



2024

**report to the
community**

a message from the executive director

leaning into our values in 2024

This past year has demonstrated Poudre Libraries' essential role in strengthening our community. In 2024, we welcomed even more people to the library, increasing the number of visitors who came through our doors, the number of new library card sign-ups, and the number of attendees at library programs. We saw the same trend in the number of items checked out, as well as the use of library meeting spaces, study rooms, and technologies.

As you'll see in this report, 2024 was full of remarkable accomplishments and meaningful impact. Staff leaned on our six library values to fulfill our mission and ensure library services could be as dynamic as the communities we serve. Even during times of social and political division, our values guide and fortify our work.

Our dedication to providing equal access to books, knowledge, and opportunity is often what draws people to the library. This work is rooted in our values. Visitors to the libraries can see our values prominently displayed on our walls and recognize the ways in which those values—like Innovation, Collaboration, and Inclusion—contribute to common community aspirations.

I am pleased to say that 2025 brings more exciting activities! We are eager to collaborate with you on a new strategic plan that echoes our community voice and is grounded in community needs. At the same time, we'll continue to plan for a new Southeast Community Center, a joint project with the City of Fort Collins that includes a new library, recreation and aquatic facilities, and public spaces.

Poudre Libraries is fortunate to have a dedicated staff of innovative thinkers who are steadfast in serving the entire community. Our accomplishments are due in part to their creativity and compassion. We are also thankful for the support of our Board of Trustees, an incredible Friends of the Library group, the Poudre Libraries Trust, an amazing team of volunteers, and our community.

Our 2024 Report to the Community is merely a highlight of our work to better serve you. I invite you to experience the library first-hand to see just how many services, programs, and resources are available. I look forward to seeing you at the Library.

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Diane Lapierre". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a large, stylized 'D' and 'L'.

your library

MISSION

To create opportunities and build connections to strengthen our community

VISION

To be a vibrant and essential center for learning, inspiration, and engagement

VALUES

- | | |
|-----------------|------------------------|
| 1 Curiosity | 4 Inclusion |
| 2 Collaboration | 5 Intellectual Freedom |
| 3 Innovation | 6 Accountability |

LIBRARY LEADERSHIP

Diane Lapierre EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

Ken Draves DEPUTY DIRECTOR

Kristen Draper OLD TOWN LIBRARY MANAGER

Currie Meyer COUNCIL TREE LIBRARY MANAGER

Molly Thompson HARMONY LIBRARY MANAGER

Monique Ramos COMMUNITY OUTREACH MANAGER

Tova Aragon COLLECTIONS MANAGER

Xochil Arellano EQUITY, DIVERSITY + INCLUSION MANAGER

Katie Auman COMMUNICATIONS + DEVELOPMENT DIRECTOR

Mark Huber IT + FACILITIES MANAGER

Angela Kettle PROGRAMMING + EVENTS MANAGER

Sabrina Leslie HUMAN RESOURCES DIRECTOR

Amy Lyons FINANCE MANAGER

Selena Paulsen DEVELOPMENT OFFICER

BOARD OF TRUSTEES

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Anuja Riles

Rick Rivera

Vicky Woods



The Nectary Pollinator Garden

welcoming spaces

It's more important than ever for Poudre Libraries to serve as an open, inclusive space for all members of our community. We work hard to create welcoming spaces where everyone belongs, and people feel valued and connected to one another and to the library. For many community members, the Library acts as a "community living room" that offers space for social interaction and personal and professional discovery.

LIBRARY VALUE *Innovation*

Buzzing with Nature

One of the most noticeable additions to Poudre Libraries in 2024 was a new pollinator and sensory garden located on the southwest side of the Administration Center, 301 E. Olive St. The 1,500 square foot garden, named The Nectary, provides a healthy environment for pollinators while extending library spaces outdoors for community programs and learning. The garden was made possible by a Nature in the City grant from the City of Fort Collins.

BY THE NUMBERS

- 26 different native plant species
- 380 individual plants
- 2 ADA-height raised garden planters



New Teen Space

🌀 painting their new mural!

