2026

Legislative Reference Bureau

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MILWAUKEE PUBLIC LIBRARY

LIBRARY

City of Milwaukee

2026 Proposed Plan and Executive Budget Review

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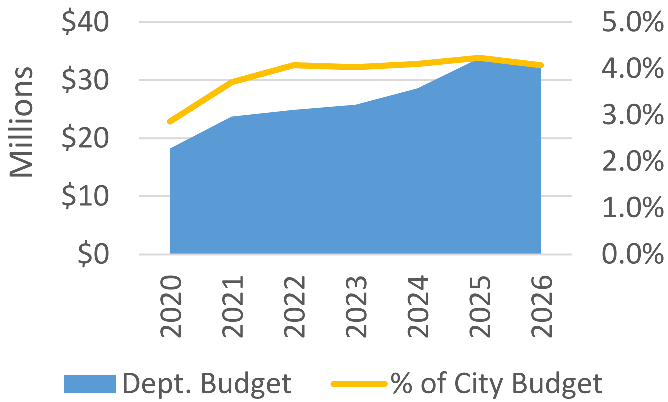
Budget Hearing: 2:00 pm on Wednesday, October 8, 2025

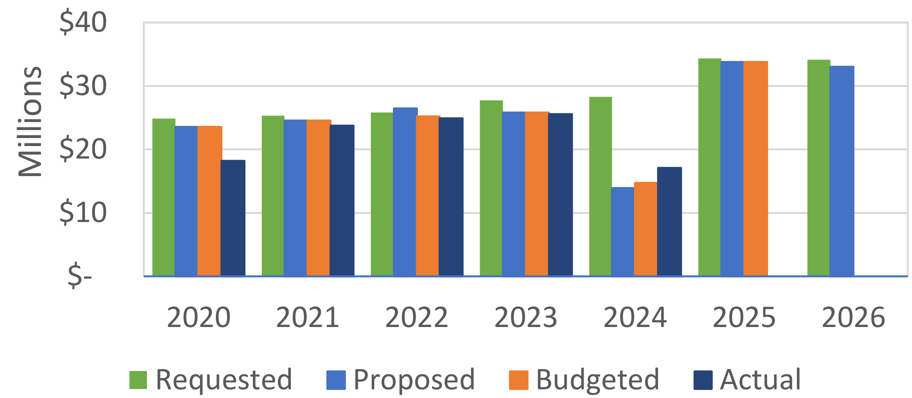
Library

$33,022,606	-$763,861	$-1,112,520	$34,135,126
Proposed 2026 Budget	Overall Change from 2025	Difference from Requested	Requested 2026 Budget

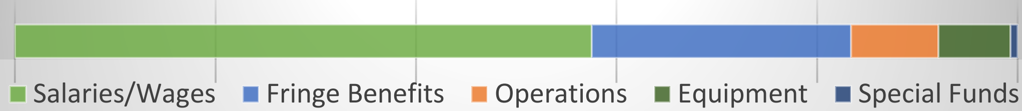
Total Departmental Budget



Comparative Funding

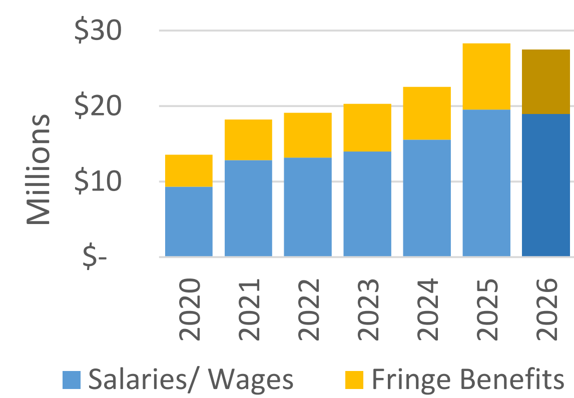


Levy Departmental Budget Appropriation by Category



$18,991,489	$8,546,171	$2,879,816	$2,371,430	$233,700
58%	26%	8%	7%	1%

Personnel Budget

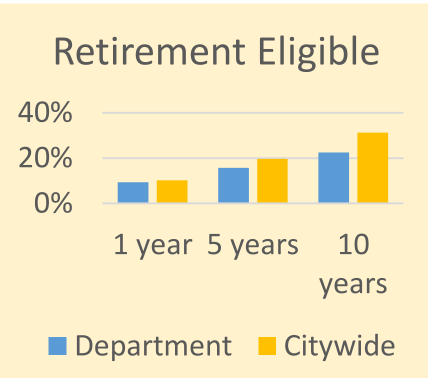


-2.8%

Change in Salaries and Wages from 2025 Budget.

