

# MAKING AN IMPACT

## 2024 YEAR IN REVIEW

Stillwater  
Public Library

"Stillwater Public Library is a special place, filled with book lovers and kind, thoughtful people. I always feel welcomed. I value the skills of the staff, and I never hesitate to ask for help if needed. I am amazed at the wonderful classes and opportunities the library creates for people of all ages and all levels of knowledge." - Library Patron, November 2024

### Providing Welcoming Spaces for Everyone



**133,160**

library visits

**394**

daily visitors, on average



**150**

groups held

**579**

meetings

### Supporting Learners of All Ages



**351,364**

physical items  
checked out

**92%**

agree that Stillwater Public Library  
provides valuable resources for  
lifelong learning and education

(Source: 11/2024 City of Stillwater survey)

In the past 10 years,  
total circulation  
climbed 38%,  
while Stillwater's  
population grew 3%.



**91,099**

e-materials  
borrowed



**1,486**

new  
cardholders

### Engaging & Connecting Our Community



**364**

programs & activities

**19,584**

adult & youth  
participants



**7,040**

computer sessions

**281,314**

Wi-Fi sessions



**70**

volunteers

**2,769**

volunteer hours



**106,305**

website visits

**Our Mission:** To connect members of our community with the power of knowledge, the possibility of new ideas, and the opportunity to engage with one another.



[library.stillwatermn.gov](http://library.stillwatermn.gov)



651-275-4338



[splinfo@stillwatermn.gov](mailto:splinfo@stillwatermn.gov)



# MAKING AN IMPACT 2024

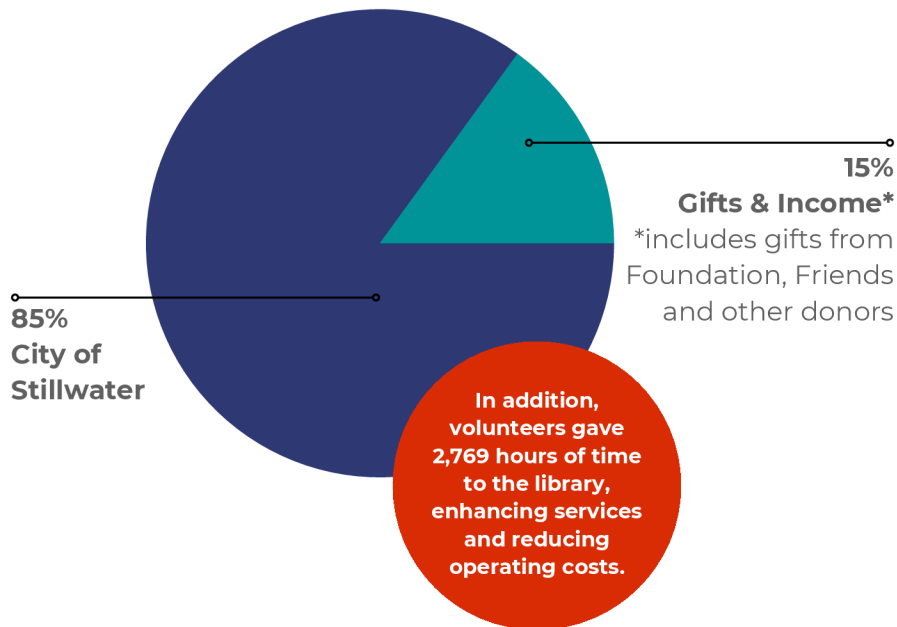
Stillwater  
Public Library

## A City Library Supported by the Community

Stillwater Public Library is a community-supported library, owned and operated by the City of Stillwater. The majority of the library's operating funding comes from city property tax revenues. In 2024, the city allocated \$1,565,996 to the library, covering 85% of the total operating costs. About 9 cents of each dollar the city receives from the tax levy goes to the library. These funds support key library functions, including staff salaries, building maintenance, supplies, and utilities.

Generous donations make up most of the additional support for the library. Essential community partners like the Stillwater Public Library Foundation and the Friends of the Stillwater Public Library play a crucial role in funding many of the library's services. Donor contributions cover 50% of the costs for purchasing new materials, staffing for Sunday hours, and one of two Youth Services Librarian positions. Additionally, nearly every library program—ranging from children's events to adult classes—is made possible through gifts and grants.

