



Required by Wis. Stat. §§ 43.17(5) and 43.24(3)

## GENERAL INFORMATION

Library System

Prairie Lakes Library System

Describe significant needs and problems that influenced the development of this and other system plans.

The overarching theme influencing the development of this plan is that 2023 marked the first year of existence of the Prairie Lakes Library System (hereafter “PLLS”). PLLS was created by the merger of the now-former Arrowhead Library System and Lakeshores Library System. PLLS’ 2023 library system plan was used as a key document in the merger process to provide details and scope of how the “new” library system would function during its first year. Utilizing the system plan in this way provided municipal and county stakeholders with a reasonable assurance that the merger would succeed. The 2023 plan was submitted to each county government, along with letters of support from all of the member library boards that would be affected by the merger. All three member county boards of supervisors approved the merger by formal resolution, and the 2023 plan was filed to and approved by DPI. Following the appointment of Trustees to a new Prairie Lakes Library System Board, PLLS came into existence on January 1st, 2023. Many of the key activities that unfolded over the course of 2023 were related to implementing aspects of the merger transition.

The planning environment in 2024 is expected to feature a number of specific areas of emphasis:

1. Completing the strategic planning process, approving a strategic plan, and taking initial steps to implement it;
2. Refining internal and external processes to fit the needs of PLLS and member libraries;
3. Efforts to build cohesion among the system board and member libraries;
4. Ongoing information gathering about member library needs;
5. Refining the advisory and facilitation roles performed by PLLS with respect to county library planning, county library funding, and county library levy exemptions;
6. Renovating the library materials delivery service;
7. Evaluating the physical facility needs of the library system.

Did the library system consult member libraries in the development of this plan?

- No, the library system did not include member libraries in the development of this plan.  
 Yes, the library system included member libraries in the development of this plan.

**If yes, describe the planning environment and process for this system plan. Include how member libraries are involved in plan development and review:**

Member libraries were asked for comment on the plan draft prior to the filing deadline established by DPI. Received comments were shared with the system board for review prior to approval of the draft.

Does the library system have a formally appointed advisory committee under Wis. Stat. § 43.17(2m)?

- No, the library system does not have a formally appointed advisory committee.  
 Yes, the library system has a formally appointed advisory committee.

**If the system appoints an advisory committee under Wis. Stat. § 43.17(2m), describe how the system makes appointments, posts meetings, and how the advisory committee reports to the library system board. Include a list of any additional system planning documents with the period covered and attach any planning documents which have not previously been provided to the Division:**

The following language appears in the Bylaws of the Prairie Lakes Library System:

“A Prairie Lakes Advisory Committee shall be appointed to, among other things, advise the system board about the status and needs of libraries in the system, serve as a conduit of information between the system board and individual libraries in the system and make recommendations to the

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**GENERAL INFORMATION (cont'd.)**


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...system board relating to libraries in the system. Appointees to this committee shall be the library directors, or designated representatives thereof, of each member library of the system. The Prairie Lakes Advisory Committee is granted the authority to adopt committee bylaws or committee rules for the purpose of defining procedures related to the implementation of the committee's charge. Any bylaws or rules adopted by the Prairie Lakes Advisory Committee shall be subordinate to any bylaws, policies, procedures, or actions of the Prairie Lakes Library System Board of Trustees."

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**ASSURANCES**


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The following plan and compliance document provides assurance that your public library system intends to comply with all statutory requirements for public library systems for calendar year **2024**. Indicate, with a check, your system's intent to comply with each system requirement and provide the requested information under each system requirement.

**Wis. Stat. § 43.24(2) For a public library system to qualify for and maintain its eligibility for state aid under this section it shall ensure that all of the following are provided:**

**Membership Agreements**

- Wis. Stat. § 43.24(2)(a) Written agreements that comply with Wis. Stat. § 43.15(4)(c)4 with all member libraries.
- The system will provide a sample copy of the agreement with a list of all members signing and the dates signed to the Division by January 15. (The system does not need to file multiple copies of the same agreement; only a sample copy of each type of agreement is necessary.)

