

HENNEPIN COUNTY
LIBRARY

Strategic Plan Progress Report

2023 RESULTS



ROCKFORD ROAD LIBRARY RENOVATION
MAY 2023 – APRIL 2024



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.



SCOTT DUIMSTRA
LIBRARY DIRECTOR

MESSAGE FROM THE HENNEPIN COUNTY LIBRARY DIRECTOR

You're back!

2023 marked a welcome return to the library after the COVID pandemic. Your visits are continuing to increase, with 41 locations welcoming more than **3.7 million visitors last year!** In addition, more than **491,000 of you are active cardholders** and you borrowed **11.7 million items**, the highest borrowing count we've seen in the past eight years!

Hennepin County Library is an essential point of access for computers, internet, and online resources, so it's no surprise that the largest area of growth in the library system last year was use of meeting rooms and technology access.

We will continue working to ensure library resources expand as the needs and aspirations of our community evolve. Thank you for using and loving your local library!

Scott Duimstra, Library Director



JANE BRISSETT
LIBRARY BOARD

MESSAGE FROM THE HENNEPIN COUNTY LIBRARY BOARD

"You're back!" is not just a slogan. Having attended programs in the majority of Hennepin County Library locations in 2023, I can tell you that the many people who attended them were overjoyed to be in the library and participating in everything from knitting to storytimes to bucket drumming to homework help – and much more. When you walked in you felt the buzz.

That doesn't just happen by chance. It takes the skillful planning and execution by our wonderful staff who worked courageously throughout the pandemic. They not only tended to the collection and our buildings, but worked to discern neighborhood needs and imagine ways to make the library more accessible for everyone.

All this brought us to 2023, when everything mushroomed. You will see that in the numbers. We couldn't do it without the Hennepin County Board, which puts an extremely high priority on libraries and funds them generously, making our library system one of the top in the nation. Read on to see the details.

Jane Brissett for the Hennepin County Library Board

NORTHSTAR MEASURES

Focusing on the top three measures of success:
library visits, cardholders, and patron satisfaction

Visits and cardholders up; positive patron feedback

“ I am so grateful for the library.
This is one of the only public places
where one is a citizen, rather than
a consumer. ”

Patron response from 2023 survey



Hennepin County Library (HCL) asked patrons about their experience with library services in a patron survey that was offered in libraries, on hclib.org, and through Ask Us from September 25 to October 8, 2023.

The survey focused on satisfaction with library services on the specific day the survey was filled out.

Every service received the highest rating available – excellent – from at least 75% of respondents.

Patron satisfaction

96% felt welcome at the library.
96% had a positive experience at the library.
98% gave the highest customer service ratings: 'most satisfied' with staff.

Visits

3.7 million visits, nearly 1 million more than in 2022, an increase of 34%.