-$547,936

Change in Salaries and Wages from 2025 Budget.



-16 Change in Positions	**-1.5%** % Change in Positions
57 Current Vacancies	**22** Voluntary Separations In 2025

Staffing Vacancies

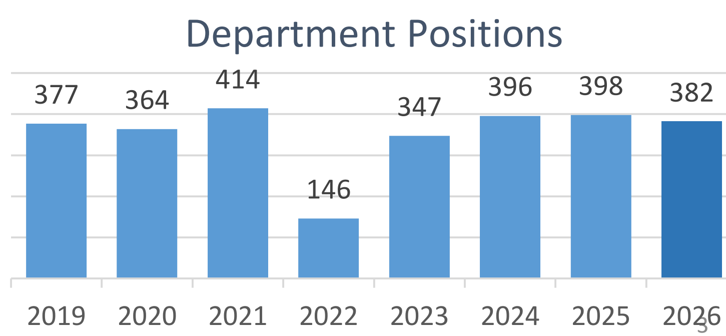
The Library reported 57 vacancies as of the current staffing snapshot. Positions with the most vacancies are:

- Librarian III, with 12 vacancies out of 53 funded positions (23%).
- Library Security Guard, with 9 vacancies out of 28 funded positions (32%).
- Custodial Worker II, with 7 vacancies out of 24 funded positions (29%).
- Library Circulation Services Representative, with 11 vacancies out of 55 funded positions (20%).

Vacancies within these four positions account for 68% of all current vacancies and 11% of all funded positions.

Staffing Update: Results of National Consulting Firm

Realignment Goal	Current Position	New Position
Invest in youth and all-ages 21st century learning	Librarian III (2)	Library Connected Learning Specialist (2)
Invest in youth and all-ages 21st century learning	Library Circulation Services Rep. (2)	Library Connected Learning Specialist (2)
Invest in staff and patron safety and security	Library Circulation Services Rep. – Lead (1)	Library Communications Assistant (1)
Invest in discovery and access to collections	Library Circulation Services Supervisor (1)	Library Technical Services Supervisor (1)
Invest in discovery and access to collections	Library Circulation Services Rep. (4)	Library Technical Services Specialist (4)



Library

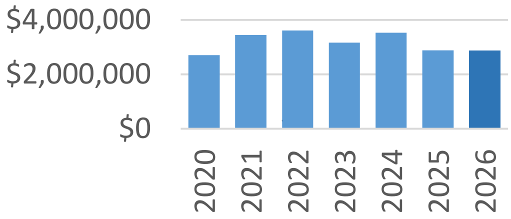
+8%

Change in expected revenue from 2025 Adopted Budget ($1,071,000) to 2026 Proposed Budget ($1,166,000).

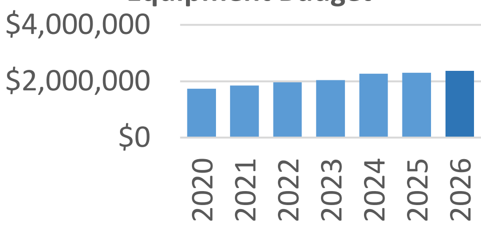
-38%

Change in grant funding from 2025 Adopted Budget ($1,305,249) to 2026 Proposed Budget ($942,482).

