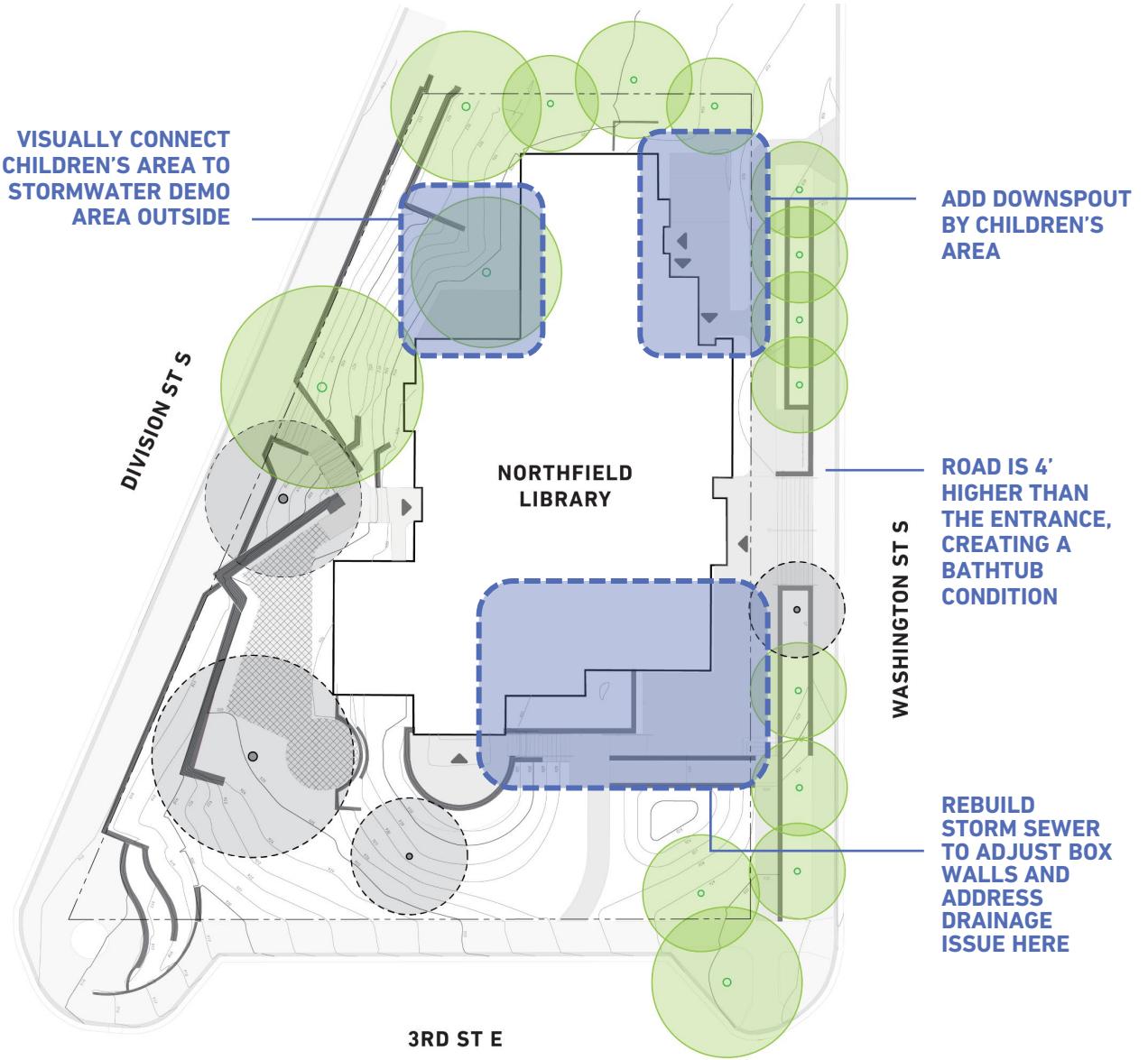
Sustainability



KEY

- Property Line
- Library Building
- Entrance
- Wall
- Minor Contour
- Major Contour
- Areas with Drainage Issues
- 2024-25 Fallen Trees

VISUALLY CONNECT
CHILDREN'S AREA TO
STORMWATER DEMO
AREA OUTSIDE



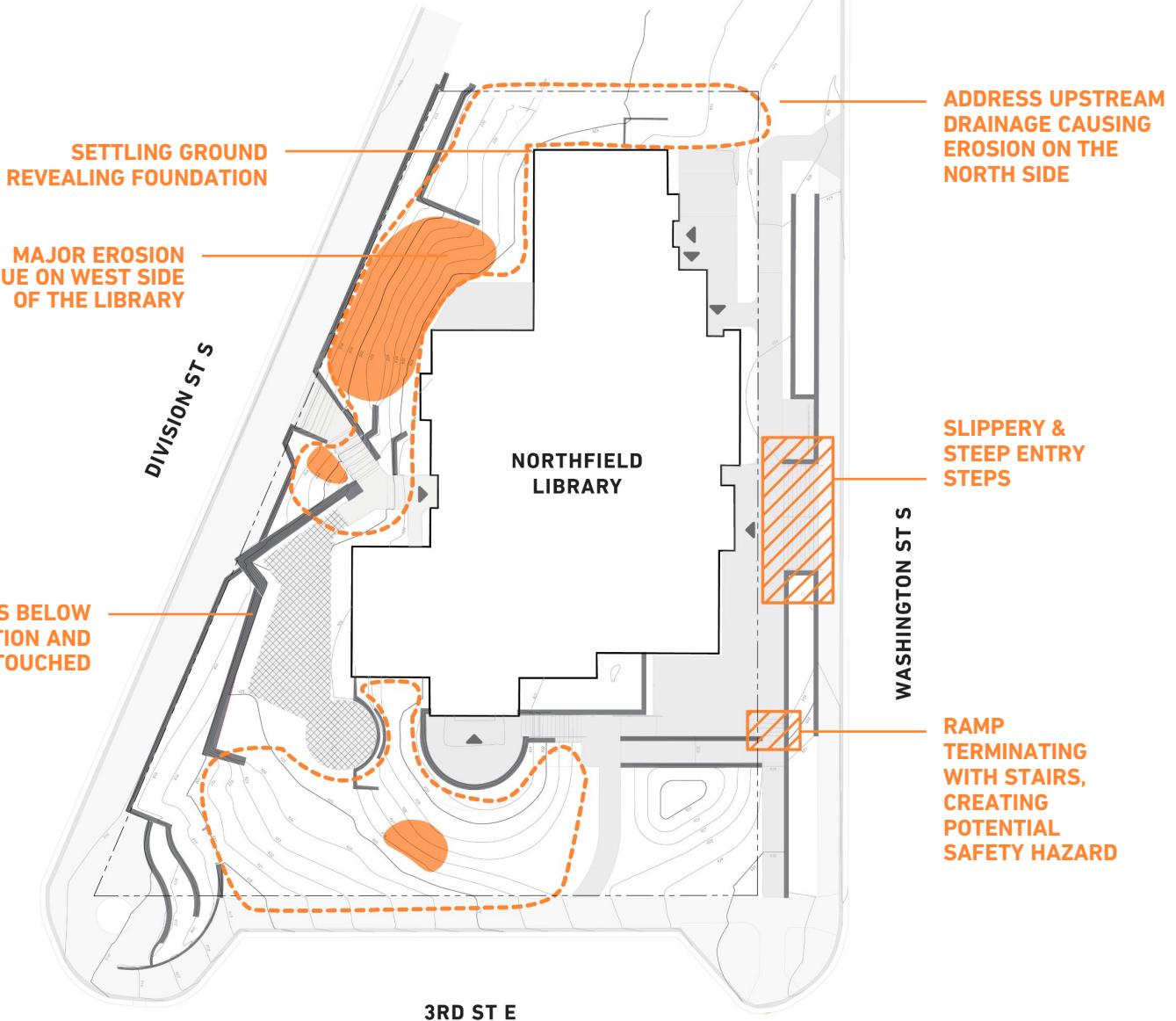
Safety



KEY

- Property Line
- Library Building
- Entrance
- Wall
- Minor Contour
- Major Contour
- Area with Slopes above 1:3
- Areas of Erosion Issues
- Areas with Steep Steps