Cardholders

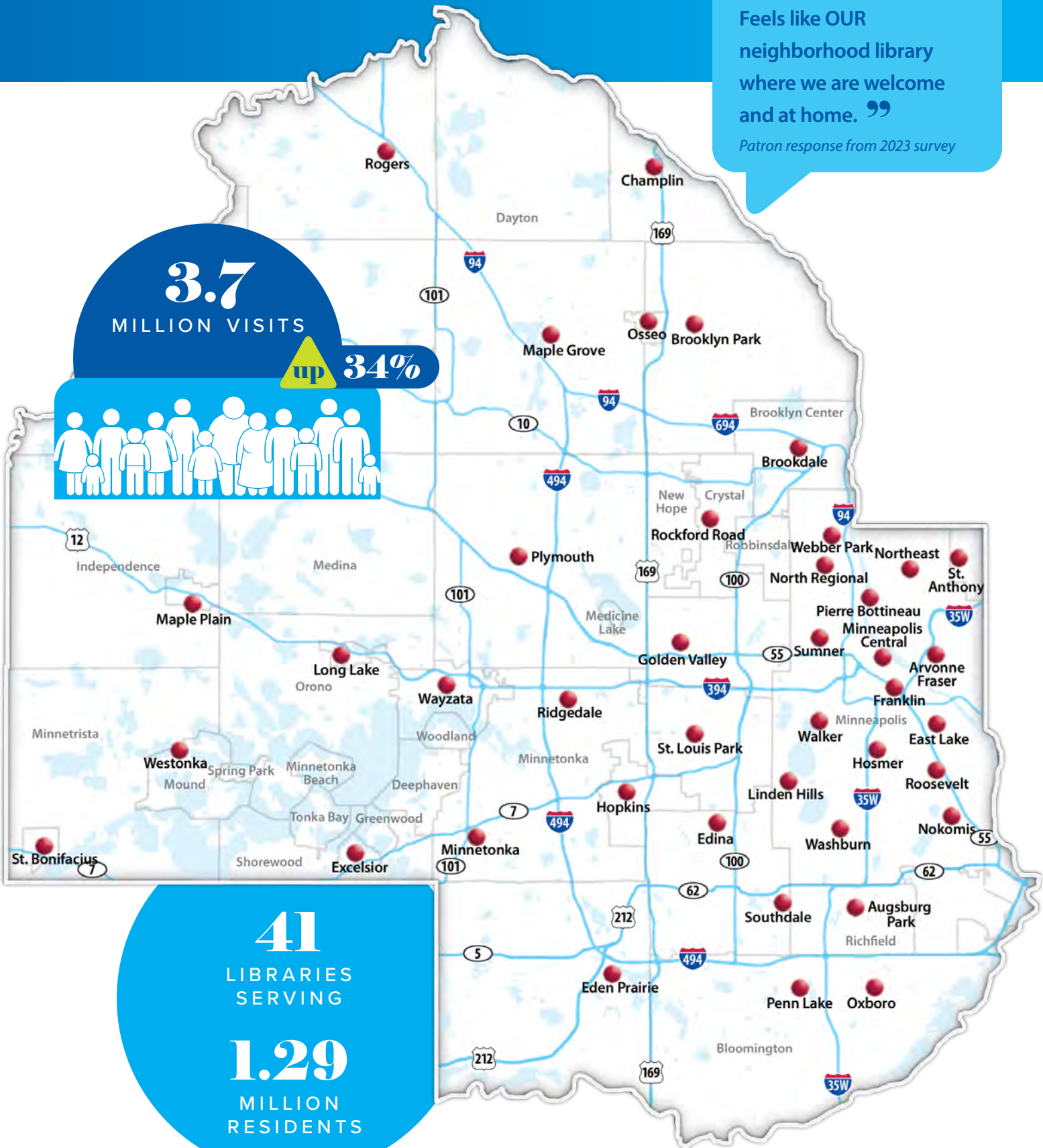
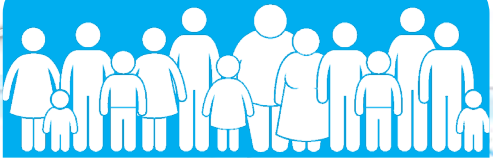
491,000 active cardholders, trending up for the first time in over a decade.

“ We love this library.
Feels like OUR
neighborhood library
where we are welcome
and at home. ”

Patron response from 2023 survey

3.7
MILLION VISITS

up 34%



41
LIBRARIES
SERVING
1.29
MILLION
RESIDENTS

PRIORITY ONE

Upholding free access
to a broad spectrum of ideas

Reaching more people with more checkouts

Circulation

Growth of youth material checkouts was up 7% in 2023, compared to 3% for adult materials. The checkouts of youth physical materials have surpassed adult materials—a clear indicator that patrons are able to successfully find materials for youth in our spaces.



Borrowers

The library's collection is made up of physical books, ebooks, audiobooks, CDs, DVDs, and more, all available for checkout with a Hennepin County Library card. There is considerable crossover between physical and digital borrowing as people use different formats for different needs or will select the format that is most available in the moment.

Special Collections

In 2023, HCL's Special Collections team focused on community outreach to increase collection size through use of an inclusive frame for curation and robust newsletter outreach featuring "cool" tools and staff profiles. This effort resulted in increased usage in HCL's specialized digital collections in sessions, users, and item uses in 2023.



