

TRUSTEES OF THE PUBLIC LIBRARY OF THE CITY OF BOSTON
Special Meeting of the Trustees as a Corporation and Administrative Agency
Friday, December 13, 2024 at 9:00 a.m. via Zoom
MINUTES

The Meeting of the Trustees of the Public Library of the City of Boston (“BPL”) held on Friday, December 13, 2024 at 9:00 a.m. via Zoom.

Present at the meeting included: Chair, Dr. Ray Liu, Vice Chair Evelyn Arana Ortiz and Trustees: Joe Berman, Jim Canales, Cheryl Cronin, John Hailer, Jeff Hawkins, Julie Kim, Jose C. Masso III, Porsha Olayiwola, Senator Mike Rush, Christian Westra, and Lynn Perry Wooten. Navjeet Bal and Jonathan Lavine were absent.

Also present: BPL President David Leonard, Clerk of the Board Pamela Carver, BPL staff, and members of the public.

Chair of the Board, Dr. Ray Liu presided and called the meeting to order at 9:01 a.m. He read the trustees’ reaffirmation statement. The clerk conducted a roll call, confirming a quorum. Everyone was reminded that the meeting was being recorded and provided instructions on how to sign up for public comment.

Dr. Liu introduced the main topic for the meeting, the approval of the Boston Public Library Strategic Plan. He commended all the trustees, staff, and various stakeholders involved for their work in producing a strong and clear strategic plan. There were no questions, so he called for a motion that was duly made, seconded, and approved of the strategic plan as presented.

VOTED: “that, the Trustees of the Public Library of the City of Boston approve to accept the Boston Public Library Strategic Plan 2025-2030 as presented.”

Next, Ms. Emily Tokarczyk provided an update on the BPL fleet of vehicles purchase. The vote would be for approximately \$350,000. The fleet consists of seven vehicles, including: three vans for book delivery, two large utility trucks for equipment, two passenger cars (considering two hybrid models for the passenger cars, with the other five vehicles to meet state guidelines). Ms. Tokarczyk indicated the vote would be held once the necessary information was finalized.

Ms. Arana Ortiz, Chair of the Finance and Audit Committee, requested a vote to delegate approval of the fleet purchase to the Finance and Audit Committee. A motion was duly made, seconded, and voted to approve delegation.

VOTED: “that, the Trustees of the Public Library of the City of Boston delegate the vote to approve the vehicle fleet for the BPL to the Finance and Audit Committee.”

Dr. Liu asked for any new business. He announced that the next board meeting had been rescheduled to Tuesday, February 4, 2025, with the time and location remaining unchanged. People were encouraged to check the website for further details.

Dr. Liu called for public comment for which there was none. With no further business, the meeting was adjourned at 9:13 a.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Pamela Carver

Pamela Carver, Clerk of the Board

HONAN-ALLSTON BRANCH LIBRARY



Using horse-drawn carriages, a delivery station in Frank Howe's drugstore at 26 Franklin Street first provided library service to Allston in 1889.

.In 1905, the Allston Reading Room opened at 354 Cambridge Street and became a full-service branch in 1924. The branch moved to 161 Harvard Avenue in 1929 and was closed following statewide budget cuts in 1981

The current location opened in 2001, and In 2003 the branch was renamed the Honan-Allston Branch in honor of the late City Councilor Brian Honan.



SPECIAL FEATURES OF THE BRANCH

COURTYARDS



ART GALLERY



LIONS IN RAY MALLONE PARK





LIBRARIANS

- Generalist II Librarian Sarah Mahon
- Branch Librarian Carin O'Connor
- Children's Librarian Caroline Richardson



LIBRARY ASSISTANTS



Special
Library
Assistant
Janet
Guerra

Senior
Library
Assistant
Yaelsis
Baez Soto



CUSTODIAN
ROBERT ORLANDINO



SECURITY GUARD
MADISON JACOB



FY2025 Quarterly Circulation Data

Sum of Total	Q1			Q1 Total	Q2			Q2 Total	Grand Total
	Col Labels	Row Labels	Row Labels		Row Labels	Row Labels	Row Labels		
	July 2024	Aug 2024	Sept 2024		Oct 2024	Nov 2024	Dec 2024		
BPL- Honan-Allston Branch Library	4,766	4,569	4,410	13,745	4,596	4,426	4,215	13,237	26,982

CIRCULATION NUMBERS

PROGRAM NUMBERS

From July 2024 to
December 2024. We
held 107 programs
attended by 1,694
people.

READ BOSTON BROUGHT IN MORE THAN 500 CHILDREN OVER FOUR SESSIONS. THEY CAME TO HEAR STORIES AND PICK OUT A BOOK TO TAKE HOME.

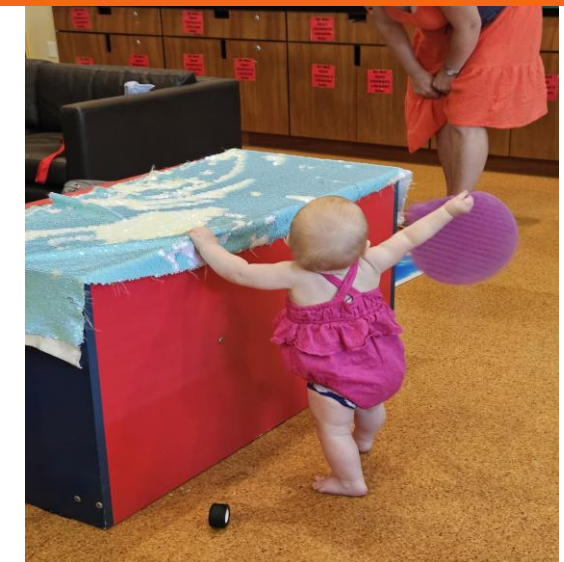


CHILDREN'S ROOM



Lilla and Lilly have been coming to the Honan-Allston branch since they were infants.

