



HENNEPIN COUNTY
LIBRARY

mission

vision


strategies

2023-2027



Building Upon a Legacy of Service





For more than a century, the residents of Hennepin County have turned to their libraries as a trusted source for learning and enrichment. In 1922, the Library used a horse-drawn book wagon to bring books to rural Hennepin County schools and families. In 2022, more than 5 million eMaterials were downloaded from our digital collection.

Since Minneapolis founded its public library in 1885, the Library has been more than just a building with books. Outreach and innovation have been continuously embedded in our services, thanks to the tireless efforts of people such as Gratia Countryman and by generations of dedicated library staff.

As the needs and aspirations of our community have evolved, library offerings have expanded in response. The library is now an essential point-of-access for computers, internet, and online resources, providing patrons with access to a wealth of information and educational resources at their fingertips.

In addition to serving as a source of information, our libraries are an integral part of civic life, providing safe and welcoming spaces where people can gather

to share ideas and experiences. We want residents to know the library is a place where they can pursue their passions, discover new interests, and learn in a supportive and inclusive environment.

In recent years, the Library has also taken on a more active role in addressing community needs. Through mutually beneficial partnerships with Hennepin County departments and community organizations, the Library has worked to broaden access to library services and connect patrons to human service providers who can support critical needs related to food, shelter, mental health, and safety.

By revisiting our mission and clarifying our priorities, we hope to ensure that library services remain a vital and valuable resource for every Hennepin County resident for years to come.

mission

Hennepin County Library's mission is to **inspire, facilitate, and celebrate lifelong learning.**

vision

Shaped by the **information needs and aspirations** of our residents, we envision the library as a **shared space for enrichment and connection.**

Library services are an important part of thriving and interconnected communities, and we believe that every Hennepin County resident should have a **library card** and use it regularly.

priorities

To achieve our **mission** and realize our **vision**, the library is committed to six priorities:

- 1 Upholding free access to a broad spectrum of ideas
- 2 Championing the aspirations of residents with learning, literacy, and enrichment
- 3 Offering free access to essential technology and connectivity
- 4 Creating inviting, inclusive, accessible, and safe public spaces
- 5 Delivering a positive and equitable experience to every patron
- 6 Supporting individuals and their basic human needs through connections to resources and services



focus

Hennepin County Library will focus on three specific areas:

Increasing library usage

The number of active library cardholders has declined over the last decade. The Library will actively seek out new users and re-engage inactive cardholders.

Support for literacy and education

The Library will strengthen and expand its efforts to support literacy for residents of all ages, and seek new opportunities to contribute to the educational success of Hennepin County youth.

Ensuring a positive patron experience

It is critical that every visitor feels welcome at the library. The Library will continue to seek out ways to improve our physical and online spaces, and provide consistently high levels of customer service.

“Free, welcoming, and open to everyone, Hennepin County Library plays a fundamental role in society to serve and support, educate and empower, offer a sense of belonging and help shape new perspectives and ideas.”

**FRIENDS OF THE
HENNEPIN COUNTY
LIBRARY SURVEY**



Priority 1

Upholding free access to a broad spectrum of ideas

GOAL

Hennepin County Library will be a trustworthy and steadfast source of a broad spectrum of knowledge, ideas, opinions, and creative expressions to engage, inform, enrich patrons, and ensure residents see themselves, their identities, and their cultures represented in the Library's collection.

STRATEGIES

- Support residents in navigating and engaging with a broad spectrum of information
- Drive representation of Hennepin County's diverse identities throughout the collection
- Maintain the collections by balancing popularity, ideals, and representation
- Uphold the Library's Collections Policy in a time of rising book bans
- Innovate processes and procedures to reduce wait times for materials

OUTCOMES

- Increased circulation of library materials and resources
- Increased number of cardholders

MISSION IN ACTION

- Ongoing acquisition of local history and records by Special Collections
- Community engagement planned for evaluation of Sudduth Collection at Sumner Library and American Indian Collection at Franklin Library

"I really appreciate the library and think it's a great asset for Hennepin County."

