

LIBRARY

DESCRIPTION

The Henrico County Public Library (HCPL) provides informational, educational, and reading resources to residents of all ages. Library services include professional information staff who expertly answer customer questions, a comprehensive and timely materials collection, programming for children, teens, and adults, computer classes and digital media creation, book discussion groups, resources for job seeking assistance, and more. The library provides mobile library services to daycare centers and retirement communities and participates in community outreach events. HCPL is known for its high standard of customer service, its responsive collection, and its attractive and well-equipped facilities.

The library offers in-person and online services through 748 public workstations, loanable laptops and wireless hotspots, and other devices embedded in libraries across the county. The library provides Internet access, web-based Library Catalog searching, Microsoft Office software, digital media creation tools, and electronic information resources. Wi-Fi is available at all public library locations. The Library catalog, eBook downloads, and research databases are available to access online, any time, from anywhere. HCPL is a resource for every resident, supporting and adapting to ever-evolving community needs.

OBJECTIVES

- To provide customers with a positive library experience that meets their needs and expectations and that enriches community life.
- All libraries will be welcoming and engaging places that provide accessibility and an array of spaces to meet the community’s growing needs.
- Residents will be offered a responsive, relevant and diverse collection that is available in a timely manner.
- Libraries will offer services and programs that reach out to Henrico County’s changing population in ways that respond to diverse community needs.

FISCAL YEAR 2024 SUMMARY

Annual Fiscal Plan

Description	FY22 Actual	FY23 Original	FY24 Approved	Change 23 to 24
Personnel	\$ 15,531,836	\$ 17,797,754	\$ 19,052,770	7.1%
Operation	3,926,507	4,391,911	4,616,911	5.1%
Capital	104,542	200,000	200,000	0.0%
Total	<u>\$ 19,562,885</u>	<u>\$ 22,389,665</u>	<u>\$ 23,869,681</u>	<u>6.6%</u>
Personnel Complement	228	227 *	227	0

* One position transferred to the Police Division as part of the addition of 10 School Resource Officers.

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PERFORMANCE MEASURES

	Performance Measures			Change 23 to 24
	FY22	FY23	FY24	
Workload Measures				
Digital/E Circulation	1,063,987	1,117,186	1,173,046	55,860
Library Cards Issued	15,719	16,033	16,514	481
Meeting Room Attendance	113,375	130,381	149,938	19,557
Physical/Print Circulation	2,269,318	2,382,784	2,501,923	119,139
Program Participation	50,010	51,510	54,086	2,576
Public Computer Sessions	152,141	161,269	174,171	12,902
Questions Answered	464,175	468,817	473,505	4,688
Total Circulation	3,333,305	3,499,970	3,674,969	174,999
Visits	1,100,350	1,232,392	1,417,251	184,859
Website Visits	3,734,189	3,771,531	3,809,246	37,715
WiFi Connections	2,117,502	2,435,127	2,800,396	365,269

BUDGET HIGHLIGHTS

The Department's budget for FY24 totals \$23,869,681 representing an increase of \$1,480,016, or 6.6% from the previous approved budget. The personnel component has increased by \$1,255,016 to reflect an increase in employee salaries and benefits. The operating component of the budget has increased by \$225,000 for the restoration of the collection line. Capital Outlay remains consistent with the previous fiscal year.

DEPARTMENTAL HIGHLIGHTS

STAFF AND FACILITIES

Sandston Library Refresh

The Sandston Branch Library closed from September 12 to November 30, 2022 for a refresh of the building interior and grounds. Fresh paint, new carpet, eco-friendly landscaping, resurfaced parking lots, updated A/V, and new, modern shelving units that facilitate browsing and display are among the many improvements to the facility. Lighting at Sandston had previously been overhauled to install new energy efficient fixtures, bringing the project total to over \$411,000 of upgrades. The community was served by the Mobile Library Service on Fridays and by the nearby Varina and Fairfield Area Libraries during the closure. An open house on November 30th welcomed the public back into the building with a brief ribbon cutting ceremony, followed by a Family Storytime and activities for all ages throughout the day.