- Class visit from the Gardner Pilot Academy.
- Caroline helping a student.
- Baby enjoying the sensory space.



CHILDREN'S PROGRAMMING

- Up close with a snake
- ToddlerYoga
- Creating a dinosaur





ADULT CRAFT PROGRAMS

- Painting on silk fabric
- Jewelry making class
- Floral arranging with autumn colors



FRIEND'S SPONSORED ADULT PROGRAMS

- Book Club
- Sip and Stitch
- Yoga





OUR SEWING PROGRAM BEGAN IN 2014 AND IS STILL SUCCESSFUL. IT IS SPONSORED BY THE FRIENDS OF THE HONAN-ALLSTON BRANCH, WITH GRANTS FROM THE HARVARD ALLSTON PARTNERSHIP FUND.



SPRING BOOK SALE

BY THE FRIENDS OF THE
HONAN-ALLSTON BRANCH
LIBRARY

SATURDAY, APRIL 27

10:00 AM - 2:00 PM

Honan-Allston Branch of the Boston Public Library
300 N. Harvard St., Allston, MA 02134 | 617-787-6313 | allston@bpl.org

FRIENDS OF THE HONAN-ALLSTON BRANCH LIBRARY

I would like to introduce the Board Members of the FRIENDS of the Honan-Allston Library: Rita DiGesse, Bob Gale, Brian McLaughlin, Phyllis Harrington, Barbara Bucelewicz Absent: Geri Sullivan, Bob Pessek, Sarah Markell, Jimmy Georges

Our volunteer-based, non-profit group was formed to support and expand community programming at our branch. The Friends apply for and receive grants and donations in addition to membership dues. We coordinate with Carin and the library staff to provide help with whatever is needed.

Some of our successful projects have been:

- sewing machines for the popular sewing instruction classes
- teen area with furniture set up for research, homework, and job searching
- special materials and furnishings for autistic children in the children's area
- track system to hang works of art in the gallery for art exhibitions
- sound proofing system in the community room
- signage for the 'Rita DiGesse Community Room' for speaker forums, concerts, book sales, and community civic meeting groups

Please help yourselves to the light refreshments the Friends have provided during the meeting today.

PATRON REVIEW

• “The Honan-Allston library has been my sanctuary since moving here. It’s calming presence seeps into you as soon as you enter the doors, like entering a private world where you can lose yourself in whatever book you choose. The parts I enjoy the most are the ethereal atrium that sits in the middle of the building, and the effervescent Raymond V. Mellone Park that is neatly tucked away behind the building. These are perhaps my two favorite places to read in all of Boston. It’s quiet, just you and the sounds of birds chirping, and there is nothing like having a pocket of nature to escape into and feel at peace. I couldn’t recommend going to the Honan-Allston branch to relax and enjoy the pleasures of reading more,” said Luke U. from Allston.



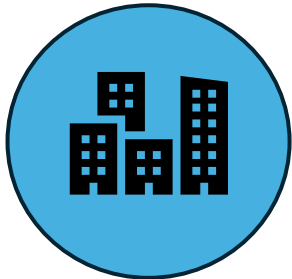


INTRODUCTION TO THE BPL'S BUDGET

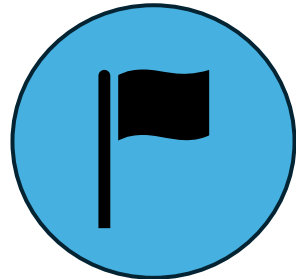
- Funding Sources
- Budget History
- Expenditures
- Trust Funds
- Potential Gaps



