



To: Library Board

Fr: Shellie Anderson, Adult Library Supervisor

May 20, 2026

Re: Wauwatosa Public Library Foundation Support Request: Digitizing historic Wauwatosa newspapers

Purpose/Need

The Library has historic Wauwatosa newspapers on microfilm. Digitizing these newspapers would improve patron access.

Background

The library maintains a microfilm collection of historic Wauwatosa newspapers including:

- *Wauwatosa News*: March 18, 1899 through April 1, 1948.
- *Wauwatosa Times*: August 29, 1940 through October 24, 1947.
- *Wauwatosa News-Times*: April 8, 1948 through March 30, 2007.

Currently, access to these newspapers is limited to microfilm and aging (and some tattered) bound paper copies. Funding the digitization of newspaper microfilm archives will help preserve valuable local history while making it more accessible to the community. Digitized archives allow students, researchers, genealogists, and residents to easily search and explore these historical newspapers without risking damage to our aging microfilm and paper materials.

The digitized archives would be available for in-library patron use.

This investment supports long-term preservation, expands public access to information, and strengthens the library’s role as a steward of community heritage and lifelong learning.

The project cost is \$200 a reel, plus incidentals. We are proposing doing half this year (100) and half the next year (about 100). The vendor will scan the microfilm and build a searchable website. They also will provide a backup hard drive of all of the scans.

Project Costs

100 reels of microfilm scanned	\$20,000.00
High speed 2TB USB 3.2 Gen2 External Solid State Drive.	\$350.00
Shipping	\$60.00
Project total:	\$20,410.00

Recommendation

A motion for the Library Board to approve submitting the proposal to the Wauwatosa Public Library Foundation Board for consideration.