



# Memorandum

**Memo Date:** February 8, 2024  
**From:** Joanna Bertucci, Library Director  
**Meeting Type:** Planning and Operations Committee  
**Meeting Date:** February 13, 2024  
**Action Requested:** For discussion  
**Subject:** Annual Statistical Review

**Background:**

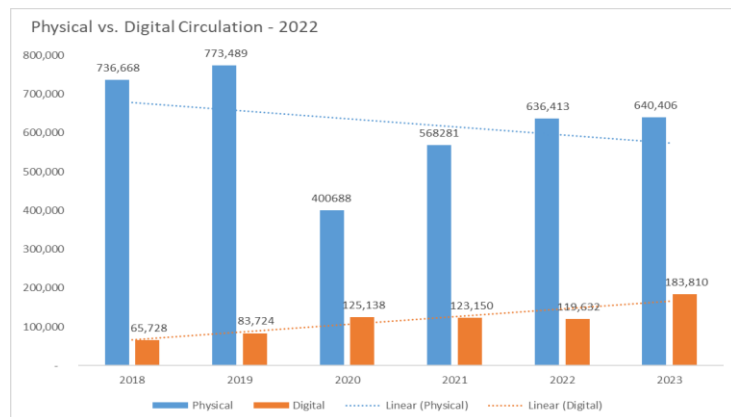
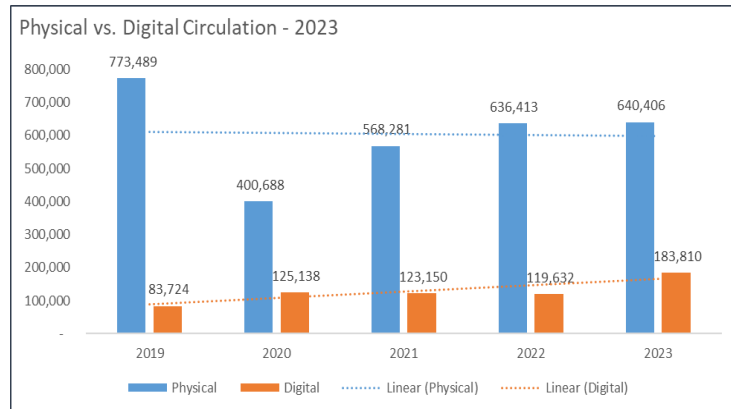
The start of the new fiscal year is a good opportunity to look back at our previous year’s statistics and evaluate our library’s strengths and weaknesses relative to other comparable libraries.

**2023 Recap:**

In 2023, the Library circulated 824,216 physical and digital items, up 9% over the prior year. While overall circulation is down 4% compared to pre-pandemic 2019, we are encouraged by our continued progress over last year’s total circulation performance.

**Circulation by format – physical vs. digital:** As with prior years, we continue to monitor and track circulation performance by format. This constant monitoring is critical for our budgeting process. In 2022, we saw physical item circulation trending down, but this year we saw a slight increase, adjusting the trend to relatively flat, which suggests to us that our patrons still want access to physical materials. We expect to see the trend for circulation of physical materials increase in the coming year with the reorganization of our picture book collection. This reorganization will make our picture books more accessible to our patrons.

	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023
Total Circ	861,329	525,826	691,313	756,045	824,216
% change	7%	-39%	31%	9%	9%

