Vision

MPL is an anchor institution that helps build healthy families and vibrant neighborhoods – the foundation of a strong Milwaukee.

Mission

Inspiration starts here – we help people read, learn, and connect.

BOARD OF TRUSTEES REGULAR MEETING AGENDA

Tuesday, October 27, 2026
4:00 p.m.

Central Library
Rotary Club of Milwaukee Community Room
814 W. Wisconsin Avenue
Milwaukee, WI 53233

WELCOME & ROLL CALL
4:00 – 4:05

PUBLIC COMMENT
4:05 – 4:15

SPECIAL COMMUNICATION
4:15 – 4:20

1. **Introduction of New Trustee**. President Bria will introduce new Trustee Katie Sanders.

CONSENT AGENDA
4:15 – 4:20

Attachment A, page 3

2. **Regular Board Meeting Minutes, September 22, 2026**.

3. **Committee Reports**.
    a. Innovation & Strategy Committee Meeting – October 8, 2026

4. **Administrative Reports**.
    a. Financial Report
    b. Director's Report
    c. Statistics

5. **2027 Meeting Schedule**.

6. **Revised MPL Board Committee Assignments**.

REPORTS

7. **MPL Foundation Report**. MPL Foundation Executive Director Ryan Daniels will present an update on fundraising and events.

8. **Fundraising Feasibility Study Report**. Library Director Jennifer Meyer-Stearns and representatives from Changing Our World will present the findings from the fundraising feasibility study.

9. **Finance & Personnel Committee Meeting**. Committee Chair Michael Morgan will present action items from the October 27, 2026 meeting.

10. **2027 Budget Update**. Library Director Jennifer Meyer-Stearns will provide a status report on the 2027 budget.

CLOSING REMARKS
5:25 – 5:30
11. **Closing Remarks and Adjournment**.

***REMINDER**: Next scheduled meetings are:*
November 4, 2026 Library Services & Programs Committee – Virtual Meeting, 4:00 p.m.
November 5, 2026 Building & Development Committee – Virtual Meeting, 8:00 a.m
November 18, 2026 Executive Committee – Virtual Meeting, 4:00 p.m.
November 24, 2026 Board Meeting – Central Library, 4:00 p.m.

Trustees

Michele Bria, *President*, Teresa Mercado, *Vice-President,* Michael Morgan, *Financial Secretary*, Neil Albrecht, Ald. Milele Coggs, Matthew Kowalski, Ald. Andrea Pratt, Katie Sanders, Ald. Larresa Taylor, Mary Urbina-McCarthy, Sup. Kathleen Vincent, Missy Zombor, Jennifer Meyer-Stearns, *Secretary*, Rebecca Colby, *Secretary's Assistant* (414) 286-3021

The Milwaukee Public Library Board of Trustees is an informed, dedicated group of citizens who represent a cross-section of the city of Milwaukee and are committed to supporting, developing, and advancing the library for the benefit of all residents of Milwaukee and others throughout Milwaukee County, the State of Wisconsin, and beyond. In their role as advocates and advisors, they serve the library's many patrons, its staff, the common good of the community, and this critical and enduring institution.

Persons engaged in lobbying as defined in s. 305-43-4 of the Milwaukee Code of Ordinances are required to register with the City Clerk's Office License Division. More information is available at www.milwaukee.gov/lobby or by calling (414) 286-2238.

Please be advised that members of the Milwaukee Common Council who are also members of this body may attend this meeting. In addition, Common Council members who are not members of this body may attend this meeting to participate or to gather information. A quorum of the Common Council or any of its standing committees may be present, but no formal Common Council action will be taken at this meeting.

Reasonable accommodations provided upon request. Contact the ADA Coordinator at: 414-286-3475 or adacoordinator@milwaukee.gov.

MILWAUKEE PUBLIC LIBRARY BOARD OF TRUSTEES

REGULAR MEETING
MINUTES

Tuesday, September 22, 2026

Central Library
814 W. Wisconsin Avenue
Rotary Club of Milwaukee Community Room
Milwaukee, WI 53233

PRESENT: Michele Bria, Michael Morgan, Ald. Milele Coggs, Matthew Kowalski, Ald. Andrea Pratt, Ald. Larresa Taylor, Sup. Kathleen Vincent, Missy Zombor, Jennifer Meyer-Stearns

EXCUSED: Teresa Mercado, Neil Albrecht, Mary Urbina-McCarthy

STAFF: Maria Burke, Gregory Diaz, Tim Fluhr, Jenna Harte Wisniewski, Ha Hoang, Melissa Howard, Dan Keeley, Yves LaPierre, Sarah Leszczynski, Tammy Mays Wilder, Karli Pederson, Rebecca Schweisberger, Kelly Wochinske, Jessica Wolf, Joy Zanders

OTHER: Budget & Policy Division: Nathaniel Haack
Milwaukee Public Library Foundation: Sam McGovern-Rowen

President Bria called the meeting of the Milwaukee Public Library Board of Trustees to order at 4:02 p.m. on September 22, 2026 with a quorum present. Trustees Morgan, Coggs, and Vincent attended virtually. Agenda items were taken out of order but are presented here in numerical sequence.

CONSENT AGENDA

1. **Regular Board Meeting Minutes July 28, 2026**

2. **Committee Reports**.
    a. Finance & Personnel Committee Meeting – July 28, 2026
    b. Building & Development Committee Meeting – September 3, 2026

3. **Milwaukee County Federated Library System (MCFLS) Board Meeting, July 7, 2026.**

4. **Administrative Reports**
    a. Financial Report
    b. Programs Report
    c. Statistics

5. **Revised MPL Board Roster and Meeting Schedule**

Chair Bria asked the Board if any items should be removed from the Consent Agenda, presented as attachment A, pages 3-45 of the agenda. Hearing no objection, the Consent Agenda was approved.

OLD BUSINESS

6. **2026 YTD Budget Update**. Business Finance Manager Sarah Leszczynski presented a year-to-date update on the operating budget through August 31, 2026. The presentation is attached at the end

of these minutes. YTD salaries expenditures are higher than previous years due to lower vacancy rates and two City-wide salary increases. The salary increases totaled $772,000 and were not included in MPL's 2026 budget. Funding for the salary increases will be issued by the wages supplement fund. Supplies and services accounts are also tracking ahead, as several large service contracts were paid earlier in the year. Year-end predictions indicate an over-expenditure of salaries by $367,000 and supplies/services by $268,000. MPL will seek Common Council approval to reallocate funds from the salaries account to supplies/services, as some of those accounts cannot be in the negative. Informational item.

7. **2027 Budget**. Interim Library Director Jennifer Meyer-Stearns shared an update on the 2027 budget process. The Mayor's proposed budget was released earlier in the day. The proposed budget for MPL is just over $35M, which is an increase of nearly $1.5M over the 2026 adopted budget. Service levels and hours will be maintained at all locations; however, Sunday hours will be reduced to 12:00-5:00 p.m. The MPL Foundation (MPLF) will provide funding for one Education and Outreach Services (EOS) position. The requested budget also includes funding hotspots, which were previously funded through MPLF. Drive-up service will be closed due to construction on the nearby deck and tiers; it will reopen for materials return only. The library's budget hearing will be held on October 13th, public listening sessions will be held at various MPL locations, and the budget will be finalized in November. Informational only.

REPORTS

8. **Library Director's Report**. Interim Library Director Jennifer Meyer-Stearns reported on recent Director's activities. The Library Director recruitment process continues; additional information will be shared with the Board as available. MPL staff and leadership have done an excellent job maintaining continuity of operations and services. The results from the fundraising feasibility study will be presented at the October MPL Board meeting. Security remains a priority and MPL staff is assessing the impacts of adding security staff as MPL positions. Kudos to Associate Library Director Ha Hoang and Public Services Area Managers Tim Fluhr and Tammy Mays-Wilder, who lead the implementation of the new public services scheduling system, TeleStaff. The City is consolidating several resource management systems into the Workday platform. Staff training is ongoing and Workday will be implemented by the end of the year. MPL recently held several highly successful partner events. In partnership with MPL and The Friends of the Milwaukee Public Library, Dead Bird Brewery produced Bücherwurm, a limited-edition German fest bier. MPL partnered with local performers and content creators to host The Library Show in the Central Library Grand Rotunda. The event allowed MPL to engage with the community in a fun and innovative way. Central Library hosted the Big Family Playdate, in partnership with Reach Out and Read Wisconsin. This event was designed as a 'big event for little kids' ages 5 and younger, though older siblings are welcome, too. President Bria commended Director Meyer-Stearns for a seamless transition period and great work as acting Director. Informational item.

9. **System and Resource Library Administrators' Association of Wisconsin (SRLAAW) Update.** Interim Library Director Jennifer Meyer-Stearns shared an update on SRLAAW activity. For many years, MPL has acted as the state resource library and has been working with the Department of Public Instruction (DPI) to seeking official designation. In August, the DPI informed SRLAAW of a proposal to rename and consolidate the 3 contracts that MPL is providing statewide under one line in the budget as State Resource Library Contracts. This change will likely take several years to implement and the MPL Board will receive updates as needed. Informational item.