Funding Sources

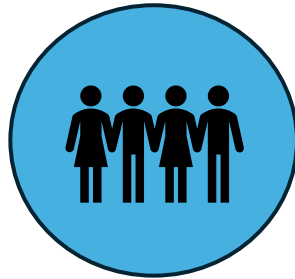


CITY



STATE

Including Interlibrary Loan &
Library for the Commonwealth



PHILANTHROPY

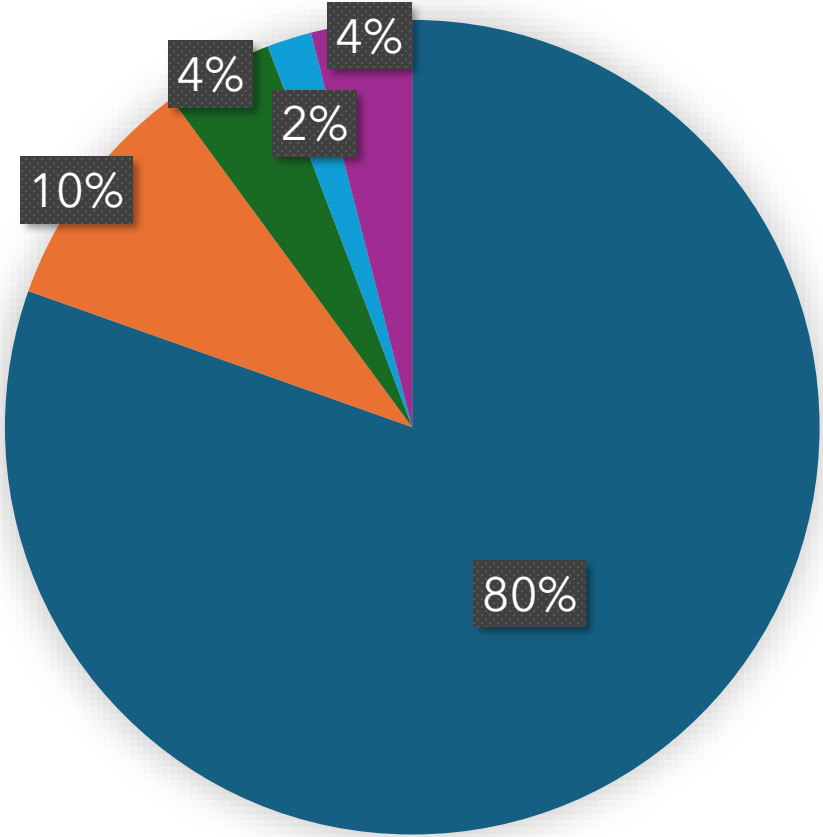


TRUST FUNDS



EARNED
REVENUE

FY25 Operating Budget: \$62M+ *(current fiscal year)*



Funding Sources

- City Budget
- State Sources
- Philanthropy
- Trust Funds
- Other

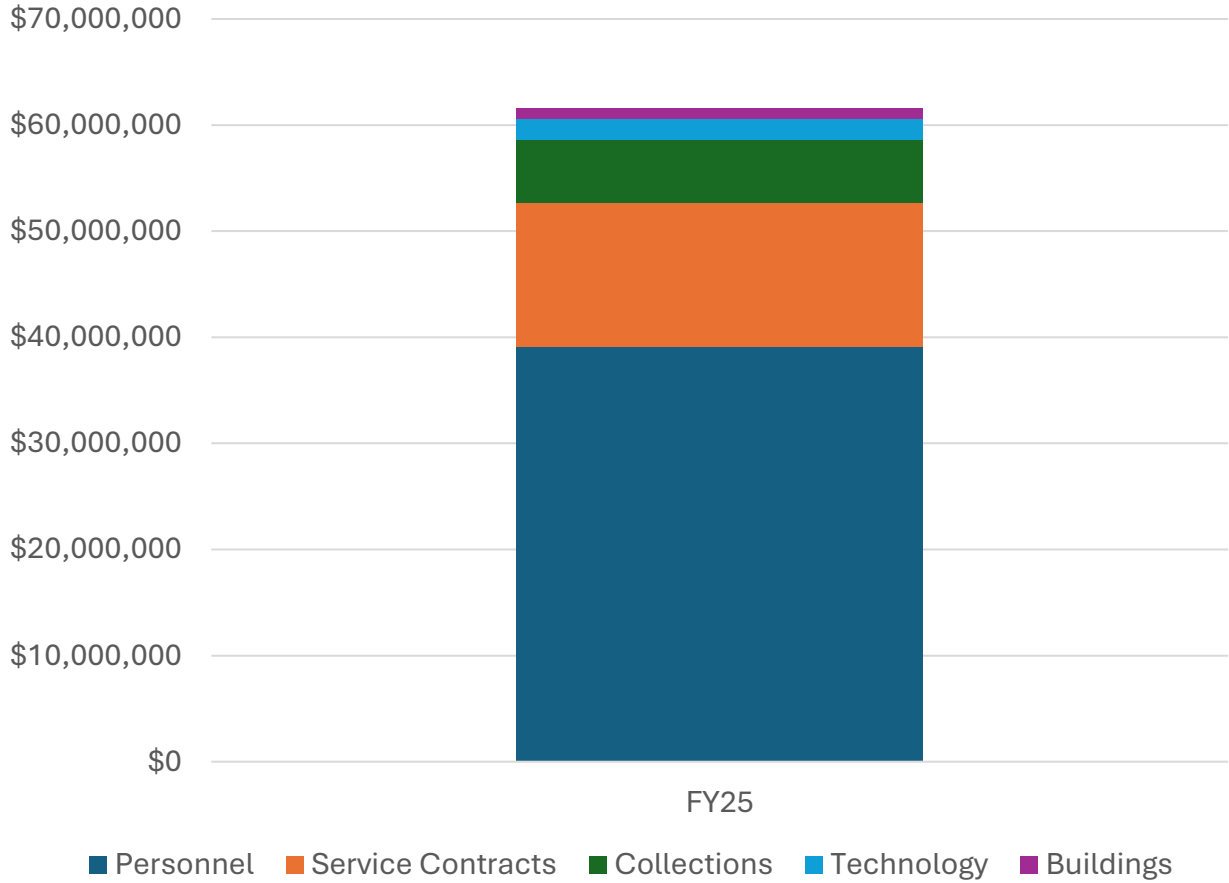


Budget History

FUNDING SOURCE	FY08	FY19	FY23	FY24 <i>(appropriated)</i>	FY25 <i>(budgeted)</i>
City	29,600,670	38,663,860	43,961,569	48,379,139	49,834,817
State++	9,183,163	2,706,384	4,836,039	5,343,640	6,259,859
BPL Fund	Included in Philanthropy total	Included in Philanthropy total	Included in Philanthropy total	Included in Philanthropy total	1,427,116
Philanthropy	509,834	1,325,419	2,975,137	2,440,053	1,240,604
Trust Funds	2,680,481	2,088,094	2,007,503	1,279,953	1,095,245
Earned Revenue		3,351,874	6,219,405	1,752,650	2,479,962
TOTAL	41,974,148	48,135,630	59,999,653	59,195,435	62,337,603