HCL PUBLIC SURVEY

Priority 2

Championing the aspirations of residents with learning, literacy, and enrichment

GOAL

Hennepin County Library will positively impact the educational, literacy, and enrichment aspirations of Hennepin County residents by designing and providing services and programs that are responsive to resident interests and needs.

STRATEGIES

- Support residents of all ages in their education, literacy, and enrichment aspirations
- Clarify the Library's niche in education, literacy, and workforce development
- Innovate new approaches and iterate existing ones to meet the needs of under-served residents
- Consistently measure and use outcomes to build on what works and adjust what does not
- Further integrate community engagement into program development

OUTCOMES

- Increased participation in library programs
- Increased use of library spaces

MISSION IN ACTION

- Expansion of in-person Homework Help to 16 locations in 2023
- Mary Ann Key Book Club returns for a 5th season
- Expanding online resources for streaming video

"Our family uses the library weekly. We are so grateful for the library, both physical and e-books...[staff] are so helpful and kind and always are supportive in helping my kids find good books."

HCL PUBLIC SURVEY



Priority 3

Offering free access to essential technology and connectivity

GOAL

Hennepin County Library will help bridge the digital divide by offering opportunities to use technology, online resources, and internet access as a pathway to employment, education, communication, and entertainment.

STRATEGIES

- Measure utilization of technology resources and use data to inform allocation
- Explore new service models to better support resident technology needs
- Clarify and support staff role in supporting patrons' technology needs
- Strengthen partnerships with the Hennepin County Office of Broadband and Digital Inclusion and Hennepin County IT

OUTCOMES

- Residents use technology to access employment, education, communication, and entertainment
- Patrons will be able to access the Library's digital collections and tools
- Patrons know how to use the Library's technology
- Increased utilization of technology resources

MISSION IN ACTION

- Pilot for video conferencing ability with library computers in select study rooms
- Limited free printing and copying became permanent policy in 2023
- Improving functionality of public multifunction printers

"I especially appreciate your wide variety of online resources! It makes so much sense to be able to conveniently access these from home at any time."

HCL PUBLIC SURVEY

Priority 4

Creating inviting, inclusive, accessible, and safe public spaces

GOAL

Hennepin County Library spaces, including both physical and online, will be inclusive, accessible, and safe for all Hennepin County residents and visitors for learning, gathering, browsing, working, community-building, and fun.

STRATEGIES

- Design spaces for a variety of uses in partnership with residents for now and into the future
- Use data to evaluate open hours and service models that better meet the needs of residents local to each location
- Clarify expectations, processes for, and provide support for staff who are responding to emergent needs of residents
 - Deepen dialogue with internal and external security partners to align on shared goals and values related to safety

"I visit the library to be in a safe and diverse community with my children."

