



Anoka County LIBRARY



Strategic Plan 2024-2028

Contents



1	We appreciate you
2	Strategic plan
4	Anoka County Library statistics
7	Our strategic priorities 2024 – 2028
9	Priority 1: Access
11	Priority 2: Connection
13	Priority 3: Literacy
15	Priority 4: Experience
17	Our process
18	Feedback from our community
22	Library locations

We Appreciate You

The library is a reflection of the community it serves. We love serving Anoka County! We are honored that families, seniors, small business owners, gamers, immigrants, job seekers, creators, and community partners look to our collections, programs, and services to connect with ideas, information, and inspiration.

The library should be an expression of its community's vision and creativity; this can only happen if community members actively participate in decision-making and planning. We appreciate the strong investment our residents make in the library. When we put out a call for community input for our strategic planning process you came out in force!

We are immensely proud of what we have achieved together and are excited about the future. We have plans for even more enriching programs, expanded collections, and enhanced services, all of which will be made possible with your continued support. As we move forward, we encourage you to share your ideas, feedback, and suggestions with us. Your input is invaluable in shaping the direction of our library.

Creating a library is a community effort. Thank you for being part of Anoka County Library!

What is a strategic plan?

This strategic plan outlines the direction and goals of Anoka County Library during the next five years. This plan will communicate to Anoka County residents, library patrons, community partners and other library stakeholders our priorities, goals, how we want to get there, and how we will measure success.



Strategic plan

2024 - 2028

Access

We will make it easy to access library resources and spaces.



Ensure library spaces are accessible and inclusive.

Provide materials, services, and programs that reach people where they are.

Increase the number of library card holders.

Connection

We will strengthen connections with our patrons and communities.



Increase awareness of library services and programs.

Develop partnerships that expand library capacity.

Build community relationships in order to reach underserved populations.

Literacy

We will cultivate a love of learning and support reading, digital, and information literacy skills.



Encourage lifelong reading achievement with a special focus on early literacy and emerging readers.

Prepare patrons for life online through various types of digital literacy instruction.

Educate community members on how to find, evaluate, and use information.

Experience

We will provide consistent high-quality services and experiences.



Create an inviting and comfortable atmosphere.

Build, support, and equip a welcoming staff that provides exceptional customer service.

Provide user-friendly library resources.

Strategic Priorities

Access • Connection • Literacy • Experience

Values

- Access
- Confidentiality and Privacy
- Democracy
- Diversity
- Education and Lifelong Learning
- Intellectual Freedom
- Preservation
- Professionalism
- Public Good
- Service
- Social Responsibility
- Sustainability

Vision

A county where knowledge, creativity, and opportunity thrive.

Mission

Connect community to ideas, information, and inspiration.

Anoka County Library statistics 2024

Visits

591,946

Checkouts



1,898,963 physical



930,559 digital



117,329 print and copy
jobs completed

Public computer and WiFi sessions

993,782



24,208 people attended
1,653 programs



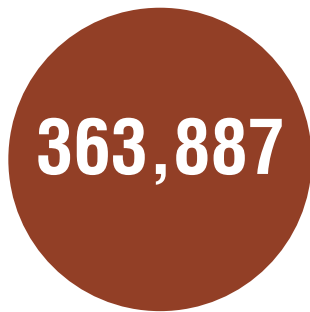
102 staff








4,832 volunteer hours

Who lives in Anoka County?

Population 2020



-  12% speak a language other than English
-  40% are between the ages of 25-54
-  33% of households have children under 18
-  31% have a bachelor's degree or higher
-  51% have lived in their house for 13 years or less

What is our community saying about our library system?

At Anoka County Library, respondents feel:



99%

Welcome



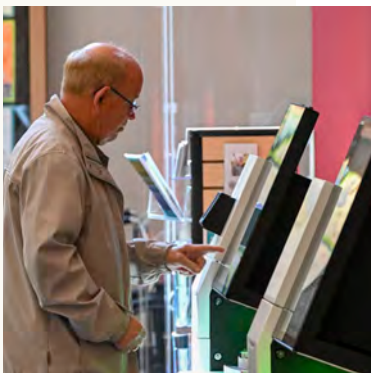
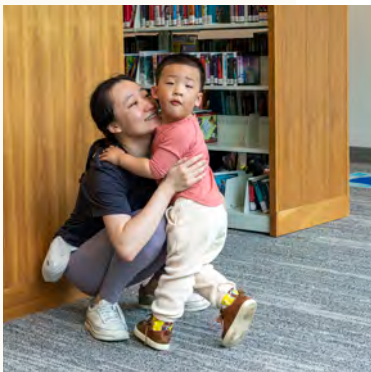
99%

Safe



95%

The facilities are excellent or good



“I appreciate that the public library system continues to work to meet the ever-evolving needs of its user/customer base. Whether it is making an immediate pivot during the pandemic to provide uninterrupted services, the inclusion of expanded WiFi accessibility, the surprise push to make food available in times of scarcity/high need, or the intuitive manner in which the librarians always seem one-step ahead of anticipating what community members desire. The services the library provides are very much appreciated.”

