

## Village of Cottage Grove Library Board's Frequently Asked Questions

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## History

*In 1922 Cottage Grove, Ms. Ruth Graves became Postmistress and kept books in a floor-to-ceiling bookcase in the Village Post Office. The books came from the 'Wisconsin Traveling Library' by train in a big, gray wooden box. In the 1940's, when the Post Office could no longer keep the number of books, the library collection was moved to the local Barber Shop. Then, beginning in 1969, the Dane County Bookmobile began making weekly stops in Cottage Grove. Now, 100 years since the inception of library services here, Cottage Grove residents still use the Bookmobile as the only local form of a library.*

*In the present day, the Village is a remarkable and fast-growing community of 8000+ residents, with excellent and expansive public parks, award-winning public schools, and a thriving business environment. However, the Village of Cottage Grove is one of the few municipalities in all of Dane County that does not have a community library nor does the Village have dedicated historical society space, or a senior, teen, or community center. In fact, the Village is centered within a 'library desert' and this gap in public service is substantial as a public library and the services librarians provide have been shown to benefit the greater community and increase quality of life for all residents. The future Cottage Grove library will provide a safe space for all residents to gather and learn, engage with their community, and express their culture. The library will be highly visible in the rapidly developing Village. There are several childcare facilities and four public schools (grades 4K-8) within the Village. Thus, a nearby library would also improve the community's access to early literacy resources and strengthen the partnerships with public schools.*

*Library planning has been the top priority of the Cottage Grove Village Board of Trustees. In 2020 and 2021, the Village's Library Planning Committee had been tasked with researching the initial phases of building a library. In 2020, the committee met with local experts, researched other public library campaigns in Dane County, and developed a ten-question peer-reviewed survey to gather responses from people living and working in the Cottage Grove community. Results showed a high level of interest in the project (>70%). Supported by the data reviewed from the 816 households and 15 business responses regarding the importance of a library in our community. The committee was then tasked with continuing the research phases, including financial data. Presented in 2021, the preliminary operational and capital costs of building a physical library in the Village of Cottage Grove were determined using (1) the population data and projections through the year 2040, (2) our current library usage, and (3) a 20-year space needs assessment. These values were used to calculate minimum requirements and standards necessary for operation, the square footage needs for a building, and spaces ideal for a growing community with multiple demographics. The Village then received positive approval from the Department of Public Instruction, formed a formal, legal Library Board, and most recently, in July 2022, completed a financial feasibility study focused on private donations and public interest.*

*Beginning in 2023, Library programming will commence, residents will see library-related activities and programming available in the community this year, in part due to a limited \$15,000 budget provided to the Library Board as part of the Village's 2023 budget cycle. Subsequently, the Library Board unanimously voted on December 21, 2022 to make "Consistent Library Programming" in the Village one of its five 2023 goals. And, in order to help facilitate Library Board's 2023 goals, the Library Board also recommended the hiring of a "Library Programming and Outreach Specialist Contractor" beginning on February 1, 2023. The new position will carefully plan and execute library programs, ensuring high engagement, participation, and opportunities for community feedback, while also managing advertising and social media. In addition, the position will lead the grant application process to secure external funding and build relationships with area librarians and civic groups.*

**A library directly serves the mission and vision of Cottage Grove by *increasing the richness and opportunities for a growing village* and *effectively providing community services for our citizens and fostering economic development*.**

*Nevertheless, the Library Board acknowledges that there are many unanswered questions and a significant amount of research to complete before a library can be built.*

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### **Why do we need a public library when I can use a school library?**

While school libraries are great, they have some significant limitations compared to public libraries. (1) They are only accessible to students during the school year and school day, (2) the budget for a school library is tiny compared to that of the public library, meaning there will be gaps in the book collection compared to a public library, (3) public libraries are more than just books and offer a wide range of programs for the entire family that can be utilized during weekdays, weeknights and the weekend that aren't offered at school libraries.

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### **Why can't we put a library in the storefront?**

A storefront library typically does not have room to grow and limits where a library can be placed. Most storefront libraries serve as a branch for a central library because they are limited by space and location. For example, outdoor space will be limited or nonexistent with a storefront library. Additionally, with a storefront library, the site is limited to where a storefront already exists, meaning there might be better places for the library. Ideally, a library is located in a space that best serves the municipalities residents rather than necessarily in an area with an open storefront.