**If the system is providing the sample copy and list of members signing through a publicly available webpage, provide the URL here:**

PLLS initiated an auto-renewing member library agreement on January 1st of 2023. The following list of member libraries are signatories to this agreement:

- Aram Public Library (Delavan -C, Walworth County)
- Barrett Memorial Library (Williams Bay -V, Walworth County)
- Beloit Public Library (Beloit -C, Rock County)
- Brigham Memorial Library (Sharon -V, Walworth County)
- Burlington Public Library (Burlington -C, Racine County)
- Clinton Public Library (Clinton -V, Rock County)
- Darien Public Library (Darien -V, Walworth County)
- Eager Free Public Library (Evansville -C, Rock County)
- East Troy Lions Public Library/Tri-Troy Joint Library (East Troy -V, Walworth County)
- Edgerton Public Library (Edgerton -C, Rock County)
- Fontana Public Library (Fontana-on-Geneva Lake -V, Walworth County)
- Genoa City Public Library (Genoa City -V, Walworth County)
- Graham Public Library (Union Grove -V, Racine County)
- Hedberg Public Library (Janesville -C, Rock County)
- Lake Geneva Public Library (Lake Geneva -C, Walworth County)
- Matheson Memorial Library (Elkhorn -C, Walworth County)
- Milton Public Library (Milton -C, Rock County)
- Orfordville Public Library (Orfordville -V, Rock County)
- Racine Public Library (Racine -C, Racine County)
- Rochester Public Library (Rochester -V, Racine County)
- Walworth Memorial Library (Walworth -V, Walworth County)
- Waterford Public Library (Waterford -V, Racine County)

A plain copy of the PLLS member library agreement is available for inspection at:

<https://docs.google.com/document/d/1D5L73P9hyb1hrO67WIFmEbQfFkWYyCceC3SD6ubBzk0/edit?usp=sharing>

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**ASSURANCES (cont'd)**


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**Resource Library Agreement**

- ✔ Wis. Stat. § 43.24(2)(b) Backup reference, information and interlibrary loan services from the system resource library, including the development of and access to specialized collections, as evidenced by a written agreement with that library.
- ✔ The system will provide a signed copy of the resource library agreement to the Division by January 15.

PLLS currently maintains two resource library agreements. The first agreement is between PLLS and the Racine Public Library. This agreement satisfies the requirements of Wis. Stat. § 43.24(2)(b), as the Racine Public Library has the largest annual operating budget among member libraries. The second agreement is a supplementary resource library agreement between PLLS and the Hedberg Public Library in Janesville. This agreement provides original cataloging services and additional system-wide funding for digital content.

**If the system is providing the resource library agreement through a publicly available webpage, provide the URL here:**

[https://drive.google.com/drive/folders/1L9fUu9nirnpl6wDG-kSRzplvi1x8\\_wnL?usp=sharing](https://drive.google.com/drive/folders/1L9fUu9nirnpl6wDG-kSRzplvi1x8_wnL?usp=sharing)

**Reference Referral, Interlibrary Loan, and Technology**

- ✔ Wis. Stat. § 43.24(2)(d) Referral or routing of reference and interlibrary loan requests from libraries within the system to libraries within and outside the system.

**List ongoing activities related to this requirement:**

Reference referral, interlibrary loan, and technology services have remained relatively constant since the merger became effective. This is largely because the former ALS and LLS Library systems had begun integrating technology operations years before the merger. As a result, there was relatively no change in the capabilities, support options, and quality of service the libraries had access to.

**Indicate new or priority activities relating to this requirement for the plan year (if none, indicate so):**

As of this writing, it is possible that strategic planning may reveal areas where the library system can improve its related range of services. Any resulting decision points will be evaluated in the context of a completed strategic plan and implemented through a combination of policy changes and budget revisions.

One significant change that the library system is actively considering is an alteration of the local IT segment of service. Specifically, the system may be able to phase out hourly billing for regular local IT work performed by System staff. This policy change is dependent on staff compensation choices that are under consideration by the system board as of this writing.