10. **2026 Summer Reading Program Update**. Public Services Area Manager (EOS and CLCR) Kelly Wochinske presented a report on the 2026 Summer Reading Program. Approximately 22,000

patrons participated in the challenge and enjoyed summer with MPL. Over 25,000 books were donated through the program. MPL offered open time in the makerspace, with a facilitator, at 4 locations. Teen-focused programs were held twice per week and 10 Teen Interns were hired by MPL to assist in the makerspaces. MPL hosted Summer Youth Interns and hosted an education day at Central Library. Outreach teams set up reading nooks and hands-on activities once a week at 3 playgrounds, with over 450 participants. MPL participated in the United Neighborhood Centers of Milwaukee's Wellness Walk at Journey House and held story times at Alice's Gardens. Outreach staff also participated in several other events, including Juneteenth Day, National Nights Out, and various festivals, including Mexican Fiesta. Informational item.

With no further business, the Milwaukee Public Library Board of Trustees meeting of September 29, 2026 was adjourned at 5:00 p.m.

2026 Operating Budget Progress Report

MPL Board of Trustees Meeting September 22nd, 2026

2026 Operating Budget as of 08/31 (67% of FY)

Account	Budget	Spent to Date	% Spent	5-Yr Avg. % Spent
Salaries	$19,412,775	$13,619,612	70.2%	65.8%
Supplies & Services	$3,028,073	$2,280,532	75.3%	70.6%
Equipment	$2,453,845	$1,328,622	54.1%	52.1%
Special Funds	$233,700	$90,598	38.8%	50.2%
TOTAL	**$25,128,393**	**$17,319,364**	**68.9%**	**64.9%**

Budget Variances

Salaries

- Citywide Pay Increases
  - 1% residency incentive and 3% general city pay increases went into effect in Pay Period 1
  - The fiscal impact to MPL is estimated to be $772,000
  - As in prior years, these pay increases were not included in departmental budgets. Citywide salary increases are budgeted centrally by the Budget Office in the general City Wages Supplement Fund.

Supplies & Services

- Operational Support During Vacancies
  - Spending is tracking ahead primarily due to operational support during staffing vacancies
    - $140K – Contracted security guards
    - $77K – Snow removal at branches
    - $24K – Temporary appointments (DER Aux)
  - Vacancies have decreased over the last six months but there will likely be additional costs through the remainder of the year

If Salary Increase Funding Had Been Appropriated…

Account	Budget	Spent to Date	% Spent	5-Yr Avg. % Spent
Salaries	$19,943,775	$13,619,612	68.3%	65.8%
Supplies & Services	$3,269,073	$2,280,532	69.8%	70.6%
Equipment	$2,453,845	$1,328,622	54.1%	52.1%
Special Funds	$233,700	$90,598	38.8%	50.2%
TOTAL	**$25,900,393**	**$17,319,364**	**66.9%**	**64.9%**

Year-End Projection

Account	Budget	YE Est. Spend	% Spent	Variance
Salaries	$19,412,775	$19,779,681	101.9%	$(366,906)
Supplies & Services*	$3,028,073	$3,296,673	108.9%	$(268,600)
Equipment*	$2,453,845	$2,453,845	100.0%	$-
Special Funds*	$233,700	$233,700	100.0%	$-
TOTAL	**$25,128,393**	**$25,763,899**	**102.5%**	**$(635,506)**

Milwaukee Public Library

Year 2027 Proposed Budget Overview

Operating Budget	2026 Adopted Budget	2027 Proposed Budget	Change from 2026 to 2027	% Change	Notes
Salaries and Wages	$ 19,412,775	$ 20,206,309	$ 793,534 ▲	4.1%	• 3.5 FTE/$183K included in requested budget for full year of expanded Sundays • 4.6 FTE/$216K increase for additional security and custodial staffing for weekend coverage • 1.0 FTE/$110K for new Early Childhood Project Coordinator to support early literacy initiatives • 1.0 FTE/$42K for new Office Assistant position to support EOS administrative work • $24K to repurpose Collections Tech. Services Specialist to Librarian I • 1.0 non-O&M FTE for Connected Learning Specialist position to support Community Kitchen • $67K to repurpose Collections Tech. Services Specialist to PSAM to support branch library services • $772K for 1% citywide increase to residency incentive and 3% general city pay increase • $49K for other salary and wage rate changes • PCA decreased from 6.0% to 5.5% Reductions made from requested budget to meet reduction target: • 1.0 FTE/$84K moved to non-O&M funding (one EOS position will be Foundation-funded) • 2.0 FTE/$85K reduction for Drive-Up service elimination • 8.2 FTE/$500K reduction for Sunday service reduction
Fringe Benefits	$ 8,735,750	$ 9,092,839	$ 357,089 ▲	4.1%	• Fringe benefits rate remains 45%
Supplies and Materials	$ 421,000	$ 420,400	$ (600) ▼	-0.1%	• $60K reduction from requested budget to meet reduction target
General Services	$ 1,563,072	$ 1,767,914	$ 204,842 ▲	13.1%	• $206K reduction from requested budget to meet reduction target • $155K increase to Property Services for HVAC ($100K), grounds ($25K), and security ($15K)
Energy	$ 913,744	$ 934,004	$ 20,260 ▲	2.2%	• Citywide rate changes: 9% increase natural gas; 2% increase electricity, 10% decrease gasoline
Equipment	$ 425,430	$ 411,260	$ (14,170) ▼	-3.3%	• $46K reduction from requested budget to meet reduction target
Books and Materials	$ 1,946,000	$ 1,946,000	$ - ▬	0.0%	• $156K reduction from requested budget to meet reduction target
Special - Branch Property Payments	$ 92,000	$ 94,000	$ 2,000 ▲	2.2%	• East, Good Hope, Mitchell Street, Villard Square, & MLK
Special - Energy Financing	$ 141,700	$ 144,500	$ 2,800 ▲	2.0%	• Energy efficiency project equipment lease
Special - Library Security Upgrades	$ 0	$ 75,000	$ 75,000		• New special fund to support systemwide security and technology upgrades
Special - Library Security Upgrades	$ 0	$ 50,000	$ 50,000		• New special fund to support early literacy initiatives
Total	**$ 33,651,471**	**$ 35,142,226**	**$ 1,490,755 ▲**	**4.4%**	
Total Less Fringe Benefits	**$ 24,915,721**	**$ 26,049,387**	**$ 1,133,666 ▲**	**4.6%**	
Positions	**394**	**398**	**4 ▲**	**1.0%**	
O&M FTEs	313.28	312.48	-0.80 ▼	-0.3%	
Non-O&M FTEs	17.95	19.65	1.70 ▲	9.5%	
Total FTEs	**331.23**	**332.13**	**0.90 ▲**	**0.3%**	

Summary

The Milwaukee Public Library is approximately 4% of the total City of Milwaukee Operating Budget

1 **2027 Proposed MPL City Supported Budget:** The 2027 Proposed Budget is $35.1 million, including fringe benefits, which represents an increase of $1.5M (4.4%) over the 2026 Adopted Budget. For MPL's cost-to-continue request, we requested an increase of $2.5M (7.6%) to maintain the current level of service and hours. However, the total of all cost-to-continue budget requests submitted by all City departments resulted in a $97 million budget gap. Departments were directed to revise their requests to achieve at least a 10% reduction from their cost-to-continue request. The Mayor's 2027 Proposed Budget for the Library includes a 2.9% reduction from our cost-to-continue request.

2 **Key Impacts:** The 2026 Proposed Budget ends Sunday hours at two branch libraries, and reduces Sunday hours at Central and two branch libraries by three hours per week. The holds pickup service at Drive-Up will also be eliminated. MPL is holding vacancies as needed and there will be no layoffs.

3 **Capital Budget:** The Mayor's 2027 Proposed Capital Budget for MPL is $3 million. $1 million is allocated to renovate the decking at Central Library, and $2 million is allocated to begin design and construction of a new branch library at Midtown Commons to replace the Capitol Branch Library.

Milwaukee Public Library

September Director Report



MILWAUKEE
PUBLIC LIBRARY

Inspiration Starts Here – Read • Learn • Connect

Bücherwurm Beer Launch Party

- Partnership between Milwaukee Public Library, Dead Bird Brewing, and the Friends of Milwaukee Public Library.
- Limited-edition festbier launched August 22
- Strong community response: Dead Bird sold out of cans twice, while the Friends gained members and donations.







The Library Show

An after-hours celebration of Milwaukee music, culture, and literacy.

- 900 attendance
- 226 library cards created
- 130 new cards and 96 re-registration.
- Of the 226 cards, 149 were issued to patrons under the age of 25.





Big Family Playdate

- Event focused on how everyday activities can help build reading readiness skills.
- Presented in partnership with Reach Out and Read Wisconsin, connecting MPL's early literacy expertise with a broader effort to encourage reading and learning from birth to age 5.





Secret Garden Enhancements

- Upgrades to the Secret Garden at Tippecanoe thanks to Friends of MPL User Experience Fund.
- Community created ~150 tiles in partnership with La Familia de Arte.








Get off your
Phone and simply
EXIST.