HCL PUBLIC SURVEY

OUTCOMES

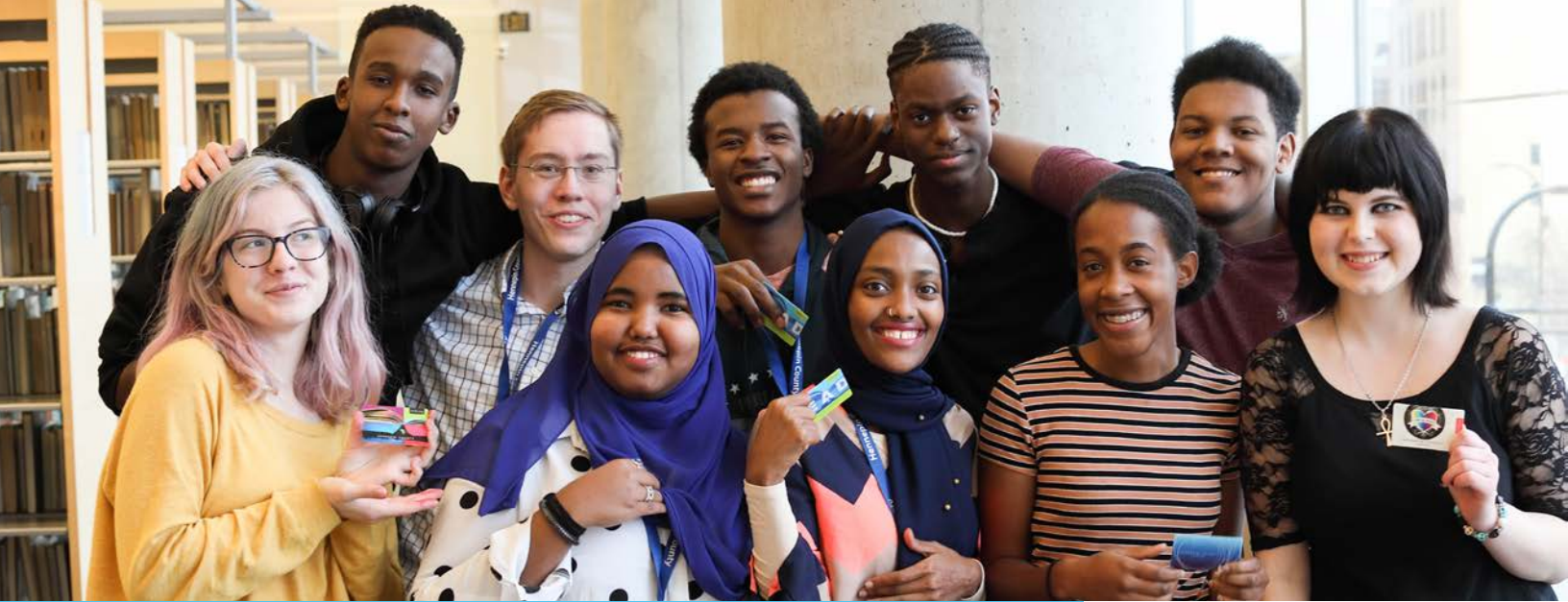
- Residents feel invited and safe in library locations
- Residents increase visits to and use of library locations
- Residents feel the Library's digital and online spaces, experiences, services, and resources meet their needs and are inclusive, accessible, and easy-to-use

MISSION IN ACTION

- Rockford Road and Sumner libraries will undergo renovations in 2023
- Planning resumes in 2023 for new Southdale and Westonka libraries
- Review Patron Conduct Policy in 2023

"As Hennepin County is one of the largest and most diverse counties in the entire state, it is vital that we have a place that is safe, accessible, free, and well-resourced that feels like it belongs to the people."

FRIENDS OF THE HENNEPIN COUNTY LIBRARY SURVEY



Priority 5

Delivering a positive and equitable experience to every patron

GOAL

Hennepin County Library (HCL) will deliver a positive and equitable experience to every patron by providing services that affirm the Library exists to serve them.

STRATEGIES

- Increase efforts to engage under-represented ages, identities, and cultures throughout Hennepin County
- Ongoing training and support for staff to provide helpful, accessible, and affirming service across diverse identities and cultures
- Make intentional, consistent, and accountable efforts to recruit, retain, and provide advancement opportunities for staff who reflect the communities served by HCL
- Strengthen library leadership's commitment, knowledge, awareness, and skills for advancing racial equity

OUTCOMES

- Residents feel their experience with the Library is positive and equitable
- Increased opportunities for residents to easily provide feedback
- Increased awareness of the Library's resources by residents
- Increased hiring, retention, and advancement of Black, Indigenous, and people of color
- Library staff feel equipped to provide helpful, accessible, and affirming service across diverse identities and cultures

MISSION IN ACTION

- Public awareness campaign launched in February 2023 to attract new library cardholders
- Designing patron satisfaction survey

"Your outreach program and their volunteers are excellent. I love the craft projects that you send to us and the kind, thoughtful notes we receive from them. You make a big difference in my world."