LIBRARY VALUE *Inclusion*

Language Access for All

The Library actively works to remove language barriers and ensure meaningful language access to library services and resources. In 2024, Poudre Libraries acquired five new, real-time translation devices that allow library staff to communicate with anyone in 200+ languages. Each device improves communication and customer service, but it also does so much more. It ensures understanding and participation in library services for everyone and builds trust with culturally diverse communities.

The devices, which were made possible with funds donated to the Poudre Libraries Trust during Colorado Gives Day, will be implemented at each library in early 2025.

A Space of Their Own

Just like libraries across the nation, Poudre Libraries is seeing an increase in young adults and teens using our services. Each of the libraries has a space dedicated to serving teens and providing a place where they feel welcome and comfortable. In 2024, Old Town Library began work redesigning their teen space thanks to a generous donation from The Don & May Wilkins Charitable Trust.

The updated space was designed with input from local teens and features new furniture, space for DIY activities, community resource information for teens, and a teen-created wall mural. The Teen Corner serves a dual purpose for the community, with designated teen-only times and other times when teens and adults can use the space together.

intentional partnerships

Poudre Libraries frequently collaborates with community partners on projects that address big social issues and achieve collective impact – literacy, educational attainment, economic resurgence, health and wellness, and more.

We are fortunate to partner with organizations to deliver important services and resources throughout the community. This includes City of Fort Collins, Larimer County, The Center for Family Outreach, Fort Collins Museum of Discovery, Volunteer Income Tax Assistance (VITA), and many others.

LIBRARY VALUE *Collaboration*

Building Bridges to Social + Health Services

Complex social issues involve many different factors, and responses to these include many different community organizations. Poudre Libraries is grateful to collaborate with social services organizations like Homeward Alliance, Outreach Fort Collins, Larimer County, and Colorado State University to address critical, community-wide issues like housing, mental health, food insecurity, and legal services.

Individuals-in-need must navigate a complex network of support agencies and special programs which can add to the difficulties they may be experiencing. The Library's collective approach with partners supports greater coordination of services, simplifying access to location services and improving opportunities for change. For instance, Homeward Alliance Resource Navigators connect individuals with government benefits like SNAP, Medicaid, or Lifeline phones and also conduct resource assessments and enroll eligible individuals in other Murphy Center services.

BY THE NUMBERS

- CSU Occupational Therapy: 655 hours of services
- Disabled Resource Service: 50 visits
- Homeward Alliance: 243 services provided
- Outreach Fort Collins: 1,000+ total contacts
- VITA: 31% increase in number of tax returns processed

I'm so grateful for all of the amazing services offered and the helpful and generous staff. The library is a haven and resource for those who slip through the cracks in larger society.

library customer



CSU Occupational Therapy

Collaboration CONT.

Revving Economic Engines

Poudre Libraries and Larimer County Small Business Development Center (SBDC) have enjoyed a long and successful partnership helping budding entrepreneurs and business startups succeed.

Business and Nonprofit Librarian Amada Simental earned two notable honors in 2024 for her work as an advisor with the SBDC and her expertise in market research. She was named the Larimer SBDC Consultant of the Year and was part of the team awarded the U.S. Small Business Administration's 2024 Colorado District Director's Diamond Award for the *T.H.R.I.V.E. Emerging Leaders Reimagined* program.



Amada Simental



SOUTHEAST COMMUNITY CENTER

Recreation | Aquatics | Library | Innovation



LIBRARY VALUE ACCOUNTABILITY

Better Together

Planning for a new Southeast Community Center continued in 2024. The center is expected to include a full-service public library, multi-use spaces, and recreation and aquatics facilities.

A project charter between Poudre Libraries and the City of Fort Collins was completed in early 2024. Shortly after, an owner's representative, architectural firm, and construction management team came onboard the project. By the end of 2024, the project reached a key milestone: acquiring 10 acres of land for the facility from Poudre School District.