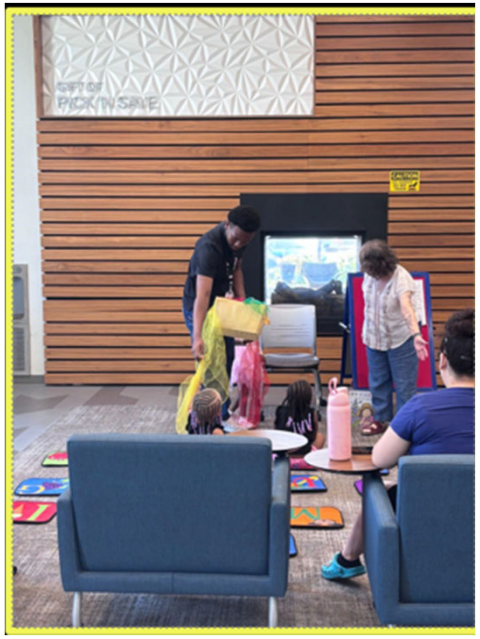

WELCOME, Makers!


Jaycee


WELCOME, Makers!







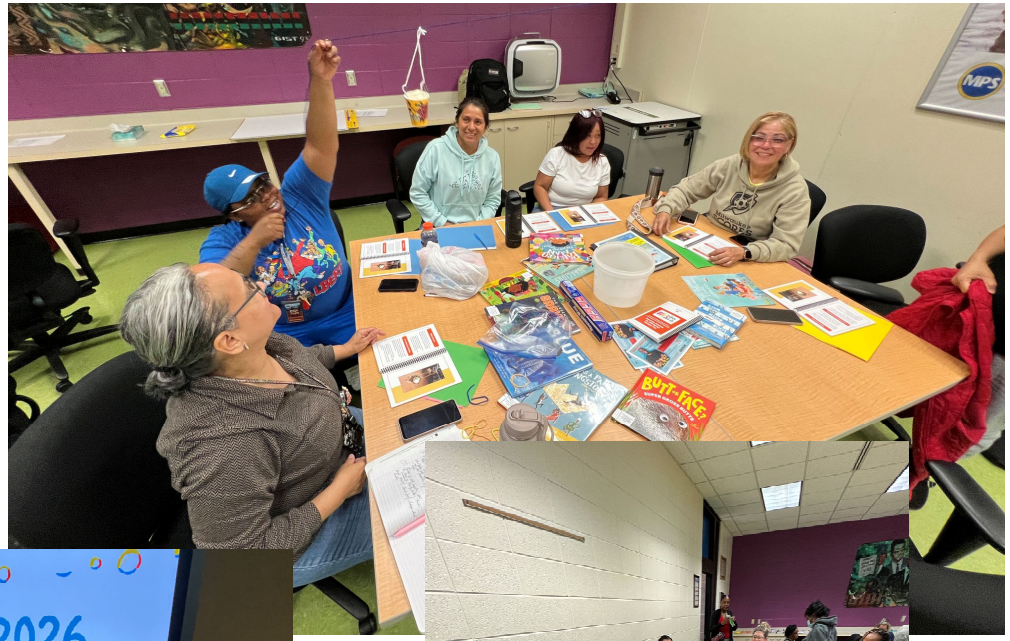
Preparations for the future

- Small actions can create a big impact.
- Get out of your comfort zone.
- Use libraries for more than just books.







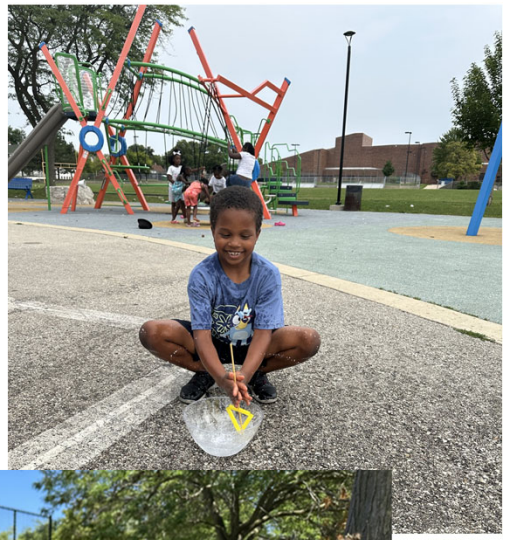



SUMMER READ
2026




Summer with MPL!
Room 329
329 -
333


BRASIL








MOON
STAFF
YOUTH AT PLAY
LIBRARY










THE CAMPING TRIP


Pete the Cat
BAD GUYS
















DOG MAN
DOG MAN




MILWAUKEE
PUBLIC LIBRARY




DREAM


NUESTRA
HISTORIA
LOS
PRIMEROS
I got my first
LIBRARY CARD
today!






Children's
Wisconsin


READ
READ
READ
READ




Summer Reading in a Box!
UCC Daycare (Preschool)
UCC Guadalupe Ctr South
UCC EL Acad - Jackson Park


JUNE 2
JUNE 9
PUBLIC LIBRARY

MILWAUKEE PUBLIC LIBRARY
BOARD OF TRUSTEES
INNOVATION & STRATEGY COMMITTEE
MINUTES
Thursday, October 8, 2026

Video Conference via Microsoft Teams

PRESENT: Matt Kowalski, Ald. Andrea Pratt, Mary Urbina-McCarthy, Missy Zombor, Jennifer Meyer-Stearns

EXCUSED: Neil Albrecht

OTHERS: MPL: Tim Fluhr, Ha Hoang, Melissa Howard, Dan Keeley, Joey McMahon, Karli Pederson, Rebecca Schweisberger, Jessica Wolf

Committee Chair Matt Kowalski called the MPL Board of Trustees Innovation and Strategy Committee meeting to order at 8:01 a.m. on October 8, 2026 with a quorum present. All Trustees and presenters participated by video conference.

1. **Committee Meeting Minutes Review**. Chair Kowalski entertained a motion to accept the minutes from the June 11, 2026 meeting. Trustee Pratt moved approval of the minutes and Trustee Urbina-McCarthy seconded. Motion passed.

2. **Strategy Document Update**. Associate Library Director Ha Hoang presented an update on strategic planning. MPL is updating the strategic documents using the framework of MPL Vision 2020 and Extended Vision 2022. The refreshed strategic framework positions the library as a trusted, accessible civic institution that helps residents learn, connect, work, and thrive. Library Managers and Administrators were tasked with reviewing demographic data and research to identify areas that could be updated. Through this work, Community Health and Well Being was identified as a new strategic directive. This directive focuses on connecting residents to reliable information, welcoming spaces, community resources, and programs that strengthen resilience. 2027 priorities include:

   - expanding food access and nutrition education using additional Charlie Carts and Kitchen-in-a-Box
   - creating welcoming and inclusive spaces, with a sensory space pilot program at Central Library
   - exploring emerging technologies and how they could affect staffing and services
   - expanding and enhancing virtual services and access for patrons
   - piloting early literacy hubs at two locations and expanding science of reading to managers
   - workforce development and economic opportunity for teens and young adults
   - The OneMPL initiative is being piloted at 3 branches and will be expanded systemwide in 2027

   Informational item.

3. **MPL Data Dashboard Presentation**. Communications and Community Engagement Director Melissa Howard gave a brief overview of data collection processes and the goals for consolidation and consistency. The updated data dashboard will be created and implemented over a two-year period. Research & Policy Coordinator Joey McMahon demonstrated an example of statistics reporting using the Microsoft Power BI platform. He described some of the challenges with the existing data collection processes and how they could impact reporting mechanisms to the new platform. Informational item.

The meeting of the Milwaukee Public Library Board's Innovation & Strategy Committee was adjourned at 8:33 a.m. on October 8, 2026.

Refreshed Strategic Directives

Building on MPL Vision 2020 and MPL 2022 Extension

MILWAUKEE PUBLIC LIBRARY

Inspiration starts here – we help people read, learn, and connect

1. Literacy, Learning, and Lifelong Discovery
2. Workforce Development, Entrepreneurship, and Business Growth
3. Community Health and Well-Being
4. Digital Access, Innovation, and Future Readiness
5. Community Third Place
6. Approachable, Adaptive, and Resilient Staff
7. Leadership, Collaboration, and Shared Impact Across Wisconsin Libraries

Looking Ahead: 2027 Priorities

MILWAUKEE PUBLIC LIBRARY

Food access and nutrition

- Enhanced food programming & initiatives
- Nutrition education
- Health resources

Welcoming inclusive spaces

- Explore sensory-friendly spaces and accessibility needs
- Central Library pilot

Library service innovation

- AI and emerging technology exploration to enhance collection discovery and workflows
- Self-service access models

Virtual services and access

- Expanded digital collections
- Virtual reference and programs
- Expanded weekend phone services

Strengthen early literacy and learning

- Pilot early literacy hubs
- Decodable book collections
- Staff training in science of reading

Teen/young adult career pathways

- Skill building programs
- Career exploration
- Connection to employment opportunities



Organizational Shifts: Implement customer service model systemwide that will direct how MPL internally realizes its mission and fulfills our promise to the community

Milwaukee Public Library

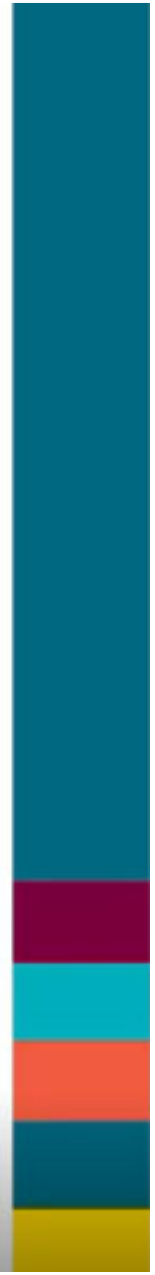
Data Strategy Roadmap

October Update



Data Strategy: Purpose & Approach

- Our starting point: Staff commitment is strong. Data infrastructure and collection consistency need improvement.
- Our goal: One trusted source of data, with shared dashboards that reduce manual reporting and support better decisions.
- Our approach: Use Power BI and Microsoft 365, with clear responsibilities and shared language.