“ I feel very lucky to have this excellent library in my neighborhood. I have stopped buying books and find books I want to read available in reasonable time. ”

Patron response from 2023 survey



Osseo Library self-service model

Self-service, with no regular on-site staff, has been a significant win for patrons of Osseo Library. The new service model allows for extended access to collection, holds, and technology. With support from our partners at the City of Osseo, the increased operating hours have led to increased use of this unique library location.

LIBRARY
COMPUTER
SESSIONS

up 176%

INDIVIDUAL
PATRONS

up 41%

ITEMS
BORROWED

up 52%

PRIORITY TWO

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

A wide range of in-person programs are back

Programming

The library is one of the few venues that offers free youth and adult programming. Program opportunities range from early learning and storytimes, hands-on art classes, and STEAM activities for youth, to career counseling, job search assistance, and computer/technology programs for adults.



New streaming service

In 2023, the library launched a new video streaming service, Kanopy. This new service has seen broad use across the county. Marketing efforts attracted more than 800,000 impressions with a first-ever YouTube campaign.

“ I appreciate the community focus in programming offered at the library. Libby and Kanopy are great additions to the library offerings. ”

Patron response from 2023 survey

Enrichment

The focus of libraries has evolved over the years. As the needs and aspirations of our community have changed, library offerings have expanded in response. What was once a place focused on physical books has now become so much more.

Today, patrons can not only check out physical books, but also digital, ebooks, and audiobooks, attend youth and adult programs, receive reading support and homework help, access online resources, stream movies, and more.

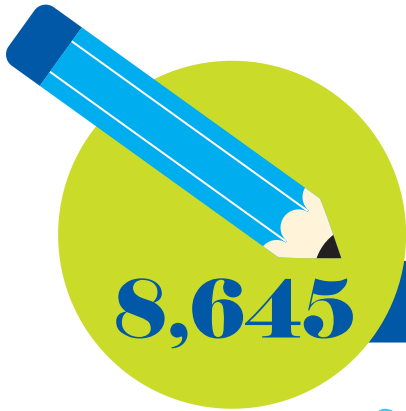


“ The homework help tutoring is so helpful. Thank you. ”

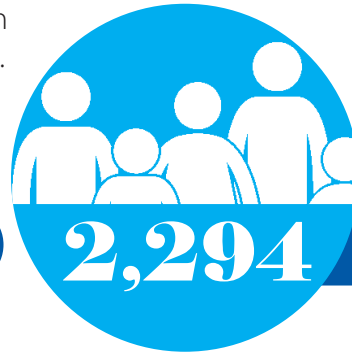
Patron response from 2023 survey

Homework Help

The drop-in tutoring program is now offered at 17 locations.



HOMWORK HELP SESSIONS



STUDENTS ATTENDED

“ I am here for kids getting homework help twice a week. I can't thank you enough. ”

Patron response from 2023 survey



Mary Ann Key Book Club

The library's Mary Ann Key Book Club added in-person events in 2023. The featured title was *Solito* by Javier Zamora.

5 events

2 ENGLISH AND 3 SPANISH

823

ATTENDEES

3,776

CHECKOUTS

3,216

EMAIL SUBSCRIBERS

PRIORITY THREE

Offering free access to essential technology and connectivity

The library is helping bridge the digital divide

The library offers opportunities for patrons to use technology, online resources, and internet access as a pathway to employment, education, communication, and entertainment.

“ Your computer, internet and printing is the most valuable tool in my life. We do not have these at home. Your library staff is beyond helpful with the computer. My family is so grateful and thankful for you! ”

Patron response from 2023 survey

Website use

The library’s website, hclib.org, continues to be a trusted source for library communications. 2023 saw 10.8 million website visits, an 18% increase over 2022. The most visited pages include My Account, Locations, Online Resources, New Titles, Contact Us, and Getting Library Cards.

Wi-Fi

The library provides an unparalleled Wi-Fi experience—no password, fast speeds, no time limits, no need to buy anything. Refurbished outdoor library spaces and boosted signals allow for connection inside and outside of the building. Wi-Fi and computer sessions use are outpacing new borrowers as no library card is required for these services.