**Inservice Training**

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**ASSURANCES (cont'd)**


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- ✔ Wis. Stat. § 43.24(2)(e) Inservice training for participating public library personnel and trustees.

The Division interprets inservice training to incorporate a range of in-person and virtual continuing education opportunities.

**List ongoing activities related to this requirement.**

The primary ongoing activity planned for 2024 is continuing participation in the Southeastern Wisconsin Continuing Education Initiative (SEWI) group. This collaborative program provides PLLS member libraries with access to in-person and virtual continuing education events, newsletters, and facilitated learning sessions.

**Indicate new or priority activities relating to this requirement for the plan year (if none, indicate so):**

A new priority for 2024 will be the provision of dedicated CE event updates during meetings of the Librarian Advisory Committee, with the ultimate purpose of providing thoughtful reminders of upcoming opportunities that may benefit member library staff - especially those who must maintain public librarian certification through completion of qualifying CE contact hours on an annual basis.

A further new objective is to begin offering in-system CE events to the staff of our member libraries on a variety of topics, ideally on a quarterly basis, at rotating geographic locations throughout the system territory.

**Identify the names and email addresses of continuing education staff employed by the system for continuing education services:**

Steven Platteter is tasked with coordinating PLLS' program of CE-related activities, including validation of Wisconsin Public Librarian applications or renewals.

Email: [splatteter@prairielakes.info](mailto:splatteter@prairielakes.info)

Phone: (608) 868-2872

**If the system contracts with another system or entity to plan and conduct continuing education services, list that system or entity and provide a link to, or copy of, the current agreement:**

PLLS collaborates closely with the Bridges Library System to plan the activities associated with the SEWI project:

<https://sewilibraries.org/>

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**Delivery and Communication**

- ✔ Wis. Stat. § 43.24 (2)(fm) Electronic delivery of information and physical delivery of library materials to participating libraries.

**List ongoing activities related to this requirement. For physical delivery reference resources, personnel, and vendors.**

PLLS is currently operating a delivery service on a 5-day-per-week basis for all 22 members of the library system. The structure of this delivery service is based upon the pre-merger delivery network, consisting of four separate components. The first component covers delivery in the counties of Racine and Walworth and is a contract with a single-employee vendor. The second component maintains a 5-day-per-week delivery link between the Racine Public Library and the Milton Public Library to facilitate exchange between primary sorting activities at these two locations. The third component provides PLLS with access to the statewide delivery network operated by the South Central Library System. The fourth component is three system-employed part-time drivers, utilizing two delivery vans, to provide 5-day per week delivery to the seven libraries within Rock County, and a number of extended system partners including Beloit College, Blackhawk Technical School, and several nursing homes.

**Indicate new or priority activities relating to this requirement for the plan year (if none, indicate so):**

PLLS has thus far refrained from making any significant changes to the delivery service model in the interest of preserving the stability of service for member libraries - especially through the period of the library system merger - the first year. Moving into 2024, PLLS will be devoting more time to the prospect of renovating the delivery service. If significant changes to the delivery service prove warranted - either due to cost, human factors, or a combination of factors - it is most likely that implementation of any changes would occur at the end of June or the end of the year, largely for budget purposes and to ensure enough lead time for member libraries to prepare for changes.

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**ASSURANCES (cont'd)**


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Immediate questions regarding delivery renovation are costs to operate delivery, service quality, service frequency, the availability of in-route sorting, and system staff capacities.

Long-term questions regarding delivery renovation include what the ultimate physical footprint of system facilities will be - and their locations, and any opportunities to collaborate with other Library systems for the purpose of consolidating library delivery services along regional lines.

Because of the importance of geographic location, proximity to major roadways, fluctuating fuel costs, etc, it is very difficult to address the delivery service without also addressing issues surrounding the physical locations of PLLS offices. It is possible that PLLS will seek outside consulting specifically for the areas of delivery and physical location. It is also worth noting that renovation of the delivery service to its ultimate final state may take a period of time to accomplish - and may be segmented into phases.