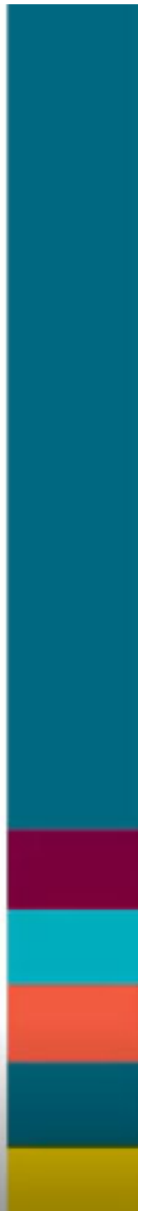


Two-Year Roadmap

- 2026: Foundation & First Dashboard. Document current state, build shared language and understanding of the data. A first staff-facing dashboard. Create light governance, and one system for managing requests.
- 2027 Q1: Centralize the Data. One trusted source of data in Power BI; retire the manual spreadsheets.
- 2027 Q2: Self-Service Access. Read-only dashboards with role-based access; begin measuring impact.
- 2027 Q3-Q4: Assess dashboards; collect feedback, iterate and plan for future investment.

Success: Consistent numbers, self-service access and more time to measure outcomes, strengthening our case for the library's value.

Investment: Phases 1–3 require essentially no new spending. Future investment decisions will draw on demonstrated value.



Milwaukee Public Library
Financial Report
September 30, 2026

City Revenues

	2026 Budget	2026 Received to date	2026 % Received	2025 Budget	2025 Received to date	2025 % Received
Additional City Appropriation	$ 32,698,143	$ 24,836,184	76.0%	$ 32,920,741	$ 23,153,100	70.3%
Fines	$ 92,000	$ 57,238	62.2%	$ 94,000	$ 59,027	62.8%
Lost Materials, etc.	$ 46,000	$ 35,372	76.9%	$ 50,000	$ 41,708	83.4%
MCFLS Contracts	$ 1,028,000	$ 817,408	79.5%	$ 927,000	$ 521,811	56.3%
Total City Appropriation	**$ 33,864,143**	**$ 25,746,202**	**76.0%**	**$ 33,991,741**	**$ 23,775,646**	**69.9%**

City Expenses

Salaries & Benefits

	2026 Budget	2026 Spent to date	2026 % Spent	2025 Budget	2025 Spent to date	2025 % Spent
Salaries	$ 19,412,775	$ 15,164,498	78.1%	$ 18,849,425	$ 13,965,098	74.1%
Fringe Benefits	$ 8,735,750	$ 6,527,111	74.7%	$ 8,792,742	$ 5,436,017	61.8%
Total	**$ 28,148,525**	**$ 21,691,609**	**77.1%**	**$ 27,642,167**	**$ 19,401,116**	**70.2%**

Supplies & Services

	2026 Budget	2026 Spent to date	2026 % Spent	2025 Budget	2025 Spent to date	2025 % Spent
General Office Expense	$ 116,550	$ 66,712	57.2%	$ 115,700	$ 67,377	58.2%
Construction Supplies	$ 27,133	$ 19,745	72.8%	$ 18,000	$ 14,070	78.2%
Energy	$ 913,744	$ 748,532	81.9%	$ 886,500	$ 626,372	70.7%
Other Operating Supplies	$ 348,084	$ 188,850	54.3%	$ 278,956	$ 140,158	50.2%
Vehicle Rental	$ 9,530	$ 9,466	99.3%	$ 9,200	$ 4,058	44.1%
Non-Vehicle Equipment Rental	$ 13,200	$ 6,720	50.9%	$ 13,200	$ 7,640	57.9%
Professional Services	$ 119,342	$ 68,953	57.8%	$ 86,600	$ 71,611	82.7%
Information Technology Services	$ 394,200	$ 357,092	90.6%	$ 357,920	$ 314,388	87.8%
Property Services	$ 688,500	$ 657,447	95.5%	$ 1,476,520	$ 1,375,825	93.2%
Infrastructure Services	$ 125,000	$ 146,491	117.2%	$ 121,000	$ 100,634	83.2%
Other Operating Services	$ 151,874	$ 98,534	64.9%	$ 152,112	$ 66,962	44.0%
Reimburse Other Departments	$ 120,916	$ 101,836	84.2%	$ 111,900	$ 42,190	37.7%
Total	**$ 3,028,073**	**$ 2,470,378**	**81.6%**	**$ 3,627,608**	**$ 2,831,285**	**78.0%**

Equipment

	2026 Budget	2026 Spent to date	2026 % Spent	2025 Budget	2025 Spent to date	2025 % Spent
Library Materials	$ 1,946,000	$ 1,297,928	66.7%	$ 1,885,500	$ 1,087,729	57.7%
IT Equipment	$ 359,534	$ 92,852	25.8%	$ 220,824	$ 72,794	33.0%
Other	$ 148,311	$ 32,011	21.6%	$ 337,042	$ 165,555	49.1%
Total	**$ 2,453,845**	**$ 1,422,791**	**58.0%**	**$ 2,443,366**	**$ 1,326,078**	**54.3%**

Other Departmental Appropriation

	2026 Budget	2026 Spent to date	2026 % Spent	2025 Budget	2025 Spent to date	2025 % Spent
Villard Square Property Payment	$ 12,000	$ -	0.0%	$ 11,600	$ 9,216	0.0%
East Property Payment	$ 11,000	$ 9,504	86.4%	$ 9,133	$ 9,133	0.0%
Mitchell Street Property Payment	$ 23,000	$ -	0.0%	$ 76,000	$ 59,942	78.9%
MLK Property Payment	$ 23,000	$ 10,267	44.6%	$ -	$ -	0.0%
Good Hope Property Payment	$ 23,000	$ -	0.0%	$ 42,967	$ -	0.0%
Contingent Energy Financing	$ 141,700	$ 141,653	100.0%	$ 138,900	$ 138,876	100.0%
Total	**$ 233,700**	**$ 161,424**	**69.1%**	**$ 278,600**	**$ 217,167**	**77.9%**

Total City Expenses	**$ 33,864,143**	**$ 25,746,202**	**76.0%**	**$ 33,991,741**	**$ 23,775,646**	**69.9%**

Milwaukee Public Library
Financial Report
September 30, 2026

Additional Funding Sources

Grants

	2026 Budget	2026 Spent to date	2026 % Spent	2025 Budget	2025 Spent to date	2025 % Spent
WTBBL Jul '26 - Jun '27	$ 1,214,000	$ 333,799	27.5%	$ 1,178,700	$ 252,913	21.5%
ILL Jul '26 - Jun '27	$ 271,050	$ 64,488	23.8%	$ 263,150	$ 43,572	16.6%
Total	**$ 1,485,050**	**$ 398,287**	**26.8%**	**$ 1,441,850**	**$ 296,485**	**20.6%**

Trust Funds

	2026 Budget	2026 Spent to date	2026 % Spent	2025 Budget	2025 Spent to date	2025 % Spent
Materials	$ 172,000	$ 116,338	67.6%	$ 167,000	$ 162,821	97.5%
Programming	$ 75,000	$ 30,482	40.6%	$ 53,000	$ 21,478	40.5%
Training	$ 27,000	$ 6,255	23.2%	$ 26,000	$ 21,759	83.7%
*Marketing**	$ 91,000	$ 14,684	16.1%	$ 45,000	$ 454	1.0%
Contingency	$ 4,000	$ 37	0.9%	$ 5,000	$ 500	10.0%
Board Development	$ 3,000	$ -	0.0%	$ 5,000	$ 384	7.7%
Strehlow 50+	$ 8,000	$ 998	12.5%	$ 8,000	$ 1,976	24.7%
*Fundraising Feasibility Study***	$ 86,000	$ 82,141	95.5%	$ -	$ -	100.0%
Hot Spots	$ -	$ -	100.0%	$ 295,000	$ -	0.0%
4T Renovation	$ -	$ -	100.0%	$ 689,773	$ -	0.0%
Total	**$ 466,000**	**$ 250,935**	**53.8%**	**$ 1,293,773**	**$ 209,372**	**16.2%**

**2026 Trust - Marketing budget includes $45,000 in carryover*

***Funded by proceeds from sale of former Forest Home Branch Library*

Foundation Contributions

	2026 Budget	2026 Spent to date	2026 % Spent	2025 Budget	2025 Spent to date	2025 % Spent
Materials	$ 358,716	$ 96,735	27.0%	$ 279,497	$ 22,297	8.0%
Programming	$ 1,315,914	$ 423,547	32.2%	$ 1,674,809	$ 1,129,911	67.5%
Total	**$ 1,674,630**	**$ 520,282**	**31.1%**	**$ 1,954,306**	**$ 1,152,208**	**59.0%**

Investments

U.S. Bank National Assoc. Commercial Paper (rated A1) confirmation #388108258 dated 09/04/26 and maturing 10/05/26 at a rate of 1.40%...$275,000

Director's Report
October 2026

Interim Library Director Meyer-Stearns and the MPL team highlighted Milwaukee Public Library's role as a statewide resource, a cultural partner and a trusted place for civic participation through their work in October.