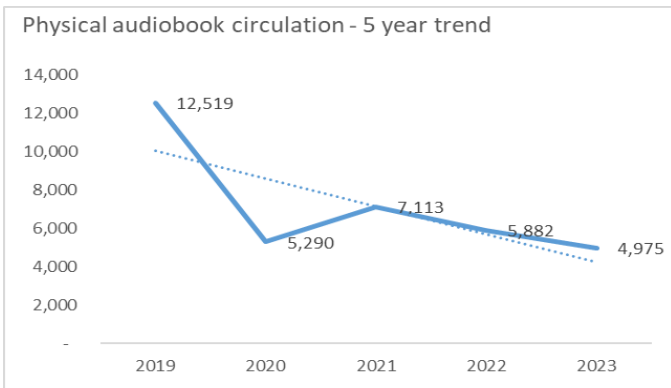




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Digital circulation continues to trend upward, with Overdrive (Libby) as the leader in eContent usage. For 2023, we set a goal to increase our digital circulation by 10% over 2022. We increased our digital circulation by 25% in 2023. This significant increase is due in part to increased Overdrive magazine checkouts, which realized a 66% increase over prior year usage of this format. This increase is because patrons can now *subscribe* to their favorite titles and the latest edition will then automatically be sent directly to their account. This enhancement mimics the consumer magazine model, provides a seamless experience for our patrons, and increases our circulation.

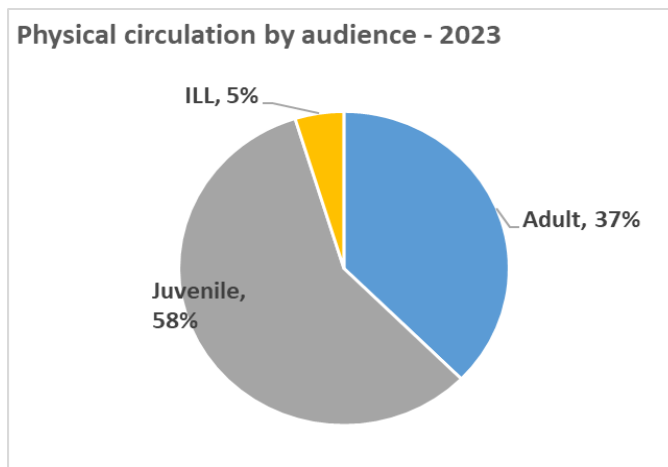
Digital Format	2022	2023	% Change over prior year
Audiobooks	45,780	56,665	24%
Books	62,727	69,823	11%
Magazines	30,646	50,991	66%
Movies/TV	6,936	5,821	-16%
Music	722	667	-8%
	<b>146,811</b>	<b>183,967</b>	<b>25%</b>



We are also monitoring digital audiobook circulation, which experienced significant growth in 2023. We have been monitoring our daily borrows from Hoopla and adjusting our funding to give patrons more checkouts before hitting our daily spending limit. For FY 2024, we increased our eContent budget by 16% to give staff more flexibility in funding Hoopla. While Hoopla’s “always available” model is very appealing to patrons, OverDrive titles account for 87% of our audiobook digital circulation. As digital audiobook circulation has increased, we have noted a marked decrease in circulation of their physical counterparts for both our adult and youth population. While we have no short term plans to eliminate any of our physical

audiobook collection, we will continue to monitor those budgets closely as the format is trending towards obsolescence. Our digital offerings for music, movies, and television are not as robust and physical DVD and CD circulation continues to remain flat overall.

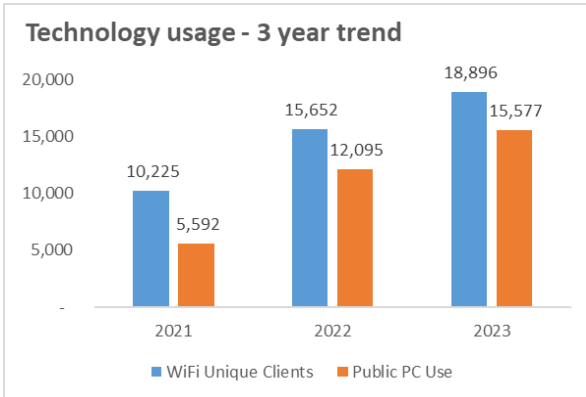
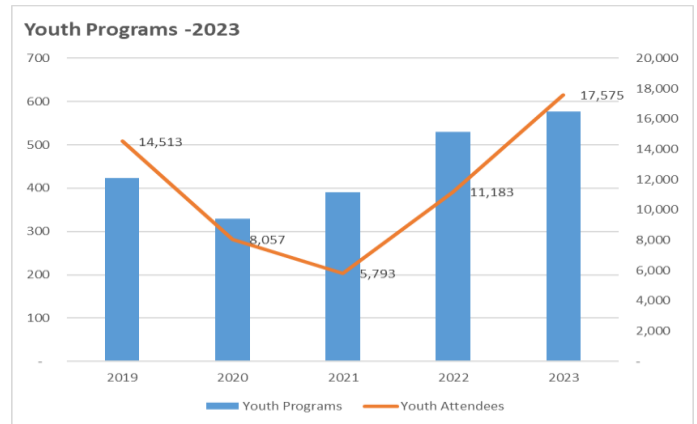
**Physical Materials Circulation by Audience:** As noted above, we saw a slight increase (less than 1%) in the circulation of physical materials. Physical material circulation is important to track, as our ability to stock physical collections is dependent on our space. Our physical item circulation by audience has remained relatively the same over the past 5 years. In most libraries, children’s collections account for the highest percentage of circulation.





