1300 St. Germain Street West
St. Cloud, MN 56301
320-650-2500 griver.org

Board of Trustees Meeting
Tuesday, November 17, 2026, 6:15 p.m.
St. Cloud Public Library Mississippi Room
Agenda

Public Open Forum – Time limit is 10 minutes; each speaker is given 2 minutes for comments. Speakers must address library-related topics not on this agenda. All parties must display appropriate behavior. Board members will not interact with public speakers. Concerns will be referred to GRRL management for follow-up. The Board Chair reserves the right to suspend or limit the forum to meet time constraints or avoid repeated information. If time does not allow every person to speak, you may share comments with the Board by using our online contact form https://griver.org/board-of-trustees.

1.	**Call to Order**	6:15
2.	**Adopt/Amend Agenda**	6:16
3.	**Approval of Minutes** – September 15, 2026, Meeting (Requested Action – Approve) pg 3	6:17
4.	**Public Open Forum**	6:18
5.	**Financials**	6:22
	5.1 Bills (emailed) and Addendum (on table) (Requested Action – Approve)	
	5.2 Financial Reports (emailed) (Requested Action – Accept)	
6.	**Consent Agenda** (Requested Action – Approve)	6:25
	6.1 Other	
7.	**Communications**	6:25
	7.1 Other	
8.	**Presentations**	6:25
	8.1 Other	
9.	**Staff Reports**	6:25
	9.1 Executive Director's Report pg 7	
	9.2 Management Reports pg 11	
	9.3 Building Reports pg 19	
	9.4 Third Quarter 2026 Strategic Plan Statistics pg 21	
	9.5 Staff Recognition Report pg 27	
	9.6 Other	
10.	**Committee Reports**	6:40
	10.1 Finance Committee (verbal) (Requested Action – Approve)	
	10.2 Personnel Committee (verbal) (Requested Action – Approve)	
	10.3 Fund Development Committee (verbal)	
	10.4 Library Development Committee (verbal)	
11.	**Unfinished Business**	6:50
	11.1 2027-2031 Fundraising Plan (Requested Action – Approve) pg 29	
	11.1.1 Fund Development Policies Revisions (Requested Action – Approve) pg 38	

11.2 2027-2033 Library Development Plan (Requested Action – Approve) pg 47
11.2.1 Library Development Policies Revisions (Requested Action – Approve) pg 88
11.3 Other

12. New Business 7:05
12.1 Library Open Hours Adjustments 2027 pg 105
12.2 Union Negotiations Committee Members Appointment (verbal)
12.3 Executive Director Annual Evaluation Summary (verbal)
12.4 Farewell to Departing Members (verbal)
12.5 Other

13. Board Open Forum 7:15

14. Next Meeting – January 19, 2027, Board of Trustees 7:19

15. Adjourn 7:20

REAT RIVER REGIONAL LIBRARY
BOARD OF TRUSTEES MINUTES
September 15, 2026

President Ed Popp called the Great River Regional Library (GRRL) Board of Trustees regular meeting to order on Tues., Sep. 15, 2026, at 6:02 p.m. in the St. Cloud Public Library Mississippi Room.

Members Present: Tarryl Clark, Tim Denny, Tina Diedrick, Gregg Felber, Cindy Graham, Aref Hassan, Laura Kangas, Bobby Kasper, Holly Lammers, Ed Popp

Members Excused: Al Amdahl, Teresa Dahl, Melissa Fee, Lynn Grewing, Jacey Wallace

GRRL Staff Present: Brandi Canter, Addie Carlson, Jay Roos, Patricia Waletzko, Nichol Wojcik

ADOPT/AMEND AGENDA
Tarryl Clark made a motion to adopt the agenda as presented. Seconded by Tim Denny, the motion carried unanimously.

APPROVE MINUTES
Tina Diedrick made a motion to approve the July 21, 2026, Board meeting minutes as presented. Seconded by Gregg Felber, the motion carried unanimously.

PUBLIC OPEN FORUM
There were no speakers for the Public Open Forum.

FINANCIALS
Bills
Tina Diedrick made a motion to approve the August and September bills and September bills addendum as presented. Seconded by Gregg Felber, the motion carried unanimously.

Financial Reports
Tarryl Clark made a motion to accept the July and August financial reports as presented. Seconded by Tina Diedrick, the motion carried unanimously.

CONSENT AGENDA
Regional Library Basic System Support FY26 Report of Results
Regional Library Telecommunications Aid FY26 Final Report
Regional Library Telecommunications Aid FY27 Application
Tim Denny made a motion to approve the Consent Agenda items as presented. Seconded by Gregg Felber, the motion carried unanimously.

COMMUNICATIONS
MN Public Library Annual Report Acceptance Letter
Breunig Article from St. Cloud Live
The Minnesota State Library Services letter confirms acceptance of GRRL's 2025 Public Library Annual Report. This is a large project completed by Patron Services Specialist Beth Ringsmuth Stolpman and is required to ensure funding for GRRL. Tina Diedrick stated that the report was well done and asked Executive Director Brandi Canter to pass the compliment on to Beth.

Board members shared positive comments about the Breunig article.

PRESENTATION
There were no presentations.

STAFF REPORTS
Executive Director's Report
Brandi Canter reviewed several items from her report.

- She and Associate Director – Accounting Addie Carlson will present on public financing at GRRL All Staff Day in October.
- Surveys are being used for staff input. Work is being done to bring back the Staff Suggestion Box.
- She shared strategic plan progress at the Regional Staff Meeting; some was included in this report.
- She is proud of the GRRL team. In spite of a challenging year, much has been accomplished.
- Patron Services Supervisor Jeannette Burkhardt was recognized for her work on the Read2Grow pilot project in Elk River. The project received positive feedback, and staff want to expand it to more libraries.
- All levels of the GRRL team have been asked to think about how we can use innovation and creativity to improve what we do.
- She is focusing on highly effective and useful training.
- Associate Director – Information Technology (IT) Jay Roos and the Public Services Team have been cleaning up GRRL's database. He stated that Circulation and Patron Services staff are doing most of the hard work. A plan for maintaining the records going forward will be made.

Management Reports
Brandi Canter highlighted topics from the Management Reports and noted Communications & Fund Development Coordinator Breanne Fruth's upcoming leave beginning September 25. They are determining priorities and a fourth quarter 2026 plan.

Addie Carlson commented on 2026 budget projections and changes that will affect a couple budget lines. She also shared the status of GRRL operating expenses and investment revenue, the MAGIC savings interest rate, and the Ehlers portfolio balance as of August 31.

Jay Roos explained that virtual server hypervisor software allows efficiencies by running many operating systems on a few servers. GRRL plans to discontinue the current software this year and replace it prior to renewal.

Associate Director – Human Resources Nichol Wojcik shared that Human Resources Generalist Dezra Rittmann was promoted to Patron Services Librarian. Daniela Hinojos Chavez has been with GRRL for about four weeks and is doing well.

Building Reports
A few building issues were noted. Staff are paying attention to how the Clearwater road construction project will affect library visits and circulation during the work and after completion.

Second Quarter 2026 Strategic Plan Statistics – Corrected Digital
The June digital circulation statistics presented in July reflected a formula error. This report shows the correct numbers.

COMMITTEE REPORTS

Finance Committee

Tina Diedrick reported that the Finance Committee approved the Short-Term Investment and Server Replacement Capital Expenditure requests. Jay Roos explained the global demand and increased cost for servers and related hardware due to Artificial Intelligence (AI) and work with Dell to analyze GRRL's performance data. Addie Carlson briefly described the short-term investment of $500,000, which will be transferred from GRRL's MAGIC money market account to Ehlers Inc.

Tina Diedrick made a motion to approve the Finance Committee report as presented. Seconded by Bobby Kasper, the motion carried unanimously.

Library Development Plan Committee

Aref Hassan reported on Committee discussion, which focused on facility development needs and alternative service models. Brandi Canter added that a Library Development Plan draft will be brought to the October GRRL Board work session for feedback prior to Board approval in November.

Central Minnesota Libraries Exchange (CMLE) Board

Brandi Canter and Tarryl Clark reported that the CMLE Board discussed how the multitype is moving forward. Resource Training & Solutions (RTS) is working to implement the CMLE strategic plan, categorize CMLE membership, and determine board member position requirements.

The CMLE Board also looked at the distribution of grant funds. Brandi and Carla Lydon, East Central Regional Library Executive Director, will meet with Shari Bishop, RTS Grant Coordinator, to improve communication and understanding.

UNFINISHED BUSINESS

There was no unfinished business to address.

NEW BUSINESS

Project Evaluation – Translation Devices

Translation devices were tested in five GRRL branches with the intent to improve patron accessibility and service. The project evaluation showed some things worked well. However, it also indicated that most people needing translation already have a phone, which does the same work. Management is considering staff training on how to work better with someone using a device they already have for translation.

All Staff Day Library Closure Request

Each year, GRRL staff from all branches come to the St. Cloud Library for an All Staff Day (ASD) to learn and connect with each other. This request is to close libraries for ASD in 2027. Nichol Wojcik invited Board members to attend this year's gathering on October 12.

Tarryl Clark made a motion to approve the All Staff Day Library Closure request as presented. Seconded by Tina Diedrick, the motion carried unanimously.

GRRL Policy Review & Revisions

- *Data Practices*
  Brandi Canter recognized Patty Waletzko for her work on the policy revisions. The Minnesota Data Practices Office recommends an annual review of these policies. She explained policy changes and noted the updated forms.

Tina Diedrick made a motion to approve the Data Practices policies revisions as presented with allowance for staff to make basic edits as needed. Seconded by Gregg Felber, the motion carried unanimously.

- *Artificial Intelligence – New*
  The Artificial Intelligence Usage policy draft incorporates the ethical guidelines discussed at the Board's August work session. Brandi pointed out that, because AI is constantly changing, a clause was added to allow the Executive Director or Associate Director – IT to approve a temporary policy exception if necessary. They would bring the policy change to the next Board meeting for formal approval. Staff feedback included significant concern about what AI means for patron services and collection development. She stated that AI does not change GRRL's policy fundamentals.

  Tina Diedrick made a motion to approve the Artificial Intelligence Usage policy as presented. Seconded by Gregg Felber, the motion carried unanimously.

Executive Director Annual Evaluation Form Distribution
The Board members present received the Executive Director Evaluation form and were asked to submit their completed form by October 12. Nichol Wojcik will email an electronic version to the Board members. She will compile all feedback, which will be presented to Brandi Canter in November.

BOARD OPEN FORUM
Topics for the October work session include the Library Development Plan and Fundraising Plan drafts, policies related to both, and information about the Minnesota Library Association Legislative Platform.

NEXT MEETINGS
The next Great River Regional Library Board of Trustees meeting will be Tues., Oct. 20, 2026.

ADJOURN
Ed Popp adjourned the meeting at 6:57 p.m.

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Ed Popp, President Jacey Wallace, Secretary

Executive Director Report
November 2026

Web accessibility preparation
GRRL must meet the Web Content Accessibility Guidelines (WCAG) by April 2028 to make our public website more accessible for people with disabilities. Although the deadline is more than a year away, leadership and administrative staff have been learning about the guidelines and preparing a strategy to meet them.

GRRL has long supported transparency by sharing board information on our public website. We currently post meeting agendas, minutes, audio recordings, and full meeting packets, including financial reports.

Making the full board and committee packets meet all WCAG requirements would take an unsustainable amount of staff time. Starting with the January 2027 Board meeting, we plan to stop posting full meeting packets on the public website. We will continue to post agendas, minutes, and audio recordings.

Staff and the public will still be able to get board and committee packets:
- Staff will find them on a new GRRL Board page on our staff intranet.
- Information Technology staff are exploring ways for the public to request packets by email instead of downloading from the website.

With the new year, we will also introduce new templates for management reports, building reports, and cover sheets for items that need board or committee approval or discussion.

Starting this switch early to meet WCAG requirements will give us time to solve problems, such as how to make tables accessible or present information in a different way. This will help us develop clear and transparent practices well before the April 2028 deadline.

County library card sign up competition
File this under fun ways to meet the Strategic Plan goal to increase the number of active borrowers. To celebrate Library Card Sign Up Month in September, GRRL libraries held a friendly contest to find out which county could bring in the most new cardholders. We counted new sign ups, not renewals. Because GRRL counties have such different population sizes, we used percentage increase to make the contest fair.

Stearns County won with a 2 percent increase, adding 618 new cardholders. Benton County was a close second with a 1.78 percent increase, adding 119 new cardholders. Every county saw at least a 1 percent increase in new cardholders during the contest:
- Stearns: 2%; 618
- Benton: 1.78%; 119
- Sherburne: 1.45%; 255
- Wright: 1.4%; 464
- Morrison: 1.3%; 88
- Todd: 1.19%; 46



We promoted the contest on GRRL social media and in libraries. We also created a very silly trophy (pictured at right) that is touring Stearns County libraries in honor of this achievement.

Image: A smiling library employee holds a trophy decorated with a gnome, colored feathers, and Scrabble tiles that spell out HUZZAH.

CRPLSA Update
On October 15 and 16, the Council of Regional Public Library System Administrators (CRPLSA) met at the Viking Library System headquarters in Moorhead. We shared updates and discussed several important topics. Some key points are covered below.

State Library Services (SLS) is working to make sure library systems count the people in our service areas accurately and consistently. Consolidated systems, like GRRL, generally report population totals that match county population numbers. In some federated systems, city and county service areas overlap, causing duplicate counts. SLS is working with impacted systems to ensure their numbers are accurate.

Several regional library systems have at least one location where approved users can enter the library outside regular hours. We discussed what works well for these "extended access" efforts. Some directors also suggested less expensive options than services like Bibliotheca. Open access is an alternative service model in the Library Development Plan considered for approval at this meeting.

We directors also discussed how to better explain to our stakeholders what would happen to library services if funding dropped to the state's required minimum. This is called Maintenance of Effort (MOE). We worry that focusing on this minimum gives people the wrong idea about how much funding libraries need. MOE has not changed since 2011, so it does not reflect the actual cost of providing effective library services today – or in the future. We were told that the Minnesota Department of Education plans to suggest updates to MOE with the new governor.

Several directors shared examples of how they are trying to balance library needs and funding challenges. We all had examples of large price increases for software we use to do the basics of library business. Directors shared lower-cost options they have found that might work just as well. I returned with several ideas to discuss with our leadership team, like the OCLC review in Jami's management report.

Lastly, we directors discussed whether to adopt a new, easier name: Regional Public Library Systems (RPLS). We will make a final decision later this year when we review the group's bylaws.

Highlighted Executive Director Activities since September Board Meeting
Sept. 16 – Fund Development Committee meeting
Sept. 17 – Organizational Orientation
Sept. 18 – MAGIC Monthly Market Update
Sept. 23 – Annandale staffing allocations discussion; St. Cloud Community Foundation Fund Committee meeting
Sept. 24 – Desk coverage at Elk River library due to M3 Huddle
Sept. 25 – Council of Regional Public Library System Administrators (CRPLSA) virtual meeting

Sept. 28 – Library Development Plan Committee meeting
Sept. 29 – Meeting with Matt Glaesman about St. Cloud Public Library (SCPL) security and outside improvements
Sept. 30 – Friends Meet Friends event with East Central Regional Library
Oct. 2 – Training-*Refusal as Instruction: Talking to Patrons about AI*
Oct. 5 – Discussion with Regional Training Solutions and East Central Regional Library leadership about collaboration with Central Minnesota Libraries Exchange (CMLE)
Oct. 7 – Communication & Development Department meeting, Leadership Support Team meeting; Training-*AI 101: Best practices and platforms*
Oct. 8 – Labor Management Committee meeting
Oct. 12 – All Staff Day; presentation with Addie Carlson: Public Financing and GRRL Budget
Oct. 15 & 16 – CRPLSA meeting at Moorhead library
Oct. 20 – Meeting with Jaime Buley from St. Cloud Downtown Alliance on collaboration with GRRL/SCPL
Oct. 22 – St. Michael staffing allocations discussion
Oct. 27 – SirsiDynix Connections Virtual Conference, sessions:

- *AI in Action: What libraries are building, testing and questioning*
- *How to Handle Problematic Behavior and Enforce Rules*
- *Why Should They Care? Rethinking Library Marketing through Users' Eyes.*
- *Library Facility Assessments as Advocacy Tools*

Oct. 28 – Grey Eagle / Long Prairie staffing; Webinar-*Appeals that Work: Crafting appeals letters that bring in the bucks*
Oct. 29 – St. Cloud Chamber ACTION Summit
Nov. 3 – Waite Park staffing allocations discussion
Nov. 4 – LST meeting; Training – *AI at Work: Developing policies that protect your business*; St. Cloud Community Foundation Fund Committee meeting
Nov. 10 – Regional Staff Meeting session on social media strategy for promoting the Year- End Campaign and Continuous Process Improvement in general
Nov. 12 – Labor Management Committee meeting
Nov. 13 – MLA Legislative Update; CRPLSA virtual meeting

Management Reports
November 2026

Jeannette Burkhardt
Patron Services Supervisor

Staffing Updates
Annandale/Kimball: Longtime Library Services Coordinator (LSC) Carla Asfeld has indicated she will retire in January 2027. Succession planning includes reallocating existing staffing hours to add a Library Assistant for the shared branches and increase LSC hours without increasing the budget.

Becker: Elena Patterson returns as the new Library Assistant.

Elk River: To address ongoing staffing challenges, Danielle Kerr will fill a pilot Senior Library Assistant role—a benefits-eligible, 30-hour-per-week position that supervises Library Aides. Leadership will develop a more structured orientation and clearer expectations. Recruitment is also underway for a 14-hour-per-week Library Assistant and a 20-hour-per-week Library Aide.

St. Michael: The library is preparing to post a 14-hour-per-week Library Aide position.

Programming
Library activities advanced Strategic Plan goals through a focus on partnerships, supported learning, and increased community engagement. Staff accomplished this through school outreach, arts programming, and literacy initiatives.

Belgrade/Paynesville partnered with local schools to host the Manhattan Short Film Festival. Audiences viewed 10 international short films and voted for their favorite film and actor, encouraging exposure to new ideas and cultures.

Big Lake strengthened its partnership with fourth-grade classes at Big Lake Intermediate School through classroom visits, library resource introductions, library card registration, and read-alouds. Additional visits and a library field trip are planned. Monthly Hive Time daycare storytimes reach more than 40 preschoolers and incorporate early-literacy activities. Early Childhood Family Education's (ECFE) "Me at the Library" also launched its first library circle time in October.



Delano celebrated the city's 150th anniversary through a Legacy-funded community art project with artist LeAnna Wurzer. Participants painted squares assembled into an installation depicting the Delano Tiger reading with a child. Unveiled on October 3 as part of a community history art show, the installation received enthusiastic feedback and will hang behind the circulation desk. LSC Ashley Dahl shared that public feedback "has been incredibly positive. Everyone who has seen it in person raves on how it turned out. I think we had about 150 different patrons who worked on the piece over the course of the year, our youngest painter was a one-year-old and our oldest painter was in her 80s, which was really cool. It was

fun to see individuals who had painted one of the squares come back and look at it all together, a lot of people who kept saying "wow, it really came together!"

Elk River distributed approximately 40 kits for its first Tiny Art Show, receiving six completed submissions. The library also displayed a Spectrum High School student's recycled-materials capstone project alongside related library resources.

Monticello partnered with ECFE to offer Friday library storytimes, attracting new attendees and increasing awareness of library services.



