

2022
SPPL
Strategic Direction

2020 Impact Report





This year, 2020, was one for the history books.

Globally and locally, people were challenged by uncertainties around education, employment, and the economy. Racial and social inequities that have persisted throughout society for centuries were exacerbated by the COVID-19 pandemic and killing of George Floyd.

Our 2020 Impact Report aims to document and share the many ways Saint Paul Public Library showed up for our community during this unforgettable year.

As you read this report, we hope you feel proud of the many ways your library kept welcoming all people to connect, learn, discover, and grow during a year of immense challenge.

At Saint Paul Public Library, we are here for you – no matter what. Thank you for your continued partnership and support.

Catherine Penkert
Director




Mission

We welcome all people to connect, learn, discover, and grow.

Vision

We imagine a Saint Paul where all people feel seen, safe, and welcome. We imagine a city where libraries bring people together to experience hope, joy, and creativity through learning.





Values

The Library belongs to the people of Saint Paul. We are your library and you — our library users — shape our work. The following values guide our work.

We believe that learning is a human right.

To live, adapt, and thrive in a constantly changing world, all people need supportive learning environments and free access to information and ideas from diverse points of view.

We believe in curiosity. Curiosity can change the world and the path of one's life. We believe in igniting its spark through discovery and creative exploration.

We believe in connection. The Library is a place for quiet reflection and boisterous activity; for likeness and for difference. It is comfortable, inclusive, and vital to creating healthy, strong communities.

We believe in the power of belonging. When people feel like they belong, they are able to learn and grow. The Library brings people together to access knowledge, information, and connection. We actively work to ensure

that all people see themselves and our city's rich diversity reflected in our libraries.

In 2018 Saint Paul Public Library engaged nearly 3,000 members of our community through interviews, public listening and art sessions, and an online survey to create its [2022 Strategic Plan](#). The Library's mission, vision, and values statements were developed through this process and reflect the community it serves.

2020 SAINT PAUL PUBLIC LIBRARY BY THE NUMBERS



515,510
in-building
visitors



998,081
total
circulations
of physical
materials



173
languages
represented in
collection



15,823
new
cardholders





638,977
E-circulations



2,190,763
Website
sessions



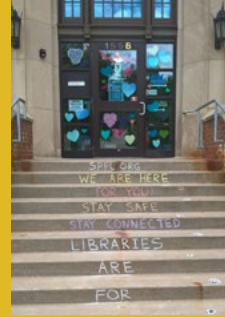
69,206
Wi-Fi
sessions



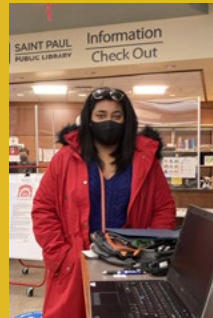
82,840
Physical
materials
circulated to
students
through
Library Go



65,313
E-materials
circulated
to Library Go
users



9,400
summer
meals
distributed
to homes





WELCOME

We create welcoming places and experiences for Library users.

GOAL

Actively invite and welcome all Saint Paul residents into the library.

SUB-GOAL

Reduce percent of Library users blocked from borrowing access.

- E-cards can now be used to check out physical items
- Increased Library Go borrowing limits from five items to 10
- Added automatic renewal for borrowed materials that do not have other users waiting for them

Increase number of annual visits.

- In-person visits dropped in 2020 due to the COVID-19 pandemic, which required:
 - Temporary closure of buildings to the public
 - Strict capacity limits upon reopening
 - Guidance for members of the public to minimize trips outside of their home
- These measures were necessary in order to maintain public health and safety during the pandemic



GOAL

Bring people together across similarities and differences for shared community experiences.

SUB-GOAL

Curate community-informed events, programs, and activities that reflect, share, and honor the diversity of our city.

Prioritize arts and cultural programs, events, and activities as ways of sharing stories and fostering connection.

RESULTS

- Program Partnerships with Ujamaa Place and OMG Media:
 - Celebration of Black History and Culture
 - Virtual Juneteenth celebration
 - A Tribute to John Lewis: Racial Equity Community Event
 - Voting 101 Webinar in Sgaw with the Karen Organization of Minnesota
 - Partnership with Lower Phalen Creek Project for Read Brave: Our Climate Crisis
 - American Sign Language in the Workplace learning circles

- 11 Vietnamese Conversation Group sessions
- Virtual Hmong New Year celebrations throughout the month of November, including:
 - Musical Residency series featuring local Hmong musician David Yang
 - Video recordings of how local authors celebrate Hmong New Year, hosted by The Friends of the Saint Paul Public Library
 - Soul Calling video produced by Shawn Vue Visuals
 - Partnered with local event planner, Luxe, to create the Minnesota Hmong New Year Virtual Celebration

“Good work on the express services! What was on your web page was exactly echoed by the staff who greeted me at the Sun Ray Branch! ... While I appreciate you opening the library, what I really appreciate is the care you’ve taken to keep it safe while keeping the library easily accessible.” – Library patron

GOAL

Invest in spaces that are safe, inviting, affirming, and comfortable for people of all cultures, abilities, and communities.