Because we are partnering with the City of Fort Collins on the facility's overall construction and operations, the Library is able to significantly reduce costs we would have incurred for a facility that we pursued on our own. Through shared visioning, collaboration, and creativity, we're excited to co-create a community center that will serve our residents in the best ways possible.



Community Empowerment Clinic



LIBRARY VALUE *INCLUSION*

Supporting Immigrants + Refugees

Poudre Libraries was honored to coordinate four Community Empowerment Clinics in partnership with ISAAC NoCo and Fuerza Latina. These quarterly programs provided vital information to our immigrant and refugee communities and offered a space for celebration and shared moments of joy. They were designed to uplift and empower newcomers and make sure individuals and families had accurate information and access to services.

Each Community Empowerment Clinic attracted between 200 and 300 participants. The events featured a themed *charla*, or presentation, highlighting an important topic such as housing or health and wellness. This was followed by a resource fair that included local businesses and resource providers. The Library signed people up for library cards, hosted bilingual storytime for kids, and delivered library services like access to laptops and Wi-Fi for attendees. This enabled people to complete forms or apply for assistance right on site.

Meeting People Where They Are

The Library's Community Outreach Team spent much of their time in 2024 delivering library services and materials to nine priority neighborhoods and a variety of other service spots including schools, senior living residences, and community events like farmers' markets. Library staff partnered with neighborhood associations, organizations, and schools to deliver library joy to thousands of people in 2024 with Evie, the mobile library.

BY THE NUMBERS

- 7,213 items checked out via Evie
- 828 new library card signups
- 9,643 participants at Evie programs and stops

Evie is so cool and bringing her to our school is a really good idea.

elementary school student



Summer Mobile Program

dynamic services

As a community hub, Poudre Libraries is uniquely positioned to assist people with access to information and resources, both formally and informally. Our goal is to ensure people feel supported by their library and find the resources and services they need to learn and grow throughout their lifetime.

The Library has a significant responsibility to children and families to support early literacy skills and school readiness. At the same time, the Library is a space for personal enrichment, discovery, and exploration at any age.

LIBRARY VALUE *Curiosity*

Promoting Literacy + Learning

Even though the Library's annual summer reading program changed its name to Summer Adventure, it didn't lose its connection to fostering a love of reading. The name change reflects the goal to create lifelong readers and learners, with an emphasis on reading, writing, STEM, art, and life skills.

As part of the program's evolution, Poudre Libraries offered free books to every baby, toddler, child, and teen who signed up for the adventure and another free book when they completed the challenge. We know the importance of reading and how it can set children on the path to success. By starting with a free book, kids and teens can build a consistent reading routine, explore the world around them, and have fun. The free books were made possible by Poudre Libraries Trust and private donations.

BY THE NUMBERS

- 8,569 participants! (Double the number of 2023)
- 50% of online registrations were new to the program
- 4,423 take-home books given out to children and teens

In September, shortly after the end of Summer Adventure, Poudre Libraries launched a new, early literacy program, 1,000 Books Before Kindergarten. This fun and free program puts young children on the path to early literacy success and supports school readiness. It's an easy way to get young children ready to learn and read by sharing 1,000 books together before kindergarten.

BY THE NUMBERS

- 376 participants
- 22,223 books read



Summer Mobile Program



COHS Grad Sabina Newton

Curiosity CONT.

2024 was also a successful year for adult learners at the Library. We celebrated the first graduate from the Career Online High School program, Sabina Newton, who not only earned her high school diploma but also finished her practical for her CNA certification.

A private donation provided a scholarship for Ms. Newton that covered the entire cost of degree program. Four students currently enrolled in the program received full scholarships through the Library's Adult Literacy Fund at NoCo Foundation and are on their way to earning their diploma and professional certification.



Summer Mobile Program



Harmony Plant Library

LIBRARY VALUE *INNOVATION*

Discover Something New

Our Harmony Library location branched out in April 2024 with a popular new Plant Library that offers free plants or cuttings to anyone. Nearly 280 plants were taken home by visitors over eight months. The plant library is self-sustaining, replenishing its inventory through community contributions. Customers donate plant cuttings, while the library provides soil, pots, and care instructions. The opportunity to take home a free plant is especially popular during the winter months, offering a touch of greenery while people wait for spring.



