# LIBRARY SERVICES

JANUARY 2026

FY27 Budget

On January 21st the City held an all-day budget meeting where each department head presented their fiscal year 2027 (FY27) budgets to the City Council. Library Director, Brittany Jacobs, presented a FY27 budget request of **$1,807,772** to cover staff, the building, and collections. For our current fiscal year (FY26) we are operating with a $75,000 cut and had to reduce staff from 27 to 26, which is down 10 people from being fully staffed at 36. With 119,000 visitors to the library in fiscal year 2025 (FY25) that equates to **1 library staff for every 7,437 library visitors, and only 1 full-time staff for every 13,000 visitors.**
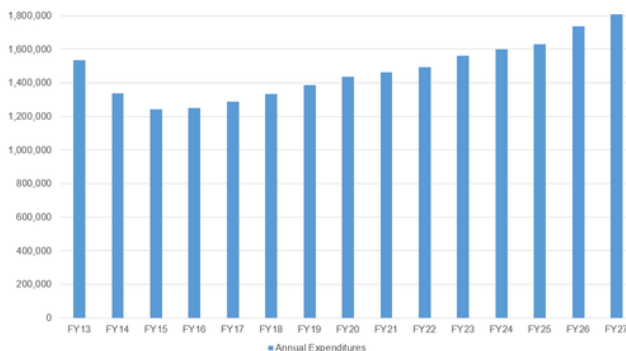
A large focus of this year's budget presentation was on the role that our public library plays in public safety. **Third and fourth grade reading proficiency remains a major predictor of long-term success or future imprisonment.** Low literacy is often seen as a key driver of, rather than just a correlation to, crime, as poor reading skills limit educational attainment and employment opportunities.

The Department of Justice has reported that, "the link between academic failure and delinquency, violence, and crime is welded to reading failure." **Two-thirds of students who cannot read proficiently by the end of fourth grade will eventually end up in jail or on welfare** (National Assessment of Adult Literacy).

Investing in the Burlington Public Library is a direct investment in the health of our community. Our requested $1.8 million is but a small fraction of the total general fund, but is multiplied exponentially in the value added to our residents.

Series Labels

Lindsey and Carmen from our Tech Services Department have taken on the tasks of labeling all book series to coordinate each book with the order in which it falls in the series. We have heard from many patrons that this additional spine label has helped them easily identify and locate the books they are searching for.

This project is a great example of how identifying ways in which patrons navigate our space helps to inform how we can best provide and present information. Information seeking behavior, or the ways in which people look for information, is at the forefront of how we are managing our collections and the physical building. Many thanks to Lindsey and Carmen for their work on creating a more accessible and user-friendly collection.

Babies Need Books

In 2025 the Burlington Public Library gave every new baby born at the Southeast Iowa Regional Medical Center a new book to welcome them into our community. Research indicates that literacy practices should begin as soon as a baby is born, if not before then, and to help support our area families we are happy to start them on their literacy journey with a new book.

Thanks to funding provided by the Murray Foundation and private donations we gifted 635 new babies with their very own book in 2025 - bringing the total amount of books given since 2013 to 6,127!

Hygiene Kits

This month we received a donation from the **Sam Aden Kindness Fund** to go towards the hygiene kits that we put together and distribute to those in need. This generous donation will help purchase materials such as toothpaste, deodorant,
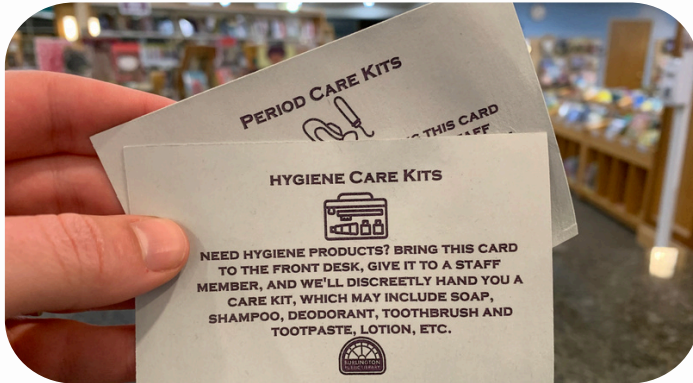
January by the Numbers