SUB-GOAL

Develop data-based, community-informed strategies for making capital investment decisions.

- Completed Facilities Master Plan that will guide renovation and use of our buildings to meet evolving needs of the community and advance Saint Paul Public Library’s mission. The Plan includes a focus on play-based learning and accessible community technology.
- Secured capital improvement funding for design work on priority renovation projects.

RESULTS

Expand Trauma-Sensitive Library project system-wide.

- Library Social worker had 709 consultations: 544 with patrons, 165 with staff; provided 97 referrals.
- 82 staff trained in Mental Health Awareness.
- 81 staff trained in Seeking Voluntary Compliance.
- 78 staff trained in Cultural Perspectives from partner organization People, Inc.
- 1,482 total staff training hours in trauma-sensitive practices.

Supported by the F.R. Bigelow Foundation

LAPTOP
STATION

ST. PAUL
HOSPITAL
STAFF ONLY
Beyond this point

CONNECT

STRATEGIC OBJECTIVE

We make it easy to connect with learning, information, and people.

GOAL Improve the Library user experience by making it easy and enjoyable to connect to the Library.

SUB-GOAL

Improve online and in-person user experience.

Ensure high level of user satisfaction across demographic groups.

RESULTS

Introduction of user-friendly upgrades:

- New mobile app
- Automatic renewals on checked-out items
- Text message reminders about item due dates
- Ability to use smart phone as library card with new barcode scanners at self-check stations

Per Wilder Research evaluation of community services (N = 90 community members who worked closely with Library cultural liaisons in 2020):

- 97% of community users agree that the library is a welcoming place
- 96% agree that resources provided by the library are useful to them
- 84% agree that the library considers their preferences and suggestions

“Getting e-books from the library is one of the top things getting me through the pandemic. Having this service has been EVERYTHING. Thank you for all you do!” – Library patron

GOAL

Expand the library experience beyond our buildings to reach all of Saint Paul.

SUB-GOAL

Increase use of existing Library Go accounts by 50%.

Expand number of Library-run programs and services offered at non-Library locations (e.g. Wash & Learn).

RESULTS

- Number of Library Go cards usage decreased from 2019 due to pandemic - related access challenges (e.g. reduced library open hours)
- Despite fewer total Library Go users, Library Go e-book circulation increased 20% from 2019, to

82,000 checkouts in 2020

The Bookmobile:

- Added nine new bi-weekly stops, identified using an equity lens
- Partnered with Library cultural liaisons to establish a new stop at a majority-Karen housing site; average of 90 visitors per stop
- Added one additional laundromat site, for a total of two laundromat partners: one on the North End and one on the East Side



GOAL

Reach new audiences when promoting the Library's critical value to Saint Paul and the role of libraries in thriving, multicultural communities.

SUB-GOAL

Deliver user-centered customized marketing experiences.

Provide all staff members with the tools and materials needed to actively promote the Library.

Improve intercultural competency in communications.

RESULTS

COVID-19 changed our marketing and communications approach, and budget impacts led to significant reduction in our marketing and communications staff team from March through December. We adjusted tactics to reach residents in new ways by:

- Displaying **280 lawn signs** in five languages to promote library services
- Sending **7,950 direct mail postcards** promoting library resources to residents in neighborhoods with high percentages of BIPOC residents
- Sending Library Go postcards to every Saint Paul Public Schools family to inform them about student access to public library resources

Marketing and communications staff participated in training to improve intercultural communication skills



LEARN

STRATEGIC OBJECTIVE

We provide free, equitable access to learning across a lifetime.

GOAL

Support readers of all ages and abilities and cultivate a love of reading.

SUB-GOAL

Increase the number of active borrowers.

Summer Spark focused on sparking the joy of reading by distributing free books to kids at a time when visiting libraries to borrow materials was less accessible and gave away more than 7,400 books (39% increase from 2019).

- E-card registration increased **177%** over 2019
- **30%** increase in new e-collection users
- **24%** increase in number of unique users

Engage 5,000 people annually in Read Brave.

Although a teacher strike disrupted plans for school-based programming, Read Brave 2020: Our Climate Crisis still had broad reach in our city, including:

- **4,925 books** given away
- **2,740 participants** in programs
- **40 Library visits** to Saint Paul classrooms
- **1,390 library checkouts** of selected Read Brave books

Ensure the Library's collection (physical and digital) is equitable and responsive to community demand.

Pivoted collection spending to support access to e-books and e-audiobooks.

