

ANNUAL REPORT

JULY 2022 – JUNE 2023



Grand Rapids
PUBLIC LIBRARY





DIRECTOR'S LETTER

As I reflect on the past year at the Grand Rapids Public Library, I am so proud of all we've accomplished and I look ahead with a renewed sense of hope and excitement.

With a deepened commitment to our patrons in mind, staff across the system worked thoughtfully, creatively, and passionately to further our mission.

Together we demonstrated our dedication to public service through the expansion of our collection, through socially responsive events designed to encourage intergenerational connectivity, and through outreach initiatives that brought the library further into the neighborhoods that make up the fabric of the city we call home.

The organizational highlights presented within this annual report underscore the significant role that libraries play in both building and safeguarding healthy, engaged, and thriving communities.

We are truly grateful for our city's collective recognition that GRPL is key to a dynamic, creative, livable city where people come together to learn and be heard.

John McNaughton
Library Director

BY THE NUMBERS



44,577
Library cardholders

9,859
First time cardholders

423,829
Library visits

472
Library events



81
Outreach events

770,950

Physical items borrowed

528,421

Digital items borrowed

128,732

Digital archival items viewed

97,472

Database searches

165,982

WiFi connections

1,385

Hotspots borrowed



73,647

Public computer sessions

PROGRAMMING HIGHLIGHTS



MOVIES ON THE LAWN

Movies on the Lawn, a fun movie-going program, welcomed participants of all ages. The program was designed as a way to foster meaningful, multi-generational experiences. Featuring a movie screening and arts and crafts, this three-part series was brimming with attendees and we welcomed over 300 guests per event to our Yankee Clipper Branch.

This film series activated the Libraries on the Lawn spaces that were installed in 2021 which include lawn games, seating and a parking lot mural.

STORYTIMES

Our well-loved storytimes feature fun and engaging activities as well as lively book readings led by expert staff. Parents and caregivers have long entrusted GRPL with the development of their child's early literacy skills. Patrons continue to seek out storytimes to support their child's growth.

With a commitment to ensuring that the stories and lived experiences of historically silenced communities are highlighted, we've also focused storytimes around cultural celebrations. Our Black History Month storytimes were a success, our highest attended event welcoming 86 visitors.





HISPANIC HERITAGE MONTH

GRPL continues to offer experiences that celebrate cultural heritage. Our Hispanic Heritage Month programming focused on providing experiences both with and to the communities in which we serve. In collaboration with key partners, we offered programming for all ages that elevated the work of local musicians, artists, and experts in mental health.

COMIC GEEK OUT

Comic Geek Out provides locals with the opportunity to attend a comic-con style event at no cost. This well-loved event grows each year and our 2022 program exceeded attendance expectations. Over 500 attendees celebrated their favorite fandom at our Yankee Clipper Branch on July 16, 2022.

Community members participated in workshops, table-top games, art-and-crafts experiences, and a cosplay contest. The highlight of the event was a presentation by nationally recognized voice actress and Grand Rapids native Colleen O'Shaughnessey.



Through the generosity of its donors, the Grand Rapids Public Library Foundation continues to support much of our Library's programming, which allows us to design and implement impactful experiences throughout the year.

Consider a donation today.
www.grplfoundation.org/donate



ADULT STORYTIMES

Building on the success of our children's storytime events, we introduced Adult Storytimes into our programming rotation in the fall of 2022. Designed to facilitate community connection featuring a local storyteller or entertainer reading short stories, each experience allowed adults to meet new friends and connect through storytelling.

SERVICE HIGHLIGHTS

WEBSITE UPGRADES

We launched a new website in December 2022 to improve community access to GRPL's collection, resources, and information. The new site leverages staff-created book and material lists, hosts a responsive event calendar for easy browsing, and elevates the services of the library with dynamic and engaging staff-generated content.

WEBSITE ACCESSIBILITY & ADA COMPLIANCE

Equal access to information, programs, and services is a key value at GRPL. This year, the library underwent a comprehensive review of our public website to remediate accessibility barriers pursuant to a voluntary resolution agreement with the Office for Civil Rights. We adopted the Web Content Accessibility Guidelines (WCAG) 2.1 level AA as our standard and used this as a benchmark for our testing.

Using a combination of manual testing procedures as well as a third party software subscription, our staff performed an in depth review of our website. Due to their efforts, our website meets our accessibility standards ensuring equitable usage for our community.

HOLD LOCKER EXPANSION

In response to positive patron feedback and usage data from our Hold Locker service at the Ottawa Hills Branch, GRPL expanded this service. Our Seymour and West Side locations welcomed new Hold Lockers to their exterior in the fall of 2022. In addition to the expansion, GRPL also changed locker vendors and updated both hardware and the software interface to optimize the patron experience.



ONE-ON-ONE CONSULTATIONS

GRPL's One-on-One consultations emphasize our commitment to supporting the growth and potential of each of our patrons. 249 One-on-One Technology Help appointments were scheduled and we offered 81 Small Business Resource Center consultations.



PATRON SUPPORT MATERIALS

Staff across the library system have been working together to help GRPL provide a wide variety of support materials to patrons. To address the need to ensure all patrons have access to products that support their health and dignity, we've provided bottled water, hand and toe warmers, cold packs, a free diaper dispenser, deodorant and hygiene products for teens, menstrual products, and at-home COVID-19 tests. Feedback from patrons for these items has been overwhelmingly positive.

