

# Grand Rapids Community College

## State of Michigan Capital Outlay Project Request - FY 2025 (Originally submitted FY2023)

### Learning Resource Center/Library & Learning Commons – Renovation and Addition

Project Focus:         Academic         Research         Administrative/Support  
Type of Project:      Renovation         Addition         New Construction  
Approximate Square Footage:    Renovation - 61,268 SF        Addition - 16,100 SF  
Total Estimated Cost:    \$33.6 Million

#### Estimated duration of Project:

Is the Five-Year plan posted on the institution's public internet site?    YES

Is the requested project included in the Five-Year Capital Outlay Plan? YES

#### 1. Project Purpose:

In the midst of a global pandemic, GRCC completed a new campus master plan in 2020, full of optimism, intentionality, and aspirations for the future. The plan serves as a guide for future endeavors over several years and phases. Through the master planning efforts, the Learning Resource Center (LRC) was identified as the facility most in need of renovations to meet the changing needs of GRCC students and for our faculty to improve student learning and completion outcomes.

The LRC currently houses the GRCC Library and Learning Commons, Tutoring and Academic Support, Media Technologies and the Office for Diversity, Equity and Inclusion. The existing LRC is a large space with a vast amount of natural light. It is deemed as one of the most utilized student spaces on campus. However, the current facility is outdated and no longer meets the changing learning and academic support needs of students. The goals for this renovation/addition include:

- A dynamic center where students can access the resources they need to support their learning, transforming a more traditional library model that is currently in place
- A dynamic space that promotes both independent and collaborative student studying
- An area where many essential student services can be obtained in one area
- A space that will create a "sense of belonging and place" for students
- An improved, expanded, transparent exterior appearance

With these goals in mind, GRCC's vision for an improved Library and Learning Commons is to deliberately align and integrate high touch and high impact student and faculty programs and resources in a manner that increases access, collaboration, and synergy -- advancing teaching and learning, and demonstrably improving student persistence and completion. By connecting and making these campus programs more visible and highly accessible, our vision for this space will elevate student participation in library, research, technology services, mental health supports, and programs that promote equity and inclusion.

#### 2. Scope of the Project:

The LRC is a two-story facility, originally constructed in 1972. The current structure includes a large mezzanine area that divides the building into north and south sections and includes a mid-level mezzanine between the two floors, which is currently not accessible for those with mobility limitations. Additionally, the facility needs electrical upgrades including feeders, switch gear, transformers and panels; restroom enhancements to comply with plumbing code and ADA

requirements; interior doors; lighting and control systems; mechanical and HVAC infrastructure including air handling units, chiller and cooling tower; terminal units and mixing boxes, and building automation and energy management controls. The planned renovation is a complete deconstruct of the existing interior to improve utilization efficiency, address accessibility issues, and upgrade building infrastructure. Additionally, the building envelope (roof) will be replaced and waterproofed. The building addition will allow for expanded student services and will create a warmer, welcoming atmosphere for this destination facility.

### **3. Program focus of occupants**

This facility serves all GRCC students, faculty and the general public. Current occupants include:

- Library & Learning Commons
- Tutoring and Academic Support
- Office of Diversity, Equity and Inclusion
- Media Technologies

Additional occupants pending renovation and addition:

- Counseling
- Disability Support Services
- Testing Center
- Shared community/Collaboration Space

### **Additional Information?**

#### **4. How does the project support Michigan's talent enhancement, job creation and economic growth initiatives on a local, regional and/or statewide basis?**

GRCC is nationally recognized for the quality of its academic programs, both in the Arts and Sciences for transfer pathways, and in Workforce Development for career, technical, apprentice and job training programs. The programs and services housed in the LRC support **all** GRCC students, contributing to their success. Through the Woodrick Social Justice Consortium, GRCC has forged strong partnerships with local organizations and companies that share a commitment to increasing workforce training and development in areas of diversity and inclusion. Empathy, cultural competence, and intercultural communication and engagement are learned practices that will take a lifetime to master. Additionally, GRCC has a history of working closely with area employers to meet workforce needs and address workforce talent requirements.

#### **5. How does the project enhance the core academic, development of critical skill degrees, and/or research mission of the institution?**

Grand Rapids Community College was founded in 1914, following a resolution by the University of Michigan faculty that encouraged the establishment of junior colleges in Michigan. Under the 1966 Community College Act, Michigan included postsecondary vocational-technical education in the community college program. Consequently, GRCC now offers comprehensive educational services for workforce degree students, transfer students and job training students.