- Added **20,134** items to our Overdrive e-book collection between March and December 2020, a 194% increase over the same period in 2019
 - Decreased average wait time for e-materials by **40%**
 - In partnership with Saint Paul Public Schools, worked to expand youth e-book access as part of Summer Spark. Checkouts of juvenile and teen materials increased **134%** over the same time period last year
- 173** languages now represented in the collection

Supported by McKnight Foundation, District Energy St. Paul, Katherine B. Andersen Fund of the Saint Paul & Minnesota Foundation, Saint Paul Saints, Minnesota Arts and Cultural Heritage Fund, Presented in partnership with the City of Saint Paul, The Friends, Saint Paul Public Schools, and Science Museum of Minnesota.

RESULTS

“The library is important to me this summer because it’s a great community where it doesn’t matter who you are, where you’re from, they will accept you. Also, I can get free books or movies for a few weeks without having to spend money. The librarians also are super, kind, funny, and always have great book recs.”

– Summer Spark youth participant

GOAL

Create equitable, impactful, and playful learning experiences for young learners, ages 0 to 18.

SUB-GOAL

Embed and deepen quality practices in programs and services for young learners.

100% of Library locations offer play-based learning for children.

RESULTS

We quickly turned focus from building-based spaces for youth and families to online activities and programs.

- Virtual storytimes, which had more than 4,500 views, connected children and families to familiar faces and high quality learning experiences during times of uncertainty and stress.
- **More than 1,500 “Take and Make” kits** distributed to babies, kids, and teens over the summer allowed participants to garden, play in nature, and express themselves through art.
- **800 K-12 students received Summer Spark activity kits** and books delivered directly to their homes in July and August through a partnership with Saint Paul Public Schools’ Flipside after school program.

Best Buy Foundation, Xcel Energy Foundation, and 3Mgives

Invest in developing staff members to have the skills and support needed to meet the ever-changing needs of our community members.

Library employees report a high level of engagement.

- This was a year of extremes for employee engagement - incredible highs and painful lows – prompted by historic crises.
- The Library's Equity Change Team identified improving workplace culture as the top priority for advancing anti-racism in our organization. The team began a human-centered design project to identify and implement actions towards cultivating a more anti-racist workplace culture. This project is a top priority in 2021.
- Monthly All-Staff Roundtables provided a new opportunity for staff to engage directly and collectively with senior leaders and the entire library team.

Develop and implement a strategy to align staff development with the needs of individuals and of the Library's strategic direction.

Development of comprehensive training and development strategy was put on hold due to pandemic and service disruptions. Training and development continued, however, with an intentional focus on cultivating an inclusive workplace culture:

- 35 staff members participated in **485 hours** of racial healing training and facilitation
- 16 staff members completed 26 hours of training and coaching in intercultural competence, emotional intelligence, and workplace efficacy. This built upon 33 staff completing **774 hours of training** in these topics in 2019
- Five staff, **80% of whom identify as BIPOC**, received scholarships to continue their education

Improve onboarding practices for new employees.

In 2020 we refined our onboarding process to make sure that new hires had foundational information about Saint Paul Public Library.

COMMUNITY CAREER LAB THE STREET LIBRARY

654-793-1699

- Online job search tools and resources.
- Information and referral to CARES community providers.
- Referral to employment and training programs.
- Career planning and assessment information.
- Virtual job fairs and employer hiring information.
- Phone or virtual job search assistance.
- Faxing, scanning, copying and printing.

This career lab is provided through the Ramsey County Investment and Support Efforts (RISE) using Federal Coronavirus Aid, Relief, and Economic Security (CARES) Act funds.

RISE | Employment Support

LEARN MORE:

ramseycounty.us/RISE



City of Saint Paul
Partner Site

**LIMITED
COMPUTER
ACCESS**

DO YOU WANT TO USE THE COMPUTER FOR AN HOUR?

MAKE AN APPOINTMENT NOW TO USE THE NEXT AVAILABLE COMPUTER AT THE RISE LIBRARY ON TUESDAYS AND WEDNESDAYS FROM 1 - 5PM.

To make an appointment please call 654-266-7000

Tuesday and Wednesday
Time: 1:00 - 2:00
2:30 - 3:30
4:00 - 5:00



DISCOVER

STRATEGIC OBJECTIVE

We provide opportunities to discover potential and unlock new ideas.

GOAL Ignite curiosity and build skills for an increasingly technology-driven world.

SUB-GOAL 80% of locations offer age-appropriate, hands-on, interest-based technology learning opportunities for K-12 youth.

RESULTS Createch Outside at Arlington Hills Library encouraged youth, school-age and teens, to discover new interests by distributing **1,293 hands-on activity kits** and **758 early literacy kits**. Staff there connected with **1,056 youth and their families** over the summer.

Sub-goal: Increase the number of adults building technology skills through library offerings.

- Distributed **792 TechPaks** to COVID-impacted job seekers through a partnership with Ramsey County, Tech Dump, PCs for People, and Literacy Minnesota
- TechPaks included: a refurbished laptop, prepaid Wi-Fi hotspot, and access to digital navigation support
- Engaged nine learners in a pilot of Cell-Ed, which helps adults build technology skills via a mobile-based platform
- Reached **169 registrants** in new “learning circles” model of building technology skills in community
- Facilitated learning circles online and in-person



GOAL

Establish the Library as the best place in Saint Paul for families to learn together.