St. Michael collaborated with Girl Scout Grace Behn and the Friends group to create six outdoor nonfiction scavenger-hunt backpacks supporting exploration and reading skills. A Wright-Hennepin Cooperative Electric Association grant also refreshed the 1,000 Books Before Kindergarten program, including new photo frames.

Addie Carlson
Associate Director – Accounting

Accounting
By the end of the third quarter, we received 81.58 percent of our budgeted operating revenue and spent 68.43 percent of our budgeted operating expenses. We expect normal business operations to continue in the fourth quarter and to end 2026 with an operating surplus. Budget designation requests to support the 2027 budget will be presented at the Finance Committee meeting on November 17, 2026.

All Staff Day Library Budget 101 Presentation
Brandi and I had the opportunity to present on the library budget at All Staff Day on October 12. Prior to All Staff Day, we sent a survey to staff asking them to submit questions that they had about the library budget and finances. We received 48 responses. We answered questions received from the survey during the presentation and covered topics such as the legal requirements and ethics of spending public dollars, the budget allocation process and timeline, and the various types of library revenues and expenditures.

Government Accounting Classes
In October, I attended two classes that focused on governmental accounting. They were presented by the Minnesota Government Finance Officers Association (MNGFOA) and taught by auditors. One class focused on intermediate level topics such as fund accounting, capital assets, and revenue/expense recognition for governmental organizations. The other class focused on more advanced topics including Governmental Accounting Standards Board (GASB) updates, internal controls, and fraud prevention.

Investment Management
On October 31, the interest rate for our MAGIC savings was 3.87 percent. The GRRL portfolio currently has 25 certificates of deposit (CDs), including four held with local financial institutions. In October, we transferred $500,000 from the MAGIC fund to GRRL's Ehlers portfolio for reinvestment as approved by the Finance Committee in September 2026. The Ehlers portfolio value was $1,469,527.66 on October 31. Investment revenue is 113.09 percent received against the 2026 budget.

Matured CDs

Institution Name	Maturity Date	Amount	Net Rate of Interest	Interest at Maturity
First State Bank, AR	10/02/2026	$240,000	3.90%	$9,720.00
The Western State Bank, KS	10/5/2026	$235,000	3.90%	$14,428.28
Mission National Bank, CA	10/5/2026	$245,000	3.80%	$4,772.47
Old National Bank, MN	10/20/2026	$250,000	3.65%	$9,875.00
Stearns Bank, MN	10/22/2026	$250,000	3.80%	$9,500.00

Purchased & Renewed CDs

Institution Name	Maturity Date	Amount	Net Rate of Interest	Est. Interest at Maturity
Financial Federal Savings Bank, TN	10/04/2027	$238,000	4.45%	$11,007.99
Bank of Crockett, TN	10/5/2027	$239,000	4.40%	$10,874.50
First Capital Bank, SC	10/4/2028	$228,000	4.45%	$20,976.00
Old National Bank, MN	4/13/2028	$250,000	4.30%	$16,625.65
Stearns Bank, MN	10/22/2027	$250,000	3.85%	$9,796.67

Other Investments

Institution Name	Maturity Date	Amount	Net Rate of Interest	Est. Interest at Maturity
Ehlers Financial Portfolio	NA	$500,000	NA	NA

Third-Party Collateral

GRRL holds a collateral agreement with BNY Mellon on behalf of Old National Bank. This agreement states that deposits held at Old National Bank are collateralized at 110 percent of face value. This aligns with Financial Policy Chapter 5. Deposit and Investment.

Brandi Canter reporting for Breanne Fruth
Communications & Development Coordinator

With Breanne Fruth, Communications and Development Coordinator, on leave through most of the fourth quarter, I have taken a larger role in communication and fundraising projects. Before her leave, I worked with Breanne and her staff to set priorities for ongoing and seasonal projects. We also decided which projects could wait until the department is fully staffed again.

Social Media Survey

As part of 2026 Strategic Plan efforts, in September I sent a survey to all staff to gather ideas for a stronger, more effective social media strategy. GRRL has devoted fewer resources than many large library systems to promote our services, programs, and collection on social media. We need to use those resources well to make the greatest possible impact.

We received nearly 60 responses from staff in a variety of roles. I will continue reviewing the results. In December, I will meet with six coordinators and two regional staff members who manage social media for a deeper conversation about ways we might strengthen our strategy.

Year-End Campaign
The Year-End Campaign is the largest fundraising effort of the year, with a goal of raising $82,000. Prior to her leave, Breanne helped prepare us for a successful fundraising campaign. I have been working closely with Julie Bouchie, Communications and Development Assistant, and Bernadette Stephenson, Graphic Designer, to keep the campaign on track.

Fundraising letters went out to donors in early November. Radio mentions and local promotions will help spread the message. A press release about the campaign has already brought in some online donations. As of November 4, we had already raised $9,402.03, or 11.5 percent of our goal!

Julie, Bernadette, and I are also working on a more organized plan to promote the campaign on Facebook. I will share details of this Strategic Plan effort with LSCs and others at the November virtual Regional Staff Meeting. By coordinating regional and local social media posts, we can also learn how well these promotions work and whether to put more effort into coordinated social media efforts. We will track whether donations increase after we post campaign messages.

Jason Kirchoff
Patron Services Supervisor

Artificial Intelligence (AI) Work Group
The AI Work Group will identify ways that GRRL staff might use AI that align with GRRL foundational documents (Mission, Vision, Strategic Plan, and Logic Model) and the Artificial Intelligence Usage Policy. The work group will also identify uses of AI that would be contrary to GRRL foundational documents and core values. Group membership is in the process of being finalized. The group hopes to have their first meeting before the end of 2026.

Staffing
We hired Bekkah Ruth as the new LSC in Royalton. Bekkah was previously a Library Assistant in Foley. We will soon finish interviews for the vacant Library Assistant position in Cokato/Howard Lake. Finally, we have posted a Library Assistant position in Long Prairie/Grey Eagle that we hope to fill soon.

Touch-a-Truck in Buffalo
In collaboration with Buffalo ECFE, Community Connections Collaborative (C3), and the Wright County Historical Society, the Buffalo Public Library offered a Touch-a-Truck event. Attendees of the event could learn about a variety of local trucks and their operators, enjoy storytime as read by the mayor, learn about early literacy programs, and more.

Special Storytime in Pierz
Pierz had a special storytime in October to celebrate the 90th birthday of their storytime volunteer. The event was well attended with past employees and storytime veterans stopping by to visit. The volunteer played the ukulele to an admiring crowd.

Cara Langston
Lead Patron Services Supervisor

Virtual Regional Staff Meeting
On November 10, 2026, Patron Service Supervisors and the Leadership Support Team held a Regional Staff Meeting online. In addition to general updates, our meeting focused on programs that support the Strategic Plan. Brandi talked about the Year-End Campaign and continuous process improvement strategies. Regional staff also had dedicated time to talk about literacy programs together.

Regional Initiatives and Programming Group
We are building a group with staff from different departments to help carry out regional projects and programs that support the new Strategic Plan. One of its first planned projects is to evaluate regional support for 1,000 Books Before Kindergarten, a program that encourages early literacy throughout our communities.

Read2Grow
After hearing from Elk River staff about their summer experience with the Read2Grow program, other LSCs want to explore offering the program in their communities in 2027. Read2Grow matches adult volunteers with readers who are reading below grade level to help them build reading skills and supportive relationships.

Staffing
Hiring continues across the region. Current openings include Library Assistant positions in Foley and Waite Park and Library Aide positions in St. Cloud.

Jay Roos
Associate Director – Information Technology

Internet Computer Replacement
GRRL is moving our public Internet computers from Windows 10 to Windows 11 this year. Information Technology (IT) staff have begun replacing those computers due for replacement and reloading the rest. At the same time, all of our software packages have been re-implemented in a software package management system that was first purchased in 2023. Once this project is complete, support will be more seamlessly automated because all of our computers will be using the new package management system and all of our public computers will be on Windows 11. We expect to move staff computers to Windows 11 starting in 2027.

Virtual Server Hypervisor Replacement
The software that lets us run multiple virtual computers on a single physical server (called a hypervisor) is from VMware. Broadcom, a large technology company, bought VMware in late 2023. After the purchase, Broadcom changed how the software is sold and priced. Many organizations—including public agencies, schools, and businesses—have reported that their annual renewal costs rose sharply. In our case, it was almost three times more expensive by 2025.

Our current agreement comes up for renewal in November. Instead of renewing VMware, GRRL has decided to move ahead with Microsoft Hyper-V. We already have the licensing in place for our existing

Windows servers, so this will be accomplished with no additional software cost. We engaged one of our vendors to consult and guide us through the migration process.

At this time, our virtual servers have all been migrated to Hyper-V. We still have some work to migrate our remaining VMware hosts to Hyper-V. We also received our new servers far ahead of schedule and those will be set up soon.

As a result of cancelling our VMware contract, we have enough funds remaining in operating lines to fund the purchase of the new servers and will not need to dip into capital automation funds as requested at the September Board meeting.

Patron Address Scrub
GRRL is working with our collections vendor, Unique Management Services, to check and update all of our patron addresses. The check will use the U.S. Postal Service NCOA (national change of address) database to ensure that:

- They are formatted correctly (USPS Pub 28),
- Everyone is assigned to the correct county,
- Only residents of a GRRL county receive resident privileges, and
- We have the correct address for patrons who have moved.

We determined that a small percentage of the return data we get back has inaccurate county information. At this time, we are working with the vendor on options to improve the results and discussing internally how to move forward.

This project is funded by Regional Library Telecommunications Aid (RLTA) Priority 2 funds.

Jami Brierley
Associate Director – Collection Development

Strategic Plan Progress: Support Learning – New Online Resource Launched: LOTE4Kids
GRRL launched LOTE4Kids in November as part of our Strategic Plan goal to strengthen literacy resources for emerging readers. LOTE4Kids is a digital library of more than 10,000 children's picture books with audio and video features. It supports English and bilingual learning through stories in more than 100 languages, including American Sign Language.

Each book is also available in English, with recordings in American, Australian, and British accents. All stories are read by native speakers. The website and app include interactive features such as adjustable playback speed, picture-in-picture viewing, and quizzes. Children can also explore facts about languages and cultures, including where languages are spoken, traditional foods, and holidays.

This new regional resource is fully funded through a generous donation from the St. Cloud Friends of the Library.

Exploring Lower-Cost Options for Collection and Catalog Management
As part of our commitment to responsible use of public funds, Collection Development is reviewing the paid subscription tools we use to manage our collections and catalog. These tools are important to our

daily work, but we are looking for ways to reduce costs without adding work for staff or losing needed features.

The Collection Development Librarians are exploring whether BlueCloud Analytics can provide the collection reports we currently get through CollectionHQ. I am also working with our Technical Services Coordinator to identify lower-cost alternatives to our OCLC cataloging product. Our goal is to find practical solutions that support staff workflows while making better use of our budget.

Nichol Wojcik
Associate Director – Human Resources

GRRL All Staff Day
I am proud to report we had a very successful All Staff Day on October 12, 2026. Our keynote speaker was Scott Zimmer, who presented *Connecting Across Generations*. Scott's talk was very engaging and staff seemed to enjoy his energy. I am also very excited to share that I was awarded a Central Minnesota Libraries Exchange (CMLE) grant to pay the speaker fee. Brandi and Addie presented our second session, *Library Budgets 101*, which focused on GRRL funding sources and how leadership and the Board make decisions on where money is spent. We catered lunch from Bravo Burrito, and then our final guest speaker for the day was Sergeant Tad Hoeschen from the St. Cloud Police Department. Tad spoke about de-escalation and situational awareness. Feedback from staff was great; they really enjoyed this year's All Staff Day. Now the pressure is on to plan something just as great in 2027!

Minnesota Pay Equity Report
We received notice from the State that our pay equity report is due on January 31, 2027. The report must reflect data as of December 31, 2026. Minnesota Management and Budget will review our report and indicate whether we are in compliance. We have contracted with David Drown Associates, who completed our compensation study last year, to complete our pay equity report.

2027 Benefits
Brandi, Addie, and I met with our benefits broker at the end of October. GRRL has very favorable rates heading into 2027. Blue Cross Blue Shield came back with a slight premium decrease and other ancillary carriers are still under a price guarantee or came back with no increase. We will maintain all of our current benefits and offer two new employee-paid benefits in 2027. Employees working eight or more hours a week will be eligible to elect pet insurance through Nationwide, and employees working 20 or more hours a week will be eligible to elect hospital indemnity insurance.

Building Reports
November 2026

Benton
No reports for Benton County.

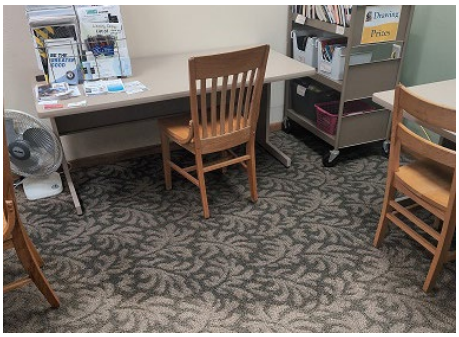
Morrison

Swanville: The City of Swanville received a grant to fix their leaky roof. Hopefully, this will address the water damage that has been problematic for the library. The project should be completed in the spring of 2027.

Sherburne
No reports for Sherburne County.

Stearns

Belgrade: During the severe weather on Wednesday, October 28, 2026, the Belgrade Library experienced water intrusion. Water extended into the library's computer area, leaving a noticeable water stain on the carpet. The city placed fans in the affected area to assist with drying the carpet and preventing further damage.



The city hired a concrete contractor to assess the concrete apron along the backside of the building to determine whether its slope may be contributing to the water intrusion. This issue has also been added to the Belgrade City Council agenda for the November 16, 2026, meeting for further discussion.

Melrose: The Melrose Library received new carpeting and LED lighting in the main portion of the library during the month of October. Staff and volunteers were amazing and packed up the entire library in a day. The library reopened on Monday, October 19.

Paynesville: The Ad Hoc Library Committee has put together a funding proposal that is being presented to the building partners and Paynesville City Council in November 2026. If all partners approve the funding proposal, construction for the new Paynesville building will start spring 2027 with a move in date to be late 2027, according to the proposed timeline.

Saint Cloud: Library staff are working with the city to improve safety outside the library. Staff are communicating with city police about people sleeping outside the library. The library and city are working together to remove the low bushes along the northwest side of the building so staff and police can see the area more clearly. The city, library, and St. Cloud Community Foundation Fund Committee are also collaborating on a future plan to replace the bushes with interactive musical equipment that community members can play.

Todd
No reports for Todd County.

Wright

Buffalo: The city finished updating the library door fob system. All the entry doors now automatically lock and unlock with library open and close times. The city also installed a camera facing the doors in case there are any locking issues. Sealing on one of the windows has failed. The city is looking into the issue.

Clearwater: The Clearwater Library has been dealing with some HVAC/duct issues. The air quality has created some allergen issues for staff and patrons. The landlord will be addressing this in November.

Rockford: The city will be carpeting the back room of the library this month. The project is not expected to impact library open hours.

GRRL 2026-2030 Strategic Objectives and Key Results
Total Borrowers by Library – Q3 2026

Library	1/1/2026	10/1/2026	Change
Albany	2,231	2,226	(5)
Annandale	2,226	2,296	70
Becker	2,532	2,495	(37)
Belgrade	423	449	26
Big Lake	3,060	3,155	95
Buffalo	6,282	6,526	244
Clearwater	1,084	1,093	9
Cokato	1,384	1,415	31
Cold Spring	2,250	2,269	19
Delano	3,278	3,387	109
Eagle Bend	419	421	2
Elk River	10,722	10,872	150
Foley	1,683	1,564	(119)
Grey Eagle	279	281	2
Howard Lake	1,265	1,369	104
Kimball	862	855	(7)
Little Falls	4,312	4,227	(85)
Long Prairie	1,550	1,532	(18)
Melrose	1,342	1,263	(79)
Monticello	5,304	5,229	(75)
Paynesville	1,379	1,358	(21)
Pierz	1,088	1,072	(16)
Richmond	662	650	(12)
Rockford	1,319	1,251	(68)
Royalton	1,127	1,135	8
St. Cloud	23,321	23,772	451
Saint Michael	10,508	10,742	234
Sartell Locker	838	800	(38)
Sauk Centre	1,676	1,766	90
Staples	1,739	1,693	(46)
Swanville	271	238	(33)
Upsala	471	466	(5)
Waite Park	2,664	2,740	76
Region Total	**99,551**	**100,607**	**1,056**

GRRL 2026-2030 Strategic Objectives and Key Results
New Borrowers by Library – Q3 2026

Library	2026 through Q3 new borrowers	2025 through Q3 new borrowers	2024 through Q3 new borrowers	2023 through Q3 new borrowers	2022 through Q3 new borrowers
Albany	263	271	262	360	334
Annandale	353	321	339	309	373
Becker	349	402	423	426	403
Belgrade	82	70	58	91	56
Big Lake	477	456	533	467	546
Buffalo	1,028	997	920	831	790
Clearwater	130	135	159	145	108
Cokato	219	156	197	175	197
Cold Spring	258	308	328	283	371
Delano	480	470	465	458	391
Eagle Bend	65	45	61	57	59
Elk River	1,788	1,810	1,959	1,777	1,664
Foley	202	245	268	341	214
Grey Eagle	35	27	28	29	38
Howard Lake	202	194	324	118	188
Kimball	100	109	122	132	122
Little Falls	593	597	660	668	677
Long Prairie	184	257	205	209	192
Melrose	163	181	200	252	131
Monticello	732	940	814	847	809
Paynesville	188	213	199	260	162
Pierz	132	137	163	162	212
Richmond	78	83	102	113	106
Rockford	139	164	207	208	173
Royalton	156	180	210	170	160
Saint Cloud	3,823	3,816	3,771	3,699	3,734
Saint Michael	1,548	1,686	1,674	1,701	1,509
Sartell	126	203	219	234	135
Sauk Centre	282	222	260	205	228
Staples	233	263	228	340	304
Swanville	32	30	32	28	52
Upsala	47	56	60	45	54
Waite Park	381	315	386	365	320
Region Total	**14,868**	**15,359**	**15,836**	**15,505**	**14,812**