Total Checkouts: 21,828 (20,619)

Number of Programs: 42 (39)

Program Participants: 1,293 (730)

New Borrower Accounts: 75 (58)

Use of online databases: 18,770 (18,081)

WiFi & Computer Use: 3,181 (2,872)

Items borrowed & loaned through Inter Library Loan: 175 (107)

Meeting Room Reservations: 348 (313)

Door Count: 9,651 (8,220)

January '26 / December '25

Staff Recognition

This January we had several staff members celebrate milestones with the Burlington Public Library, including Kathy Gerling, Lynn McVey, Sara Garland, and Becky Ruberg. Kathy is our sole cataloger and is responsible for inputing all metadata on the backend of every item that circulates in our collection. She celebrated 34 years with BPL this month!

Becky Ruberg is our teen specialist and has been inspiring and leading teens at the library for 25 years! She also serves on the Governor's STEM Council, and is an avid reader and champion of libraries.

Sara keeps all of our meetings, purchasing, and ordering running smoothly not to mention all of the assistance provided to the Library Director. Sara celebrated 13 years with BPL this month!

Lynn is celebrating her second wind with BPL having celebrated 11-years as a part-time employee. Prior to that Lynn worked for 12 years with BPL.

Kathy, Becky, and Lynn were all instrumental as they were part of the team of BPL staff that helped move the library from our Columbia Street location to our current building in 2006. Congratulations to Kathy, Becky, Sara, and Lynn for their work anniversaries with the Burlington Public Library!
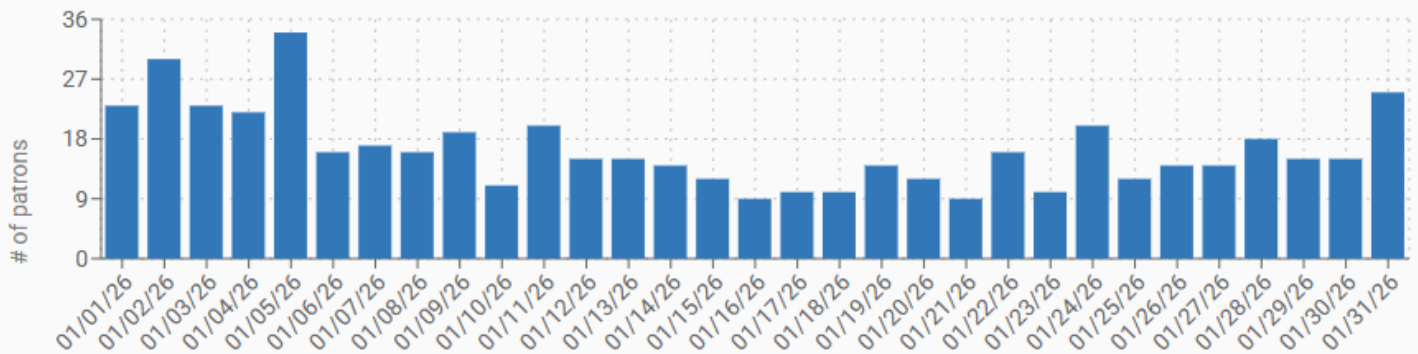
January by the Numbers: E-Lending

OverDrive/Libby & Hoopla

|	Total Circulation	Amount Spent	Unique Patrons	New Patrons	Average Circ/Patron
Hoopla	579	$1,423.62	319	34	1.82
BURLINGTON Libby	3,387	$504.64	683	38	4.96
State Libby	321,460	$107,593	62,799	3,429	5.12

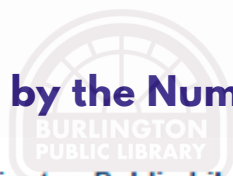## Hoopla Detailed Report

Patron Borrowing Report

There were **319** unique patrons borrowing Instant licenses from January 1, 2026 through January 31, 2026 with an average of **10** people borrowing at least one Instant item per day.