## 2024 OPERATING SUPPORT



### The City funds:

- Most library staffing
- Open hours from Monday - Saturday
- 50% of new physical and digital materials
- Public and staff computers and internet access
- Building maintenance and utilities
- Historic building preservation

### Gifts from Foundation, Friends and donors fund:

- Youth Services Librarian and Volunteer Coordinator
- Open hours on Sunday
- 50% of new physical and digital materials
- Programs and activities for all ages
- Discovery Room
- Newspaper digitization

**“Stillwater Public Library is a constant, free, and grounding community resource that has spanned generations and is an essential foundation to what Stillwater's been, is today, and is changing to become in our future.”**

- Library Patron, November 2024



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## A Passport to Information, Ideas & Entertainment

"Stillwater Public Library is very important to me. I check books and magazines out on a very regular basis. I also access books and magazines through Overdrive. We feel very welcome at the library and are greeted individually each time we come to the library. Honestly, I would feel so lost without the library . . . I feel so fortunate to be able to use the library." - Library Patron, November 2024

### Library Collection

Stillwater Public Library's physical and digital shelves are stocked with a wide range of materials for individuals of all ages and backgrounds. From thrillers to telescopes, we have something for everyone.



**76,361**  
print books,  
magazines and  
newspapers



**123,487**  
e-books  
available through  
MELSA: Twin Cities  
Metro eLibrary



**9,867**  
DVDs,  
audiobooks  
and music CDs



**47,615**  
e-audiobooks  
available through  
MELSA: Twin Cities  
Metro eLibrary



**31**  
hotspots  
**4**  
laptops  
with hotspots



**9**  
Memory  
Minder  
Kits



**4**  
Orion reflector  
telescope kits



**102**  
book club  
kits



**7**  
Nature  
Backpacks



**4**  
DVD  
players  
and drives

## A Bridge from Our History to Our Future

For over 125 years, Stillwater Public Library has connected the community to knowledge and local history, with the St. Croix Collection playing a key role. This collection preserves the history of Stillwater, Washington County, and the St. Croix River Valley through photographs, documents, and unique items. Notable resources include the John Runk and Frederick Holcombe photo collections, James Sinclair stereopticon slides, Company B Veterans' biographies, and early building permits. These materials provide valuable insights into local history and preserve our community's heritage.

The St. Croix Collection is available in person during library hours and online through the library's website. The library is a founding contributor to the Minnesota Digital Library, an online collection of historical images, documents, and oral histories from across the state. The library is also a partner in a collaborative effort to digitize pages of the Stillwater Gazette, Stillwater Messenger, and other local newspapers in the searchable Minnesota Digital Newspaper Hub.

### 2024 Highlights

St. Croix  
Collection



**209**  
in-person  
archive visits

**1,620**  
online archive visits

Minnesota  
Digital  
Library



**3,715**  
Stillwater items  
**11,221**  
views

Minnesota  
Digital  
Newspaper  
Hub



**132,474**  
Stillwater pages  
**21,330**  
views

**40,511**  
pages  
added in  
2024!

**"The [volunteer] genealogist that helped me did a very good job. We found some very exciting information that I had not heard before about my great-grandfather and his business. You have a wealth of information in the room. I have learned more from your library about my ancestors in Stillwater than I have at any other place that I have talked to."**

- Library Patron, June 2024



## Growing Early Learners

At Stillwater Public Library, we provide early learning opportunities that lay the foundation for lifelong success. Our Youth Services team fosters language, literacy, and social-emotional development through storytimes, activities, and curated books, helping children build essential skills and a love for reading. These resources support school readiness while creating a welcoming space for families to engage in their child's learning.

### Storytimes

Storytimes at Stillwater Public Library are immersive, engaging experiences that spark imagination, foster learning, and build a love for books. Each session is carefully designed to create a nurturing environment for young minds.

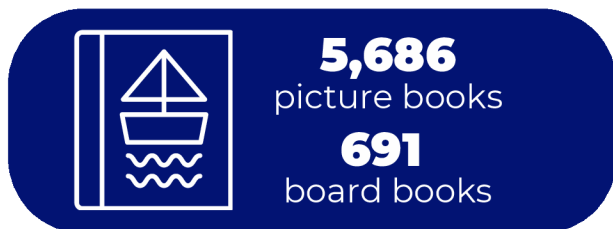


#### Patron Story:

Janelle cares for her 4 1/2-year-old great-niece, Olivia, once a week. Noticing Olivia hadn't yet learned her alphabet, Janelle made library storytime a regular part of their routine. At first, Olivia struggled to engage, but after just six weeks, she's now fully participating—singing, doing the motions, recognizing letters, and making friends.