SUB-GOAL

Increase attendance by 30% in programs designed for families to learn together.

Createch Outside (June-December):

- **1,293 Take and Make kits distributed**
- **1,056 visits** to outdoor, drop-in activities
- Staff-created virtual music, literacy, and art programs provided preschooler opportunities to learn in fun, developmentally appropriate ways. Virtual music programs were especially popular, with more than 1,700 views for eight programs
- Adult Programming Committee evolved into the “Maker, Arts, and Culture” programming team, with a focus on providing diverse intergenerational programs and activities for families to participate in together

Engage communities to inform culturally specific strategies for family learning.

2,194 online visits

to storytime in Karen, computer classes, and conversation circles. Supported Karen families to learn skills necessary to attend virtual programming.

“On March 17, I lost my job as a flight attendant. We have struggled for months to get things back on track. I ended up applying for TechPak and GED classes and got the acceptance for both on the same day! Excited for the future!”
– Library TechPak recipient

Cultivate the Library to be an organization that enables a diverse workforce to thrive and grow.

GOAL

SUB-GOAL

RESULTS

Increase career pathways within the Library.

Transitioned Bookmobile leadership from a librarian position to a community services coordinator, enabling qualified applicants with diverse educational backgrounds and community engagement expertise to apply.

Increase the number of adults building technology skills through library offerings.

A citywide hiring freeze and budget reductions led to reductions in the Library's workforce. Despite the overall reduction in headcount, workforce demographics changed in the following ways:

- The percentage of full-time Library positions held by staff who identify as BIPOC increased by 2% and is now at 40%.
- The percentage of staff who identify as BIPOC in mid-level manager positions increased by 4% and is now at 28%.

As of December 2020, the Library workforce is 46% BIPOC, 54% white.



GROW

STRATEGIC OBJECTIVE

We play a vital role in Saint Paul becoming a city that works for all.

GOAL

Support an inclusive local economy.

SUB-GOAL

Increase support for new and existing business owners.

Strengthen the Library's position as a resource for community members exploring career pathways that connect to better career options.

RESULTS

Pivoted service to safely supporting residents whose economic situations were harmed by COVID.

- **766 Career Lab appointments** at four libraries (August – December)
 - Partnership with Ramsey County Workforce Solutions
 - Rapid response to address economic impacts of the pandemic
- Library staff temporarily assigned to support the City's Bridge Fund. Staff answered **5,000+ calls** received between April 9-May 1, to support business and families affected by COVID-19.
- **71.6%** of TechPak recipients referred to career planning and training through new device and internet.

We play a vital role in Saint Paul becoming a city that works for all.

GOAL In partnership with communities, build a systemwide foundation for services to culturally and linguistically diverse communities.

SUB-GOAL Embed, grow, and sustain community services work across our system.

Increase collaboration with and improved service for racial and ethnic groups currently underrepresented among library users.

- RESULTS**
- Maintained full-time positions for Karen, Somali, and Latinx cultural liaison positions through 2020 by securing grant funding from Saint Paul & Minnesota Foundation
 - Successfully advocated for sustainable funding in 2021 City budget for these roles
 - Secured highly competitive Institute of Museum and Library Services CARES Act Grant to support expansion of culturally responsive library services and digital inclusion efforts

More than 8,000 interactions recorded by cultural liaisons working with Karen, Somali, and Latinx communities. Interactions occurred via in-person visits, virtual formats (WebEx, Whatsapp, etc.), texting, and calls.

Supported by Saint Paul and Minnesota Foundation, IMLS

“Thank you all so much. I got that manager position because of your help and love. Thank you Rondo Library.”
– Career Lab User

GOAL

Grow strong public and private support for the Library.

SUB-GOAL

Partner with The Friends of the Saint Paul Public Library to increase annual philanthropic dollars raised to support Library programs, services, and capital needs.

The Library actively collaborates across sectors to ensure Saint Paul is a city where all people can thrive.

RESULTS

- **\$327,979 in gifts and grants** raised by The Friends of Saint Paul Public Library.
 - Includes individual gifts and institutional and government grants, minus administrative fees.
- During a very challenging year, 100% of institutional funders renewed their grant support of library programs and projects with many offering increased flexibility in use of funds.
- Individual gifts in direct support of the Library increased by 32%.
- In addition, The Friends received \$265,000 in new endowment gifts for direct benefit to the Library, which will pay out over time.

Key partners and collaborators:

- Little Moments Count
- Living Cities Year of Reckoning
- Ramsey County Workforce Solutions
- Saint Paul Public Schools
- Saint Paul Public Schools Community Education
- Saint Paul Parks and Recreation
- Urban Libraries Council

Library Work During a Pandemic

2020 was an historic year. Phrases like “pivot,” “unprecedented,” and “the new normal” became the year’s buzzwords as a virus transformed life and work seemingly overnight.