July 2026 Circulation Statistics

	Location	Month Total	CKO Sessions	Circ/Hour July 2026	Circ/Hour July 2025	CPH % Change	YTD 2026	YTD 2025	% Change YTD
	Albany	6,145	890	35	34	2.8%	35,789	36,996	-3.3%
+	Annandale	5,145	1,017	43	40	7.6%	28,145	26,794	5.0%
	Becker	4,704	933	32	33	-2.0%	27,593	31,139	-11.4%
	Belgrade	591	165	6	8	-24.8%	3,878	5,596	-30.7%
+	Big Lake	6,337	1,073	45	41	7.6%	38,029	35,923	5.9%
	Buffalo	15,665	2,939	74	74	0.4%	95,793	98,949	-3.2%
	Clearwater	2,426	520	23	27	-14.8%	15,054	16,702	-9.9%
	Cokato	4,343	845	31	31	2.2%	23,845	24,745	-3.6%
	Cold Spring	5,596	955	34	40	-16.3%	33,737	39,864	-15.4%
+	Delano	8,604	1,426	44	44	-0.5%	50,112	49,609	1.0%
+	Eagle Bend	1,447	214	15	15	-0.2%	9,318	8,939	4.2%
+	Elk River	21,157	3,347	101	99	1.9%	118,041	117,677	0.3%
	Foley	4,641	684	29	33	-11.8%	28,791	29,993	-4.0%
	Grey Eagle	628	154	7	6	14.9%	3,821	4,163	-8.2%
	Howard Lake	2,430	517	17	21	-17.5%	14,810	17,056	-13.2%
	Kimball	1,629	342	16	24	-33.0%	11,808	12,194	-3.2%
+	Little Falls	7,407	1,623	37	39	-5.5%	47,462	46,772	1.5%
	Long Prairie	2,634	666	16	21	-24.1%	19,139	19,326	-1.0%
+	Melrose	12,417	799	105	99	6.6%	87,283	86,074	1.4%
	Monticello	10,936	1,882	57	63	-9.4%	68,562	72,620	-5.6%
+	Paynesville	1,923	499	13	12	9.6%	12,097	12,054	0.4%
+	Pierz	2,192	486	17	17	0.7%	12,904	12,439	3.7%
	Richmond	1,599	363	16	17	-4.8%	8,967	9,637	-7.0%
	Rockford	3,667	584	25	28	-10.8%	21,505	22,904	-6.1%
	Royalton	1,481	331	14	15	-7.6%	8,198	8,355	-1.9%
	Saint Cloud	42,130	7,394	165	169	-2.1%	254,881	263,860	-3.4%
+	Saint Michael	24,209	4,174	114	114	0.0%	133,602	131,821	1.4%
	Sauk Centre	4,402	929	28	36	-20.1%	28,449	35,406	-19.6%
	Staples	4,023	767	25	26	-4.4%	24,867	28,255	-12.0%
	Swanville	250	80	3	5	-41.8%	1,725	2,961	-41.7%
	Upsala	1,754	307	17	22	-24.0%	11,195	13,997	-20.0%
	Waite Park	6,784	1,495	47	48	-2.4%	43,387	44,080	-1.6%
	Sartell Locker	722	205				5,571	6,423	-13.3%
	Total	**220,018**	**38,605**	**47**	**50**	**-5.4%**	**1,328,358**	**1,373,323**	**-3.3%**
+	Total Digital	50,460					342,850	315,395	8.7%

+ Indicates an increase in YTD circulation total over last year

August 2026 Circulation Statistics

	Location	Month Total	CKO Sessions	Circ/Hour Aug 2026	Circ/Hour Aug 2025	CPH % Change	YTD 2026	YTD 2025	% Change YTD
	Albany	5,433	788	33	32	3.5%	41,222	42,307	-2.6%
+	Annandale	5,094	961	42	34	22.6%	33,239	30,949	7.4%
	Becker	4,270	803	30	32	-4.7%	31,863	35,554	-10.4%
	Belgrade	528	160	5	8	-30.6%	4,406	6,349	-30.6%
+	Big Lake	5,838	977	43	39	9.3%	43,867	41,345	6.1%
	Buffalo	14,504	2,726	70	70	0.4%	110,297	113,114	-2.5%
	Clearwater	2,291	463	21	25	-15.1%	17,345	19,349	-10.4%
	Cokato	4,000	700	31	25	23.6%	27,845	28,005	-0.6%
	Cold Spring	4,917	846	31	37	-14.8%	38,654	45,638	-15.3%
+	Delano	7,074	1,247	38	38	-0.3%	57,186	56,701	0.9%
+	Eagle Bend	1,348	216	13	12	13.8%	10,666	10,024	6.4%
+	Elk River	18,473	3,027	90	91	-1.9%	136,514	136,329	0.1%
	Foley	3,393	577	23	28	-19.8%	32,184	34,363	-6.3%
	Grey Eagle	738	201	8	6	50.1%	4,559	4,716	-3.3%
	Howard Lake	2,438	495	18	18	-1.0%	17,248	19,501	-11.6%
	Kimball	1,589	324	15	19	-18.2%	13,397	14,099	-5.0%
+	Little Falls	6,983	1,489	37	37	-0.4%	54,445	53,786	1.2%
	Long Prairie	2,367	579	15	17	-11.4%	21,506	21,929	-1.9%
+	Melrose	12,714	754	109	106	2.8%	99,997	98,122	1.9%
	Monticello	10,351	1,848	56	58	-4.3%	78,913	83,322	-5.3%
+	Paynesville	1,740	451	12	12	1.8%	13,837	13,764	0.5%
+	Pierz	1,595	416	13	16	-18.1%	14,499	14,386	0.8%
	Richmond	1,512	317	15	15	-2.1%	10,479	11,136	-5.9%
	Rockford	3,151	509	22	21	4.9%	24,656	25,824	-4.5%
+	Royalton	1,485	321	15	13	12.6%	9,683	9,661	0.2%
	Saint Cloud	38,368	6,884	151	155	-2.3%	293,249	302,687	-3.1%
+	Saint Michael	21,320	3,485	103	98	5.9%	154,922	151,762	2.1%
	Sauk Centre	4,137	864	28	31	-10.2%	32,586	40,012	-18.6%
	Staples	3,626	744	23	24	-4.4%	28,493	31,954	-10.8%
	Swanville	352	122	4	4	4.0%	2,077	3,273	-36.5%
	Upsala	1,760	314	16	17	-2.7%	12,955	15,805	-18.0%
	Waite Park	6,041	1,396	44	47	-6.1%	49,428	50,516	-2.2%
	Sartell Locker	895	206				6,466	7,385	-12.4%
	Total	**200,325**	**35,210**	**43**	**44**	**-2.2%**	**1,528,683**	**1,573,667**	**-2.9%**
+	Total Digital	48,760					391,610	363,649	7.7%

+ Indicates an increase in YTD circulation total over last year

September 2026 Circulation Statistics

	Location	Month Total	CKO Sessions	Circ/Hour Sept 2026	Circ/Hour Sept 2025	CPH % Change	YTD 2026	YTD 2025	% Change YTD
	Albany	5,051	724	31	31	-1.6%	46,273	47,408	-2.4%
+	Annandale	5,212	989	44	38	15.2%	38,451	35,475	8.4%
	Becker	3,785	696	27	32	-14.5%	35,648	39,948	-10.8%
	Belgrade	568	145	7	7	-11.7%	4,974	7,007	-29.0%
+	Big Lake	5,683	870	42	37	12.5%	49,550	46,361	6.9%
	Buffalo	13,553	2,468	67	68	-1.7%	123,850	126,902	-2.4%
	Clearwater	1,937	443	18	23	-22.2%	19,282	21,769	-11.4%
+	Cokato	3,552	595	27	25	9.5%	31,397	31,275	0.4%
	Cold Spring	4,546	767	29	32	-7.9%	43,200	50,543	-14.5%
+	Delano	7,182	1,155	39	37	6.0%	64,368	63,516	1.3%
+	Eagle Bend	1,015	151	11	12	-13.5%	11,681	11,272	3.6%
	Elk River	16,093	2,618	80	82	-2.9%	152,607	152,901	-0.2%
	Foley	3,089	534	20	26	-22.8%	35,273	38,365	-8.1%
	Grey Eagle	572	155	7	5	30.4%	5,131	5,208	-1.5%
	Howard Lake	2,069	430	16	18	-9.7%	19,317	21,793	-11.4%
	Kimball	1,283	238	14	17	-18.0%	14,680	15,699	-6.5%
+	Little Falls	5,950	1,356	31	34	-9.5%	60,395	60,295	0.2%
	Long Prairie	2,670	589	17	16	9.7%	24,176	24,379	-0.8%
+	Melrose	11,066	627	99	106	-6.7%	111,063	110,093	0.9%
	Monticello	10,751	1,747	60	53	13.2%	89,664	92,816	-3.4%
+	Paynesville	1,637	439	12	12	-2.4%	15,474	15,442	0.2%
	Pierz	1,575	359	14	15	-9.1%	16,074	16,096	-0.1%
	Richmond	1,054	209	11	13	-15.6%	11,533	12,398	-7.0%
	Rockford	3,442	463	25	22	16.6%	28,098	28,776	-2.4%
+	Royalton	1,268	244	13	12	12.8%	10,951	10,761	1.8%
	Saint Cloud	34,779	6,252	141	147	-4.2%	328,028	339,007	-3.2%
+	Saint Michael	17,191	2,881	86	85	1.2%	172,113	168,752	2.0%
	Sauk Centre	3,586	733	25	27	-9.1%	36,172	44,011	-17.8%
	Staples	3,270	638	21	22	-5.4%	31,763	35,410	-10.3%
	Swanville	353	77	5	3	34.1%	2,430	3,543	-31.4%
	Upsala	1,550	266	15	17	-13.5%	14,505	17,597	-17.6%
	Waite Park	6,159	1,391	46	43	7.9%	55,587	56,183	-1.1%
	Sartell Locker	1,029	238				7,495	8,271	-9.4%
	Total	**182,520**	**31,487**	**39**	**41**	**-3.7%**	**1,711,203**	**1,759,272**	**-2.7%**
+	Total Digital	46,529					438,139	408,861	7.2%

+ Indicates an increase in YTD circulation total over last year

Staff Recognition Report

2026 - Quarter 4

October 1 - December 31

First Name	Last Name	Department	Supervisor	Celebebration Date	Years of Service
Klein	Cynthia	Staples	Cathy Perish	10/9/2006	20
Schmitz	Brian	GRRL - Distribution	Colleen Sjostedt	10/24/2016	10
Lindberg	Jen	Paynesville	Katerie Gruber	10/4/2021	5
McGarvey	Grayce	Delano	Jeannette Burkhardt	10/30/2023	3
Wojcik	Nichol	GRRL - Human Resources	Brandi Canter	12/11/2023	3
Shelkey	Nate	Buffalo	Katie Teesdale	10/27/2025	1
Hauer	Laura	Buffalo	Katie Teesdale	10/30/2025	1
Abeln	Roxanne	GRRL - CD - Technical Services	Christopher Getz	12/9/2025	1
Whitney	Peter	Saint Cloud - Custodial	Neil Vig	12/15/2025	1

2027-2031 GRRL Fundraising Plan and Fund Development Policies

Submitted by Breanne Johnson, Communications & Development Coordinator, and Brandi Canter, Executive Director

BOARD ACTION REQUESTED

☐ Information ☐ Discussion ☒ Action Requested

RECOMMENDATION

Approve the 2027-2031 Fundraising Plan and revised Communications & Fund Development policies Chapter 2. Fund Development.

BACKGROUND INFORMATION

☒ Supporting Documents Attached

- 2027-2031 Great River Regional Library Fundraising Plan
- Policy Chapter 2. Fund Development – markup & clean versions

GRRL's last fundraising plan expired at the end of 2025. The 2027-2031 Fundraising Plan continues the goals from the previous plan. The draft was reviewed at the October GRRL Board work session; there are no substantive changes from what was reviewed.

FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

Estimated Cost: $ Funding Source: Budgeted: ☐ Yes ☐ No ☒ N/A

ACTION

☐ Passed ☐ Failed ☐ Tabled

Great River Regional Library Fundraising Plan 2027-2031

Vision

Ultimately, the goal of GRRL's development efforts will be to provide, based on a long-term average, annual private support equal to approximately 5% of the system's annual budget. This target goal would equal $450,000 to $500,000 annually. Library Strategies (previously contracted for the 2018-2021 fundraising plan) stated that they believe this is a realistic, achievable, *long-range*, 10 to 20 year goal. Additionally, GRRL should have a parallel, long-term goal to develop an endowment or permanent fund, primarily from planned gifts, of at least one million dollars.

Case for Support & Goals

The fundraising case for support: Covering six counties, Great River Regional Library serves many communities with varying needs and interests. As communities continue to evolve, the Library faces a greater demand to provide the best quality across more services and resources. Financially supporting Great River Regional Library provides the ability to enhance new collections and provide innovative library services.

Chart of Projected Fundraising Revenue Goals

Note: The following is only for "cash" donations to the system and does not include in-kind donations or local Friends support.

Major Fundraising Area or Activities Activity	8/2026 to date	2027 Goals	2028 Actuals	2029 Goals	2030 Goals	2031 Goals
Year-End Campaign	'25: $78,572	$82,000	$86,000	$90,000	$94,500	$100,000
Spring local fundraiser (Local Library Drive)	Paused for evaluation	$32,000	$33,600	$35,200	$37,000	$40,000
Summer Reading Challenge	$21,867	$23,000	$24,500	$25,500	$26,700	$28,000
Grants/foundation support	$55,288	$20,000	$30,000	$40,000	$50,000	$60,000
Planned gifts	$11,100	$100,000	$130,000	$170,000	$250,000	$280,000
General/Tribute/Misc.	$56,564	$60,000	$63,000	$66,000	$70,000	$73,000
Recurring donations	$598	$700	$900	$1,200	$1,500	$2,000
TOTALS		**$317,700**	**$368,000**	**$427,900**	**$529,700**	**$583,000**

Goals & Strategies

Development

Donor Database System

GOAL: Simplify and streamline donor database.

Strategies:

1. Migrate from Kindful to Bloomerang donor database.
2. Seek ways to use the system to increase stewardship communications to donors.

Outcomes by end of 2027:

- Migration complete, staff training, and coaching finished.
- Donor database is organized and can build more reports for continued library donation growth.

Online Giving

GOAL: Simplify, make more prominent, and promote online giving opportunities.

Strategies:

1. Create a way to share about the option of recurring giving.
2. Include the option of honor, memorial, and tribute giving in all online forms/pages.
3. Regularly publicize the library's online giving opportunities, primarily through the use of social media.
4. Seek Bloomerang's Text-to-Donate capacity within the online giving forms.
5. Receive donor feedback on what they are seeking in online giving.

Outcomes by end of 2031:

- Online giving is seamless and attracts younger generation donors.

Grants & Foundation Support

GOAL: Expand support to the library through foundation grants.

Strategies:

1. Update the GRRL grant vision procedure that was created in 2020.
2. Identify new projects or areas at GRRL for which to seek foundation support.
3. Create a short list of the most likely foundation funders (based on research).

Outcomes by end of 2031:

- Strategic efforts yearly to achieve and help fulfill GRRL Strategic Plan goals.

Relationships

Fund Development Committee

GOAL: Expand the capacity of the Fund Development Committee to advance fundraising.

Strategies:

1. Participate in fundraising efforts (annual meaningful gift; sharing of networks; participation in fundraising activities) as well as volunteer tasks.
2. Connect to philanthropy networks each year to help in advancing major gift, corporate, and foundation gifts.
3. Recruit two to four key individuals connected to philanthropy networks each year to help in advancing major gift, corporate, and foundation gifts.
4. As committee tasks increase, update committee meetings to bi-monthly.
5. Committee members meet with and solicit local connections and local "celebrities."
6. Create guidelines for approval of planned gift project proposals sent to the committee by branches for use of bequest dollars.

Outcomes by end of 2031:

- Committee members are actively involved and participating in fundraising activities.

GRRL Board and Staff

GOAL: Foster board, leadership, and staff awareness of library's case for support.

Strategies:

1. Communicate and celebrate fundraising with staff.
2. Involve local staff with community connections.
3. Share importance of giving with GRRL Board of Trustees at least annually.

Outcomes by end of 2031:

- GRRL Board members and staff members report an improved understanding of the importance of philanthropy in supporting the library's mission.

Friends of the Library

GOAL: Continue to advance the relationship with Friends groups to provide maximum support for the Library.

Strategies:

1. Hold an annual "Friends Meet Friends" gathering.
2. Discuss with the Friends groups additional ways they might support system-wide fundraising, especially in the areas of planned giving and memorials/tribute gifts.
3. Engage with Friends quarterly (or monthly) by email on updates, ideas, and connections.

Outcomes by end of 2031:

- Further solidification of local Friends support for system-wide fundraising.
- Increased annual support by local Friends.

Donor Recognition

GOAL: Provide additional recognition and nurturing of individual donors, particularly major donors, planned givers, and long-time contributors.

Strategies:

1. Communicate directly with major donors to explain what their gifts have allowed the library to accomplish (A special call from a Committee member, Library Director, or lead development staff for gifts over $1,000). Attempt to have at least one personal contact with every major donor annually.
2. Explore cultivation connections, such as giving anniversaries, birthdays, etc., within Bloomerang CRM's email automation.
3. Seek other opportunities to best recognize our top donors, instead of the previous annual appreciation event.

Outcomes by end of 2031:

- Library donors receive personal communications and are encouraged by what the library is doing with their donations.

Campaigns

Year-End Campaign

GOAL: Increase income from the annual year-end campaign by approximately 5% annually.

Strategies:

1. Achieve 100% annual board and committee giving.
2. Expand the year-end fundraising campaign, incorporating a number of the following major features and activities:
    - All committee members provide a list of at least ten potential donors.
    - Explore other possibilities for capturing potential donor lists.
    - Focus and special letters to lapsed/lapsing contributors to encourage them to return as donors, with a compelling reason to do so.
    - In all letters, list the previous donation and specifically ask for a gift this year at the next higher level.
    - Use Give to the Max Day to promote the campaign. Primarily promote Give to the Max Day through social media, texts, and emails.
    - Review all donations received the first week of December. Committee members make phone calls or other personal contact with all individuals at the $100 level or above on the list who have not yet contributed to the campaign.

Outcomes by end of 2031:

- Support from more donors and give at a higher level.

Local Library Drive – Raise for Reading

GOAL: Increase giving to the spring campaign.

Strategies:

1. Create new branding for spring campaign to refresh design.
2. Regain excitement and interest among staff and patrons with newly branded local fundraiser.
3. As with past spring campaign (Locally Growin'), focus at least part of the ask on the connection to the local library, and especially to children and the need to advance literacy/reading. Elicit even more support from the Friends in these campaigns, and be sure to celebrate successes with them.

Outcomes by end of 2031:

- New local fundraiser continues to build momentum and engagement locally.

Summer Reading Challenge

GOAL: Create opportunities for corporate partnerships and expand corporate sponsorship solicitations and gifts.

Strategies:

1. Identify and develop relationships with the top 10-20 potential corporate/business sponsors in the community.
2. Continue to build on Summer Reading sponsorship opportunity, using tactics and recognition that appeals to businesses and corporations.
3. Have local staff connect with and invite businesses in their service area to sponsor.

Outcomes by end of 2031:

- The Summer Reading Challenge sponsorship is well known as a corporate participation opportunity in the community.

Planned Giving

GOAL: Grow the planned giving program to provide long-term support to the library.

Strategies:

1. Provide planned giving brochures to local area senior centers.
2. Encourage board members, committee members, and current and former library staff to designate a planned gift (of any size – through their will or estate plan, insurance beneficiary, etc.).
3. Start a "happy 71 ½ birthday" promotion for awareness about Qualified Charitable Distributions (QCDs) and a "happy 73rd birthday" promotion for awareness about QCDs for your Required Minimum Distributions (RMDs).

4. Share about opportunity for legacy giving to Board of Trustees and distribute Letter of Intent forms.
5. Expand Make a Will Month in August with estate planning programming in partnership with local branch staff and more resources available for patrons.

Outcomes by end of 2031:

- All fundraising materials include details about planned giving.
- One-third of board members have completed a Letter of Intent, including the library in their wills.

Local capital campaigns

GOAL: Explore options for GRRL's system-wide fundraising program to help support or get involved in capital campaigns for local libraries.

Recommendation/Opportunities:

Facilities and building projects often resonate most strongly with donors, particularly major donors. Given that the library facilities are locally controlled, there can be a disconnect between the system's fundraising and the local effort by the Friends group or local municipality to raise funds for their library. Nonetheless, there is a potential synergy for GRRL's fundraising efforts to get involved, as the professional fundraising approach could help raise additional funds. In return, GRRL's annual fundraising could benefit by developing relationships with major donors at the local level. The potential returns are significant for all parties, but structuring the support or help may be difficult and involve guidelines or new policies. Thus, it is recommended that GRRL conduct an exploration process in the next year or two on the possibilities for developing this kind of approach.