The Learning Resource Center houses GRCC's library, which provides open access to a large range of materials and services to students, faculty, staff, and the general public. The collection supports the GRCC curriculum and consists of physical and electronic items. The library serves as one of the main hubs on campus, with open-access hours 74-hours per week, and contains research materials, study tables, computer lab, an information literacy classroom, presentation spaces, Laptop and Hotspot checkouts, textbook and reserves, and houses more than 70,000 physical books. Electronic resources include over 150 licensed databases, over 65,000 academic journals, more than 400,000 e-books, and thousands of full-length streaming videos. The role and function of the academic library needs to evolve to accommodate the changing needs of our students and faculty (i.e. create collaborative spaces, spaces for quiet, individual online learning, group study rooms, flexible spaces to support changing student work). As a featured and reliable resource for our students, the GRCC library has become a central destination for our students. To continue to stay relevant and responsive to the changing learning needs and styles of our students, a renovation, expansion and technology upgrade is desperately needed to better support their success. The renovation will also provide dedicated space and support for the development of faculty, staff, student and community skills in the use of current media technologies which will result in transforming the manner in which we teach and our students learn.

**6. Is the requested project focused on a single, stand-alone facility? If no, please explain.**

Yes, the Learning Resource Center is stand-alone facility.

**7. How does the project support investment in or adaptive re-purposing of existing facilities and infrastructure?**

The LRC will be adapted and re-used, while also being added on to. This represents some 73,000 sf to be re-used, not demolished and rebuilt, and will offer significant cost and sustainability advantages. A schematic is included as Attachment A.

**8. Does the project address or mitigate any current health/safety deficiencies relative to existing facilities? If yes, please explain.**

The project will introduce all new mechanicals to allow for up to date, excellent ventilation, heating and cooling. Currently, half of the air handling capacity is at or very near end of useful life and includes associated freq. drives, pumps, coils, and controls. Indoor air quality will be greatly improved by this project. Restrooms will be upgraded to address plumbing code and ADA deficiencies.

**9. How does the institution measure utilization of its existing facilities, and how does it compare relative to established benchmarks for educational facilities? How does the project help to improve the utilization of existing space and infrastructure, or conversely how does current utilization support the need for additional space and infrastructure?**

As part of the 2020 campus master plan, a comprehensive space utilization study was completed which benchmarked GRCC classroom and space usage (pre-COVID) against established higher education best practice. The results of that study indicated where GRCC has opportunity to modify existing and underutilized space to meet campus needs. The brutalist modern architecture of the LRC, with the un-accessible mid-floor mezzanine, was identified as one of the first spaces that should be considered for renovation. The renovation will improve building utilization and efficiency by eliminating the architectural barriers that prevent use of significant space within the building.

**10. How does the institution intend to integrate sustainable design principles to enhance the efficiency and operations of the facility?**

GRCC incorporates LEED standards in all building and renovation projects. In addition to employing LEED standards, we incorporate energy efficient systems and automated controls, lighting sensors and recyclable materials are used in furnishings, carpeting, etc. The project will introduce all new mechanicals to allow for up to date, excellent ventilation, heating and cooling. Currently, half of the air handling capacity is at or very near end of useful life and includes associated frequency drives, pumps, coils, and controls. Indoor air quality will be greatly improved by this project.

**11. Are match resources currently available for the project? If yes, what is the source of them match resources? If no, identify the intended source and the estimated timeline for securing said resources.**

Existing plant fund resources will be allocated to meet match requirements. All planning and construction resources will be on hand prior to the desired start of the project in fall of 2023.

**12. If authorized for construction, the state typically provides a maximum of 75% of the total cost for university projects and 50% of the total cost for community college projects. Does the institution intend to commit additional resources that would reduce the state share from the amount indicated? If so, by what amount?**

GRCC is requesting 50% support, as no additional resources are available to assist with this project.

**13. Will the completed project increase operating costs to the institution? If yes, please provide an estimated cost (annually, and over a five-year period) and indicate whether the institution has identified available funds to support the additional cost.**

No significant additional operating costs have been identified.

**14. What impact, if any, will the project have on tuition costs?**

The increase in operational cost is not projected to have any impact on GRCC tuition costs.

**15. If the project is not authorized, what are the impacts to the institution and its students?**

The facility needs a major interior renovation to repurpose underutilized spaces to better serve student learning, academic support and campus experience requirements. Additionally, the facility needs electrical upgrades and panels, transformers, restroom enhancements to comply with ADA requirements, interior doors; lighting and control systems; HVAC air handling units and energy management systems. Post-COVID, the student at the community college will expect a campus and facilities that provide a safe and healthy learning environment and access to comprehensive and customized services to enhance their college success.

**16. What alternatives to this project were considered? Why is the request project preferable to those alternatives?**

The alternative to a renovation and addition would be to completely demolish the current facility and replace it with a brand-new building which is cost prohibitive for GRCC. The LRC will be adapted and re-used, while also being added on to. This represents some 73,000 sf to be re-purposed, not demolished and rebuilt, and will offer significant cost and sustainability advantages.