WALL GOES BELOW
BUILDING FOUNDATION AND
SHOULD NOT BE TOUCHED



02 PROPOSED DESIGN



Preferred Concept

PREVIOUS CONCEPT



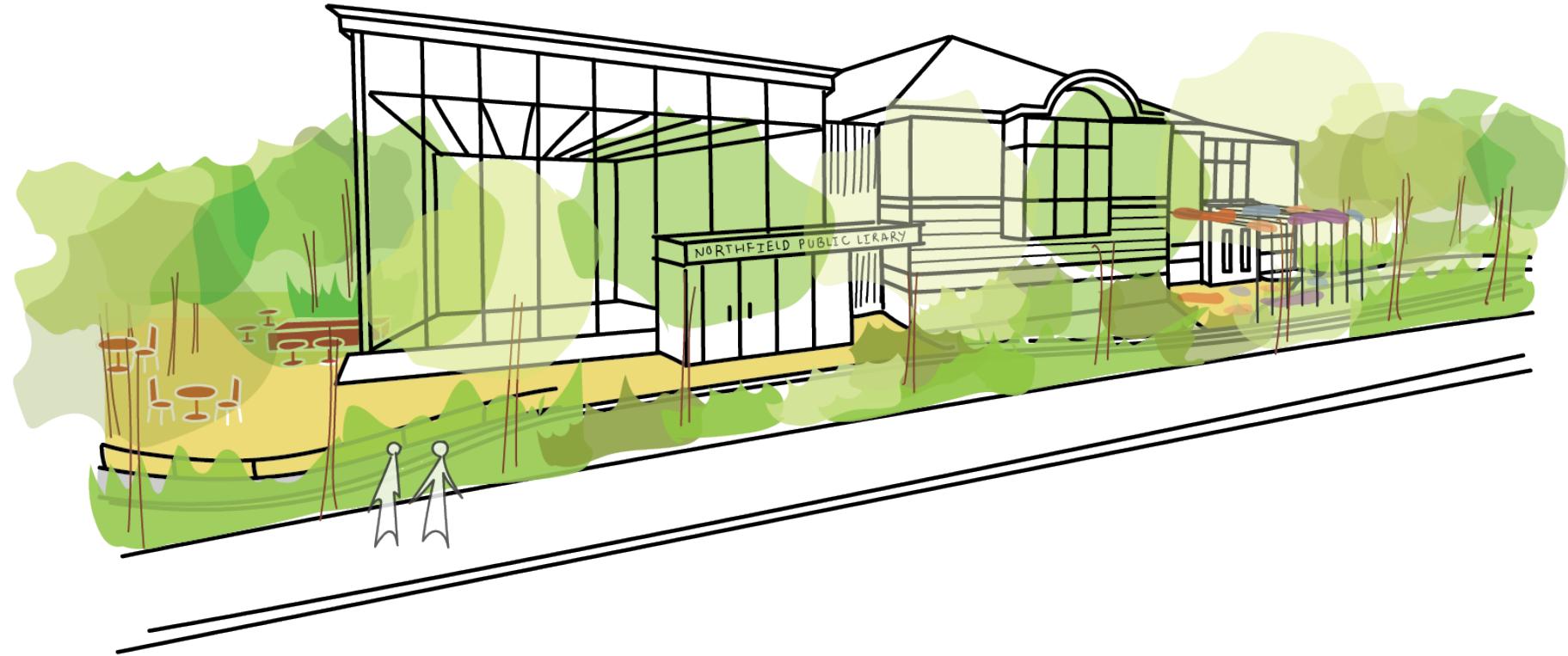
OPTION 1



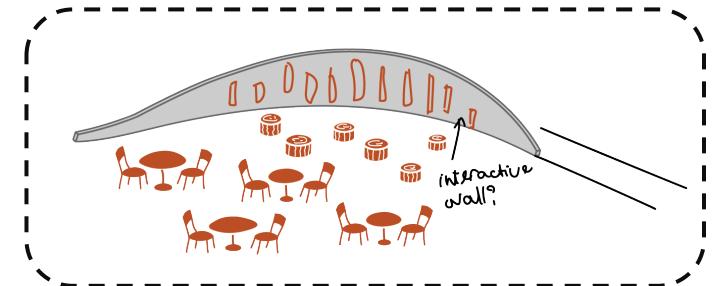
OPTION 2



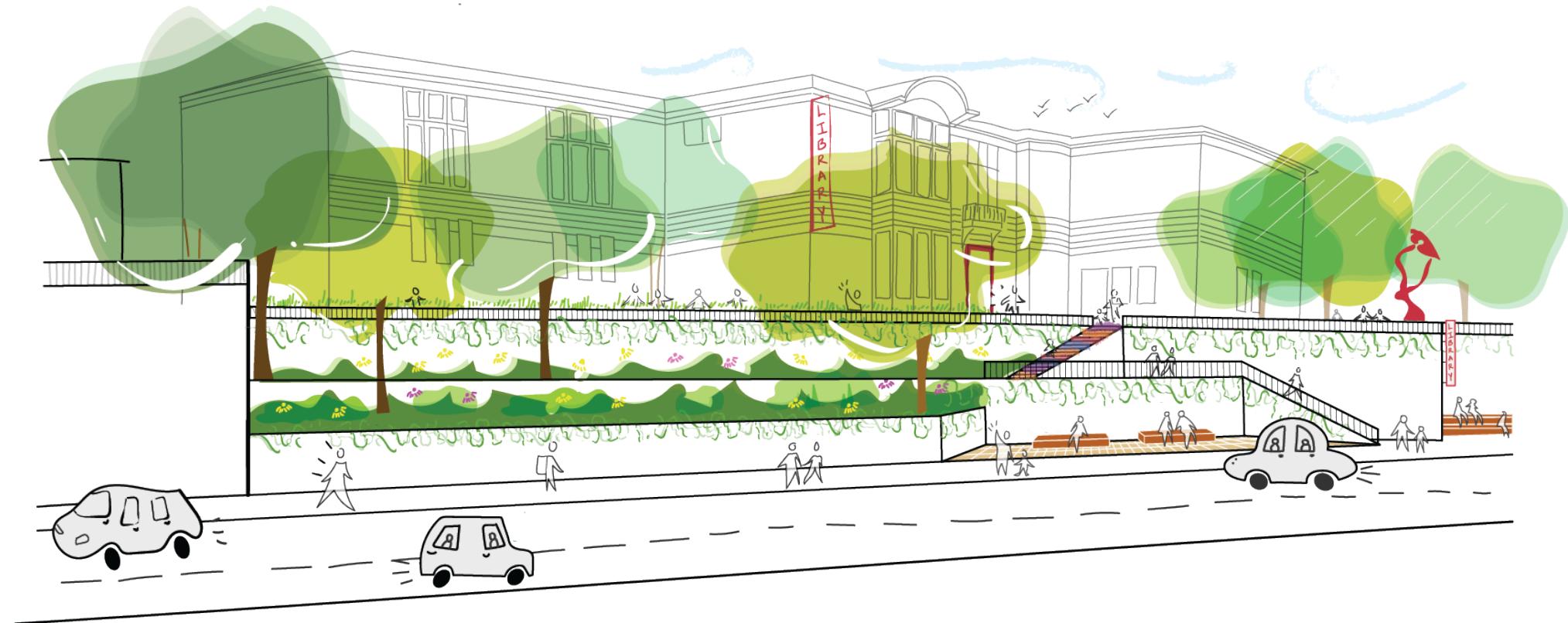
East Side



West & South Side



West Side



QUESTIONS?

QUESTION



Local Option Sales Tax (LST)

Context



Strategic Plan: 2025–2028

- **Improve Financial Strength**
 - **Increased Revenue Diversification**
 - **10% increase in non-tax/non-governmental revenue 2025–2028**

Examples Items to Review

- ✓ Gas & Electric Franchise Fee Update (2025 adopted)
- Local Option Sales Tax
- Park dedication fees
- College Voluntary Donation
- Broadband Franchise Fees
- Municipal Cannabis
- Rice County – County Library increase Park Dedication Fees
- Code Enforcement Fines – increase (blight, weeds, etc.)
- Administrative Citations (parking, low speed violations, etc.)
- Overnight Parking Downtown Fee & Winter Parking Fee
- Others

Comprehensive Plan Alignment



- Capital Budgeting – dedicated funding for needs
- Decision-Making Matrix – Economically responsible to property tax level
- Diversify tax base – policy intent of overreliance on any one source such as property taxes
- Direct citizen engagement – public vote required under state law for local sales tax

Local Option Sales Tax



- A Local Option Sales Tax (LST) is a revenue tool that would be beneficial as it would distribute specific project capital costs to individuals to pay costs of a city outside of Northfield
 - 40% of local sales taxes from non-northfield residents (U of MN Extension 2026 Local Sales Tax Analysis Report)
 - Estimated in Northfield to generate up to \$11.4M of revenue for projects
- Recent examples include:
 - Rochester – .5% LST in 2023 to fund multiple projects
 - Bloomington – .5% LST in 2023 to fund multiple projects
 - Moorhead – .5% in 2022 to fund library & community center

Current Law Requirements



