



Great River Regional Library
Library Development Plan

2022

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Background

- GRRL is a consolidated regional library system with 32 libraries in six counties in central Minnesota. Our joint powers agreement and branch agreements establish that GRRL is responsible for all costs associated with the provision of library services. Cities are responsible for the costs associated with buildings, insurances, utilities, and related building operations.
- The 2022 Library Development Plan builds on the work of previous plans, updating open hour recommendations, facility assessments and alternative service models. Our recommendations for facilities, open hours and alternative service models are based on current policies and analysis of library usage.
- Library usage patterns changed as a result of the pandemic, and it is too soon to tell how trends are resetting. Some communities, such as St. Michael, have seen exponential increases in usage. The majority of GRRL residents live within 15-minute drive time from a GRRL location. This is the standard GRRL has established in policy for distance between libraries.
- Patrons expect self-service and virtual options as well as an excellent in-person experience when visiting the library. Options exist today that were not available in the past, such as Bibliotecha Open+. These new methods of delivering library service should be considered so GRRL can continue to provide Central Minnesota with exceptional library service.



Executive Summary

FACILITY IMPROVEMENTS

The following libraries are in need of improvements due to accessibility, space or safety issues:

- Belgrade
- Cold Spring
- Sauk Centre
- Waite Park

The following communities are in the process of updating or relocating their library buildings:

- Eagle Bend
- Howard Lake
- Paynesville

Further detail on each of these facilities is included in the Facility Assessments.

OPEN HOURS

Based on usage patterns and population increases, GRRL should increase open hours at St. Michael when budget and staffing conditions permit. This change to open hours would have a budgetary impact and be brought forward through GRRL budgeting processes for approval by the Board of Trustees.

ALTERNATIVE SERVICES

Enhanced library service is desired by some communities without libraries within the GRRL service area. The alternative services identified could most feasibly be offered within the constraints of our existing service model. Expansion of any library service would be dependent on the regional cost to add the service and/or local funds to support the service long-term.

Open Hours

RECOMMENDATIONS

Based on an updated analysis of library usage trends, the following change is recommended. It would require an increase in staffing, so will be incorporated as a future department budget request.

Library	Current weekly open hours	Recommended change	Recommended weekly open hours	Reason for recommendation	Funding Source
St. Michael	47	Bring St. Michael open hours up to the same level as Buffalo and Elk River.	48	Sustained increase in circulation/open hour, stable borrower numbers, 10-year increase in circulation.	An increase to staffing is required, so would be incorporated as a future department budget request.

DATA ANALYSIS

GRRL offers 1,077 open hours each week between our 32 libraries for an average of 33.66 hours at each location. In 2016, GRRL offered 989 weekly open hours for an average of 30.91 at each location. Three libraries offer extended hours (48 or more weekly): St. Cloud, Elk River, and Buffalo. In 2022, GRRL extended open hours in 27 locations as a response to community needs following the pandemic. Seven libraries are at 23 hours or less: Belgrade, Eagle Bend, Grey Eagle, Kimball, Richmond, Royalton and Swanville. None are at the state-mandated minimum level of 20 hours weekly.

Recommendations for adjusting library open hour schedules to meet changes in patron need throughout the region are based on the following criteria:

- Borrower numbers
- Circulation per open hour
- Internet usage per open hour
- Staffing per open hour
- Location of library in the county seat
- Proximity to other libraries
- Building size
- Shared patron base with nearby libraries
- Presence of an Express Checkout

CRITERIA FOR INCREASING OPEN HOURS

- Ability to make changes within existing base budget
- Sustained increases in circulation and borrower activity over 10-year period
- Adequate facility size to support increased usage
- Average circulation/open hour compared with libraries of similar size or service population

OR

- Local funds available to increase hours with at least a 5-year commitment

ADDITIONAL NOTES

Increasing open hours at locations above base levels or adding options like Sunday hours could be considered if locally funded. GRRL and the city would need to agree to provide ongoing funding for at least a five-year period. Expanded open hour services using this option would be dependent on continuation of local funding.

CRITERIA FOR DECREASING OPEN HOURS

- Sustained decrease in circulation and borrower activity over 10-year period
- Budgetary needs
- Inadequate facility space or condition

OPEN HOURS ADJUSTMENTS SINCE 2019

With the exception of St. Michael, adjustments to open hours since 2019 have been independent of the Library Development Plan :

Library	2019 Weekly Open Hours	Change	Year changed	Current Weekly Open Hours	Reason for change
Albany	37	Increase 2	2022	39	Pandemic response
Annandale	25	Increase 3	2022	28	Pandemic response
Becker	30	Increase 3	2022	33	Pandemic response
Belgrade	20	Increase 2	2022	22	Pandemic response
Big Lake	29	Increase 3	2022	32	Pandemic response
Clearwater	23	Increase 2	2022	25	Pandemic response
Cokato	28	Increase 3	2022	31	Pandemic response
Cold Spring	34	Increase 3	2022	37	Pandemic response
Delano	41	Increase 3	2022	44	Pandemic response
Eagle Bend	20	Increase 3	2022	23	Pandemic response
Foley	35	Increase 1	2022	36	Pandemic response
Grey Eagle	20	Increase 3	2022	23	Pandemic response
Howard Lake	28	Increase 3	2022	31	Pandemic response
Kimball	20	Increase 3	2022	23	Pandemic response
Little Falls	43	Increase 2	2022	45	Pandemic response
Long Prairie	35	Increase 2	2022	37	Pandemic response
Melrose	25	Increase 2	2022	27	Pandemic response
Paynesville	31	Increase 2	2022	33	Pandemic response
Pierz	23	Increase 5	2022	28	Pandemic response
Richmond	20	Increase 3	2022	23	Pandemic response
Rockford	31	Increase 2	2022	33	Pandemic response
Royalton	20	Increase 3	2022	23	Pandemic response
Saint Michael	44	Increase 3	2020	47	Increase in library usage
Sauk Centre	32	Increase 3	2022	35	Pandemic response
Staples	35	Increase 2	2022	37	Pandemic response
Swanville	20	Increase 3	2022	23	Pandemic response
Upsala	23	Increase 2	2022	25	Pandemic response
Waite Park	30	Increase 2	2022	32	Pandemic response

CHALLENGE AND OPPORTUNITY

Swanville's borrower numbers have been stable, but circulation and Internet use continues to decrease. Budget constraints and current policy regarding Regional Library Telecommunications Aid has limited adjustments in open hours to no less than 20 hours weekly. It may be cost-effective to operate the library without state funding to support the broadband connection. If budget or staffing pressures change in the next three years, reducing services below the 20-hour minimum should be considered.

All libraries showed a reduction in borrower numbers following the 2020 pandemic closures and limited services. Most libraries are trending back toward 2019 levels of service. It is too soon to determine how usage will level out following the pandemic. Management's recommendation is to monitor these changes and reassess service levels in three years when this plan is updated next.

EXPIRING SERVICE AGREEMENT

The City of Elk River and GRRL signed a service agreement to offer an additional three open hours at Elk River Public Library from Jan. 1, 2018- Dec. 31, 2022. The City of Elk River opted not to continue this contract beyond the five-year agreement so open hours will revert back to the 48 hours supported by GRRL starting Jan. 1, 2023.

PATRON FEEDBACK

The 2018 St. Cloud State University (SCSU) User/Non-user survey asked specific questions of non-users about open hours. Non-users were defined as people who did not use any library service in the past year. Participants who did not know if they used a library service in the past year were counted as non-users. The sample included 6,793 users (172 completed the telephone survey) and 985 non-users (254 completed the telephone survey).

A small percentage (2% or less) of non-users reported that parking, inconvenient hours or locations, transportation, or safety concerns prevented them from using GRRL services. Only small percentages of non-users (less than 5%) identified changes to hours, services, or locations as factors that would encourage them to use the library.

Since open hours were expanded in 27 locations in 2022, this topic should be revisited in the next GRRL User/Non-user survey.

Express Checkout

Express Checkouts have been used at GRRL and other library systems across the country to enhance patron service. The goal for expansion of Express Checkout at GRRL is to increase patron access to public service staff for enhanced customer service experiences and outreach to the community.