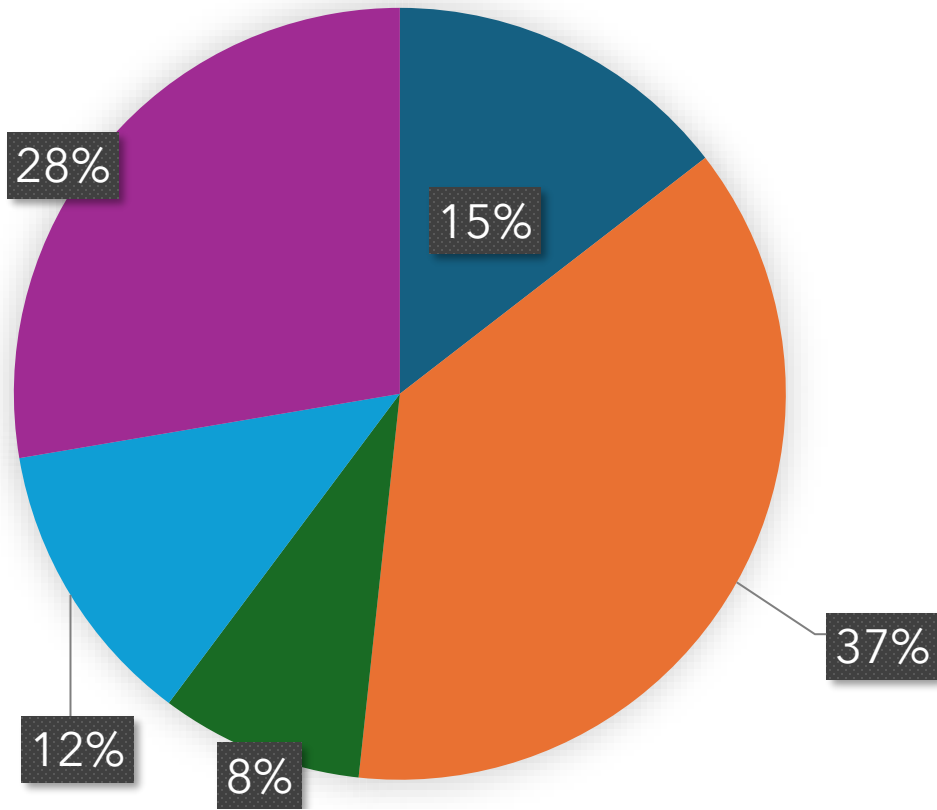
- Please note: BPL Fund and Philanthropy lines show budgeted expenditures, not total funds raised

FY25 Total Expenditures



FY25 Personnel Expenditures

~64% of annual budget



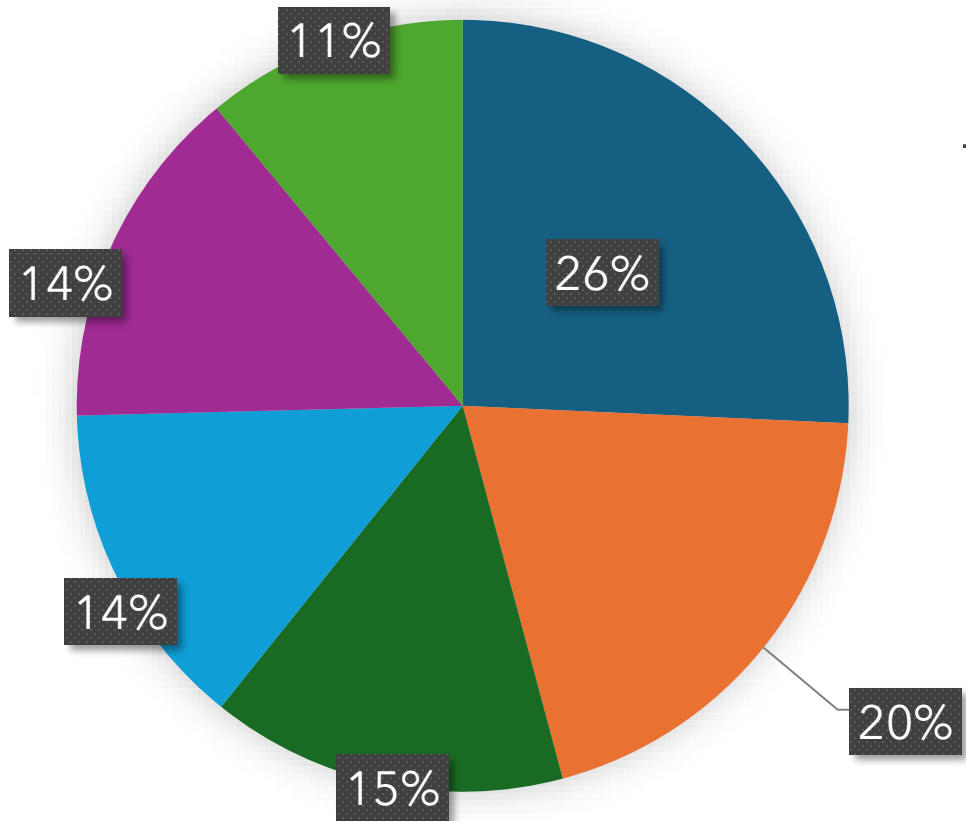
Personnel Organization

- Library Administration
- Neighborhood Services
- Research & Special Collections
- Library Operations
- Library Services



