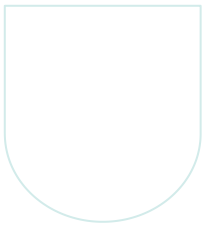


BOSTON CITY COUNCIL
Ways and Means Hearing

**BOSTON
PUBLIC LIBRARY**

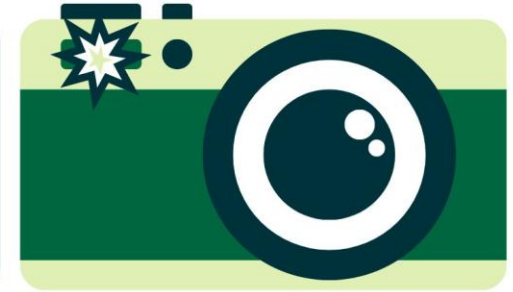
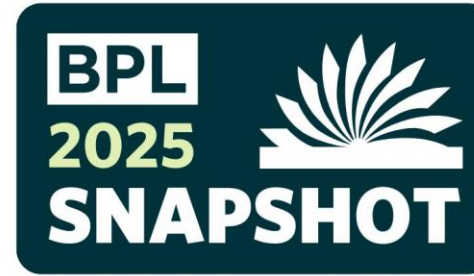
FY26-FY27

**Accomplishments
& Goals Summary**



BPL BY THE NUMBERS

Calendar 2025
Most recent full-year data



View the facts and figures at
bpl.org/statistics



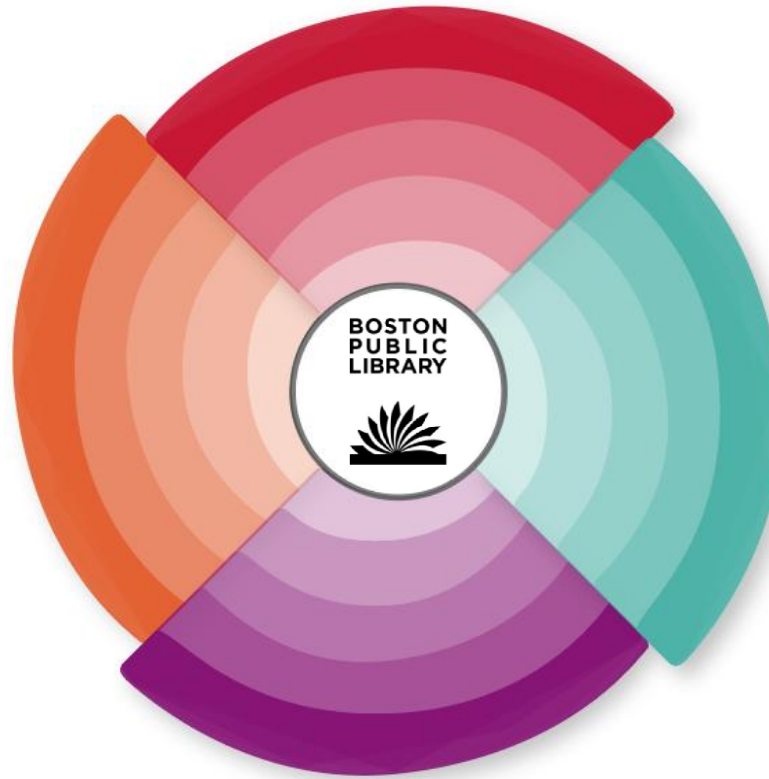
OUR STRATEGIC ROLES

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 & 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.

Ignite Young Minds

Created BPL's first-ever **all-ages summer reading program**. Families were able to participate together for the first time.

Accepted into the first library cohort of **LEGO Group's Playful Library Network**

Worked closely with Office of Early Childhood on City's **Boston Reads** program, opening the door to closer collaboration with other City agencies with whom BPL had not previously partnered.

Through LEGO Group's Playful Library Network, Youth Services librarians will collaborate with colleagues worldwide to **develop playful programs** and curricula to enhance services.

Launch the **Hello Hatchlings** program to support new caregivers with early literacy resources, with a goal of reaching six thousand families

Launch "**1,000 Stories Before Kindergarten**" to boost caregiver engagement and better support early literacy by providing professional development for children's librarians

Advance Youth Opportunities

Developed **new onboarding process for Youth Service librarians**, to support new librarians' professional growth, training, and mentorship

All Children's Librarians engaged in training focused on incorporating **early literacy practices** into their storytimes, including sharing early literacy information with parents and caregivers

Expand the **Teen Volunteer Program** to include career pathways by offering increased opportunities for career exploration and hands-on learning opportunities

Recruit **ESOL volunteers** who can support **students with learning challenges or impairments** and organize training materials to support these students