- **Council Resolution Requesting Application for Authority must include:**
 - Proposed tax rate (.5%) applied to only taxable sales in MN
 - Detailed description of no more than 5 capital projects that will be funded from the tax.
 - Documentation of regional significance of each project, including the share of the economic benefit to or use of each project by those in and out of city.
 - Amount of sales tax revenue that would be used for each project and the estimated time needed to raise that amount of revenue.

MN Sales Taxes



- State General Rate: 6.875%
- Local: Cities & Counties have authority to impose additional local sales & use taxes, up to 3%
- Current Northfield (Rice County .5% Transit Tax): 7.375%
- Combined state & local sales tax rates typically range from 6.875% to 8.375%

Projects for consideration



- Base projects for council to consider:
 - **NCRC** – Essential CIP costs plus energy investments (geo/solar) – (does not include state bonding request for food shelf warehouse)
 - **Library** – Essential CIP costs on exterior and interior
- Other options:
 - **Riverfront Park Projects** – Essential CIP riverfront costs
 - **3rd Street Parking structure** – convert existing city parking at 300 Washington and on 3rd Street into 2-level parking structure with infrastructure for further development in future on Washington St. level

Riverfront Parks examples



- Park Bathrooms (Lions, Riverside, Sechler)
- Lions Park Shelter
- Sechler Park – other recreation & infrastructure
- East Riverwalk Stairs and Railing
- Riverwalk “Loop” Additions
- Ames Park – plan & improvements (with dam project)

Riverfront Park Projects

Essential CIP costs



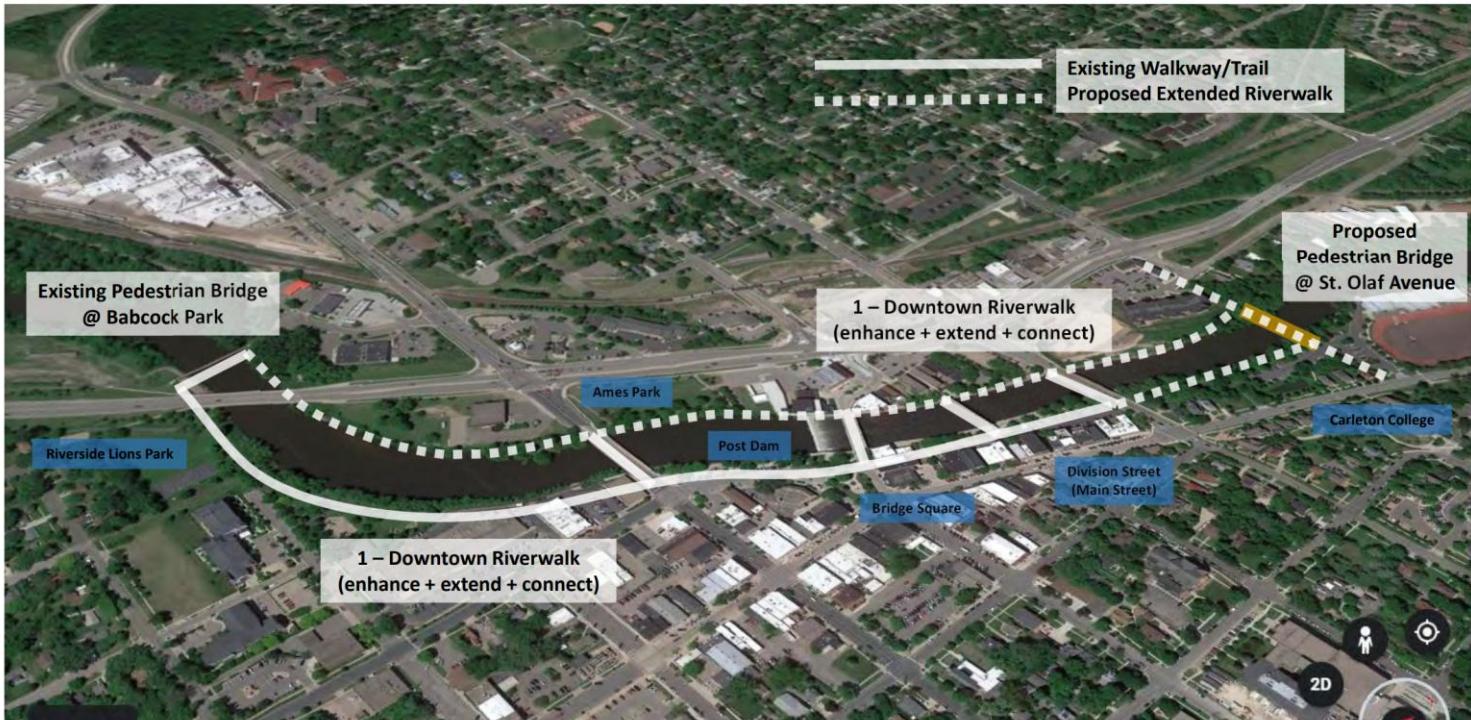
Stairs needing replacement



Broken railing



Downtown Riverwalk “Loop” Completion



NCRC project

Essential CIP costs



- **HVAC and Mechanicals**
 - Boiler replacement
 - Chiller replacement
 - Air handling units replacement
- **Other CIP costs**
 - Exterior painting
 - Public restrooms
 - Flooring
 - Pool/locker room