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### **Tax Levies and Referendums: Why is planning now important?**

In Wisconsin, tax levies can be increased above the allowable limits if the amount is approved by a referendum. The governing body (*i.e.*, Village Board) must adopt a resolution specifying the proposed increase in the levy beyond the amount allowed and stating whether the proposed increase is for the next levy only or if it will apply on an ongoing basis. The resolution must also specify the purpose of the levy increase. And, the resolution must be submitted to the electors for a vote during an election.

In an **advisory referendum**, a proposed measure is placed on the ballot to gauge the community's opinion. The results of an advisory referendum are not binding, and governing bodies are not required to act in accordance with the majority opinion. However, the Village Board ultimately determines when the project should continue, regardless of the referendum vote outcome. An advisory referendum may be included in an upcoming election for the Village Board of Trustees to measure community support for the project.

A **binding referendum** will be required to establish operational funding in the proposal for a Cottage Grove Library. The results of a binding referendum mandate by the community either approve or disapprove of a proposal.

**What capital project planning is happening?** The library plan, along with the plans for the proposed second EMS station and the new Village Campus, will be considered by the Village Board to identify and establish a village financial plan based on variables that consider financing, public safety, growth needs, and overall community benefits. The Village Board has funded FGM Architects to work with the Village Library Board to identify requirements for building size, library program, collections, and staffing. FGM uses materials from previous planning efforts and will be conducting interviews with various stakeholder groups. This work is important to identify the overall costs associated with the project. This work takes time to collect information, analyze the inputs, draft a proposal, and validate the proposal.

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**I can drive 10 minutes to a Madison Library branch, why would I benefit from having a local library in the Village of Cottage Grove?**

The Sun Prairie Library is a 13-minute drive from Highway N and Cottage Grove Road. The Madison Pinney Branch Library is an 11-minute drive, and the Monona Public Library is a 17-minute drive.

**Transportation:** There is no public transportation nor bike paths from Cottage Grove to any other library location. This requires children, adults, and seniors who cannot drive to a library to find alternative means of transportation.

**Library Programming:** No two libraries are the same. Consider library and collection size, amenities such as study and community rooms, and programming options for children, teens, adults, and seniors. Libraries focus on providing services that pertain to their direct, surrounding neighborhood. The Village community programming needs are not reflected in the Sun Prairie, Monona, or a branch library like Pinney. Having a library in Cottage Grove will promote the community's culture, values, and needs relating to the growing and changing population. This includes hours of operations, programs focusing on multiple demographics and outcomes, and the availability of library resources.

**Economics:** A community library increases property values and can attract people to the Village. Libraries provide no-cost or low-cost events and programs. Libraries provide services to entrepreneurs looking to start and grow small businesses and are often a one-stop shop. Local businesses benefit from a library by retaining customers within Cottage Grove for groceries, pharmacies, shopping, and other services.

**Materials and Licensing:** Area libraries prioritize their residents. Residents of Cottage Grove may not be eligible for licensed materials at community libraries outside the Village. These resources may include access to electronic materials and software.

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## Why do we need a library in the Village?

- Libraries add value to neighborhoods.
- Libraries have a direct economic impact.
- Libraries increase access and equity.
- Libraries have an educational and literacy impact.
- Libraries have a social/societal impact.

Research demonstrates that libraries are incredibly important to the development of a community; they are the community's gathering place and heart of a community. A library enhances and contributes to the Village's current economic and community development goals.

**The Library Board suggests viewing this video:** <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Jl2CLqq3LLk>

*Connect the Community:* A library is welcoming to all, and bridges socioeconomic divides. Library spaces provide room for people to interact and partner with information, learning experiences, and entertainment.

*Infrastructure/Economy:* Libraries are a readily available source of comprehensive information needed by people for personal, family, educational, and job-related purposes.

*Value:* A result of the pandemic has been increased desire for library services. People are returning to wanting to read printed materials over digital media. More so than a community center, town hall, or public park ever could, libraries connect their communities in a way that benefits everyone. They pool local resources, from educational offerings to job training to homeless outreach to ESL learning and put them all under one welcoming roof for everyone to share.

*Technology:* ebooks, digital magazines and more. Libraries engage in fair pricing, licensing and FULL access to technology, multimedia content, and educational programs.

*Sustainability:* Educational events, reduction of carbon footprint, a net zero building, LEED certification. Seed Borrowing and community gardens are examples of how libraries pair with sustainability actions.

*Engagement:* Public events, programming, book clubs, author readings, and teen groups.

*Gathering:* A place for the entire community, indoor & outdoor spaces for small and large groups.