Summary of Recommended Fundraising Tasks through 2031

The following are recommended new tasks to add to the development program, or significant changes to the current approaches. On-going, continuing tasks from previous years – such as Year-End Campaign – are not included here. Champions (one individual who will be responsible for the task) and completion deadline should be filled in by the library or Fund Development Committee

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TASK OR STRATEGY	CHAMPION	COMPLETION DEADLINE
Complete migration to Bloomerang donor database and complete tasks for Year-End Campaign in new system.	ComDev Assistant and Coordinator	Feb. 2027
Create new branding for spring campaign to refresh design.	ComDev Assistant and Coordinator	Mar. 2027
Explore cultivation connections, such as giving anniversaries, birthdays, etc. within Bloomerang CRM's email automation.	ComDev Assistant and Coordinator	Aug. 2027
Create guidelines for approval of planned gift project proposals sent to the committee by branches for use of bequest dollars.	Fund Development Committee	Oct. 2027
Update the GRRL grant vision procedure that was created in 2020.	ComDev Coordinator	Jan. 2028
Seek Bloomerang's Text-to-Donate capacity within the online giving forms.	ComDev Assistant and Coordinator	Oct. 2028
Start a "happy 71 ½ birthday" and "happy 73rd birthday" promotion for awareness of QCDs and RMDs.	ComDev Coordinator	Feb. 2029
Expand Make a Will Month.	ComDev Coordinator	Jul. 2029
Explore possibilities for capturing potential donor lists for the Year-End Campaign mailing.	Fund Development Committee	Sept. 2030

Chapter 2. Fund Development

Introduction

Great River Regional Library (GRRL) qualifies to receive tax deductible contributions under section 509(a)(1) and 501(c)(3) of the Internal Revenue Service Code. The mission of GRRL Fund Development is to:

1. Provide financial support to improve and enhance its services.
2. Realize the library mission to ~~inspire Central Minnesota residents to Explore, Learn and Connect.~~ serve all Central Minnesotans with library collections and services.
3. Achieve its vision to ~~be the Neighborhood Gateway: Inspiring Central Minnesota to shape the future through exploration, knowledge and connection.~~ foster the spirit of exploration, knowledge, and connection for all ages and cultures.

As part of its regular fundraising activities, GRRL accepts monetary and in-kind donations. Some gifts must be reviewed by the Executive Director and Fund Development Committee before they are accepted. These gifts may create special risks for GRRL. Examples include gifts of stock, real estate, personal property, or securities.

Approved Date: 03/26/06
Revised Date: ~~07/17/18,~~ 07/18/23, 11/17/26

Chapter 2A. Fund Development Committee

The Fund Development Committee supports the ~~L~~library's fundraising ~~activities~~ and ~~advances fundraising~~ helps it grow at GRRL. The committee consists of members of the GRRL Board, the Executive Director, Communications & Development Coordinator and donors. Committee members ~~participate~~ take part in fundraising ~~efforts~~, ~~take on~~ do their assigned volunteer tasks, and ~~monitor~~ watch over planned giving funds. The committee ~~presents~~ reports fundraising ~~information and makes recommendations on fundraising~~ to the GRRL Board of Trustees and makes recommendations. Committee members ~~are eligible for~~ may receive travel and per diem reimbursements ~~consistent with~~ under the same rules ~~set forth~~ that apply for Board members in GRRL bylaws.

Approved Date: 07/18/23
Revised Date: 11/17/26

Chapter 2B. Gift Solicitation/Grant Application

GRRL staff and volunteers are partners in fundraising for GRRL. ~~They are encouraged to attract private support to GRRL. Gift solicitations~~ Gift requests, ~~both~~ whether monetary and in-kind, ~~made on behalf of the library must meet~~ must follow Communications & Development guidelines. They must also coordinate with ~~and be coordinated with~~ the GRRL fundraising plan. Accepting ~~additional~~ funds for technology ~~and/~~or specialized equipment must be ~~pre~~ approved in advance and ~~in keeping with~~ follow GRRL policy.

GRRL staff ~~should not solicit~~ must not seek gifts or apply for grants in their official ~~capacity~~ role ~~as a GRRL staff member, on behalf of~~ for a non-GRRL entity. A non-GRRL entity is another organization, business,

or group ~~etc. with~~ over which GRRL has no functional authority~~, such as~~. A~~a~~ Friends of the Library~~-~~ group is one example.~~organization.~~

Approved Date: 03/26/06
Revised Date: ~~03/20/12,~~ 07/17/18, 11/17/26

Chapter 2C. Gift Acceptance

GRRL solicits and accepts gifts that ~~are consistent with~~ match its mission. ~~and that~~ Gifts should support its core programs~~, as well as~~ and special projects. Donations and other ~~forms of~~ support will generally be accepted from individuals, partnerships, ~~corporations~~companies, foundations, government agencies, or other ~~entities subject to the following limitations~~groups. The following limits apply:

- GRRL ~~reserves the right to~~may accept or decline any gift not ~~expressly intended~~clearly meant for GRRL,
- GRRL ~~reserves the right to~~may decline any gift ~~not consistent with~~that does not match its mission or ~~in violation of~~that breaks any federal, state or ~~municipal~~ local law,
- All gifts of property or material that ~~are accepted by~~ GRRL accepts become the property of GRRL. GRRL ~~reserves the right to~~may use and dispose of donated materials and funds as ~~appropriate for~~it fits current needs,
- GRRL will ~~not assess the~~set a value of any gifts of property for tax purposes,
- ~~Gifts will not be accepted that require or stipulate the future employment at GRRL of any specified person or doing business with any specified company or person.~~ GRRL will not accept gifts that require hiring a certain person at GRRL. It also will not accept gifts that require doing business with a certain person or company.

~~All~~ Any decisions to ~~solicit and/or~~seek or accept ~~potentially controversial gifts~~a gift that may be controversial will be made by the Fund Development Committee of the GRRL Board. The committee will make this decision ~~in consultation~~ with the Executive Director. The ~~primary consideration~~main concern ~~will be the impact of~~is how the gift ~~on~~ affects the organization.

~~In the course of its regular fundraising activities, GRRL will accept donations of money, real property, personal property, stock and in-kind services. Certain types of gifts must be reviewed by the Executive Director prior to acceptance due to the special liabilities they may impose for GRRL. Examples of gifts which will be subject to review include gifts of real property, personal property or securities.~~

~~Ownership of all gifts directed to GRRL vests in GRRL, whether said gifts are for the benefit of GRRL generally or for some specific purpose in it. Funds designated in writing by the donor for a specific purpose or branch will be encumbered on behalf of that purpose or branch in a special account at GRRL. Undesignated gifts shall be used for such purposes as GRRL judges will best advance its mission and priorities. GRRL will make every attempt to honor the donors request; however, GRRL will act in the best interest of the organization.~~ All gifts directed to GRRL belong to GRRL. This is true whether the gifts are for GRRL overall or for a specific purpose. When a donor names a specific purpose or branch in writing, those funds will be set aside for that purpose or branch in a special GRRL account. Gifts with no designation will be used for the purposes GRRL thinks best advance its mission and priorities. GRRL will make every attempt to honor the donor's request. Even so, GRRL will act in the best interest of the organization.

GRRL may accept gifts of materials or other in-kind items. Library materials that are accepted ~~are subject to~~follow the GRRL Collection Development Policy. In-kind items ~~accepted and designated~~meant for use at a GRRL Library ~~are subject to~~follow the terms of the Library Branch Agreement.

GRRL may accept monetary or other gifts ~~designated~~ meant for new or improved library capital building campaigns, if ~~authorized by~~ the GRRL Board of Trustees approves. ~~Such~~ These gifts will remain under the fiduciary control of the local library board or city that owns the building. That entity ~~will be responsible to ensure~~must make sure ~~that~~ donated funds are ~~properly accounted for~~tracked properly.~~, that expenditures are made in accordance with the donor's wishes, and that reports to donors on the use of such funds are facilitated.~~ It must make sure spending follows the donor's wishes. It must also provide reports to donors on how the funds are used.

~~GRRL staff, in their official capacity as a GRRL staff member, may not deposit monetary gifts intended for Friends organizations, local library boards, or other non-related entities, in any financial account. Designated members of those sponsoring organizations must conduct gift deposit and accounting for Friends of the Library or local library board fundraisers.~~

~~GRRL staff, in their official capacity as a GRRL staff member, may not serve as a signatory on or have any access to any financial accounts on behalf of a non-GRRL entity with which GRRL does not have functional authority.~~
~~Refer to GRRL Collection Development and Finance Policies for related information on gifts of materials, in-kind items, library book sales, gift receipting and grants.~~

Approved Date: 03/26/06
Revised Date: ~~03/20/12,~~ 07/17/18, 11/17/26

Chapter 2D. Staff Involvement

The Communications and Development department handles and directs all fundraising efforts, including grants. GRRL staff must follow the fundraising plans. They help meet fundraising goals by receiving and recording donations properly at the desk.

GRRL staff, in their official role, may not deposit monetary gifts into any financial account if the gifts are meant for Friends organizations, local library boards, or other unrelated entities. Designated members of those sponsoring groups must handle gift deposits and accounting for Friends of the Library or local library board fundraisers.

GRRL staff, in their official role, may not serve as a signer on financial accounts of a non-GRRL entity. They also may not have access to those accounts. This applies to any entity over which GRRL has no functional authority.

Refer to GRRL Collection Development and Finance Policies for related information on gifts of materials, in-kind items, library book sales, gift receipting, and grants.

Approved Date: 11/17/26

Chapter ~~2D~~ 2E. Equipment Donation

GRRL generally does not accept donated equipment. In the event that an exception is made and the equipment is accepted, the donation must enhance the mission of GRRL. GRRL reserves the right to decline any equipment donation for any reason. This equipment will be considered the property and full responsibility of GRRL.

Branch staff are encouraged to work with their city administration in accepting monetary or in-kind gifts for furnishings and facility equipment not provided by GRRL. Examples are furniture and shelving. The City will be responsible to ensure that donated funds are properly accounted for, that expenditures are made in accordance with the donor's wishes, and that acknowledgements to donors are facilitated.

The Associate Director - Information Technology (IT) will determine the suitability of donated equipment that is operated or maintained by IT. The Associate Director - IT and/or the Library Executive Director must approve equipment donations and monetary donations designated for a particular technology purpose in writing prior to the acceptance. Failure to obtain prior written approval may result in removal of the equipment and/or disciplinary action for staff. Equipment donations need to follow standard donation procedures. Equipment that is donated may be reallocated or disposed at the discretion of the Associate Director - IT.

Approved Date: 03/26/06
Revised Date: 03/20/12, 07/17/18
Reviewed Date: 11/17/26

Chapter ~~2E~~2F. Gift Receipting

The Accounting Department ~~is responsible for processing and acknowledging~~processes and acknowledges all accepted gifts to GRRL in writing. This is done in a way that meets ~~and in a manner that satisfies the~~ IRS~~'s~~ substantiation requirements for ~~the deduction of charitable gifts by individual donors~~donors who deduct charitable gifts. ~~The ensuing~~ These documents ~~are deemed to be~~serve as the official acceptance of the gift and its related terms. ~~and conditions, as well as official certification~~They also serve as the official record of the donation for income tax purposes.

Gifts to GRRL will be valued on the date postmarked~~,~~ if mailed~~, .~~ ~~or on the date received, if delivered to a GRRL library.~~If delivered to a GRRL library, they will be valued on the date received. All gifts must be postmarked or received ~~no later than~~by December 31 ~~for inclusion~~to count in the current fiscal year.

In ~~certain circumstances~~some cases, ~~individuals may wish to donate expense reimbursement fees or other expenses earned in the course of~~people may want to donate expense reimbursement fees or other amounts earned through their GRRL duties. ~~Such~~ These amounts ~~constitute~~ count as taxable income ~~in their hands~~to them. If ~~the individual does~~a person chooses to donate these amounts to GRRL, ~~he/she shall~~they must first ~~be required to~~ accept payment for the services. Then they must~~, then proceed to~~ make a donation ~~in order~~ to qualify for an income tax deductions. ~~Forfeiture of~~Giving up a payments or ~~redirection~~ redirecting ~~of~~ funds~~, while constituting~~ may be a gift, but it does not qualify for a tax deductions.

Approved Date: 03/26/06
Revised Date: ~~03/20/12,~~ 07/17/18, 11/17/26

Chapter ~~2F~~ 2G. Gift Recognition

The Communications & Development Department ~~shall advise the Library~~will inform the Executive Director and Board of Trustees ~~of~~ about gifts received. It will ~~, making~~ make a reasonable effort to protect ~~the confidentiality of donors when requested~~donor privacy when requested.
Gifts received by GRRL will be recognized through ~~appropriate venues~~suitable channels during ~~the course of~~ each fiscal year (January 1- December 31). This public recognition is meant to express GRRL's ~~appreciation and gratitude for the generosity of those individuals and institutions that have committed themselves to supporting and advancing library programs and services.~~thanks. It honors the people and groups who have committed to supporting and advancing library programs and services.

GRRL will honor donors' wishes ~~as to~~about how published credit should appear and will honor those who wish for their contributions ~~to be~~ credited anonymously.

~~Individuals~~ People whose gifts are matched by their employers will receive recognition. ~~but~~ They will not receive individual credit for the ~~amount matched~~matched amount. Employers who match gifts will receive recognition for the amount matched.
Refer to the GRRL Collection Development Policy for policy regarding books or other library materials.

Approved Date: 03/26/06
Revised Date: ~~03/20/12,~~ 07/17/18, 11/17/26

Chapter ~~2G~~ 2H. Discontinuing Contact Upon Request

GRRL will ~~discontinue~~ stop contacting~~,~~ any person for Fund Development purposes~~, any~~ when that person ~~upon his/her~~asks orally or in writing. ~~written~~ This request ~~directed~~ goes to the Communications & Development Department. The ~~Communications & Development Department~~department will ~~maintain~~ keep a record of all requests ~~by persons who indicate that they~~from people who do not wish to be contacted by or on behalf of GRRL.

Approved Date: 03/26/06
Revised Date: ~~03/20/12,~~ 07/17/18, 11/17/26

800 Communications & Fund Development
Chapter 2. Fund Development

Introduction

Great River Regional Library (GRRL) qualifies to receive tax-deductible contributions under section 509(a)(1) and 501(c)(3) of the Internal Revenue Service Code. The mission of GRRL Fund Development is to:

1. Provide financial support to improve and enhance its services.
2. Realize the library mission to serve all Central Minnesotans with library collections and services.
3. Achieve its vision to foster the spirit of exploration, knowledge, and connection for all ages and cultures.

As part of its regular fundraising activities, GRRL accepts monetary and in-kind donations. Some gifts must be reviewed by the Executive Director and Fund Development Committee before they are accepted. These gifts may create special risks for GRRL. Examples include gifts of stock, real estate, personal property, or securities.

Approved Date: 03/26/06
Revised Date: 07/18/23, 11/17/26

2A. Fund Development Committee

The Fund Development Committee supports the library's fundraising and helps it grow at GRRL. The committee consists of members of the GRRL Board, the Executive Director, Communications & Development Coordinator and donors. Committee members take part in fundraising, do their assigned volunteer tasks, and watch over planned giving funds. The committee reports fundraising to the GRRL Board of Trustees and makes recommendations. Committee members may receive travel and per diem reimbursements under the same rules that apply for Board members in GRRL bylaws.

Approved Date: 07/18/23
Revised Date: 11/17/26

2B. Gift Solicitation/Grant Application

GRRL staff and volunteers are partners in fundraising for GRRL. Gift requests, whether monetary and in-kind, must follow Communications & Development guidelines. They must also coordinate with the GRRL fundraising plan. Accepting funds for technology or specialized equipment must be approved in advance and follow GRRL policy.

GRRL staff must not seek gifts or apply for grants in their official role for a non-GRRL entity. A non-GRRL entity is another organization, business, or group over which GRRL has no functional authority. A Friends of the Library group is one example.

Approved Date: 03/26/06
Revised Date: 07/17/18, 11/17/26

2C. Gift Acceptance

GRRL solicits and accepts gifts that match its mission. Gifts should support its core programs and special projects. Donations and other support will generally be accepted from individuals, partnerships, companies, foundations, government agencies, or other groups. The following limits apply:

- GRRL may accept or decline any gift not clearly meant for GRRL,
- GRRL may decline any gift that does not match its mission or that breaks any federal, state or local law,
- All gifts of property or material that GRRL accepts become the property of GRRL. GRRL may use and dispose of donated materials and funds as it fits current needs,
- GRRL will set a value of any gifts of property for tax purposes,
- GRRL will not accept gifts that require hiring a certain person at GRRL. It also will not accept gifts that require doing business with a certain person or company.

Any decisions to seek or accept a gift that may be controversial will be made by the Fund Development Committee of the GRRL Board. The committee will make this decision with the Executive Director. The main concern is how the gift affects the organization.

All gifts directed to GRRL belong to GRRL. This is true whether the gifts are for GRRL overall or for a specific purpose. When a donor names a specific purpose or branch in writing, those funds will be set aside for that purpose or branch in a special GRRL account. Gifts with no designation will be used for the purposes GRRL thinks best advance its mission and priorities. GRRL will make every attempt to honor the donor's request. Even so, GRRL will act in the best interest of the organization.

GRRL may accept gifts of materials or other in-kind items. Library materials that are accepted follow the GRRL Collection Development Policy. In-kind items meant for use at a GRRL Library follow the terms of the Library Branch Agreement.

GRRL may accept monetary or other gifts meant for new or improved library capital building campaigns, if the GRRL Board of Trustees approves. These gifts will remain under the fiduciary control of the local library board or city that owns the building. That entity must make sure donated funds are tracked properly. It must make sure spending follows the donor's wishes. It must also provide reports to donors on how the funds are used.

Approved Date: 03/26/06
Revised Date: 07/17/18, 11/17/26

2D. Staff Involvement

The Communications and Development department handles and directs all fundraising efforts, including grants. GRRL staff must follow the fundraising plans. They help meet fundraising goals by receiving and recording donations properly at the desk.

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of those sponsoring groups must handle gift deposits and accounting for Friends of the Library or local library board fundraisers.

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Refer to GRRL Collection Development and Finance Policies for related information on gifts of materials, in-kind items, library book sales, gift receipting, and grants.

Approved Date: 11/17/26

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GRRL generally does not accept donated equipment. In the event that an exception is made and the equipment is accepted, the donation must enhance the mission of GRRL. GRRL reserves the right to decline any equipment donation for any reason. This equipment will be considered the property and full responsibility of GRRL.

Branch staff are encouraged to work with their city administration in accepting monetary or in-kind gifts for furnishings and facility equipment not provided by GRRL. Examples are furniture and shelving. The City will be responsible to ensure that donated funds are properly accounted for, that expenditures are made in accordance with the donor's wishes, and that acknowledgements to donors are facilitated.

The Associate Director - Information Technology (IT) will determine the suitability of donated equipment that is operated or maintained by IT. The Associate Director - IT and/or the Library Executive Director must approve equipment donations and monetary donations designated for a particular technology purpose in writing prior to the acceptance. Failure to obtain prior written approval may result in removal of the equipment and/or disciplinary action for staff. Equipment donations need to follow standard donation procedures. Equipment that is donated may be reallocated or disposed at the discretion of the Associate Director - IT.

Approved Date: 03/26/06
Revised Date: 03/20/12, 07/17/18
Reviewed Date: 11/17/26

2F. Gift Receipting

The Accounting Department processes and acknowledges all accepted gifts to GRRL in writing. This is done in a way that meets IRS substantiation requirements for donors who deduct charitable gifts. These documents serve as the official acceptance of the gift and its related terms. They also serve as the official record of the donation for income tax purposes.