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**Patron Activity:** 2023 was a very busy year at the Park Ridge Public Library! We are very happy to report that door count (283,054) in 2023 has exceeded prepandemic counts for the first time since 2019 (259,869) by almost 9% and up nearly 20% over 2022 (283,054). We attribute much of this success to our record attendance at youth programs in 2023. Our Summer Reading program continues to be a huge draw as are our weekly storytimes. Youth Services staff have anecdotally noted the presence of many new families and families visiting the library as a destination, as they would a zoo or park. Our monthly passive programs (scavenger hunts, craft projects) give families an opportunity to have their child(ren) engaged while visiting without needing to sign up or commit to anything ahead of time.

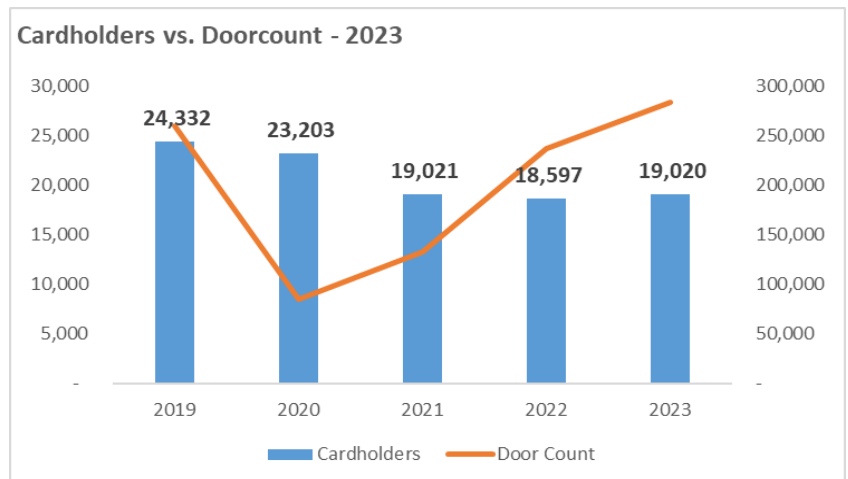


In the Adult Services department, we have seen an increase of unique clients using our WiFi and public computer terminals. Our five private study rooms are in high demand as patron usage is up 16.5% over 2022. We are pleased to see that the Library has become a destination for students as they prepare for final examinations in the winter and spring. Both the Studio and Media Lab experienced significant growth last year. The Studio has really taken off with our patrons and Adult Services staff are working very diligently to schedule as many classes as possible to ensure maximum patron use of this creative and unique space. Due to the pandemic, these spaces were unavailable to patrons for most of 2020 and 2021.

Space	2022	2023	% Change
STUDIO: Hours of Use	216	501	132%
STUDIO: Users	344	544	58%
MEDIA LAB: Hours of Use	696	820	18%
MEDIA LAB: Users	370	382	3%

We continue to struggle with recovering cardholders from prepandemic levels. In fall 2023, we launched a direct mail postcard campaign to new residents, welcoming them to the community and encouraging them to sign up for a library card. We have not collected enough data to determine the impact of this effort.