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**Service Agreements**

- ✓ Wis. Stat. § 43.24(2)(g) Service agreements with all adjacent library systems.
- ✓ The system will provide a copy of the agreements to the Division by January 15. The agreements with adjacent systems – including consulting agreements, consortium agreements, etc. – must include a list of all systems signing the agreement.

**If the system is providing the service agreements through a publicly available webpage, provide the URL here:**

PLLS is still in the process of optimizing its new website. Copies of service agreements will be provided in physical form along with the submission of this library system plan.

**If the system is providing the service agreements through a publicly available webpage, provide a brief description of the types and number of agreements here:**

Agreements maintained with all adjacent library systems:

- Bridges Library System
  - Kenosha County Library System
  - Milwaukee County Federated Library System
  - South Central Library System
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**Other Types of Libraries**

- ✓ Wis. Stat. § 43.24(2)(L) Cooperation and continuous planning with other types of libraries in the system area, which results in agreements with those libraries for the appropriate sharing of library resources to benefit the clientele of all libraries in the system area.
- ✓ The system will have agreements with other types of libraries, or if the system participates in a cooperation agreement with a multitype organization to meet the purposes of this goal, there is established a clear link between the system and the individual members of the multitype organization. The system will provide a copy of the agreement with a list of all signing libraries to the Division by January 15.

**If the system is providing the agreements with other types of libraries through a publicly available webpage, provide the URL here:**

PLLS is still in the process of optimizing its new website. Copies of agreements with other types of libraries will be provided in physical form along with the submission of this library system plan.

**If the system is providing the agreements with other types of libraries through a publicly available webpage, provide a brief description of the types and number of agreements here:**

Agreements maintained with other types of libraries:

- Wisconsin School for the Deaf
  - Wisconsin School for the Blind and Visually Impaired
  - Blackhawk Technical College
  - Beloit College
  - Waterford Union High School
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**ASSURANCES (cont'd)**


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**Library Technology and Resource Sharing Plan**

- Wis. Stat. § 43.24(2)(m) Planning with the division and with participating public libraries and other types of libraries in the area in regard to library technology and the sharing of resources. By January 1, 2000, and every fifth January 1 thereafter, the public library system shall submit to the division a written plan for library technology and the sharing of resources.
- The system will provide the current plan for library technology and resource sharing to the Division by January 1, 2024, if the system amended the plan since last submitting it to the Division or if the plan on file with the Division is no longer valid. See [the Library System Technology and Resource Sharing plan webpage](#) for the most current version of the system library technology and resource sharing plan.

**If the system is providing the current technology and resource sharing plan through a publicly available webpage, provide the URL here:**

The current technology and resource sharing plan is housed within a framework developed by DPI in Google docs. PLLS is preparing to conduct a technology plan renovation in 2025 per the 5-year cycle indicated in the statutes, in conjunction with an expected update to DPI's preferred mechanism for submission.

**Is the plan current and comprehensive for the technology and resource sharing services the system provides?**

- Yes, the library system technology and resource-sharing plan is current and comprehensive for the technology and resource-sharing services the system provides.
- No, the library system technology and resource sharing plan is not current or comprehensive for the technology and resource sharing services the system provides or will provide.

**If no, describe what the system has added, changed, or eliminated from the plan in effect (and describe how the changes were reviewed with member libraries and approved by the system board):**

**Indicate new or priority activities relating to this requirement for the plan year:**

It is possible that a new technology plan for 2025 will tie-in with the results of a library system strategic plan that is estimated to be completed early in 2024.

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**Professional Consultation**

- Wis. Stat. § 43.24(2)(h) Professional consultant services to participating public libraries.

