

# **BOSTON CITY COUNCIL** *Ways and Means Hearing*

## **BOSTON PUBLIC LIBRARY**

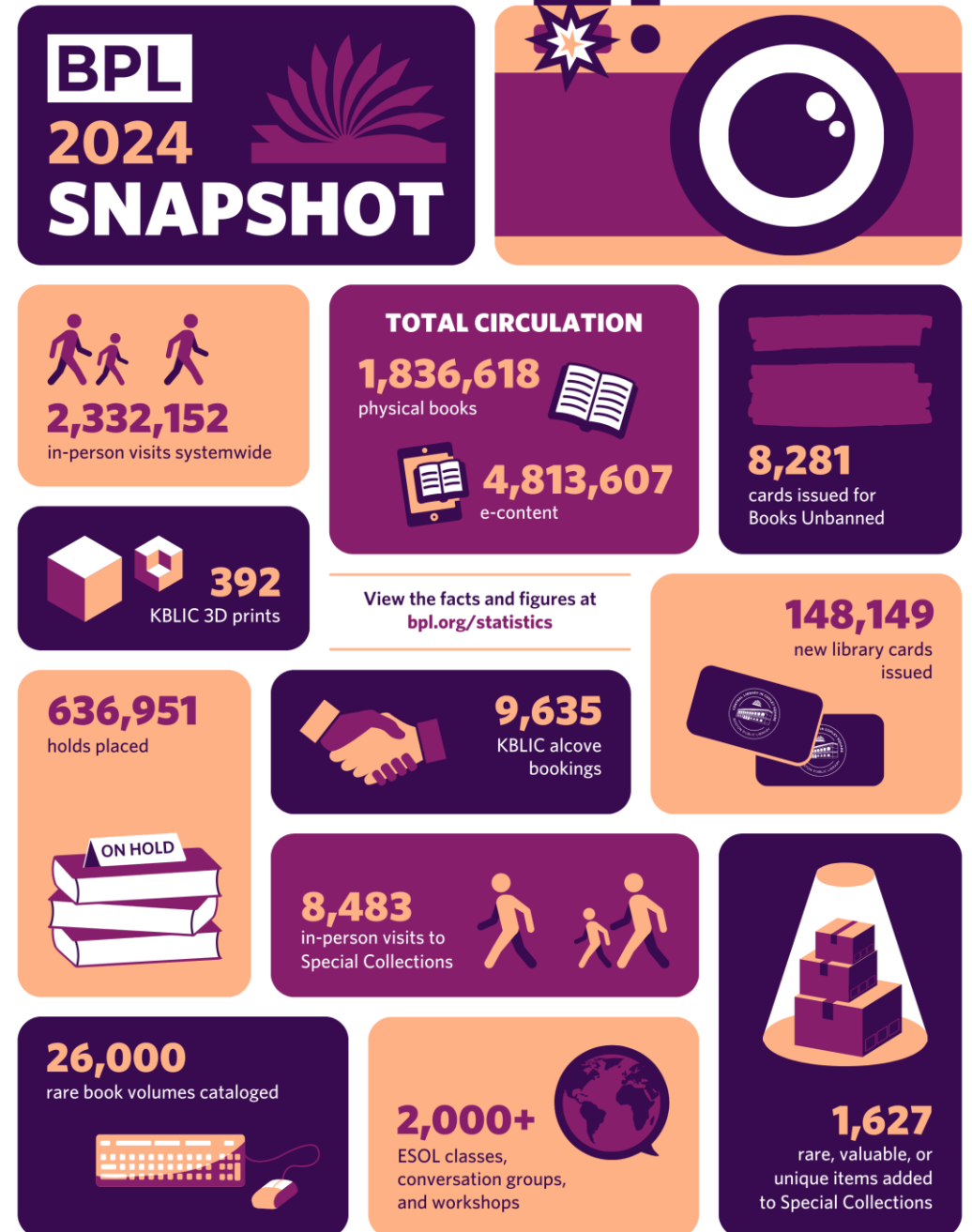
**FY25-FY26**

## **Accomplishments & Goals Summary**

## Introduction

# BPL BY THE NUMBERS

*(most recent full-year data)*



# BPL'S NEW STRATEGIC ROLES

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## Community Engager

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

## Life-Long Learning & Research Partner

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

## Welcoming Destination

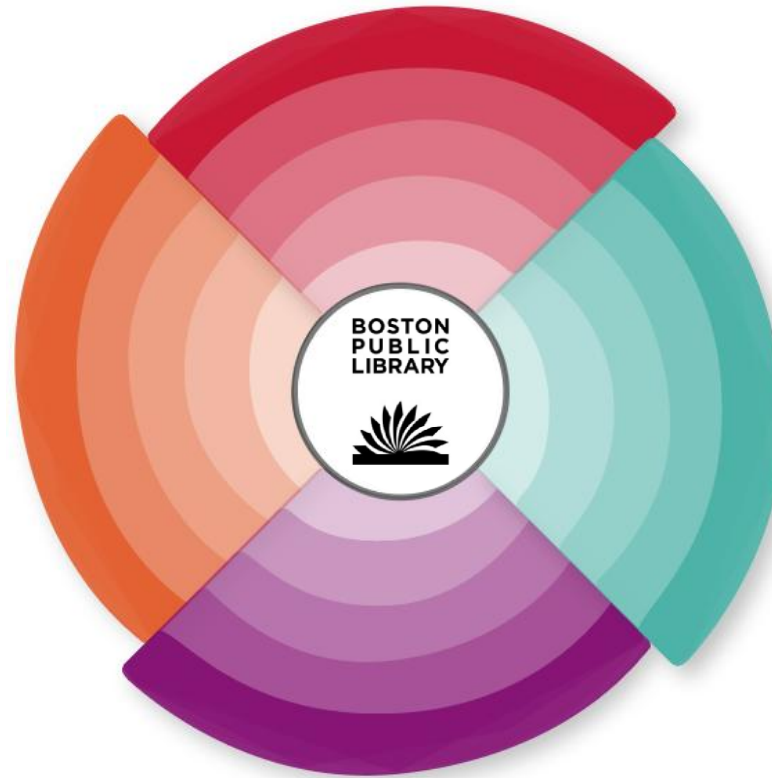
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*Creating active, inclusive third spaces where every person can chart their own path.*

## Trusted Resource

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



# LIFE-LONG LEARNING & RESEARCH PARTNER I

## ACCOMPLISHMENTS

## GOALS

**172,899** children and caregivers attended **early literacy programs**.

**150,000 items** from the Jordan Collection of classic children's literature newly available to the public

**Summer programming** served **5,627** children and teens

New **Chief of Youth and Family Engagement**

176 teens **recorded original music** using our digital audio workstations.

Served **145 incarcerated teens** with creative tech workshops.

Launch "**Hello Hatchlings**" to reach **six thousand new families**.

Launch "**1,000 Stories Before Kindergarten**"

Expand the **Teen Volunteer Program**

**Expand and enhance academic support services** for teens.



- ➔ **Ignite Young Minds**
- ➔ **Advance Youth Opportunities**

## LIFE-LONG LEARNING & RESEARCH PARTNER II

- ➔ Support Lifelong Growth