HCL PUBLIC SURVEY

Priority 6

Supporting individuals and their basic human needs through connections to resources and services

GOAL

Hennepin County Library will be a source of information and connection to resources and services provided by government and community-based organizations to meet the basic human needs of residents.

STRATEGIES

- Increase and strengthen mutually accountable partnerships with County departments and community-based organizations
- Equip staff with the knowledge, skills, and contacts needed to connect residents to basic needs information and resources

OUTCOMES

- Residents successfully access resources and services from government and community partners that address their basic human needs
- Staff feel knowledgeable about and connected to County and community partners

MISSION IN ACTION

- Facilitating embedded social workers at East Lake, Franklin, and Minneapolis Central libraries
- Expanding embedded model to welcome employment navigators from the Hennepin County Office of Workforce Development

“Having a social worker in our library has made a tremendous difference to our patrons, as well as staff. [They are] able to connect patrons directly to County and community resources, which staff are unable to do due to limited capacity and privacy policies.”

**HCL STAFF
SURVEY**



Planning Process

Supported by a team of outside consultants, the Library's strategic planning process occurred over several months, in four stages.

1 Launch

MAY - JUNE 2022

- Organizing planning committee
- Identifying key guiding questions to engage audiences and stakeholders
- Designing survey, interview, and meeting tools
- Organizing quantitative data into simple frameworks

2 Engagement and Data Collection

JUNE - AUGUST 2022

- Distributing surveys
- Conducting interviews with boards and community members
- Analyzing data and summarizing findings

3 Meaning Making and Planning

AUGUST - OCTOBER 2022

- Making meaning of data
- Updating mission, vision, and values statements
- Setting goals and developing strategies
- Re-engaging community, staff, and boards to confirm understanding of emerging themes

4 Documentation and Review

OCTOBER 2022 - JANUARY 2023

- Documenting the plan
- Developing structure and support for implementation
- Sharing strategic plan with everyone who contributed to it



Guiding Principles

Advancing Equity, Inclusion, and Belonging

Deliver an equitable and inclusive experience for all residents and patrons – including those who have been historically underrepresented and underserved by the Library.

Centering Community Voice

Engage community in the design of programs and spaces to ensure our services are accessible and responsive to resident and patron interests.

Embracing Purposeful Innovation

Promote a culture of continuous learning and unlearning to support innovation in program and service design.

Driving Effective Collaboration

Work closely with Hennepin County partners, community-based organizations, and colleagues at the Library to increase communication and remove barriers for residents and patrons.

Celebrating Diversity

Celebrate and honor the unique perspectives, identities, and lived experiences that make up our diverse community.

Honoring the Contributions of Staff

Value, respect, and affirm the important role staff have in bringing our resources to life and creating positive experiences for residents and patrons.

Engagement Audiences

Throughout the engagement process, patrons and stakeholders celebrated Hennepin County Library's robust resources. These resources include the collection, technology, expert staff, and high-quality physical spaces. Patrons expressed overall satisfaction with their library experience, and broad support for resources they may not use themselves.

Staff often described HCL as an information provider, connecting patrons and the public to essential information and community resources. Similarly, staff highlighted the Library's proximity to the community, approachability, and ease of access that lends itself to being described as an ambassador for Hennepin County.

PATRONS

A community survey invited feedback from library users and non-users, gathering 2,033 total responses, including individuals who have and have not used the library in the last two years. Participants rated their satisfaction with resources, ranked the importance of core services, and offered feedback about their experiences and aspirations.

"Libraries are probably the public service I'm most proud my tax dollars go to. The ability to borrow Kindle and mp3 books is awesome even if I don't go to the library in person, it's incredibly useful!"