NCRC project

Additional information



- **Energy investments**
 - Project costs include energy savings investment in solar and/or geothermal
- **Food shelf warehouse addition**
 - LST project costs do not include the proposed food shelf warehouse addition
 - Warehouse addition still considered in State Bonding Request

Library project *background information*

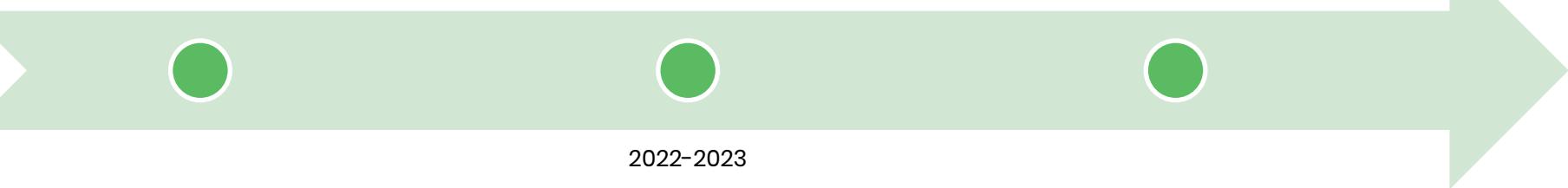


library remodeled, atrium addition
built in 2015-2016

Some landscape work to
accommodate growth to south/east,
north/west side of grounds
untouched

2024-2025

Friends of the Library and MDE grant
supported community engagement
and landscape concept
development with Ten X Ten



2022-2023

Site issues lead to site plan to support
and sustain the next 115 years
downtown, protect investment, and
serve growing 21st century
community

Library site challenges

Division Street



Stairs needing replacement



West slope eroding



Library site challenges

Washington & 3rd



Tree loss



Accessibility



Site Issues by Principles



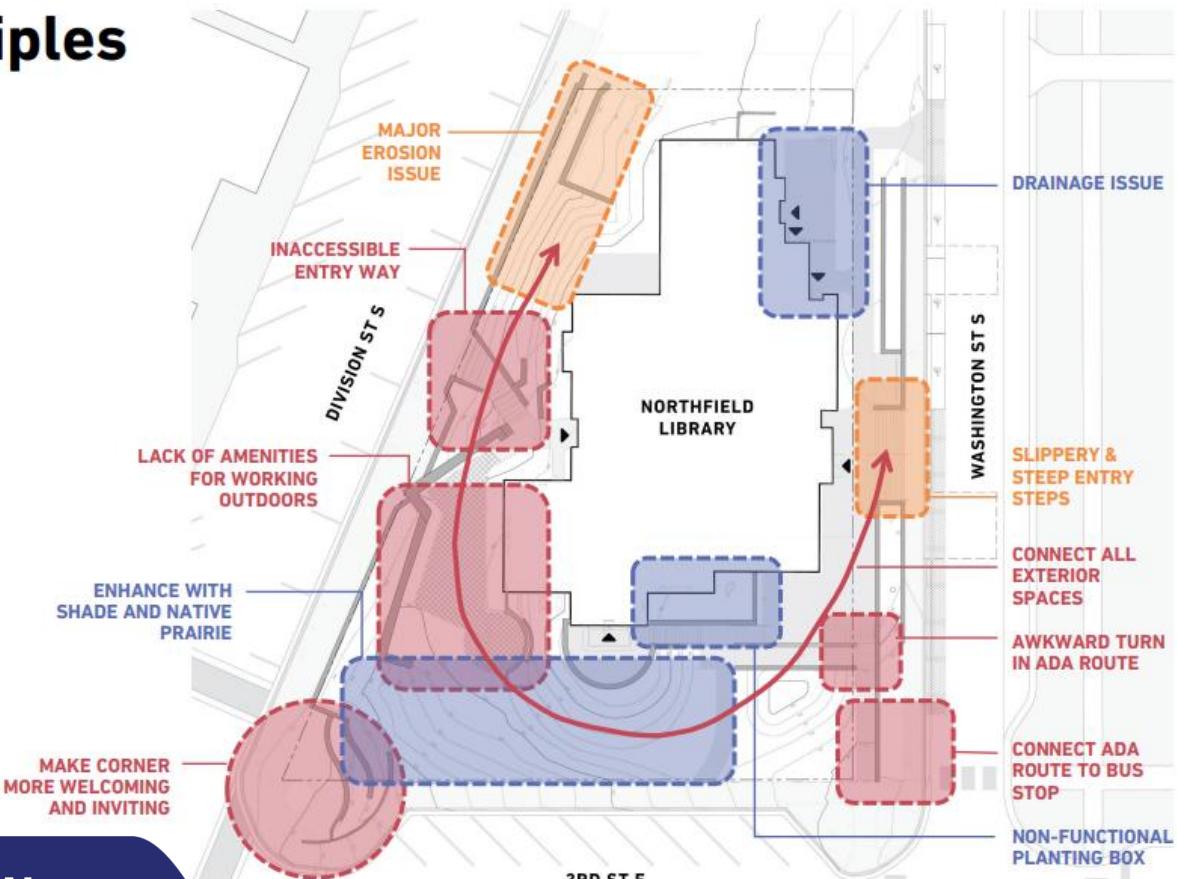
ACCESSIBILITY



SUSTAINABILITY



SAFETY



Library is regional draw-
180k visits annually

West & South Side



Preferred concept based on
results from community
engagement



3rd Street Parking Structure

Conversion

Parking

Infrastructure

Public Restrooms

ADA Access
(Elevator)

Potential
Redevelopment

Estimated project costs



- **Base projects (CIP items):**
 - NCRC – \$2.5 million
 - Library – \$2.5 million
- **Other options (either/or):**
 - Riverfront Park Projects – up to \$6.4M
 - 3rd Street Parking – up to \$6.4M

Estimated Revenue



- 0.5% local sales tax would generate approximately \$11.4 million over 20 years
 - Approximately 40% would be paid by individuals visiting Northfield, alleviating \$4.5 million of capital costs from local taxpayers

Timeline and Process



Date	Description
January 20	Council Approves Resolution
January 31	Legislative Request Submitted
May	MN Legislature must approve request
After session	Council must approve the taxing authority granted by State
August	Council Resolution on Local Referendum
November	Local Referendum (each project voted separately)
After election	Council must approve implementation if voter approved

Initial Feedback: Policy Questions



- Decision no later than January 20th Council meeting
- Interest to explore initially a local option sales tax in 2026 legislative session?
- Interest in Projects
 - Library
 - NCRC
 - Riverfront Parks OR 3rd Street Parking Structure
 - Or, other project ideas?