– Anoka County Resident

Our strategic priorities

2024-2028

With insight and guidance from Anoka County Library staff, board, community organizational partners, and library patrons, the library will focus on four overarching priorities:



Access

We will make it easy to access library resources and spaces.



Connection

We will strengthen connections with our patrons and communities.



Literacy

We will cultivate a love of learning and support reading, digital, and information literacy skills.



Experience

We will provide consistent high-quality services and experiences.

Key



Goals

Each priority has an overarching goal that the library will focus on during the next five years.



Objectives

Approaches the library will take to meet our goals.



Action Plan

Immediate, focused steps to take to meet each objective. These will be reviewed and updated annually.

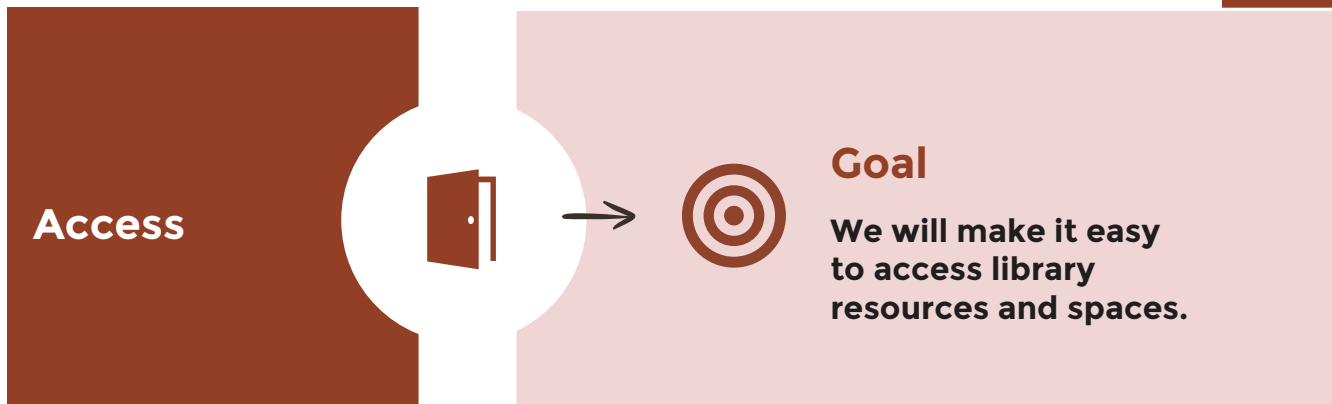


**“Access to the Anoka County Library is one of the best parts of my life!
... The library is a fabulous resource!” - Anoka County Resident**



**“[ACL should] be open longer hours and seven days a week. Libraries should be accessible to all people and when [ACL is] only open during first shift or during school hours, it makes it hard for people to use. [ACL] being closed on school release days and Sundays does not make sense.”
- Anoka County Resident**

Priority 1



2026 Action Plan:

Objective 1

Ensure library spaces are accessible and inclusive.

- Implement changes found during accessibility audit to ensure compliance with ADA Title II Web and Mobile Application Accessibility requirements.
- Add after-hours meeting room access at two branches
- Ensure library records display correctly in various alphabets

Objective 2

Provide materials, services, and programs that reach people where they are.

- Every branch will offer an intergenerational program
- Evaluate bilingual Storytime options

Objective 3

Increase the number of active library card holders.

- Partner with schools to connect students with library resources
- Develop a library card sign up month initiative program
- Reach out to inactive patrons and encourage them to re-engage with the library