Libraries without Express Checkout stations include: Belgrade, Cold Spring, Grey Eagle, Pierz, Richmond, Swanville and Upsala.

GRRL added a second station in St. Michael in 2019 as a pilot project. The additional station has assisted with the increase in circulation there. Usage remained high over the past three years and exceeds self-checkout usage at St. Cloud Public Library, which is the only other location with two stations. If usage statistics on existing Express Checkout stations and overall circulation match that of St. Michael, it would warrant an additional stations. Possible future sites would be Buffalo and Elk River, depending on usage trends.

CRITERIA FOR FUTURE STATIONS

- Building readiness
- Self pick up of holds
- Circulation over 100,000
- Low staffing levels – enhance desk coverage
- Staffing levels with potential for open hours increase
- Percent of circulation attributed to hold activity

POTENTIAL NEXT LOCATIONS FOR EXPRESS CHECKOUT PLACEMENT

- Not a priority at this time.

Analysis of Express Checkout feasibility for each location is included in the Facility Assessments.

Facility Assessment: Albany



Location Statistics		Facility Highlights	
Year joined GRRL	1969	Sufficient staff work area	Yes
Year opened	1960	Private office for LSC	No
Year built or last updated	2012	Staff break room	Shared
Collection size	19,352	Study Room/s	No
2021 circulation	92,815	Separate meeting or program space/s	1
Total floor space (Sq. Ft.)	3,500	Program space shared or library-only	Shared
2022 open hours	39	Sufficient for collection & technology	Yes
Public Internet stations	4	Significant building operational issues	No
Public catalog stations	1	Significant MCIT or accessibility issues	No
Express check station/s installed	2018	City owned or leased	Owned

The library is located within the city offices facility. The library is a well-lit, spacious, window-filled space with great visual sight lines from the checkout desk. There is a small magazine reading area and a small children's seating/table area. The center of the library has available display table space. The only true programming space is the city council chambers. The building has an outdoor book drop. The staff area behind the checkout desk was recently enlarged when the desk was moved forward and expanded. This creates space for two staff stations with plenty of room between them. The back staff area is a long and very narrow space with a single staff station. Open hours were increased from 37 to 39 in this library at the beginning of 2022. The library now opens two hours earlier on Fridays.

Facility Assessment: Annandale



Location Statistics		Facility Highlights	
Year joined GRRL	1969	Sufficient staff work area	Yes
Year opened	1900	Private office for LSC	No
Year built or last updated	2003	Staff break room	No
Collection size	17,161	Study Room/s	No
2021 circulation	35,848	Separate meeting or program space/s	3
Total floor space (Sq. Ft.)	3,850	Program space shared or library-only	Shared
2022 open hours	28	Sufficient for collection & technology	Yes
Public Internet stations	4	Significant building operational issues	No
Public catalog stations	1	Significant MCIT or accessibility issues	No
Express check station/s installed	2018	City owned or leased	Owned

The Annandale Library facility is bright, light-filled and centrally located. Built in 2003, it is part of a joint-use facility with city hall and senior dining services and has excellent shared programming spaces. The collection and computer spaces are generally able to meet the needs of the community. The circulation desk is spacious and well-organized, and there is a small, separate staff work area. The Annandale Improvement Club, Annandale Friends of the Library, and city-appointed board all work to make sure that any shelving and furniture needs are addressed. Issues with the roof required repairs in 2013, 2014 and 2018, but otherwise the building is in good condition.

Facility Assessment: Becker



Location Statistics		Facility Highlights	
Year joined GRRL	1984	Sufficient staff work area	Yes
Year opened	1984	Private office for LSC	No
Year built or last updated	2010	Staff break room	Shared
Collection size	15,660	Study Room/s	No
2021 circulation	51,881	Separate meeting or program space/s	1
Total floor space (Sq. Ft.)	3,500	Program space shared or library-only	Shared
2022 open hours	33	Sufficient for collection & technology	Minimally
Public Internet stations	3	Significant building operational issues	Signage
Public catalog stations	2	Significant MCIT or accessibility issues	No
Express check station/s installed	2016	City owned or leased	Owned

The Becker Library is part of the Becker Community Center. The facility was built in 1994. Overall, the facility is in good repair; the carpeting was replaced in 2017. Space for collection, seating, and Internet computers is tight, and there is no further space for wiring additional public access computers. There is no space for programming in the library proper – most programming occurs in the shared community space in the Becker Community Center. Therefore, the library often has to schedule its programming around various other groups' schedules.

There is no separate staff or Friends work space. This has been remedied with use of temporary walls to portion off some work area, but this reduces the amount of space available for the collection. The library lacks clear and effective signage.

Facility Assessment: Belgrade



Location Statistics		Facility Highlights	
Year joined GRRL	1969	Sufficient staff work area	No
Year opened	1927	Private office for LSC	No
Year built or last updated	2005	Staff break room	No
Collection size	5,652	Study Room/s	No
2021 circulation	10,229	Separate meeting or program space/s	No
Total floor space (Sq. Ft.)	1,789	Program space shared or library-only	NA
2022 open hours	22	Sufficient for collection & technology	Yes
Public Internet stations	3	Significant building operational issues	No
Public catalog stations	1	Significant MCIT or accessibility issues	Yes
Express check station/s installed	NA	City owned or leased	Owned

The Belgrade Library is a remodeled storefront with an open arrangement and good artificial lighting. There is a small work area for staff, with one staff computer used for check-in set slightly behind a partial wall. There is no private office space for staff. The carpeting is in good condition. The shelving is uniform in appearance and is generally lined up against the outer walls. There is no programming space except for a large table in the middle of the room that is used for book club and other small group meetings. The space is minimally adequate to meet current demand. The floor at the back of the library is below ground level, resulting in repeated water intrusion during spring melt-off and some heavy rains. The City of Belgrade is working with a contractor on a plan to address this. Work is anticipated in 2023. Work to correct water intrusion at the front of the library was completed in 2022.

Holds are self-pickup in the public area.

MCIT has recommended installation of a smoke detector. The city manager consulted with the fire marshal, and it was determined that this was not mandatory in the building.

Facility Assessment: Big Lake



Location Statistics		Facility Highlights	
Year joined GRRL	1984	Sufficient staff work area	Yes
Year opened	1984	Private office for LSC	Yes
Year built or last updated	2009	Staff break room	Yes
Collection size	20,201	Study Room/s	1
2021 circulation	53,716	Separate meeting or program space/s	1
Total floor space (Sq. Ft.)	2,750	Program space shared or library-only	Shared
2022 open hours	32	Sufficient for collection & technology	Yes
Public Internet stations	4	Significant building operational issues	No
Public catalog stations	1	Significant MCIT or accessibility issues	No
Express check station/s installed	2016	City owned or leased	Owned

In early 2008, the Big Lake Library moved to its current location in a multi-use commercial building. It is a good-sized space with a fair amount of room for the current collection, ample space for public access computers and staff work areas, and a separate, generously-sized programming area. The library is located across the street from an elementary school and next door to an apartment complex, making it a busy and easy destination for children.

In 2011, GRRL provided the City of Big Lake with a space needs analysis for a new library facility that would serve the community's needs through 2030. The study was accepted by Hay Dobbs Architects and incorporated into a larger study of municipal facility needs for the city. The study provided by GRRL estimated that the community of Big Lake required a facility of approximately 11,000 square feet. In 2013, the City of Big Lake purchased the building where the library is currently housed. As of 2015, the library and the police department occupy the entire building.

Facility Assessment: Buffalo



Location Statistics		Facility Highlights	
Year joined GRRL	1969	Sufficient staff work area	Yes
Year opened	1907	Private office for LSC	Yes
Year built or last updated	2013	Staff break room	Yes
Collection size	47,692	Study Room/s	4
2021 circulation	166,978	Separate meeting or program space/s	No
Total floor space (Sq. Ft.)	10,000	Program space shared or library-only	NA
2022 open hours	48	Sufficient for collection & technology	Yes
Public Internet stations	7	Significant building operational issues	No
Public catalog stations	3	Significant MCIT or accessibility issues	No
Express check station/s installed	2013	City owned or leased	Owned

The Buffalo Library is a stand-alone facility, situated on Buffalo Lake in downtown Buffalo. The building was built in 1973 and renovated in 1995 and 2010. In 2021, the city updated the building by renewing signage and the circulation desk lights. They also repainted. Parking has improved with the county building availability. HVAC has begun to be a problem, as it was last improved in 2010.