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Legislation Text

File #: 26-038, **Version:** 1

Library Board Meeting Date: January 14, 2026

To: Library Board Members

From: Natalie Draper, Library Director

Library Strategic Plan Report.

Action Requested:

The Library Board receives an update regarding staff activities.

Summary Report:

The attached (1) staff reports, and (2,3) statistics include items not included as agenda items for this meeting.

Alternative Options:

N/A

Financial Impacts:

N/A

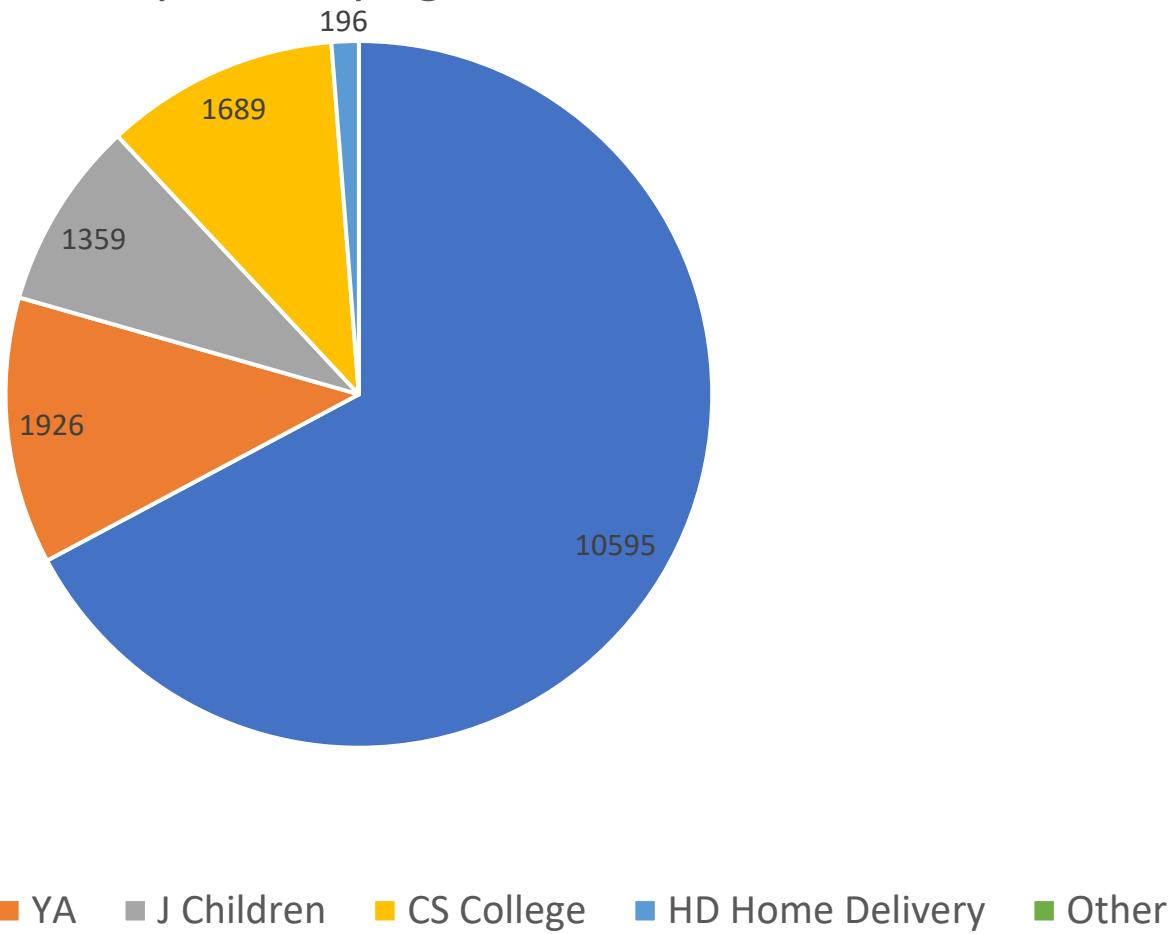
Tentative Timelines:

N/A

Library Statistical Sumary December 2025

Library Circulation	22,225	Total Library Cards	16,947				
E-checkouts	4,596	New Registrations	70				
Oasis Circulation	150	# of Borrowers Using Collection	2,465				
Bookmobile Circulation	42	Documents Notarized	30				
Total Circulation	<u>27,013</u>	Passports Executed	110				
2025 Year to Date	194,715	Home Delivery	102				
2024 Year to Date	<u>193,821</u>	Pick Up Locker	16				
% Change 25 to 24	0.46%						
		# of PR	Atdnce				
		NPL	NPL				
Yr to Date Door Count 2025	204,146	Childrens	10				
Yr to date Door Count 2024	<u>189,252</u>	Adult	16				
% Change 2025-2024	7.3%	Teen	5				
		Children Outreach					
ILL to NPL	n/a	Non-library	1				
ILL from NPL	n/a	Outreach	2				
		Passive	7				
	NPL	Oasis	BKM				
Hours Open	268	268		Ancestry	1,568	Novelist	435
Self Check	9,289	47	n/a	Her.Quest	788	Trspt Lng	18
Wireless	9,840	n/a	n/a	Hoopla	0	NY Times	4502
Internet Use	593	41	n/a	Libby	4,290	Crtv Bug	0
Requests Placed	4,106	16	11	LibGuides	8,589	Kanopy	<u>306</u>
# of Items Added	n/a	n/a	n/a	Lnk Lrn	156		
# of Items Withdrawn	n/a	n/a	n/a			Total	20,652
Door Count	13,734	2,000	104				