On March 11, 2020, the World Health Organization declared the COVID-19 respiratory virus to be a global pandemic. On March 16, Mayor Carter temporarily closed libraries and recreation centers to the public, signaling the severity of the viral threat. Library staff immediately shifted their focus to creating new ways of meeting residents’ needs during this time.

Virtual Programming: SPPL presented a virtual storytime on March 17 – our first virtual program during the pandemic. By the end of 2020, SPPL presented more than 2,037 virtual programs and learning opportunities.

For the remainder of 2020, SPPL focused on the following goals:

- Meeting community members’ most urgent needs.
- Prioritizing COVID-19 safety measures for staff and community.
- Managing budget challenges to continue delivering services while avoiding layoffs.

MARCH



APRIL



Contactless Materials Pick Up: Five locations opened with contactless pick-up options that enabled patrons to check out items without coming into a building and while maintaining social distancing.

As a team, we continually modified, redesigned, and invented services to meet these goals. We focused on “safely turning the dials” – slowing dialing our service levels up and down based on the public health situation and available safety measures.

Continuing to meet the essential resource, information, and connection needs of Saint Paul residents while maintaining safety for staff and community during the pandemic required incredible teamwork, courage, and leadership from all members of the Saint Paul Public Library team.

MAY

Adapt Buildings for Safety: Library maintenance and technology teams began adapted facilities for in-person services. Adaptations included: custom plexiglass barriers for public service desks, hand sanitizer at building entrances and self-check stations, turning off shared water fountains, computer software to facilitate helping patrons while social distancing, moving furniture and computers to meet our new service needs, and HVAC system enhancements to reduce the risk of COVID-19 spread through the air.

JUNE

Computers by Appointment: We opened reservation-based computer stations at three locations, restoring opportunities for the public to safely access computers and the internet via libraries.

Outdoor Programs and Services: We stayed connected with community members by offering pop-up outdoor activities and giving away books and take-and-make craft kits at libraries and Bookmobile stops. We also served summer meals at two locations.

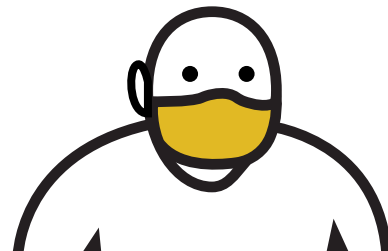
AUGUST

Career Labs: We launched a rapid response pilot program at four locations to provide targeted support and computer access for COVID-impacted job seekers, in partnership with Ramsey County Workforce Solutions.

Library EXPRESS: We began welcoming patrons back into buildings via a low-contact service model called “**Library EXPRESS**” that focused on **providing public access to copy/fax machines, printing, and browsing and checking out books, movies, and other materials.** Following public health guidance, we required everyone to wear masks, and implemented strict capacity limits and 30-minute time limits on visits.

SEPTEMBER

Voting and Elections: We helped expand safe, accessible voting options by serving as ballot drop-off sites for the 2020 elections. A total of 3,102 ballots were dropped off at Saint Paul libraries, which was 8% of all ballots cast in Ramsey County.



While quickly adapting library services, library staff also supported citywide efforts to serve our community:

- Helped residents complete financial support applications for the City's emergency Bridge Fund program.
- Answered calls and questions in multiple languages and provide translation support to the City's Community Resource Line.
- Sewed 2,000 cloth face coverings for use by City employees in public-facing roles during a time when other personal protective equipment sources were scarce.

Year of Reckoning

The May 25 killing of George Floyd by Minneapolis police officers sparked local, national, and global uprisings against police brutality and in support of Black life. This collective reckoning with the ongoing reality of racism and the grief over this murder so close to our city showed up in our organization and in our work with community members.

While our city's streets were filled with protests, Library Youth Services staff planned and led virtual storytimes modeling how to talk to young children about race and racism, including a special storytime planned by staff member Tiana Bellamy that honored the life

of George Floyd. The rest of the summer, the team incorporated mindfulness techniques in each storytime to help children process feelings like anxiety, fear, and anger. Other staff members, including Timothy Turner and AJ Ragland, were featured in story spotlights that celebrated Black life and Black stories. The Library provided financial and promotional support to community organizations Ujamaa Place and OMG Media as they created celebrations of Juneteenth and the life of civil rights leader John Lewis.

In a time of dramatic collective learning about race, racism, and racial healing, public library materials were essential to helping community members learn and grow in their anti-racism journeys.

- Our **Resources on Race** webpage featured staff-curated lists designed to help people of all ages, backgrounds, and reading interests learn and grow in their understanding of race and racism. This page received 2,035 hits in June. That number went down to 51 hits in December, illustrating the dramatic spike of summer interest in anti-racism and waning of public engagement as time went on.

- Through our investments in in no-wait e-books, patrons were able to check out high-demand anti-racism titles more than 1,000 times. We expanded our collection of equity-focused e-books that focused on anti-racism, racialized trauma, and resilience.