The area is crowded and will only become more so as usage increases. Lack of a dedicated meeting room and programming space is an issue of concern for a facility that serves a population as large as Buffalo. The four study rooms are regularly full, and the community frequently requests meeting space. Currently, to have space to accommodate programs, all of the kids books are moved or the program is hosted in the back staff work area.

Facility Assessment: Clearwater



Location Statistics		Facility Highlights	
Year joined GRRL	2001	Sufficient staff work area	Yes
Year opened	2001	Private office for LSC	No
Year built or last updated	2012	Staff break room	No
Collection size	12,958	Study Room/s	No
2021 circulation	27,864	Separate meeting or program space/s	No
Total floor space (Sq. Ft.)	3,750	Program space shared or library-only	NA
2022 open hours	25	Sufficient for collection & technology	Yes
Public Internet stations	4	Significant building operational issues	No
Public catalog stations	1	Significant MCIT or accessibility issues	No
Express check station/s installed	2016	City owned or leased	Leased

The Stickney Crossing Library relocated to a much larger space in 2012 in a low-traffic area with excellent parking. The library is spacious and will allow for additional shelving if needed. The front door does not have an automatic open button for handicap accessibility. The facility is leased by the city.

There is no private work area for staff, and storage is minimal. The space includes an area for public meetings and programming. However, this area is open on one side to the children's area. Because of this, there can be noise concerns and distractions during programs.

Open hours increased in 2022 from 23 to 25.

Facility Assessment: Cokato



Location Statistics		Facility Highlights	
Year joined GRRL	1976	Sufficient staff work area	Yes
Year opened	1927	Private office for LSC	No
Year built or last updated	2014	Staff break room	Shared
Collection size	15,226	Study Room/s	No
2021 circulation	56,346	Separate meeting or program space/s	1
Total floor space (Sq. Ft.)	1927	Program space shared or library-only	Shared
2022 open hours	31	Sufficient for collection & technology	Yes
Public Internet stations	3	Significant building operational issues	No
Public catalog stations	1	Significant MCIT or accessibility issues	No
Express check station/s installed	2017	City owned or leased	Owned

The Cokato Library is in a joint use facility, sharing space with a museum and a large meeting room. In 2015, the library was updated with cosmetic changes as a collaboration between the city and Friends of the Cokato Area Library (FOCAL). This work did not change the overall space allocated to the library. In 2017 and 2018, the city updated the entry in order to meet accessibility requirements. The staff enjoys a large separate work/storage area, however, it is not efficiently or ergonomically designed, and there is no separate office for the Library Service Coordinator (LSC).

Facility Assessment: Cold Spring



Location Statistics		Facility Highlights	
Year joined GRRL	1969	Sufficient staff work area	No
Year opened	1969	Private office for LSC	No
Year built or last updated	1984	Staff break room	Shared
Collection size	12,228	Study Room/s	No
2021 circulation	61,202	Separate meeting or program space/s	1
Total floor space (Sq. Ft.)	1,768	Program space shared or library-only	Shared
2022 open hours	37	Sufficient for collection & technology	No
Public Internet stations	2	Significant building operational issues	Yes
Public catalog stations	1	Significant MCIT or accessibility issues	No
Express check station/s installed	Not feasible	City owned or leased	Owned

The Cold Spring Library is significantly under-sized for its borrower numbers, program utilization, computer access, and circulation. The city and Friends have been looking for alternatives since at least 2005. In 2016, the city charged the planning commission with investigating alternatives for the library. GRRL has provided three (3) space needs studies – 2008, 2010 and 2016 – to assist the city with planning a new facility. In 2018, the City of Cold Spring articulated a plan to renovate the existing site and expand the library. For this to be done, the city must first build a new fire hall in order to make space for a renovation. In the summer of 2019, the city worked to secure land for the fire hall. While this plan may address the space needs for the library, sufficient parking will likely remain an issue during larger programs and other busy times. As of 2022, the planned fire hall and police station are no longer moving forward. Therefore, library plans are also stalled. The city is currently assessing plans that would address the needs of the various city departments, including the library.

Express Check Feasibility: An Express Check would not be feasible in the current Cold Spring facility due to the space constraints.

Facility Assessment: Delano



Location Statistics		Facility Highlights	
Year joined GRRL	1969	Sufficient staff work area	Yes
Year opened	1939	Private office for LSC	No
Year built or last updated	2010	Staff break room	Yes
Collection size	25,421	Study Room/s	1
2021 circulation	89,893	Separate meeting or program space/s	1
Total floor space (Sq. Ft.)	5,970	Program space shared or library-only	Library
2022 open hours	44	Sufficient for collection & technology	Minimally
Public Internet stations	5	Significant building operational issues	No
Public catalog stations	2	Significant MCIT or accessibility issues	No
Express check station/s installed	2013	City owned or leased	Owned

The Delano Library relocated to a remodeled bank building in 2004. Initially, some of the space was retained by the city for storage. A further renovation in 2010 converted this space into small but efficient staff work areas and provided a drive-up book drop. One of the distinctive features of the space is the converted vault, now the teen area, which provides Delano with possibly the most secure tornado shelter in the region. While the facility does meet current needs and is overall relatively spacious, it is becoming cramped for adult print and media. There is little to no room for growth in other areas of the collection without losing important activity space. Program area in the library is limited, while demand for programming is high. Parking is sometimes insufficient during programs and at the height of summer business.

Facility Assessment: Eagle Bend



Location Statistics		Facility Highlights	
Year joined GRRL	1982	Sufficient staff work area	Minimally
Year opened	1982	Private office for LSC	No
Year built or last updated	2013	Staff break room	Shared
Collection size	11,448	Study Room/s	No
2021 circulation	23,646	Separate meeting or program space/s	No
Total floor space (Sq. Ft.)	2,800	Program space shared or library-only	Shared
2022 open hours	23	Sufficient for collection & technology	No
Public Internet stations	4	Significant building operational issues	No
Public catalog stations	1	Significant MCIT or accessibility issues	No
Express check station/s installed	2018	City owned or leased	Owned

The Eagle Bend Library shares space with the local history museum. The library space is narrow and crowded and appears dark, even though there is plenty of artificial light. The shelves are tall to utilize the limited floor space, giving the library its shaded and dark appearance. There is a small office at the back shared with museum staff, which is more suited for use as a coffee/break room as it has no staff computer. The area behind the desk contains two staff computers in a very small space where all check-in and checkout is done. There is a table in the computer area for small group programming. Although not ideal, the city does own a community meeting room across the street that the library can use for programming. Moving the museum out and expanding into their space would provide much needed space for materials and programming. In 2013, the doors and windows were replaced and an indoor book drop was added. In 2017, the City of Eagle Bend purchased the vacant lot next to the library. They are in process of building a new addition and are scheduled to be completed by spring 2023.

Facility Assessment: Elk River



Location Statistics		Facility Highlights	
Year joined GRRL	1972	Sufficient staff work area	Yes
Year opened	1921	Private office for LSC	2
Year built or last updated	2007	Staff break room	Yes
Collection size	52,836	Study Room/s	3
2021 circulation	213,007	Separate meeting or program space/s	1
Total floor space (Sq. Ft.)	16,500	Program space shared or library-only	Library
2022 open hours	51	Sufficient for collection & technology	Yes
Public Internet stations	11	Significant building operational issues	No
Public catalog stations	3	Significant MCIT or accessibility issues	No
Express check station/s installed	2008	City owned or leased	Owned

The Elk River Library was built in 2007 and is recognized as the first library in Minnesota to receive Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design (LEED) certification. The facility boasts excellent natural lighting in almost every part of the building, and has well-differentiated spaces for adult, children and teen collections. There are also three study rooms and a large programming / meeting room. Staff areas are large and efficiently designed as well. The original plans include drawings for expansion if and when that is needed. The facility also has a well-sized parking lot that is usually sufficient, although parking can be problematic during large programs or at the height of summer business.