- ➔ Preserve & Share Heritage & History



## ACCOMPLISHMENTS

First ever **Adult Online High School Graduation** ceremony & reception.

**Record-setting 15,000 participants** in **ESOL** classes and conversation groups.

**Job Search Fundamentals** programming served **231 patrons**.

**Entrepreneur in Residence** hosted more than 80 in-person appointments.

Digitized significant collections documenting **African American history and Black community life**

**Lectures and classes for 1200 visitors:**  
Boston's music scene, forensic genealogy, abolition, and climate change.

## GOALS

Increase **workforce education** programming, particularly for English language learners.

**One-on-one financial coaching sessions** with certified professionals.

First major exhibition in almost a decade: **Unfinished (R)evolution: Boston's Legacy of Art and Activism** as part of **Boston250**

Series of **Boston250** open houses showcasing **Declaration of Independence** and key revolutionary objects from BPL's collections

## WELCOMING DESTINATION I

- ➔ Create Inclusive Spaces
- ➔ Embrace Diversity



## ACCOMPLISHMENTS

Launched **Disability and Accessibility Working Group**

Launched **Bloomberg Connects** website and app: **screen reader accessible** and can be translated into 40+ languages.

Completed system-wide audits and certifications for **Age Strong branches**

Permanent branch spaces now open **9-5** on **Saturdays**.

8 branches participated in the City's **Outdoor Cool Spaces** program

## GOALS

Re-imagine the **Central Library tour program** to be more inclusive and modern

Increase **seating capacity** at the Central Library to meet patron needs.

