

Milwaukee Public Library

2026 Proposed Executive Budget

Mission: Inspiration starts here; we help people read, learn, and connect.



2026 Budget Summary

	2025 Adopted Budget	2026 Proposed Budget	Amount Change	Percent Change
FTEs – O&M	311.38	305.63	-5.75	-1.8%
FTEs - Other	24.45	17.95	-6.50	-26.6%
FTEs - Total	335.83	323.58	12.25	-3.6%
Total Positions Authorized	398	382	-16	-4.0%
Salaries & Wages	\$19,539,425	\$18,991,489	-\$547,936	-2.8%
Fringe Benefits	\$8,792,742	\$8,546,171	-\$246,571	-2.8%
Operating Expenditures	\$2,879,200	\$2,879,816	\$616	0.0%
Equipment	\$2,296,500	\$2,371,430	\$74,930	3.3%
Special Funds	\$278,000	\$233,700	-\$44,900	-16.1%
TOTAL	\$33,786,467	\$33,022,606	-\$763,861	-2.3%

Changes from 2025 budget



- Increase in contracted snow removal
- Shift all security expenses to in-house staff (started in 2025)
- Reduced property payments for Mitchell St. and Good Hope branches, added a new property payment for Dr. King branch
- Added 2 grant-funded communications positions
- 4 Teen Connected Learning Specialists moved from grant-funded to O&M
- Library Now program funding lapsed, eliminating 3 grant-funded positions
- 1 Program Assistant III position moved from grant-funded to O&M
- Increased PCA from 5% to 6%
- Eliminate Sunday hours at Good Hope and Tippecanoe, maintain at Central

Sunday Hour Usage



	January-July 2025 Patrons	Ave. Patrons per Sunday	% of Total	January-July 2025 Physical Circulation	Ave. Physical Circulation per Sunday	% of Total
Central	15,839	528	71%	16,208	540	62%
Good Hope	3,320	111	15%	2,922	97	11%
Tippecanoe	3,066	102	14%	7,115	237	27%
TOTAL	22,225	741	100%	26,245	875	100%

2026 Capital Expenses



- \$75,000 for security and IT upgrades
- \$2,725,000 for critical repairs to the roof and dome masonry at Central
- \$200,000 for planning a new Capitol branch

Service Table



Description of Services Provided	Operating and SPA Budget	Capital Budget	Grant Budget	FTEs
Administrative Services (Human Resources, Business Office, Communications, and other operations)	\$3,320,566	\$0	\$54,915	24.50
Public Services (research and readers' advisory services, customer experience, circulation and cardholder account management in-person at Branches and Central, by phone and online; and programs and public instruction)	\$16,035,359	\$0	\$700,490	186.58
Outreach Services (van delivery, early literacy services, school-aged and teen services at childcare centers, schools, senior high-rises, community events, and partner organizations)	\$1,344,444	\$0	\$15,735	15.50
Information Technology (IT), Technical Services, and Collections (IT and network services, collections development, management and access, interlibrary loan services, database management, and other technology services)	\$6,374,138	\$0	\$171,342	40.00
Facilities and Fleet Services, and Security at 13 physical facilities	\$5,948,099	\$3,000,000	\$0	57.00
TOTAL	\$33,022,606	\$2,815,000	\$942,482	323.58

Core Services

The Milwaukee Public Library Role and Impact:

- Free access to knowledge, information, and diverse ideas.
- Support for school readiness, literacy, and economic development.
- Central Library + 12 neighborhood branches serve Milwaukee's informational, cultural, and recreational needs.
- Nearly 2.5 million physical items + electronic resources available.



Public Services and Hours Update:

- Maintain full services at all locations
- 12 branch libraries: 48 hours/week, Monday-Saturday
- Central Library: 54 hours/week, Sunday hours year-round.