In 2015, the city and the Elk River Library Board developed a long-term Capital Investment Plan to ensure timely repairs and/or replacement of equipment.

In 2017, the City of Elk River and GRRL entered into a 5-year agreement, beginning January 1, 2018, for the city to pay for 3 additional open hours. The city opted not to continue this contract beyond the initial agreement, so open hours will revert back to the 48 hours supported by GRRL starting January 1, 2023.

Facility Assessment: Foley



Location Statistics		Facility Highlights	
Year joined GRRL	1974	Sufficient staff work area	Yes
Year opened	1941	Private office for LSC	No
Year built or last updated	1992	Staff break room	Shared
Collection size	18,172	Study Room/s	No
2021 circulation	54,181	Separate meeting or program space/s	1
Total floor space (Sq. Ft.)	5,000	Program space shared or library-only	Shared
2022 open hours	36	Sufficient for collection & technology	Yes
Public Internet stations	4	Significant building operational issues	No
Public catalog stations	1	Significant MCIT or accessibility issues	No
Express check station/s installed	2019	City owned or leased	Owned

The Foley Library is located in a multi-use facility that includes the city hall and police station. The space is adequate for the collection, computers and public seating, although there is not sufficient room for a dedicated young adult area, and the children's area is cramped. The children's area will expand once the coat closet is removed in 2022. There is no separate parking lot for the library; however, on-street parking is generally sufficient for patron needs except during large programs.

There is a large, semi-private workroom for staff.

The city informed us of its intent to replace carpets in the library in 2020, which was then rescheduled to November of 2022.

An express checkout station was installed.

Facility Assessment: Grey Eagle



Location Statistics		Facility Highlights	
Year joined GRRL	1993	Sufficient staff work area	Yes
Year opened	1945	Private office for LSC	No
Year built or last updated	1993	Staff break room	No
Collection size	9,719	Study Room/s	No
2021 circulation	12,901	Separate meeting or program space/s	1
Total floor space (Sq. Ft.)	2,500	Program space shared or library-only	Library
2022 open hours	23	Sufficient for collection & technology	Yes
Public Internet stations	3	Significant building operational issues	No
Public catalog stations	1	Significant MCIT or accessibility issues	No
Express check station/s installed	NA	City owned or leased	Owned

This facility is housed in a converted store front with large windows. Additional lighting was added around 2014. The desk is in a location that provides great sight lines for the entire library. There is no staff work space other than what is provided at the check-out desk. There are two staff computers. The shelving units are a mix and match selection of varying colors. There is a small room in the back of the building with a sink and cupboards, and a good size magazine reading/seating area at the front. The library is of an adequate size for current demand. The bathroom flooring, kitchen sink and countertop were replaced in 2017. The bathroom vanity was replaced in 2018. The A/C unit was replaced in June 2019.

Facility Assessment: Howard Lake



Location Statistics		Facility Highlights	
Year joined GRRL	1969	Sufficient staff work area	No
Year opened	1905	Private office for LSC	No
Year built or last updated	1979	Staff break room	No
Collection size	12,110	Study Room/s	No
2021 circulation	34,861	Separate meeting or program space/s	1
Total floor space (Sq. Ft.)	1,200	Program space shared or library-only	Shared
2022 open hours	31	Sufficient for collection & technology	No
Public Internet stations	3	Significant building operational issues	Yes
Public catalog stations	1	Significant MCIT or accessibility issues	Yes
Express check station/s installed	2021	City owned or leased	Owned

Howard Lake Library is located on the lower level of a community building built in 1982. The second level of the building houses the city's community center, which is also available to the library for programming space. The building is not adequately handicap accessible. While there is handicap parking and an accessible entrance at both the library and community room levels, only a stairwell provides interior access between the two spaces. In addition, MCIT has recommended installation of a smoke detector. The city manager consulted with the fire marshal, and it was determined that this was not mandatory in the building.

In 2011, 2015, 2017, and 2022, the library experienced water intrusion. The city completed major exterior structural work in 2012 to address drainage needs. In 2018, the library was closed for several weeks while the city conducted air quality tests following concerns by library patrons and staff. The city approved bids in August 2019 for additional structural work to protect against future water intrusion.

The space is attractive but undersized. In late 2017, GRRL presented a space needs analysis to city staff, outlining concerns: the space is undersized for the current collection, technology, seating and staff work areas. The city has expressed a desire to move the library to a larger, more accessible location, and plans are underway.

Facility Assessment: Kimball



Location Statistics		Facility Highlights	
Year joined GRRL	1969	Sufficient staff work area	Yes
Year opened	1960	Private office for LSC	Yes
Year built or last updated	2019	Staff break room	No
Collection size	11,477	Study Room/s	No
2021 circulation	20,769	Separate meeting or program space/s	1
Total floor space (Sq. Ft.)	792	Program space shared or library-only	Shared
2022 open hours	23	Sufficient for collection & technology	Yes
Public Internet stations	2	Significant building operational issues	Yes
Public catalog stations	1	Significant MCIT or accessibility issues	No
Express check station/s installed	2021	City owned or leased	Owned

The new Kimball Library opened its doors for the first time on December 7, 2020. The new stand-alone building has plenty of room to allow the collection to be significantly larger than the previous shared space. The circulation desk allows staff plenty of workspace for staff and cabinetry for storage. Behind the desk is an enclosed separate work area for staff. The building plan required the latest eco-friendly options in order to comply with the strict B-3 requirements needed to receive a matching state grant of \$439,511.97. Donors, community members, and people from the surrounding area came together to raise more than \$610,000 to complete this project.

With the attached community room, the library is also able to hold programs for adults and youth inside the building.

The building operational issue noted under Facility Highlights is the low number of electrical outlets which may be a potential safety issue.

Facility Assessment: Little Falls



Location Statistics		Facility Highlights	
Year joined GRRL	1986	Sufficient staff work area	Yes
Year opened	1904	Private office for LSC	Yes
Year built or last updated	2013	Staff break room	Yes
Collection size	29,197	Study Room/s	1
2021 circulation	80,139	Separate meeting or program space/s	2
Total floor space (Sq. Ft.)	14,000	Program space shared or library-only	Library
2022 open hours	45	Sufficient for collection & technology	Yes
Public Internet stations	5	Significant building operational issues	Yes
Public catalog stations	2	Significant MCIT or accessibility issues	No
Express check station/s installed	2018	City owned or leased	Owned

This is a beautiful original Carnegie Library that was remodeled in 1998 to meet accessibility needs, adding an elevator and a ground floor entrance. It is four floors, making security an issue. Therefore, a security video system is in place. The building has good lighting, gorgeous woodwork and plenty of space. However, there is a shortage of shelving that has been addressed in various, creative ways over the years. There is a small staff break room and a large staff work area close to the circulation desk. This area has two staff stations where the check-in takes place. There is an additional office space on the 3rd floor for the manager. The circulation area, with two work stations, has been enlarged by moving the desk out farther and moving self-pickup of holds from behind the desk. The desk is necessarily always staffed by two people. There are two meeting rooms, both are quite large that can accommodate most events. One is a smaller study room for groups of one to four.

A building operational issue is presence of bats.

Facility Assessment: Long Prairie



Location Statistics		Facility Highlights	
Year joined GRRL	1974	Sufficient staff work area	Yes
Year opened	1974	Private office for LSC	No
Year built or last updated	2002	Staff break room	Shared
Collection size	15,732	Study Room/s	No
2021 circulation	44,011	Separate meeting or program space/s	No
Total floor space (Sq. Ft.)	2,570	Program space shared or library-only	NA
2022 open hours	37	Sufficient for collection & technology	Yes
Public Internet stations	5	Significant building operational issues	No
Public catalog stations	1	Significant MCIT or accessibility issues	No
Express check station/s installed	2018	City owned or leased	Owned

This facility is adequately sized for the current demand. It was expanded in the early 2000s. There is light and space and three staff stations behind a large checkout desk. There is a small reading area at the back of the library and two small programming tables in the children's area. The book drop is indoors, but accessed through a door on the outside of the library. This works well enough. A large mural depicting life in Long Prairie and its history decorates one wall. There is no programming space other than small table areas.