Staff Development, Emerging Leaders Certification, and Career Development Plan

In the first biennial staff development days, library staff joined a virtual event to hear updates about the system and State Library services receiving accolades and awards voted on by their peers. Several HCPL employees graduated from the County's Emerging Leaders Certification Program, having cultivated wider skillsets and networks that will benefit their careers and the library system as a whole. Thirteen HCPL staff have enrolled in Leadership Henrico.

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Several employees are expected to complete their Career Development Plan, meaning they are cross-trained in multiple public service areas to increase the strength of the library system's workforce. The Friends of Henrico County Public Library provided scholarships to send staff to the American Library Association conference and the Public Library Association conference, the Joint Conference of Librarians of Color, and the Virginia Library Association conference.

Achievement Awards

HCPL and its staff were recognized by the National Association of Counties (NACo) this year with three achievement awards for programs: Community Collections, in which donated or withdrawn library materials are repurposed as reading materials in waiting rooms for youth facilities or programs at other county agencies; Storyline, a phone-in story time featuring recorded children's books read aloud by library staff and updated weekly; and Computer Work and Play Stations, the custom designed furniture pieces at the Fairfield Area Library for parents and caregivers needing to use computers while accompanied by a small child. The Virginia Association of Counties (VACo) also recognized the Computer Work and Play Stations. The Fairfield Area Library was awarded the Institute of Interior Designers of America and American Library Association's Library Interior Design Award, a biennial national honor recognizing excellence and innovation in library interior design. HCPL received an honorable mention from the Virginia Energy Efficiency Council for the library system's many environmentally conscious buildings and efforts, including HCPL's five LEED certified buildings, a 23% reduction in energy usage since FY17, and solar panel installation projects. Fairfield Area Library received two awards from the US Green Building Council, Virginia Chapter: Innovative Project of the Year—New Construction and the People's Choice Award.

PROGRAMS AND SERVICES

Early Literacy, Youth, and Family Programs

Early literacy efforts at the library were building upon pre-pandemic levels of service in FY22. Options for both in-person and virtual story times were available for parents and caregivers. The Work and Play Station computer stations at Fairfield Area Library, custom designed to facilitate computer use by parents and caregivers accompanied by a small child, went viral for a second time (since the 2019 Grand Opening) on national and international social, print, and other news media, appearing in *The Washington Post*, *The New York Times*, *Newsweek*, *Good Morning America*, and *Richmond Times-Dispatch*. Library staff authored and published articles about the workstations in leading industry publications *American Libraries* magazine and *Children and Libraries* magazine. Summer Reading was an overall success with a significant rebound in participation and a popular ocean theme. Nearly 5,000 participants logged approximately 75,000 books and shared 4,100 reviews on the Summer Reading app, Beanstack. A new "100 Books Before Graduation" program, sponsored by the Friends of the Library, debuted for teens in middle and high school to track their reading for school or for pleasure and to earn rewards.

Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion

The library added another group and location to the popular Next Chapter Book Club for adults with developmental disabilities, in partnership with Henrico Mental Health and Developmental Services, at the North Park Branch Library. For patrons who require service in a language other than English, and for translation of Library promotional materials, HCPL contracted with United Language Group to offer live interpretation for customer service interactions and to receive document translation services as needed. The Fairfield Library's Trailblazers exhibit, designed to represent a diversity of identities and to inspire the youth of Fairfield on their paths in life, received new inspirational quotes from an inclusive group of luminaries added to the quote panels on the first and second floors. The Libbie

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Mill Heritage Wall received an update with a new story about Indigenous Peoples created with help from the Pamunkey Museum and Cultural Heritage Center and Henricus Historical Park and Foundation. HCPL continues to provide programming in support of recognized cultural heritage months and of the initiatives of Henrico County Multicultural Engagement. HCPL staff and facilities were prominent in the FY22 Henrico Citizens Academy. Staff participated in the Virginia State University and Virginia Union University Henrico Days and distributed a newly-developed library staff recruitment flyer. National non-profit Generation Hope, which supports student-parents (pregnant or those with young children) in completing their degrees, toured Fairfield Area Library with their academic partners from around the country and an HCPL partnership has been initiated with VSU's division of Student Success & Engagement.