**"It's been an amazing experience for Olivia, helping her socially and academically as she prepares for school."** - Janelle, 2024

### Books for Young Learners



### Discovery Room

Open during library hours, the Discovery Room offers a space for kids and caregivers to play, imagine, and learn together. Created by staff, the Discovery Room is made possible through the generosity of the Stillwater Public Library Foundation.



**"My son loves the 'store' with the cash registers! The wind tunnel is always a favorite, and we can't wait to visit and see what theme is next! The effort and details in this room are incredible, and the entire children's area at the Stillwater library has been an amazing resource for our family."**

- Megan, 2024

**"Love the hands-on applications of learning. It's like a mini children's/please touch museum. Love that it brings the kids to the library and builds a foundation to loving the library."**

- Anna, 2024

**"My children ALWAYS enjoy everything in the Discovery Room. It's hard to get them to leave :) Thank you for making it so enjoyable."**

- Kristin, 2024



# MAKING AN IMPACT

## 2024

Stillwater  
Public Library

## Supporting School-Aged Learners

**"When I stop to consider the impact that the library has had on our family through children's programs alone, it is immeasurable. Our family has taken advantage of so many offerings over the past 9 years of our Stillwater residency. We are so thankful to have a community that values the pillars of what a library stands upon."** - Library Patron, November 2024

### Programs & Classes

Our school-aged programs provide kids with the chance to explore new hobbies and topics in a free, safe space. With access to materials that deepen their knowledge, kids can discover their interests and passions. From educational experiences like the 2024 naturalist series to fun events like a magic show, each program sparks curiosity and inspires exploration.



**99**  
school-aged  
programs  
**3,819**  
attendees

### Summer Reading

Stillwater's summer reading program helps prevent the "summer slide" by keeping kids engaged in reading and learning. Studies show that participants in library summer programs maintain and even improve their reading skills. Additionally, the program fosters a love of reading and encourages critical thinking.



**58,146**  
teen and children's  
books borrowed  
June - August

### Scavenger Hunts

Scavenger hunts are a fun and interactive way to engage children of all ages. Available whenever the library is open, these hunts offer kids the chance to practice problem-solving, observational skills, and social interaction. They encourage children to explore the library and make new friends as they collaborate to complete the hunt.

**"[Stillwater Public Library] is creating a space for children to learn and become lifelong readers."**  
- Library Patron, November 2024



**4,042**  
scavenger hunt  
participants

### Books & More

Our collection of children's and teen materials spans from early readers and chapter books to nonfiction, graphic novels, and young adult titles. We stay up-to-date with usage trends, adhere to library guidelines, and are responsive to the evolving needs of our community. To better support emerging readers of all ages, we've expanded our collections of Vox Books and Wonderbooks (which combine books and audio into one) and decodables (phonics-based books).



**3,144**  
early reader books  
**7,174**  
chapter books  
**4,028**  
teen books

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## Lifelong Learning & Community Engagement

"[Stillwater Public Library] provides access to books, the internet, educational materials, which all contribute to residents being well-informed and supported in their pursuit of their individual goals. It's a place of lifelong learning that doesn't exist anywhere else in the community. There are art exhibits, free programs for all ages, staff with expertise to help you navigate a variety of challenges, plus it's a place to meet and connect. No other organization provides so much. Stillwater Library adds so much to my quality of life."

- Library Patron, November 2024

### Programs & Classes

"[Stillwater Public Library contributes to our community] by offering various classes for all age groups. Today is meditation, last month was Tai Chi, tomorrow could be how to make something. I enjoy looking through the calendar to see what is being offered every month."

- Library Patron, November 2024

### Research, Learn & Work

Stillwater Public Library provides resources for research, job searches, language learning, online courses, family history, career exam prep, and more. With quiet study spaces, reservable meeting rooms, and access to Wi-Fi, printing, desktop computers, hotspots and laptops, the library keeps the community connected. We also offer weekly one-on-one tech support to bridge the digital divide.



**130**  
adult  
programs  
**2,647**  
participants



**9,418**  
retrievals from  
electronic resources

**93%**  
said it is very or extremely  
important for our community  
to have access to  
free library programs

(Source: 6/2024 City of Stillwater Survey)



**18,371**  
adult fiction books  
**20,629**  
adult nonfiction

**75%**  
agreed that "I or someone in my  
family benefited from attending a  
Stillwater Public Library program  
in the past year."

(Source: 6/2024 City of Stillwater Survey)

"The library provides a wonderful place  
to do research with a very helpful staff."

- Library Patron, November 2024

"Provides an essential  
community service. It was the  
best place for me to study  
during graduate school.  
Today I utilize the library  
for printing . . . and holds."

- Library Patron, November 2024