Facility Assessment: Melrose



Location Statistics		Facility Highlights	
Year joined GRRL	1969	Sufficient staff work area	Yes
Year opened	1969	Private office for LSC	No
Year built or last updated	2008	Staff break room	Yes
Collection size	19,165	Study Room/s	No
2021 circulation	102,545	Separate meeting or program space/s	2
Total floor space (Sq. Ft.)	2,850	Program space shared or library-only	Shared
2022 open hours	27	Sufficient for collection & technology	Yes
Public Internet stations	3	Significant building operational issues	No
Public catalog stations	1	Significant MCIT or accessibility issues	No
Express check station/s installed	2017	City owned or leased	Owned

This library is located in the same building as the city offices and the senior center. The library has its own space. It is open and very light. There is a good sized workroom for check-in of material. There is an indoor book drop and a beautiful, whimsical mural in the children's area. The shelves are full and there is not much room for expansion. The library staff has access to two community rooms for programming. There is a new circulation desk as of January 2016. The library has one small computer room where all computers were moved into in 2019. Also in 2019, the city moved collection shelving to allow for more floor space in front the desk, for more programming space within the library.

Open hours were increased in Melrose in 2022 from 25 to 27. The library is now open at 10 a.m. on Tuesdays and Thursdays for more consistency.

Facility Assessment: Monticello



Location Statistics		Facility Highlights	
Year joined GRRL	1973	Sufficient staff work area	Yes
Year opened	1973	Private office for LSC	Yes
Year built or last updated	2005	Staff break room	Yes
Collection size	37,247	Study Room/s	1
2021 circulation	143,223	Separate meeting or program space/s	2
Total floor space (Sq. Ft.)	9,700	Program space shared or library-only	Library
2022 open hours	43	Sufficient for collection & technology	Minimally
Public Internet stations	7	Significant building operational issues	No
Public catalog stations	2	Significant MCIT or accessibility issues	No
Express check station/s installed	2013	City owned or leased	Owned

The Monticello Library was moved into its current location, a renovated bank building, in 2005. It is a very busy library, serving residents of both Wright and Sherburne Counties. Parking is generally sufficient except during large programs or at the height of summer business and Farmer’s Market Days (Thursdays from May through October). The library was given additional open hours in 2012.

The facility is generally in good repair. A new roof was installed in August 2022. Temperature control is an issue in some areas. There are clear distinctions between the children, teen, and adult areas, and comfortable reading areas for patrons. However, collection space is becoming cramped in some areas. The facility provides for a sizeable work and storage room for the Friends and for staff. There is a mid-sized, well-used programming space, and in 2019 staff worked with the city to convert a storage room to a well-used meeting and study space which is able to be reserved by the public.

Facility Assessment: Paynesville



Location Statistics		Facility Highlights	
Year joined GRRL	1992	Sufficient staff work area	No
Year opened	1908	Private office for LSC	Yes
Year built or last updated	2012	Staff break room	No
Collection size	10,272	Study Room/s	1
2021 circulation	25,929	Separate meeting or program space/s	No
Total floor space (Sq. Ft.)	2,896	Program space shared or library-only	NA
2022 open hours	33	Sufficient for collection & technology	No
Public Internet stations	3	Significant building operational issues	No
Public catalog stations	1	Significant MCIT or accessibility issues	No
Express check station/s installed	2021	City owned or leased	Owned

The library is located in a remodeled storefront on the main city street. It is a busy library and is no longer meeting demand. The circulation desk is too small for two people to be working there at one time. The staff work area is a small and crowded room that is inadequate for check-in and collection management tasks, requiring staff to perform these tasks at the front desk. Visibility from the desk is poor. Mirrors have been suggested to see the back of the library, but they have not been reinstalled since plexi glass is up at the desk. There is a central area with tables for small programming events. This is insufficient for community needs.

An accessibility concern is that none of the entrances to the building have automatic door openers. There is no lot for library parking, only parallel-street parking, so that it is insufficient during busiest times and events.

Express checkout station was installed. Holds are self-pickup in the public area.

In 2022, the city began actively looking for a site for an expanded library with community meeting rooms and programming space.

Facility Assessment: Pierz



Location Statistics		Facility Highlights	
Year joined GRRL	1971	Sufficient staff work area	No
Year opened	1938	Private office for LSC	No
Year built or last updated	2008	Staff break room	No
Collection size	11,938	Study Room/s	No
2021 circulation	27,208	Separate meeting or program space/s	No
Total floor space (Sq. Ft.)	3,570	Program space shared or library-only	NA
2022 open hours	28	Sufficient for collection & technology	Yes
Public Internet stations	6	Significant building operational issues	No
Public catalog stations	1	Significant MCIT or accessibility issues	No
Express check station/s installed	NA	City owned or leased	Leased

Pierz moved into a new facility in December 2008. The move to this large space with good lighting and easy access was welcome. The large circulation desk has two staff stations, but there is no back workroom for staff. There is a very comfortable reading room and a small area at the back with large tables for programming. There is a teen reading area and a similar space in the adult area. It is a leased space.

There is a space in the back of the library for local organizations and groups to use. It is not private, but sufficient for a group of approximately 15 people.

Facility Assessment: Richmond



Location Statistics		Facility Highlights	
Year joined GRRL	1969	Sufficient staff work area	No
Year opened	1962	Private office for LSC	No
Year built or last updated	2007	Staff break room	No
Collection size	7,481	Study Room/s	No
2021 circulation	13,784	Separate meeting or program space/s	No
Total floor space (Sq. Ft.)	1,440	Program space shared or library-only	NA
2022 open hours	23	Sufficient for collection & technology	No
Public Internet stations	3	Significant building operational issues	No
Public catalog stations	1	Significant MCIT or accessibility issues	No
Express check station/s installed	Not feasible	City owned or leased	Owned

The building that houses the Richmond Library was built in 1998 mostly through donations and grants. While it is in generally good repair it is very small, and the lack of separate or sufficient space for storage and programming poses a sometimes-significant challenge for patrons and staff. There is also insufficient lighting for some of the space. The Friends provided funds for a very attractive circulation desk area, which is needed since there is no separate staff work area.

Parking is on the street but is generally sufficient, except during programs. Because the library is on the border between downtown and residential areas, many patrons are able to ride their bikes or walk to the library.

Express Check Feasibility: Not feasible due to space constraints.

Facility Assessment: Rockford



Location Statistics		Facility Highlights	
Year joined GRRL	1989	Sufficient staff work area	Yes
Year opened	1947	Private office for LSC	No
Year built or last updated	2000	Staff break room	Yes
Collection size	19,432	Study Room/s	Yes
2021 circulation	46,761	Separate meeting or program space/s	Yes
Total floor space (Sq. Ft.)	3,900	Program space shared or library-only	NA
2022 open hours	33	Sufficient for collection & technology	Yes
Public Internet stations	4	Significant building operational issues	Yes
Public catalog stations	1	Significant MCIT or accessibility issues	Yes
Express check station/s installed	2019	City owned or leased	Owned

The Rockford Library is a former fire station, remodeled in 2000. While there is adequate room for collection and technology, there is little room for future growth. The lack of a separate programming space can cause significant congestion and noise issues during storytimes or other programs. A back workroom enables the bulk of check-in and collection management tasks to be handled away from the main desk.

In 2014 and 2015, staff alerted GRRL and the city to issues with mold in the building that were causing health concerns for both staff and patrons. The city moved quickly to address these issues; however, this issue should be carefully monitored in the future. An MCIT safety audit in 2016 raised concerns about the fire exit access, noting that it “does not lead outside but rather to a dark room with another exit door.” The exit has steps as well, so is not handicap accessible. The city was alerted to these concerns but indicated it is unable to resolve them without redesigning the building.