*Communication:* opportunity for events, sharing of experiences, lectures, and programming.

*Economic development:*

- 73% of public libraries assist their patrons with job applications and interviewing skills, and 48% provide access and assistance to entrepreneurs looking to start a business of their own.

*Health of Cottage Grove:* it has been shown that a community library increases the overall health of a community. Opportunity to find jobs, explore medical research or housing needs.

- 59% of libraries help patrons find health insurance resources, 18% bring in healthcare providers to offer free limited screening services, and 23% provide free fitness classes.

*Community Space:* A library provides services to all ages. It would serve as a senior center, children programming, study space, meeting place, computer and technology classes. Homework help and a safe haven for afterschool.

*Breaking Accessibility Barriers:* Accessible for all, supports literacy, education, and technology for everyone including underserved populations.

*Education/Arts:* Celebrations of experiences and art.

*Diversity and Inclusion:* A library can close achievement gaps; it can provide safe learning spaces, bridge socioeconomic divides, and rebuild trust. Libraries allow the community to have a voice.

*Makerspaces:* Provide opportunities to attend STEAM events that enrich development and educational opportunities.

*Growth:* Libraries are needed for the growth of the community that has new subdivisions, and apartment developments.

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### **What is a 21<sup>st</sup> century library?**

Libraries are hubs of learning, innovation, and creation. Public libraries in the United States are civic institutions that perform critical functions extending far ‘*beyond books*’. Their staff provides valuable contributions to all residents, are positive indicators of municipal economic health, and centers for community betterment. Public libraries serve the entire community, from “cradle to grave.” The safe, inclusive, and equal learning spaces they provide are more integral in today’s social, political, and economic climate than ever before. 21<sup>st</sup> century libraries are designed to include learning spaces, and the resources available within those spaces to increase exploration, creation, and collaboration. Today’s libraries are less a warehouse of books, and more a marketplace of ideas and things. Spaces are flexible, and can include makerspaces, technology labs, podcasting booths, tool-lending, seed sharing, teen and children’s hang out spaces.

**The Library Board suggests viewing this video:** <https://www.cbsnews.com/news/welcome-to-the-library-of-the-21st-century/>

*Additional Citations:*

<https://www.ala.org/advocacy/intfreedom/americanvalue>

<https://pubmed.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/27834243/>

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### **Who uses libraries?**

The number of library card holders with Cottage Grove addresses has quadrupled since 2020 from 949 in 2020 to over 3500. In 2021, individuals with a CG address checked out 86,962 items from Dane county libraries. This includes 17,155 items from the bookmobile. Over 800 people attended Friends events in 2022. With the commencement of Village programming, over 340 have attended the first 9 programs of 2023. With over 40 programs scheduled through July 2023.

Nationally, over 174 million people are registered at a local library, that's nearly 54 percent of the population. Digital collections are now larger and more diverse, with growth by over 113% since 2009. And, with nearly six million programs for children, young adults, and people of all ages taking place inside libraries, one in every 10 people visiting a library are now doing so to attend a local program (23% more than pre-pandemic).

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### **How will our taxes be impacted?**

Public libraries are funded in five different ways: (1) municipal funding from the annual budget, (2) home-county payments for serving residents who live in communities without a public library, (3) other special library projects supported by the county board, local foundations, federal, state, or local grants, (4) Friends of the Library, (5) adjacent County payments, for serving residents in adjacent counties who live in communities without a public library.

The Village is the primary municipality responsible for an annual budget. There will be an impact to taxes; however, without a scope/master plan we cannot make an appropriate estimation at this time. The annual operating expenses are determined by the state statutes and county standards, size of the building, staffing wages/benefits, services provided, and hours of operation.

*Tax impact will be calculated to the community once this work is completed, and prior to an operational referendum.*

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### **Why can't we have a joint library with the Town?**

It is true that several libraries in Wisconsin, including 3 in the SCLS system, that are joint ventures between 2 or more municipal funding bodies (<https://www.scls.info/files/jointlibs.pdf>). However, in Dane County we have adopted county library standards. Because the Town of Cottage Grove overlaps with several school districts, a joint Town: Village Library is not feasible.

Review Dane County Library Funding Here: <https://dpi.wi.gov/libraries/public-libraries/funding-budgets>

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**What is Dane County Library Tax and how much do I pay?**

**Dane County Library taxes are paid by all for library services.** These tax dollars do not stay in Cottage Grove and instead are relocated to other municipalities with libraries that meet the required minimum standards and to fund the Dane County Library System (e.g., Bookmobile). It is estimated that this tax will continue to increase each year.