RESOURCE NAVIGATOR

GRPL helps patrons navigate a variety of needs by providing them with referrals. To further pursue our commitment to care, we've hired a Resource Navigator who makes critical connections between vulnerable patrons and community resources that improve quality of life.

The Resource Navigator has regular office hours at all GRPL locations and works closely with front-facing staff who often facilitate warm introductions to patrons who are looking for resource-related assistance. In the first eight months of the position, Sabrina Slenk has worked with 75 GRPL patrons, resulting in 154 referrals to support resources. In the process she has facilitated access to a wide variety of needs, including transportation, transitional housing, mental health services, mobile phone hardware, employment services, food, and clothing.



ONSITE COMMUNITY RESOURCE AVAILABILITY

Nonprofit agencies have been regularly visiting GRPL locations to provide information about their services or to work directly with patrons. Arbor Circle Youth Outreach, Pine Rest StreetReach, Safe Haven, YWCA, Mel Trotter, Catherine's Health Center, Family Futures, Kent ISD, are a few of our regular partners.

OUTREACH HIGHLIGHT

MOBILE LIBRARY ROUTE PILOT

In the spring of 2023, the Mobile Library kicked off a 10-week pilot that provided targeted services to community members who are unable to visit GRPL locations due to socio-economic status, transportation, and geographic isolation. Community members who engage with the Mobile Library can sign up for a library card, check out books and movies, access free WiFi, and utilize our printing services. Our 10-week pilot allowed us to gather baseline data to inform future Mobile Library services and goals.





COLLECTION HIGHLIGHT

VINYL COLLECTION

Inspired by media consumption trends and data, GRPL added vinyl records and portable record players to its circulating collection at the Main Library and West Side Branch.

To complement the collection, we added in-house listening stations at both locations for patrons to sit and enjoy music independently or with a friend. Our vinyl collection has proven to be a popular offering with 30-35 year olds and over 90% of the collection has been checked out since its introduction.

HISTORY CENTER HIGHLIGHTS



The Grand Rapids History Center continues to build, preserve, and share the history of our community. In 2022, we provided access to 869 boxes of material from our archives. This includes unique items such as photographs, diaries, scrapbooks, records, and letters. On top of this, patrons requested 552 folders of negatives from the Robinson Studio collection, 734 high school yearbooks, and 387 addresses from our real estate listing cards.

Our archival collections were accessed in person by 415 unique patrons from 68 different zip codes across 15 states. Despite this reach, our primary use is from local residents, with 70% of the requests coming from patrons in the 49503 through 49507 zip codes.

We supported research on topics that impact our community. These included intersections between climate change and the Odawa people, mural projects in the Heartside Neighborhood, the role of philanthropy in Grand Rapids, and local civil rights leaders like Phyllis Scott.



FRIENDS OF THE LIBRARY

BOOK SALE

The Book Sale presented by the Friends of the Library has been a signature experience for library-goers each year. The well-loved event was paused due to the COVID-19 pandemic, but returned in October 2022 with record attendance. Staff and volunteers welcomed over 3,000 visitors and the sale brought in over \$11,000.00 in proceeds that directly support our library programming.

FINANCIALS

LIBRARY REVENUE

	<u>Operating Fund</u>	<u>Capital Fund</u>	<u>Trust Fund</u>
Property Tax Millage	\$ 11,929,258	\$ —	\$ —
Penal Fines	280,985	—	—
Interest Income	(543,094)	(135,218)	6,837
Other Income	123,751	490,000	—
State Aid	179,300	—	—
Fines and Fees	20,955	—	—
Total Revenue	\$ 11,991,155	\$ 354,782	\$ 6,837

LIBRARY EXPENDITURES

Personnel Services	\$ 7,578,264	—	—
Building Maintenance, Utilities, Other Services	1,231,178	—	—
Collections of Books & Media	1,563,595	—	—
Capital Outlay	490,000	340,407	—
Other Operations	894,518	—	—
Administrative Services	258,358	—	—
Total Expenditures	\$ 12,015,913	\$ 340,407	\$ —

LIBRARY FUND BALANCE

FY 2022 Surplus (Deficit)	\$ (24,757)	\$ 14,375	\$ 6,837
Prior Year's Balance	4,818,836	1,406,562	450,962
Ending Fund Balance	\$ 4,794,079	\$ 1,420,937	\$ 457,799

BOARD OF LIBRARY COMMISSIONERS

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Kristen Kopec•

Lauren Woolsey•

° term ended December 2022

• term started January 2023

* term ended April 2023

GRAND RAPIDS PUBLIC LIBRARY FOUNDATION FINANCIALS

FOUNDATION ASSETS

	<u>June 30, 2023</u>	<u>June 30, 2022</u>
Cash	\$ 18,802	\$ 23,083
Endowment Fund	5,672,713	5,238,734
Other assets	—	—
Total assets	\$ 5,691,515	\$ 5,261,817
Accounts and grants payable	23,005	8,358
Net assets	\$ 5,668,510	\$ 5,253,459

FOUNDATION INCOME

Contributions and gifts	\$ 138,140	\$ 257,100
Investment income	403,553	231,818
Unrealized gain on investments	239,134	(825,633)
Other income	8,996	15,104
Total Income	\$ 789,823	\$ (321,611)

FOUNDATION EXPENSES

Grants made and granting expenses	\$ 343,221	\$ 341,855
Development	14,249	11,818
General and administrative	17,302	15,665
Total Expenses	\$ 374,772	\$ 369,338
Change in net assets	\$ 415,051	\$ (690,949)

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