

NEW UPDATE

2026-27 Louisville Metro Library Funding Priorities

The Louisville Free Public Library (LFPL) is essential to making a safer, stronger and healthier Louisville. With branches across every part of the community, it is one of the only public places where everyone, regardless of identity, can access free resources that encourage lifelong learning.

LFPL is a cornerstone of this city. Investment in the library supports the well-being of citizens, families and businesses: from young Louisvillians beginning to read, to aspiring entrepreneurs, to older adults discovering new skills and connections.



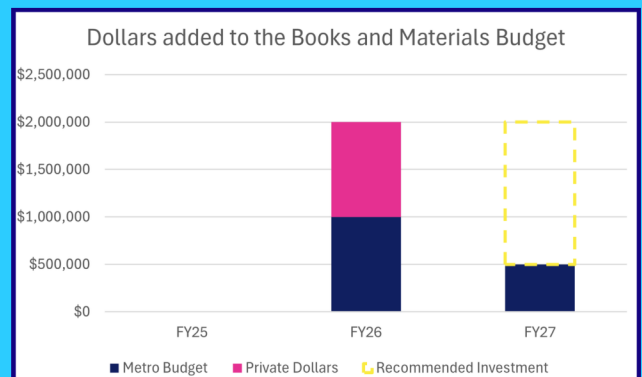
FY27 PLATFORM

\$2 million books + materials

In last year's budget, the Mayor and Metro Council supported a \$1 million increase, matched by a \$1 million one-time gift from the Library Foundation, Library Advisory Committee, and Friends of the Library. Last year's public-private partnership demonstrated what's possible, and even engaged over 100 new donors.

This funding worked to lower wait times and increase circulation. Circulation is up 3.4% from this time last year and the longest wait times have been cut almost in half (from 30 to 16 weeks for ebooks and 15 to 9 weeks for print). Average wait times are down - an average of 15 days for print and 26 days for ebooks.

MAYOR'S PROPOSED FY27 BUDGET

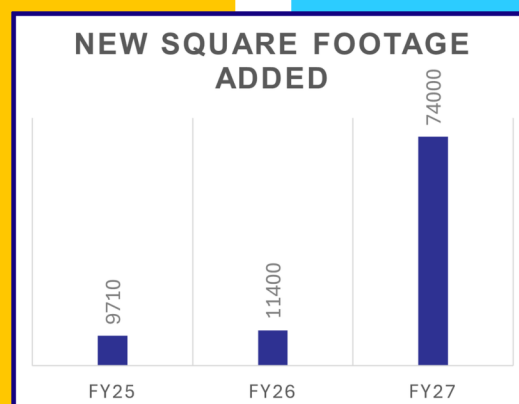


The current proposed budget sustains only \$500,000 of last year's increases in public funding, which means **we are \$1.5 million from reaching our goal of a permanent \$2 million increase.** Without sustained funding, wait times will increase again as demand outpaces supply and digital licensing costs continue to rise.

Increasing staff size to maintain and increase service

The library system has been steadily growing to keep pace with Louisville's growing population. **Louisville has made significant investments in expanding the library system:**

- **Parkland** and **Portland** reopened in 2025 (adding 20,000 sq ft)
- The upcoming **Main** renovation and new **Fern Creek** Library will add 74,000+ sq ft
- In November 2025, system-wide hours increased by 32 hours per week



Proposed budget:

- Eliminates 14 mostly part-time roles
- Adds 27 positions (20 full-time)
- **Results in a net gain of 16 full-time equivalent positions**

We are grateful to see net growth, especially in a year when the city overall reduced staffing. However, capacity still lags behind peer systems. This gap affects both core services and LFPL's ability to expand programming and partnerships.