Gifts to GRRL will be valued on the date postmarked if mailed. If delivered to a GRRL library, they will be valued on the date received. All gifts must be postmarked or received by December 31 to count in the current fiscal year.

In some cases, people may want to donate expense reimbursement fees or other amounts earned through their GRRL duties. These amounts count as taxable income to them. If a person chooses to donate these amounts to GRRL, they must first accept payment for the services. Then they must make a donation to qualify for an income tax deduction. Giving up a payment or redirecting funds may be a gift, but it does not qualify for a tax deduction.

Approved Date: 03/26/06
Revised Date: 07/17/18, 11/17/26

2G. Gift Recognition

The Communications & Development Department will inform the Executive Director and Board of Trustees about gifts received. It will make a reasonable effort to protect donor privacy when requested.

Gifts received by GRRL will be recognized through suitable channels during each fiscal year (January 1-December 31). This public recognition is meant to express GRRL's thanks. It honors the people and groups who have committed to supporting and advancing library programs and services.

GRRL will honor donors' wishes about how published credit should appear and will honor those who wish for their contributions credited anonymously.

People whose gifts are matched by their employers will receive recognition. They will not receive individual credit for the matched amount. Employers who match gifts will receive recognition for the amount matched.

Refer to the GRRL Collection Development Policy for policy regarding books or other library materials.

Approved Date: 03/26/06
Revised Date: 07/17/18, 11/17/26

2H. Discontinuing Contact Upon Request

GRRL will stop contacting any person for Fund Development purposes when that person asks orally or in writing. This request goes to the Communications & Development Department. The department will keep a record of all requests from people who do not wish to be contacted by or on behalf of GRRL.

Approved Date: 03/26/06
Revised Date: 07/17/18, 11/17/26

2027-2033 GRRL Library Development Plan

Submitted Brandi Canter, Executive Director

BOARD ACTION REQUESTED

☐ Information ☐ Discussion ☒ Action Requested

RECOMMENDATION

Approve the 2027-2033 Library Development Plan and revised Administration policy Chapter 2B. Library Development.

BACKGROUND INFORMATION

☒ Supporting Documents Attached

- 2027-2033 Great River Regional Library Development Plan
- Policy Chapter 2B. Library Development – markup version

GRRL's current Library Development plan expires at the end of 2026. The 2027-2033 Library Development Plan highlights facilities with known safety, security, or other issues and provides updated recommendations for alternative service models.

This plan draft was reviewed at the October GRRL Board work session. Substantive changes based on feedback include:

- Future Plan Timelines (p. 7)
- Use of Bequests and Large Donations for Facility Improvements (p. 12)
- Updated water intrusion information for the Belgrade Library (p. 13)
- Joint Use School & Public Library Combination – not recommended (p. 32)

In order to integrate into a rolling five-year plan with the other two guiding documents (Strategic Plan and Fundraising Plan), GRRL leadership will provide an addendum to this document in 2030 so that information remains relevant. In addition, facility issues will continue to be included in management reports to the Board so that trustees receive timely information about the state of GRRL libraries.

FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

Estimated Cost: $ Funding Source: Budgeted: ☐ Yes ☐ No ☒ N/A

ACTION

☐ Passed ☐ Failed ☐ Tabled

GRRL Library Development Plan

2027-2033



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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 2026 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 and trends.

Library usage patterns continue to change across the region. Some communities have seen increases, while others have fallen significantly over the last decade. The majority of GRRL residents live within a 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. The 2026 Library Development Plan includes updated analysis of multiple alternative models for delivering library service that can be considered in GRRL's ongoing mission to provide Central Minnesota with exceptional library service.



EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Facility Improvements

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

- Belgrade: health and safety concerns due to recurring water intrusion
- Eagle Bend: access security due to shared keys
- Little Falls: health and safety concerns due to recurring pest intrusion
- Saint Cloud: need for updated security technology and design
- Sauk Centre: health and safety concerns due to recurring water intrusion
- Swanville: health and safety concerns due to recurring water intrusion
- Waite Park: inadequate space to provide full services or efficient staff processes

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

- Cold Spring
- Paynesville

Information on those buildings that are not in need of improvements are provided in Appendix I.

Open Hours

In 2022, GRRL added 68 open hours in multiple libraries across the region. This was done with additional staffing dollars to expand access for small and mid-size libraries. GRRL has seen mixed success from this effort. Some locations have seen significant use of the added hours, others have not. In the case of Swanville and Grey Eagle, added hours did not result in increased usage, and GRRL had difficulty staffing the additional hours. Therefore, the additional hours were withdrawn in 2025 and 2026 respectively. GRRL should continue reviewing usage patterns as well as staffing challenges in case additional open hour reductions are needed.

Based on usage patterns and population increases, GRRL increased open hours at St. Michael in 2024. Added hours have been well-used in this location. In 2026, GRRL reduced the Foley library by three hours a week due to funding disputes with Benton County.

Alternative Services

Enhanced or expanded library services may be desired in some GRRL communities. This document lists the most feasible alternative service models within the constraints of our existing service model. The Library Development Plan also lists alternative service models that would not be a good fit for GRRL. 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.

Future Plan Timelines

GRRL has three significant guiding documents: a Strategic Plan, Fundraising Plan, and the Library Development Plan. In order to make the best use of staff capacity and integrate the three plans in a strategic way, this Library Development Plan will cover the years 2027 to 2033 before it, too, restarts on a five-year timeline. In order ensure that the Library Development Plan stays relevant during that time, an addendum to this plan should be presented to the GRRL Board in 2030.



2026 CONSIDERATIONS FOR GRRL FACILITIES

Library Open Hours

GRRL Leadership should continue to evaluate open hours at each location on a regular basis. This includes both the number of open hours – which can have budget implications – and the schedule of open hours. Factors for adjustment of the overall number of open hours at a library is discussed below.

GRRL leadership should consider regular evaluation of open hour schedules based on patron usage patterns and how well local staffing allocations align with patron use. When considering patron use patterns, leadership should consider activity within the community as well – for example, whether nearby businesses are open later into the evening.

State and federal laws governing rest and meal breaks may impact open hour schedules as well. For example, in some locations breaking a given day's open hours into two blocks with an hour closed time in between may allow GRRL to guarantee that staff are able to take a duty-free meal break without double-coverage.

Regional staffing may impact open hour schedules as well, making it harder to support local open hours outside of those staffed by regional support personnel in IT or other departments. An example of this would be the lack of regional support for Friday evening open hours after 6 p.m.

A table showing the current number of open hours and changes since 2019 is included as Appendix I.

Data Analysis for Determining the Number of Open Hours

GRRL offers 1,072 open hours each week between our 32 libraries for an average of 33.5 hours at each location. Changes in open hours and weekly averages are shown in Appendix I.

Four libraries offer extended hours (48 or more weekly): Buffalo, Elk River, St. Cloud, and St. Michael. While there have been some recent reductions in hours among smaller libraries, none are below the state-mandated minimum level of 20 hours weekly to receive state funding.

Recommendations for adjusting library open hours 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 &/or ability to secure consistent staffing
- 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.

Criteria for Decreasing Open Hours

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

Locally Funded and Sunday Open Hours

Increasing open hours above GRRL base levels could be considered if locally funded. GRRL and the city would need an agreement to provide ongoing funding for at least a five-year period and establish minimum usage or other measures of success. Expanded open hour services using this option would be dependent on continuation of local funding, staffing availability, and local demand.

Over the last decade, there have been periodic requests by cities and community members for Sunday hours. However, Sunday open hours would include regional costs as well. This would ensure that local staff had support such as Information Technology trouble-shooting. In addition, the ability of GRRL to provide open hours on a Sunday would be dependent on staffing availability and local demand.

CHALLENGES & OPPORTUNITIES

Borrower and Usage Changes in Small Libraries

Some challenges facing GRRL's smallest libraries mirror those facing small towns in general. As an example, at the Swanville library, borrower numbers have fallen dramatically from 385 in 2024 to less than 240 in October 2026. Belgrade library's borrower numbers have remained stable during that time, at slightly under 425. At both libraries, circulation continues to decrease in spite of staff efforts with programming, outreach, and promoting collection and services. These two libraries are also included in the Plan due to repeated and significant water intrusion issues.

Current policy requires open hours to be no less than 20 hours weekly. This is largely due to budget implications – Regional Library Telecommunications Aid is not available for libraries open less than 20 hours. However, for certain locations it may be cost-effective to operate the library without state funding to support the broadband connection. If budget or staffing pressures increase in the next three years, GRRL leadership and Trustees may need to consider reducing services below the 20-hour minimum and/or evaluation of potential for alternative services.

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. As of September, 2026, GRRL is working on a database cleanup to ensure accurate borrower data. The project includes identifying borrowers who have moved to a different address or county, those who have moved out of the GRRL six-county region, and those who are deceased. As a result of this project, we may see a drop in borrower numbers at the local level and across the region. However, we will also have more accurate data for making future decisions related to open hours, staffing, and more.

Expiring GRRL2Go Service Agreement

The agreement with the City of Sartell to host the GRRL2Go locker system will expire at the end of 2027. Leadership should provide a thorough analysis of the system since it began in 2017, including borrower numbers and circulation, wait times for lockers, etc. Analysis should also include the impact of Sartell locker request times on the region as a whole.

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. The lease agreement is set to expire at the end of 2027.

The majority of GRRL2Go users continue to be Sartell residents. The previous plan recommended a lease arrangement rather than a capital investment due to technology upgrades. However, the current vendor, Bibliotheca, no longer offers lease arrangements.

Usage and interest in cities outside of Sartell appears to have waned. Despite increasing the number of lockers, the number of patrons being served and overall usage have declined. Yet, there is still a consistent backlog of items waiting for locker space. This results in longer wait times both for the patrons using the lockers and for other patrons in the region waiting for the items.

In addition to wait times, patron complaints have included the lack of onsite staff to assist with account or technology issues, and the time delay between when patrons receive notification that their holds are available and when they are actually placed in the lockers.

Our recommendation includes the requirement that GRRL do a full evaluation of the GRRL2Go locker system before any expansion. Any future agreements and systems will need to be right-sized to community demands and analyzed for impact on existing delivery routes.

Express Checkout Usage

Express Checkouts have been used at GRRL and other library systems across the country to enhance patron service. GRRL has provided Express Checkout at all locations that have adequate space in the facility as well as sufficient local business.

Libraries without Express Checkout stations include: Belgrade, Cold Spring, Grey Eagle, Pierz, Richmond, Swanville and Upsala. Both St. Cloud and Michael have two express checkout machines.

While express checkout usage is high in some locations, it still lags far behind expectations in many locations. Investigation of these trends is outside the scope of the current update. However, we recommend that this analysis should be undertaken by 2032.

In the meantime, in the event that we need to replace a machine or install new, equipment should be taken from an underperforming site rather than purchasing a new machine.

User & Non-User Feedback

In 2018 and 2023, GRRL contracted with the St. Cloud State University (SCSU) Survey Center to conduct surveys about GRRL services. In 2018, they surveyed library users and individuals who did not use the library, and in 2023 they surveyed current and former users. Both surveys asked questions about satisfaction with GRRL collection and services. The vast majority of library users in both surveys were moderately to highly satisfied.

Both surveys also asked questions about open hours and other potential barriers to access. For the 2018 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 a small percentage of non-users (less than 5%) identified changes to hours, services, or locations as factors that would encourage them to use the library. Similarly, in 2023, 10% of former library users reported access barriers such as parking, transportation, hours, etc.

GRRL Trustees should consider funding to provide an updated survey, by 2029, of current and either non-users or former library users. It would be helpful to include specific questions about the library facilities they use in preparation for the next Library Development Plan.

Guidelines for New and Renovated Facilities

A number of recent professional resources have identified challenges for communities building or renovating a library. GRRL's local and regional staff have experienced this as well, and have identified a need for GRRL to provide more consistent and up-to-date guidelines that can be used in the collaborative effort between GRRL and cities to update their facilities. These guidelines should include GRRL standards and best practices such as:

- Recommendations for shelving by collection area, including type, height, spacing, etc.
- Seating types and spacing for reading individually or in groups, group study, flexible use, etc.
- Lighting styles that fit the needs of specific areas and uses,
- Ensuring long-term adaptability so that spaces can change with community needs,
- Requirements for staff work areas to ensure efficient processes and necessary privacy, and
- Universal design concepts that expand accessibility for patrons and staff.

It should also include a means for ensuring formal agreement between parties as to responsibilities, timelines, and communication expectations, whether with a small-scale carpet replacement or a complete new build.

While this is a high need, it is outside of the scope of this revision. We recommend that the next revision should include a section or appendix that provides this guidance.

Use of Bequests and Large Donations for Facility Improvements

The Branch Agreements for all GRRL facilities outline the shared responsibilities for providing local library services. Cities are required to provide the facility, maintenance, and operational furnishings such as general seating and shelving. GRRL provides the staff, collection, and library technology.

Occasionally GRRL receives bequests or large gifts where the donor intends for their gift to be used for furnishings, shelving, or building-related technology that would otherwise be the responsibility of the City. For gifts of $10,000 or more, GRRL leadership may request that donated dollars be used according to the donor's wishes to improve library spaces and better serve patrons. All such projects would need to follow the established Fund Development process of review and approval by the GRRL Fund Development Committee.

Use of these funds should not in any way change the terms and conditions of the local branch agreement or remove the City's overall responsibility for the care and maintenance of library spaces. Similarly, use of donated funds in one facility should not be interpreted as influencing the branch agreement or City responsibility for any other GRRL location.

FACILITY ASSESSMENTS

Introduction

With the 2026 Plan, GRRL leadership has introduced a greater focus on those facilities with current or recurring safety, security and/or space needs by highlighting them below.

Facilities not included here do not have significant concerns at this time. However, all GRRL facilities should be monitored by local and regional staff on a regular basis to ensure that any concerns that arise are immediately communicated and addressed.

- Local city partners and regional GRRL staff should be informed of concerns. Depending on the severity and duration of the concern, this may be informal or formal.
- Any significant concerns or actions on the part of city partners to address these concerns should be included in Building Reports as part of regular board meetings of the GRRL Trustees.

General information about all facilities is provided in Appendix II.

Finally, the Library Development Committee recommends development of a Facility Issues Rubric to help GRRL Trustees and staff ensure that our library facilities are evaluated fairly and equitably across the region. An example of what this might look like is included in Appendix III. A table showing recommendations for further study is included as Appendix IV.

Facilities with Known Issues

Belgrade

The Belgrade Library is located in a store-front building on the main street of town. The floor at the back of the library is below grade, creating water intrusion issues due to spring thaws and heavy rains. As recently as October 2026 there has been sufficient water intrusion to make the carpet noticeably wet. In July 2025, the water intrusion was significant enough to leave standing water and signs of wetness up the walls. The City of Belgrade has been responsive to GRRL concerns and made many efforts to remediate the situation, including installing a French drain in the back lot and new gutters in October of 2025. No further action has been taken to date.

Because of the water intrusion, mold was found growing at the base of the east wall. Public works cleaned the wall in February 2025, removed the baseboards and cleaned the wall again in July 2025.

Recommendations:

- Local and regional staff should continue monitoring for water intrusion or any evidence of mold.
- Staff should continue working closely with the City of Belgrade to ensure that any water intrusion, mold, or other potential health issues are dealt with immediately.

Clearwater

The Clearwater Library is a leased property located in a strip mall. The location is off of Highway 24, the main throughway connecting I-94 to Highway 10 and crossing the Mississippi River. Because of the distance from the highway, visibility from the street is minimal. This concern is increased because the strip mall is no longer a destination site for the shopping public.

The building has been experiencing various issues with mice, bugs, lighting, and HVAC venting. The landlord has been responsive about the mice and contracted with a local pest control agency. However, disputes between the City of Clearwater and landlord have delayed improvements for lighting or air quality, despite patron and staff complaints about watering eyes and sneezing when the heat or air conditioning are running. The city has also contacted the landlord about the needed resurfacing of the parking lot per the city's ordinances and has had little success.

Previously, the city explored the concept of a new shared location on the other side of Interstate 94. Recently this idea has come up again. While it would put the library away from the downtown, a new location near recent housing development might be preferable to the current location in many ways.

Lastly, Highway 24 is undergoing some major traffic changes with road construction that started in August 2026. Construction is anticipated to go through October 2027. The State is adding two roundabouts and a center median that will prevent left turns. Road construction will likely have a negative impact on library use. The long-term impact from the change in traffic pattern is undetermined.

Recommendations:

- Continue to watch circulation and traffic numbers, especially after completion of the highway construction.
- Continue to watch how the landlord responds to building needs.

Eagle Bend

Prior to 2024, the Eagle Bend Library and Eagle Bend Museum shared space. In 2024, the city expanded the facility in order to provide separate spaces for each. The city also created a meeting room that was to be shared by the library and museum. During construction, a door was installed in the shared wall of the library and museum to allow for easy access. However, the locks for the exterior doors into both the library and museum were keyed the same. Thus, the library can be accessed during closed hours when there are no GRRL staff present. This creates a security risk for GRRL, and leadership has been working with the city to rectify the situation.

Recommendations:

- Local and regional staff should continue working with the city in an effort to address the lock issue and improve security of the space.

Little Falls

The Little Falls Library has had ongoing issues with bat intrusion. The original facility is an historic Carnegie library built in 1904. There was an expansion 1998. The unique combination of a historic building with a modern expansion has created a building that has numerous entrance points for pests.

The city is responsive to the issue and handles any intrusion promptly. The city has also taken measures to mitigate the issue including re-sealing windows and installing one-way bat doors. These updates have reduced the amount of bat-related incidents.

This remains a concern due to the high potential for recurrence. GRRL received an OSHA complaint about bat intrusion in 2023. As a result, staff implemented regular procedures to monitor for bat intrusion and report any to the Little Falls Building Engineer.

Recommendations:

- Local and regional staff should continue monitoring for bat intrusion.
- Staff should continue working closely with the City of Little Falls to ensure that any bat intrusions are handled quickly and that mitigation efforts are ongoing.

Saint Cloud

The St. Cloud Public Library, built in 2008, is serving our needs. However, after 18 years of service to the community some updates are needed. First, the building presents several security issues, and we requested the city make changes to increase safety around the public spaces. The library needs security updates both inside and outside the library. The City of St. Cloud has been understanding of these needs and is actively working to address what they can in current and future years' budgets.

Essential exterior updates include removal of bushes outside the children's room. These bushes provide shelter for community members to sleep unobserved from the street. The bushes also collect trash and other windblown debris. Overall, we recommend complete removal to increase lines of sight for security and to neaten the exterior. Ideally, the spaces can be updated with artwork or similar to enliven and update the exterior while tying the library to the rest of downtown.

The interior St. Cloud Public Library needs security updates as well. These include an additional security camera covering the adult reference desk and sensors in public bathrooms that detect drug use. These security additions will help staff maintain a safer public space and allow follow up by authorities.

Much of the public furniture has been in heavy use since 2008 and shows its age. There is significant staining and wear on soft seating throughout the public spaces. We recommend replacement or re-upholstery to maintain a clean and neat appearance. This is a security issue as well, because a lack of clean functional seating gives visitors the impression that the space is rundown and uncared for.

