

RHPL Update and Millage Overview

May 20, 2024

Brief History

- ▶ Formed in 1924, the Rochester Hills Public Library is governed by a six-member board and two (non-voting) liaisons from contract communities.
- ▶ The community founders pledged support for the community in 1924 with a 1.0 mill in perpetuity and the millage rate has not been raised in over 100 years.
- ▶ The millage rate has been rolled back as a result of the Headlee Act and it is currently at .73 in Rochester Hills.
- ▶ RHPL's current budget is just over \$5.5 million annually, with 86% of revenue derived from property taxes.



August 6th Ballot question for Rochester Hills

New millage (.39), expires in 10 years

- ▶ 39¢ on the taxable \$1,000 of property taxes
- ▶ If approved, contract communities would be held to the same level of per capita, which amounts to about \$64 per person.
 - ▶ This is a different, yet equitable formula from what was done in the past.

Contract Communities & RHPL

- ▶ Oakland Township and the City of Rochester has been a contract community for library services since 1967.
- ▶ Contract communities have the same privileges as patrons who live in Rochester Hills. The formula for determining annual fees was based on the same millage rate (1.0 mill) as in Rochester Hills.
- ▶ The millage rate for the City of Rochester in 2024 is presently set to .68 and the millage rate for Oakland Township is .57 due to Headlee rollback.
- ▶ Contract communities are in the process of reviewing annual fees to bring them in to parity with Rochester Hills.

2024 Research on RHPL Satisfaction & Support

- ▶ 97% satisfaction rate for both library operations and satisfaction with staff.
- ▶ 89% agree that residents get a good value for the property taxes they pay at the library.
- ▶ 93% agree that they trust staff at the RHPL.
- ▶ 97% believe they will use the library the same (56%) or more (41%) in the next 5 years.



August 6th ballot messaging (information-only)

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- ▶ A new millage for the next century of service
- ▶ Same millage since 1924, no increase in over 100 years
- ▶ RHPL's millage ranks in the bottom five of libraries in the region
- ▶ All other cost-cutting measures have been exhausted
- ▶ If approved, the library will extend open hours hours (especially on the weekend), add programs & services, modernize the building and add a café



A NEW MILLAGE FOR THE NEXT CENTURY OF SERVICE.

What will patrons get?

- ▶ An, increased budget for new materials (over \$1M annually) with a renewed focus on more eMaterials and shorter wait times for popular materials
- ▶ Sunday hours year-round
- ▶ Upgrades to the existing fleet of bookmobiles to serve individuals in our 70-square-foot service area and preschool students in 24 local schools
- ▶ More storytimes for youth and programming sessions for all ages
- ▶ A modernized Multipurpose Room for community meetings, homeowners associations, and scout troops with improved sound, lighting, and comfortable seating
- ▶ Investment in alternative delivery methods for getting items to patrons faster such as same-day delivery of holds or new bookmobiles
- ▶ Investments in critical infrastructure for an aging, 30-year-old building as well as improvements to make it fully ADA-compliant and environmentally sustainable
- ▶ Feasibility study for value-added elements like adding a café as part of library renovations

How will patrons feel?



- ▶ Expanded hours and contemporary study spaces=

Smart & entrepreneurial



- ▶ Enhanced programs and opportunities for school-age kids=

Give kids a leg up



- ▶ Updated building to ADA standards and new social spaces=

Welcomed & respected

Infrastructure Needs



Infrastructure Needs

Infrastructure Needs	Estimated Cost
Full-size community bookmobile (35 ft)	\$ 450,000
Mid-sized early literacy bus (28 ft)	\$ 275,000
200KW whole building natural gas backup generator	\$ 330,000
New metal seamed roof	\$ 1,500,000
New flat roof (membrane)	\$ 95,000
New elevator	\$ 100,000
Automated Materials Handling system	\$ 325,000
1st floor exterior entrance, lobby & bathrooms (adding a single-use)	\$ 850,000
2nd floor bathrooms	\$ 285,000
HVAC (air handlers, controls)	\$ 250,000
Chiller System (chillers, condenser, tanks, plumbing, pumps)	\$ 1,200,000
Ceiling tile replacement/refresh (both floors)	\$ 120,000
LED upgrades for standard fixtures	\$ 125,000
Youth room renovation	\$ 750,000
MPR upgrades	\$ 95,000
Lobby furniture	\$ 60,000
South parking lot	\$ 685,000
	\$7,525,000
Averaged over 10 years (in 2024 dollars):	\$752,500

What has RHPL already cut?