HCL PUBLIC SURVEY

LIBRARY STAFF

HCL staff hold a wealth of community knowledge and library service experience. In an effort to leverage this local expertise, a comprehensive survey asked staff to rank services, describe the use of spaces and materials at their locations, and their vision for the future of HCL. All staff were invited to participate and 458 responded. Responses were informed by some focused conversations in community. Follow-up conversations took place on the work-unit level.

"I'm very happy and grateful to be a part of an institution that can uncynically be described as noble. I feel strongly that providing access to information is fundamental to a stable democracy."

HCL STAFF SURVEY

HENNEPIN COUNTY BOARDS

Both the Hennepin County Board of Commissioners and the Hennepin County Library Board participated in a series of interviews to understand their perspectives on HCL's strengths, opportunities for improvement, and priorities for the future.

FRIENDS OF THE HENNEPIN COUNTY LIBRARY

Friends staff, the Friends board, and local Friends groups were engaged by surveys and interviews. The focus of this engagement was to understand their interests as a partner to the Library and their perspectives on the Library's core purpose.

2022

Feedback and Statistics

Public, Staff, and Friends surveys

93%

CUSTOMER SERVICE IS
EXCELLENT OR GOOD

91%

LIBRARY COLLECTION IS
EXCELLENT OR GOOD

75%

LIBRARY EVENTS OR PROGRAMS
ARE EXCELLENT OR GOOD



Wi-Fi

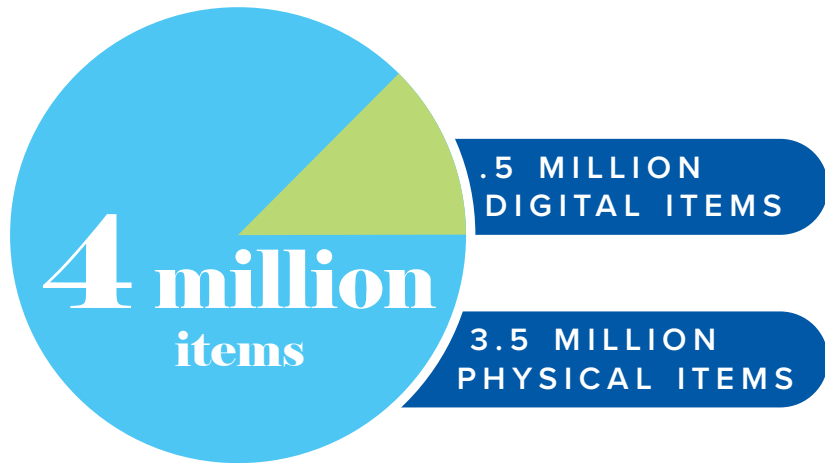
WI-FI
SESSIONS

Cardholders

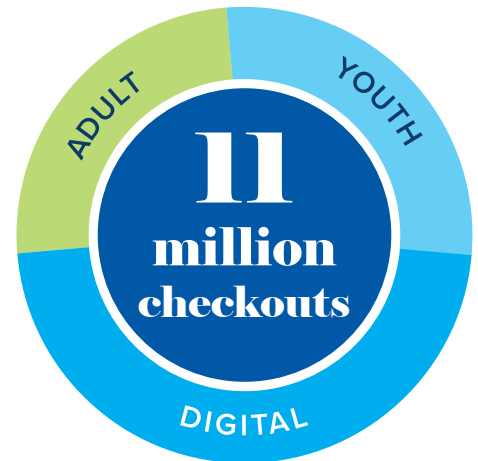
461
thousand

ACTIVE CARDHOLDERS

Collection size



Circulation

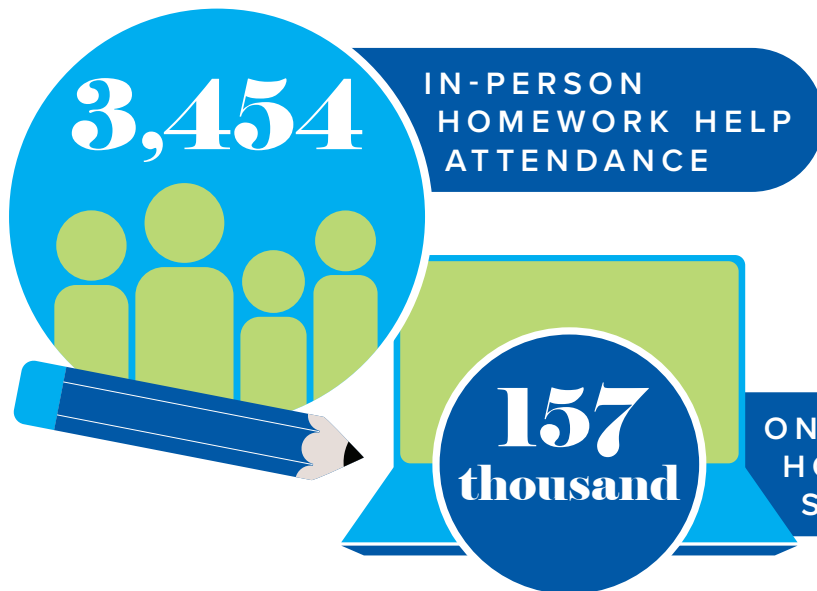


Language collection



18
WORLD LANGUAGES

Amharic • Arabic • Chinese • French • German
Hindi • Hmong • Japanese • Korean • Lakota
Laotian • Ojibwe • Oromo • Russian • Somali
Spanish • Thai • Vietnamese