Representatives from the Wisconsin Department of Public Instruction visited Central Library to meet with MPL's interim director and team. The visit provided an opportunity to discuss MPL's role as a resource for libraries and communities across Wisconsin and the collections, expertise and services that support that work.

MPL also welcomed the Milwaukee Art Museum's collections team for a tour of Central Library and its collections. Conversations explored how two of Milwaukee's major cultural institutions might align their work or partner in the future, building on their shared commitment to preserving collections and connecting the public with cultural resources.

The City of Milwaukee's October 21 announcement of its LEED Gold certification provided an opportunity to recognize the library's longstanding support for citywide sustainability efforts. MPL was an early partner with the City's Environmental Collaboration Office (ECO), advancing this work through its buildings and spaces.

The library continued its partnership with the Milwaukee Election Commission to support early voting locations and ballot drop boxes. This collaboration connects residents with opportunities to participate in elections through familiar, accessible neighborhood locations.

Preparing for the 2027 budget hearings before the Common Council was another significant focus. Interim Director Meyer-Stearns and team developed materials and prepared presentations and responses to help Council members assess MPL's proposed budget, service priorities and resource needs. The hearings provided an opportunity to demonstrate the library's community impact and explain how budget decisions shape services across the system.

MPL hosted a range of author events, bringing readers and writers together for conversation and discovery. These gatherings highlighted the library's role as a place to explore new ideas, encounter different perspectives and connect through literature.

Summary of Virtual and In-person Programs
September 2026

MPL HELPS PEOPLE READ

Hidden Chapter Book Club. Tucked away in a cozy corner of the library, The Hidden Chapter Book Club gathers once a month to read, sip, and discover. Attendees discuss a new book each month and explore historic library spaces and collections overlooked by the everyday visitor. September participants discussed *Nobody Wants Your Sh*t* by Messie Condo, and toured the Library's dome to discover the history of this unique space, which functioned as the "attic" of Milwaukee Public Library and Milwaukee Public Museum. Participants also learned about preservation with a Special Collections & Archives librarian. Attendance: 10

MPL HELPS PEOPLE LEARN

Snack Hack: 2.0. Snack Hack: 2.0 is a food and nutrition adult literacy program offered as weekly sessions designed to teach all aspects of food: nutritional elements, food groups, cooking principles, history of food, how food is grown, cultural connections to what we eat, how food works in our bodies and methods on how to prepare meals at home. Sessions include a cooking demonstration and a snack for attendees. September began Block 4 - the last section of the 4-block system used to structure the program's curriculum. This month finished the mini-series: Cooking Principles. Week 1 taught attendees the steam technique. Garden fresh vegetables were steamed before adding to the four-cheese pizza recipe. Week 2 started with a recap quiz on the 10 cooking principles covered over the past couple months. Attendees did fairly well in recognizing the attributes of the different techniques. Week 3 started the last mini-series of 2026: World Cuisines. Attendees were provided novelty passports to track where we "travel" each week. Week 4 introduced Christina Ward, author and food preserver specialist, as the guest presenter for a two-part session. In session #1, Ward taught and demonstrated various styles of food dehydration as a technique for preserving food. Week 5 was session #2 in which Ward taught and demonstrated fermentation as a preserving technique. Attendees had the opportunity to assist in transforming cabbage into sauerkraut. Total attendance for five sessions: 36

Fall Landscape Planting and Care**.** [Virtual] Keep pollinators in mind as you manage fall leaves, prune shrubs, and clean up and prepare your landscape for winter. Fall is also a great time to add trees, shrubs, and perennials to your landscape. Melinda Myers will share tips for taking care of your new and established native and non-native plants, flowerbeds, rain gardens, and lawns. She'll cover proper watering, fertilization, winterization, and protection from wildlife to get them through our challenging winters and ready for an eye-catching spring display! Sponsored by Milwaukee Metropolitan Sewerage District and hosted by Milwaukee Public Library. Live Attendance: 189

Building Health Literacy Through Movement. [Virtual] Taught by Samantha Stipan, owner of Body Language Pilates in Bay View, Milwaukee. Discover the benefits of Pilates while strengthening your health literacy skills. This beginner-friendly class introduces participants to basic Pilates exercises that support flexibility, balance, core strength, and overall well-being. By combining physical activity with digital health literacy, this program empowers adults to make informed decisions about their health and safely engage with online wellness information from trusted experts and vetted resources. Digital Pathways is developed with the support of UnitedHealthcare. It is managed by the American Library Association's Public Programs Office. On demand views: 92

Know Your Health - Navigating Healthcare in the AI Era. A community health conversation bringing together trusted health and industry experts to share practical knowledge, answer questions, and offer perspectives on how AI may influence healthcare. Topics included: Everyday health questions and informed decision-making; Changes affecting patients, families, and caregivers; Trust, privacy, access, and human care; Expert perspectives on AI's role in healthcare; Practical actions you can take for your health. Presented in partnership with the Wisconsin Chinese Chamber of Commerce. Attendance: 32

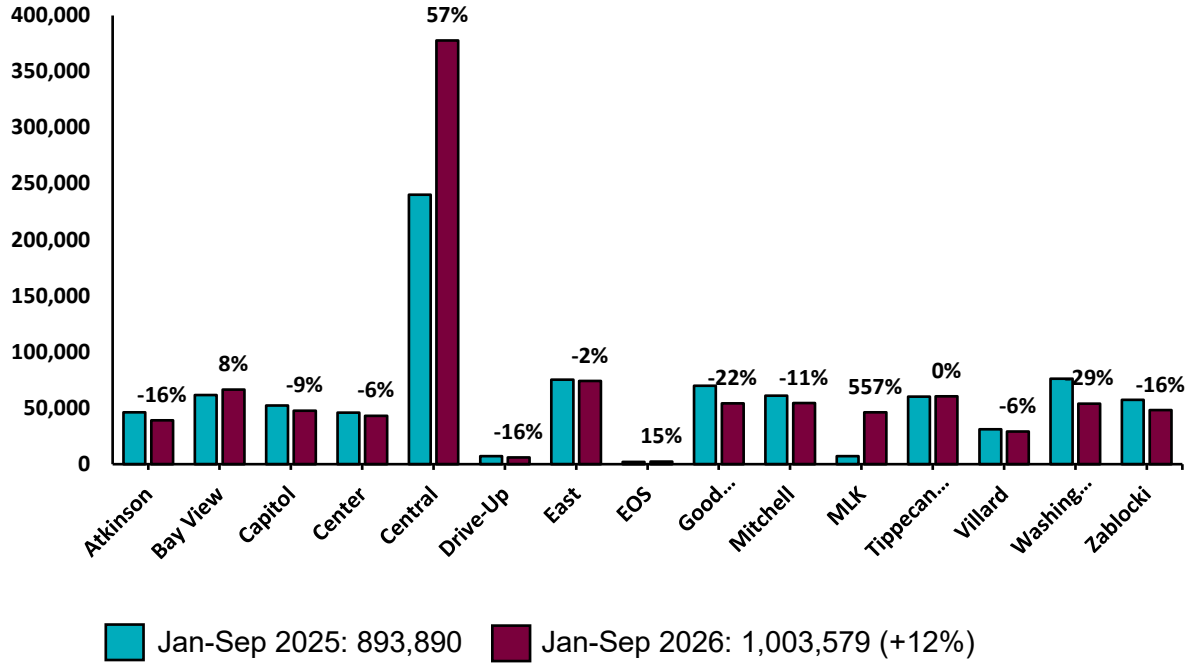
MPL HELPS PEOPLE CONNECT

The Library Show. DJs Sunny Lou, DJay Mando and r3algrl hosted a special after-hours library show in the Grand Rotunda at Central Library. Special guests included 414BigFrank, Sabbath, Lightris & Sero, and AyooLii. The Bookseller bookstore was open and food trucks and local vendor booths were on site for an evening celebrating the best of Milwaukee. September is National Library Card Sign-up Month. The first 50 people who sign up will receive a free event t-shirt, designed by Niche Exhibit. Exclusive library cards were also be available for library card sign-ups and renewals while supplies lasted. Attendance: 910

