



GROW - FACILITY DESCRIPTION

There are two key components to the Children's Museum of Rock County project: the physical building and the development of the museum experience.

THE BUILDING

The museum will be an adaptive reuse of the historic First National Bank at 100 W. Milwaukee Street. The First National Bank is an architectural cornerstone in downtown Janesville and an important piece of community history. The historic bank building will be kept intact, but the 1970s drive up will be demolished and replaced with a new addition. **Angus Young Associates** of Janesville is leading the design and engineering of the project to transform this building from a financial center into a learning center. **Haizlip Studio** from Memphis, TN, a leader in children's museum design, has been engaged to transform this building from a financial center into a learning center. The museum will consist of 20,000-25,000 square feet of hands-on, interactive learning space.

THE EXPERIENCE

Currently, the project is in the conceptual phase of the design process. During this phase, the design team, the Board of Directors, and the Design and Construction Committee are determining community needs and how to translate those needs into building design, exhibits, and experiences. However, as an organization, the Children's Museum of Rock County has been very proactive and present in the community in the last few years and its volunteers have already gleaned many wonderful ideas like the need for a water room, adventure playground, and makerspace.

Presently, we expect that museum content will touch on science, technology, engineering, art, math, music, history, and geography. Moreover, rather than static exhibits, exhibits will be geared towards open-ended play and loose parts play allowing for greater creativity, expression, and interaction. The museum will include a range of versatile exhibits, features, and spaces encouraging simultaneous play and skill-building. For example, a water room will engage gross and fine motor skills, provide a sensory experience, and encourage independent, cooperative and constructive play. We expect all museum experiences to be multifaceted.

Besides content area and specific exhibits, the museum will include various other amenities to create an enjoyable and integrated experience. Due to the age range served, there will be a dedicated infant/toddler area, sensory room, and quiet caregiver's space. We are also exploring options for usable rooftop space and an outdoor play area. Since food options at children's museums help adults extend their stay and provide additional revenue, a café or other in-house food option will be important. Moreover, hosting birthday parties is a natural outgrowth for any children's museum and a reliable source of revenue. For such reasons, the museum will have space to accommodate birthday parties with either a dedicated birthday party room or in a multipurpose room. A multipurpose room will provide flexible space for thematic activities, classes and camps. Regular, strong programming content will be integral to museum operations and will complement the museum's everyday offerings, particularly during school breaks. A gift shop is also being considered.

Finally, the goal is to build a project that is representative of Rock County and will exist in perpetuity. For such reasons, we are planning for longevity, and are designing the museum to be adaptable and enduring. The children's museum will include rotating content to keep the museum experience fresh for visitors in addition to its flex spaces. The museum experience will be symbolic of Rock County and everything that makes it a unique and wonderful place to live, work, and PLAY!