Video conference rooms

Demand for video conferencing continues to rise. This service was offered at four HCL locations in 2023: Brookdale, Hosmer, Minneapolis Central, and Plymouth. Rockford Road Library was added in early 2024. The rooms are equipped with desktop computers, webcam, and headset/microphone for video conferencing on popular platforms such as Zoom, Teams, and Google Meet.

This service supports residents who need to attend online job interviews, classes, trainings, telemedicine visits, court hearings, and other video conferencing opportunities.

“ The library has such great services and computers and other tech for community members to use and such GREAT staff. ”

Patron response from 2023 survey



Public computers

Access to scanners and printing are drivers of computer use. Around 400,000 pages are printed by the public each month.



Referrals to Broadband and Digital Inclusion navigators increased dramatically in 2023

Hennepin County Broadband and Digital Inclusion works to increase computer and internet access for low-income residents, and help them grow their digital skills and online safety knowledge. This is part of our commitment to reducing disparities.

PRIORITY FOUR

Creating inviting, inclusive, accessible, and safe public spaces

Visits increased; libraries are being updated

“ Public libraries are one of the most important institutions in our modern society. ”

Patron response from 2023 survey

Hennepin County Library spaces, both physical and online, are inclusive, accessible, and safe for all

Hennepin County residents and visitors for learning, gathering, working, community-building, browsing, and fun.

Library visits

The number of people visiting libraries across the system continues to climb, outpacing growth in circulation. Aligning with increased technology use, programming, meeting room use, and comments from the patron survey, the total visit count tells us that people want to be in community with each other again.

Meeting room use

Meeting rooms are in high demand across the library system. Staff report that rooms are always booked. Use of the space is changing from pre-pandemic norms. Today, teens are booking meeting rooms for study groups.

Capital projects

Capital project work resumed in 2023 after a brief pause during the pandemic. The Capital Improvement Plan identifies projects that will be addressed in the next five years. These range from small scale interior projects to large scale new construction.

COMPLETED

- Linden Hills Library preservation project, completed in November 2023.
- Rockford Road Library refurbishment project, completed in April 2024.

IN-PROGRESS

- Sumner Library preservation project, reopening fall 2024.
- Pierre Bottineau modification project, reopening fall 2024.

UPCOMING IN 2025

- Southdale Library demolition and new construction.
- Westonka Library demolition and new construction.

Both libraries held community meetings in 2023 and 2024, presenting site plans and preliminary architectural renderings. Design work will continue through 2024.

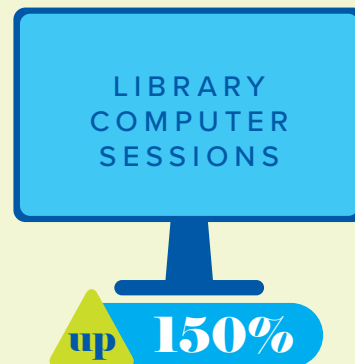
“ This is a wonderful and inclusive safe space. I love the care and consideration the staff shows to patrons like myself. ”

Patron response from 2023 survey



Expanded hours at Roosevelt Library

Hours increased from 24 hours a week in 2022 to 48 hours a week in 2023. As a result, visits rose 130% and computer use increased 150%.



PRIORITY FIVE

Delivering a positive and equitable experience to every patron

Residents are finding joy and connection at the library

Patrons have positive and equitable experiences

In 2023, the library conducted the first formal patron survey in many years. In their own voice, patrons told us staff were helpful and their experiences at the library were positive.

“ I love the library! Thank you for continuing to make it an inclusive space for all. ”

Patron response from 2023 survey

“ I enjoyed feeling part of community with the event and friendly people. ”

Patron response from 2023 survey

Feeling welcome

96% of patron survey respondents said they felt welcome in library spaces covering both the physical and social aspects of “welcome.”

Each library has a unique character and community, and staff are skilled in listening and responding to the needs of their local community. The patron survey is one of the ways we ask for feedback. When the library asks, it is because we want to know so we can make improvements.