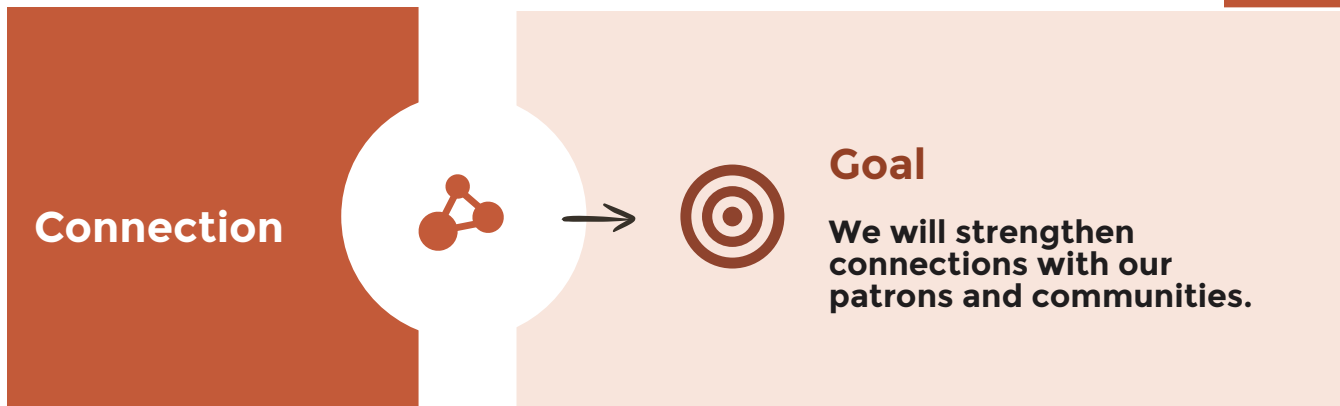


“We all need some kind of connection and the library for centuries has been just that. Connecting us where we need to be connected at the heart. Thank you again.” – Anoka County Resident



“[ACL should] be our hub for teaching us more about our community-- the history, volunteer opportunities, civic groups, corporations, gardening specific to zones 3 & 4, local service groups supporting senior citizens or early education....” – Anoka County Resident

Priority 2



2026 Action Plan:

Objective 1

Increase awareness of library resources and programs.

- Identify relevant cardholders and develop a "Back to School" email campaign
- Staff will share the "service of the month" during patron interactions to increase Word of Mouth promotions

Objective 2

Develop partnerships that expand Library capacity.

- Strengthen relationships with city officials for program partnerships, resource sharing, and referrals
- Launch "Better with a Book" promotion at local coffee shops to encourage people to download a book with their coffee

Objective 3

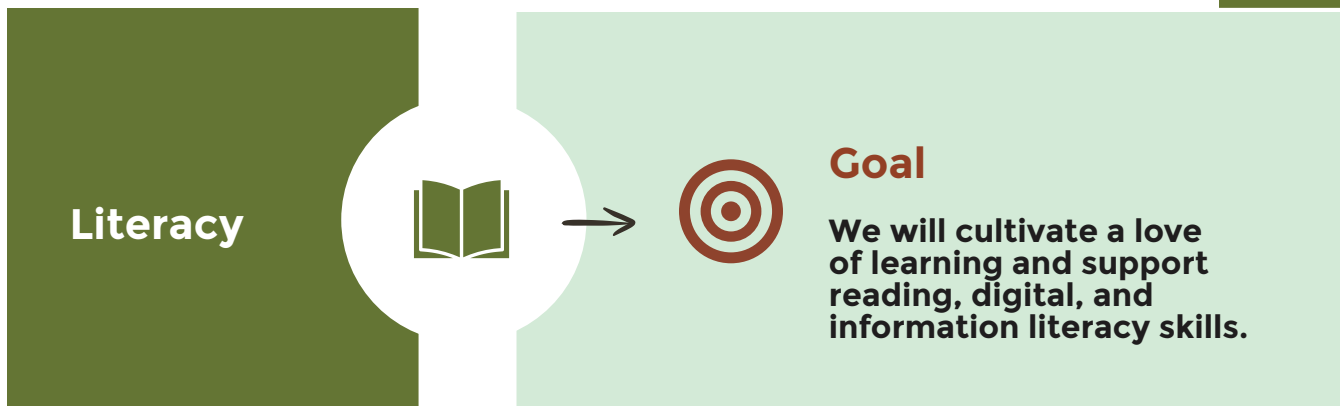
Build community relationships in order to reach underserved populations.

- Add two additional languages to the World Languages collection
- Pilot a Teen Advisory Board
- Each branch will conduct a needs assessment with an organization that serves seniors to determine opportunities for partnership



**“Thank you for facilitating our love of reading - it’s a lifelong enjoyable activity.”
- Anoka County Resident**

Priority 3



2026 Action Plan:

Objective 1

Encourage lifelong reading achievement with a special focus on early literacy and emerging readers.

- Launch Emerging Readers kits for families to work on phonics skills at home
- Offer 300 Reading Bridge spots by the end of the year
- Consult with local elementary schools to determine how to best connect teachers and students with decodable books and literacy programs

Objective 2

Prepare patrons for life online through various types of digital literacy instruction.