As an organization, this year brought honest and difficult conversations about racism in our workplace. We practiced trauma-sensitive approaches with each other and with ourselves. We shared ideas, frustrations, personal stories, feedback, and input to cultivate workplace culture that supports the power of belonging for all staff. Internally, staff members who identify as BIPOC organized and led circles to provide connection, support, and healing for each other. A white ally group also formed.

We invested in external training and facilitation support for racial healing circles and several preparation workshops to support readiness for courageous conversations among BIPOC and white staff members together. Thirty-three staff participated in at least one workshop, with a total of more than 485 staff hours between workshops, affinity groups and healing circles.

At Saint Paul Public Library, we have worked with intentionality to advance racial equity in our organizational policies, practices, and procedures; in our work with and for community; and in the hearts and minds of our staff team. We have struggled. We have made progress. We have fallen short. We keep going and continue moving forward. Heading into 2021, we are more committed than ever to specific investments in time, funding, and action to help make true the vision of a city that works for all.

Black Lives Matter.

Saint Paul Public Library joins the Urban Libraries Council in standing with all who are calling for immediate, collective action to end systemic racism that causes inequity in our communities.

Libraries are an essential part of our social infrastructure. Libraries, like all other areas of government, have been built on a foundation of systemic racism.

At Saint Paul Public Library, we offer resources for learning, connection, healing, and transformation. We also affirm our commitment to continue dismantling practices embedded in our system that contribute to inequity.

Our SPPL vision, co-created with community, includes, “We imagine a Saint Paul where all people feel seen, safe, and welcome.” We are here with our community to help make that vision true.

Digital Equity

Public libraries play a role in ensuring community can participate fully in digital life. Many residents depend on libraries for access to computers, Wi-Fi, and the internet. When the pandemic shifted much of life online, activities such as schooling, health care, and banking became much harder to access for residents without home computers or high-speed internet.

Saint Paul Public Library stepped up to help address our community's digital equity crisis. We reinvented typical services for pandemic safety, invented new resource options, advocated for long-term systemic solutions, and demonstrated the role libraries play in ensuring all community members are included in our technology-driven world.

Computers by Appointment: Restoring access to public computers was a top priority when Saint Paul Public Library phased in building-based services in June. "Computers By Appointment" provided reservation-based access to computers at three locations. We modified computer labs for pandemic safety, including ample space between stations, regular equipment sanitization, and software that enabled staff to help patrons from afar to maintain social distancing.

Borrow The Internet: We expanded access to well-established, innovative "Borrow The Internet" program that allows library cardholders to borrow mobile Wi-Fi hotspots. In 2020, several emergency grant fund sources allowed SPPL to add 36 devices and allow patrons to keep them two weeks instead of one.

TechPaks: We partnered with Ramsey County Workforce Solutions to develop "TechPaks" that supplied residents with the devices, internet access, and support needed to use them effectively. Saint Paul Public Library distributed 792 TechPaks to COVID-impacted job seekers, resulting a return of \$2.40 in social value for every \$1 invested.



TechPaks included:

- Backpack
- Refurbished laptop
- Mobile hotspot and one year of prepaid Wi-Fi
- Access to a digital navigator (sometimes library staff) and phone-based support for using the equipment.

TechPaks provided:

- Increased economic inclusion and growth.
- Increased employment and educational opportunities.
- Improved quality of life.

Computers by Appointment: Saint Paul Public Library played a critical role in several partnerships to provide resources and equipment that helped Saint Paul youth and adults stay connected to online learning and career support. Library leaders worked closely with leaders from other City departments, Ramsey County, Saint Paul Public Schools, and more to maintain the focus on the need for community internet access as essential infrastructure during the pandemic and beyond.

Saint Paul Public Library actively participated in the writing of Digital Equity in the Age of COVID-19, an Urban Libraries Council report that offered action strategies, key messages, and information to empower library leaders nationwide to take a more active, intentional role in advancing digital equity. This report spotlighted how the pandemic both intensified the digital divide and created a window for action by raising the visibility of what it means to be unconnected in our hyper-connected world—especially for our most vulnerable residents.



Summer Learning

While COVID-19 made this summer one like no other for Summer Spark, our annual library summer learning programs, our goals remained the same:

- Promote the joy of reading for fun
- Engage in hands-on, interest-based activities
- Connect youth and families with their community and the library

When library buildings could not be open to youth and families this summer, we opted to bring summer learning directly to as many youth as possible in their homes and neighborhoods.

We developed “Saint Paul Connect,” with Saint Paul Public Schools (SPPS), Saint Paul Parks and Recreation, and other community organizations. This web platform featured videos with fun, original activities that could easily be completed by children and families at home.

We redrew the Bookmobile map to prioritize reaching residents who often did not know about the Library or our services. We continued long-standing partnerships with Saint Paul Public Housing Agency and also added nine new regular stops, including a laundromat and a strip mall in areas of the city with high percentages of BIPOC residents. We also returned to 11 former neighborhood stops. We built important relationships with our community, stop by stop, for 1.5 hours at a time all summer.