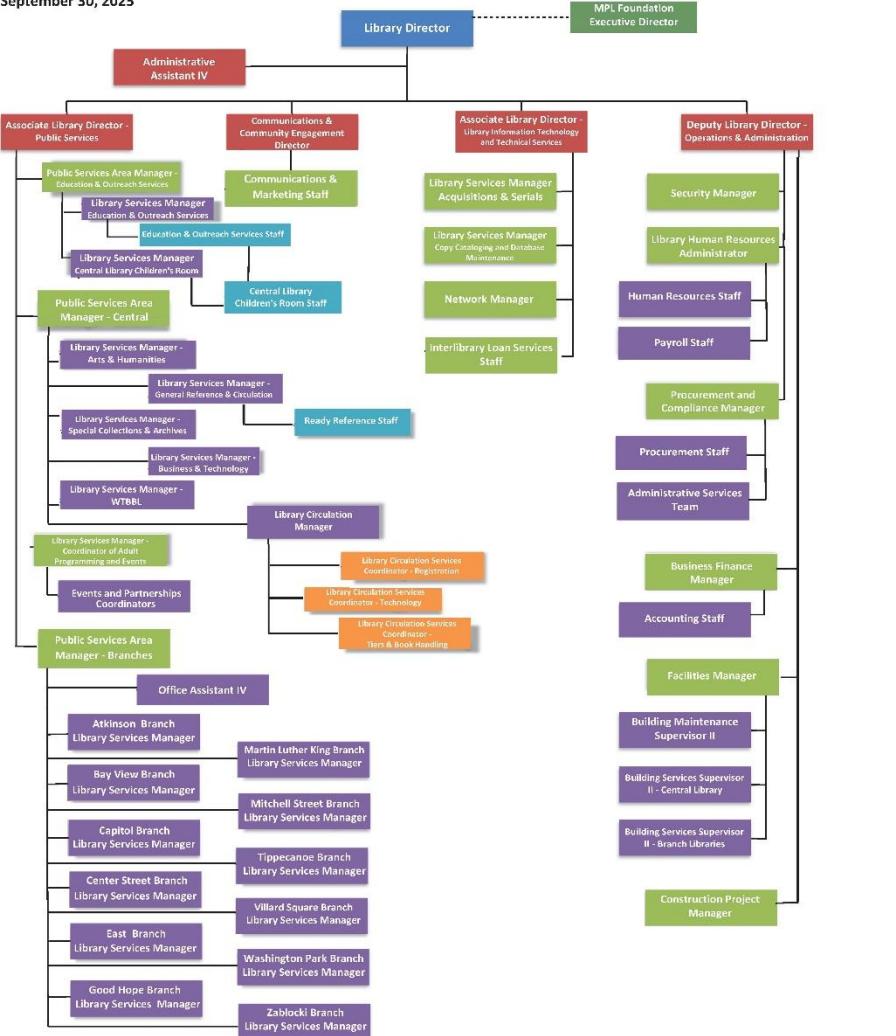


Service Delivery Model



MPL Organization Chart

September 30, 2025



2025 Accomplishments



Summary of Changes

- Service Model
 - Year-round Sunday Service at Central (only)
 - New equitable Sunday staffing rotation
- Staff Realignment to Meet Patron Needs (Cost-Neutral)
 - **Youth & Learning:** 4 positions → Connected Learning Specialists
 - **Safety & Security:** 1 position → Library Communications Assistant
 - **Collections & Access:** 6 positions → Technical & Collection Services
- Library Hours
 - Branches: 12 open 48 hrs/week (Mon–Sat)
 - Central: 54 hrs/week (incl. Sunday 1–5)
 - Central Drive-Up: early access Mon–Sat
 - **Total Central Access:** 60.5 hrs/week

Priorities and Focus

- **Service & Culture:** A system-wide shift aligning roles, workflows, and staff culture around a shared mission, creating welcoming environments and excellent service. Our target: 1.5 million visits by 2026, returning to pre-pandemic levels.
- **Resource Library (Central):** Highlight MPL's collections, featuring rare and special materials, government documents, and digital collections making MPL primary materials accessible online to all.
- **Education & Outreach:** Extending MPL beyond our walls through mobile and pop-up services, literacy and ESL programs, and teen learning initiatives that prepare youth for college, careers, and civic life.
- **Economic & Digital Inclusion:** Driving opportunity through the Business Commons, entrepreneurial support, workforce training, technology lending, and new AI instruction that equips patrons for the future.

