



Saint Paul  
Public Library

# Library Materials Update

Library Board  
October 1, 2025



# 2026 Proposed Changes: General Fund Reductions

## Reduce Library Materials Budget = \$65,079

- Reduces library materials budget by 6.3%
- The Friends will make every effort to mitigate cuts to core library work by conducting a special fundraising effort to provide an additional \$40,000 toward library materials.
- With Friends' additional fundraising, overall reduction to library materials budget in 2026 will be 2.4%
- Any reduction in the library materials budget impacts the types and volumes of materials available to residents.
- Reduces library's ability to purchase new materials and keep up purchasing power as cost of library materials increases.



## Materials Budget – library collections

Year	Materials budget – proposed	Materials budget – adopted	Difference	% change from previous year	Funding source
2024	\$ 1,032,224	\$ 1,182,224	\$ 150,000	15%	Cultural STAR
2025	\$ 1,032,224	\$ 1,207,224	\$ 175,000	15%	Library Fund balance
2026	\$ 1,007,145	\$	<b>\$ 225,099</b>	<b>15%</b>	

# 2025 Budget and funding sources

Source	Amount
<b>General fund</b>	
Taxes	\$857,224
Cultural Star (Annual Grant)	\$175,000
Fund Balance Allocation (One-time)	\$175,000
<b>General fund Total</b>	<b>\$1,207,224</b>
<b>Special funds</b>	
Fees & Misc Rev.	\$192,898
MELSA	\$134,539
Friends of the Saint Paul Public Library	\$140,194
<b>Special fund total</b>	<b>\$467,631</b>
City total	\$1,400,122
<b>Grand total</b>	<b>\$1,674,855</b>

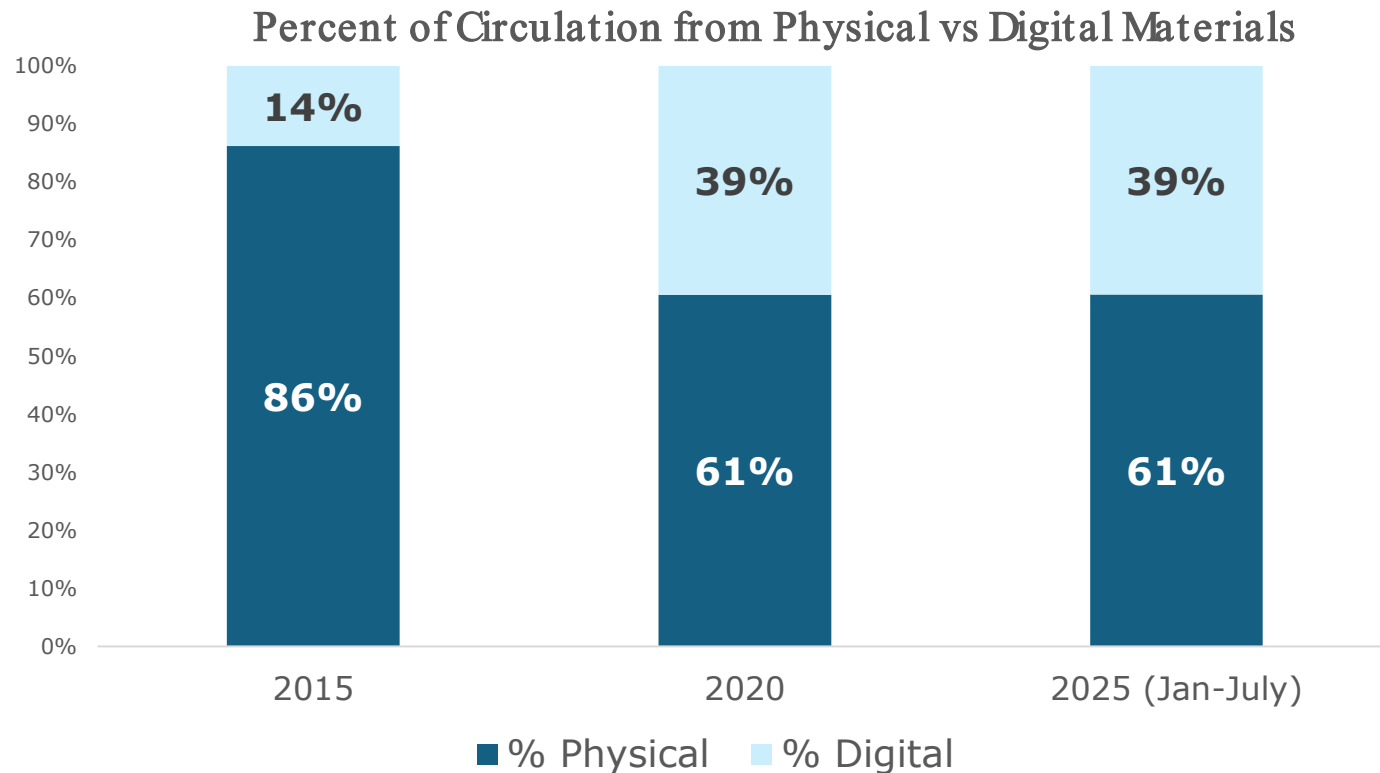
# 2025 budget increase - accomplishments

- Maintain previous years' spending on digital materials.
- Additional funding for kids materials – especially graphic novels and nonfiction. Read-Alongs will be available systemwide by the end of the year.
- Continued investment in purchasing replacements for high use items and outdated content.
- Further develop Community Informed Collections pilot at Rondo Library.