Adult Programming

Centrally planned, system-wide programs are expanding under the new Programming Division. Over the past year, author talks, lectures, performances, screenings, and discussions have connected historical and topical subjects with the library's collection, with an emphasis on diversity and inclusion. Highlights included local author Chip Jones discussing his book *The Organ Thieves*, local scholar Elvatrice Belsches presenting her original research on Virginia Randolph, the Latin Ballet of Virginia offering workshops and performances, and Shaleigh Howells of the Pamunkey Museum and Professor Gregory Smithers of Virginia Commonwealth University providing lectures during Native American Heritage Month. Support for jobseekers continued in libraries: HCPL partnered with CareerWorks to promote virtual interviewing and résumé workshops offered weekly through the winter of 2021. Tax filing was provided in partnership with United Way's Volunteer Income Tax Assistance program to lower-income individuals and families.

All Henrico Reads

The 2023 author event was announced and will be held at J.R. Tucker High School on March 30, 2023. This event will be hosted internationally bestselling author Jamie Ford. Ford will be presenting his new novel, *The Many Daughters of Afong Moy*, which has been optioned for a TV series, debuted on the NYT Bestseller list, and was selected as a Today Show Read With Jenna pick.

Voting

Six of HCPL's nine physical locations are actively involved in supporting voting in the county. Gayton, Fairfield, North Park, and Libbie Mill libraries serve as voting precincts. Tuckahoe and Varina both had drop-off ballot boxes available to the public. Varina Library served as an early voting office site, one of three in the county.

OUTREACH

Outdoor Community Events

The Outreach Team expanded their presence as increasing numbers of community events provided new opportunities to connect with the community. For comparison, in calendar year 2021, HCPL Outreach appeared at 33 community events with 3,280 interaction, while in 2022, Outreach attended 48 community events with 7,063 interactions.

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Mobile Library Service

The Mobile Library Service (MLS) added five new stops to their route in locations across the county. The MLS is working to grow Youth Services offerings, and continuing their partnership with Henrico Mental Health and Developmental Services' Connect program locations. During the Sandston Library's closure for the refresh project, the MLS made weekly visits to the library parking lot on Fridays between 10 a.m. and 2 p.m. to provide materials for 150 Sandston residents.

COLLECTION AND TECHNOLOGY

1,000 Books Before Kindergarten Kits

The Friends of Henrico County Public Library provided support for the library to curate and package kits for families participating in the 1,000 Books Before Kindergarten early literacy challenge, or any families looking to grab a convenient, curated collection of picture books. These engaging backpacks contain ten unique, librarian-selected books perfect for young readers that can be used toward reaching their goals and earning prizes in our early literacy reading challenge.

Meta Community Action Grant and ARPA funding for Wireless Hotspots

Meta, parent company of Facebook, provided funding for Wi-Fi hotspots to circulate to adult library users. This funding was later augmented by additional funds from the American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA). In total, the library was able to purchase 100 hotspots, which have circulated approximately 850 times in their first 11 months of use. Meta provided funds for the program to continue for another fiscal year as part of their Meta Data Center Community Action Grant Program. The pilot has been successful and demonstrates need for the public.

Online Learning Resources Added

The library added electronic resources for patrons including Transparent Languages, a new online language-learning tool provided through the Library of Virginia. The over 3,000 digital magazines provided by the Library of Virginia migrated to a new app, Magzster. OverDrive, the library's primary host for eBook downloads, discontinued its eponymous app and moved to its new, more user-friendly Libby app, which can be used across a variety of devices with Android or iOS operating systems.

Library Catalog Update

The HCPL catalog received a new look and feel with application of a discovery layer. This software overlay provides an improved search engine, better display of search results, and greater customization for user access to the library's catalog database. HCPL IT, Collection Management, and Public Relations collaborated to customize the search experience and the visual design of the new catalog which improved the marketing of book collections. The redesigned catalog looks modern and is easily navigated on a desktop, smartphone, tablet, or other touchscreen device. Staff also worked interdepartmentally to tailor the new mobile app provided by the software overlay vendor for an enhanced mobile search experience.

CONCLUSION

The library has found its momentum and expanded upon its pre-pandemic footprint of programs and services over this past year. With strong support from the County and a dedicated community of readers, library staff have been inspired to provide innovative, inclusive, and attentive public service that is receiving national recognition. The library is a valued and essential resource to Henrico residents and adds to their quality of life. HCPL continues to deepen engagement with the community and build on its solid foundation of excellence.