

# Library Director Report: April 2026

Prepared by Tana Elias, May 2, 2026



## LINKcat Migration Update

After months of preparation, the planned ILS migration downtime went relatively smoothly and was completed on time. The new platform is not perfect and the change is stressful for staff who use it heavily. Staff are learning as they go, creating new workflows, sharing lessons learned with each other, and doing their best to learn the ins and outs of the new system. SCLS will continue to prioritize working with SirsiDynix to test and improve the BlueCloud interface for staff, which is a more intuitive platform but does not yet have some of the key features our library system needs in order to use it.

Long-term, this move will provide more system stability and require fewer behind-the-scenes maintenance fixes for SCLS. Short-term, it's been a hard adjustment with many workflows needing to change or be recreated in order to work for Madison Public Library and other libraries in the system. I do expect that there will be some unexpected gains and losses when it all shakes out, and we're still learning what those might be.

## Web Accessibility

Madison Public Library is on path towards greater web accessibility. The library (along with [other government entities](#) across the country) were legally required by the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) to make sure that our websites meet Level 2.1 AA compliance with the [Web Content Accessibility Guidelines \(WCAG\)](#) by April 24, 2026. This will help us be more digitally inclusive, and remove barriers to accessing online content so that we can better serve individuals with disabilities.

The project includes five websites managed by Madison Public Library:

- [madisonpubliclibrary.org](http://madisonpubliclibrary.org)
- [wisconsinbookfestival.org](http://wisconsinbookfestival.org)
- [teenbubbler.org](http://teenbubbler.org)
- [madisonlivinghistory.org](http://madisonlivinghistory.org)
- [mplteenschoice.org](http://mplteenschoice.org)

This also applies to social media content, email newsletters, Word Documents and PDFs that are shared with external partners, and audio or video content produced by the library, book festival, or Bubbler.

The marketing team for Madison Public Library has been working alongside the City of Madison since May 2025 to utilize many of their training resources and tools, as well as following their overall timeline in order to meet the April 2026 deadline. Our process began with installing automated software to identify web accessibility issues, then following up by training staff to find and fix issues on existing

public-facing websites (mitigation). Ultimately, we will be archiving content, developing policies around long-term accessibility strategies, remediating documents, and working with 3rd-party vendors to ensure we're in compliance.

*-This update provided by Liz Boyd, Marketing Manager. And in a last-minute update, the deadline was extended by the Department of Justice four days before the due date until April 26, 2027 for government entities serving populations of 50,000 or more. The compliance date for entities serving less than 50,000 was extended to April 2028. You'll notice some formatting changes in this report – those are to better meet accessibility guidelines for PDF documents.*

## SCLS Contracts

This month you'll be asked to approve our three annual contracts with South Central Library System - the Cataloging Services Agreement, the Supplemental Services Agreement, and the Statutory Resource Services Agreement. You'll see these agreements are at the same level as 2026 agreements. While we have begun examining each agreement for what is actually provided and what the true costs are, the ILS migration will change many processes related to cataloging, purchasing, and outerlibrary loan service delivery. Rather than build new contracts based on old workflow data, Shannon from SCLS and I are asking to renew the contracts at the same amounts as last year until we have a chance to build new workflows and assess new costs. Since City finance is finalizing our cost to continue process now, this allows us to move forward with our City operating budget process. Assuming approval, I will provide an update in the fall of 2025 on our contract revision process.



*1 Left: Exterior grading begins where patios will be installed on the back of the Imagination Center at Reindahl Park. | Right: Cabinets are delivered as additional interior elements continue to come together at the Imagination Center at Reindahl Park.*

## Imagination Center at Reindahl Park Update

**Staffing:** We are preparing to hire 3 Library Assistants through a competitive process, and the Library Clerk through an internal promotion process. Nearly all our managers are involved in interviews at some level this spring.

**Construction:** Over the last month, construction has focused on interior finishes, building systems, and early exterior landscape work. The space is starting to look more finished as glass installation continues; drywall and painting is completed, and interior surfaces like tile and wall protection are installed. As we look ahead, site work will get underway with grading and utilities as interior finishes continue, materials are delivered, and inspections are conducted. Coordination among contractors, inspectors, and project management teams remains active to maintain progress and keep the project moving toward its next major milestones as spring construction accelerates.

**And some exciting news!** Last fall we applied for the Wisconsin DOA's [Grants for Local Projects](#) program, and I was notified last week that they are recommending the Imagination Center for a partial grant award of \$1.2 million. Recommendations will be considered, discussed and approved at the State Building Commission meeting scheduled for May 13. We are hoping for good news after that meeting and reaching out to Commission members in the meantime to share what support would mean for the project. The City of Madison received recommendations for two projects (of 71 recommended for funding), with Olbrich Botanical Gardens being the other recommended recipient for the City.

Monthly construction updates are available on the [Engineering Department's project page](#) and shared out through the [Library's email newsletter](#), too.

## Library Metrics

All monthly key metrics, by month and library, from 2015 to the previous month, are also available on our interactive dashboard: [MPL Monthly Metrics | Tableau Public](#).

## For Your Calendar

Here are some dates you may want to save on your calendar:

- Upcoming Library Board meetings –Thursday, May 7, 5pm, Goodman South Madison Library and June 4, 5pm, Alicia Ashman Library
- [Lunch for Libraries](#) with Jesmyn Ward, Tuesday, May 5, noon at Monona Terrace
- Library Staff Day (and Library Closed Day): Thursday, May 14, noon-5pm, Central Library
- We Read Youth Voices summer launch event, Monday, June 1, 2:30-4pm, Reindahl Park
- Sunday hours end for summer on Sunday, May 17 and Library Closed for Memorial Day Sunday, May 24 and Monday, May 25

## Press Releases & News Stories

### Library Press Releases

- [LINKcat Will Be Offline April 12-16 as New Features Get Added; All Madison Public Libraries Will Open Late April 16](#) (posted April 6, 2026)
- [Celebrate National Library Week April 19-25 at Madison Public Library](#) (posted April 8, 2026)
- [City-Wide WE READ Youth Voices Writing Contest Returns May 1](#) posted April 20, 2026

### News Coverage

- [Madison Public Library's LINKCat update: what you need to know](#) (Capital Times, March 31, 2026)
- [A Madison library inside a park: Construction progress continues on Imagination Center](#) (NBC15.com, April 1, 2026)
- [Conectando con tu Ciudad de Madison](#) (La Movidia, April 7, 2026)
- [Madison library catalog system will be offline next week for a major update](#) (Wisconsin State Journal, April 10, 2026)
- [National Library Week Screening of 'The Librarians'](#) (PBS Wisconsin, April 14, 2026)
- [Celebrate National Library Week at Madison Public Library](#) (WKOW, April 21, 2026)