



**Mayor Coleman's 2010 Budget:
Reforming Government, Making Tough Choices,
Moving Saint Paul Forward**

Saint Paul Public Library

Overview

Libraries are the people's universities – and some of our most unique and valuable community assets. In tough times, the library serves as our gathering place, a place to search for jobs or prevent foreclosures, or simply a place to escape in a new book. To ensure Saint Paul residents receive the most access to library collections, programs and online services, we will continue to offer both open library hours across the city seven days a week and morning and evening hours – for more than 670 hours a week – to serve the needs of children, adults, and seniors.

Investing in children, families, and neighborhoods

Mayor Coleman is committed to building a first-class library system that serves the changing needs of our children and residents. The investment in new technology and services, as well as a focus on youth and adult programs and community needs, will make the Saint Paul Public Library one of the city's most valuable assets.

Serving the Community Daily

In 2010, the Saint Paul Public Library is expected to be open to the public approximately 672 hours a week throughout the system. While each library will reduce its hours ranging from 2 to 12 hours per week in different locations, Saint Paul residents will have access to an open library seven days a week. Smaller, neighborhood branches will be open during key hours for seniors and students after school.

In the next two years, the Library will also provide *an extensive offering of arts and cultural events with funding support from the Minnesota Arts and Cultural Heritage Fund*. Youth, teen and adult programming is expected to triple and will allow Saint Paul residents opportunities to experience arts and culture, including poetry, theatre, and heritage, for free.

The Mayor's 2010 budget reduces spending in backroom operations by one-third – shifting the focus to direct customer service while continuing excellent selection in all of our facilities.

A Path to Success for Every Child

The Saint Paul Public Library is an integral part of Mayor Coleman's Ready for School, Ready for Life initiative. Research shows the earlier and more often adults read to children, the better prepared they are to learn when they enter school. Through the Library's community partnerships and innovative early literacy programs, we are making significant strides to help every child in Saint Paul get ready for kindergarten.

In 2008, the Saint Paul Public Library homework centers welcomed 16,528 visitors, a 20-percent increase since 2006. Beyond help with their schoolwork, children need safe activities during the Second Shift – after school and during no-school days – that engage them. The library will continue to provide the safe space and quality staff to extend the learning day and engage youth with programs that help them grow academically and socially.



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Expanding Economic Opportunity

The Saint Paul Public Library continues to improve the lives of our residents by helping them develop the skills and knowledge to find and create jobs, careers and businesses.

- *Workforce development:* Residents increasingly are using Saint Paul's libraries to learn computer skills as well as search and apply for jobs as more employers only accept applications online. The Library offers access to resources at the newly created Job Resource Center at Sun Ray Library and the Hot Spot Community Learning Center at Arlington Hills Library.
- *Small business development:* Recently, the Library hosted hundreds of interested people in a four-week workshop who were looking to start or expand a small business, the backbone of our economy. The Library offers resources for those wanting to create their own employment opportunities, including an unsurpassed staff with expertise to direct people to resources throughout the system. Rondo Community Outreach Library also features the Small Business Resource Center.

Technology

The Library continues to invest in technology to improve service and expand access. Plans call for the addition of two more online services to improve customer convenience in the near future, building on the success of recent technological upgrades.

- In the past four years, the library has added 55 public access computers, resulting in 40,000 hours of additional access per week. *Over the last two years, libraries have seen a 68-percent increase in users of library computers.*
- With the help of a Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation grant, the library will add 52 computers to a variety of agencies in the next two years to help provide free, high-quality access to digital resources. The Library is also expanding its capability to offer laptops for customers to checkout inside the library.
- The addition of WiFi in 2006 has enabled the Library to significantly increase its capacity to provide all types of training with computers inside libraries and on the Bookmobile.
- Self-checkout technology was installed in all library branches in late 2007. The technology is so efficient and user-friendly that *97 percent of patrons use the system.*