“ ...Our library feels clean, welcoming, safe, and staff is always willing to help. ”

Patron response from 2023 survey

“ Every time I’ve come to this branch, I have had an amazing experience. The staff is extremely kind, friendly, and helpful. And the resources are outstanding! I LOVE this library. Thank you! ”

Patron response from 2023 survey



“ We love storytime and your whole staff is just wonderful. Thank you for being a bright spot in our community! ”

Patron response from 2023 survey

PRIORITY SIX

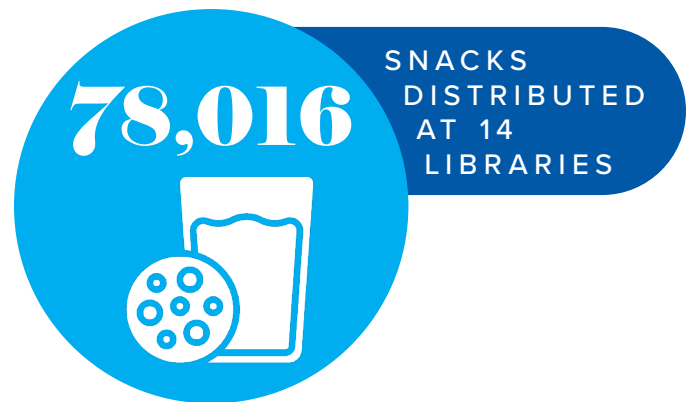
Supporting individuals and their basic human needs through connections to resources and services

Library partnerships support social needs

Hennepin County Library is trusted as a place for accessing library-related services and resources that expand beyond library services.

Staff meet patrons already in our spaces. Social workers are currently based at Minneapolis Central and Franklin libraries. The highest areas of support needed is with housing and economic benefits.

In addition to embedded social workers, expanded human services are available at kiosks placed at select locations throughout the library system.



“ Good work, everyone!
You saved my life during the pandemic
and continue to enrich my days.
And for free!!! ”

Patron response from 2023 survey

In collaboration with the Hennepin County Sheriff’s Department Community Program, 17 libraries served as collection and distribution sites for the 2023 Cold Weather Donation Drive.

“ Since becoming unemployed a year ago I discovered the library. Wow! So many resources and opportunities. It has been a mental health lifesaver. ”

Patron response from 2023 survey



“ I want to thank you for how you help all of us in the community! Thanks to libraries, we learn. We work. We live better lives! ”

Patron response from 2023 survey

3,000 PATRONS

Connected with social workers at Minneapolis Central Library and Franklin Library.





Washburn Library



Rockford Road Library



Brooklyn Park Library



Augsburg Park Library



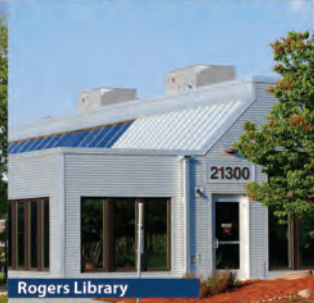
East Lake Library



Ridgedale Library



Pierre Bottineau Library



Rogers Library



Eden Prairie Library



Minneapolis Central Library



Excelsior Library



Champlin Library



Webber Park Library



Nokomis Library



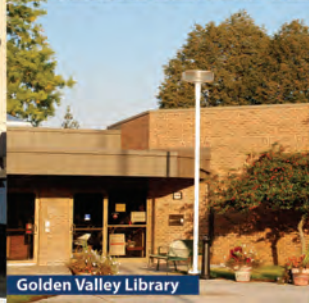
Southdale Library



Long Lake Library



St. Anthony Library



Golden Valley Library



Oxboro Library



Penn Lake Library

600+

DEDICATED
STAFF

SERVING
1.29
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

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

- Bloomington
- Brooklyn Center
- Brooklyn Park
- Champlin
- Chanhassen
- 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
- Minnetrsta
- Mound
- New Hope
- Orono
- Osseo
- Plymouth
- Richfield
- Robbinsdale
- Rockford
- Rogers
- St. Anthony
- St. Bonifacius
- St. Louis Park
- Shorewood
- Spring Park
- Tonka Bay
- Wayzata
- Woodland

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

www.hclib.org