As a result of significant spring rainfall in 2011 and 2014, concerns were raised about possible flooding of the library because it is built on a flat area near the Crow River. However, in spite of the river cresting at the ‘major flood’ level in 2014, it did not top the levee. The City of Rockford reinforced and improved the levee in 2009 and is vigilant in its maintenance. However, this will likely remain an area of concern for the library in its current location.

Facility Assessment: Royalton



Location Statistics		Facility Highlights	
Year joined GRRL	1969	Sufficient staff work area	Yes
Year opened	1908	Private office for LSC	No
Year built or last updated	2016	Staff break room	Shared
Collection size	9,085	Study Room/s	No
2021 circulation	17,369	Separate meeting or program space/s	1
Total floor space (Sq. Ft.)	2,000	Program space shared or library-only	Shared
2022 open hours	23	Sufficient for collection & technology	Yes
Public Internet stations	3	Significant building operational issues	No
Public catalog stations	1	Significant MCIT or accessibility issues	No
Express check station/s installed	2018	City owned or leased	Owned

This library was moved in 2007. It shares space with the city offices, the museum and the police department. The library has its own space within this facility. It is well lit and roomy enough for current demand. The circulation desk location allows limited sight lines to certain parts of the library. There is no back staff workroom and virtually no storage space. Two staff computers are at the circulation desk. A small reading area doubles as a small programming area. The library has easy access to the city council chambers for events. Carpet was replaced in November of 2016 and, at that time, it was decided to keep the circulation desk in place because of wiring difficulties in other locations in the library.

Facility Assessment: St. Cloud



Location Statistics		Facility Highlights	
Year joined GRRL	1969	Sufficient staff work area	Yes
Year opened	1902	Private office for LSC	Yes
Year built or last updated	2008	Staff break room	Yes
Collection size	256,558	Study Room/s	17
2021 circulation	514,783	Separate meeting or program space/s	4
Total floor space (Sq. Ft.)	118,000	Program space shared or library-only	Shared
2022 open hours	59	Sufficient for collection & technology	Yes
Public Internet stations	58	Significant building operational issues	No
Public catalog stations	12	Significant MCIT or accessibility issues	No
Express check station/s installed	2008	City owned or leased	Owned

The St. Cloud Public Library, built in 2008, has become a cornerstone of the St. Cloud community. The facility affords plentiful parking as well as spaces for community meetings and library programs.

The library is meeting current demand, but may need to be re-evaluated in the future. Other small improvements are also needed. Custodial staff levels could be increased to keep pace with the size and use of the building. In 2018, the library saw installation and dedication of International World Peace Circle located in the front of the library. In 2019, solar panels were installed on the roof.

There are 17 study rooms, with plans to dedicate one room to a calming sensory space.

The city plans to update the library lighting system in 2024. The city and library staff continue to monitor the HVAC system for the IT server room, and are waiting on the installation of a new chiller unit.

Facility Assessment: St. Michael



Location Statistics		Facility Highlights	
Year joined GRRL	1989	Sufficient staff work area	Yes
Year opened	1989	Private office for LSC	Yes
Year built or last updated	2010	Staff break room	Yes
Collection size	46,790	Study Room/s	2
2021 circulation	192,593	Separate meeting or program space/s	3
Total floor space (Sq. Ft.)	9,375	Program space shared or library-only	Shared
2022 open hours	47	Sufficient for collection & technology	Yes
Public Internet stations	6	Significant building operational issues	No
Public catalog stations	2	Significant MCIT or accessibility issues	No
Express check station/s installed	2013 & 2019	City owned or leased	Owned

The large, light-filled joint-use facility was completed in late 2010, housing city hall and council chambers, the Crow River Senior Center and the library. The library space was a joint project, funded by the cities of St. Michael, Albertville and Hanover, donations to the volunteer-driven Building It Together committee, and a Minnesota Public Library Accessibility and Construction grant.

The community is growing quickly, and it is expected that borrower numbers and circulation will continue to rise. There are concerns that there is not enough space for collection growth to keep pace with what is expected from this library. There is room for growth of public access computers, and the staff work areas are large, spacious and well planned. A drive-up book drop was moved in 2019 to a better location and safer for staff to empty.

The proximity of the library to the Senior Center has enabled dynamic collaboration with shared programs. While the programming spaces are shared with other entities within the facility, the flexibility provided by the different sizes and types of programming spaces is a huge asset.

Facility Assessment: Sauk Centre



Location Statistics		Facility Highlights	
Year joined GRRL	1990	Sufficient staff work area	Yes
Year opened	1904	Private office for LSC	Yes
Year built or last updated	2012	Staff break room	Yes
Collection size	24,471	Study Room/s	2
2021 circulation	65,162	Separate meeting or program space/s	1
Total floor space (Sq. Ft.)	5,032	Program space shared or library-only	Shared
2022 open hours	35	Sufficient for collection & technology	Yes
Public Internet stations	3	Significant building operational issues	No
Public catalog stations	1	Significant MCIT or accessibility issues	No
Express check station/s installed	2018	City owned or leased	Owned

The library is in a remodeled Carnegie Library on the second floor. This level, accessible by stairs or an elevator, seems adequate for the current demand. It is a beautiful, bright space that is showing some age since the remodel. The library was re-carpeted in 2012. The interior walls of the library and entryway need repainting. Two small windows over the main doors were replaced in February 2021. The large library windows need to be replaced as soon as possible. The large round interior lights were upgraded to LED in summer of 2021.

The space behind the circulation desk holds two staff work stations. The city installed a manual lift desk in June of 2020 to give more space between staff. It is still cramped at times. Holds are now self-pickup in the public area and that has helped move holds away from behind the circulation desk. The staff work area, behind a short wall, is small and does not accommodate two employees. Wireless reception is poor because of the makeup and thickness of the walls. The lower floor houses a local history museum and a large shared programming space.

In 2021, water from heavy rains came in through the emergency exit hallway by the restrooms. This caused water damage to a small area in the museum. The city did work to remediate future water intrusion. The city researched outside book drop alternatives, but no options were appealing so it has been decided to stay with the loud inside book drop. The name of the building was changed to Sinclair Lewis Library in May 2018, and a bronze statue of Sinclair Lewis was installed on the front lawn of the library in July 2019. A study room was converted into a staff breakroom in 2020.

The library has high usage and added 3 additional open hours in 2022.

Facility Assessment: Staples



Location Statistics		Facility Highlights	
Year joined GRRL	1997	Sufficient staff work area	Yes
Year opened	1909	Private office for LSC	No
Year built or last updated	2009	Staff break room	No
Collection size	19,566	Study Room/s	No
2021 circulation	49,432	Separate meeting or program space/s	1
Total floor space (Sq. Ft.)	4,733	Program space shared or library-only	Shared
2022 open hours	37	Sufficient for collection & technology	Minimally
Public Internet stations	8	Significant building operational issues	No
Public catalog stations	2	Significant MCIT or accessibility issues	No
Express check station/s installed	2015	City owned or leased	Owned

This is a new and beautiful facility; the library moved in 2010. It shares a building with the city offices. It is light and accommodates needs currently. This is a busy library and they may soon grow out of their space. The circulation desk is large with ample space for two employees and a book drop. There is a workroom that, while once appearing large, is now filled with activity. The Friends of the Library have filled the library space with artwork and fanciful children's furniture and fixtures. Programming and meetings take place in the adjacent city council chambers.

Facility Assessment: Swanville



Location Statistics		Facility Highlights	
Year joined GRRL	1969	Sufficient staff work area	Yes
Year opened	1957	Private office for LSC	No
Year built or last updated	2012	Staff break room	No
Collection size	5,568	Study Room/s	No
2021 circulation	4,920	Separate meeting or program space/s	Not accessible
Total floor space (Sq. Ft.)	879	Program space shared or library-only	Shared
2022 open hours	23	Sufficient for collection & technology	No
Public Internet stations	1	Significant building operational issues	No
Public catalog stations	1	Significant MCIT or accessibility issues	No
Express check station/s installed	Not feasible	City owned or leased	Owned

Swanville expanded in 2012. It added about 400 square feet and received new shelving to accommodate additional materials. It is still small, but it does serve the current level of demand from the community. There is no programming space. The library has access to a basement and to the Senior Center to meet this need, although neither location is very conducive to library programming and not accessible for all. The Swanville museum adjoins the library and is open when the library is open. It replaced the dentist offices in July 2022.