Under Wisconsin Statute s. 43.64 (2), municipalities with public libraries may be exempt from the county library tax if they appropriate locally an amount above the defined minimum. Thus, upon the opening of a Village of Cottage Grove Community Library, Dane County tax would be reimbursed to the Village of Cottage Grove based on use from village residents and the service area the library would provide.

**2021 Dane County Library Taxes:**

Town of Cottage Grove: \$193,290.74

Village of Cottage Grove: \$280,331.89

**2022 Dane County Library Taxes:**

The 2022 DCL Tax for the Village of Cottage Grove will be \$291,750. See the calculation [HERE](#).

Without a public library, that meets set standards, Village residents will continue to pay DCLT indefinitely.

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### **How much are Library services worth?**

This tool from Sun Prairie Public Library can be used to determine how much your individual or family library usage is worth based on services you use every month: <https://www.sunprairiepubliclibrary.org/news/library-use-return-investment-value-calculator>

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### **What kinds of return on investment does a library provide?**

*Housing:* People prefer to live near a public library if they have a choice, and often perceive library access as part of an enhanced quality of life, although it is rarely a direct factor in home purchase decision making.

*Proximity to the library has value:* Users who stop at the library while completing a longer list of errands report "halo" spending at firms and establishments close to the library. Although this spending is not part of an economic impact statement of public libraries, it is also true that proximity to a library increases spending for those businesses located near the library.

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### **What is the average distance to a public library?**

According to a 2015 article published in Library & Information Science Research, the Wisconsin average population-weighted distance to the nearest public library is 2.1 miles. There are no public transportation, foot, or bike paths in Cottage Grove to an area library. The nearest libraries must be accessed via county highways. While people living further from libraries can still access library programs and services, the accessibility and usage drops as the distance increases.

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### **Where would the library go?**

During the Library Board's 2022 research of Dane County Libraries, there were common underlying factors when considering ideal locations that included the proximity to schools, walkability, and visibility. Additionally, room to grow and expand in the future (20+ years), available parking, and outdoor spaces was favored among the local Library Directors we spoke to. For example, other Dane County Libraries have expressed the importance of outdoor programming space for a vibrant library Community.

The proposed land for construction has been managed by the Friends of the Cottage Grove Library, Inc. since 2008, though originally purchased by the Village after the exploration of 30 parcels of land and 8 existing buildings as alternative sites. The proposed land site is nearly 7 acres, including road development, and is in close proximity to 2 schools (grades 3-8; Granite Ridge and Glacial Drumlin), multiple subdivisions and developments. In July of 2022, the Library Board unanimously approved the location of the proposed library. In August of 2022, the Village Board voted: Motion by Melissa Ratcliff to designate the current land owned by the Friends of the Cottage Grove Library as the preferred site of the proposed future Village Library, seconded by Sarah Valencia. Motion carried with a voice vote of 6-1-0. With John Williams voting No. See the site of the future library [HERE](#).

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### **Who would use the future library?**

This map highlights the service area of the future Cottage Grove Community Library. The estimated service area consists of: Village of Cottage Grove, Town of Cottage Grove, Pleasant Springs, Blooming Grove, Sun Prairie, Deerfield, and Marshall. It is important to note that not everyone from an adjacent municipality would use the library; instead, in our planning we totaled those municipality's populations and used 15% of that total to conservatively estimate service population. The initial service population used was 16,470 as defined in our July 5, 2021 report. See the Service Area Map [HERE](#).

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### **What are the Library Board Goals for 2023?**

1. *Initiation, schedule, and governance of committees.*
2. *Begin consistent library programming in the Village.*
3. *Determine program statement and timeline for future library.*
4. *Development of capital campaign strategy and materials.*
5. *Identify novel revenue streams.*

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**What is the timeline for the project?**

The Library Board recommends the consideration of the following timeline related to the ongoing library planning initiatives (including operational and capital planning), 2023 fiscal budgets, and the Village Financial Management Plan. We emphasize that these recommendations also align with the current village priority plan for 2022-2023 which ranks the library planning as first. This is considered a draft timeline that is subject to change.