Life-Long Learning & Research Partner

Strategic Initiatives

ACCOMPLISHMENTS

GOALS



Life-Long Learning & Research Partner

Strategic Initiatives

ACCOMPLISHMENTS

Support Lifelong Growth

Hired grant-funded **ESOL/workforce specialist** to increase workforce education programming for ELL patrons

CFA Society of Boston offering **one on one financial coaching** sessions

Successfully refocused work to manage unexpected and unprecedented **shifts in the library vendor market**

Preserve & Share our Heritage & History

Opened first major exhibition in almost a decade: ***Revolution! 250 Years of Art and Activism in Boston***; more than **95,000 visitors**

Participate in **Boston 250** programming efforts to showcase Boston in the 250th anniversary of the American Revolution

Showcasing BPL's **eight** copies of the **Declaration of Independence**

GOALS

Comprehensive **collection maintenance plan**

Dedicated workforce support to ESL students, with support from new staff person

Recruit partners to offer **workshops** about **changes to US immigration policy**

Recruit **college and university** volunteer tutors for **adult basic education and literacy instruction**

Launch spring and summer **programs to augment Declarations exhibition.**

Revolutionary Ideas programming will run for all of calendar year 2026

Co-develop **“Teaching Boston” pilot**: Boston history and geography themes in partnership with Leventhal Map & Education Center.



Welcoming Destination

Strategic Initiatives

ACCOMPLISHMENTS

Create Inclusive Spaces

Completed **strategic review of Central Library tour program**

“Ask Me” shifts; volunteers stationed in high traffic locations to engage visitors

Increased bandwidth, replaced network firewalls, and replaced WiFi access points across the system

Embrace Diversity

Created **accessibility checklist** of improvements needed at all BPL locations

Conducted series **of listening sessions with disability community**; hosted Disability Commission listening tours in multiple locations

GOALS

Implement recommendations to identify **additional seating opportunities** in the Central Library

Using data from pilot program, offer more **frequent and accessible tours** of Central to more patrons.

Roll out revised, **new interpretive signage** that more directly engages with the history of the McKim builds as library space.

Prioritize and identify funding **for accessibility improvements**

Finalize three-year plan to outline **phased implementation of accessibility devices, equipment, building features, assistive technology**



Welcoming Destination

Strategic Initiatives

ACCOMPLISHMENTS

Reimagine McKim

Used **Bridge to McKim grant funding** to begin preparations for renovation:

Institutional Archivist to organize historic records and plans related to the library's buildings and construction projects.

Launched **Central Library User Experience Study** to identify ways to address needs of operations, service, space, and collection management.

GOALS

Continue building readiness activities including **photography and 3D modeling** initiatives

Incorporate findings of Central Library User Experience Study with technical assessments to begin **developing the vision for the Master Plan Update**.

Build Sustainable Communities

Construction underway on new **Fields Corner Branch**, the first branch built to the City's Fossil Fuel Free standard

Construction started on first full size branch in **Chinatown** in more than 50 years. The branch is part of a larger housing development, a first in BPL history.



Trusted Resource

Strategic Initiatives

ACCOMPLISHMENTS

Continued participation in **Books Unbanned**, with more than 24,500 signups and 102,000 items borrowed

Continued to offer **Intellectual Freedom training** to all BPL staff

Recast Browse | Borrow | Board as **Why Wait?**, providing magazines, newspapers, games and more.

Empower Digital Access

Expanded **scope of digital instruction** to highlight high interest topics, online safety, and AI

Launched **Palace app** to expand digital offerings

Improved digital reading options while managing the growing costs of digital materials

Completed **Community Learning user study** to optimize digital resources for patrons

GOALS

Expand Books Unbanned, **ensuring the right to read**, to a full collection with no holds

Ensure that Annual Book List Working Groups **complete intellectual freedom training and apply EDI best practices**

Develop **new media literacy workshop** about S.I.F.T. -- a new framework to evaluate digital information

Develop **vendor neutral in-app experience** for reading and listening to digital books

Build out **curation and discovery opportunities** showcasing print and digital collections.

Simplify descriptions of community learning programs to make them **more accessible** to less **digitally literate patrons**



Connecting to Human Services

Trusted Resource

Strategic Initiatives

ACCOMPLISHMENTS

Secured partnership with **Trial Court Law Libraries**, which enables patrons to access resources on immigration, general research, and landlord/tenant law.

Secured grant funding to **assess social service needs of housing insecure patrons**, and how the Library can serve them.