Increase bandwidth, replace network firewalls, and replace Wi-Fi access points across all locations to **ensure stable, secure, high-speed access**

**Listening sessions** with the **disability community** to better serve the needs of all visitors.



## WELCOMING DESTINATION II

- ➔ Re-Imagine McKim
- ➔ Build Sustainable Communities



## ACCOMPLISHMENTS

**New pop up arts programs** in McKim's Wiggin Gallery reinvigorated underutilized spaces

Engaged hundreds of Boston area schoolkids with live “**Library Lion**” performances in historic McKim building

Completed design and closed **Fields Corner Branch** for construction of a new building with 40% more square footage.

**South End** and **Egleston designs** advanced to the construction document phase.

Continued to partner with City to co-locate **Chinatown's** first full size branch in 50 years with **110 affordable housing units**.

## GOALS

Use **Bridge to McKim** funding to prepare for design with institutional archiving, documentary photography, and 3D modeling

New **Uphams Corner** and **West End branches** co-locate new branches with affordable housing

**Egleston Branch** rebuild will increase the branch size along with large outdoor reading space, outdoor classroom, and teaching garden.

**South End Branch** rebuild will increase the size of the branch by 70% to meet the needs of a modern library in an urban neighborhood.

## TRUSTED RESOURCE

- ➔ Deliver Reliable Information
- ➔ Empower Digital Access
- ➔ Connect to Human Services



## ACCOMPLISHMENTS

Checked out more than **1,300 eBooks** to young people through the **Books Unbanned** nationwide initiative.

Introduced new **media and information literacy offerings**

Started **Coffee and Conversation**; **92 people** have built relationships and social connections

**Community Support Team** assisted **28 patrons** per month with resources for housing, public benefits, employment, legal aid, and food access.

Checked out more than **500 Chromebook Connectivity Kits** an – increase of **178 percent**

## GOALS

Continue participation in **Books Unbanned**, supporting the **Right to Read** for all individuals.

Continue offering **Intellectual Freedom training** to all BPL staff.

Increase patron access to **legal resources** and law librarianship

**Improve digital reading options** while managing growing digital material costs

Comprehensive **Community Learning user study** to optimize digital resources

Expand **digital instruction** to highlight topics such as emerging technologies, online safety, and AI.



# COMMUNITY ENGAGER I

## ACCOMPLISHMENTS

## GOALS

First-ever **Chef in Residence** offered 20 programs based on a new food curriculum reflective of Roxbury's myriad cultures

**Community Learning** team served **514 patrons** with 28 programs, outreach activities, class visits, and project consultations

**Piloted a Mobile Memory Lab**, funded by MONUM; ran two community scanning days, with plans for more

Build on **Fellowes Athenaeum** at Roxbury; integrating programming and directly dedicating funds to neighborhood programs.

**Partner with local organizations** who can provide complementary services alongside BPL programming.

**Research financial literacy needs** by demographic and neighborhood to improve program offerings.

Plan and implement **additional Community History programming**, including scanning days, Roxbury Art Walk, Sidewalk Stories Listening Party

- ➔ Center Community Needs + Input
- ➔ Amplify Community Voices



## COMMUNITY ENGAGER II

- ➔ Foster Civic Participation
- ➔ Expand Digital Reach



## ACCOMPLISHMENTS

Connected patrons to **reliable election information resources**, including voter registration drive at Central and ESOL civics education walking tour

Piloted new curriculum focusing on the **intersection of news literacy and AI**.

Facilitated **community conversations** focused on current events and news.

**Digitized and made accessible 258,440 items** including newspapers and other items from rare books, arts, and photography collections.

Expanded **digitization of non-English materials**.

## GOALS

Define **civic engagement at BPL** and benchmark current efforts.

**Develop and update curriculum** focusing on news and media literacy topics in the evolving news ecosystem.

Expand **Living Room Conversations** to **facilitate safe and engaging discussions** about timely civic conversations.

Identify **technical barriers, language challenges, and accessibility gaps** faced by patrons

**FY25  
Appropriations**

*vs*

**FY26  
Recommended**

*(most recent full-year data)*

Funding Source	FY25 Appropriation	FY26 Recommended
City Budget	49,882,808	49,335,895
External Funding	12,130,776	11,905,068 *
Total	\$62,013,584	\$61,240,963

Total Recommended Capital for FY26-FY30:

\$283,180,400 *(31% increase)*

*\* Projection, below expected final numbers*



# THANK YOU!