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## Georgia Library Spotlight - Hall County Library System, Gainesville Library

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# GLA SPOTLIGHT

## Hall County Library System Gainesville Library

The [Gainesville Library](#) serves as the headquarters for the [Hall County Library System](#) and consists of approximately 37,500 square feet on two levels. This building was originally constructed in 1969 at 28,900 square feet and was intended to serve as a tornado shelter after a historically tragic category 5 tornado destroyed most of downtown Gainesville in 1936.

In 2016, Special Local Operation Sales Tax (SPLOST) funds were allocated to begin the renovation and expansion of the Gainesville Library. The state of Georgia later matched this with a \$2 million grant and supplements from local impact fees. This \$5 million renovation and new addition consisted of redesigning the entire building to accommodate the exponential amount of growth in the local community and surrounding areas. During the planning phase of the project, community focus groups and stakeholders were surveyed on their top priorities for the new



renovation. Their most frequently requested changes and improvements were more space for youth services, places for meetings and small group work, better lighting, and a more secure local history room.

The biggest challenge of the project was figuring out how to add the necessary square footage. The Gainesville Library is landlocked just off the downtown square. Parking in the vibrant downtown area is a struggle, so no parking areas could be sacrificed. The solution was to build out in the airspace behind the back of the building, which also created a nice, covered parking area.



Additions to the building include five new study rooms, a dedicated children's programming room named for Georgia's former first lady Sandra Deal, a more spacious youth services area, a 14-seat conference room, and a large community room. Energy efficiency was improved by replacing 50-year-old glass throughout the building with thick and efficient window panes. LED lighting was also installed to replace old fluorescent fixtures. Existing

shelving was repainted and renovated to decrease waste.

One feature that was not removed was the beloved signature spiral staircase; the Hall County community demanded that it remain in place. This beautiful piece of the original architecture received a much-needed facelift but is still the heart of the library. In addition, the original aged and dated exterior of the library has now been covered with a state-of-the-art Alucobond metal panel system featuring a combination of metal and wood-look finishes to ensure that it stands the test of time. These panels are broken up by large-scale glass fully

surrounding the building to allow for an increase in natural light throughout. New landscaping and exterior lighting were also added to the façade for a complete transformation and beautiful addition to the Hall County community that is nestled in the popular downtown square.

The architects for the Gainesville Library project were BCA Studios with interior design by Vivre Interiors. The project was constructed by Scroggs & Grizzle Contracting, Inc. For more information about the Gainesville Library, visit [www.hallcountylibrary.org](http://www.hallcountylibrary.org).