We reached additional youth through pop-up outdoor programming. Arlington Hills Library brought Createch outdoors. Createch, previously and indoor space for teens to hang out, connect with trusted adults, play with technology, discover new interests, and be themselves, became Createch Outside—a safe, outdoor space where youth and their families could engage with

library staff and pick up an activity kit to bring home. Highlights included twice weekly drop-in activities outside, art kits for neighborhood teens, and partnerships with youth-serving organizations, including a massive plant giveaway with Urban Roots followed by regular social media posts describing how to care for plants and grow a garden.

In 2020, we supported our city's young people by sharing materials and resources, providing safe opportunities to engage with creativity and hands-on learning during a time of limited connection, and helping our youth continue to find joy in learning.

7,400

books given away for children and teens to build their home libraries in the summer.

39%

increase in number of children and teens receiving free books.

800

Saint Paul Public Schools students received Summer Spark materials and books directly to their homes.

5,700

views on Facebook Live and YouTube of virtual art and activity programs created by local performers.

800



Take and Make Kits (bags containing art materials and supplies, plus activity prompts) and Baby Kits (bags containing board books and early learning toys and activities) distributed by the Bookmobile to families in neighborhoods that face access challenges.



2020 Saint Paul Public Library Staff Team

Hindi Abdi
Tayo Adefuye
Faisa Aden
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Rakeem Amerson
Rebecca Ammerman
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Polyxeni Angelis
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Gina Belde-Rakotz
Tiana Bellamy
Mary Ann Berglund
Margo Bock
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Kristin Bowman

Jennifer Brannen
Gardner Brenneisen
Shalisa Brewer
Joanna Brookes
Matthew Bruess
Susan Buda
Eric Byrd
Brandon Campos
Jonathan Casey
Ya-Hui Chen
Jada Claiborne
Mary Clausen
Candace Clement
Kathleen Conger
Riley Conway
Natalie Cornish
Venecia Crowe
Glaw Dee
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Carlos Espitia
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Kimberly Faurot
Pat Finnegan
Carla Foley
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Laura Frese
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Katrina Hartz Taylor
Crystal Heflin
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Andrea Herman
Xenia Hernández
John Hofmann
Eddie Hogan
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Katie Howes

Betsy Hunter
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Noah Jackson
Colette Johnson
Kelsey Johnson-Kaiser
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Caitlin Kempainen
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Mark Kile
Linda King-Johnson
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Davy Koy-Lyons
Alaina Kozma
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Jeremy Lacount
John Larson
Zamira Laurie
Xor Lee
Youa Lee
Maica Lelis-Her
Dominic Lindstrom
Darcy Loera
Larry Longard
Gloria Lopez
Karla Martinez
Jennifer Mason
Zach McCall
Marisa McCurdy
Janos McGhie
Suzanne McGinn
Aaron McKenzie
Elaine McMahon



Terrie Meath
 Alisa Mee
 Johnny Mengistu
 Kevin Mercado
 Matthew Metzdorf
 Isaac Mielke
 Mike Miller
 Sara Mitchell

Hafsa Mohamud
 Brandon Moore
 Brian Moser
 Lisa Motschke
 Dominique Myles
 Jenaya Myvett
 Kurtis Neu
 Wendy Neurer

Edmond Ngeh
 Violet Nikitina
 Nate Nins
 Anders Oftelie
 John Ohr
 Adi O'Keefe
 Sally Orne
 Rose Oyamot Rodriguez
 Will Paine
 Andrew Parker
 Ronald Paulson
 Betty Pearson
 Catherine Penkert
 Jen Peterson
 Marjorie Peterson
 Sovanearny Phann Sweere
 Eliza Pope
 Kirk Providence
 AJ Ragland
 Kusuma Reasoner
 Patrick Reckas-Jackson
 John Richardson
 Jonathan (Jon) Richert
 Leah Rimpel
 April Rodriguez

Andrea Ross
 Peter Rudrud
 Rebecca Ryan
 Savitri Santhiran
 Aura Scherbel
 Therese Scherbel
 Joleen Schwartz
 Kari Selix
 Cate Sering
 Reshanda Shanklin
 Erik Skold
 Heather Skye
 Andrew Sohn
 Donicia Soliz
 Barb Sporlein
 Leslie Spring
 Marika Staloch
 Mary Steiner
 Morgan Strickland
 Maggie Sullivan
 Tati Terfa
 Dua Thao
 Nick Thoemke
 Jeff Thompson
 Charlotte Tjaden

Brianna Trinidad Sprung
 Craig Trost
 Timothy Turner
 Kim Tyler
 Barbara Vang
 Bee Vang
 Chia Vang
 Mai Vang
 Paige Vang
 Phasoua Vang
 See Vang
 Vang Vang
 Xong Vang
 Yang Vang
 Greg Verdeja
 Cha Dee Vue
 Mark Vue
 Neng Vue
 Destiny Walker
 Margaret Walker
 Mariah Waller
 Jingrong (Jane) Wang
 Cindy Wang
 Mauricio Washington

