



***Mayor Coleman's 2008 Proposed Budget:
Making Tough Choices, Moving Saint Paul Forward.***

Better Service at a Better Price: Saint Paul Public Library

OVERVIEW

The Saint Paul Public Library will implement a plan focused on investing in technology and improving services in all library locations. To ensure Saint Paul residents receive the most access to library collections, programs and online services, there will be no reduction in system-wide hours.

The Saint Paul Public Library consists of 13 libraries and a Bookmobile. Library locations include Arlington Hills, Central Library, Dayton's Bluff, Hamline Midway, Hayden Heights, Highland Park, Merriam Park, Rice Street, Riverview, Rondo Community Outreach, Saint Anthony Park, Sun Ray, and West Seventh.

TECHNOLOGY

WiFi: Wireless internet: Since April 2007, all Saint Paul Public Library branches have offered wireless internet access. This technology has proved popular, with connections increasing by hundreds each month, totaling approximately 9,000 connections since spring 2007.

WiFi has enabled the library to significantly increase its capacity to provide all types of training with computers. Staff can now use fifteen laptop computers to provide training in any library. Before wireless was available, training had to be provided on the desktop computers that are so heavily used by the public.

Self-Check: The new checkout technology will be installed in all Library branches by fall 2007. The technology is so efficient and user-friendly that 97% of patrons use the system where the equipment is in operation.

Online Services: In 2007 the library introduced two new services to increase customer convenience. Library users may now use credit cards to pay fees online from any computer. They can also pre-register for a library card online, which speeds the process of getting a library card.

Future Technology: The Saint Paul Public Library continues to invest in technology to improve service. Plans for 2008 call for the addition of two more online services to improve customer convenience. Customers will be able to reserve the Library's public meeting rooms online from any computer. Users of the Library's public computers will be able to use new technology to reserve a time that is convenient for them.

HOURS

The Saint Paul Public Library is open to the public 730 hours a week throughout the system.

Mayor Coleman is committed to providing the residents of Saint Paul with access to the most resources during the most hours. Last year, Library service hours were reallocated throughout Saint Paul Public Library branches. Due to the current demand for hours in larger neighborhood branches, Sunday hours are returning to the Merriam Park Branch Library and Rice Street Branch Library.

Factors that influenced branch library hours are location and proximity to other large branches with more resources, branch accessibility by public transportation, and the need to keep smaller, neighborhood branches open during key hours for senior citizens and after-school customers.

REFOCUSING SERVICES TO MEET THE COMMUNITY NEEDS

In 2008, the Saint Paul Public Library will refocus services at the Hayden Heights and Hamline Midway Branches. We will slightly reduce hours at these two branches--by about five hours a week. However, we will also make changes to improve service at both libraries. At Hayden Heights, we are going to increase the number of public computer workstations, and make it a more comfortable neighborhood destination. At Hamline, we are going to add computers and begin a relationship with Hamline University to enrich programming for the community.

Both branches will continue to have a full range of library materials, services, and programming. This fall, we will invite members of the Hayden Heights and Hamline neighborhoods to give us their ideas for how we can improve their libraries. Residents of both communities can expect reinvigorated library service in 2008.