South St. Paul Library

Community Input Requested

January 8, 2020

Dear South St. Paul Resident:

The City of South St. Paul has been reviewing options for the future of our library. In October 2019, City staff kicked off community engagement. Since then, the City has held various events, developed informational tools, and created supplemental articles and social media posts to keep residents informed. You can find all this information at the South St. Paul Library website page at www.southstpaul.org/library.

Help Us Write the Next Chapter

We have enclosed a one-page handout entitled Help Us Write the Next Chapter which summarizes the topics the City is reviewing. The City can assure you that our community will continue to have a library, it is simply a matter of where the library will be located and how it will be paid for.

Library Survey

To assist in our ongoing efforts to get resident input, we are enclosing a paper survey which you can fill out and return to City Hall or the SSP Library. Or, you may take the survey online by going to the City website at www.southstpaul.org/library. Survey deadline is January 24, 2020.

The survey results are a key piece of input the Council and Library Board will be using in their decision-making process. However, it needs to be understood that the survey is not a referendum (vote by the public) and all information will be considered in arriving at a final decision.

We encourage you to follow the City of South St. Paul on Facebook to keep up to date with this and other City topics.

Thank you,

South St. Paul City Council
South St. Paul Library Board
The ABCs of the Next Chapter

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.

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 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
Since it opened in 1922, the South St. Paul Library has served thousands of people by providing a space to learn, enjoy its many collections, and participate in special programs and events throughout the year. The Library is one of four City-owned libraries of the 115 libraries in the metro area. The Library and City are at a crossroads in determining its future as it is in need of many repairs, improvements, and increased capacity. As we look toward writing the next chapter of our community, we want to ensure the Library serves the needs of all South St. Paul’s residents.

The following survey has approximately 18 questions and will take less than five minutes to complete. The information provided will be invaluable as South St. Paul considers the future of the City’s library. Thank you in advance for your participation.

If you prefer completing an online version of this survey, visit: bit.ly/SSPLibrarySurvey

1. Please write your address to verify you are a South St. Paul resident.

________________________________________________________________________________

2. How often do you use the South St. Paul Library?

_____ Daily          _____ Every few months
_____ Once or twice a week      _____ Once a year
_____ Once or twice a month     _____ I never visit the South St. Paul Library

3. What programming or services offered by the South St. Paul Library do you use?

_____ Adult programs
_____ Teen programs
_____ Children’s programs
_____ Children’s Play & Learn Station (revolving themes throughout the year)
_____ Technology classes/tutoring
_____ Public computers with free Internet access/software or free Wi-Fi
_____ Meeting room reservation
_____ Fax Service
_____ E-books/audiobooks (Cloud Library, RBdigital, etc.) and streaming service (Hoopla Digital)
_____ Online resources and databases (Homework Help Now!, JobNow!, Ancestry Library Edition, NoveList Plus, etc.)
_____ Check out onsite library materials (books, DVDs, magazines, Spanish-Language collection, DIY kits, etc.)
_____ Other (please describe): ________________________________________________________________
_____ None of the Above
4. Have you reviewed the Future of the South St. Paul Library Fact Sheet and/or the SSP Final Library Report?
   _____ Yes
   _____ No
   _____ Unsure

5. Do you think the South St. Paul Library’s current location and/or building have any deficiencies or issues?
   _____ Yes
   _____ No
   _____ Unsure

6. What do you think are the South St. Paul Library’s deficiencies or issues? *(please describe)*
   __________________________________________________________
   __________________________________________________________
   __________________________________________________________

7. What do you LIKE about South St. Paul Library?
   __________________________________________________________
   __________________________________________________________
   __________________________________________________________

8. Have you used any of the other Dakota County Libraries?
   _____ Yes
   _____ No
   _____ Unsure
9. Which of the following Dakota County Libraries have you visited? (Check all that apply)

_____ Burnhaven (Burnsville)    _____ Pleasant Hill (Hastings)
_____ Farmington                _____ Robert Trail (Rosemount)
_____ Galaxie (Apple Valley)    _____ Wentworth (West St. Paul)
_____ Heritage (Lakeville)      _____ Wescott (Eagan)
_____ Inver Glen (Inver Grove Heights)  _____ None of the Above

10. What did you LIKE about the Dakota County Library or Libraries you visited?

_____________________________________________________________________________________
_____________________________________________________________________________________  

11. What did you DISLIKE about the Dakota County Library or Libraries you visited?

_____________________________________________________________________________________
_____________________________________________________________________________________  

12. The City of South St. Paul and the Library Board believe the current library facility needs substantial upgrades to meet the needs of the users and community now and in the future. Do you agree/disagree with this assessment?

_____ Agree
_____ Disagree
_____ Unsure

13. The City Council is considering joining the Dakota County Library System which would provide operational cost savings to the City of an estimated $319,000 annually (2019 Library Levy was $767,739). Any renovation or rebuild costs, estimated at $6-$8 million, would also be absorbed by the County. Based on that information, should the City pursue these savings by having Dakota County provide library services to South St. Paul residents, or should the City continue to operate and maintain the current library?

_____ Yes, I support joining the Dakota County Library System
_____ No, I support the City continuing to operate and maintain the Library
_____ Unsure
14. If you support having the City of South St. Paul continue to operate and maintain the library, then:
   _____ The City should substantially upgrade the facility
   _____ The City should build a new library facility at a new site
   _____ The library should be kept essentially as it is
   _____ Unsure
   _____ I do not support the City of South St. Paul continuing to operate and maintain the library

15. If the City of South St. Paul decides the South St. Paul Library will not join the Dakota County Library System, would you be in favor of a community referendum (vote) in support of bonding $6-$8 million in order for the City to renovate the existing library/build a new library?
   _____ Yes
   _____ Maybe
   _____ No

16. What is your age?
   _____ Under 18
   _____ 18 - 24
   _____ 25 - 34
   _____ 35 - 44
   _____ 45 - 54
   _____ 55 - 64
   _____ 65 - 74
   _____ 75+
   _____ Prefer not to say
17. How long have you lived in South St. Paul?

- _____ Less than 1 year
- _____ 1 - 5 years
- _____ 6 - 10 years
- _____ 11 - 15 years
- _____ 16 - 20 years
- _____ 21 - 25 years
- _____ 26 - 30 years
- _____ 31+ years
- _____ Prefer not to say

Thank you for taking the time to complete this survey. If you completed the paper version of the survey, please return by January 24, 2020 by mailing to:

City of South St. Paul  
Attn: Library Survey  
125 3rd Avenue North  
South St. Paul, MN 55075

You can also drop off the completed paper version at City Hall (125 3rd Avenue North) or the South St. Paul Library (106 3rd Avenue North).

Your input is valued - Thank you!
WE WANT TO HEAR FROM YOU!

SSP Library Survey Enclosed

versión en español: bit.ly/SSPLibrarySurvey