This location increased hours in 2022 from 20 to 23. Circulation in this library has declined consistently over the past five years. If this trend continues, options for reducing services at this location should be considered.

Express Check Feasibility: Low. Current space is not sufficient and the library's low circulation activity does not warrant one.

Facility Assessment: Upsala



Location Statistics		Facility Highlights	
Year joined GRRL	1988	Sufficient staff work area	Yes
Year opened	1987	Private office for LSC	No
Year built or last updated	2010	Staff break room	Shared
Collection size	10,283	Study Room/s	No
2021 circulation	32,279	Separate meeting or program space/s	No
Total floor space (Sq. Ft.)	1,726	Program space shared or library-only	NA
2022 open hours	25	Sufficient for collection & technology	Yes
Public Internet stations	3	Significant building operational issues	No
Public catalog stations	1	Significant MCIT or accessibility issues	No
Express check station/s installed	NA	City owned or leased	Leased

The Upsala Library moved in 2010 adding about 626 square feet of space. The additional space has increased their materials collection, meeting the needs of the community. A small work area is used by staff and volunteers. The library uses a variety of facilities around the community for programming. The library is a leased space. Circulation per open hour indicated high usage and an increase in open hours. In April 2019, the library increased their open hours from 20 to 23 hours a week, by adding 3 open hours on Tuesday. Two additional hours were added in 2022 bringing the total up to 25 hours. The carpet was replaced in early March 2020. The wooden library shelving is original to the library and needs some repairs to keep it usable in the future. WiFi was upgraded and extends to outside the front of the library. A third internet station was added in 2022 due to high usage and demand.

Facility Assessment: Waite Park



Location Statistics		Facility Highlights	
Year joined GRRL	1969	Sufficient staff work area	No
Year opened	1963	Private office for LSC	No
Year built or last updated	2003	Staff break room	No
Collection size	14,008	Study Room/s	No
2021 circulation	76,274	Separate meeting or program space/s	No
Total floor space (Sq. Ft.)	3,472	Program space shared or library-only	NA
2022 open hours	32	Sufficient for collection & technology	No
Public Internet stations	4	Significant building operational issues	No
Public catalog stations	2	Significant MCIT or accessibility issues	No
Express check station/s installed	2013	City owned or leased	Owned

The Waite Park Library was remodeled and expanded in 2003. It has plentiful parking. The space is used to its fullest potential yet struggles to meet the demands of a growing community. Additional room is needed for the collection as it is so undersized that it does not provide an adequate browsing collection. As a result, patrons primarily call in requests, and staff must send out a dozen or more bags of excess materials every week. Dedicated spaces for programming, meeting, and studying are lacking as well.

Staff work areas are insufficient. There is no private work area, no break area, and storage is lacking.

The library is built on two levels, with a modified freight elevator for accessibility. However, some patrons are uncomfortable using the elevator, so access to the lower level is still an issue.

A reading garden behind the library was completed in 2016. This area is available for outdoor library programming as well as general patron use. That same year, an interior book drop was installed. In 2022, outdoor family games were added to the garden area.

More open hours are needed, but the current facility would not support increased activity, and additional staffing hours would be needed to accomplish that goal.

Alternative Service Recommendations

Mail-A-Book

RECOMMENDATION

This service might be feasible for homebound residents in our service area if supported as a new service through funding sources outside of the general operating budget, such as fund development. Other regional library systems offer this service on levels equivalent to library branch operations. We would need to limit the scope and size due to demand and available resources.

DESCRIPTION

Patron Benefit

- More convenient return of library materials for residents without a library in their community and who are homebound.

Criteria for establishing

- Population – GRRL will consider establishing Mail-A-Book in communities with a demonstrated need, patron interest and funding to support it.
- Internal capacity – Consideration would be given for existing staffing and space constraints.
- Drive Time – Consideration would be given to establishing such services if there were no GRRL libraries or other outreach services within a 15-minute drive time from the community.

Criteria for discontinuing services

- Funding – a new funding source, such as a grant, local community support or donations could be used to establish this service.
- Circulation – GRRL will periodically evaluate usage. Significant decreases in usage over time may result in the discontinuation of services.
- Staffing or budget limitations – GRRL reserves the right to discontinue such services if funding for staff, library materials, technology or delivery services is no longer available to provide for them.

Additional costs for this service model

- Collection would need to be expanded to support or a special collection built specifically for this service.
- Mailing costs and delivery time will directly impact the cost of service delivery.

Other considerations

- Would patrons be allowed to request materials? If so, loan periods may need to be adjusted and additional time allocated for processing materials.
- Large demands for this service may require additional investment in library vehicles and potential storage.

Alternative Service Recommendations

Bibliotecha Open+

RECOMMENDATION

This is a service GRRL could pilot in one of our shared-use facilities if we have an interested city partner willing to help support it.

DESCRIPTION

Bibliotecha Open+ is a self-service system. It allows libraries to extend library access beyond staffed hours. It requires an Express Checkout and an additional subscription to enhance building security and monitoring. This service is in place in a few libraries in North America. Services offered range from holds pick up to full check out and Internet usage. Some libraries are expanding morning hours. Others are expanding to 24/7 access.

Patron Benefit

- Expanded access to library collection and services beyond staffed open hours.

Criteria for discontinuing services

- Funding – a new funding source, such as a grant, local community support or donations could be used to establish this service.
- Circulation – GRRL will periodically evaluate usage. Significant decreases in usage over time may result in the discontinuation of services.
- Staffing or budget limitations – GRRL reserves the right to discontinue such services if funding for staff, library materials, technology or delivery services is no longer available to provide for them.

Additional costs for this service model

- Pricing (estimated): \$2,500 initial set-up, \$12,000 annual subscription
- Bibliotecha charges an annual subscription fee for the equipment and software to offer this service.

Alternative Service Recommendations

GRRL2Go Locker

RECOMMENDATION

Based on the successful pilot project from 2017-2020, GRRL and the City of Sartell signed a six-year lease agreement to extend GRRL2Go services at the Sartell Community Center. One anticipated impact of GRRL2Go in Sartell, a shift in Waite Park borrowers to using the locker system, did not occur. The majority of GRRL2Go users are from Sartell. Due to vendor changes, the locker system was replaced in 2022 with an updated model which is leased. Going forward, we would recommend a lease arrangement rather than a capital investment due to technology upgrades.

The cities of Otsego and St. Joseph have expressed interest in adding a GRRL2Go system. Future agreements and systems will need to be right-sized to community demands and analyzed for impact on existing delivery routes.

DESCRIPTION

GRRL2GO is a remote smartlocker system used as a secure depository for materials requested by library patrons with accompanying book return. Hours of access depend on facility placement. Patrons are notified when their items are available.

Patron Benefit

- More convenient access to library materials for residents without a library in their community.

Additional costs for this service model

- Delivery Time – Time will depend on location, whether it is close to a current delivery route, and number of delivery days. Each stop will need to include time for loading and unloading lockers and emptying book return.
- Controller connection.
- Time to process incoming/outgoing delivery and returns – dependent on usage and number of delivery days.

Other considerations

- A notification system will need to be developed
- Expired holds period for items at this location
- Number of delivery days
- Checkout period
- Whether to offer other services – PAC or Internet station, wireless

Capacity	40 to 160 compartments per controller* (maximum of 8 units)
Pricing (estimated)	10 compartment unit with controller \$14,500 40 compartment unit with controller \$45,000 Could include more compartments if smaller sizes are selected. Includes complete turnkey installation.
Book return	\$3,500-5,000

Alternative Service Recommendations

Community Mini-Library

RECOMMENDATION

Offer this extension of library service to communities or organizations with local funds to support the additional costs of operation, including delivery of materials. Develop a service agreement that outlines the responsibilities for GRRL and the community or organization and criteria for adding or discontinuing the service.

DESCRIPTION

GRRL staff transport a small collection of library materials to a municipality on a monthly basis. GRRL staff loan these materials to the public over an agreed upon period of time. No GRRL library materials or equipment are stored on site. This service is similar to East Central Regional Library Outreach Services and Lake Agassiz Regional Library LINK sites.

