Downers Grove Civic Center Downers Grove, IL

Category: Institutional - Civic

Program Statement

The Downers Grove Civic Center (DGCC) realizes this community's bold vision for a vibrant shared facility that houses its Village Hall, Police Department, and School District 58 administration. Instantly recognizable as a center of local government, the DGCC design achieves three critical goals: Celebrating community heritage and pride; providing a warm, welcoming environment that enhances productivity; and demonstrating the community's commitment to sustainability.

Located on a transformed 6.5-acre site, the DGCC is a gateway to Downers Grove's revitalized downtown district. Two outdoor plazas complement the building design. The northwest plaza connects commuters to regional train service and is also a well-used pedestrian pathway. The Blackburn Civil Rights Plaza honors the legacy of Israel Blackburn, a formerly enslaved person and one of Downers Grove's original founders.

DGCC's exterior design balances tradition with progress. Timeless brick and stone materials combine with a wealth of glazing, canopies and overhangs to provide both natural light and critical shading. The space design of the three-level facility (including the basement) provides safe and functional workflows that enhance productivity and a positive experience for building visitors.

The DGCC's most prominent interior space is the two-story, light-filled atrium which connects most public spaces including the Council Chambers, used for Village meetings, trainings and community gatherings. The chamber's flexible layout features an operable partition that can divide the space. The first floor also contains secure transaction windows for Village services and key police department functions.

DGCC's second floor houses Village departments, police functions and school district staff in dedicated areas. Within departments, individual workspaces are designed for comfort and productivity with high-quality, durable materials. Large perimeter windows ensure abundant natural light, while automatic shades, linked to programmable lighting controls, offer flexibility in managing light levels. Customized audio-visual systems further support a range of activities, including broadcasting, training, and virtual or hybrid meetings. A prominent feature of the second floor is the shared staff hub, a centrally located zone for shared meeting rooms, break areas, a kitchen area, wellness room and outdoor green deck.

The DGCC is a visible manifestation of the Village's commitment to sustainability. The design team reviewed a range of sustainability options including maintainability, first cost, long term operating cost, and carbon footprint. Site enhancements include permeable pavers, rain gardens, and bioswales to support best practices in stormwater management. Design enhancements include an efficient building envelope, laminated glazing units for both acoustic and solar performance, and photovoltaic panels on the carport structures.

Significantly more efficient than the buildings it replaced, the DGCC's system has an EUI of 54.6, a 60% EUI savings over the old buildings' EUI of 137. The new building also achieves a 31% EUI savings over the CBECS 2003 baseline. Annual energy costs are expected to be 61% less in this single new structure compared to the previous 3 buildings – saving approximately \$168K annually. Carbon dioxide (CO2) savings are estimated at more than 37%.

The DGCC cost was \$60 million including \$52 million for construction and \$8 million for soft costs.

Civic107-01

Preferred slide



A beacon of excellence and civic engagement, the Downers Grove Civic Center is the new home for this community's Village Hall, Police Department and School District 58 Admin offices. The horizontal lines of the council chambers and lobby atrium roof canopies along with abundant tall window systems were inspired by prairie style architecture.



Balancing tradition with innovation, DGCC's exterior design palette includes a custom brick blend, manufactured stone accents, metal trim, wood-look soffit panels, and rain chains leading into rain gardens as visitors approach the southeast entry plaza. Permeable paver parking spaces can be seen in the foreground which help reduce stormwater runoff.



A detail of the west elevation highlights the two-story entry into the public lobby with its asymmetrical civic canopy providing extra depth to shade the south curtainwall system.

















Left: A dynamic secured staff stair with perforated risers and linear lights leads up to the second-floor shared staff social hub. Right: The shared staff social hub, at the center of all three second floor departments, has a large island and kitchen that invites conversation and connections with views beyond towards the exterior roof terrace.





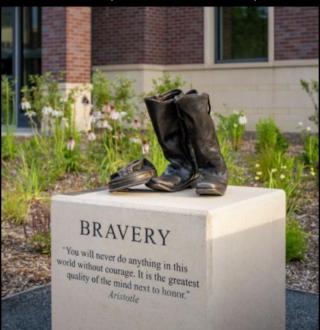




The Blackburn Civil Rights Plaza pays tribute to Israel Blackburn, a formerly enslaved person who served in the Union Army and was one of the village's original founders. The plaza celebrates different periods of his life through custom place-making sculpture elements cast from bronze or laser cut from steel plates set at different planes for his abstract portrait.













Achieving the Civic Center campus masterplan involved a complex four phases of construction (see phasing diagram below)

- Phase 1: demolition of NW corner parking, create temporary entries for existing police and village hall to remain in operations during construction.
- Phase 2: Construct new civic center in NW corner (only 15' from old police station) and partial parking.
- Phase 3: Move staff into new building, demolish old buildings.
- Phase 4: Finishing remaining site work for parking and civil rights plaza.





SECOND FLOOR PROGRAM PLAN 28,260 sf

PUBLIC ACCESS AREAS

SECURE STAFF SHARED AREAS

POLICE PROGRAM

VILLAGE HALL PROGRAM

SCHOOL DISTRICT PROGRAM

BUILDING SUPPORT AREAS





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LOWER LEVEL PROGRAM PLAN 14.400 sf PUBLIC ACCESS AREAS SECURE STAFF SHARED AREAS POLICE PROGRAM VILLAGE HALL PROGRAM SCHOOL DISTRICT PROGRAM BUILDING SUPPORT AREAS O 10 20 40

Unexcavated Areas

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