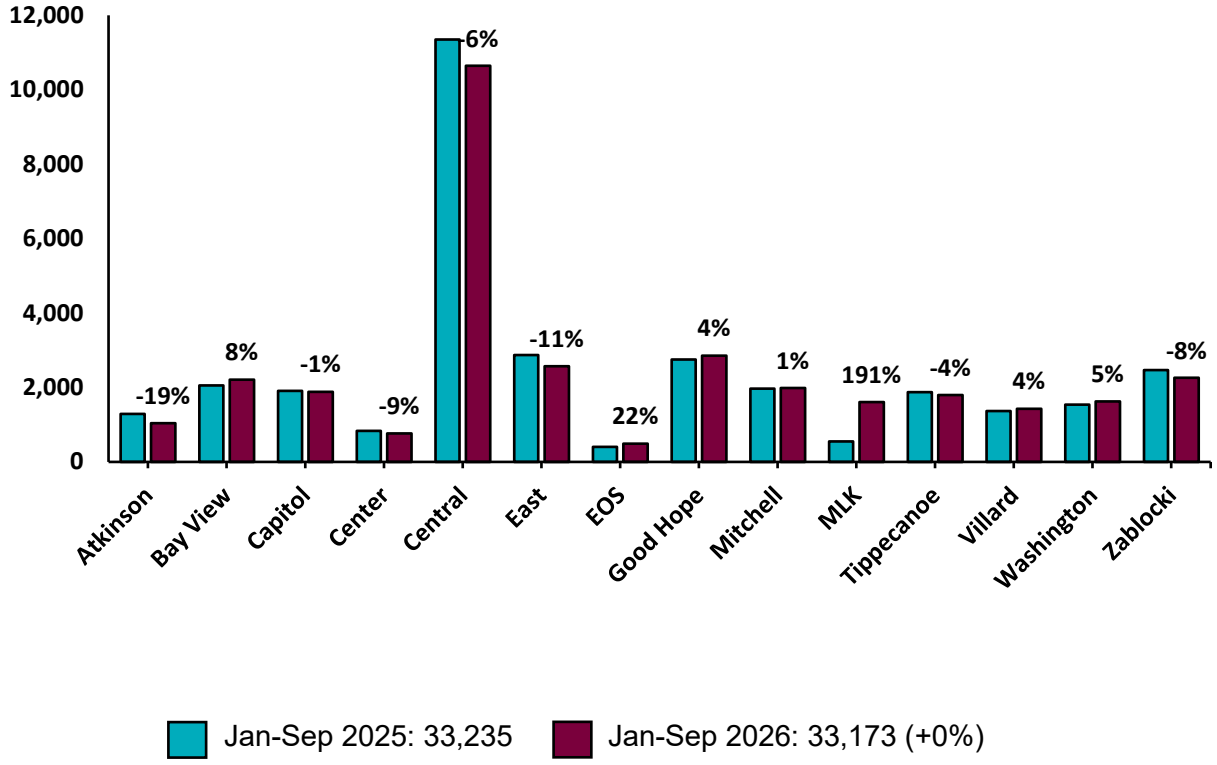
Doors Open Milwaukee. Central Library has participated in Doors Open Milwaukee since its beginning in 2011. This year, 1,426 people came to Central to take tours, hear about MPL history, and appreciate the beautiful building. Doors Open Milwaukee is a free community event that provides behind-the-scenes access to more than 150 locations throughout Milwaukee. Total attendance: 1,426

Total attendance for 149 programs: 3,716

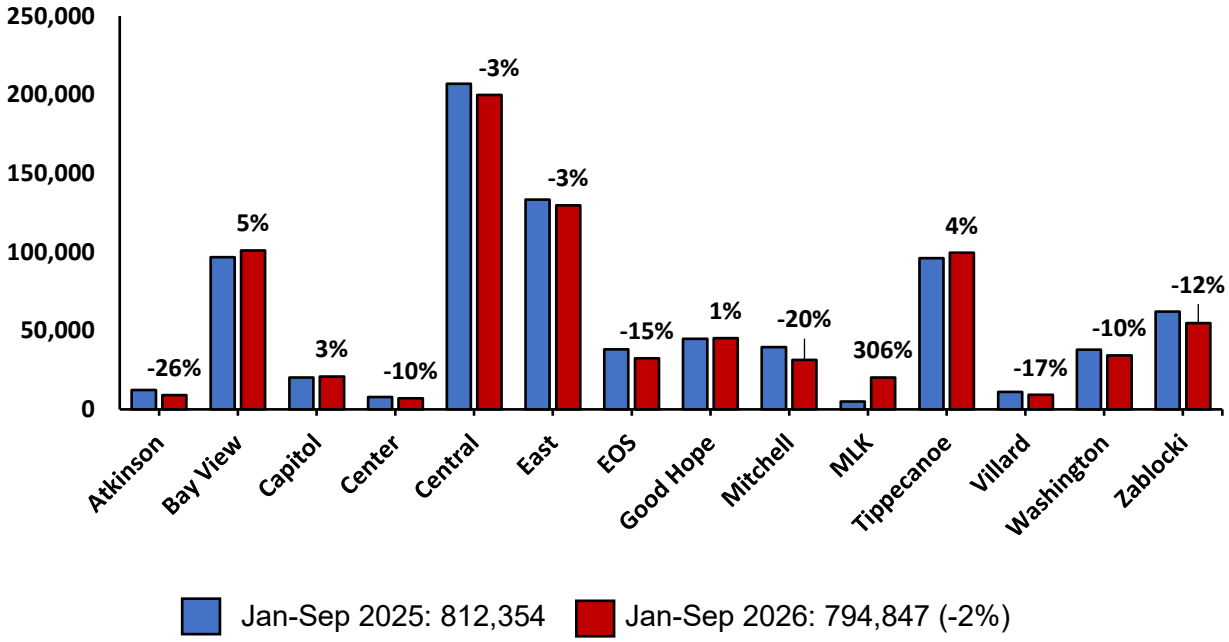
Patron Visits



Registration

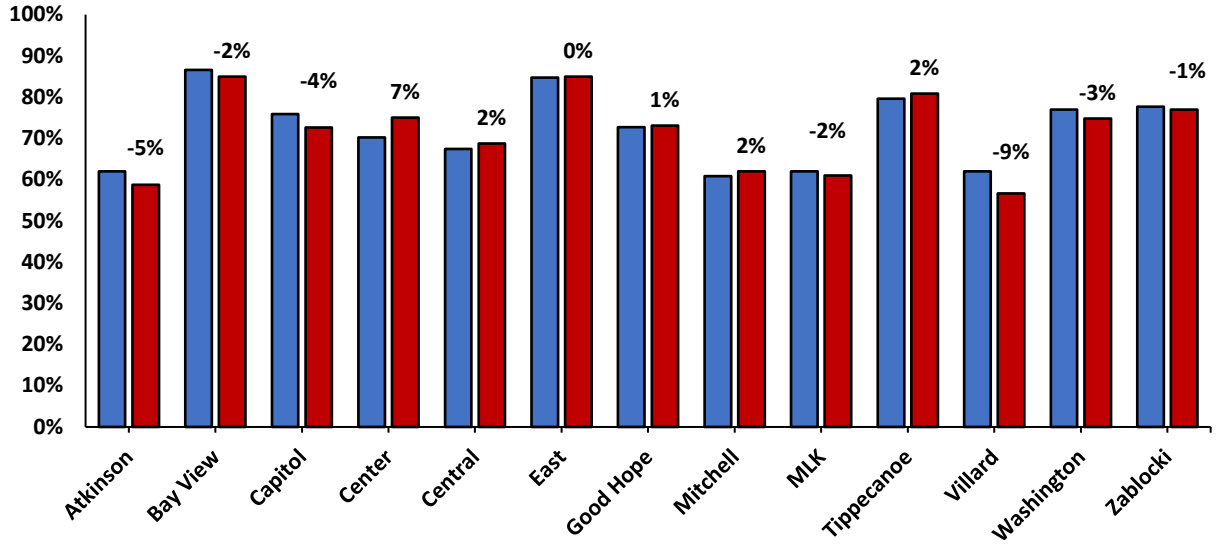


Traditional Circulation



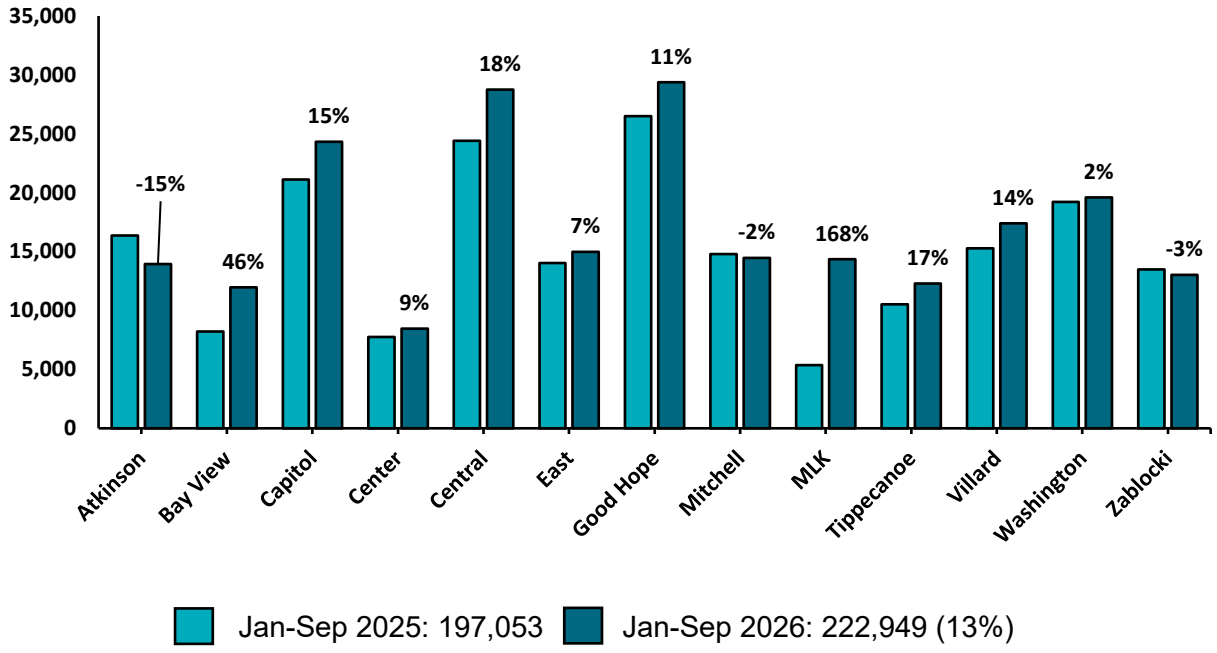
Jan-Sep 2025: 812,354 Jan-Sep 2026: 794,847 (-2%)