Other, less visible, upcoming building issues include replacement of the automated materials handling system (AMHS) as well as plumbing and HVAC issues. The AMHS is used for both local and regional check-in and sorting of materials. The system has been in place since the library opened and has had multiple, recurring problems that leave it non-operational for days or weeks at a time. Staff have extended its life by recycling parts of the machine on different sections to keep it in operation. According to the lease agreement with the City of St. Cloud, ownership of the AMHS will be fully shifted to GRRL by 2033 (75% in 2027). Replacement is needed within 5-10 years.

We have been informed by the city that a major sewer pipe from the library to 12th Avenue South will need replacement at some point in the future. Currently, it is not a dire need. However, a human caused emergency could result in damage requiring immediate repairs. This could result in a regional service outage as well as for St. Cloud Public Library.

The specialty HVAC system for server rooms will likely need replacement within the next few years. While recent updates have improved its performance, it is something that both GRRL Information Technology (IT) staff and the city will need to watch.

Recommendations:

- Local and regional staff should continue working with the city in an effort to address interior and exterior security concerns listed above.
- For the eventual replacement of the automated materials handling system, GRRL will need to work with the City of St. Cloud to update wiring and more so that a new system can be installed with efficient and safety-minded traffic patterns for GRRL staff and visitors.
- Furniture replacement is a significant need.

Sauk Centre

This is the second historic Carnegie library in GRRL. Since 2021, water intrusion has been an issue. Heavy rain and leaf litter has caused rainwater and spring melt to come in through the emergency exit at the basement level. The city has been responsive to GRRL concerns and has done remediation multiple times. They routinely check drains. They have completed exterior updates such as water diversion, window replacement, and extra caulking. There has not been any water intrusion in 2026, so we are hopeful that the latest fixes will be sufficient.

This is a significant issue to watch because future water intrusion could impact the only restrooms in the facility as well as space used to provide programming for library patrons.

Recommendations:

- Local and regional staff should continue monitoring for water intrusion or any evidence of mold.
- Staff should continue working closely with the City of Sauk Centre to ensure that any water intrusion, mold, or other potential health issues are dealt with immediately.

Swanville

Water intrusion at the Swanville Library happens during large rain events and snow melt. There is water intrusion both seeping up from the ground level and coming down through the roof. The city has made numerous remediation attempts. City staff routinely remove snow and water from the roof. A carport adjacent to the library was also removed in hopes it would alleviate the issue. Industrial fans and bleaching are used to mitigate mold development, although it remains a concern.

As a result of the water intrusion and mold concerns, staff are no longer able to use the basement event room for story times or other programs.

Recommendations:

- Local and regional staff should continue monitoring for water intrusion or any evidence of mold.
- Staff should continue working closely with the City of Swanville to ensure that any water intrusion, mold, or other potential health issues are dealt with immediately.

Waite Park

The Waite Park library is undersized. As the population of Waite Park increases and changes, the current space cannot hold a collection appropriately sized for the community. Sufficient staff work areas are even more lacking. The result is that staff are unable to adopt efficient work processes and are without private space to work. Further, having an undersized building requires additional local and regional staff time to manage the local collection to provide a diverse and browsable selection of materials without exceeding shelving capacity.

In addition, the lack of event or meeting space significantly limits staff ability to offer programs and quiet, private places for patrons to connect with each other or work.

Recommendations:

- Regional staff should continue working with the City of Waite Park to emphasize the need for a larger library space.
- Preference should be given to a facility closer to new developments and areas of population growth, while also being convenient to a bus line.



Waite Park



Swanville



Little Falls



Eagle Bend

Current & Ongoing Facility Projects

Cold Spring

The Cold Spring Public Library, in its original location, was undersized. It had not been updated or expanded since 1984—before the library had computers. The size limited collection size, our ability to offer programs, and many public spaces were not accessible for patrons using mobility aids. The city has had at least two space needs analyses updates from GRRL leadership, and had several information meetings with committees and architects to address the long-standing space issues.

In June of 2026, the Cold Spring branch opened in its new temporary space at 402 Red River Ave N, STE 5. The GRRL Board approved this temporary space on October 21, 2025 with the understanding that the new library would be built within approximately three years. The city and temporary location owner, working with regional GRRL staff, made modifications to the medical arts building to fit the collection.

While the temporary space is larger than the previous facility, it presents challenges as a library. Patrons have expressed that the library is difficult to find as it is behind and beneath a medical arts building. In addition, the space is divided into multiple rooms down a long hallway, so visibility is limited. The city has mitigated the latter concern somewhat by providing security cameras.

In September 2026, significant water intrusion occurred due to faulty pipes. The city immediately addressed the water intrusion.

In spite of these challenges, local and regional GRRL staff are excited to work with the city toward the goal of a standalone library facility for Cold Spring. A parcel was purchased in 2023 for this use. The city hopes to fund the new library building through grants and donations. The Cold Spring Library Fund was established to handle fundraising for the building. The city council member in attendance at the October 2025 board meeting asserted it will take a period of three years to fundraise, construct, and move the Cold Spring branch to its true new home.



Paynesville

The current Paynesville Library location is a remodeled storefront on the main city street. This location is no longer sufficient to meet the needs of the community. The circulation desk is too small for two people, the staff work area is small and crowded, visibility from the desk to the back of the library is poor. The area for programs and events, which also serves as the central area for seating and meeting, is small. Lighting, particularly in the large print and adult fiction areas, is inadequate. And finally, street parking provides an accessibility concern and is insufficient during busy times and when events are taking place.

The City of Paynesville has acquired a vacant lot on Highway 23, with access to a residential area of town. The site is close to the elementary school while still part of downtown. An Ad-Hoc Library Committee was formed in June 2023 to investigate the possibility of a new library building in Paynesville. The GRRL Board approved the current project November 18, 2025.

The Ad-Hoc Library Committee contracted with Widseth Architecture for the design of the new building and also worked with students from NDSU. There is a preliminary building design completed and the City and the committee are now working to determine the best method of funding for the new building.



Artists' rendering of proposed Paynesville library.

ALTERNATIVE SERVICE RECOMMENDATIONS

Extended Access System

Formerly: Bibliotheca Open+

Description

Extended access uses technology to provide self-service library access. Patrons who have agreed to user terms are able to enter the public area using an updated library card. Patrons may check out items and use services like WiFi, printing, and copying. Services offered range from holds pick up to full collection access and Internet usage. Specific hours can vary based on the location. For example, a library housed in a multi-use facility might use extended access to allow patrons to use the library during hours when other tenants are open but be inaccessible overnight.

Extended access requires an express checkout, security technology such as cameras, swipe-card door access, the ability to secure some staff-only areas, and a subscription for building security and monitoring.

Patron Benefit

- Expanded access to library collection and services beyond staffed open hours.
- Chance for patrons with noise or other sensitivities to use the library when there are fewer people.
- In multi-use facilities, convenience of using the library and other services in a single trip.

Other considerations

- Would require an addendum to the Branch Agreement between GRRL and the City partner.

Service Costs

Additional costs for this service model include:

- Hardware such as security cameras and self-service technology along with the annual subscription fees for the software and support to offer this service.
- Facility improvements to allow key-card access to public spaces outside of library open hours.
- Updates to staff work areas such as locking doors or cabinets, etc. to ensure security of GRRL technology, files, etc.

Additional Considerations

If possible, a new funding source, such as a grant, local community support or donations, could be used to establish this service. GRRL should also evaluate usage both within and outside of library open hours. Significant decreases in usage over time may result in the discontinuation of services.

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.

Recommendations

This service has been adopted in a few other Minnesota regional library systems. Feedback from those systems has been generally positive, with minimal security or theft issues. Patrons appreciate the opportunity for greater access. Some systems have also found that while interest and support for this service is high, actual usage has been less than anticipated as most patrons still prefer to use the library when it is staffed.

Before offering this service to a community, additional research should be done to determine what has been successful in other regional systems so that GRRL can be clear on benefits and risks for both GRRL Trustees and potential community partners. While this may change in the future, for the span of this Development Plan, extended access should be considered an enhancement for a current location rather than an alternative to a facility with staffed library hours. In addition, a multi-use facility would be the best option, such as one that has a community or senior center, city offices, etc.

Lastly, since the 2022 plan was adopted, there are also more options than Bibliotheca Open+, thus we have changed the name for this option.

GRRL2Go Locker for Requested Items

Description

GRRL2GO is a remote smart-locker system used to securely hold materials requested by library patrons. The service includes a book return. Hours of access depend on the facility where the lockers are housed. Patrons are notified when their items are available.

Patron Benefit

- In communities with a GRRL branch, lockers could be included as part of an extended access project to further expand availability for patrons outside of regular open hours.
- In communities without a library, it could provide more convenient access to library materials for patrons unable to travel to a GRRL branch.

Service Costs

If this service existed as a compliment to a staffed library, additional staffing costs would be minimal. However, additional staffing and non-technology costs for this service model would be higher for communities without a staffed library:

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

Equipment costs

Capacity	40 to 160 compartments per controller* (maximum of 8 units)
	controller connection
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*

**2022 estimate*

Additional Considerations

This service would require a legal agreement between GRRL and the city partner. There are a number of aspects to the service that impact patron satisfaction both locally and regionally. These will likely be bigger issues in locations without staffed library hours:

- Current technology does not allow notification when the lockers are loaded. Instead, regional Distribution staff set items into request queues the night before delivery. As a result, patrons receive notification that their materials are available before the items have been loaded in the lockers.
- If there are not a sufficient number of lockers to meet local demand, the resulting delay negatively impacts patron satisfaction with the service. In addition, it may impact GRRL's ability to deliver requested materials in a timely manner for other patrons around the region, thus reducing the quality of public service more widely than just the location with the lockers.
- Because timelines for requested item hold periods and checkouts are universal for the GRRL system, GRRL is unable to create custom settings for the locker system that might improve the efficiency of materials circulation locally and regionally.
- Potential locations may want to offer additional services such as catalog or Internet stations, wireless access, etc., which would need to be considered in any agreement.
- Technology issues may lead to longer down times if the locker is housed in a location without GRRL staff who can troubleshoot and resolve the issues.
- Issues with patron accounts may be more difficult to address and resolve in a location without GRRL staff.
- Many locker systems on the market require radio frequency identification (RFID) technology, which GRRL has determined is not a good fit with our collection processes and budget.

Recommendations

Based on persistent challenges with the GRRL2Go lockers at the Sartell Community Center, this service may be better as an enhancement to existing library services rather than a replacement for a staffed location. An added advantage to this arrangement is that it would minimally impact existing delivery services.

In addition, GRRL should develop a way to better determine the minimum size locker system to meet the needs of a community. Both the Library and city partner need this information to ensure patron satisfaction. GRRL leadership should conduct a full evaluation of the Sartell service prior to expanding to other locations. This will improve GRRL Leadership's ability to provide potential community partners a clear understanding of the benefits, risks, and costs that the service may entail.



Outreach Collection Services

Previously: Community Mini-Library

Description

GRRL staff transport a small, curated collection of library materials to a municipality or partner organization on a regular basis, providing checkouts of requested and other materials, and pickup of returned items. Services could also include reference, tech tips, and even some programming. Library materials would be loaned for normal time periods.

No GRRL library materials or equipment would be stored on site. Thus, the partner organization would need to provide accessible indoor space 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. The site must be convenient to load and unload library materials and meet all applicable ADA criteria for accessibility. The partner must provide suitable furniture or tables for display of materials.

Partners must also provide electric and Internet connectivity (including VPN access) to allow for on-line circulation functions on site.

Patron Benefit

- Access to library materials and services for underserved populations.
- For organizations such as assisted living sites, it could provide access for home bound patrons unable to travel to their local library.

Service Costs

Staff time and travel: Expenses will depend on proximity to other libraries and frequency of visits.

Each stop will need to include time for loading and unloading library materials. Estimated staffing needs per stop: four hours per visit for direct public service, two to four hours per visit for collection selection and processing, and drive time to the location.

Additional Considerations

The purpose of this service would be to extend access to collection and services to populations that are underserved by traditionally staffed libraries. Outreach services might prove beneficial in the case of:

- Communities of 300 or more or more residents without a local library, or whose city can no longer support a local library, or
- Housing sites with a population of at least 50 residents who lack access to their local library (e.g. assisted living facilities, trailer parks, etc.) and are part of an underserved population.

Provision of this service would require regular evaluation to ensure sustainability. Specifically, that would include:

- Circulation – GRRL will periodically evaluate usage in the community. Significant decreases in usage over time may result in the discontinuation of services at a specific site.
- 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.

Recommendations

This model has been used successfully in other Minnesota regional library systems to provide much-needed library access to individuals and families who could not otherwise visit the library. GRRL should consider this extension of library service to communities or organizations with local funds to support the additional costs of operation, including delivery of materials.

It may also be worth looking for future grant opportunities to pilot this service in order to determine whether the return on investment is sufficient to make this part of the suite of regular GRRL services. Such a pilot should include partners in communities where there are GRRL libraries, as an enhancement of services to meet the needs of underserved and/or homebound patrons. If possible, it should also include a community without a library. Methods and benchmarks for evaluation should be included in the pilot plan.

Any pilot project would require a service agreement that outlines the responsibilities for GRRL and the community or partner organization as well as evaluation criteria for adding or discontinuing the service.

Consideration would be given to establishing such services

- In municipalities where there were no GRRL libraries or other outreach services within a 15-minute drive time from the community.
- In housing sites with a high density of residents who are unable to physically visit their local library.
- As an alternative, replacement method of service delivery for communities with library facilities identified as having significant and recurring issues.

Deposit Collection

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 historical 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.

Service Costs

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: one hour per three-week checkout period for public services staff, drive time to location.

Additional Considerations

Criteria for establishing

- The partner organization must provide a staff person on-site to manage and monitor the collection and coordinate with library staff.

Preference will be given to establishing these collections in the following situations:

- Communities without a local library or other outreach services, or
- Facilities in which mobility or disability of the residents is a barrier to accessing library services.

Provision of this service would require regular evaluation to ensure sustainability. Specifically, that would include:

- 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.

Recommendations

In the few sites where this service is currently offered, GRRL has assumed the full cost as it is a longstanding agreement with the institution and sustainable within existing staffing allocations. However, that might not be the case if this service were to be expanded. Therefore, as with Outreach Services, it may be worth looking for future grant opportunities to determine whether this service could be a sustainable way to build access for underserved communities. Such a pilot should include partners in communities where there are GRRL libraries, as an enhancement of services to meet the needs of underserved and/or homebound patrons.

Alternatively, GRRL should be open to communities or organizations with sufficient funds to support a cost share for delivery of materials and security of the collection.

In either case, GRRL should develop a service agreement for both current and future partners, which outlines the responsibilities for GRRL and the institution as well as criteria for evaluating or discontinuing the service.



Local Book Return

Description

Benefit GRRL patrons without a library in their community by providing a more convenient location to return library materials. The 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. In addition, it should:

- Provide some cover or protection from weather,
- Be easily accessible for patrons to drop off materials, and
- Allow sufficient space for GRRL staff to safely empty items and move them to delivery vehicles.

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.

Service Costs

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 the book return.

Equipment:

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

**2022 estimate*

Additional Considerations

Continuation of the service should be evaluated annually to gauge usage. If usage levels do not average at least 100 items per pick up, this service should be discontinued.

Other considerations

- Frequency of stops may impact loan periods and availability of materials for other patrons.
- Capacity for regional staff to provide additional pick-up stops will need to be determined.

Recommendations

This service could be offered to communities with local funds and resources to support the additional costs. GRRL should develop a service agreement that outlines the responsibilities for GRRL and the community and criteria for evaluating or discontinuing the service. GRRL could consider a pilot project 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.

ALTERNATIVE SERVICE MODELS CONSIDERED BUT NOT RECOMMENDED

Mail-a-Book

Description

The service was envisioned to expand access to homebound patrons or others without access to a GRRL library. Requested items would be mailed to patrons, and a return mailer provided.

Service Costs

Postage for mailing materials.

Physical space for storing the collection.

Staff time to manage the collection and delivery of requested items.

Recommendations

This service has been shifted from “recommended” to “not recommended” as of the 2026 Plan. Postage costs have increased significantly since earlier plans, making this a prohibitively costly service. In addition, leadership research suggests that a successful mail-a-book program would need a dedicated collection due to access and technology needs. GRRL lacks the space or staffing to accomplish this.

In addition, the expansion of the digital collection in recent years may have reduced the need for this service.

Popular Materials/Technology-Focused Library

Description

This would be a staffed library facility. The collection would be focused on certain areas instead of providing the full range of materials available with GRRL.

An example of this service would be a new materials collection of only items that are less than six 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 was used in the Victoria Public Library in Carver County, and we can learn from their challenges. Library staff there found success with a large children's collection. However, their attempt to offer only "popular" adult materials was less successful. Staff found that their adult patrons wanted a large, well-rounded, highly browsable collection.

Service Costs

Additional wiring would be required in order to offer more technologically focused library service. Additional equipment, such as scanners, computers, monitors, or other devices may need to be purchased.

Additional staff time to manage delivery processing for requested and returned items.

Additional Considerations

Patron Impact

- While some patrons might experience a better browsing experience and improved access to those items they seek, by definition this service model would exclude a significant number of patrons who would have to request any items that did not meet the specific criteria for the local collection.
- Depending on staffing levels, there might be improved public access to technology services, including basic computer assistance. However, with internet use declining significantly across the region, it is questionable whether this continues to be a relevant factor.

Recommendations

Based on research into patron behavior and the experiences of other regional library systems, we do not recommend this model for GRRL. Our patron use research shows that borrowers continue to seek

physical materials at the library. Not only that, they want a wide range of materials – multiple formats, genres, and both newly published and older materials. Patrons also want ample space to socialize, relax, or study.

In addition, our experience with facilities identified as “undersized” for the community serves as a caution against this model. A space too small for the full breadth of GRRL collection and services comes with an increased staff workload to process materials. There can also be decreased patron satisfaction when those expecting the full GRRL branch experience are disappointed in the lack of browsing materials or reader’s seating spaces.

We have also seen significant changes in the kinds of technology patrons seek to access in the library. Use of public internet stations has decreased significantly over the last decade as requests for printing have increased. Where need for additional tech help persists, GRRL’s Book a Librarian service may better meet many of the same technology needs that initially inspired this idea.

Joint Use School & Public Library Combination

Description

This would be a joint-use library facility, likely adjacent to a school. The collection would be accessible to both students and the general public. When joint-use libraries are proposed, it is generally as a cost-saving measure by establishing a single facility in a school, rather than two separate buildings.

Additional Considerations

Minnesota Statute 134.195 stipulates that any school and public joint-use library must have a separate board that includes representation from the local City Council and School Board. The statute also states that

> "Public library services established according to this section, including materials, programs, equipment, and other public library services, whether located in an elementary or secondary school building or elsewhere, shall be available for simultaneous use by students and residents of the area. If public library services are located in an elementary or secondary school building, a separate entrance, accessible from the outside of the school building, shall be provided for use by the residents (MN 134.195, Subd. 10)."

Recommendations

Joint-use public and school libraries are not recommended. Meeting the statutory requirements above would place multiple burdens on GRRL and the Board of Trustees and require a fundamentally different organizational and governance model than what has historically been in place. Additionally, GRRL Leadership has concerns that sharing space between students and community members could result in a number of challenges with respect to security, equitable provision of services, and collection development.

Bookmobile

Description

A library vehicle custom-fitted to provide both a collection of materials and access to internet stations or wireless. The vehicle would travel to partner locations where patrons could check out and return items, get assistance from library staff with reference questions, tech help, etc. Some programming could also be provided, such as summer story times.

Service Costs

The most significant cost would be for the vehicle.

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 GRRL's integrated library system.