**Identify consultants, specific service areas, and related activities. If the consultant is employed by a member library, indicate the library and the consultant's title:**

- Accounting and Finance - Jeremy Erickson ([jerickson@prairielakes.info](mailto:jerickson@prairielakes.info))
- Administration and Statutory Compliance - Steve Ohs ([sohs@prairielakes.info](mailto:sohs@prairielakes.info))
- Communications and Marketing - Tovah Anderson ([tanderson@prairielakes.info](mailto:tanderson@prairielakes.info))
- Continuing Education - Steven Platteter ([splatteter@prairielakes.info](mailto:splatteter@prairielakes.info))
- Technology - Jim Novy ([jnovy@prairielakes.info](mailto:jnovy@prairielakes.info))
- Interlibrary Loan - Anita Schultz ([aschultz@prairielakes.info](mailto:aschultz@prairielakes.info))
- Youth Services - Jennifer Puccini ([jpuccini@prairielakes.info](mailto:jpuccini@prairielakes.info)) - Oconomowoc Public Library
- Inclusive Services - Rene Bue ([rbue@prairielakes.info](mailto:rbue@prairielakes.info)) - Hedberg Public Library

**Indicate new or priority activities relating to this requirement for the plan year (if no change from current year, indicate *None*):**

PLLS is actively considering whether to transition from a contract basis to a full-time staff consultant basis in the areas of youth services and inclusive services. It is expected that any decision on this matter will be implemented early in 2024 upon the completion of a system strategic plan.

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**ASSURANCES (cont'd)**


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**Inclusive Services**

- Wis. Stat. § 43.24(2)(k) Promotion and facilitation of library service to users with special needs.

The Division interprets services to users with special needs as inclusive services. Inclusive library services are holistic, spanning library policies, collections, space, and services. Inclusive services reflect equity and accessibility for all members of the community, including services to individuals or groups for whom using the public library is difficult, limited, or minimized.

**Indicate new or priority activities relating to this requirement for the plan year:**

Inclusive services consulting was offered to member libraries by a contract-based consultant during 2023. This was done in accordance with the inaugural system plan for PLLS. As in the years prior to the library system merger, additional occasional continuing education opportunities were available to member Library staff through the Southeastern Wisconsin Continuing Education partnership (SEWI) between a number of library systems in the southeastern region of the state.

Through an ongoing strategic planning process, PLLS is engaged in gathering feedback from member libraries regarding this area of consulting, and others. Specific changes to the inclusive services consulting profile of the library system do not yet exist as of the plan file date. However, it is anticipated that the library system may make changes during 2024.

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**Other Service Programs**

Wis. Stat. § 43.24(2)(i) Any other service programs designed to meet the needs of participating public libraries and the residents of the system area, as determined by the public library system board after consultation with participating public libraries.

**List each "other" service program individually with ongoing activities and new or priority activities for the plan year under each program. For instance, if the system provides a bookmobile service program, list ongoing activities and new or priority activities for the bookmobile program. (Do not lump miscellaneous activities under a single "other" program.)**

The SHARE Consortium is the primary other service program operated by PLLS. The SHARE Consortium consists of a library automation partnership between all member libraries of PLLS, plus the two member libraries of the Kenosha County Library System. This partnership consists of a joint decision-making body integrated with the PLLS Librarian Advisory Committee and a cooperative budget for the purpose of funding the ongoing maintenance of library automation software which is staffed by PLLS staff. This cooperative budget also includes a number of resources purchased by the members of SHARE via the fiscal agency of PLLS. This arrangement allows the library system to purchase resources requested by the member libraries at a discounted rate - bringing an economy of scale to a number of electronic resources that are offered by all participants of the SHARE Consortium.

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**Administration**

- The system will not expend more than 20 percent of state aid received in the plan year for administration.
- The system will submit the 2022 system audit to the Division no later than September 30, 2024.
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**Budget**

- The system completed and included the budget by service program category and fund source for the plan year ([see guidelines](#)).

**NOTE:**

As of current writing, the PLLS board is in the process of setting staff compensation for the 2024 fiscal year. As a result, approved budget information by program category is not yet computable. It is the intent of the PLLS board to file an amended system plan immediately upon approval of all budget information needed to compute expenditures by program category. A copy of the current draft budget shall be supplied with this plan in lieu of a completed budget outlay by program category.