- ▶ 2010 - 2019
 - ▶ Freezing staff wages for 3 years
 - ▶ Cutting the library's retirement contribution by 40%
 - ▶ Cutting back staff health care plans (medical, prescription, and dental)
 - ▶ Cutting budgets for supplies and specialized consulting
 - ▶ Reupholstered furniture and re-laminated study tables

What has RHPL already cut?

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- ▶ 2020 - present
 - ▶ Reduced staff from 135 positions to 105;
 - ▶ Outsourced 5-person custodial department to a nightly cleaning service;
 - ▶ Eliminated 2.5 FTE positions with benefits (did not replace);
 - ▶ Deferred major furniture upgrades by acquiring old furniture disposed of from other libraries;
 - ▶ Completed major projects with internal team and eliminated consulting and installation fees;
 - ▶ Eliminated or re-bid service contracts (maintenance, internet, supplies, etc.);
 - ▶ Garden landscapes are maintained by volunteer gardeners at no cost to taxpayers;
 - ▶ Deferred replacement of bookmobile and instead purchased small utility van to transport materials;
 - ▶ Eliminated long-term care insurance benefit for staff;
 - ▶ Installing LED lighting with internal team as a way to reduce utility costs over time.

What about Grants & Donations?

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The library benefits from generous donations made possible by an annual appeal in the fall. **Typically the appeal yields \$35,000 in revenue.** It is unlikely that the community would support a second appeal for monetary donations.

The library has pursued three major grants (\$50,000 or more), but was not awarded any of them because the community demographics do not demonstrate enough need. It is unlikely that RHPL will be a strong candidate for grants in the future given our economic standing as one of the wealthiest communities in the state.

How does Rochester Hills compare?

- ▶ The current millage rate (Headlee-reduced) is in the bottom 5 for the metro Detroit region.
 - ▶ **The only libraries that have a lower millage rate are Lincoln Park, Ray Township, Romulus, and Chesterfield Public Library**
- ▶ Among our peers:

	Population	Operations	Tax Revenue	Per Capita Funding of Tax Revenue	Total levied millage rate
Canton Public Library	98659	\$7,422,205	\$6,955,944	\$70.50	1.44
Farmington Community Library	95583	\$7,340,338	\$6,474,503	\$67.74	1.47
Troy Public Library	84272	\$6,875,700	\$6,644,847	\$78.85	1.10
West Bloomfield Township Public Library	72613	\$6,522,115	\$5,988,413	\$82.47	1.34
Baldwin (Birmingham) Public Library	37981	\$5,331,431	\$4,180,640	\$110.07	1.31
Rochester Hills Public Library	109402	\$5,633,000	\$4,861,970	\$44.44	0.73

Who uses the library?

- ▶ The library has over 1,150 visitors to the library every day.
- ▶ There is net gain of 553 of new library cards issued **each month** on average.
- ▶ In a 2024 survey of residents 97% indicated they would use the library the same **or more** in the next five years, this is up from 95% two years prior.
- ▶ Demand for electronic materials such as ebooks have grown exponentially (20% increase in use over last year, and almost doubled the year prior).
- ▶ Meeting room and study room needs have exploded for students and work from home professionals, with over 10,000 reservations in 2023.

21st Century Library Experience

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- ▶ RHPL is operating on a 20th century millage while delivering a 21st century library experience.
 - ▶ The size of the library in 1924 was approximately 1700 sq. ft, it is now just over 75,000 sq. ft.
 - ▶ The population served was 3,870 and now it is 110,000.
 - ▶ In the first year of service, the 1-person library staff circulated 14,543 items, it now employs more than 100 people and circulates more than 1.5 million titles each year.



Questions?

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For further information please visit www.rhpl.org/millage or contact Juliane Morian, Library Director at director@rhpl.org or 248-650-7122