Self-Checkout

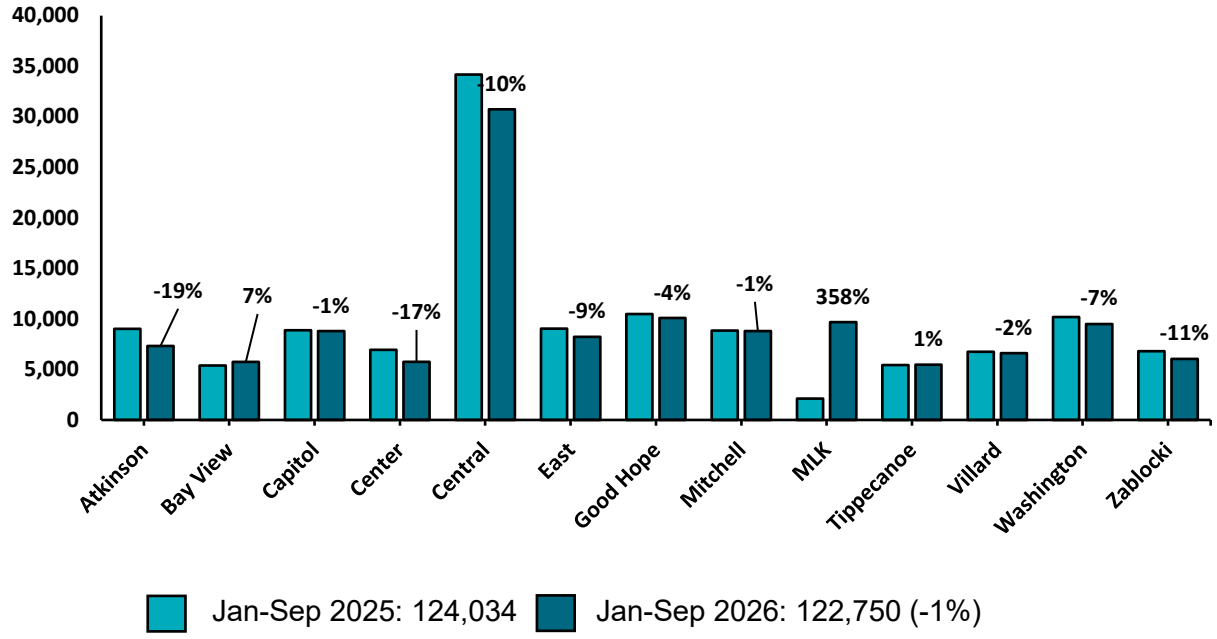


Jan-Sep 2025: 76% Jan-Sep 2026: 76% (+0%)

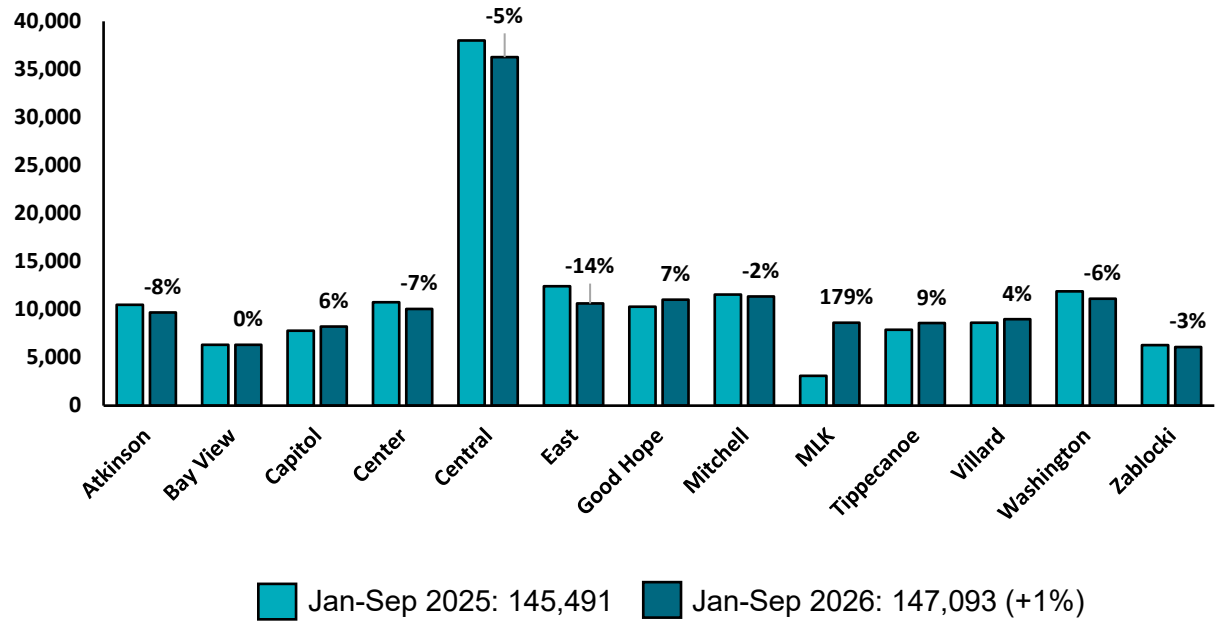
Print/Copy/Fax/Scan Jobs



Public Computer Sessions



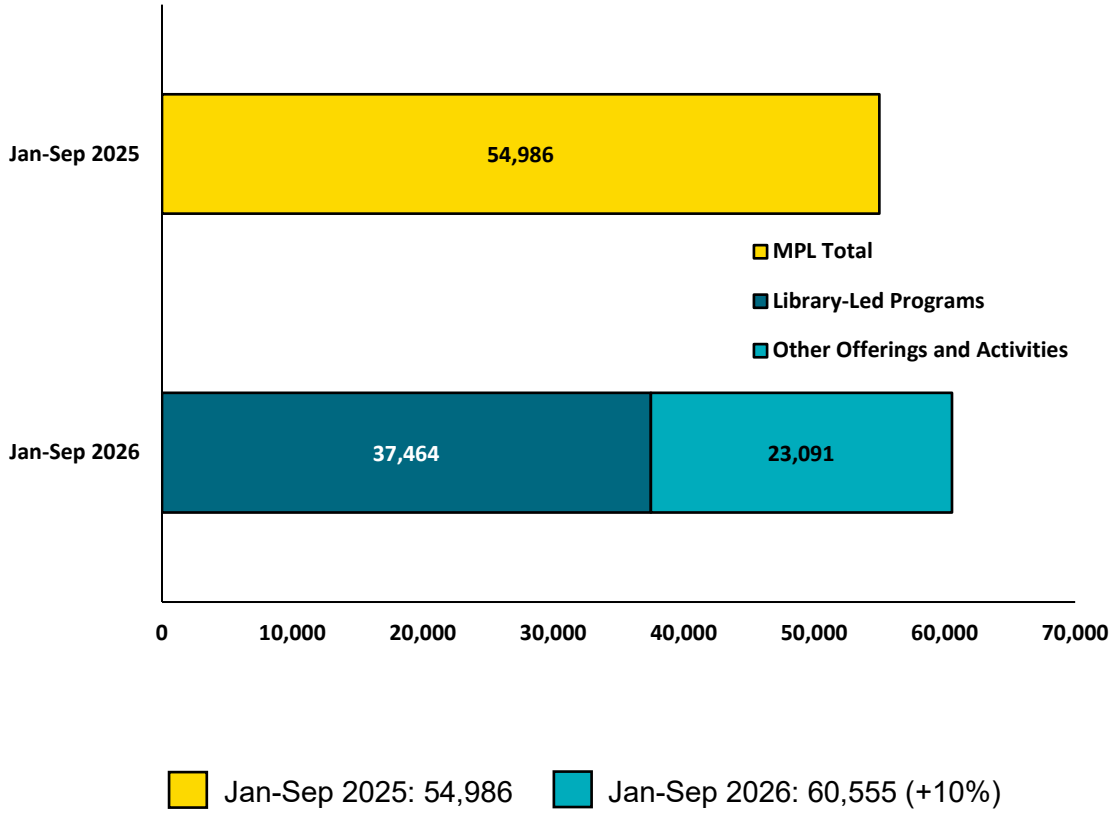
Wi-Fi Unique Users



eCirculation

Platform	Jan-Sep 2025	Jan-Sep 2026	Change
Freegal Music	160,208	441,784	+176%
Hoopla Digital	48,915	52,289	+7%
Kanopy	27,818	30,360	+9%
OverDrive	385,320	435,442	+13%
Total	**622,261**	**959,875**	**+54 %**

Program Attendance*



*On January 1st, 2026, MPL changed how programs are reported and counted to closer match definitions provided by the WI Department of Public Instruction. Due to this change, comparative statistics will be different as we continue to collect updated and accurate statistics throughout the remainder of the year.