Homework Help



Washburn Library



Rockford Road Library



Brooklyn Park Library



Augsburg Park Library



East Lake Library



Ridgedale Library



Pierre Bottineau Library



Rogers Library



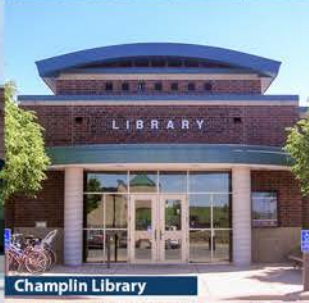
Eden Prairie Library



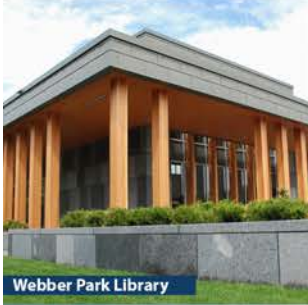
Minneapolis Central Library



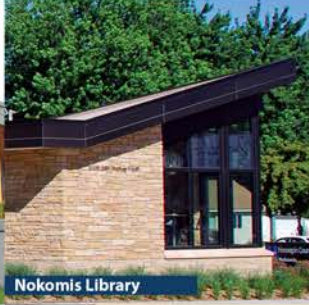
Excelsior Library



Champlin Library



Webber Park Library



Nokomis Library



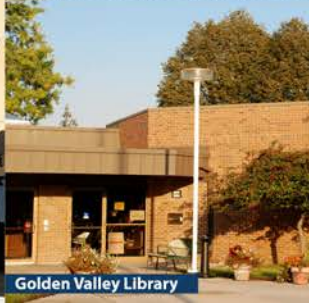
Southdale Library



Long Lake Library



St. Anthony Library



Golden Valley Library



Oxboro Library

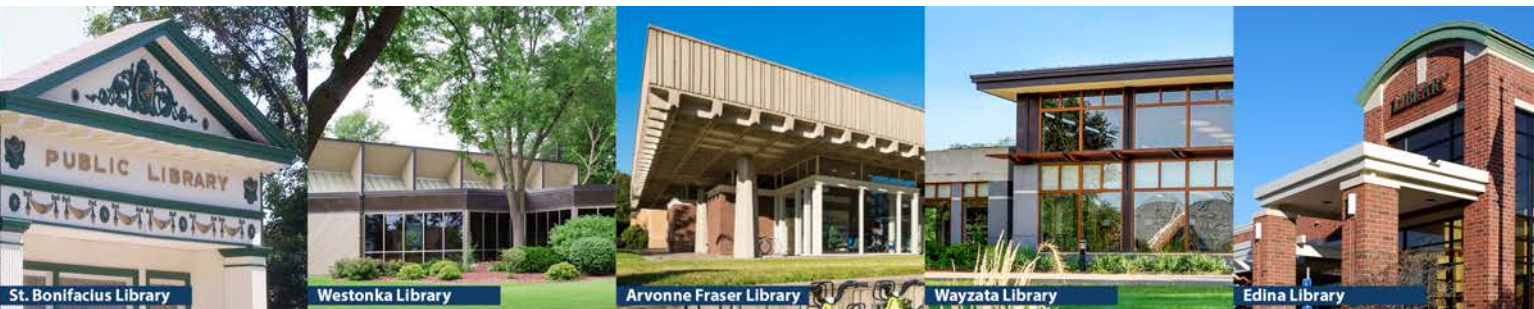


Penn Lake Library

600+
DEDICATED
STAFF

SERVING
1.25
MILLION
RESIDENTS

FROM
45
CITIES
ACROSS
HENNEPIN
COUNTY



St. Bonifacius Library

Westonka Library

Arvonne Fraser Library

Wayzata Library

Edina Library



Walker Library

Sumner Library

Brookdale Library

Northeast Library

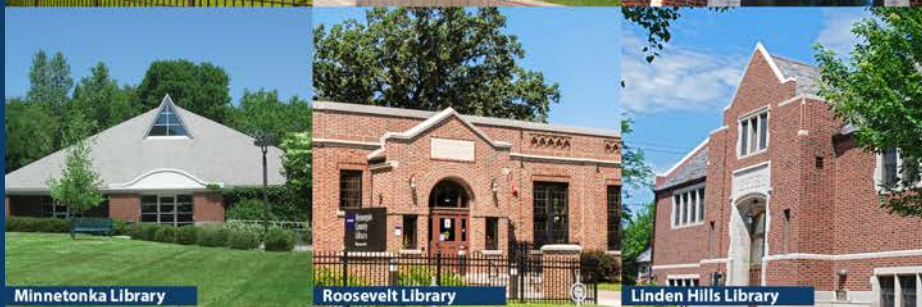
- Bloomington
- Brooklyn Center
- Brooklyn Park
- Champlin
- Chanhasen
- Corcoran
- Crystal
- Dayton
- Deephaven
- Eden Prairie
- Edina
- Excelsior
- Golden Valley
- Greenfield
- Greenwood
- Hanover
- Hopkins
- Independence
- Long Lake
- Loretto
- Maple Grove
- Maple Plain
- Medicine Lake
- Medina
- Minneapolis
- Minnetonka
- Minnetonka Beach
- Minnetrissa
- Mound
- New Hope
- Orono
- Osseo
- Plymouth
- Richfield
- Robbinsdale
- Rockford
- Rogers
- St. Anthony
- St. Bonifacius
- St. Louis Park
- Shorewood
- Spring Park
- Tonka Bay
- Wayzata
- Woodland