Year	Goal	Staff
2023	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Formation of committees</li> <li>▪ <b>Draft Program Statement</b> with architect and SCLS/Site layout/Concept plan</li> <li>▪ Begin forms of library programming (w. McFarland)</li> <li>▪ Library Board Trustee training and professional development</li> </ul>	Hire part-Library Programming and Outreach Specialist (16 hours/week)
2024	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ <b>Design Phase/Architectural work</b></li> <li>▪ Engineering assessments (soil conditions, grading, stormwater needs, size, and layout)</li> <li>▪ 14-18mo Capital Campaign/consulting fees</li> <li>▪ Launch library website</li> <li>▪ Programming &amp; outreach</li> </ul>	Interim Library Director (30 hours/week)
2025	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ <b>Construction Phase</b></li> <li>▪ 14-18mo Capital Campaign/consulting fees</li> <li>▪ Programming &amp; outreach</li> </ul>	Interim Library Director (40 hours/week)
2026	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ <b>Plan for opening</b> and meeting WI and Dane County standards</li> <li>▪ SCLS membership</li> </ul>	Increase staffing

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**How much tax-payer money has been spent on library planning since 2019?**

Since 2019, the Village Board has allocated \$30,000 of taxpayer-specific funding to the Library Board. These funds were used for (1) a financial feasibility study that interviewed potential donors and identified a preliminary target goal capital fundraising campaign (funding was matched by private donations through the non-profit Friends' group), and (2) library programs such as storytimes, webinars, adult learning opportunities, teen book clubs.

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### **What are Free Little Libraries and where can I find them?**

The original four Little Free Libraries (LFL) were purchased by the Friends of the Cottage Grove Library, Inc in the early 2000's. Local residents constructed and decorated the wooden structures. The Village of Cottage Grove installed and maintains these little free libraries. Since then, there have been many additional LFL's set up by area residents. The Library Board compiled a list of LFL locations and created a map, posted online by the Cottage Grove Parks and Recreation Department. See the map [HERE](#).

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### **What library services do I currently receive in Cottage Grove?**

The Dane County Library Bookmobile has been coming to the Village of Cottage Grove since 1966. The collection offers books, magazines, DVD movies, and music and audiobooks on CD. The Bookmobile has Wi-Fi and residents can pick up holds and return items. The current schedule can be found on their website. The Bookmobile is not ADA accessible; however, staff will step off the bus to answer questions and fill requests. When requested, the Dane County Outreach Librarian provides resources to seniors and visits local daycares.

Dane County Library Services Website and Hours: <https://www.dcls.info/bookmobile>

Village-led library programming can be found by visiting the Programming Facebook page: [@CGPublic.Library](#)  
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### **What is DCLS and SCLS?**

**DCLS:** Dane County Library Services was created in 1966 in order to assure legal access to public library services for every resident of Dane County. Bookmobile service began in 1967 to provide public library services in Dane County cities, towns, and villages that do not have a public library.

**SCLS:** Joining South Central Library System is a requirement of Dane County Library Standards. SCLS serves to make its member libraries even more effective by: helping them share materials so expenditures of thousands of dollars locally become worth millions in services to the general public in a shared environment; providing them with leadership in the areas of technology and telecommunications; providing them with the training, expertise, and consulting services to cope with constantly changing technologies and demands for service.

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### **What's the difference between the town and village?**

Unlike the organization of cities and villages, towns are unincorporated and can only implement functions specifically authorized by state law. Cities and villages have home rule power and have greater flexibility to govern themselves. The Village of Cottage Grove is governed independently from the town.

Village Website: <https://www.vi.cottagegrove.wi.gov/>

Town Website: <https://www.tn.cottagegrove.wi.gov/>

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### **What consultants have been hired?**

In 2022, the **Sweeney Group** was hired by the Library Board to conduct a financial feasibility study. The Sweeney Group has extensive experience working with every aspect of a public library campaign, including major gift solicitations, and innovative segments that involve a broad spectrum of the community and has extensive experience working with more than 20 public libraries in smaller Wisconsin communities.

In 2022, the Village Board extended their contract with **FGM Architects** to complete capital project master planning, including the master plan for the library. Results from their work will be complete in Fall of 2023.

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**How many Library staff have been hired?**

To date, there are zero librarian-specific staff positions. The Library Board has hired a part-time seasonal position to organize library programs in 2023 using dedicated programming funding.

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**How is Cottage Grove projected to grow and will the library be planned to meet future growth needs?**

Between 2010 and 2022, Cottage Grove grew in population from 6,192 to 8,840 and is projected to surpass 10,000 residents by 2025 and 14,000 by 2035. The current library planning is for 20-year projected growth rate.