LIBRARY VALUE *INTELLECTUAL FREEDOM*

Unwavering Commitment

Poudre Libraries continued its public commitment to championing the rights of individuals to read, seek information, and speak freely as guaranteed by the First Amendment. Through a variety of events, programs, displays, and outreach, we engaged the community in these issues, their rights, and the Library's role in ensuring free and equal access to information.

The Library's annual Banned Books Week programming took place in September with the theme "Freed Between the Lines" and included a variety of programs and a reading challenge.

Championing Democracy

We were thrilled to participate in Colorado State University's Democracy Expo where we shared information on the foundations of intellectual freedom, the Library Bill of Rights, and the public library's role in our democracy.

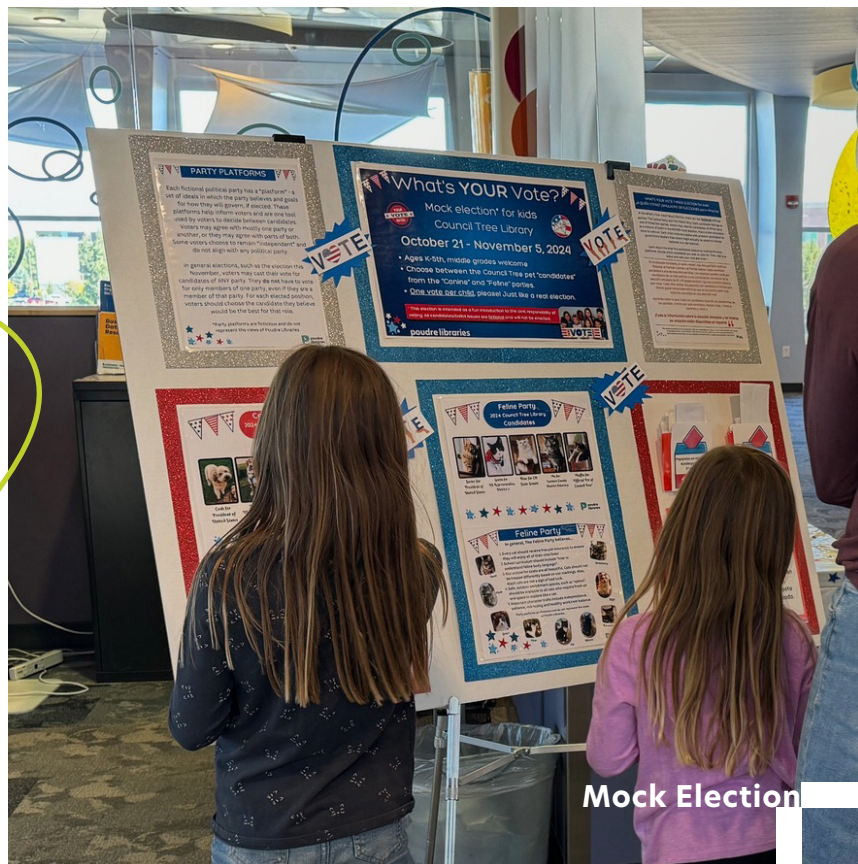
Poudre Libraries are strong partners in elections with local government and nonprofit organizations. Harmony Library hosts a ballot return box and Council Tree Library serves as a Voter Service and Polling Center for Larimer County. We also collaborate with the Larimer League of Women Voters to host ballot issues presentations for both local and national elections.

BY THE NUMBERS

- 650 people voted at Council Tree Library on Election Day
- 175+ people voted on the Monday prior to Election Day
- 350 people submitted mail ballots at Council Tree Library on Election Day

The Larimer League of Women Voters did 15 ballot issues presentations this year. The one Poudre Library hosted had one of the highest attendances. In total we had about 450 citizens come to our presentations and 15 League leaders presenting. I call that a real success story! We couldn't do it without organizations like the library supporting our work. Thanks again!

