

A **city** that works for all of us needs a **library** that works for all of us.

The Friends of the Saint Paul Public Library serves as a catalyst for SPPL to strengthen and inspire all Saint Paul residents by leveraging maximum private investment to amplify the City's public spending. This public-private partnership has helped make our City's library a national leader.

Each year, The Friends works with Saint Paul Public Library to determine funding priorities and advocate for robust City investment as well as private investments through philanthropy.

In order to meet individuals where they are and reflect the goals and values of our City, The Friends requests the following investments in support of the Library's work. With each of these funding priorities, the City of Saint Paul has the opportunity to exemplify its values of equity, innovation, and resilience.

2019 Funding Priorities

1. \$280,000 to Eliminate Fines
- ~~2. \$90,000 to Increase Capacity for Cultural Liaisons~~ (Private grant recently secured)
3. \$125,000 to Invest in Collections
4. \$50,000 to Extend Social Worker Contract



“The Saint Paul Public librarians were indispensable in my search for a job. I did not realize how much the world had changed in terms of finding work...I know that without their help it is truly questionable if I would have ever been able to find a job.”

– Emilia, library user

Eliminate Fines: \$280,000

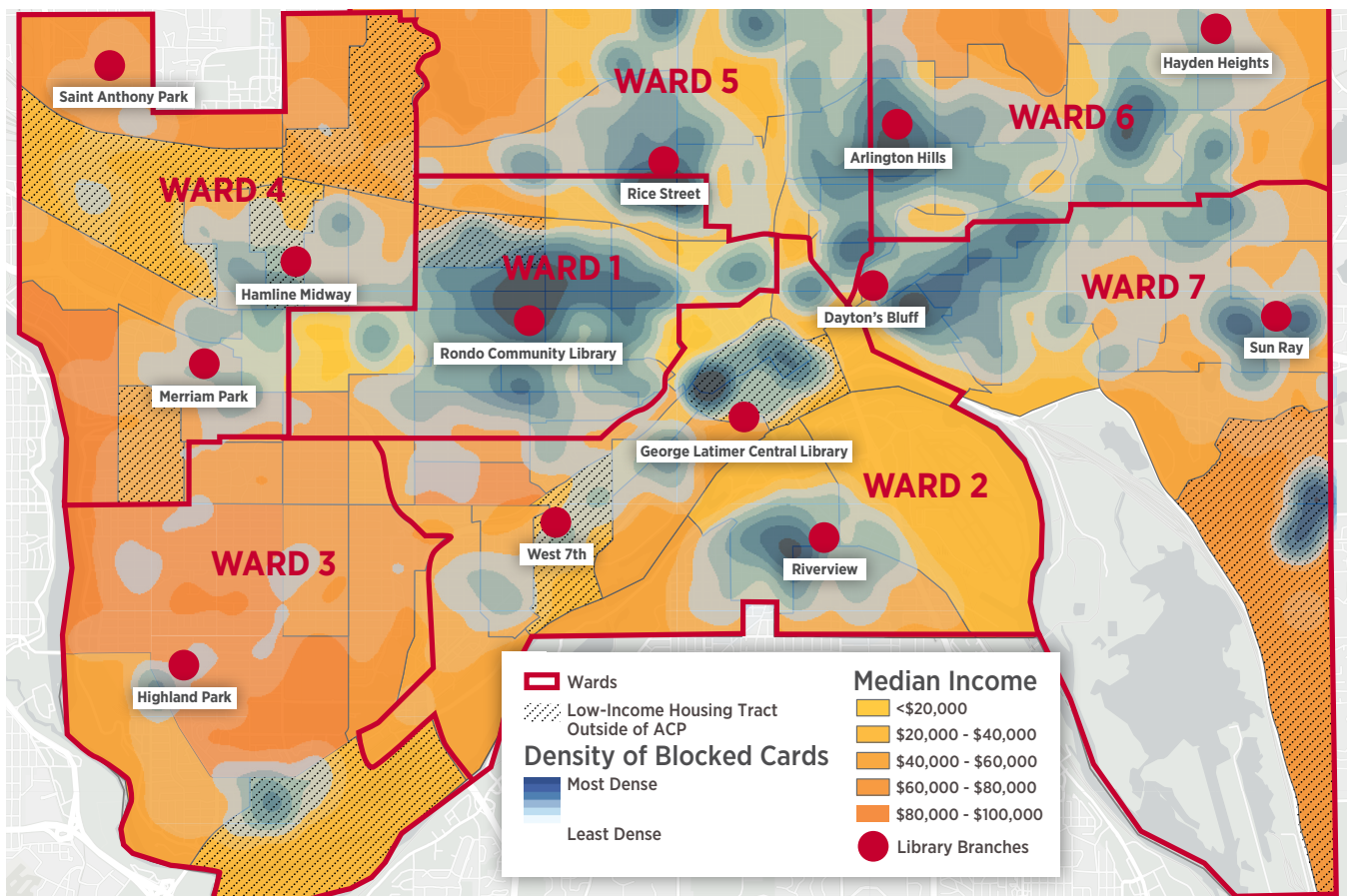
The Case:

By eliminating library fines, we remove a significant barrier to accessing this essential City resource and we send a powerful message to those who need the Library most that “you are welcome here.”