MILWAUKEE
PUBLIC LIBRARY

Milwaukee Public Library Board of Trustees
2027 Schedule of Meetings (by Committee)

RECESS: February, August, December

REGULAR MEETING OF THE BOARD

4th Tuesday of the month, except recess months

Date	Day	Time	Location
January 26, 2027	Tuesday	4:00 p.m.	Central Library, Rotary Club of Milwaukee Community Room
March 23, 2027	Tuesday	4:00 p.m.	Branch?
April 27, 2027	Tuesday	4:00 p.m.	Central Library, Rotary Club of Milwaukee Community Room
May 25, 2027	Tuesday	4:00 p.m.	Central Library, Rotary Club of Milwaukee Community Room
June 22, 2027	Tuesday	4:00 p.m.	Branch?
July 27, 2027	Tuesday	4:00 p.m.	Central Library, Rotary Club of Milwaukee Community Room
September 28, 2027	Tuesday	4:00 p.m.	Central Library, Rotary Club of Milwaukee Community Room
October 26, 2027	Tuesday	4:00 p.m.	Branch?
November 23, 2027	Tuesday	4:00 p.m.	Central Library, Rotary Club of Milwaukee Community Room

LIBRARY BUILDING & DEVELOPMENT COMMITTEE

1st Thursday of the month, except January (New Year holiday) and recess months

Date	Day	Time	Location
January 7, 2027	Thursday	8:00 a.m.	Virtual Meeting
March 4, 2027	Thursday	8:00 a.m.	Virtual Meeting
April 1, 2027	Thursday	8:00 a.m.	Virtual Meeting
May 6, 2027	Thursday	8:00 a.m.	Virtual Meeting
June 3, 2027	Thursday	8:00 a.m.	Virtual Meeting
July 1, 2027	Thursday	8:00 a.m.	Virtual Meeting
September 2, 2027	Thursday	8:00 a.m.	Virtual Meeting
October 7, 2027	Thursday	8:00 a.m.	Virtual Meeting
November 4, 2027	Thursday	8:00 a.m.	Virtual Meeting

EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE

2nd Wednesday of the month in June and November

Date	Day	Time	Location
June 9, 2027	Wednesday	4:00 p.m.	Virtual Meeting
November 10, 2027	Wednesday	4:00 p.m.	Virtual Meeting

MILWAUKEE
PUBLIC LIBRARY

Milwaukee Public Library Board of Trustees
2027 Schedule of Meetings (by Committee)

FINANCE & PERSONNEL COMMITTEE

Quarterly – 4th Tuesday of the month in January, April, July, and October

Date	Day	Time	Location
January 26, 2027	Tuesday	8:30 a.m.	Virtual Meeting
April 27, 2027	Tuesday	8:30 a.m.	Virtual Meeting
July 27, 2027	Tuesday	8:30 a.m.	Virtual Meeting
October 26, 2027	Tuesday	8:30 a.m.	Virtual Meeting

INNOVATION & STRATEGY COMMITTEE

Quarterly – 2nd Thursday of the month, except January (due to conflict with B&D Committee), April, June, October

Date	Day	Time	Location
January 14, 2027	Thursday	8:00 a.m.	Virtual Meeting
April 8, 2027	Thursday	8:00 a.m.	Virtual Meeting
June 10, 2027	Thursday	8:00 a.m.	Virtual Meeting
October 14, 2027	Thursday	8:00 a.m.	Virtual Meeting

LIBRARY SERVICES & PROGRAMS COMMITTEE

Quarterly – 1st Wednesday of the month March, May, July, November

Date	Day	Time	Location
March 3, 2027	Wednesday	4:00 p.m.	Virtual Meeting
May 5, 2027	Wednesday	4:00 p.m.	Virtual Meeting
July 7, 2027	Wednesday	4:00 p.m.	Virtual Meeting
November 3, 2027	Wednesday	4:00 p.m.	Virtual Meeting

MILWAUKEE
PUBLIC LIBRARY

Milwaukee Public Library Board of Trustees
2027 Schedule of Meetings (by date)

January 2027			
January 7	Building & Development Committee	8:00 a.m.	Virtual Meeting
January 14	Innovation & Strategy Committee	8:00 a.m.	Virtual Meeting
January 26	Finance & Personnel Committee	8:30 a.m.	Virtual Meeting
January 26	Board Meeting	4:00 p.m.	Central Library, Rotary Club of Milwaukee Community Room

March 2027			
March 3	Library Services & Programs Committee	4:00 p.m.	Virtual Meeting
March 4	Building & Development Committee	8:00 a.m.	Central Library, Rotary Club of Milwaukee Community Room
March 23	Board Meeting	4:00 p.m.	**TBD**

April 2027			
April 1	Building & Development Committee	8:00 a.m.	Virtual Meeting
April 8	Innovation & Strategy Committee	8:00 a.m.	Virtual Meeting
April 27	Finance & Personnel Committee	8:30 a.m.	Virtual Meeting
April 27	Board Meeting	4:00 p.m.	Central Library, Rotary Club of Milwaukee Community Room

May 2027			
May 5	Library Services & Programs Committee	4:00 p.m.	Virtual Meeting
May 6	Building & Development Committee	8:00 a.m.	Virtual Meeting
May 25	Board Meeting	4:00 p.m.	Central Library, Rotary Club of Milwaukee Community Room

June 2027			
June 3	Building & Development Committee	8:00 a.m.	Virtual Meeting
June 9	Executive Committee	4:00 p.m.	Virtual Meeting
June 10	Innovation & Strategy Committee	8:00 a.m.	Virtual Meeting
June 22	Board Meeting	4:00 p.m.	**TBD**

July 2027			
July 1	Building & Development Committee	8:00 a.m.	Virtual Meeting
July 7	Library Services & Programs Committee	4:00 p.m.	Virtual Meeting
July 27	Finance & Personnel Committee	8:30 a.m.	Virtual Meeting
July 27	Board Meeting	4:00 p.m.	Central Library, Rotary Club of Milwaukee Community Room

MILWAUKEE
PUBLIC LIBRARY

Milwaukee Public Library Board of Trustees
2027 Schedule of Meetings (by date)

September 2027			
September 2	Building & Development Committee	8:00 a.m.	Virtual Meeting
September 28	Board Meeting	4:00 p.m.	Central Library, Rotary Club of Milwaukee Community Room

October 2027			
October 7	Building & Development Committee	8:00 a.m.	Virtual Meeting
October 14	Innovation & Strategy Committee	8:00 a.m.	Virtual Meeting
October 26	Finance & Personnel Committee	8:30 a.m.	Virtual Meeting
October 26	Board Meeting	4:00 p.m.	**TBD**

November 2027			
November 3	Library Services & Programs Committee	4:00 p.m.	Virtual Meeting
November 4	Building & Development Committee	8:00 a.m.	Virtual Meeting
November 10	Executive Committee	4:00 p.m.	Virtual Meeting
November 23	Board Meeting	4:00 p.m.	Central Library, Rotary Club of Milwaukee Community Room

MILWAUKEE
PUBLIC LIBRARY

BOARD OF TRUSTEES COMMITTEES
2026 - 2028
(Updated October 7, 2026)

LIBRARY BUILDING & DEVELOPMENT COMMITTEE
Michael Morgan, Chair
Larresa Taylor, Vice-Chair
Matt Kowalski
Teresa Mercado
Katie Sanders

EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE
Michele Bria, President
Teresa Mercado, Vice-President
Michael Morgan, Financial Secretary
VACANT, Past President

FINANCE & PERSONNEL COMMITTEE
Michael Morgan, Chair
Milele Coggs, Vice-Chair
Neil Albrecht
Andrea Pratt
Katie Sanders

INNOVATION & STRATEGY COMMITTEE
Matt Kowalski, Chair
Neil Albrecht
Andrea Pratt
Mary Urbina-McCarthy
Missy Zombor

LIBRARY SERVICES & PROGRAMS COMMITTEE
Milele Coggs, Chair
Kathleen Vincent, Vice-Chair
Larresa Taylor
Mary Urbina-McCarthy
Missy Zombor

AUXILIARY COMMITTEES
Urban Libraries Council Executive Board - Michele Bria
Milwaukee Public Library Foundation Board - Michele Bria
Milwaukee County Federated Library System Board – Neil Albrecht