

CARNEGIE PUBLIC LIBRARY

1902

Stillwater
Public Library

2023
Progress
Report



Message from the Library Board of Trustees President and the Library Director

2023 was an exceptional year for Stillwater Public Library!

Our library was recognized by the City of Stillwater's Heritage Preservation Commission for its efforts to preserve a historic building. Further recognition was bestowed for educational opportunities through the St. Croix Collection. The library's outstanding service in support of the City of Stillwater's mission was also acknowledged.

The City of Stillwater's Human Rights Commission nominated Stillwater Public Library's Youth Services team for the Stillwater Human Rights Award.

A new strategic plan was adopted. In this report, objectives and successes are highlighted for each of the three strategic themes, which are Space & Place, Access & Enrichment, and Culture & Organizational Health.

Also, more materials were borrowed from this library than any previous single year, and we can report record-breaking participation in library programs and activities too. Clearly, this is a community that values literacy, lifelong learning, and engagement. Thank you for being a part of our story.

Warmest regards,



Pat Lockyear
President, Board of Trustees



Mark Troendle
Director, Stillwater Public Library

Our Mission: Stillwater Public Library connects members of our community with the power of knowledge, the possibility of new ideas, and the opportunity to engage with one another.



353,354
physical items
checked out



79,491
e-materials
borrowed

2,541
volunteer
hours



LIBRARY

6,930
new items added to
physical collection

81%
of circulation is from physical
items

287
programs
& activities



18,861
participating adults,
teens & children

2023 in Review

126,369
library visits



An average of **376** visitors
each day!



1,514
new library cardholders



97,110
visits to our
website



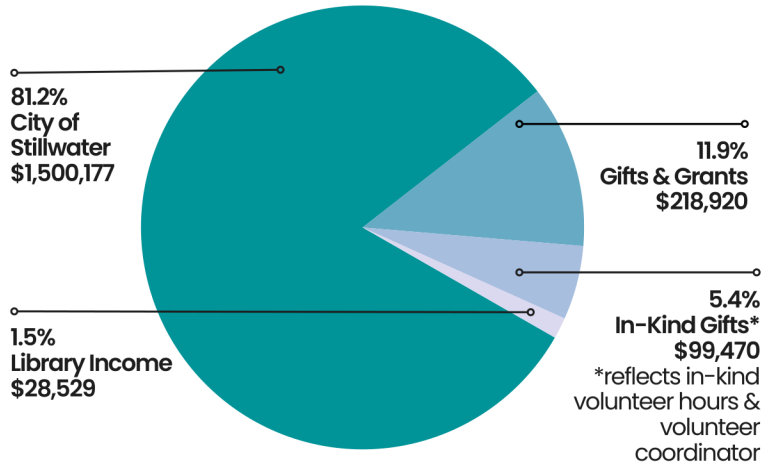
24,037
Wi-Fi users

2023 Financial Highlights

A Community-Supported City Library

Stillwater Public Library is city-owned and operated. In 2023, the City of Stillwater provided more than 81% of the library's total operating support through the levying of property taxes. The remaining support came from the generosity of donors to the library, Stillwater Public Library Foundation, and Friends of the Stillwater Public Library, as well as volunteers assisting at the library.

2023 Operating Support



The City funded:

- Library staffing for Monday - Saturday
- Building maintenance and utilities
- Equipment, supplies and services
- 55% of new materials purchased for users to borrow
- Masonry restoration (capital budget)

Gifts from Foundation, Friends and donors funded:

- 45% of new materials purchased for users to borrow
- Library staffing on Sundays
- Youth Services librarian
- Youth Summer Reading Program
- Discovery Room
- Programs and activities for all ages
- Staff training
- Digitization of historical newspapers

Space & Place

Stillwater Public Library is committed to providing an inclusive, accessible, and welcoming space where all members of our community can explore, learn, and connect.



Our Objectives

- Bolster the library's position in the community as an accessible, free, safe, and welcoming destination for everyone.
- Anchor the library's role as a connector within the larger social and economic fabric of the community.
- Preserve and honor the unique character of the historic Carnegie library.
- Protect the library's people, property, and information.
- Maintain and improve library spaces and amenities to enhance the user experience.