Library Cards by Age Level December 2025

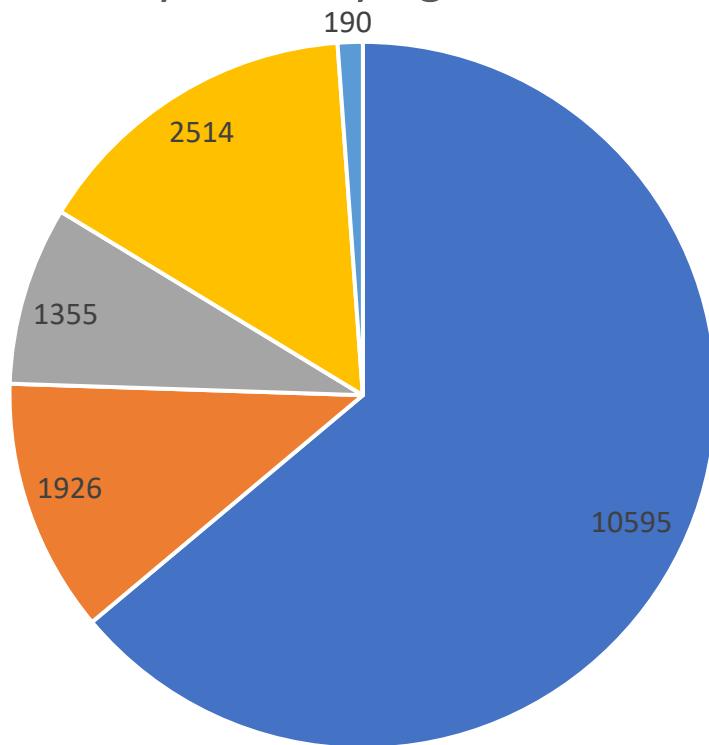


■ Adult ■ YA ■ J Children ■ CS College ■ HD Home Delivery ■ Other

Library Statistical Sumary November 2025

Library Circulation	22,733	Total Library Cards	16,897				
E-checkouts	4,321	New Registrations	86				
Oasis Circulation	116	# of Borrowers Using Collection	2,626				
Bookmobile Circulation	61	Documents Notarized	29				
Total Circulation	<u>27,231</u>	Passports Executed	80				
2025 Year to Date	290,234	Home Delivery	71				
2024 Year to Date	<u>252,856</u>	Pick Up Locker	23				
% Change 25 to 24	12.88%						
		# of PR	Atdnce				
		NPL	NPL				
		Oasis	Oasis				
Yr to Date Door Count 2025	188,340	Childrens					
Yr to date Door Count 2024	<u>173,442</u>	Adult					
% Change 2025-2024	7.9%	Teen					
		Children Outreach					
ILL to NPL	n/a	Non-library	3				
ILL from NPL	n/a	Outreach	53				
		Passive	7				
			800				
	NPL	Oasis	BKM				
Hours Open	250	268	9	Ancestry	91	Novelist	63
Self Check	9,645	50	n/a	Her.Quest	577	Trspt Lng	23
Wireless	11,506	n/a	n/a	Hoopla	297	NY Times	3704
Internet Use	597	46	n/a	Libby	3,662	Crtv Bug	0
Requests Placed	4,451	7	9	LibGuides	12,649	Kanopy	<u>362</u>
# of Items Added	n/a	n/a	n/a	Lnk Lrn	238		
# of Items Withdrawn	n/a	n/a	n/a			Total	21,666
Door Count	13,159	3,370	124				

Library Cards by Age Level November 2025



■ Adult ■ YA ■ J Children ■ CS College ■ HD Home Delivery ■ Other

Director's report

Submitted by Natalie Draper, Director of Library Services

Welcome to new board member, Martha Anderson! Martha brings great experience from the Arts and Culture Commission, which was eliminated in December of last year. She is filling the seat vacated last year by Sherry Mooney.

2026, in some ways, is a year of getting back to basics as we prepare for some big projects happening over the next couple of years. As with our site plans, we are focusing on **Accessibility, Sustainability, and Safety** as we close out the 21-26 strategic plan and prepare for the next one.

- City Council heard a presentation by City Administrator Martig and Library Director Draper and discussed an item related to projects to include for local option sales tax (LST) on 1/6, one of which is the library's site renewal. Council was unanimous in their support for inclusion of the library's site plans in the LST request to the state legislature. This request is due January 31st. There will be a vote on the matter at the council meeting on the 20th, after which it moves to the state for approval. Assuming all is approved it will likely be on the ballot this November. The Board will receive a presentation on this project as part of tonight's agenda.
- A patron satisfaction survey has gone out with the email newsletter ([link to survey](#)). Board members are encouraged to take the survey and share it with others. This will help guide us as we work on the next strategic plan. SELCO director Krista Ross is available in October to facilitate a strategic plan workshop for the board
- The library will be adding hearing loop to the Bunday Room and service desks this year. A hearing loop (or induction loop) is an assistive listening system that sends clear audio directly to telecoil-equipped hearing aids or cochlear implants, cutting out background noise by using a wire loop to create a magnetic field in a room. Users activate the "T-switch" on their device to receive sound wirelessly from a microphone or audio system, making public spaces more accessible and inclusive for people with hearing loss, often without needing separate equipment. We are also testing out a "caption companion", an AI captioning device for those with hearing loss. We have added text to our event posts to make requests for ASL interpretation and other accommodation easier as well.
- Bunday Room capacity has been reduced from 65 to 45 to ensure seating is inclusive of those with disabilities. This will be a big adjustment! We have had a few over capacity programs in the past year that prompted a decision to reassess how we program the space.

- At their request, we partnered with the Human Rights Commission for the first time this year to help them make the event more inclusive of those with sensory processing differences. We will be providing them with five “sensory kits” to have on hand for the MLK Jr. Celebration at the High School. Normally they are reserved for in-library use.
- Norwegian librarian, Ellen Berg Larsen, visited last fall and spent time with staff at our library and the Wilmar library to gather material for an article on libraries in Minnesota. That article has now been published in *Bok & Bibliotek* (Norway’s version of Library Journal). If you can read Norwegian, take a look and enjoy: starting on page 24: [Bok & Bibliotek](#)

Staff reports

Submitted by Katlin Heidgerken Greene, Collection Development Librarian

A connected community has access to the resources they need.

- Adult Services Associate Zoe Cheng Pinto (they/them) received special permission and funding from Carleton to continue work over winter break between terms and was able to work extra hours to complete ongoing collection projects. They were able to complete the large mystery weeding project and series labeling that was begun at the start of the term (series inventory started way back last year with our previous student worker, Linda!). The collection looks wonderful! Books in series are now shelved in number order and will be much easier to find/enjoy. Their next project is creating some mystery booklists to promote the new series we have been able to highlight with the project.
- I am working with Tyler and Carleton’s CCCE to add a Summer Fellow position for Accessibility/Collections who will be able to continue this work during the summer break for 2026. Student work hours are so valuable to us and make possible many of these special large projects to improve the library’s collections, while also providing work experience to students interested in libraries or related fields.
- We continue to use our Ingram Express account to receive unprocessed items at near-normal discount more quickly-- as a way to mitigate slowed order fulfillment from Ingram. The discounts have been extended through March so we may continue to lean on this alternative supply option through quarter 1 of 2026 though managing invoices for these expedited items is more time-consuming.
- We are in the process of setting up a book leasing account through Brodart, another library vendor. This will help the library diversify its supplier options and create a new avenue to source bestseller/high-demand titles in a timely fashion. Leasing temporarily-popular materials also creates a built-in end-of-shelf-life plan

for these items, meaning less waste and streamlined staff work time in weeding/removal.

- In early 2026, I look forward to:
 - We will add large print materials to the library Oasis
 - I will work with a committee to pursue sustainable libraries certification
 - I will join other library staff to record an episode of the Library Love podcast for Feb 2026—I love to read month + romance theme

I will present at the Northfield Garden Club's annual luncheon in Feb

Submitted by Tyler Gardner, Emerging Technology Librarian

A connected community has access to the resources they need.

- I am working with Katlin and Carleton's CCCE to add a Summer Fellow position for Accessibility/Collections who will be able to continue this work during the summer break for 2026. I will work with the student on our Website Accessibility project which will involve making sitewide updates to meet WCAG 2.1 standards to web accessibility

Outreach Services

Submitted by Angelica Linder, Outreach Manager & Alexus Kreft Adult Programming & Outreach Librarian

November and December was a month focused on wrapping up outreach, programming as well as focusing on older adult including Spanish speakers' older adults while also planning for 2026.

An invited community feels at home in their library.



We kicked off a new collaboration with [Giving Voice](#) and launched the first Latino Choir in Northfield, with about 10 members, including several older adults. The choir is open to anyone in the community, and the excitement was immediate. After their first rehearsal in November, participants were eager to perform and share Spanish carols with the community. Their first performance on December 17 brought together around 45 people, including family members of the singers. It was a joyful evening filled with pride, music, and a strong sense of connection.