Additional Considerations

- Length and height of vehicle limits collection size and is a factor in the type of driver's license (e.g. CDL) 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. The number of stops and amount of usage would impact the replacement cycle.
- Mobile internet access may be poor in some parts of the region.
- Winter driving conditions may limit the ability to use the service year-round.

Recommendations

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

Automated Library Kiosk

Description

Library materials would be available to patrons through vending machine type technology. GRRL staff would fill the machine with a selection of materials that library patrons could access using their card.

Service Costs

The long-term direct and indirect costs of offering this service would require substantial investment while providing access to significantly fewer items than even our smallest libraries.

Equipment:

Stand-alone kiosk	$115,000-$200,000 plus annual maintenance / support fees.
Capacity	350-800 items

Additional Considerations

- 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.
- Many systems on the market require radio frequency identification (RFID) technology, which GRRL has determined is not a good fit with our collection processes and budget.
- 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.
- This service would necessarily provide a very limited number of library items that fit the specification of the machine. Large or odd-sized items would not be available to patrons.
- Book return would need to be provided. This would require additional staff time for pickup and delivery.

Recommendations

This service seems prohibitively expensive for the degree of access it might provide. Other alternative service models would likely provide better access for local communities at a lesser cost for both the city and GRRL.

APPENDICES

I. Open Hours Adjustments since 2022

Library	2019 Weekly Open Hours	2022 Weekly Open Hours	Change Since 2022	Year changed	Current Weekly Open Hours	Reason for change since 2022
Albany	37	39			39	
Annandale	25	28			28	
Becker	30	33			33	
Belgrade	20	22			22	
Big Lake	29	32			32	
Buffalo	52	52			52	
Clearwater	23	25			25	
Cokato	28	31			31	
Cold Spring	34	37			37	
Delano	41	44			44	
Eagle Bend	20	23			23	
Elk River	51	51	-3	2023	48	Elimination of local funding
Foley	35	36	-3	2026	33	Regional budget implications
Grey Eagle	20	23	-3	2026	20	Staffing
Howard Lake	28	31			31	
Kimball	20	23			23	
Little Falls	43	45			45	
Long Prairie	35	37			37	
Melrose	25	27			27	
Monticello	43	43			43	
Paynesville	31	33			33	
Pierz	23	28			28	
Richmond	20	23			23	
Rockford	31	33			33	
Royalton	20	23			23	
Saint Cloud	59	59			59	
Saint Michael	44	47	+1	2024	48	Activity levels
Sauk Centre	32	35			35	
Staples	35	37			37	
Swanville	20	23	-3	2025	20	Staffing
Upsala	23	25			25	
Waite Park	30	32			32	
Total	**1,007**	**1,080**	**-8**		**1,072**	
Average Hrs/week	**31.47**	**33.75**			**33.5**	

II. General Building Information

Location	Building Age	Service Population -2025	Square Feet	Owned or Leased	Recent Building Updates
Albany	1999	14,038	3,500	owned	Does not include shared programming space. New carpet-2012
Annandale	2003	9,044	3,850	owned	Does not include shared programming space. New carpet-2024
Becker	1994	15,380	3,500	owned	New circulation desk-2010/new carpet-2015/new HVAC unit & roof repair-2025/new signage-2026
Belgrade	1955	2,649	1,789	owned	New carpet-2005 (2007?)/new roof-2024/Window replacement-2025/new HVAC-2025
Big Lake	1963	20,758	4,000	owned	New location-2009/new paint-2016/new signage-2024
Buffalo	1974 & 2010	28,154	10,000	owned	Remodel and expansion – 2010. New carpet-2024
Clearwater	1979	10,500	3,750	leased	New location-2012
Cokato	1976	6,412	2,480	owned	Additional 2300 sq. ft. in shared space. New flooring & circulation desk-2014
Cold Spring	1991	10,244	2,886	Leased 3 years	New temporary location-2026
Delano	1975	11,528	5,970	owned	New location-2004/Expanded office-2010/new carpet-2020
Eagle Bend	1989	4,357	3,108	owned	Expanded space-2024
Elk River	2007	78,350	16,000	owned	New flooring & shelving-2025
Foley	1992	9,901	5,000	owned	New carpet-2023
Grey Eagle	1945	2,826	2,500	owned	New circulation desk-2026
Howard Lake	2024	8,570	6,143	owned	New building-2024
Kimball	2020	4,977	3,200	owned	New building-2020. Additional 1000 sq. ft. community room and programming space

Location	Building Age	Service Population -2025	Square Feet	Owned or Leased	Recent Building Updates
Little Falls	1905 & 1999	16,899	14,000	owned	New carpet in 2013
Long Prairie	1988	10,883	2,570	owned	Additional 250 sq. ft. in shared meeting space. HVAC repaired/replaced-2024
Melrose	1991	8,597	2,850	owned	Does not include shared programming space. New carpet-2008/New carpet-2026
Monticello	1998 & 2004	18,753	9,039	owned	New location-2003/Remodel-2005/New carpet & paint-2024
Paynesville	1935	6,268	2,896	owned	Expanded-1996/new carpet-2012
Pierz	1938	9,169	3,570	leased	New carpet, shelving, & painting upon move in-2009
Richmond	1998	3,873	1,440	owned	
Rockford	1947	8,077	4,375	owned	
Royalton	1984	10,526	2,027	owned	New carpet-2016, Painting-2025
Saint Cloud	2008	120,670	118,000	owned	
Saint Michael	2010	34,009	9,375	owned	Does not include shared programming space
Sauk Centre	1903	9,166	5,032	owned	HVAC repaired/replaced-2020, windows replaced 2026
Staples	2009	7,951	3,800	owned	
Swanville	1957	2,275	800	owned	
Upsala	1987	2,640	1,726	leased	New carpet approx. 2020
Waite Park	1969 & 2003	16,585	3,472	owned	New carpet and paint approx. 2022

III. Example of a Facility Issues Rubric

Issue	Severity			Notes
	Low	Moderate	High	
Adequate square footage for public spaces	1	2	3	
Adequate square footage for staff work areas	1	2	3	
Non-safety space issues - noise, appearance, etc.	0	1	2	
Repeated water intrusion after attempt/s to fix	2	3	4	
Safety - Mold, air quality	3	4	5	
Safety - Pest intrusion	1	2	3	
Safety - Staff unable to see /hear public safety issues	2	3	4	

Rating numbers could be assigned based on potential safety or security threat.

IV. Recommendations for Further Study or Examination

Timeline	Topic	Page
2027	Evaluation of GRRL2Go	9-10
2028	Survey of library users and former or non-users.	10
2029-2030	Process to determine open hours reduction below 20 &/or shift to alternative services for small libraries with declining usage	9
2029-2030	Style guide and communication plan for new or renovated library projects.	11
2030	Addendum to Library Development Plan	7
2032	Express checkout cost/benefit analysis	10
NA	Extended access best practices	20

100 Administration
Chapter 2. Organization
2B. Library Development
Introduction

The GRRL Board determines whether and when new libraries or alternative services will be added to the regional service area. The board also works collaboratively with GRRL administration and local city government to determine if the location of the library is best suited to meet the public service needs of the community. The GRRL Board utilizes the guidelines, standards and measurements within this document to determine where libraries are located to best suit the needs of the region's library users. The priorities established within this policy are to be reviewed every three years to determine if the conclusions incorporated into this policy remain accurate.

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2B.1 GRRL Library Development Plan (document)

2B.2 Evaluation Criteria for New Libraries

A. Population

GRRL will place a high priority on developing and/or increasing access to existing libraries (providing additional open hours) in areas that serve the greatest number of people, have the greatest population densities, and have the largest potential for population growth. State demographer's data will be used. However, GRRL will also place a high priority on providing additional open hours in rural areas where access to services is limited by libraries open fewer than 35 hours per week.

B. Open Hours at Adjacent Libraries

GRRL will place a high priority on providing additional open hours in current libraries in order to meet the library needs of adjacent communities. GRRL will also place a high priority on developing open hours schedules that are complementary to other libraries in geographic proximity in order to provide more access to libraries in a particular area.

C. Drive Time

GRRL will place a high priority on library development in communities more than 15 minutes of drive time from another GRRL library. An exception may be made if a community within that limit commits to building a library significantly larger than those already existing in the area, or in the judgment of GRRL administration and library board will serve a regional need at a reasonable cost to GRRL.

D. Public Service Staff per Library Open Hours

GRRL will place a high priority on providing additional public service staff in geographic areas served by libraries with staffing levels significantly less than other areas of the region. Staffing solutions may include providing additional staff in existing libraries as well as providing an additional facility in the geographic area.

E. Collection Per Capita

GRRL will place a high priority on providing additional library materials in geographic areas served by libraries with collections per capita significantly less than others. Collection development solutions may include encouraging communities to expand, renovate, or provide new facilities that meet the needs of the geographic area. Another option is providing an additional library in the area.

F. Demographic Trends

GRRL will monitor and evaluate demographic trends in all parts of the region to better serve its customers. Such data may include but not be limited to, age, income, family size, immigration trends, and poverty data.

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2B.3 Minimum Level of Service

The following minimum level of service is defined as the basic GRRL library services delivered at every library throughout the region. The total amount of services delivered will be dependent on facility space, population size of community and surrounding area, proximity to other libraries, active registered borrowers, and patron demand.

Collection

- Shared and Floating - The collection is shared and floats freely among all GRRL libraries.
- Broad audience - Materials are purchased in a variety of formats representing a wide variety of views and tastes.
- Community driven - Patrons may suggest specific titles for purchase. Whenever possible, Interlibrary Loan will be offered for items GRRL does not purchase.
- Delivery - Delivery of requested material is provided on a regular basis.
- Collection maintenance - Library materials are systematically evaluated to facilitate the repair or withdrawal of damaged, unused or obsolete materials from the collection.

Technology

- Wireless - Public wireless Internet is available for web browsing from most devices.
- Internet station - Computer workstations with software are provided for public use.

- Public Access Catalog - Computer workstations are restricted to library catalog use and accessing library provided databases or services.
- Copying - Copiers are available for patrons to use for a fee per page.
- Printing from public computers - Patrons may print from GRRL computer workstations for a fee per page.

Locally Delivered Public Services

- Information services - Reference, reader's advisory and technology assistance provided in-person or over the phone.
- Circulation services - Registration of library cards, check-out and check-in of library materials. Automated telephone or email notification for requested materials.
- Programming services - Programs for all ages: pre-k, school age, teen, and adult with a minimum of 25 programs annually. A minimum of one outreach event per library community annually.

Regionally Delivered Public Services

Web-based

- Online catalog - The library catalog is maintained to reflect library holdings and facilitate convenient 24/7 access to library materials.
- Digital Library – e-books and e-audio materials are available through the library's website.
- Virtual reference – Email reference available during library open hours. Chat reference available 24/7 through statewide AskMN consortium.
- Subscription Databases - Patrons have access to databases on various topics that are subscribed to by GRRL or Electronic Library of Minnesota (ELM).

In-library

- Book-a-Librarian - Personalized face-to-face sessions with a librarian by scheduled appointment.
- Programming
    - Arts & Cultural Heritage Programs (grant dependent)
    - Summer Reading Program
    - Winter Reading Program

- Marketing and publicizing programs and services

Criteria for Scale of Services Delivered

The number of public and staff computer stations will be dependent on facility size and wiring capacity. Additionally, total Internet usage, borrowers, and open hours will be used to determine the number of stations assigned to a library. A minimum of one public access catalog, two public Internet station and two staff computer work stations will be provided in each library.

The amount of programs, marketing and publicity will be dependent on the number of borrowers served at each library and grouped by Tier.

Tier	Open Hours	Borrowers	Minimum annual program levels
1	20-23	400-1,300	25
2	24-40	1,300-4,000	30
3	41-49	4,000-20,000	40
4	50 or more	20,000 or more	200

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2B.4 Alternative Services

Great River Regional Library system has focused resources to deliver the highest quality patron experience in 32 libraries across six counties. These existing libraries are located within 15 minutes driving distance to the majority of the residents in the area.

Access to library services is a GRRL Strategic Plan Service Priority. Enhanced library service is desired by some communities without libraries within the service area. The alternative services identified in the Appendices are those that could most feasibly be offered within the constraints of the existing service model.

Expansion of any library service depends on the regional cost to add the service and/or local funds to support the service long-term. A community needs to demonstrate a desire for this type of service. Methods to determine resident interest would include a survey of residents and current GRRL library usage. Additionally, financial and political support from the community are essential. Any facilities or service points require approval of library administration and the GRRL Board. The facility or service point needs to meet GRRL requirements and be maintained as long as the service was delivered.

If a community wants to add library service using one of the described alternative services, priority would be given to those with underserved communities as demonstrated by:

- Local literacy rates
- Percentage of registered borrowers
- Access to public transportation
- Number of homebound residents

Other considerations include overall population size, proximity to existing library services, and traffic patterns. Addition of an alternative service model requires a service agreement outlining the responsibilities for GRRL and the community or organization and includes criteria for adding or discontinuing services. The approval process would follow the New Library Consideration Process.

Models of GRRL alternative services available for consideration include ~~Deposit Collections, Community Mini-Library, Mail-A-Book, GRRL2GO, Local Book Return, and Bibliotecha Open+~~extended access systems and GRRL2Go locker systems, outreach or deposit collections, or local book return. They ~~which~~ are described in detail in the ~~Appendices~~most recent GRRL Library Development Plan.

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2B.5 New Libraries

Library buildings are the responsibility of the municipality to operate and maintain. They may be owned or leased. Funding other than municipal tax receipts may be used to provide for those responsibilities, but those costs must be guaranteed by city council resolution and city levy authority. All requirements under Minnesota Statute 134.34 must be met.

A. New Libraries - Building Requirements*

1. The city wishing to add a new GRRL library location needs to meet all GRRL specifications for community size, facility space and distance from other GRRL libraries as outlined in GRRL policy and the GRRL Branch Agreement or other requirements set by the GRRL Board of Trustees.
2. Site: the library site shall provide maximum convenient access to the greatest number of people in the community during the normal course of their daily activities by being located near the center of highest density of daily activity and near high use facilities such as a post office, retail stores, educational facilities, or in close proximity to government centers or community centers.
3. The municipality will provide adequate, safe, convenient and well-lighted parking areas for library users and staff. Parking needs are based on population served. Convenient on and off street parking shall be made available for library customers. The minimum number of parking spaces may be determined by municipal zoning ordinances. Handicapped parking requirements of the Americans With Disabilities Act must be met.
4. Minnesota provides no absolute numerical standards for public library size. However, a large community population indicates a need for greater amounts of public service space to provide for necessary collections and other services. Communities serving larger populations require libraries with more floor space not only for larger collections, but also for additional seating, larger program space and greater numbers of computers to access library information resources.
5. The library must be of adequate size to meet and implement the full range of library services that are consistent with GRRL's long range plan and the standards within this document.
6. The library will have adequate space for adult, child, and family use, with all materials easily accessible for library users of all ages. Furniture provided by the municipality must also include design elements appropriate for children and patrons with disabilities. Furnishings and shelving purchased by the city must be approved by GRRL. Furnishings and shelving will remain as property of the city that will bear the responsibility of maintaining the facility and furnishings as outlined in the branch agreement. All purchased equipment will become the property of GRRL and must be approved by GRRL who will bear the responsibility of maintaining library operations as outlined in the GRRL Branch Agreement.
7. The library building and furnishings must meet state and federal requirements for physical accessibility, including the ADA Accessibility Guidelines for Buildings and Facilities (ADAAG).
8. In compliance with ADAAG, library signage must include directional signs and instructions for the use of the collection, the catalog, and other library services in print, Braille, alternate formats and languages other than English, as appropriate.
9. The library facility will support the implementation of current and future technologies. Installation and repair of code compliant wiring within the facility is a municipal responsibility.

10. The library entrance will be clearly visible and located on the side of the building that most users approach.
11. Interior lighting levels must comply with standards issued by the Illuminating Engineering Society of North America.
12. The library facility provides for the return of library materials when the library is closed. After-hours book deposits must be easily accessible to staff and secure and protect library materials from weather elements. It is highly recommended that after-hours book deposits store materials inside the facility. They must also be easily accessible to people with disabilities.
13. The municipality will provide appropriate floor covering throughout the building (carpeting or other sound absorbing materials).
14. The building will include appropriate ceiling treatments throughout (sound absorbing materials).
15. The building will include appropriate space for heating and cooling equipment, stairways, janitorial, entryway, and other spaces determined by community needs, service program and architectural design.
16. Because of additional staffing costs associated with multi-level buildings, all new libraries shall be constructed on one level of public service space. The space should be as open and as flexible as possible.
17. The building will include adequate heating and air conditioning.
18. The building will include adequate electrical service, conduits and outlets necessary to meet GRRL's needs.
19. Library space must be utilized only as a library and not as a community meeting room, city hall or any other purpose. Multi-use facilities are acceptable only if the library area has its own designated space and is physically separated from other areas of the building with walls and doors that can be locked and secured by library staff.
20. Library shelving must be standard metal or wood shelving in 3' sections in a variety of heights to accommodate children's, reference, audio-visual and other collections. All standard shelving units will be furnished with adjustable shelves.
21. The building must include convenient delivery access: the delivery access must be accessible for deliveries of library materials from headquarters.
22. The building must include an adequate private work area for staff off-desk tasks and breaks.

B. New Libraries - Access Requirements*

1. Library signage must be provided on main community thoroughfares as well as on the building. Communities must also provide signage on the facility that includes the GRRL logo.
2. The standard range of library services must be available during every open hour.
3. Library hours must include a mixture of morning, afternoon, evening and weekend hours to provide as much accessibility as possible for library users.
4. GRRL determines open hours schedules. Library open-hour schedules are arrived at by methods that may include a survey of the community, as well as an evaluation of library hours of adjacent library facilities to insure as much access for the public as possible.
5. Libraries must be open a minimum of 20 hours per week, or the minimum number of hours necessary to qualify for Regional Library Telecommunication Aid (RLTA).

* These requirements are based on the Wisconsin Public Library Space Needs Standards document. They are also referenced in Minnesota State Library’s Accessibility and Construction Grant guidelines.

C. New Libraries - Other General Requirements

Service Area

Library buildings and their primary area of service must be within the following Minnesota counties: Benton, Morrison, Sherburne, Stearns, Todd, and Wright. The population served must be at least 5,000 based on the community and adjacent townships surrounding the community. The most recent population statistics from the Office of the State Demographer will be used to determine compliance with this requirement.

Start-up Costs

Start-up costs for new library facilities are the responsibility of the host city to be provided through local funds. These costs include but are not limited to:

Library equipment and furnishings – funding for staff and public computers, network equipment, copier, telephone, Express Checkout machine. Equipment must meet minimum GRRL standards as outlined in policy to ensure compatibility with existing systems. Basic library equipment and operations costs required: circulation terminals, public access catalogs, public computer stations, cabling, printers, a copier, book carts and network equipment. Additionally, the costs for software license fees, printing, maintenance contracts, telecommunications (usually provided by RLTA), and miscellaneous equipment need to be covered. Considerations for space, wiring and equipment costs for self checkout stations are strongly recommended for libraries with projected circulation figures over 12,000 items per month. Projected costs will be calculated as part of a new library proposal and will be based on GRRL libraries of similar size and population service area.

Opening Day Collection – Funding for a physical collection of a size adequate to meet the size of the community. Library materials equivalent to 70 percent of capacity based on libraries of comparable size in GRRL. The opening day collection will consist of 25 percent re-distributed older materials from existing GRRL collection and 75 percent newly purchased materials. Projected costs will be calculated as part of a new library proposal and will be based on current GRRL models of collection size and format.