Larimer League of Women Voters



by the numbers

Poudre Libraries' popularity remained strong and continued to grow year over year.

A COMMUNITY HUB

spaces

753,815

PEOPLE WELCOMED
THROUGH THE DOORS

6.2% increase over 2023

17,431

STUDY ROOM RESERVATIONS

544

MEETING ROOM RESERVATIONS

cardholders

137,061

TOTAL CARDHOLDERS
9% increase over 2023

25,305

NEW CARDHOLDERS

programs

1,817

PROGRAMS
4.2% increase over 2023

43,803

PROGRAM ATTENDEES
10% increase over 2023

volunteers

147

VOLUNTEERS

7,424

VOLUNTEER HOURS

TECHNOLOGY ACCESS

online sessions

329,408

LIBRARY APP
11.2% increase over 2023

966,931

LIBRARY WEBSITE

1,296,339

TOTAL ONLINE SESSIONS

in-library sessions

77,996

PUBLIC COMPUTER SESSIONS
13.2% increase over 2023

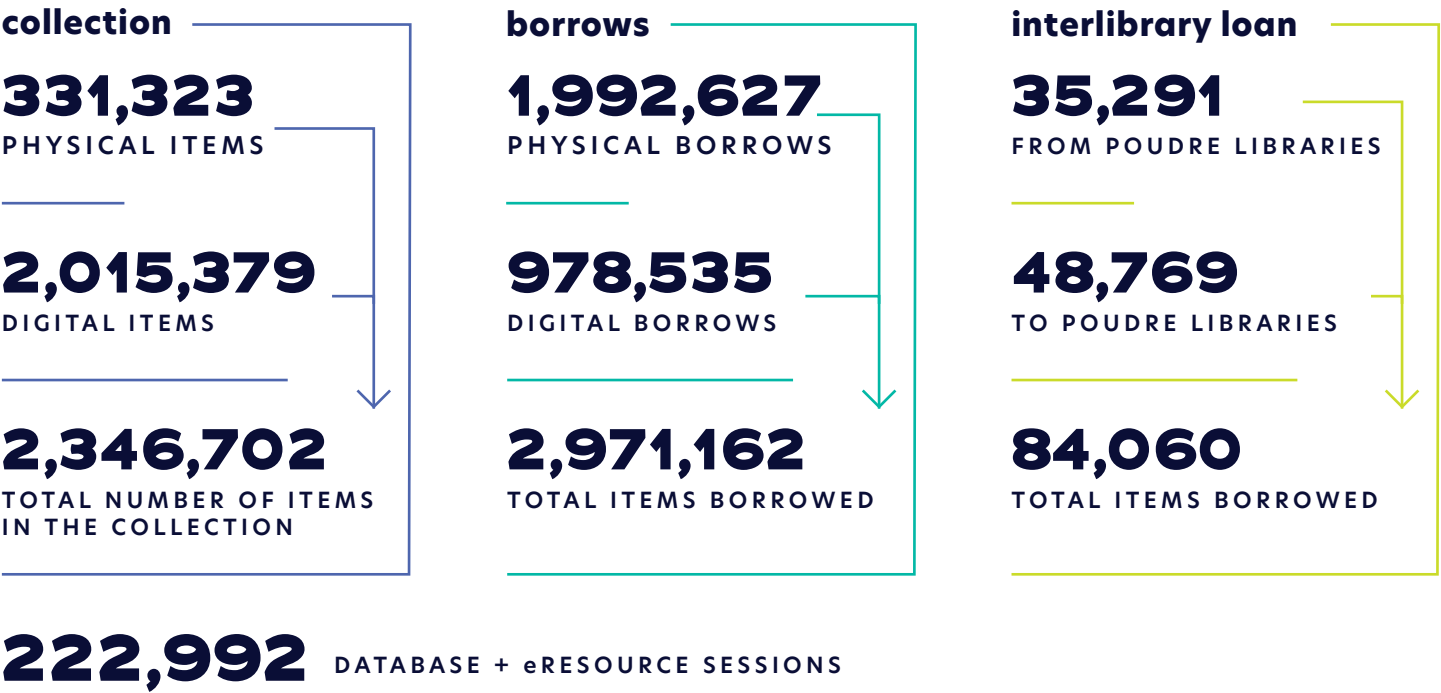
150,243

IN-LIBRARY WIFI SESSIONS
16.6% increase over 2023

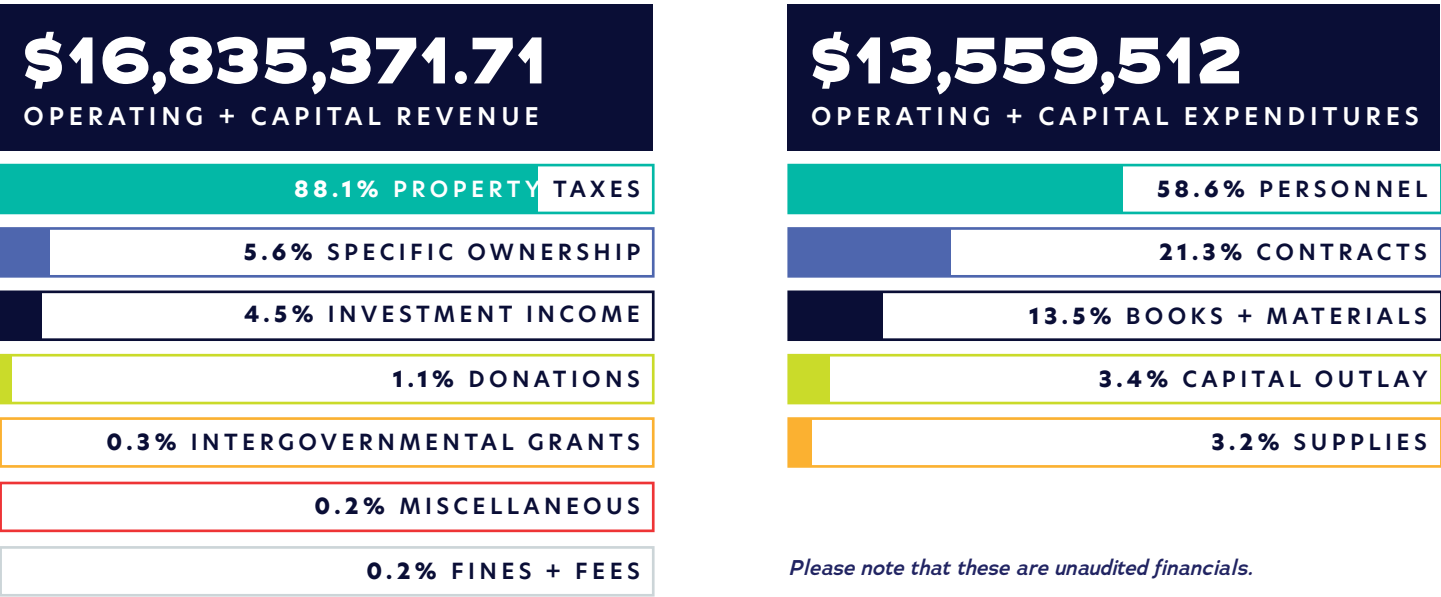
My family and I are continually impressed by the [Poudre Libraries] staff. We frequent the library often and participate in library events. Everyone is always so responsive, helpful, friendly, and creative. Each of you make our experiences joyful! Thank you for all you do for our community!

library customer

LIBRARY COLLECTION



STATEMENT OF REVENUE + EXPENDITURES



DEVELOPMENT





301 East Olive Street
Fort Collins, CO 80524

970-221-6740

poudrelibraries.org

**"Dear old town librarie, I love this place im just
a kid but still love it aspesahly the kid section
I love the squarle hunts too! Thank you ♥**

P E N N Y
library customer