Trust Fund Allocations

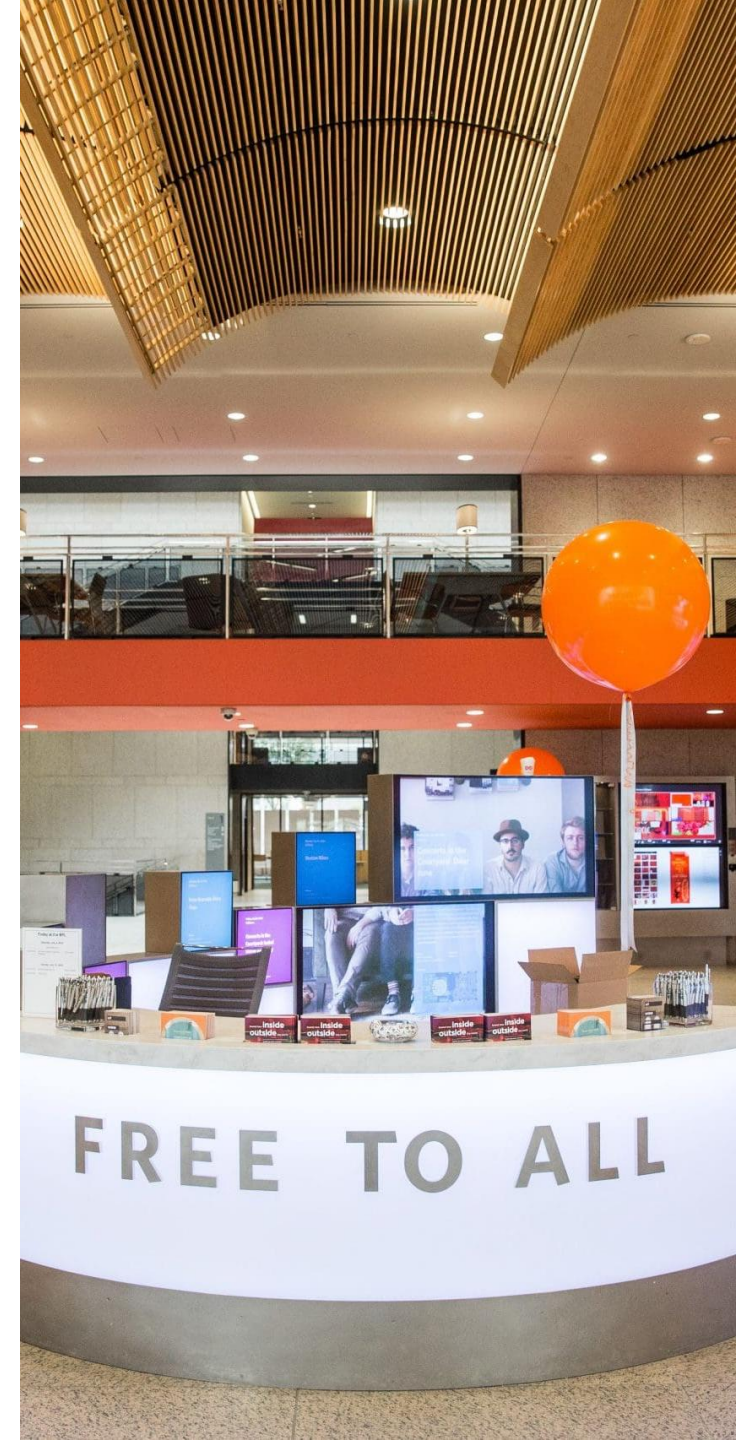
FY25 Distribution: \$3.5M



Trust Fund Restrictions

- General Collections
- Special Collections
- Preservation
- KBLIC
- Other
- Unrestricted

- Please note: Other includes programming, building maintenance, staff support, etc.



Potential Funding Gaps

- Book Budget, *State Aid Requirement*
- Deferred Building Maintenance
- Digital Storage
- Furniture Replacement Strategy
- Operating Needs for Complex Systems
- Overtime Challenges
- Strategic Plan Recommendations
- *Immediate Situational Response



FY26 City Operating Budget

Maintenance Budget Request Submitted on January 13th

- 3.4% increase (primarily due to salary increases)

	FY25 appropriated	FY26 submitted
City Operating	\$49,834,817	\$51,531,189

Investment Proposal Areas of Need:



FACILITIES



MATERIALS



STAFF

**Strategic Plan
Organizational Readiness:**

Resource Development
& Capacity Building

Recent History

City of Boston Operating Budget Investments

FY23 - 6 positions

- Cybersecurity
- Branch Staff x5

FY24 - 16 positions

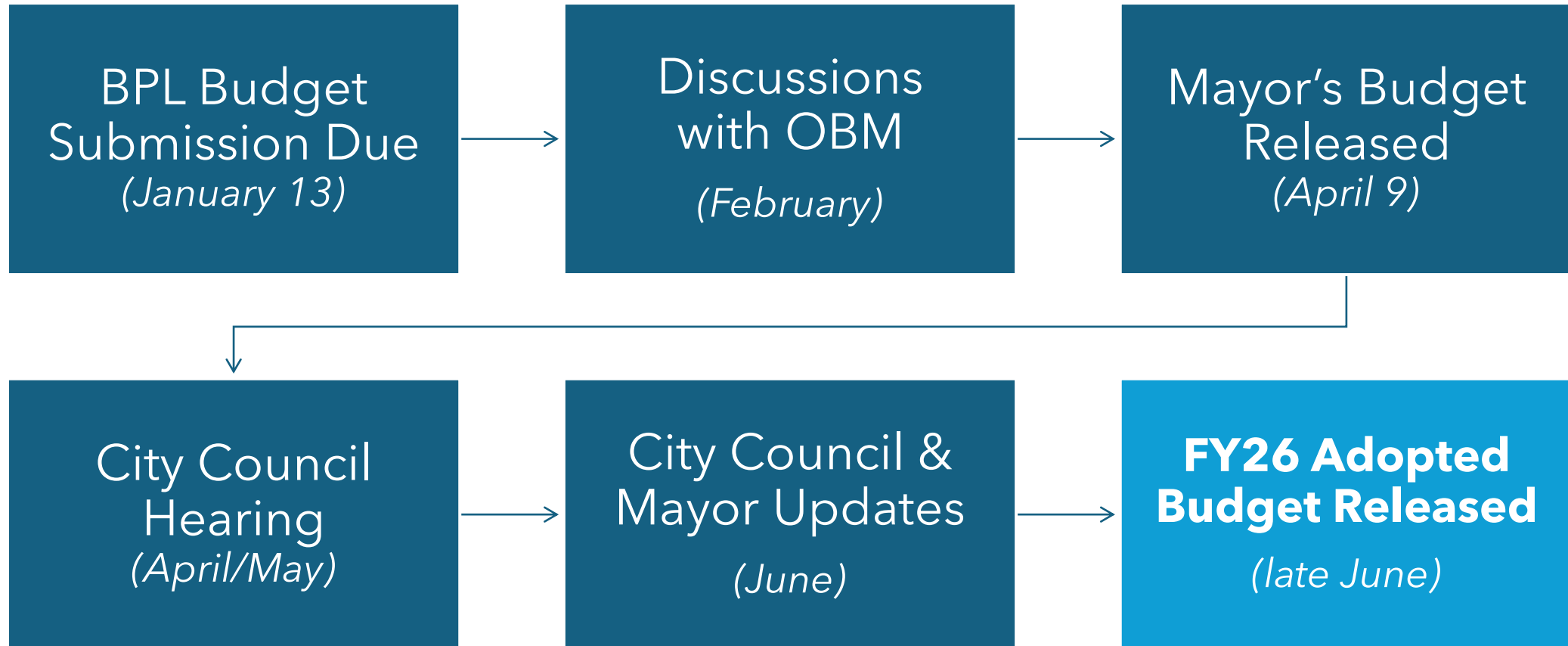
- HR
- Facilities
- Social Worker
- ESL x3
- Branch Staff x10