Our Successes

- The library was honored with an award from the Stillwater Heritage Preservation Commission for the library's contributions to preservation, preservation education, and good stewardship of our historic Carnegie building.
- Masonry restoration continued with caulking and tuckpointing completed on the west side, the terrace, and half of the south face of the building.
- Preservation work occurred throughout the library, including interior wall repairs and repainting, installation of a metal cap over a joint in the gallery floor to protect tiles from damage, retaining wall repairs, and restoration of wood tables by a past trustee.
- Grant money was awarded to the library to update signage to help patrons better navigate the building and find resources.
- Building security was enhanced with the addition of a new exterior security camera providing coverage of the staff entrance and the replacement of four interior analog security cameras with digital models.
- Volunteers from the Ivy Garden Club and the Board of Trustees brought vibrancy and color to the library with their careful planting and tending of flowering pots and seasonal greens.
- With visitors to the library often asking about its history, a research volunteer dug into archives for articles and artifacts highlighting key library events. A history of the library display was installed on the mezzanine level and updated in both a brochure format as well as on the website.
- The library is a founding member of a collective effort called the Stillwater Area Historic Newspaper Initiative that undertook a project to digitize and make searchable more than 77,000 pages of the Stillwater Gazette (1870–1926) and the Stillwater Messenger (1911–1926).



Stillwater Public Library is a bridge from our history to the future.

Access & Enrichment

Stillwater Public Library is responsive to the diverse needs of our community and offers library services to all.

Our Objectives

- Grow the library's commitment to reducing barriers to access.
- Provide meaningful opportunities for community engagement.
- Expand the library's reach with materials, programs, and services that reflect community needs and inspire diverse groups to seek access.
- Support users of all ages in their education, literacy, and enrichment aspirations.
- Help users navigate and engage with a broad spectrum of information and resources.
- Uphold the principles of intellectual freedom.



Stillwater Public Library is a passport to information and ideas.

Our Successes

- Borrowing of both physical and electronic items hit record levels. Total circulation has increased more than 30% over the past 10 years.
- Wonderbooks were added to the children's read-along collection. These print books with a built-in audio player aid in reading comprehension.
- The Road to Decode collection was expanded to include short chapter books and additional early reader titles to support new and striving readers.
- Due to the popularity of mobile hotspots, eleven more were added to help meet demand. These are funded by Stillwater Public Library Foundation.
- Based on patron suggestions, a magazine exchange was established.
- The library hosted We Are Water MN, an interactive exhibit and series of programs on the science, history, culture, and relationships of water in Minnesota and the lower St. Croix River Valley.
- One-on-one technology help appointments were regularly offered to provide personal assistance with computers, smartphones, tablets, and e-readers.
- Wellness programs were introduced for adults, including a balanced wellness series and regular Tai Chi classes.
- A new document camera was purchased that allows library program instructors to project an image of the techniques they are using to the class.
- A library card design contest for youth generated 70 entries, with one design printed as a limited edition card.
- The Discovery Room has become a year-round destination in the children's area with themes changing seasonally. Open during library hours, it is a place for children and caregivers to play and imagine together.
- The library director participated in a panel discussion of intellectual freedom.



Culture & Organizational Health

Stillwater Public Library offers an internal culture focused on inclusion, accountability, and respect. The library is a trusted community organization and a responsible steward of taxpayer and donor dollars.

Our Objectives

- Cultivate an inclusive organization focused on equitable outcomes and services for all.
- Build staff capacity to deliver on our mission and create opportunities for development and growth.
- Boost public awareness of the library and its value and role in improving the lives of people in the community.
- Align financial and operational resources with strategic priorities to ensure long-term sustainability.

Our Successes

- The library's youth services team was nominated for a Stillwater Human Rights Award for going above and beyond to ensure the enjoyment and protection of human rights by the city's Human Rights Commission.
- Trustees approved a 2023-2027 strategic plan focused on objectives in the areas of space and place, access and enrichment, culture and organizational health.
- A Library Advocacy Committee, consisting of representatives from the library board, staff, Foundation, and Friends, was formed to grow support and awareness of the library across the broader community.
- Library staff were out in the community at DaVinci Fest, Stillwater Farmers Market, ECFE, Family Means, Boutwells Landing, and area schools.
- Staff were enrolled in a training program that emphasizes resolving challenging situations with empathy and de-escalatory tactics.
- Staff participated in health and wellbeing activities offered through the city.
- A three-year grant was approved by Stillwater Public Library Foundation to fund a 20-hour per week Youth Services Librarian.
- Volunteers gave more than 2,500 hours of their time to the library, an equivalent of over \$80,000 in staffing.



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