



Help us **WRITE THE NEXT CHAPTER** for the South St. Paul Public Library

- Foreword -

The South St. Paul Public Library first opened its doors in 1922 and moved to the first public library building in Dakota County in 1927. The library is one of only four City-owned and operated libraries of 115 libraries in the metropolitan area. Since its opening, the library has served thousands of people through providing a space to learn and enjoy its many collections and offering special programs such as community preschool story time in local schools and Sip & Spell Adult Spelling Bee, as well as special events throughout the year.

What's the Story? (Current Situation)

Safety & Service Concerns Prompt Facility Study

Our library has served us well, but we are at a crossroads. A 2016 facility study of the current library found several building and operating deficiencies. The study suggested the needed improvements and expansions have an expected project cost of over \$6 million in 2022 construction dollars and will not address parking issues. This same study suggested that a new building that would meet the needs of the community in terms of space, experience, future technology, and parking would cost over \$8 million in 2022 construction dollars. Simply put, the City cannot operate the library in its current state due to safety and service concerns and must also consider the financial implications to the City and its residents.



Objectives

While this issue is near and dear to many people in the City, it should be understood that the over-riding objectives include:

1. Upgrade library facilities for the citizens of South St. Paul
2. Provide quality library services to the community
3. Engage the public through a transparent information sharing process
4. Seek broad-based and representative citizen input to aid in the decision making process
5. Preserve the original 1927 building through repurposing or upgrades
6. Be fiscally responsible



(Read about the ABCs of the decision on next page.)

The ABCs of the Next Chapter

Libraries, and the services and experiences they provide, are a vital part of any community. As we look toward writing the next chapter in our community, we want to ensure the library serves the needs of all South St. Paul's residents.

There are three main areas where the City needs your input:

A

AUTONOMY

One of decisions the City is considering is whether to **join the Dakota County Library System (DCL)** with nine other libraries in the cities of Apple Valley, Burnsville, Eagan, Farmington, Hastings, Inver Grove Heights, Lakeville, Rosemount, and West St. Paul. The certainties with this option include Dakota County Library System will share resources and assume financial responsibility now and in the future. The uncertainties include impacts on total staffing numbers and responsibilities, potential differences in programming, and collection maintenance.

B BUILD-OUT

According to the 2016 Facility Study and standards set forth by DCL, the current library and site are inadequate for the needs of the community. The City must consider whether to **renovate the current library realizing that not all issues, including parking, will be addressed or build a new library on a larger site.** The current library building is a recognized feature in the City and holds memories for some of its residents. It is uncertain if DCL will want to renovate the current building due to the inadequate size. The City is also uncertain whether to continue to invest dollars into a site that was deemed deficient in the 2016 Facility Study.

C COST IMPACTS

As the City considers the importance of the library in the daily lives of its residents, it also must weigh the cost impacts now and in the future.

Join Dakota County Library System: If DCL assumes operations of the library, South St. Paul would realize a net property **tax savings of \$319,467/year** that could be reallocated to address drinking water, wastewater, streets, and other infrastructure upgrades. (Estimates are based on 2019 City and County budgets).

Build-Out as a part of the Dakota County Library System: If DCL assumed the costs of build-out at the current site or a new site, the City would see a **potential savings of between \$471,750/year and \$699,100/year** respectively from shifting a tax levy increase from South St. Paul residents to Dakota County.

Maintain Autonomy: If the City decides to maintain autonomy, financing options include a referendum, or various types of bonds which entail an election and varying interest rates to address the **\$6-\$8 million in renovation cost.**



HELP US Write the Next Chapter



Help us write the next chapter of our community by participating in discussions and surveys in the coming months. To find additional information and links to provide input, please go to:

www.southstpaul.org/481/Future-of-SSP-Library