Alexus and Angelica shared our community-created cookbook, *Northfield Cocina*, with the world at a release party on December 5th. Over 30 contributors, family members, and patrons joined us for food and celebration. It was wonderful to watch the contributors see the final product for the first time, and we got amazing feedback from many people involved. This project has been a true labor of love, starting back in October 2024, so it was incredibly rewarding to see it come to fruition.



Thanks to the Friends and Foundation, we are selling the cookbooks for \$20, with all of the funds going toward future Spanish-language programming. We started with 75 copies of the cookbook for sale, we're now down to 16!

Planning is already underway for the 2026 Celebrate Asia Pasifika event, and will continue to host the celebration in partnership with St. Olaf's Asian Studies department. This year, we're looking forward to reaching out to Carleton College's Asian Studies department and Asian student groups to ensure that all students have the opportunity to share and celebrate their culture with our community. I'm so looking forward to the third iteration of this event.

Steve shared that the Winter Walk was a huge success this year. Over 2,400 people enjoyed the trains, music, and cookies. The Northfield Handbell Choir played for an hour. The Friends and Foundation of the Northfield Public Library mingled with patrons handing out cookies and engaging in many wonderful conversations. We had six trains and many happy patrons. The Mayor's Youth Council was a fantastic late addition to our festivities. They handed out candy canes and polled the young ones near the Teen Space.





***A Connected Community* has access to the resources they need**

On December 22nd, Alexus hosted Catherine Friend for a program, *Shorter Nonfiction for Shorter Memories: Extending the Reading Life of Loved Ones with Memory Loss*. Catherine shared information on and free copies of a grant-funded book project she's been working on creating short nonfiction pieces targeted at readers experiencing memory loss. Although there was a slim crowd, likely because we rescheduled from the original date due to winter weather, Catherine shared useful and engaging information based on her experience caring for her father. Alexus worked with Karin to share free copies with senior living facilities in town after the program as well.

On December 18, we partnered with Growing Up Healthy for their “*Café y Galletas*” program. This gathering created a welcoming space for immigrant families to learn how to prepare an emergency plan and receive support with completing DOPA, POA, and travel permit forms. Our goal was to remove barriers by offering these services free of charge and in Spanish, with Francisco and Angelica available as notaries and interpreters to support families every step of the way. Attorney **Kimberly Decker** was also present to assist with legal questions.

We launched a new collaboration with **St. Dominic Church**, bringing the Spanish computer class directly to that space to better serve our community. The first class took

place on Tuesday, January 6 with eight students participating. The program will continue through the end of February.

Another new partnership was formed with the **Northfield-based End-of-Life Choices Collective**, which will offer quarterly advance care planning open houses for the community at the library on the first Wednesday of January, March, May, September and November.

Steve shared a memorable interaction during a Tech Time visit. A man who had lost most of his hearing, and will very soon completely, came in to get help installing an app on his phone. This app called *Nagish*, will allow all his phone calls to be transcribed. The is a free app that is paid for by a federally administered fund in the United States. Users must be eligible. He said, "this is live changing". He was very appreciative of the library and our support.

In 2025 sent out over 23,000 emails during the 12 months. Over 10,000 Shelf Life emails were opened to take a look at our newsletter. And toward the end of the year, we went over the 2,000 subscriber's mark.

An informed community understands what their library offers and has opportunity to shape the library with feedback.

Speaking of **Northfield Cocina** by Alexus, she shared that her and Angelica were chosen to present a poster on the project at the 2026 ALA Conference! We can't wait to share what we've learned about community-created publishing, platforming marginalized stories, and using food to bridge cultures with fellow library workers.

Karin organized several visits to older adult facilities to promote the library's home delivery service and added a new stop to our fourth Thursday outreach schedule at Millstream Commons.

Francisco continues regular visits on the fourth Thursdays to Valley View Assisted Living and Millstream Commons. Karin's third Thursday visits include Benedictine Living, 1000 Cannon Valley

Dr., Three Links Apartments, NRC Lobby Stops, Parkview Ivy Dining Room, and the Manor Dining Room.

An Included Community is seen, heard, and engaged by their library



We wrapped up the year with a cozy social for the Spanish Book Club on the evening of the Winter Walk. While participation was lower than usual, everyone was excited to share the new year's books and look forward to upcoming discussions.

We started a new partnership with [A Day at the Farm](#), an organization that offers free recreation and community-building opportunities for people with disabilities, especially adults with more complex support needs. Beginning in January, Steve and Alexus will host a monthly Library Pop-Up on the third Wednesday of each month, with curated book selections and sensory- and family-friendly activities.

We also began the new year by sharing powerful stories of resilience and migration through a partnership with [Puentes/Bridges](#), whose mission is to build connections between immigrant workers and the rural and farming community. The bilingual exhibition *“Chicāhuac: Women’s Stories of Strength & Sacrifice from Rural Mexico to the Midwest”* will be on display from January 2–February 4, 2026, with an opening reception on Thursday, January 15 from 5:30–6:30 p.m. The exhibit highlights strength, sacrifice, Indigenous history, and migration through the experiences of women who have led households in rural Mexico while their loved ones work in the Midwest.

For the first time, we are partnering with Nerstrand Big Woods State Park to take part in one of their largest winter events, the Winter Candlelight Event, on Saturday, January 24. Weather permitting, the bookmobile will be on site; if conditions do not allow, we will host a lobby stop instead. Visitors are invited to stop by to check out books, sign up for a library card, or simply connect with library staff while enjoying candlelit trails and warm drinks by the bonfire.

To end the report on a personal note from Alexus:

“I began working full-time in my position in late December, and I’m so thrilled to grow my capacity and continue this incredibly rewarding work!”

Youth Services report attached

Youth Services Report
December 2025-January 2026
Amy Nelson, Em Lloyd, Cat Sebright

An invited community is a community that feels at home in their library.

Em says, “Word is spreading to the larger community that visits the NCRC to shop for food about the Monday Oasis storytime. A person on desk at the CAC told me several people had asked when it was.”

Em will be visiting 2nd grade classrooms in early February to booktalk—short, engaging presentations of book titles designed to spark interest in reading.

Youth Services hosted two New Year’s events this year—New Year’s Eve Eve for Teens and Unicorn Noon Year’s Eve for Kids and Families. 11 teens came for New Year’s Eve Eve and 80 people attended the Unicorn Noon Year’s Eve. Cat says, “I love seeing new faces at the library. Programs like these are great for that!”

An included community is a community in which every person is seen, heard, and engaged.

Em offered a Black Friday storytime (on “too much stuff”) and an open-art program for older kids on Friday, November 28, and had 70 participants. It can be hard to predict if there is community interest or need for programming around holiday dates, but the day after Thanksgiving has been a well-attended program date for two years in a row now.

Cat and Teen Tuesday participants are working to host a mini golf program for kids and families over Spring Break. They’ll be preparing obstacles and course materials at some of their weekly programs in January, February, and March.

Em has been hard at work lining up presenters and programs for the first half of 2026. Planned events include:

January

- January 10: Stuffed Animal Sleepover
- January 10: A visit from local author (and third grade teacher at Greenvale Park Elementary) Kelly Johnson and her bearded dragon Tom, for a program around her graphic novel *Once Upon a Tom*.