Any other items needed to open the library and meet GRRL specifications as determined by library administration and the GRRL Board.

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2B.6 Staffing Requirements

Library supervision and staffing levels are determined by the library's size, area population served, open hours, and potential population and business growth.

Any new library established in the region requires staff additions not only at the new library, but also at regional headquarters to meet increased demands for centrally provided information, materials and services.

A. Local Library Staff

The GRRL Board initially sets and approves the number and level of staff at each new library.

All new libraries must be staffed to meet the staffing guidelines and criteria approved by the GRRL Board of Trustees. Estimated staffing and open hours will be based on comparisons with other libraries serving similar populations.

B. ~~Central~~ Regional Staff

Each new library requires support from headquarters staff in a number of areas. Depending on the size of the library and the population served, the amount of regional staff support may vary. Support will be needed from all regional departments, including but not limited to regional Patron Services, Collection Development, Communications & Development, Information Technology, Human Resources, etc.~~This section attempts to show where additional support is needed and at what level when a library is added.~~

~~**Patron Services Librarian** – ½ hour per week~~
~~Responsible for locating information to answer subject requests from branch customers. Provides Ask a Librarian and virtual reference services.~~

~~**Collection Development Staff**: Librarian – ½ hour, Clerk – ½ hour~~
~~Responds to direct calls from libraries for information or specific materials. Participates in selection, weeding and other collection development activities. Process additional patron title requests. Additional time to select materials for an Opening Day collection is also required.~~

~~**Driver/Delivery:** To Be Determined~~
~~The number of hours necessary will be determined by the location of the library. A new library location may add as few as 10 minutes to as much as 40 minutes to the total delivery drive time.~~

~~**Technical Services Staff:** Technical Services Assistant – 1 hour, Technical Services Clerk – 1 hour, and Technical Services Aide – 1 hour per week.~~
~~Processes materials purchased for new libraries; periodicals and supplies.~~

~~Temporary hours for Technical Services Assistant, Technical Services Clerk, and Technical Services Aide to catalog and process the new library materials for the new library: 100 hours Technical Services Assistant, 100 hours Technical Services Clerk, and 100 hours Technical Services Aide.~~

~~**Collection Development Assistant –** 1 hour per week~~
~~To manage collection reports for the new location and associated collection related tasks.~~

~~**Community Relations:** Communications & Development Assistant – 1 hour per week~~
~~Miscellaneous tasks associated with library communications including typesetting, laminating, copying and filing.~~

~~**Patron Services Staff:** Library Associate – ½ hour per week~~
~~Assists in developing regional programming including Summer Reading Program and storytelling kits.~~

~~**Information Technology Staff:** Computer Support Technician – 3 hours per week~~
~~Assists in trouble-shooting all software and hardware problems. Installs computers. Upgrades software programs. Installs new peripherals. Provides network maintenance.~~

~~**Distribution Aide** – 2 hours per week~~
~~Assists in processing holds for libraries and distribution of new library materials.~~

~~**Circulation Aide** – 1 hour per week~~
~~Searches for holds on St. Cloud Public Library shelves.~~

~~**Administrative Staff:** Accounting Specialist – 1 hour per week~~
~~Payroll and cash reporting.~~

~~**Human Resources:** HR Generalist – 1 hour per week~~
~~Additional training needs.~~

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2B.7 Responsibilities of the Local City Council for Library Operation

1. Provision and maintenance of a building, furniture for staff and public areas, shelving and other building equipment (including but not limited to circulation desk).
2. Provision and maintenance of heat, air conditioning, light, water and other utilities with the exception of telephone service. All code compliant wiring is to be provided by the building owner or the municipality.
3. Janitorial (cleaning) and trash removal services on at least a weekly basis. Larger facilities need more frequent janitorial services.
4. Maintenance and repair of the building and grounds including raking, lawn mowing and snow removal in a timely manner.
5. Cities must provide insurance on the building (if city owned) and city owned contents. The city must also provide liability insurance coverage.
6. Development and interpretation of policies relating to meeting room use (if applicable).
7. Development of a Rules of Behavior Policy enforceable by local law enforcement.

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2B.8 Responsibilities of Great River Regional Library

1. Determination, development, and provision of programs and services to be provided with input from local residents of individual communities.
2. Development and carrying out of all library policies. GRRL maintains uniform service policies for all libraries. To minimize confusion no individual service policies for particular locations will be maintained.

3. GRRL administrative staff determines hours of service with input from local residents.
4. Collection development: The GRRL staff is responsible for selection of library materials for all GRRL libraries. All materials purchased for any library are to be ordered through GRRL regardless of the source of funds. Local citizens are encouraged to make suggestions for collection development and GRRL staff will evaluate those recommendations utilizing the library's Collection Development Policy. Gift materials or monetary donations will be accepted under the provisions of GRRL's Collection Development Policy. Collection maintenance including future purchases and de-acquisitions (weeding)
5. Personnel administration: GRRL is responsible for the selection, training and employment of all personnel. The GRRL Board is responsible for maintaining a region-wide compensation schedule and personnel policy applicable to GRRL employees. All decisions relating to staffing levels, promotion, demotion, hiring or terminations are the responsibility of the regional library.
6. GRRL will insure all GRRL owned materials and equipment.
7. Miscellaneous services: GRRL provides basic telephone service (except building wiring), networking, Internet connections and technology services, programming, delivery service, purchase of essential operating supplies and all other responsibilities not directly associated with the provision and maintenance of library buildings. Maintenance of GRRL-provided equipment.
8. GRRL will provide automation equipment, software and licenses required to perform assigned GRRL functions.
9. Computers – GRRL computers are to be used for library purposes only. No software can be added to any GRRL computer without the authorization of the Associate Director - Information Technology.

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2B.9 Renovated, Re-Located or Expanded Libraries

Local governments must work closely with GRRL when planning for renovation, expansion or relocating libraries. GRRL administration and/or the GRRL Board must approve all renovation and relocation projects. The GRRL Board shall determine whether GRRL staff and materials will or will not be located in any building provided by the city. The GRRL Board may choose not to provide service in a renovated or relocated building if it does not meet the needs of the region.

Relocated libraries must meet the criteria established in this document under V. New Libraries, sections A, B and C.

When existing libraries are renovated or expanded, significantly increased usage is likely. Anticipating and planning for increased staffing levels at these locations will require ongoing conversation with city planners. GRRL's budget cycle requires that a budget for the following calendar year be set in July of the preceding year. Budget planning for additional staff must be completed as part of the GRRL budget process well in advance of any library's expansion, relocation or renovation.

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2B.10 Contracts and Final Agreements

Using the criteria listed above, the following additional steps are required for the establishment of new libraries.

The GRRL Board has the final authority to approve the relocation or establishment of any new library.

New Library Consideration Process

1. City makes an official request by resolution for addition of a new branch location to the GRRL Board.
2. Upon GRRL Board approval, GRRL management provides the City and the GRRL Board with a full analysis of the requirements needed for new branch service, including start-up and ongoing operational costs.
3. Any city given authority by the GRRL Board to establish a new library shall pass a resolution committing the funding needed to meet the expenses listed in GRRL policies V. New Libraries and VI. Responsibilities of the Local City Council for Branch Operation from city revenues. Other funding sources may be used to meet these costs, but they must be backed by city resources under city levy authority. The city presents its proposal to the GRRL Finance Committee for consideration and recommendation to the full GRRL Board of Trustees.
4. The GRRL Board considers the proposal. Any new branch service ongoing operational costs are incorporated into future GRRL budgets.
5. A signed contract must be in place prior to the establishment of a new library outlining responsibilities of GRRL and the city.

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2B.11 Criteria for Reducing or Discontinuing Library Services

If it becomes necessary to reduce levels of service provided in the region, the following criteria will be used to evaluate where potential cuts to library services may be made.

- If possible, preference will be given to reductions in staff hours throughout the region prior to the closure of any library.
- Circulation - GRRL will evaluate circulation counts in the community in relation to number of residents served. Significant decreases in usage over time may result in the discontinuation or reduction of services.
- Numbers of users - Registered borrower and checkout session information will be evaluated regularly. Significant decreases in either number over time may result in the discontinuation or reduction of services. Population in general may also be used as an evaluation factor.

- Staffing or budget limitations - GRRL reserves the right to discontinue such services if funding for staff, library materials, technology, delivery services and equipment are no longer available to provide for it.
- Local support - The commitment and ability of the city to provide and maintain an adequate library building will be a factor in the decision to close a library or reduce services. Local support factors can include:
    1. Adequate budget to clean the library building on a regular basis.
    2. Prompt repair and maintenance of the building when needed.
    3. A record of local commitment to expand the library building if growth in services warrants.
    4. A record of meeting shelving and furniture needs.
    5. Prompt maintenance of grounds during and after snow.
    6. Adequate and prompt maintenance of outside grounds during the summer.
- Size of the library building - Inadequate size of the library building may be a factor in determining if a library will be closed or services reduced.
- Location - Driving time to other libraries will be a factor in determining if a library will be closed or services reduced.
- Program attendance - The number of people attending library programs will be a factor in determining whether a library will be closed or services reduced.
- No library may be reduced below 20 open hours per week ~~due to~~without consideration of financial implications related to RLTA requirements.

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~~**Appendix 1**~~

~~**Consolidated or Joint Use School/Academic Library Media Center/Public Library**~~

~~GRRL materials and services provided within school/academic settings. GRRL does not currently offer such services. GRRL would follow guidelines established in Jointly Operated School and Public Library Services in the Same Location: Co-Location: a guide to community based library services, a document published in May 2000 by the staff of Library Development and Services.~~

~~**Criteria for Establishment**~~

- ~~GRRL will consider establishing such services in communities not served by a GRRL branch library.~~
- ~~Population: GRRL will consider establishing such services in communities serving 5,000 or more people.~~
- ~~GRRL will consider establishing such services in communities not served by a community outreach service.~~
- ~~The library must be more than 15 minutes from an existing library.~~
- ~~Location: must be convenient to the general public~~
- ~~Hours: hours of operation must be convenient to the general public. The public must have access to the media center/library during hours of operation similar to other GRRL branch libraries in like communities, not just during school hours.~~

- Delivery: convenient and secure delivery access must be provided
- Training: costs for staff training related to school or academic operations, equipment and automated services will be the responsibility of the school.
- Most school/academic and public library materials must be accessible for checkout to the general public except general reference items that do not circulate.
- Equipment: Funding for computers, routers and other automation services that would be jointly used must be provided by the school. This would include any wiring costs.
- Resources available: Funding reductions may have an impact on GRRL's ability to provide such services.
- Local Support: school administration and media center personnel must support the plan.
- Joint planning: If possible, planning for joint school/public services should be accomplished prior to the design and construction of new school media centers or academic library.
- Staffing levels and areas of responsibility are to be negotiated.

Criteria for Reducing or Discontinuing Services

- Circulation: GRRL will evaluate usage in the community in relation to number of residents served. Numbers of borrowers will also be evaluated on an annual basis. Significant decreases in usage over time may result in the reduction or 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.
- Public Library service in a school or academic library would be discontinued if another library were to be opened in that community or within 15 minutes of that library.

Appendix 2

Deposit Collection

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.

Criteria for Establishment

- Preference will be given to establishing these collections in communities not currently served by libraries.
- Preference will be given to establishing these collections in communities that are not currently served by other outreach services.
- A committed staff person on site to manage and monitor the collection and coordinate with library staff.
- Geographical balance: GRRL will attempt to establish these collections in a manner in which all counties are represented in a proportional manner.
- Special needs populations: 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.
- Resources available: Funding or staffing reductions may have an impact on GRRL's ability to provide these services.

- Staffing needs: 1 hour per week at Library Assistant level, 1 hour per week of Library Aide, and driver time (depending on route). If onsite programming is desired, this enhanced service would require 2 hours Patron Services Librarian time per program.
- GRRL approved service agreement.

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.

Appendix 3

Community Mini-Library

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 a specific time period. No GRRL library materials or equipment are stored on site.

Criteria for Establishment

- Preference will be given to establishing these collections in communities not currently served by libraries.
- 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.
- Resources available: Funding reductions may have an impact on GRRL's ability to provide these services.
- Staff time and travel: Time will depend on location and whether it is close to a current delivery route or library as well as number of delivery days. Each stop will need to include time for packing and unpacking materials.
- GRRL approved service agreement.

~~**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.~~
- ~~Building: GRRL may consider discontinuing such services if the facility were not able to meet the requirements in this document.~~

~~Appendix 4~~

~~Jail Services~~

~~Materials provided upon request.~~

~~**Criteria for Establishment**~~

- ~~GRRL will provide donated paperbacks to jails upon request.~~

~~Appendix 5~~

~~Mail Services~~

~~GRRL does not offer a Mail-A-Book program. GRRL encourages family members and/or caregivers to arrange to pick up and return library materials for library customers who are homebound. GRRL may opt to pilot this service if funding from other sources becomes available.~~

~~Appendix 6~~

~~Bookmobile Service~~

~~GRRL does not offer bookmobile services.~~

~~Appendix 7~~

~~GRRL2GO~~

~~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.~~

~~**Criteria for Establishment**~~

- ~~Preference will be given to establishing this alternative service in communities not currently served by libraries.~~

- Funding: Communities with local funds and resources to support the additional costs of capital and operation, including delivery of materials. A GRRL service agreement would be developed outlining the responsibilities for GRRL and the community as well as criteria for adding or discontinuing the service.
- Staff time and travel: Time will depend on location and whether it is close to a current delivery route as well as number of delivery days. Each stop will need to include time for emptying book return.
- Delivery time: Time will depend on location, whether it is close to a current delivery route, as well as number of delivery days. Each stop will need to include time for loading and unloading lockers and emptying book return.
- Controller connection would be required.
- Time to process incoming/outgoing delivery and returns: dependent on usage and number of delivery days.
- System needs to be located indoors at a facility that is monitored by local city staff.

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.
- Building: GRRL may consider discontinuing such services if the facility were not able to meet the requirements in this document.

Appendix 8

Local Book Return

Provide a local book return in cities without library facilities. Location needs 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.

Criteria for Establishment

- Preference will be given to establishing this alternative service in communities not currently served by libraries.
- Funding: Communities with local funds and resources to support the additional costs of capital and operation, including delivery of materials. A GRRL service agreement would be developed outlining the responsibilities for GRRL and the community as well as criteria for adding or discontinuing the service. GRRL may opt to pilot this service if funding from other sources becomes available.
- Staff time and travel: Time will depend on location and whether it is close to a current delivery route as well as number of delivery days. Each stop will need to include time for emptying book return.

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. 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.
- 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.
- Building: GRRL may consider discontinuing such services if the facility were not able to meet the requirements in this document.

Appendix 9

Bibliotecha Open+

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.

Criteria for Establishment

- GRRL will consider establishing Bibliotecha Open+ in an existing shared-use facility if an interested city partner is willing to help support it.
- Requires an Express Checkout station to be installed.
- Limited to buildings that are staffed and occupied beyond library 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.

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2027 Open Hours Adjustments

Submitted by Cara Langston, Lead Patron Services Supervisor

BOARD ACTION REQUESTED

☒ Information ☐ Discussion ☐ Approve/Accept

RECOMMENDATION

In response to changing traffic patterns and staffing challenges, we plan to adjust open hours in 2027 for five libraries: Buffalo, Cold Spring, Richmond, Staples, and Upsala.

BACKGROUND INFORMATION

☒ Supporting Documents Attached

- A list of these libraries with current and new hours and a brief description.

The total number of open hours and staffing allocations are not impacted by these changes.

FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

Estimated Cost: $ 0 Funding Source: Budgeted: ☐ Yes ☐ No ☒ N/A

ACTION

☐ Passed ☐ Failed ☐ Tabled

Library Open Hours Adjustments

Buffalo
Patron busyness and survey results indicate patrons prefer earlier opening times. Shifting hours meets this community need more consistently.

Current Schedule	2027 Schedule
Monday: 10 a.m. - 8 p.m.	Monday: 10 a.m. - 7 p.m.
Tuesday: 10 a.m. - 8 p.m.	Tuesday: 10 a.m. - 7 p.m.
Wednesday: 10 a.m. - 8 p.m.	Wednesday: 10 a.m. - 7 p.m.
Thursday: 12 - 8 p.m.	Thursday: 10 a.m. - 7 p.m.
Friday: 11 a.m. - 5 p.m.	Friday: 10 a.m. - 5 p.m.
Saturday: 10 a.m. - 2 p.m.	Saturday: 10 a.m. - 3 p.m.
Total open hours: 48	*Total open hours: 48*

Cold Spring
Local busyness trends show late evenings on Tuesdays and Thursdays get comparatively little use. By shifting evening hours to open earlier on Tuesday, we can better provide access to the community.

Current Schedule	2027 Schedule
Monday: 12 - 6 p.m.	Monday: 12 - 6 p.m.
Tuesday: 2 - 8 p.m.	Tuesday: 12 - 7 p.m.
Wednesday: 10 a.m. - 5 p.m.	Wednesday: 10 a.m. - 5 p.m.
Thursday: 11 a.m. - 8 p.m.	Thursday: 11 a.m. - 7 p.m.
Friday: 11 a.m. - 5 p.m.	Friday: 11 a.m. - 5 p.m.
Saturday: 10 a.m. - 1 p.m.	Saturday: 10 a.m. - 1 p.m.
Total open hours: 37	*Total open hours: 37*

Richmond
Changing Monday's last hour of the day to open earlier on Wednesday benefits the public during more busy times and allows us to more easily staff Mondays.

Current Schedule	2027 Schedule
Monday: 2 - 8 p.m.	Monday: 2 - 7 p.m.
Tuesday: 10 a.m. - 1 p.m.	Tuesday: 10 a.m. - 1 p.m.
Wednesday: 11 a.m. - 1 p.m., 3 - 6 p.m.	Wednesday: 10 a.m. - 1 p.m., 3 - 6 p.m.
Thursday: 3 - 6 p.m.	Thursday: 3 - 6 p.m.
Friday: 3 - 6 p.m.	Friday: 3 - 6 p.m.
Saturday: 10 a.m. - 1 p.m.	Saturday: 10 a.m. - 1 p.m.
Total open hours: 23	*Total open hours: 23*

Staples
Shifting hours earlier meets patron busyness trends and patron requests that the branch open over the noon hour on Tuesdays and Thursdays.

Current Schedule	2027 Schedule
Monday: 10 a.m. - 6 p.m.	Monday: 10 a.m. - 6 p.m.
Tuesday: 1 - 8 p.m.	Tuesday: 12 p.m. - 7 p.m.
Wednesday: 10 a.m. - 6 p.m.	Wednesday: 10 a.m. - 6 p.m.
Thursday 1 - 8 p.m.	Thursday: 12 - 7 p.m.
Friday: 1 - 5 p.m.	Friday: 1 - 5 p.m.
Saturday 9 a.m. - 12 p.m.	Saturday: 9 a.m. - 12 p.m.
Total open hours: 37	*Total open hours: 37*

Upsala
The Upsala hour changes reflect patron preference for earlier opening hours and busyness trends.

Current Schedule	2027 Schedule
Monday: 10 a.m. - 4 p.m.	Monday: 10 a.m. - 6 p.m.
Tuesday: 2 - 6 p.m.	Tuesday: 2 - 6 p.m.
Wednesday: 2 - 8 p.m.	Wednesday: 1 - 7 p.m.
Thursday: Closed	Thursday: Closed
Friday: 2 - 8 p.m.	Friday: 2 - 6 p.m.
Saturday: 10 a.m. - 1 p.m.	Saturday: 9 a.m. - 12 p.m.
Total open hours: 25	*Total open hours: 25*