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**COLLABORATIVE ACTIVITIES**



Summary of Activities *Briefly describe collaborative activities with other libraries, public library systems, and other organizations. Exclude services and activities listed in the system's 2021 resource library contract.*

Cost Benefit For each activity above, list the activity name and estimated cost benefit realized.


Activity	Amount
1. Wisconsin Public Library Consortium Electronic Content Collections	\$1,500,000
2.	
3.	
4.	
5.	
6.	
7.	
8.	
9.	
10.	
<b>Cost Benefit Total</b>	0\$0

**CERTIFICATION**

**WE, THE UNDERSIGNED, CERTIFY** that to the best of our knowledge, the information provided in this document and any attachments is true and correct, and that the system will be in full compliance with all applicable provisions of Chapter 43 of the Wisconsin Statutes for the year **2024**.

Name of System Director Steve Ohs	Signature of System Director 	Date Signed Mo./Day/Yr. 10/18/2023
Name of System Board President Annette Smith	Signature of System Board President 	Date Signed Mo./Day/Yr. 10/18/2023

**FOR DPI USE  
LIBRARY SYSTEM PLAN APPROVAL**

Pursuant to Wis. Statutes, the plan contained herein is: <input type="checkbox"/> Approved  <input type="checkbox"/> Provisionally Approved <i>See Comments.</i> <input type="checkbox"/> Not Approved <i>See Comments.</i>	DLT Assistant Superintendent Signature  	Date Signed Mo./Day/Yr. 11/20/23
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<b>PUBLIC LIBRARY SYSTEM 2024 ANNUAL PROGRAM BUDGET</b>					
Program	2024 Public Library System Aid	System Aid Carryover and Interest Earned	Other State and Federal Library Program Funds	All Other Income	Total
<b>Technology, Reference, and Interlibrary Loan*</b>					
1. Technology	\$102,406	0	\$3,000	\$156,335	
2. Reference	\$59,543	0	0	0	
3. Interlibrary Loan	\$18,914	0	0	0	
4.					
5. Electronic Resources	\$189,935	0	0	\$147,775	
<b>Program Total</b>	<b>\$370,798</b>	<b>\$0</b>	<b>\$3,000</b>	<b>\$304,090</b>	<b>\$677,888</b>
<b>Continuing Education and Consulting Service*</b>					
1. Continuing Education	\$44,155	0	0	0	
2. Consulting Service	\$140,090	0	0	0	
<b>Program Total</b>	<b>\$184,245</b>	<b>\$0</b>	<b>\$0</b>	<b>\$0</b>	<b>\$184,245</b>
<b>Delivery Services</b>	\$314,127	0	0	0	0\$0
<b>Inclusive Services</b>	\$15,979	0	0	0	0\$0
<b>Library Collection Development</b>	\$4,000	0	0	0	0\$0
<b>Direct Payment to Members for Nonresident Access</b>	0	0	0	0	0\$0
<b>Direct Nonresident Access Payments Across System Borders</b>	0	0	0	0	0\$0
<b>Youth Services</b>	\$124,882	0	0	0	0\$0
<b>Public Information</b>	\$109,356	0	0	0	0\$0
<b>Administration</b>	\$314,689	0	0	0	0\$0
<b>Subtotal</b>	<b>\$883,033</b>	<b>\$0</b>	<b>\$0</b>	<b>\$0</b>	<b>\$883,033</b>
<b>Other System Programs</b>					
1. SHARE ILS	\$130,089	0	0	\$204,940	0\$0
2. Capital Expenditures	\$10,000	0	0	0	0\$0
<b>Program Total</b>	<b>\$140,089</b>	<b>\$0</b>	<b>\$0</b>	<b>\$204,940</b>	<b>\$345,029</b>

**PUBLIC LIBRARY SYSTEM 2024  
ANNUAL PROGRAM BUDGET**

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<b>Grand Totals</b>	\$1,578,165	\$0	\$3,000	\$509,030	\$2,090,195
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\* These programs may be divided into subprograms at the discretion of the system. If choosing not to use subprograms, enter amounts on line 1. Line 5 is reserved for the amounts budgeted for electronic resources ([see program budget guidelines](#)).