Continuation of the service will be evaluated annually to gauge usage. If usage levels are not above 20 items per service hour, this service will be discontinued.

Patron Benefit

- More convenient access to library materials for residents without a library in their community.

Criteria for establishing

- Population - GRRL will consider establishing mini libraries in communities serving 700 or more. This population will be determined by the latest census or state demographer's estimates.
- Building Space – The municipality must provide an adequate building for the provision of this service. It must be air conditioned in summer and heated in winter. It must be large enough to provide adequate space for browsing library materials, staffing and checkout. Cities must provide a telecommunications data line to connect with the GRRL catalog. The building must be convenient to load and unload library materials. The building must meet all applicable ADA criteria for accessibility. The community must provide suitable furniture or tables for display of materials.
- Location – The location must be in a centrally located public area in the community.
- Drive Time – Consideration would be given to establishing such services if there were no GRRL libraries or other outreach services within a 15-minute drive time from the community.
- The city must provide Internet connectivity to allow for on-line circulation functions on site.

Criteria for discontinuing services

- Circulation – GRRL will periodically evaluate usage in the community. Significant decreases in usage over time may result in the discontinuation of services.
- Staffing or budget limitations – GRRL reserves the right to discontinue such services if funding for staff, library materials, technology, or delivery services is no longer available to provide for them.
- A community mini-library would be discontinued if a library were to be opened in that community or within a 15-minute drive time of the community.

Additional costs for this service model

- Staff time and travel: Expenses will depend on proximity to other libraries. Each stop will need to include time for loading and unloading library materials. Estimated staffing needs per stop: 4 hours per month Library Assistant, 4 hours per month Library Aide, and drive time (depending on route).

Alternative Service Recommendations

Deposit Collection

RECOMMENDATION

Offer this extension of library service to communities or organizations with local funds to support the additional costs of operation, including delivery of materials and security of the collection. Develop a service agreement that outlines the responsibilities for GRRL and the institution and criteria for adding or discontinuing the service.

DESCRIPTION

GRRL staff transport a small collection of library materials to an institution on a monthly basis. The institution agrees to handle the loan of the materials on-site. The institution also accepts responsibility for the loss or damage of the materials. This service is currently extended to a few existing institutions based on previous arrangements. Senior living facilities are an example of an institution this model could serve.

Patron Benefit

- Access to library materials for residents without reliable transportation or means to travel to the library, such as those living in senior living facilities.

Criteria for establishing

- Preference will be given to establishing these collections in communities not currently served by libraries or other outreach services.
- Preference will be given to the establishment of these collections in facilities in which mobility or disability of the residents is a barrier to accessing library services.
- A committed staff person on-site to manage and monitor the collection and coordinate with library staff.

Criteria for discontinuing services

- Circulation – GRRL will evaluate usage periodically. Significant declines in usage over time may result in service being discontinued.
- Staffing limitations or budget limitations – GRRL reserves the right to discontinue such services if funding for staff, library materials, and delivery services is no longer available.
- Loss of library materials – If library materials are not returned on a timely basis and/or become lost, the library reserves the right to be compensated for the lost materials. If payment cannot be made for these items, this service may be discontinued until payment has been made. Service will be resumed upon receipt of complete payment.

Additional costs for this service model

- Staff time and travel: Expenses will depend on proximity to other libraries. Each stop will need to include time for loading and unloading library materials. Estimated staffing required: 1 hour per week Library Assistant; 1 hour per week Library Aide.

Alternative Service Recommendations

Local Book Return

RECOMMENDATION

Offer this extension of library service to communities with local funds and resources to support the additional costs of operation, including delivery of materials. Develop a service agreement that outlines the responsibilities for GRRL and the community and criteria for adding or discontinuing the service.

Consider a pilot to add a book return to an existing delivery route in a community without a library to better understand the benefits and impact of expanding this service.

The City of Rice has expressed interest in being a pilot project for this service.

DESCRIPTION

Provide a local book return in cities without library facilities. Location would need to be visible and near other public facilities that are regularly monitored by local city staff to ensure security of library materials. Returns would be picked up by GRRL Distribution staff on a regular basis. Returns must be placed for easy access for emptying materials and in an area protected from weather elements.

Continuation of the service will be evaluated annually to gauge usage. If usage levels are not above 100 items per pick up, this service will be discontinued.

Patron Benefit

- More convenient return of library materials for residents without a library in their community.

Additional costs for this service model

- Staff time and travel - Time will depend on location and whether it is close to a current delivery route and number of delivery days. Each stop will need to include time for emptying book return.

Other considerations

- Frequency of stops may impact loan periods and availability of materials for other patrons.

Book return	Estimated \$3,500-5,000
Capacity	Approximately 200-500 books/media cases

Alternative Service Models Considered But Not Recommended

Popular Materials/Technology-Focused Library

RECOMMENDATION

Based on further research and the experiences of other regional library systems, we no longer recommend this model for GRRL. This is not a true alternative service model, and to be successful would require additional local and regional staffing dollars. We may experiment with local collections to tailor them better to local audiences. Our Tech Help and Book a Librarian services meet many of the same technology needs that initially inspired this idea.

DESCRIPTION

Library would feature only a new materials collection – items that are less than 6 months old. These materials would not be available for request to other libraries in the system until they have aged out of the collection. At least one copy of each item in this collection would be available for request at other libraries in the region. All items returned from other libraries would be transported and distributed back to the original location.

Space and staffing would focus more on information and technology services, such as 1:1 computer assistance, digital inclusion efforts, Digital Library assistance, and reader's advisory. This model has been successfully used in the Victoria Public Library in Carver County. However, while it proved to be a good testing ground, it did not yield all of the results that were anticipated.

Patron Benefit

- Better browsing experience and improved access for patrons served by the individual library.
- Improved public access technology services, including basic computer assistance.

Additional costs for this service model

- Additional wiring would be required in order to offer more technologically focused library service. Additional equipment, such as scanners, computers, monitors or other devices would need to be purchased.
- Additional delivery time to process returns from other libraries and redistribute these materials.

Alternative Service Models Considered But Not Recommended

Bookmobile

RECOMMENDATION

The long-term direct and indirect costs of offering this service would require substantial investment. The service would have limited availability due to scheduling. Reinstatement of bookmobile service at GRRL is not recommended.

DESCRIPTION

Capacity	Approximately 2,000 items, determined by length and height of vehicle
Pricing (estimated)	\$200,000-250,000

Additional costs for this service model

- Staff time: A best practice of other library systems with bookmobile service is at least two employees scheduled for each open hour for security reasons.
- Insurance and maintenance for the vehicle.
- Mobile internet access to ILS.

Other considerations

- Length and height of vehicle limits collection size and is a factor in the type of driver's license required to operate the vehicle also.
- Safety standards for operating these types of vehicles are becoming more stringent.
- Storage of the vehicle would need to be determined.
- Vehicle would need to be replaced approximately every five years. Number of stops and amount of usage would impact the replacement cycle.
- Mobile Internet access may be poor in some parts of the region.

Alternative Service Models Considered But Not Recommended

Automated Library Kiosk

RECOMMENDATION

Estimated costs for a stand-alone library kiosk are \$115,000-\$200,000. With a maximum holding capacity of 800 items, the number of patrons this service would serve would be substantially fewer than even the smallest branch. The long-term direct and indirect costs of offering this service would require substantial investment. The addition of automated library kiosks is not recommended at this time.

Additional costs for this service model

- Delivery time: Time will depend on location, whether it is close to a current delivery route, and number of delivery days. Each stop would need to include time for loading and unloading the kiosk and emptying the book return.
- Network connection would need to be maintained.
- Time to process incoming, outgoing delivery and returns – dependent on usage and number of delivery days.
- In 2019, estimated maintenance for the system was \$3,000-\$4,000/year.

Other considerations

- Location would need to be visible and near other public facilities that are regularly monitored by local city staff to ensure security of library materials.
- Book return would need to be provided. This would require additional staff time for pickup and delivery.