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### **How can I get involved?**

Openings for Village specific committees are available on the Village website:

<https://www.vi.cottagegrove.wi.gov/775/Committee-Vacancies>

Please contact the Library Board if you are interested in becoming involved in the project:

[libraryboard@village.cottage-grove.wi.us](mailto:libraryboard@village.cottage-grove.wi.us)

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### **Who are the Friends of the Cottage Grove Library?**

Friends of the Cottage Grove Library Inc, are a 501(c)3 non-profit that are championing a community gathering place in Cottage Grove that celebrates literacy, education, and technology for all. Their vision is to create connections across generations and cultures to foster personal, community, and economic growth. Over the past year, the Friends have engaged nearly 800 people through their free, community-oriented events. Ranging from Earth Day with Your Friends to Lunch and Learns, the Friends' have offered a variety of library-related programming to enrich residents' lives and support life-long learning. With twenty committee members, the group has volunteered hundreds of hours of their time to serve our community families and businesses.

More information about the Friends' on their website: <https://libraryfriendscgwi.org/>

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**What is the difference between the Friends' and the Library Board?**

The Library Board is appointed by the Village Board to identify budgets, timelines, and operate a capital campaign for building a library.

The Friends' educate the general public on the benefits of a library, literacy, and generational access to community resources, with other community groups to create enrichment opportunities for Cottage Grove area residents, and support research and fundraising efforts.

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**Where can I find additional information?**

You can find meeting agendas, updates, and other relevant information on the Village's Library Board

Webpage: <https://www.vi.cottagegrove.wi.gov/623/Library-Board>

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**Who do I contact?**

The Library Board can be contacted via email: [libraryboard@village.cottage-grove.wi.us](mailto:libraryboard@village.cottage-grove.wi.us)

Programming Outreach Specialist: Tracy Phillippi, [tphillippi@village.cottage-grove.wi.us](mailto:tphillippi@village.cottage-grove.wi.us)

Village Staff Liaison: JJ Larson, [jl Larson@village.cottage-grove.wi.us](mailto:jl Larson@village.cottage-grove.wi.us)

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### **What was the 2020 Survey?**

In 2020, the former Library Planning Committee conducted a public survey. Approximately 26% of households responded to the survey; 816 households. Overwhelmingly, residents stated they were interested in building a library in the Village (>70%). The survey also gave directions as to what spaces and services residents would be interested in. A complementary survey was given to 15 area businesses, 100% of which were interested in building a physical library in the Village.

A survey has many advantages including the ability to obtain detailed feedback; this was not a poll or referendum. We didn't use a poll because we wanted to understand on a broader level what library services and spaces meant to the residents of Cottage Grove. Internet surveys have increased dramatically over the past decade for several reasons. The use of web surveys has several advantages including low cost, more convenient for users, lack of an interviewer can also reduce bias.

The survey consisted of 10 questions that were validated by area librarians and the UW-Madison Survey Center. The library planning committee worked with a local marketing firm throughout the study. The survey consisted of multiple-choice questions and open-ended response questions. Survey instructions included asking that only one person per household responds. The online survey link was published on social media, posted on the Village's website, and was delivered via postcard to all Village of Cottage Grove households. Residents were also provided with a phone number to call with their response. The results were sorted by location; duplicate IP addresses were removed. Requesting personal information such as name and address can reduce participation, reduce trust, and reduce research integrity. The survey was in English and Spanish and was available for one month.

The 816 households that responded is also on par with the turnout in the April 2021 primary election and is nearly 500 more responses compared to the last three village planning surveys (2019 Comprehensive Plan – 174 respondents; 2018 Park & Open Space Plan – 463 respondents; and 2015 Comprehensive Plan – 394 respondents). There is a margin of error with survey statistics (sampling error contributes to this) and the higher the response rate, the lower the risk of bias. Given our survey methods, a response rate of 26% is higher than the predicted rate. The fact that people take the time to respond suggests a high level of interest (one way or another) and they will go out of their way to respond.

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## How do libraries help economic development and local businesses?