February

- February 28: Potato Derby Orientation. Em writes, “At orientation, you’ll get your wheels, your potato, and the derby rules. You’ll learn the physics behind crafting a super-speedy spud from St. Olaf’s STEMQuest team, get inspired by images of potato cars past, and learn what Race Day on March 14 will look like.”

March

- March 14: 2nd Annual Potato Derby
- March 24: KPop Demon Hunters: Trivia, Crafts, and More program
- March 25: The Works: Light and Kaleidoscopes
- March 27: Sustainable Safari

April

- Heart of the Beast Theater—“Trees Are Cool” puppet show for Earth Month

May

- Working with local artist Rocky Casillas Aguirre to co-create a program for kids for Mental Health Awareness Month

Summer

- Bruce the Bug Guy
- Carlson’s Lloveable Llamas

A connected community is a community with access to needed resources for all.

Em says, “I spent the last large chunk of the money in the juvenile ebook budget, focusing again on e-audiobooks (about 80% of my order).”

Cat is working to schedule visits to The Key to promote library services and resources and build relationships with the staff and youth.

An empowered community is a community that is equipped for a changing world.

In December, both Em and Cat were notified that they were selected to receive scholarships from the Public Library Association to attend the PLA Annual conference in Minneapolis. Circulation Assistant Natalia Torres Camargo was also selected for the PLA Scholarship.

An informed community is a community that understands what their library offers and shapes their library with feedback.

Based off teen feedback, Cat organized two sessions of Dungeons and Dragons for winter campaigns this year. One group for experienced players and one for beginners. Groups are meeting concurrently, every other Saturday from January to April. Teens from TAB serve as the DMs (Dungeon Masters) for the group.

As a team, we also set our department goals for 2026.

Northfield Public Library
Youth Services Framework
2026

The mission of Northfield Public Library is “inviting exploration, empowering people, engaging community.” Youth-focused activities that work to fulfill the mission of the

library include planning, collections, spaces, staff and training, technology and access, programs and services, and communication.

Northfield Public Library values:

- Hospitality
 - Create an inviting environment, inside and out
 - Nurture a welcoming staff culture
 - Uplift and celebrate diversity
- Trust
 - Listen and respond to feedback from the community
 - Be a reliable community partner
 - Be a responsible custodian of resources
- Access
 - Guarantee equitable access to resources
 - Develop staff leadership and expertise at all levels
 - Provide free access to all expressions of ideas without restrictions
- Innovation
 - Encourage creative problem solving
 - Embrace playful learning and inquiry
 - Anticipate and respond to community needs
- Connection
 - Engage with the community where they are
 - Reach out to the underserved
 - Foster conversation across differences

Five strategic priorities have been identified in the 2021-2026 Strategic Plan:

1. An invited community is a community that feels at home in their library.
2. An included community is a community in which every person is seen, heard, and engaged.
3. A connected community is a community with access to needed resources for all.
4. An empowered community is a community that is equipped for a changing world.
5. An informed community is a community that understands what their library offers and shapes their library with feedback.

The goal of creating a framework that describes and encompasses the range of services provided to the community by the Northfield Public Library is to encourage the development of holistic plans for youth-focused services, resources, and communication plans that reflect the library's values, as well as evaluating their effectiveness in fulfilling the library's strategic priorities.

Planning

Youth-focused services are based on input from the community, research, best practice, broad trends, and community needs that support the library as third space. Specific objectives include:

- Use current research about child and teen developmental needs and the role of libraries in supporting them.

- Scan developments in technology and the online environment to ensure library services remain relevant.
- Incorporate best practices as identified by expert professionals and professional organizations, in and outside the library world.
- Link into local community needs.
- Lobby for appropriate resources to support youth services in the library.

Action plan for 2026:

- Engaging in planning that establishes an annual view of programs/services.

Collections

Collections for young people should be responsive, relevant, and accessible.

- Promote the collection through youth-focused displays, reading lists, online access to the catalog, and peer-to-peer recommendations.
- Provide a range of formats that are informed by new developments in youth literature.
- Consider input from children, teens, caring adults, and adults who work with youth when making selections in addition to traditional sources such as library jobbers, review journals, and social media.
- Review collection use regularly to evaluate the public's engagement with youth collections, including circulation statistics, in-library use, appeal, appropriateness, and relevance.

Action plan for 2026:

- Look at creative ways to promote the collection through youth-focused displays.
- Continue to refresh book lists with an eye to supporting readers to know why a book might appeal to them beyond the main theme of the list.
- Develop Decodable reader collection to support emerging readers.
- Develop collection development plan for Spanish collections.
- Complete work started in 2025 to relabel the Parenting Collection books to reflect the thematic organizational scheme that was implemented.

Spaces

Spaces for children, teens, and families at Northfield Public Library should:

- Extend a spirit of welcome and belonging.
- Embrace playful learning and inquiry.
- Have furniture and fittings appropriate for the needs, preferences, and use of the spaces by the intended age group.
- Highlight and showcase the collection and resources available.

Action plan for 2026:

- Evaluate Oasis, Bookmobile, and regular off-site program locations (such as Central Park) and develop best practices for programming in those spaces to better meet our goals.
- Use results of evaluation to begin a long-range plan for youth space enhancement/changes.

- Continue grant work to replace children's shelving and address safety and accessibility concerns with new layout.

Staff

Youth Services staff work collaboratively with other library staff and throughout the community to provide positive, proactive engagement of children and teens in libraries. Staff seek to:

- Provide opportunities for staff development and mentoring of all staff
- Provide opportunities for teens to volunteer and/or work in the library
- Advocate for the needs of children and teens in the library
- Participate in professional development and contribute to the body of knowledge about children and teen service provision
- Collaborate on children and teen projects with other colleagues and community organizations

Action plan for 2026:

- Prepare and deliver training for interested staff regarding basic child and adolescent development, reasonable expectations, and suggestion for redirecting energies.
- Incorporate Reader's Advisory recommendations, tips, recent trends, etc. at monthly All-Staff meetings.
- Prepare and deliver training for staff regarding the Parenting Collection so they can better assist patrons in utilizing the materials.

Technology

The library aims to provide equitable access to online resources, and emerging technologies. Specific objectives include:

- As new resources or technology is introduced at the library, work to develop policies for use that minimize barriers for children and teens.
- Maximize access to library collections via interactive online tools.
- Provide opportunities to develop information literacy skills.

Action plan for 2026:

- Assess Youth/Teen webpages; determine what information is most helpful to share with Emerging Technology Librarian.
- Assess youth STEAM kits; identify opportunities for continuation of service.

Programs and Services

Programs and services to children, teens, and caregivers endeavor to:

- Empower, connect, and showcase the creativity of young people.
- Foster an invited and included community by encouraging social interactions and a sense of belonging.
- Support the recreation, reading, and information literacy needs of families and young people in nontraditional settings.
- Work in partnership with other agencies providing services for children and young people.

Action plan for 2026:

- Clarify Youth and Outreach department roles and responsibilities; work together to identify potential community partners or opportunities
- Make space during department meetings to discuss age-group program challenges, successes, and plan for upcoming events

Communication

- Develop communication and promotional strategies targeted toward children, teens, and interested adults.
- Utilize networks for communicating with other agencies serving young people as clients to cross-promote activities.

Action plan for 2026:

- Develop a regular flow for sharing Youth library events and resources both internally and externally
- Prioritize gathering images from programs of both staff delivery and participants for future marketing campaigns, presentations, etc.