- Every location will offer a “Getting Started With...” session in conjunction with a community partner introducing the community to a digital resource in the library collection
- Every location will offer a digital literacy program or self-directed activity

Objective 3

Educate community members on how to find, evaluate, and use information.

- "Scroll Smarter" column in the county newsletter will provide digital and information literacy tips to the community 3 times a year



“The Anoka County Library is still a place that I enjoy visiting and have an amazing experience everytime I walk in the door.” – Anoka County Resident



“There needs to be an emphasis on serving diverse communities and making sure the library and its collection is welcoming and inclusive for all community members.” – Anoka County Resident

Priority 4



2026 Action Plan:

↙ Objective 1

Create an inviting and comfortable atmosphere.

- Create play spaces that encourage families with young children to visit and socialize in the library
- Standardize the procedures for meeting and study rooms across all locations

↙ Objective 2

Build, support, and equip a welcoming staff that provides exceptional customer service.

- All staff complete customer service training
- Each branch will have at least one youth services and one adult services program observation and coaching session

↙ Objective 3

Provide user-friendly library resources.

- Explore print and PC management solutions
- Conduct a user experience audit of the library website
- Reduce processing times so new materials make it to patrons faster



“[Anoka County Library should provide a] better education about how to access digital resources. I haven’t looked in a while, but the last time I did it was very confusing on how to download and listen to audio books and magazines.” – Anoka County Resident

Our process in determining our priorities



Project kick-off & planning

March - May 2022

- Gathered key stakeholders for initial planning groups
- Compiled existing data about Anoka County residents utilizing American Community Survey data
- Identified guiding research questions to inform the Anoka County public survey, Anoka County Library staff survey, focus groups with community members, and interviews with community partner organizations
- Designed surveys, focus groups, and interview protocols and instruments



Data collection

May - October 2022

- 14,178 Anoka County community members completed a Public Survey. Respondents included current or former cardholders and non-library users
- 23 Anoka County Library employees completed a staff survey
- Interviewed 19 staff from community organizations in Anoka County
- Hosted six community focus groups; 65 community members participated



Analysis and reporting

November 2022 - March 2023

- Analyzed data and summarized findings to produce the Anoka County Library: Data-Informed Strategic Planning Report



Strategic planning

April - August 2023

- Hosted three planning sessions with staff and stakeholders to review data
- Created priorities, goals, and strategies based on data and planning sessions
- Drafted plans based on planning sessions
- Worked with key staff and stakeholders to finalize the plan

Feedback from our community

Feedback was collected through a community survey, focus groups with community members, and interviews with community partner organizations.

- Nearly **1/3** of library users indicated they visit the library between **1-3 times** per month.
- Current hours of operation are the most common barrier to accessing Anoka County Library branches.
- Almost all (**97%**) of community survey respondents rated help from ACL staff as “excellent” or “good”.
- Almost all respondents “strongly agreed” or “agreed” the library they use is clean and well-maintained.



Areas for Improvement



Youth programming



Collections



Library spaces

While the majority of community survey respondents report that library services and programs are diverse, inclusive, and reflective of various cultural values and beliefs, there is room to improve.

Suggestions for improvement include

- Materials and resources in languages other than English
- Hosting programming and events about different cultures and traditions
- Conducting outreach to community partners and members
- Providing a welcoming and inclusive environment

Diversity of Services and Materials

The library services and programs offered are diverse, inclusive, and reflect various cultural values and beliefs.

The library materials available are diverse, inclusive, and reflect various cultural values and beliefs.



Agree includes responses of strongly agree.
Disagree includes responses of strongly disagree.