Looking at this challenge from a different perspective, we have started to review our patron library card purge statistics. After 3 years of inactivity, so long as patron cards are free from bills or long overdue/lost items, patrons are automatically purged from our system. In 2023, 1,746 patrons were purged from our database. This year, we will begin generating reports of patron cards that are eligible for purging and send targeted emails to encourage patrons to come in and renew and use their library card. We are also planning library card signup outreach events in addition to offering sign up at our annual visits to the Farmer's Market and Back to School Nights.



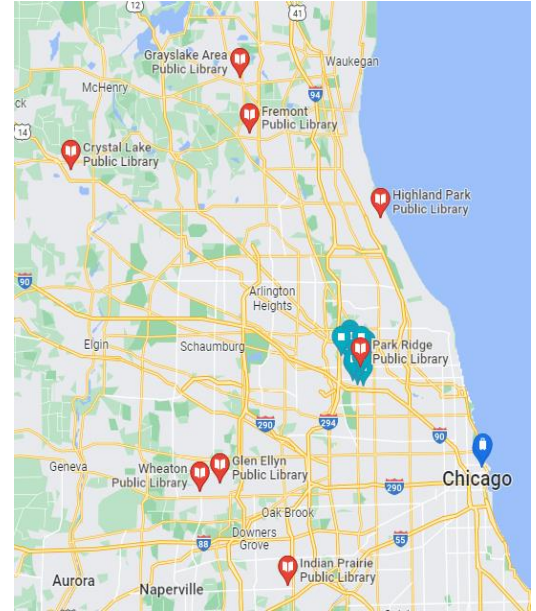


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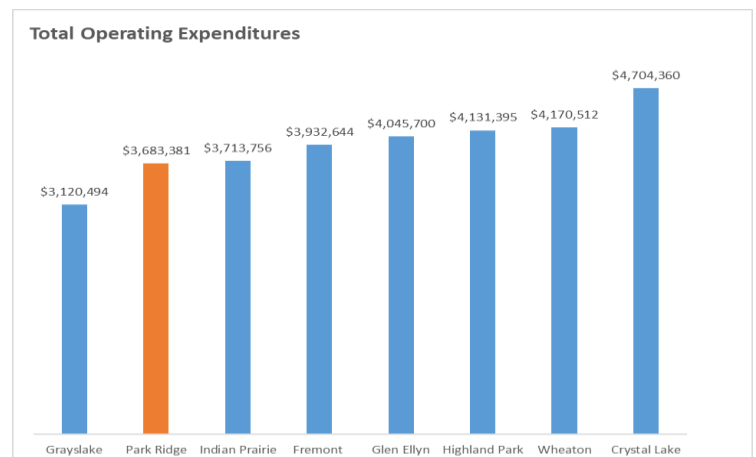
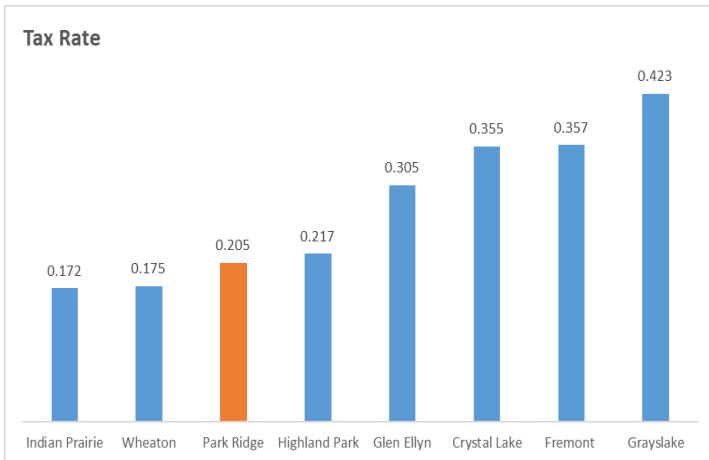
## Comparable Libraries:

Last year, I used data from the most recent Illinois Public Libraries Annual Report (IPLAR) database and the United States Census Bureau *QuickFacts* reports to develop a list of comparable libraries. Our comparable libraries have operating expenditures between \$3 and \$5 million dollars and have similar demographic profiles to the City of Park Ridge. I have reviewed the list developed last year and determined that the same list is applicable for this year's analysis. The most recent IPLAR data available is from FY22. Since libraries have varying fiscal years, this data is representative of anywhere from January 1, 2021 through June 30, 2022. For the Park Ridge Public Library, the data is from January 1 – December 31, 2021.