FY25 - 1 position

- Youth Services
- Security (\$175k)
- COBAC (\$80k)
- Branch HVAC (\$200k)
- Kiosks (\$1.3M)

FY26 City Operating Budget

Anticipated Timeline



Mayor's Recommended FY26-FY29 Capital Budget

Project	
Central Library Façade Study and Repairs	\$400,000
Central Library: McKim Master Plan	\$50,000,000
Chinatown Branch Library	\$22,000,000
Codman Square Branch Library	\$26,300,000
Connolly Branch Library	\$575,000
Egleston Square Branch Library	\$31,510,000
Fields Corner Branch Library	\$30,900,000
Hyde Park Branch Library	\$500,000
North End Branch Library	\$1,475,000
Research Collections Preservation + Storage Plan	\$300,000
South Boston Branch Library Study	\$250,000
South End Branch Library	\$2,500,000
Uphams Corner Branch Library	\$22,000,000
West End Branch Library	\$22,000,000

**Total Recommended
Capital for FY26-FY29:**
\$210,710,000



By the Numbers

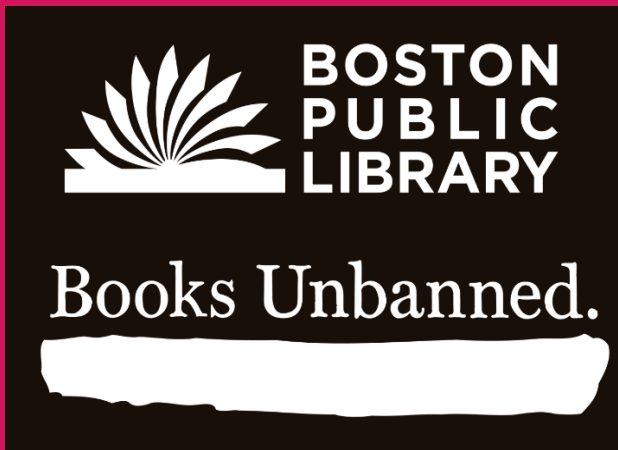
- Five Years
- \$35 million+ Raised
- 15-strong Board
- 9 Fund Staff Members
- 110 Emerging Leaders



Strategic Plan Alignment

Activating Democracy

ROLE: LIFE LONG LEARNING & RESEARCH PARTNER



- WORKFORCE PROGRAMMING
- ENGLISH FOR SPEAKERS OF OTHER LANGUAGES
- BOSTON COMMUNITY HISTORY PROJECT

Unlocking Opportunity

ROLE: TRUSTED RESOURCE AND COMMUNITY ENGAGER

- NEW RESIDENCIES:
 - Chef + Entrepreneur in Residence
- SOCIAL SERVICES
- CATALYST MINI GRANTS



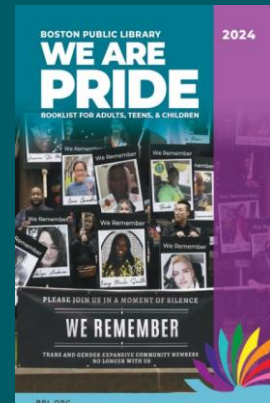
Sharing Treasures

ROLE: WELCOMING DESTINATION

- THE FOUNDING RESEARCH COLLECTION



- EXPANDING LGBTQIA+ COLLECTIONS & PROGRAMMING



Activating Democracy

ENGLISH FOR SPEAKERS OF OTHER LANGUAGES



Classes that provide
literacy for economic
and social
empowerment

In 2024 **2000+**
classes

Total attendance
15,000+

Rising demand for
classes

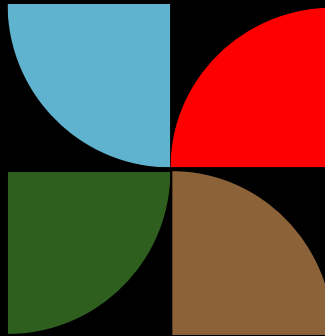


Activating Democracy



- Supporting the rights of teens and young adults nationwide to read what they like -- without censorship.
- Young adults 13 - 26 can access frequently challenged and banned eBooks and eAudiobooks
- To date: **8,579** card holders from all 50 states including Puerto Rico, Guam and American Samoa; **15,910** check outs Top states: **California, Texas, & Florida.**
- From a Texas participant:

"Being in Texas means that my options for reading are under fire – having access to the Boston library's collections means I never have to have my horizons narrowed by my home state!"