Alice Welna
 Eric Whalen
 Pam Wheeler
 Bryan White
 Lee Williamson
 Jodi Wittman
 Ariel Worrel
 Amanda Xiong
 Ka Xiong-Moua
 Pa Yor Mee Xiong
 Pang Mee Xiong
 Chue Yang
 Duzong Yang
 Eric Yang
 Gao Yang
 Mai Yang
 Mie Yang
 Pang Yang
 Patrice Yemmene
 Delena Zekarias
 Rong Zhang
 Jessica Zillhart
 Erin Zolotukhin-Ridgway



Leadership

Mayor, City of Saint Paul

Melvin Carter

Saint Paul Public Library Leadership

Catherine Penkert, Library Director

Maureen Hartman, Deputy Director, Public Services

Barb Sporlein, Deputy Director, Operations

Library Board

Jane Prince, Library Board Chair

Nelsie Yang

Amy Brendmoen

Mitra Jalali

Rebecca Noecker

Dai Tao

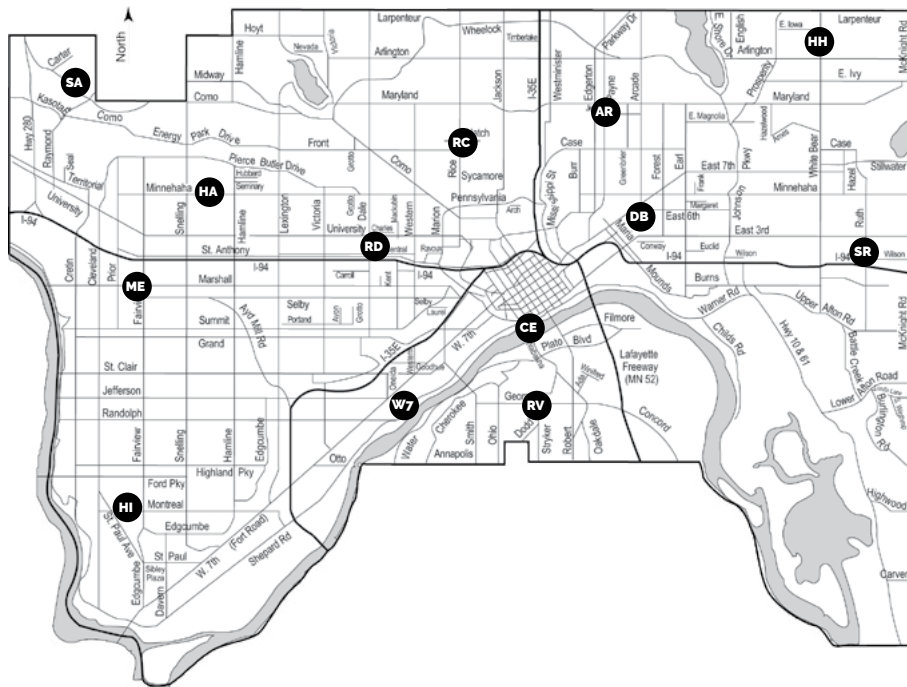
Chris Tolbert

Support

The Friends of the Saint Paul Public Library is an independent, nonprofit organization that acts as a catalyst for libraries to strengthen and inspire their communities. The Friends secures financial support from thousands of library supporters to benefit the programs and services of Saint Paul Public Library. The Friends invests in libraries because they believe that libraries are essential to strong communities.

Learn more at TheFriends.org.





Locations

Arlington Hills (AR)

1200 Payne Ave, 55130
651-632-3870

George Latimer Central (CE)

90 West Fourth St, 55102
651-266-7000

Dayton's Bluff (DB)

645 East 7th St, 55106
651-793-1699

Hamline Midway (HA)

1558 W Minnehaha Ave, 55104
651-642-0293

Hayden Heights (HH)

1456 White Bear Ave, 55106
651-793-3934

Highland Park (HI)

1974 Ford Parkway, 55116
651-695-3700

Merriam Park (ME)

1831 Marshall Ave, 55104
651-642-0385

Rice Street (RC)

1011 Rice St, 55117
651-558-2223

Riverview (RV)

1 East George St, 55107
651-292-6626

Rondo (RD)

461 North Dale St, 55103
651-266-7400

Saint Anthony Park (SA)

2245 Como Ave, 55108
651-642-0411

Sun Ray (SR)

2105 Wilson Ave, 55119
651-501-6300

West 7th (W7)

265 Oneida St, 55102
651-298-5516

Bookmobile (BK)

461 North Dale St, 55103
651-266-7450

Let's keep in touch.

Saint Paul Public Library 90 West Fourth Street, Saint Paul, MN 55102

Phone: 651-266-7000 | Email: spplweb@ci.stpaul.mn.us

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