Local library services provide increased property value to the municipalities that they serve. Libraries have a large impact on the local economy and workforce development through the provision of a variety of classes, programs, and resources. Data has shown that proximity to a library increases spending for those businesses located near the library. These benefits are directly related to the operational tasks and programming that are designated by library budgets. The following are examples of how libraries directly impact local economies:

### 1. Libraries increase spending in local economies.

- a. **Wisconsin:** The economic return to taxpayers is \$4.06 per dollar of taxpayer support. The return on investment is calculated by dividing the economic contribution of public libraries per capita (\$134.16) by the public tax support per capita (\$33.07). This return per dollar of taxpayer funds comes back to taxpayers in the form of the value of public library services and the direct economic contribution of public libraries to the state economy. In addition to the measurable services and expenditures that add value to the state economy, there are numerous other services that are valuable but at this time can't be calculated from available data. The contributions of public libraries to overall literacy, to helping people with special needs, to supporting the efforts of K-12 schools, to providing community gathering space, and to supplying data needs of big and small businesses are additional and valuable contributions to the state economy (p. 33). (Source: <https://www.ala.org/tools/research/librariesmatter/wisconsin-public-libraries-have-strong-roi-and-provide-additional-valuable-services>)
- b. **Minnesota:** For every dollar of direct spending on operations payroll, libraries generate \$0.53 in additional spending in the economy of Minnesota. In the same way, for every dollar of direct spending on operations services, libraries generate \$0.74 in additional spending in Minnesota's economy (Source: <https://www.ala.org/tools/research/librariesmatter/minnesota-public-libraries-return-investment>)
- c. **Seattle:** The Library is associated with \$16 million in net new spending in Seattle in its first year of operations--equal to \$80 million for 5 years, \$160 million for 10 years, or \$320 million over a 20-year period. Nearby businesses report increases in spending associated with visitors to the Central Library. Increases in the use of Library resources contributes to learning, literacy, business productivity, personal and professional developments, and individual livelihood. (Source: <https://www.ala.org/tools/research/librariesmatter/economic-vitality-brought-seattle-central-library>)
- d. **South Carolina:** Among the findings are indications that the public library: - 49% of business users indicated that they obtained most of the business/research information from their public library - 78% of business users indicated that information obtained from the public library contributed to the success of their business - 59% of personal investors said they obtained the information needed for making investment decisions from their public library - 48% said "definitely" the investment information at the public library had contributed to their financial well-being and 34% said "somewhat" (Source: <https://www.ala.org/tools/research/librariesmatter/extent-taxpayers-south-carolina-feel-public-library-contributes-their-economic-well-being>)
- e. **Philadelphia:** 8% of survey respondents report that they could not have started, grown or improved their business without the Free Library, resulting in an estimated 8,630 businesses that benefited from Free Library business development services. (p.5) (Source: <https://www.ala.org/tools/research/librariesmatter/businesses-couldnt-have-done-it-without-library>)

### 2. Libraries are valuable resources to local entrepreneurs, small businesses, and their employees.

As described above, libraries boost economic development, and the community's economy benefits when businesspeople use library resources to make business decisions, and employees use it to improve job skills.

- a. **Libraries help to promote businesses.**

They provide data subscriptions for market analysis finding customers, demographic analysis, and business location evaluation, provide spaces for local small businesses to work, provide collaborative opportunities with small business development centers. (Sources: <https://medium.com/everylibrary/five-ways-local-libraries-can-help-small-businesses-and-entrepreneurs-bd8b7a208819>; “Conducting Business in the Library,” by Rebecca Cruz in Public Libraries Online. March 28, 2013; “Top 3 Library Services for Your Small Business,” Ahmad El-Najjar. December 15, 2016. Townsquared Resources.; <https://medium.com/everylibrary/tagged/business-development>)

**b. Employees turn to and depend on the library.**

73% of public libraries assist their patrons with job applications and interviewing skills, and 48% provide access and assistance to entrepreneurs looking to start a business of their own. Library operations and programming can focus on career skills for examples online study tools like Mango Languages, Learning Express Library, or access technical manuals, computer programming, and business eBooks through O'Reilly for Public Libraries (previously Safari Books Online). Libraries provide spaces for events, meetings, free wireless internet, printers, scanners, and computers. Libraries can work with partners to offer classes for business, job skills, and technology, and with service providers that offer business, career, and legal advice (Source: <https://www.madisonpubliclibrary.org/resources/business>)

**3. Fiscal responsibility and financial planning are essential to any capital project.**

The Library Planning committee in their July 2021 report has recommended a financial feasibility study to determine how a capital campaign and fundraising will impact the financing and tax plans. There are many opportunities to reduce finances including numerous opportunities to apply for programming that will benefit local businesses and employees. Moreover, ***keeping taxes local and reinvesting this tax money into library programming for local businesses and their employees is fiscally responsible and directly benefits the local economy (please see economic impact memo)***. Currently Village residents pay over \$290,000 for the use of other community libraries (2022). In 2030, for example, this number is projected to be \$350K (using a constant rate of increase and given no change to the valuation of Cottage Grove, which is not realistic).