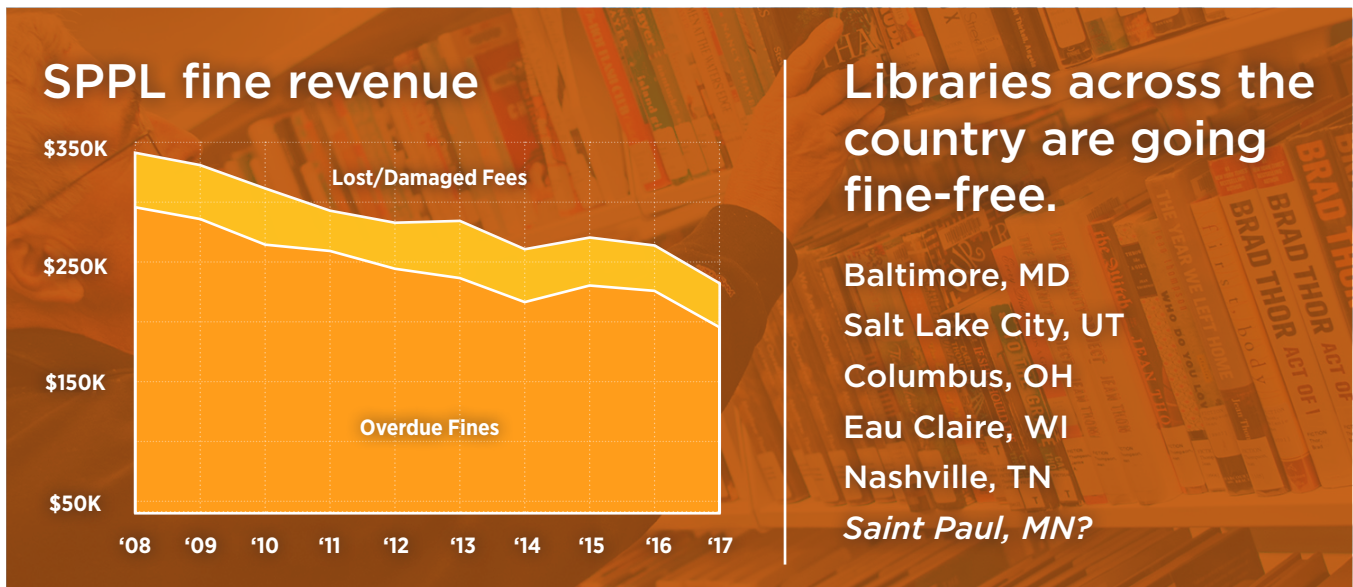
The Evidence:

- Over 51,000 library cardholders are currently blocked due to fines and fees. This represents about 1 in 5 of almost 270,000 SPPL cardholders.
- While books come back late in every library, punitive measures like fines and fees disproportionately affect low-income library card holders, with higher percentages of blocked cards belonging to Saint Paul residents living in economically-challenged neighborhoods.
- There is little evidence that fines actually achieve their intended purpose of promoting more timely returns. Research from cities whose libraries have already eliminated fines show no significant increases in financial loss have been reported.
- Fines can be costly to enforce. Saint Paul Public Library estimated that if frontline staff spent 10% of their time on fine negotiation, it would amount to over 12,000 hours and \$250,000 per year in staff time.

Percentages of blocked cards are higher in economically-challenged neighborhoods.



Fines are not a sustainable form of revenue.



Invest in Collections: \$125,000

The Case:

We need to offer resources that meet the demands of our diverse community, particularly as more Saint Paul residents gain access to library resources through the elimination of fines and fees. **With additional investment in collections, the Saint Paul Public Library can offer a current, balanced, and relevant collection that effectively supports all our residents.**

The Evidence:

- Serving our City means continuing to provide relevant and high-demand resources that residents need to thrive, like world language collections and children's e-books.
- According to a report from the Institute of Museum and Library Services (IMLS), increased investment in libraries, including collections, leads to increased use of libraries. Saint Paul Public Library saw this increase firsthand with the implementation of LibraryGo, in which use of some databases increased by more than 1,000%. Conversely, decreased investment leads to decreased use.
- Saint Paul Public Library has trailed other metro library systems in per capita collections expenditures, as well as collections as a percentage of total library budget. Saint Paul invests just over 50% the amount of Hennepin County.



Extend Social Worker Contract: \$50,000

The Case:

With a combination of public and private funding, the Library contracted a social worker in 2018 through the Wilder Foundation to better meet the needs of patrons as a “trauma-sensitive” library.

By investing additional dollars to retain the social worker for another year, the Library can maintain continuity and build on the important progress it has made serving patrons.

The Evidence:

- The social worker has worked with more than 100 library patrons between March and September of this year, offering help with topics like housing concerns, domestic abuse issues, and navigating complicated legal systems. In many cases, she helps to deescalate situations before they become larger problems and coaches staff on trauma-informed customer service.
- Saint Paul Public Library staff from each branch have participated in more than 600 hours of training this year. An independent program evaluator worked with staff to evaluate their trainings and their experience working with the social worker day-to-day. Staff indicated that they are learning new techniques for how to approach patrons and interact with them to identify their needs and maintain a safe and welcoming environment for all.
- The program evaluator also used various tools to assess the impact of the trauma-sensitive project for patrons, including a survey and interviews. About 90% of patrons who responded say it is a good idea to have a social worker in the library.



**We believe in the Library.
We invest in the Library.**

The Friends exists to help libraries, and the communities they serve, thrive. An independent, nonprofit organization established in 1945, The Friends invests in the Saint Paul Public Library through fundraising, advocacy, and programming; as a result, our Library is a nationally-recognized leader in serving its community. The Friends also serves libraries across the country and internationally through its consulting services, Library Strategies, and promotes literacy, reading, and libraries statewide as the Library of Congress’s designated Minnesota Center for the Book.

The public-private partnership between the City of Saint Paul and The Friends continues to be a national model in the fulfillment of our mission to act as a catalyst for libraries to strengthen and inspire their communities.

www.thefriends.org | 651-222-3242