GOALS

Enhance outreach in support of our legal resources; explore creation of a physical space

Expand AI instruction for patrons new to tech; seniors; and job seekers

Pilot first **Computers4People technology literacy program**

Introduce **“Silver Chat”** to Mattapan’s “Silver Tech” classes



Center Community Needs & Input

Amplify Community Voices

Community Engager

Strategic Initiatives

ACCOMPLISHMENTS

Increased **block programming to all 25 branches**

Partnering with local organizations to provide **complementary services** alongside BPL programming

Developed additional ways to service communities while **branches are closed for renovations.**

Planned and implemented **Community History programs** including:

- Community scanning days
- Sidewalk stories listening party
- Boston Black Women Lead Wikipedia edit-a-thons
- Roxbury Art Walk
- “Finding My Neighborhood History” program in partnership with LMEC

GOALS

Expand and enhance **civics-based education for ESOL students**

Expand outreach to the **Returning Citizens** population by collaborating with **Norfolk Sheriff’s office**

Expand KBLIC workshops to better serve **Boston’s arts community**

Launch **McKim Memory Program** in Bates Hall

Strengthen collaboration among member libraries by expanding opportunities for staff to **share best practices and participate in statewide policy groups.**



Community Engager

Strategic Initiatives

ACCOMPLISHMENTS

Foster Civic Participation

Created definition for **what civic engagement will mean** for BPL

Launched **Civic Engagement Staff Interest Group**

Engaged Simmons and Brown University students to help **workshop definitions**.

Continued to develop and update **curriculum focusing on news and media literacy topics**

Expand Digital Reach

Completed **user research study** that included staff interviews, community focus groups, and one on one user interviews.

Analyzed peer library systems and UX **best practices for lower literacy and vulnerable populations**

Identified patrons' **technical barriers, language challenges, and accessibility gaps**

GOALS

Test new definition for civic engagement with patron and staff **focus groups**; strategize current and future civic engagement offerings.

Roll out **Community Agreement best practices** for public programming and staff interactions

Work with **Election Commission** to develop engagement around the midterm elections

Continue **“Unraveling the News”** conversation groups

Conduct **user study focused on core library patrons** to understand how they discover and access collections and services online.

Use findings **to inform catalog improvements and website priorities**.

Implement recommendations to **reduce barriers to web site usability**, including **plain language gaps, mobile accessibility, and registration complexity**.



Organizational Readiness

Strategic Initiatives



ACCOMPLISHMENTS

Equity, Diversity & Inclusion

- Expanded **translation and interpretation** services
- Gathered data in preparation for developing EDI 2.0 plan, in alignment with the strategic plan.
- Implemented staff suggestions for **more physical accessibility** in BPL spaces
- Began regular cadence of meetings with Disability Commission and **re-launched Accessibility Working Group**

GOALS

- Ensure front-line staff are confident using Lionbridge for **on-demand interpretation**;
- Train and support BPL's new **Language & Communication Access (LCA) Points of Contact**
- Ensure staff at locations with **assistive listening technology** are confident offering it to patrons
- Develop toolkits and best practices to support staff

Workplace Culture

- Implement recommendations from **Trauma-Informed Approaches** Committee
- Built capacity within the Social Work department** by hiring a social worker and peer navigator supervisor.
- Piloted staff **community of practice meetings** facilitated by social work interns, providing space for staff to discuss challenges of public library work

- Continue search process to hire a **Peer Navigator Supervisor**.
- Onboard new Social Worker and **create regular rotation of social work services** (drop-in hours, appointments, and Coffee program) at 3 branches.

Organizational Readiness

Strategic Initiatives



ACCOMPLISHMENTS

GOALS

Staff Development

Strengthened the Library's **onboarding process** so new staff members have a focused 12-month program of learning and development in their first year of employment

Ensure staff are fully aware of **professional development** funds available to them for higher education, certifications, and skill building.

Roll out the Day 2 model of onboarding where new employees get a **second check in moment** with HR and Leadership during the second half of their first year of employment.

Published **Orientation Tasks checklist for Managers** on HR BPL Hub Site.

Collaboration & Communication

Made overall **data collection more streamlined**, user-friendly, and accessible to all staff.

Established **transparent process for evaluating funding needs** as they relate to strategic plan and operational priorities

Developed & deployed "**SnAPIcat**" custom application, to dramatically improve efficiency of cataloging workflows.

Improve data collection by socializing new dashboards, developing patron survey templates, identifying individualized success criteria for programs and services

Review appropriate ways to ensure the **Extended Leadership budgeting process** is gathering information from all levels of staff and departments.

Capacity Building

Organizational Readiness

Strategic Initiatives

ACCOMPLISHMENTS

Develop **flexible and responsive ordering practices** to de-centralize ordering and increase ordering from one vendor across print and digital landscapes

Began phasing out paper- and e-mail based procedures. Provide clear updates and guidelines to staff using BPL's new intranet platform.

GOALS

Build appropriate capacity in **Communications** to better inform residents of critical services available at BPL

Evaluate findings from current Dolt data evaluation and implement recommendations, **reducing shipping backlogs, collection transit time, and staff touchpoints.**

Build the infrastructure needed for **long-term stewardship** of our digitized and **digital collections.**



Thank you



**BOSTON
PUBLIC
LIBRARY**
BPL.org

QUESTIONS?