Circulations by Format
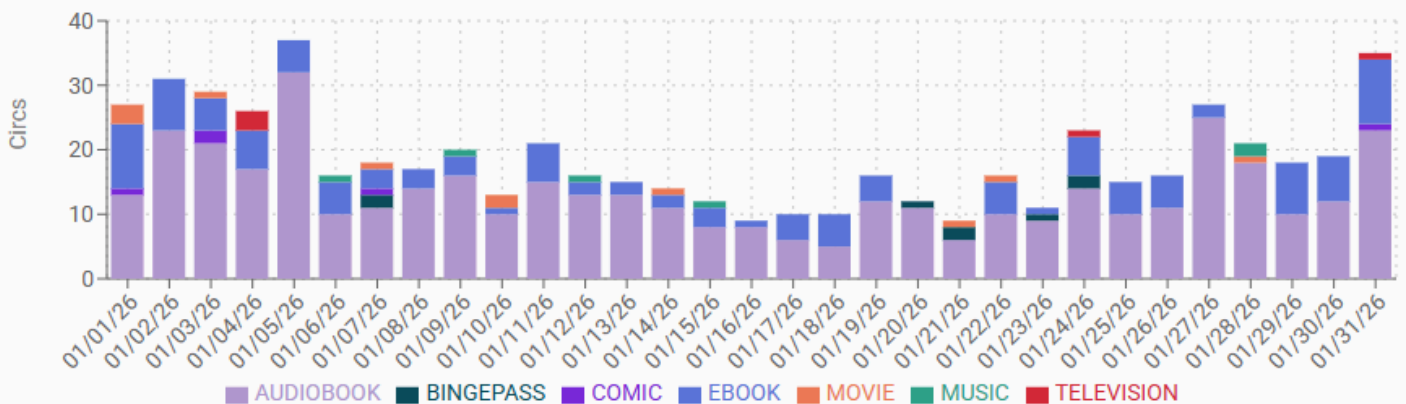
January by the Numbers: WiFi

Burlington Public Library
January-2026

In January, 557 unique patrons used your library WiFi. On average, these patrons visited to use the WiFi on just under 3 individual days.

Change from prior month

1446 ↑ **19.7%**
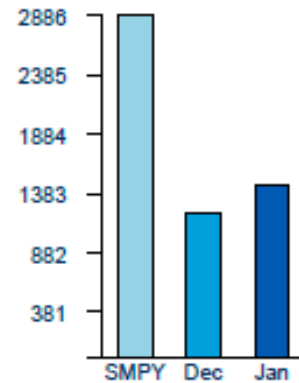
Monthly Sessions

1258 ↑ **17.68%**

Total Visits

557 ↑ **13.44%**

Unique Visitors

2.26 ↑ **3.67%**

Average Return Rate

Total Monthly Session Count

	SMPY	Dec	Jan
	2886		

Y-axis: 381, 882, 1383, 1884, 2385, 2886

Total Monthly Visits

	SMPY	Dec	Jan
	2231		

Y-axis: 227, 728, 1229, 1730, 2231
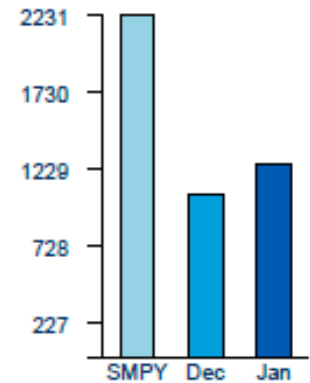
SMPY: Same Month Prior Year

Average Daily Visits

Y-axis: 0, 11, 22, 33, 44, 55

Categories: Sun, Mon, Tue, Wed, Thurs, Fri, Sat

Average Peak Hourly

Y-axis: 2, 8, 14

Categories: 8am, 9am, 10am, 11am, 12pm, 1pm, 2pm, 3pm, 4pm, 5pm, 6pm