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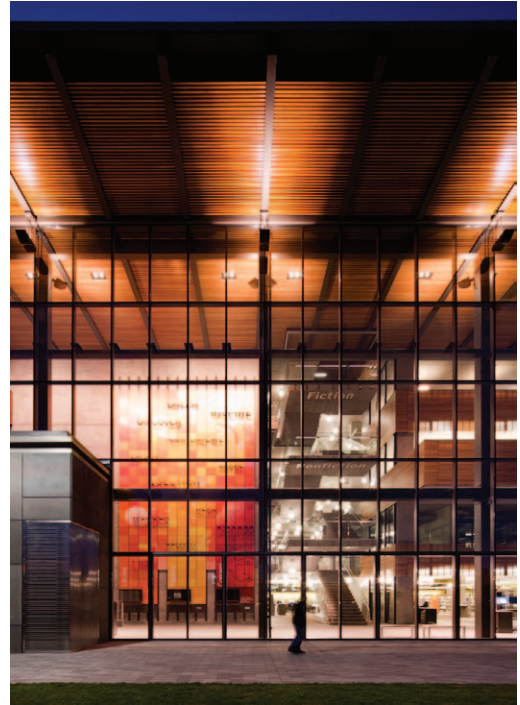
Miller Hull Partnership-Designed New Vancouver Community Library Opens

August, 2011—Designed by the award-winning architectural firm, The Miller Hull Partnership, the Vancouver Community Library in Vancouver, Washington, recently opened to the public. With an almost 200-foot long, four-story atrium welcoming visitors to this new civic gathering space, the light-filled space features a sculptural concrete stair uniting the library's five floors. A 50-foot high "Knowledge Wall" installation symbolizes the collection of information and ideas in the building.

"The main goal was to create a new center for the community," said Adin Dunning, the lead architect for the library project who also grew up in Vancouver. "It was about bringing new users into the library and expanding what the library had to offer. The atrium space connects the program together and differentiates this building from any other building in the city."

The old library spent almost five decades at a site cut off from the city by the freeway. The new building more than triples the current space (to 80,000 square feet). As part of the urban core of Washington's fourth largest city, the building serves as the cornerstone of a planned four-block 600,000-square-foot mixed-use development, including a public plaza that will spill out from the library's atrium to host a series of community events.

In response to the community's values and in an effort to market the library's services to the next generation of users, the youngest patrons and families are featured prominently in the building. More than 4,000 square feet of children's museum-like interactive displays (the largest such installation in the country) provides a focus on early literacy and a (free) place for children and their caregivers to come and build the skills that contribute to learning to read. Additionally, a state-of-the-art (and fully-enclosed) Teen Space was created providing



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dedicated computers, lounge seating, monitors for gaming, as well as an audio/ video system designed to allow teens to bring their own music into the space.

To facilitate community dialogue and discussions, the library includes both indoor and outdoor meeting and presentation spaces. All of these areas are available for community use, including a large roof deck with commanding views to the Columbia River and Mount Hood beyond.

The Vancouver Community Library was designed for long-term flexibility and adaptability as libraries change over time. Large open floor areas and a flexible raised access floor, containing mechanical and electrical systems, allow for easily rearranged spaces in the coming years and contribute to the overall sustainable design goals and projected LEED Gold certification. The use of natural daylight was a key design strategy, and the narrow building and arrangement of shelves maximizes north and south light. Carefully sized overhangs and the strategic use of clear and shaded glass (both a stainless steel mesh shade and ceramic frit) control heat gain and glare.

As the role of the library changes, including the evolution of how we consume books and media, the Vancouver Community Library stands out as the library of the future — anticipating that we cannot and do not know what to expect, but designed to adapt and respond when that future (and the next future) arrives.

The Miller Hull Partnership specializes in award-winning design for public and private buildings that actively engage their communities. Miller Hull's built work spans a wide range of project types such as schools, interpretive, community and nature centers, museums, city halls and public administration buildings, libraries, higher education facilities, mixed-use buildings, laboratories, corporate offices, condominiums and small residences. The Miller Hull Partnership is a recipient of the National Firm Award from the American Institute of Architects.



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