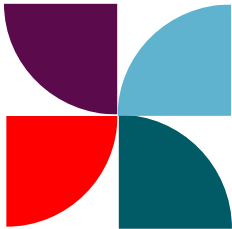
Unlocking Opportunity

NEW RESIDENCIES: CHEF + ENTREPRENEUR



ENTREPRENEUR-IN-RESIDENCE

- Milestone 3rd year
- Local successful entrepreneurs with lived experience managing disparities
- Based in KBLIC, EIR's are available for one-on-one mentoring appointments, hackathons, workshops, and demonstrations



CHEF-IN-RESIDENCE

- BPL's inaugural chef in residence is a local, experienced chef with a history of community involvement, funded by the PDB Foundation
- Based in the Roxbury branch, the Chef-in-Residence will expand programming and reach

UNLOCKING OPPORTUNITY Social Services



- Continued expansion of Social Services at BPL through philanthropic investment
- Alignment under the Health and Human Services Cabinet
- Demand is outgrowing capacity

Unlocking Opportunity



WORKFORCE + CAREER COUNSELORS

- Building on BPL's 100-year history of preparing people for the job market
- Building + creating **new partnerships** across the system and the City
- Today: full career and workforce counseling services at **four sites**
- Expanding workforce services for **young adults funded through a major grant from State Street Foundation**





Unlocking Opportunity

Branching Out Mini Catalyst Grants



- Over the past two years, **\$138,000** in funding has supported **70 projects** across all **25 branches**, enabling creative initiatives to engage patrons within their communities.



- Funds support programs that celebrate cultural heritage, foster intergenerational connections, and engage teens



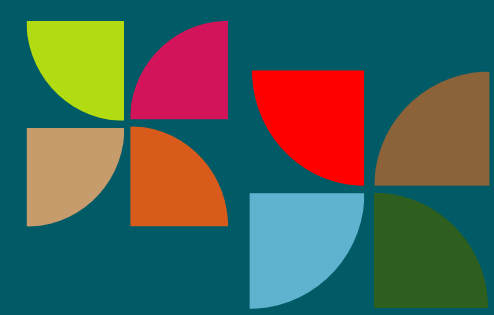


SHARING TREASURES

THE FOUNDING RESEARCH COLLECTION

- Thanks to support from an anonymous donor BPL's Founding Research Collection is fully accessible to the public for the **first time in the digital era.**
- Cleaning, cataloguing, and preserving **400,000 volumes** spanning **five centuries**, but only catalogued on physical cards.
- **Very first volumes** collected by the BPL, integral to our holdings since 1850s.





SHARING
TREASURES

THE LEVENTHAL
MAP + EDUCATION
CENTER



STRONG PARTNERSHIP SUPPORT
BETWEEN FUND AND LMEC

Sharing Treasures

Expanding LGBTQIA+ Collections & Programming

\$1m bequest from the late Howard Cooper

Cooper grew up in in Dorchester; frequent visitor to Central as a teen in the 1950s.

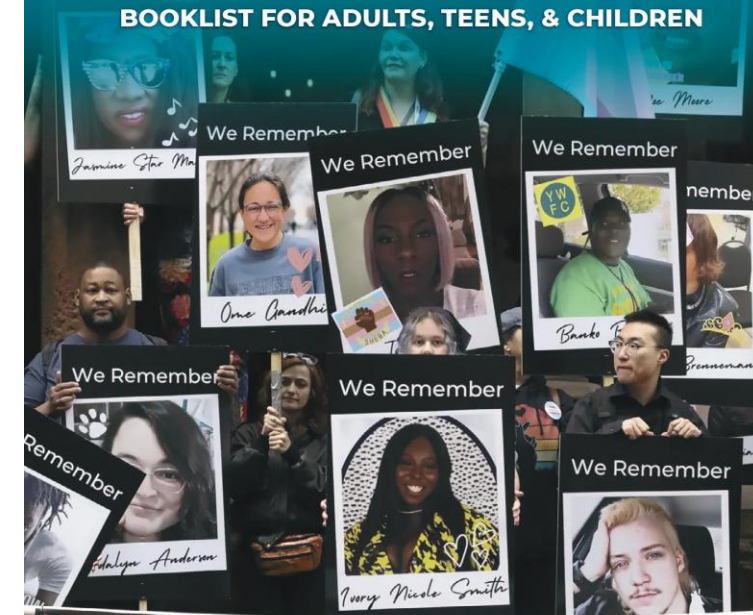
Funds will support:

- expanding LGBTQ+ circulating collection
- researcher to review historic collections for LGBTQ+ materials
- LGBTQ+ intern to become part of the Boston Community History Project.
- *The Howard Cooper LGBTQ+ Endowment Fund*

BOSTON PUBLIC LIBRARY

WE ARE PRIDE

BOOKLIST FOR ADULTS, TEENS, & CHILDREN



PLEASE JOIN US IN A MOMENT OF SILENCE

WE REMEMBER

TRANS AND GENDER EXPANSIVE COMMUNITY MEMBERS
NO LONGER WITH US

BPL.ORG

2024





What's Next

- Two-year, \$5 million fundraising initiative. Bridge to McKim Renovation, SPECIAL CONNECTIONS
- Activate and Engage thousands of patrons and visitors through a breadth of dynamic and engaging programs
- Focus on feasibility, first endowed role - Chief of Creative Engagement, and planning for future use of McKim spaces

Strategic Roles

A Bold Path Forward. Our vision demands transformation. We will revolutionize how we serve our communities by focusing on four powerful roles:

Community Engager

Expanding the reach of the library beyond its physical walls so we can meet and engage communities where they are.

Life-long Learning and Research Partner

Empowering curiosity and a love of reading, discovery, and scholarly exploration for all.



Welcoming Destination

Creating active, inclusive third spaces where every person can chart their own path.

Trusted Resource

Connecting all people to reliable information and services that meet their needs and enrich their lives.

Life-Long Learning & Research Partner

Ignite Young Minds

Elevate BPL's role as an extraordinary hub of discovery, **igniting the curiosity of young children** and their families as they learn and grow together.

Advance Youth Opportunities

Launch the next generation toward excellence, **empowering teens and young adults** with innovative tools and opportunities to shape their own futures and thrive during their transition to adulthood.