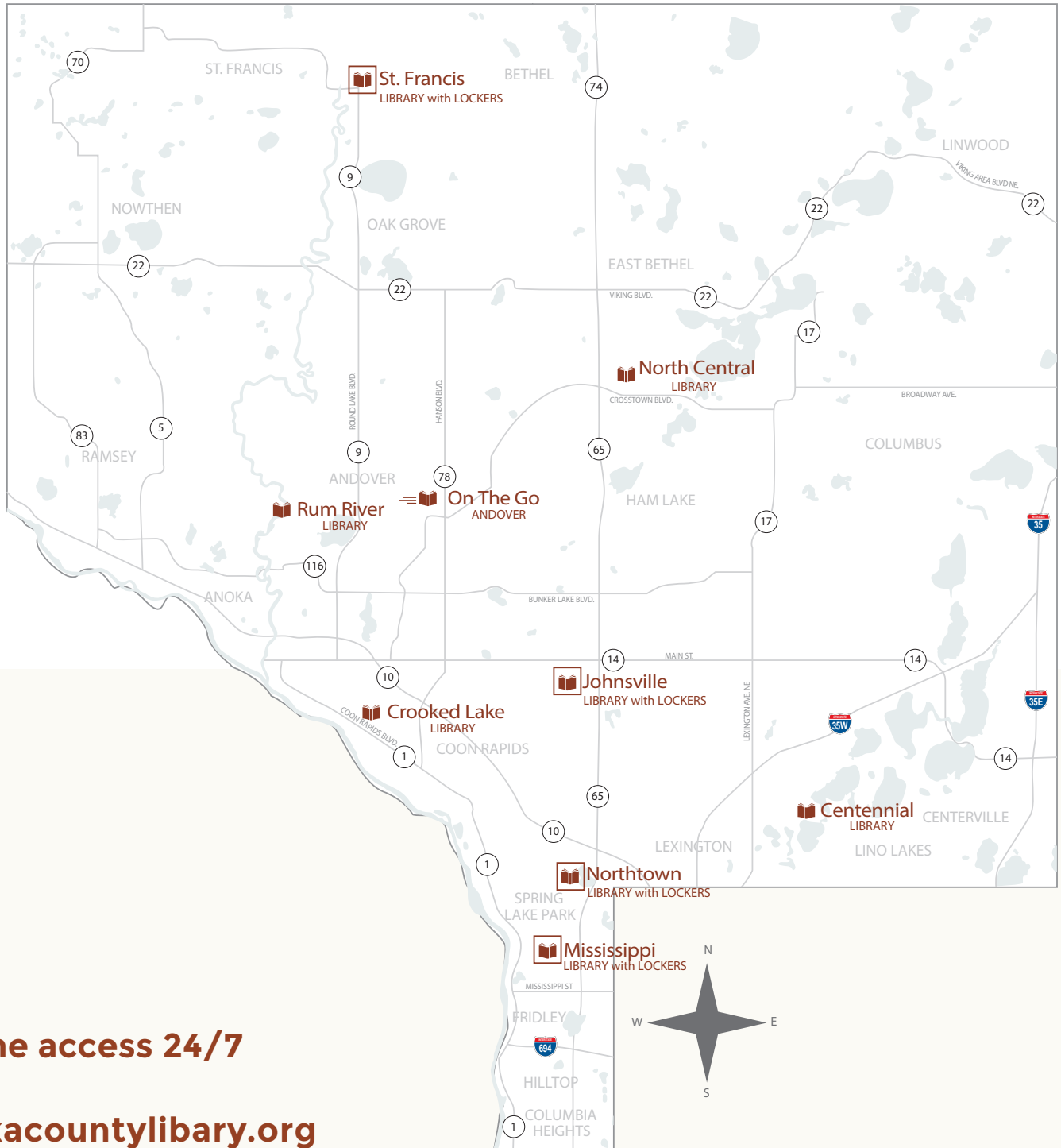


Partnerships with both Anoka County departments and with community partners are important for the library to thrive.



Community programs, outreach and events are ways the library can help in the community.

Library locations



Online access 24/7

anokacountylibrary.org



Centennial Library
 100 Civic Heights Cir
 Circle Pines, MN 55014
 Phone: 763-324-1540



North Central Library
 7565 Central Ave NE
 Ham Lake, MN 55304
 Phone: 763-324-1570



Crooked Lake Library
 11440 Crooked Lake
 Blvd NW
 Coon Rapids, MN 55433
 Phone: 763-324-1530



Northtown Library
 711 County Hwy 10
 Frontage Rd
 Blaine, MN 55434
 Phone: 763-324-1510



Johnsville Library
 12461 Oak Park Blvd
 Blaine, MN 55434
 Phone: 763-324-1550



Rum River Library
 4201 6th Ave
 Anoka, MN 55303
 Phone: 763-324-1520



Mississippi Library
 410 Mississippi St NE
 Fridley, MN 55432
 Phone: 763-324-1560



St. Francis Library
 3519 Bridge St NW
 St. Francis, MN 55070
 Phone: 763-324-1580

Lockers



Library On the Go
 Lockers at Andover YMCA
 Community Center

Open During
 Community Center
 Hours Monday-Sunday



Locker Hours
Lockers open daily 4 AM - 12 AM
 Johnsville, Mississippi, Northtown, St. Francis





Anoka County
LIBRARY

Ideas, Information, Inspiration.

Administrative Office
register@anokacountymn.gov

Physical Address
707 County Hwy 10 Frontage Rd
Blaine, MN 55434-2398