

Madison Public Library Operating Budget 2026

Presented at Library Board 7/8/25



MADISON
PUBLIC
LIBRARY

Base Budget Guidance

From the Mayor's Agency Guidance:

- *Agencies will receive a base budget consistent with the cost-to-continue current services.*
- *The base will continue the same salary savings rate as the 2025 budget. Rates will be tiered from 0%-3% based on agency size.*
- *The base will also include a 0.77% reduction to reflect underspending trends. This reduction is less than prior years, which required a 1% cut, to allow more flexibility in agency budgets. Department heads will be expected to manage to their target budget.*
- *Agency requests should be aligned with citywide priorities, including racial equity, social justice, and sustainability.*

Base Budget: \$22,768,274

Target

- Our target letter indicated our base budget was \$23,204,942; but after resolving some changes in debt service payment, our target was reduced to \$22,768,274
- Highlights:
 - 0.77% efficiency = about \$44,590 extra
 - “Made whole” on big things including Dane County formula - decreased revenue (\$117,810) and increased expenses (\$396,453) total increase \$514,263
 - Received increases for remainder of Dream Bus expenses (increase from \$71,556 reallocated in 2025 to \$98,000, estimated annual cost)
 - \$36,684 increase for databases and OverDrive
 - Includes \$195,000 that we received in 2025 plus \$41,000 in retirement savings to be used towards Reindahl operations.

Supplemental Request

From the Mayor's Agency Guidance:

*The 2026 budget will have limited capacity to fund supplemental budget requests. Agencies may submit a supplemental request if they meet one of the following criteria: **1) funding operating expenses for a new City facility that is not included in the base budget**, or 2) funding ongoing costs associated with one-time revenues that will no longer be available.*

Supplemental Request in Brief

Library Supervisor	12 months	\$97,973
3.0 Librarians + 3.0 Library Assistants + 1.0 Clerk	6 months	\$297,679
4 Security Monitors (16 hrs/week) + 9 Pages (15 hrs/week)	5 months	\$91,628
Supplies	5 months	\$43,100
Purchased services (\$64,085 minus \$195,200	5 months	\$64,085
Minus \$195,200 (increase in 2025 for ICRP costs)		(\$195,200)
Minus \$41,183 from retirements		(\$41,183)

June Scenario Assumptions

Our June presentation was based on the following assumptions. In black are the assumptions shared in June; in red are what our budget request includes:

- Budget direction from Mayor will include a 2% “efficiency” and preserve existing services from last year, but not provide additional funding for Reindahl staff. Budget guidance did not provide additional funding in 2026 for Imagination Center, but did maintain existing services, reduce efficiency to 0.75% and allow for a supplemental ask. (with debt service adjustments, our efficiency is now 0.77%)
- Reindahl will open with a one-shift model. Because of the possibility of a supplemental ask, we’re starting our request with the original hours proposal of 10am-8pm Mon-Fri & 9-5 Sat, a two-shift model, and including cost reductions in our supplemental request instead of our base budget.
- Service hour reductions should be minimized. This proposal only includes hours reductions for Sundays.
- Layoffs should not be considered to support Reindahl staffing. This proposal does not include layoffs.
- Every effort should be made to minimize the impact on the Dane County cost formula. We anticipate that Imagination Center will produce some savings in this area by 2027. Sunday hours reductions are lowest impact to overall checkouts.
- No supplemental request allowed. Supplemental requests were allowed.

Operating Cost Impact of Imagination Center, JUNE ESTIMATE (\$994,997)

	Funding Gap	Sources
2026	\$438,637	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Sunday hours at Lakeview, Goodman South, and Central• a portion of the \$195,000 added in 2025 budget• an additional position as it becomes vacant in 2025• Programming reduction or mix of one position + programming reduction
2027	\$556,360	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• City Cost to Continue

Operating Cost Impact of Imagination Center, JULY ACTUAL (\$918,002)

	Funding Gap	Sources
2026	\$326,040	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Elimination of Sunday hours at Lakeview, Goodman South, and Central• Repurpose an additional Librarian-level or higher position as it becomes vacant in 2025-6• Reduction in program services & supplies• Reduction to one-shift model if necessary
2027	\$591,962 (2027 estimate)	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• City Cost to Continue will fund annualized positions if approved in 2026 operating budget• Additional non-staff costs for supporting a full year of operations