Priorities and Focus (cont.)

- **Community Engagement:** Using community feedback to shape programming and branch work plans, ensuring events and services reflect local needs and priorities.
- **Technical Services:** The behind-the-scenes backbone that acquires, manages, and provides access to all library materials and digital resources while supporting IT infrastructure.
- **Virtual MPL:** A 24/7 library experience offering eBooks, streaming, research tools, online learning, tutoring, and virtual programming supported by a strong social media presence.

Department Demographics

Non-Management				
	Female	Male	Total	%
Black	29	29	58	24%
Hispanic	10	8	18	8%
Asian	4	1	5	2%
American Indian	1	1	3	1%
White	107	50	157	65%
Total	151	89	240	
%	63%	37%		

Management				
	Female	Male	Total	%
Black	10	1	11	19%
Hispanic	3	5	8	14%
Asian	1	2	3	5%
American Indian	0	0	0	0%
White	25	10	35	61%
Total	39	18	57	
%	68%	32%		

85% City Residents

Service Uniformity



- **Library Service Network**
 - 12 branches across Milwaukee, spaced 1–4 miles apart
 - Central Library serves as the system hub with centralized activities
- **Shared Staffing**
 - Cluster model allows staff to cover unexpected shortages to keep all locations open
 - Testing a new system-wide Sunday staffing approach to strengthen one-system culture
- **Unified Services**
 - Consistent staff expectations system-wide to deliver quality programming
 - Makerspaces and other value-added services available in each cluster
- **Building Standards**
 - Universal building program ensures consistent functional design
 - Community input shapes features unique to each new branch

Environmental Impact



Milwaukee Public Library is committed to sustainable development. MPL is investing in renewable energy, green building systems, and educational programming to showcase green living and educate the public.

- **Sustainable Facilities:** Libraries across the system feature geothermal HVAC, solar arrays, EV charging stations, green roofs, and stormwater-smart parking lots with bioswales, rain gardens, and permeable paving.
- **Energy Efficiency:** Automated building systems, efficient HVAC, and LED lighting maximize performance and reduce energy use.
- **Green Programming:** Workshops and programs on solar, composting, rain gardens, and rain barrels engage patrons in everyday sustainability.
- **Community Partnerships:** Collaborations with MMSD, Fresh Coast Guardians, Groundwork MKE, and nature centers strengthen impact and expand reach.

Inspiration starts here – we help people read, learn and connect.
Thank you for your time and attention!



Addendum: Charts

MPL Branch Data Profile Chart						
Top Four 1-4 = HIGH	Makerspace Sites Program Support	Library Circulation	Library Visits	Library Wi-Fi Usage	Library Computer Usage	Service interactions
Middle Four 5-8 = MEDIUM						
Bottom Four 9-12 = LOW						
Data Range		2,331-118,538	3,127 - 68,867	1,981 - 11,190	1,547 - 9,588	3,322 - 37,735
NORTH CLUSTER						
Atkinson		10	10	5	4	11
Capitol		9	7	9	5	7
Good Hope	X	5	3	6	1	6
Villard Square		11	11	7	8	9
CENTRAL CLUSTER						
Center Street		11	9	4	7	10
East		1	2	1	3	2
Martin Luther King		12	12	12	12	12
Washington Park	X	8	1	2	2	3
SOUTH CLUSTER						
Bay View		2	4	10	10	8
Mitchell Street	X	6	6	3	6	1
Tippecanoe		3	5	8	11	5
Zablocki		4	8	11	9	4
		January - August 2025				

*MLK Branch operated at a reduced capacity since 2023

*MLK Branch Makerspace has a makerspace location as of 9/6/2025