Operating Expenditures Budget



Equipment Budget



Revenues:

Revenue Item	2024 Actual	2025 Adopted	2026 Proposed
Lost Materials	$52,649	$39,000	$39,000
Overdue Charges	154,250	94,000	92,000
Printing Charges	3,323	3,000	3,000
Library Card Charges	3,234	0	0
User Fee Cards	1,200	1,000	1,000
Ditto Copy Service	2,081	0	0
Miscellaneous	4,837	7,000	3,000
MCFLS Contracts	765,750	927,000	1,028,000
Total	**$987,324**	**$1,071,000**	**$1,166,000**

Grants:

Description	Source	Programmatic Area	Amount
Civic Eng. Campaign	Cities Forward	Patron Experience & Strategy	$250,000
G. Hope Branch Pkg. Lot Green Infrastructure	Milwaukee Metro Sewerage District	Facilities & Fleet Services	100,000
Ideas to Action: Entrepreneur-In-Residence	Wis. Library Services	Patron Exp. & Strategy	5,000
Interlibrary Loan Services	Wis. Dept. of Public Instruction	IT, Technical Services, & Collections	197,100
Interlibrary Loan Services	Milwaukee County Federated Library System	IT, Technical Services, & Collections	36,450
Wisconsin Talking Book & Braille Library	Wis. Dept. of Public Instruction	Patron Exp. & Strategy	1,033,100

Library

+4.6%

Planned increase in public service hours from 2025 (32,000) to 2026 (33,500).

+29%

Planned increase in patron visits from 2025 (1,157,733) to 2026 (1,500,000).

$200,000

2026 Proposed Budget for Capitol Branch Planning.

13

Total Paid Teen Interns for 2025-2026.

Sunday Hours

Location: Sunday Patron Visits	2024 (29 Sundays)	2025 (32 Sundays)	Total
Central	13,522	19,167	32,689
Good Hope	3,315	3,910	7,225
Tippecanoe	2,622	3,558	6,180
Total	**19,459**	**26,635**	**46,094**

Location: Sunday Circulation (Traditional)	2024 (29 Sundays)	2025 (32 Sundays)	Total
Central	13,906	18,656	32,562
Good Hope	1,897	3,448	5,345
Tippecanoe	4,228	8,495	12,723
Total	**20,031**	**30,599**	**50,630**

School & Youth Partnerships: MPL works with schools and youth-serving organizations

- 2024: 363 class visits (13,900 attendees) + 9 school visits (161 attendees)
- 2025: 194 class visits (7,315 attendees) + 3 school visits (131 attendees)

Sunday Service: Patrons value Sunday access.

- The Mayor's Proposed Budget retains this service as an addition to rather than replacement of weekday hours.

Resource Availability: Most support from Central Library, other City departments, County, and partners is concentrated **Monday–Friday**.

Staffing Impact: Expanding to every Sunday and every evening would create challenges for staff retention.

-16.1%

Change in Special Funds from 2025 Adopted Budget ($278,600) to 2026 Proposed Budget ($233,700).

Special Funds

Fund Name	
Contingent Energy Financing*	$141,700
Villard Square Property Payment	$12,000
East Property Payment	$11,100
Mitchell Street Property Payment	$23,000
Good Hope Property Payment	$23,000
MLK Property Payment	$23,000
Total	***$233,700***

**Lease payments on energy efficiency equipment.*

MLK Branch

- Grand Opening (Sept 2025) $11M investment in King Drive neighborhood.
- Nearly 1,300 attendees at opening event.
- Complements nearby redevelopment (Thrivent, Five Points).
- Open 6 days/week, serving and uplifting community.

Capitol Branch – Next Project

- Planning funds in 2026 Proposed Budget.
- Will deliver architectural report + baseline cost estimate 2027.
- Capital funding request anticipated.
- Additional support sought from tax credit grants.

Facilities Challenges

- Capital budget constraints delaying.
- Central & branch repairs.
- Full facilities systems assessment planned Spring 2026.
- Will prioritize replacements and repairs across all locations.

Innovation & Technology – 2026

- **Digital Inclusion:**

Upgraded conference room tech; exploring Chromebook & Hotspot programs (pending MPLF support).

- **Makerspaces:**

4 active sites, fully staffed; expanding tools & workshops to build 21st Century skills.

- **Cybersecurity & Infrastructure:**

New XDR platform, firewall upgrade, expanded Wi-Fi access points, and efficiency software.

- **AI & Digital Literacy:**

Public trainings (ChatGPT Unlocked!), staff integration, City GovAI pilot participation; expanded online learning via Niche Academy & virtual coaching.