1. Crystal Lake Public Library
2. Fremont Public Library (Mundelein)
3. Glen Ellyn Public Library
4. Grayslake Area Public Library District
5. Highland Park Public Library
6. Indian Prairie Public Library District (Darien)
7. Wheaton Public Library



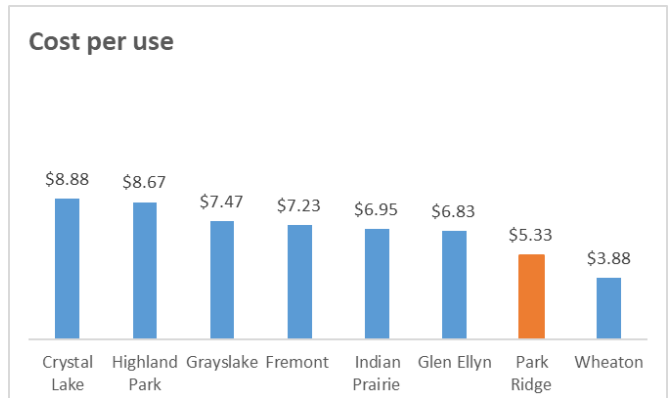
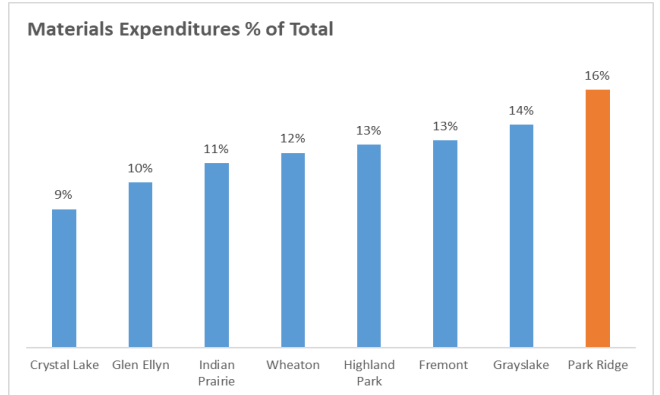
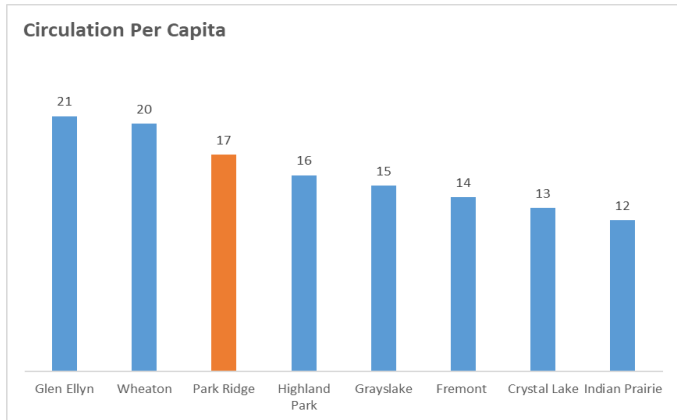
**Funding and Spending:** In reviewing data from comparable libraries, Park Ridge Public Library continues to be an excellent value for taxpayer dollars. Compared to our peers, our Library has the next to the lowest operating expenditures, while maintaining a reasonable tax rate.