Reductions in Priority Order: Overview

Sunday hours: Goodman South Madison & Lakeview libraries	\$45,848
Sunday hours: Central Library	\$80,000
One vacant Librarian or higher position	\$90,000
Program services/supplies reduction	\$70,192
Reduction to one-shift model at Imagination Center	\$40,000
Total	\$326,040

Sunday Hours: Goodman South & Lakeview Libraries (\$45,848) and Central Library (\$80,000)

	Sunday Visits (2023)	Wednesday Visits (2023)*	Sunday Visits (2024)	Wednesday Visits (2024)*
Central	13,777	11,418	15,366	12,559
Goodman South Madison	2,350	4,294	2,614	5,480
Lakeview	4,411	5,529	4,644	6,722
Total Patrons Served	20,538	21,241	22,624	24,761

*Data taken from same weeks as Sunday open hours, from 1-5pm.

Central: 2024 Average

	8a	9a	10a	11a	12p	1p	2p	3p	4p	5p	6p	7p	8p	9p
Sun	0	1	3	4	8	116	79	62	37	1	2	1	0	0
Mon	5	100	84	77	92	91	81	73	71	64	54	32	16	1
Tue	9	94	79	75	97	96	79	79	78	73	60	34	17	1
Wed	6	114	103	83	95	91	82	78	72	66	67	32	18	2
Thur	8	100	82	78	99	93	80	71	76	67	60	35	19	1
Fri	6	102	82	85	120	97	82	78	69	46	8	12	4	2
Sat	8	135	148	153	145	131	115	97	65	6	6	2	1	1

Goodman South: 2024 Average

	8a	9a	10a	11a	12p	1p	2p	3p	4p	5p	6p	7p	8p
Sun	0	0	0	0	1	18	15	11	7	1	0	0	0
Mon	0	3	39	34	35	36	40	44	35	30	19	12	1
Tue	0	2	34	37	31	32	34	41	38	33	22	11	1
Wed	0	2	36	31	34	34	33	34	39	32	19	12	1
Thur	0	2	35	32	33	33	32	33	37	33	18	10	1
Fri	0	1	33	29	32	34	37	33	35	27	18	10	1
Sat	1	25	33	31	33	34	32	27	18	2	0	0	0

Lakeview: 2024 Average

	8a	9a	10a	11a	12p	1p	2p	3p	4p	5p	6p	7p	8p
Sun	0	0	0	0	2	30	24	21	14	1	0	0	0
Mon	0	3	57	38	39	41	43	48	54	38	25	12	1
Tue	4	7	48	39	40	43	42	44	55	42	29	14	1
Wed	0	2	48	37	41	45	41	42	44	43	29	15	1
Thur	0	3	52	38	39	40	39	39	39	38	28	13	1
Fri	0	1	41	37	40	40	42	39	42	33	24	12	1
Sat	1	30	42	43	56	46	42	41	31	1	0	0	0

1 Vacant Librarian or Higher Position TBD: (\$90,000)

- 1782.5 hours/year lost through loss of additional position
- 2900 service hours added through opening of Imagination Center
- 2 positions already reallocated in 2025

Program Services & Supplies Reductions (\$70,192)

	2024	40% reduction in funds/20% reduction in programs/attendance
Total programs	4,477	3,582
Total attendance	92,774	74,219

Examples of programs that *may be funded* through City contracts: Naturalist in Residence, DeJope and Beyond, health & wellness classes (yoga, journaling, cooking), Seed Library, Artist in Residencies, Youth Voices writing contest, We Read, contracted storytimes in other languages or with music, musical performances.

Important to note that programs funded with City funds vary from year to year due to donations from Foundation and Friends, so this is a representative sample

4,477

Total Programs

92,774

Program Attendance

Offsite Programs:

671 Events
with **18,412**
attendees

1-on-1 Assistance Programs

(Not Included in Total Programs Above):

1,160 events

Community-led Events:

1,344 free and open to the public, community-led meetings hosted in meeting rooms.



Reduce to Single Shift Model at Imagination Center (\$40,000)

- 20 less service hours per week at Imagination Center
- Inconsistent hours or no evening hours
- Inequitable hours compared to most other Madison libraries

2026 operating budget timeline

- **July 8 & 15** - Board approves budget submission
- **July 18** - budget due to Finance
- **August 13-21** - internal review of department operating budget submissions
- **October 7** - Mayor releases 2026 Executive Budget
- **October 13-November 4** - Council & Finance Committee review of budget
 - Council amendment week: **October 27-November 4**
- **November 11-13** - final budget approved by Council