

Book Safe Harbor Presentation and FAQs

Library Commission Meeting, 4/27/2026

What IS a Book Safe Harbor (or Book Sanctuary City)?

A municipal, physical and/or digital space that actively protects the right to read and ensures access to banned or challenged books.

- The movement started in [Chicago](#).
- Harris County established the first [Book Sanctuary](#) in Texas!
- The Book Sanctuary movement is on fire in [New Jersey](#).

What are the goals of a Book Safe Harbor?

- Reaffirming the policies and principles of the library
- Protecting “endangered” books and keeping them accessible
- Providing community education around book banning and intellectual freedoms
- Supporting library collections, staff and budgets

What Steps Do We Need to Take to Make Austin a Book Safe Harbor?

- Connect with City stakeholders (such as Council members or representatives and the Human Rights Commission)
- Draft an ordinance to explicitly include the principles of the library, including protecting intellectual freedom, open access and a collection that serves every reader
- Create action items and timeline with an October 2026 goal to coincide with APL’s centennial celebration
- Work with the Library Foundation around displays, presentations, promo materials, and more.