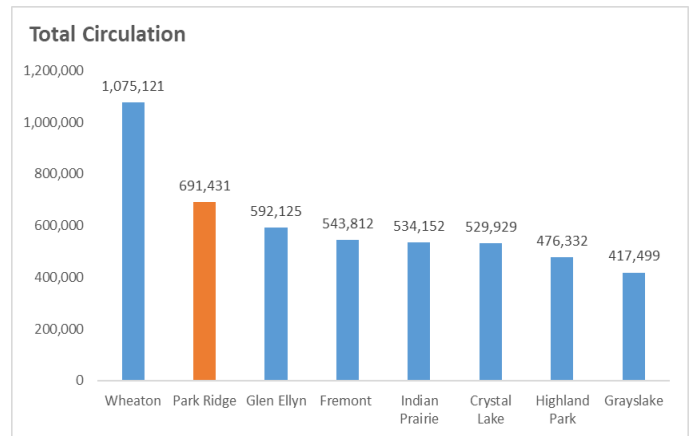
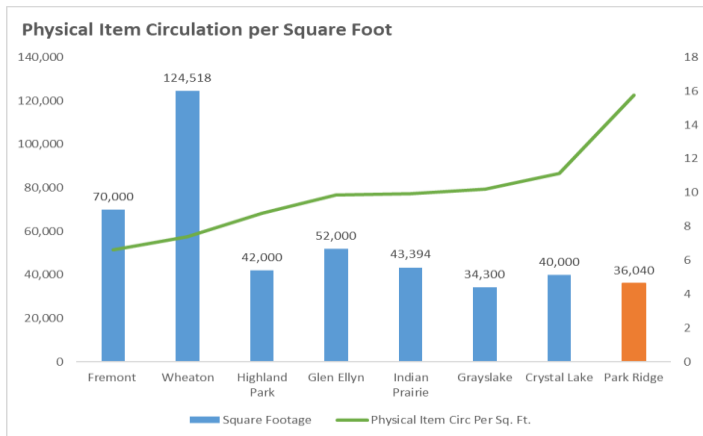


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**Collections and Circulation:** Our spending on collections is the highest as a percentage of total expenditures, when compared with other libraries, at **approximately 16%**. This has proven successful for us as we have the third highest **circulation rate per capita** among our peers **at 17 circs per capita**. Looking at the average cost per circulation among peer libraries is another measure of value provided and PRPL is second only to Wheaton with a **cost per circulation of \$5.33**.



We know that our building is small for the size of our community, prior (and current) Library trustees and administrators have been thoughtful about the highest and best use of public spaces to give patrons the most access to library collections and services. PRPL moves **25% more physical materials per square foot of space** than the closest comparably sized library, Crystal Lake Public Library with 40,000 square feet. In terms of overall circulation for FY21, we rank **second at 691,431 total circs** compared to Wheaton Public Library whose building is 3.5 times larger than Park Ridge.

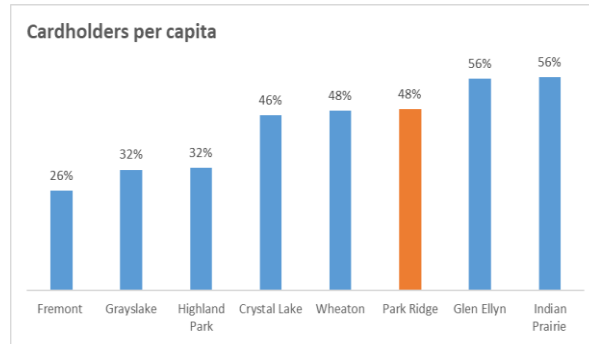




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**Cardholders:** Compared to our peer libraries we are slightly above average for cardholders per capita. We are continuing to prioritize improvement in our total cardholders statistic, as noted above.



**Conclusion:** The Park Ridge Public Library continues to be an excellent value for our taxpayers and the community. We have a hard working and professional staff who anticipate and respond to the needs of our patrons as evidenced by our strong circulation, program attendance, and building use statistics. When compared to our comparable libraries, we demonstrate a commitment to spending on collections as library materials are at the core of our service model. In the coming year, we will continue to work to increase our total cardholders while maintaining our excellent standards in the areas where we are high achieving.