Franklin Library

North Regional Library

Hosmer Library



Minnetonka Library

Roosevelt Library

Linden Hills Library



Maple Grove Library

Hopkins Library

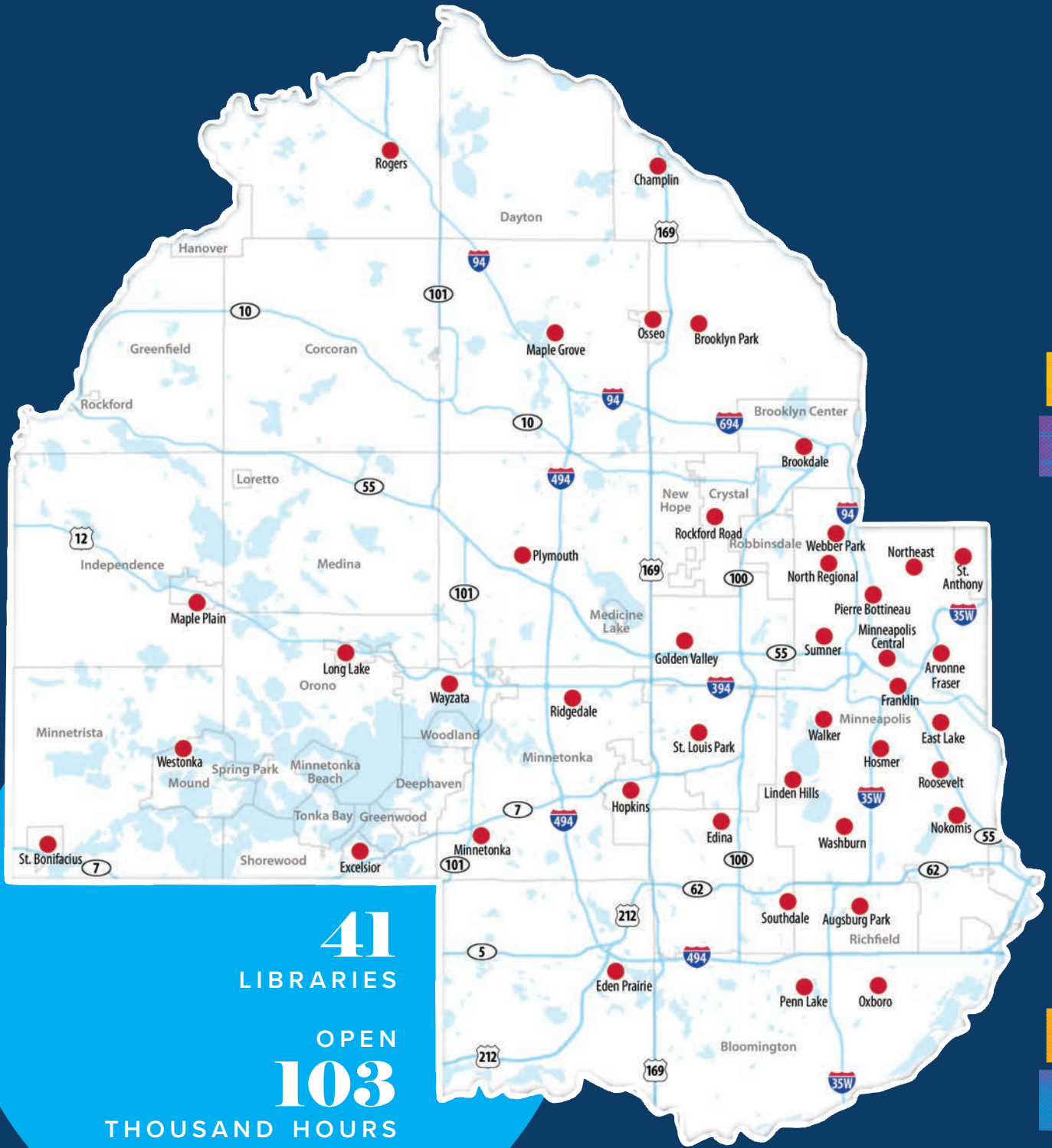


Plymouth Library

St. Louis Park Library

Osseo Library

Maple Plain Library



41
LIBRARIES
OPEN
103
THOUSAND HOURS
IN 2022

Hennepin County Library
Administrative Offices
12601 Ridgedale Drive
Minnetonka, Minnesota 55305

www.hclib.org