# Community Informed Collections

- Rondo Library (in progress)
  - Gathering feedback right now: at Community Conversations, survey
  - Beginning spending based on feedback
- Rice Street Library (2024 collections investments)
  - Added around 1,200 items in response to community feedback
    - Added Arabic language collection and substantially refreshed Spanish collection for kids
  - Built relationships with community members, across Library staff workgroups

# Circulation Trends

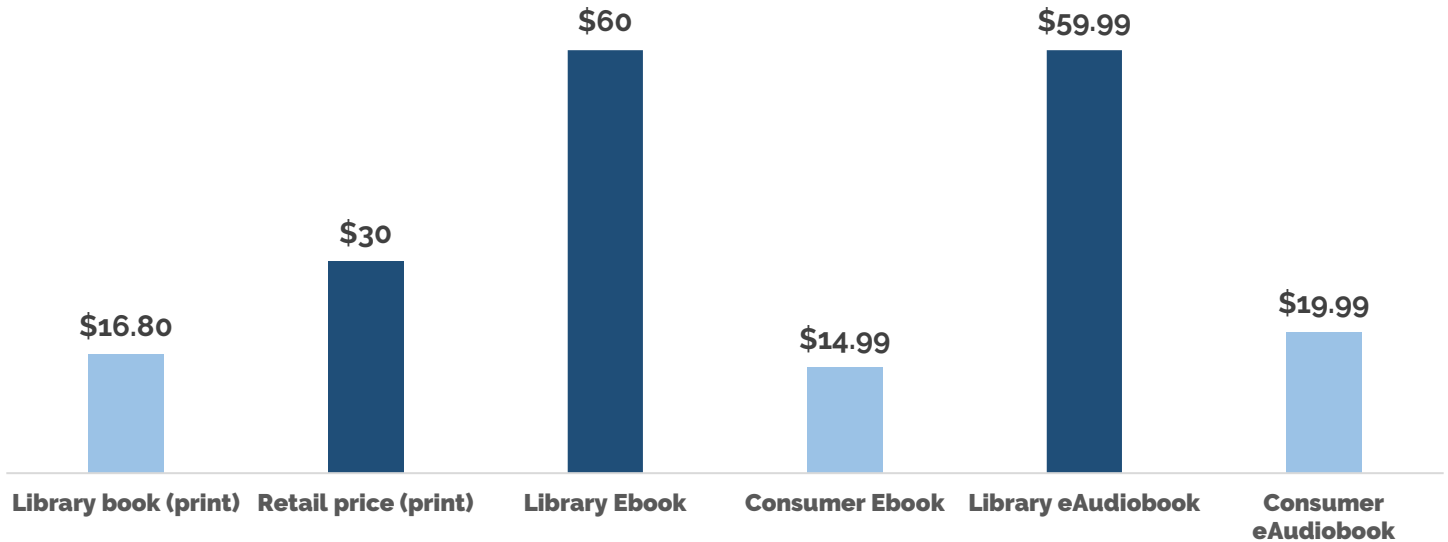
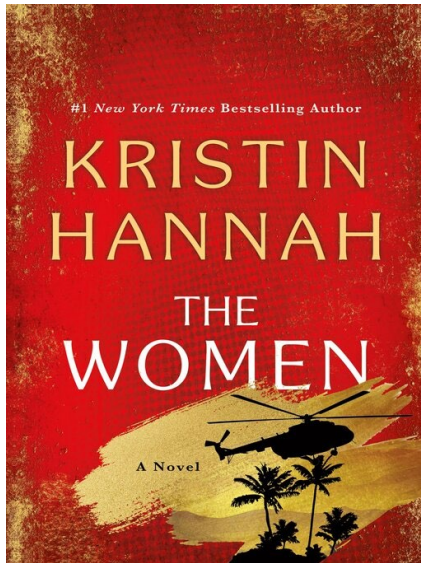


# Digital Materials

- The Library licenses content from publishers through a third-party vendor (Overdrive/Libby)
- Prices are often much higher than consumer prices.
  - An eAudiobook that is available for \$20 through a consumer platform might cost libraries \$80-\$120
- Licenses expire after a set amount of time or number of checkouts, so they must be re-purchased to keep the title in the collection.



# Digital Materials



# Digital Materials

- Digital material prices have seen significant price increases over the last several years.
- Publishers view library sales as lost individual sales and set prices accordingly.
- Being in the realm of Digital Rights Management vs. First Sale Doctrine limits the rights of libraries.

# Digital Materials

- Despite pricing challenges, SPPL is committed to maintaining digital collection:
  - Accessibility: built in accessibility features for text and audiobook content for low vision/blind users, available for patrons who can't easily visit our buildings.
  - eAudiobooks – currently about half of our digital collection circulation. eAudio formats gaining in popularity as physical options for audio become less usable and less varied.
  - Format preference – patrons like the convenience of digital content!

# Impacts of materials budget reduction

- Wait times for materials will increase.
  - Across all audiences/formats. Digital content will likely see biggest impacts given pricing challenges.
- Collection will be less robust
  - Fewer new titles, less breadth of offerings
  - Worn out items, out of date content not replaced as often
- Discontinued services or formats
- Reduced capacity for special collections projects that allow us to innovate/pilot new ideas

# Impacts of budget reduction

- Less able to respond to changing community needs and information environment.
- Budget reductions have cumulative impacts
  - Collections that aren't invested in are less relevant and less able to meet community needs and interests.
  - Maintaining a relevant and up-to-date collection is easier than overcoming the challenges of a collection that is worn out and out-of-date.
  - Recent additional investments in collections have helped move us toward building back the collection from years of challenging budgets.



**Questions?**