Support Lifelong Growth

Champion adults' aspirations for personal success by becoming their life-long learning partner, fostering meaningful connections to their passions, their communities, and to each other.

Preserve and Share our Heritage & History

Pioneer innovative approaches to serve patrons from Boston, the Commonwealth, and beyond, by leveraging our collections, services, and programs to **closely connect communities to their past, document the present, and preserve these stories for the future.**

Welcoming Destination

Create Inclusive Spaces

Ensure that **every location of the library is a place of belonging**, a third space, where all community members feel welcome, safe, included, and inspired to discover, create, connect, and celebrate their unique identities.

Embrace Diversity

Dramatically expand **our offerings for multiple languages, accessibility, and support for all**, to create vibrant crossroads where diverse communities find their voices amplified and celebrated.

Reimagine McKim

Renovate and transform the historic McKim Building into a vibrant, exciting library space that preserves and builds on its unique history while honoring its past, meeting the present, and celebrating the future.

Build Sustainable Communities

Create **future-ready spaces** that adapt with and support our evolving communities by continuing our visionary transformation of BPL's physical locations through thoughtful investment and innovative design.

Trusted Resource

Deliver Reliable Information

Champion **the pursuit of truth and knowledge** by setting the standard for information access, positioning the BPL as a beacon of accuracy and intellectual freedom in the digital age.

Connecting to Human Services

Pioneer an **effective partnership model of integrated community support**, connecting social and human services in the City of Boston with those who need them most.

Empower Digital Access

Advance **creative initiatives to shrink the digital divide**, ensuring all our patrons have the digital literacy skills, connectivity and tools they need to embrace new technologies and thrive in an increasingly connected world.

Community Engager

Center Community Needs and Input

Revolutionize how we serve, engage, and connect to our neighborhoods, prioritizing **community-centered, data-informed outreach, programs, and services** at our branches, enabling BPL to be in the community, working for the community, and informed by the community.

Amplify Community Voices

Investigate, uncover and amplify the untold stories and history of Boston and the Commonwealth through our collections, programs, and services, ensuring every community's narrative becomes an integral part of Boston's collective identity.

Foster Civic Participation

Launch **an innovative civic engagement program to bring people together** and transform community members into active architects of, and participants in, Boston's civic life and future.

Expand Digital Reach

Pioneer a true **'Library without Walls'** by **enhancing the digital experience and expanding awareness** of BPL's expansive online collections - setting new standards for accessibility, engagement, and use.

Activating the Strategic Plan

OUR STRATEGIC GOALS (15)

ORGANIZATIONAL READINESS

This transformation comes from within.

We are investing in our greatest asset – our people – through a workplace culture that champions creativity, growth, and well-being.

The nature of library work has shifted; staff are being challenged in new ways to help patrons solve issues that, until now, were outside the scope of library work. Our commitment is to become an inclusive organization, and our work to address systemic inequities is ongoing.

To that end, we are embedding equity and inclusion principles into every aspect of our work. We are building new capabilities in technology, community engagement, and cross-system collaboration. And we are examining how to shift our structures and strategies to use our resources most wisely.

By scaling our organizational capacity, BPL will be positioned to achieve more ambitious initiatives and explore new opportunities. These internal priorities must be addressed alongside the implementation of external-facing initiatives.



SP: ITEMIZATION

- 4 Strategic Roles
 - 15 Public Goals
 - 5 Organizational Priority Areas
 - 86 Initiatives
-
- = 110 Items to plan, track and measure, over a 5 year period

NEXT STEPS (JAN-JUNE 2025)

- Socialization
 - Publication & Printing!
 - BPL Fund State of the Library Preview
 - All Staff Webinar (Feb)
 - Round Tables & Roadshow (staff/user community/donor community)
 - **Deliverable: Understanding, Buy-in, Adoption**
- Implementation Planning
 - Project Management Capacity (onboarding)
 - Leadership/Staff Group on review & prioritization
 - Initial Capacity/Funding Needs
 - Communications/Marketing Recommendations
 - **Deliverable: Roadmap for the next 5 years**

OPERATIONAL UPDATES

- Staffing
 - Today: 495 Employees (F/T & P/T) (inc 41 Library aides)
 - 49 Active F/T Vacancies with 9 External Pre-onboarding
 - FY25 Personnel Budget: 540
 - Plus some part time and planned positions (5-10) (externally funded)
 - A Fully Budgeted and Staffed Target: 565 (less regular turnover)

OPERATIONAL UPDATES

- Facilities/Critical Repair Work
 - McKim Elevator and Fire Panel Replacement Timing
 - MEP: Northend, Connolly, Hyde Park, Codman, Boylston Street Bldg
 - Central Loading Dock (final phase)

MA FY26

BPL FUNDING LINES:

9401 - LFC

9501 - AID (10%)

9506 - MBLN+

FY2026 MBLC Budget Request

Line Item Number and Name	FY2024	FY2025	Proposed Increase	FY2026 Request
9101 Board of Library Commissioners	\$1,904,745	\$2,074,268	\$414,854	\$2,489,122
9401 Regional Libraries Local Aid	\$16,717,600	\$19,000,000	\$950,000	\$19,950,000
9402 Talking Book Program Worcester	\$678,040	\$711,942	\$35,597	\$747,539
9406 Talking Book Program (Perkins) Watertown	\$3,860,420	\$4,053,441	\$202,672	\$4,256,113
9501 Public Libraries Local Aid	\$17,600,000	\$20,000,000	\$2,000,000	\$22,000,000
9506 Technology & Resource Sharing	\$6,167,581	\$6,169,480	\$308,474	\$6,477,954
9508 Center for the Book	\$420,000	\$420,000	\$130,000	\$550,000
TOTALS	\$47,348,386	\$52,429,131	\$4,041,597	\$56,470,728