- a. Chamber of Commerce leakage study (2017) shows that sales are leaking out of the CG area and being absorbed by businesses in Madison.  
(Source: [https://www.cottagegrovechamber.com/uploads/4/0/7/8/40788503/commercial\\_leakage\\_study\\_-\\_cottage\\_grove\\_2015-08-20.pdf](https://www.cottagegrovechamber.com/uploads/4/0/7/8/40788503/commercial_leakage_study_-_cottage_grove_2015-08-20.pdf))

For more on the Economic Impact of Public Libraries: <https://dpi.wi.gov/pld/data-reports/economic-impact>  
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## Does a library intersect with Village priorities?

- 1. Fiscal responsibility and financial planning:** The LPC is recommending a financial feasibility study to determine how fundraising will impact the financing and tax plans. There are many opportunities to reduce finances (see other report sections). Keeping taxes local is fiscally responsible; as currently Village residents pay over \$290,000 for the use of other community libraries (2022).
- 2. Economic growth:** Libraries have a large impact on the local economy and workforce development through the provision of a variety of classes and resources. The community's economy benefits when businesspeople use library resources to make business decisions, and employees use it to improve job skills. During economic hardship, citizens turn to and depend on the library. In turn, libraries boost economic development. Proximity to a library increases spending for those businesses located near the library. (Reference: <https://www.urban.org/sites/default/files/publication/46006/1001075-Making-Cities-Stronger.PDF>)
  - a. 73% of public libraries assist their patrons with job applications and interviewing skills, and 48% provide access and assistance to entrepreneurs looking to start a business of their own.
  - b. Chamber of Commerce leakage study (2017) shows that sales are leaking out of the CG area and being absorbed by businesses in Madison.  
(Reference: [https://www.cottagegrovechamber.com/uploads/4/0/7/8/40788503/commercial\\_leakage\\_study\\_-\\_cottage\\_grove\\_2015-08-20.pdf](https://www.cottagegrovechamber.com/uploads/4/0/7/8/40788503/commercial_leakage_study_-_cottage_grove_2015-08-20.pdf))
- 3. Diversity, equity, and inclusion:** Libraries are accessible for all, support literacy, education, and technology for everyone including underserved populations.  
(Reference: <https://www.journals.uchicago.edu/doi/full/10.1086/699267>)
- 4. Sustainability:** Libraries provide educational events (e.g., seed borrowing, community gardens). The Ad Hoc committee could provide suggestions during design and construction (i.e., reduction of carbon footprint, net zero building, LEED certification).  
(Reference: <https://americanlibrariesmagazine.org/blogs/the-scoop/libraries-and-sustainable-thinking/#:~:text=Sustainable%20thinking%20refers%20to%20the,life%20to%20fruition%20through%20choices>)
- 5. Emergency management planning:** A library provides a space for residents to go in extreme weather; this location is currently lacking in Cottage Grove.
- 6. Food insecurity:** Public libraries are part of the solution to food insecurity. Librarians can be a source for programming (State, County, and Local). For example, librarians may assist those who manage farmers' markets, summer feeding programs, community fridges, and culinary literacy centers build a greater understanding of the unique roles of local librarians in community food systems. (Reference: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=h8YC2ILYsMk>)
- 7. Communication and engagement:** A library provides the spaces to recruit volunteers from the community as well as provides and enhances their confidence, skills, and levels of employability. A library is welcoming to all, and bridges socioeconomic divides through examples of productive partnerships. A library allows for a space for our local community groups to meet and provide information for residents on programs, groups, and activities to be active in. We estimate many roles for community members throughout the library planning process. (Reference: <https://www.ala.org/tools/librarianstransform/libraries-transforming-communities/engagement>)
- 8. Housing:** People prefer to live near a public library if they have a choice, and often perceive library access as part of an enhanced quality of life.  
(Reference: <https://www.ala.org/tools/research/librariesmatter/minnesota-public-libraries-return-investment>)

- 9. Parks and Recreation:** More so than a community center, town hall, or public park ever could, libraries connect their communities in a way that benefits everyone. They combine local resources, including arts and crafts, educational offerings, job training, tutoring and technology learning. The Cottage Grove Library could include a dedicated space for Parks and Recreation programming.  
(Reference: <https://www.brookings.edu/blog/up-front/2017/03/30/how-public-libraries-help-build-healthy-communities/>)

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