Highlights & Updates Report

Hannah Terrell, Director of Libraries



Austin Public Library

September 2026

Public Services Highlights



Art for All

Art for All started transforming the Austin Central Library garage into vibrant murals created by artists and Austinites experiencing housing insecurity. The first team began prepping walls and setting the foundation for a series of works that will unfold over the coming months. Participants earn same-day pay while accessing on-site support services, making the project both an artistic and economic lifeline. With new artists joining soon, the murals will continue to take shape in real time, bringing fresh color and powerful stories to a public space.



Kittypalooza Tour



Austin Public Library and Austin Animal Services teamed up for Kittypalooza Tour 2026, bringing adoptable cats, kitten-themed crafts, and plenty of feline fanfare to branches across the city. With lively stops at Yarborough and Windsor Park and a finale at Central, the tour helped more than 60 kittens find new homes during peak kitten season. The event's impact reflects the commitment of fosters, staff, volunteers, and community partners who make lifesaving connections possible.

Tool Library

The Tool Library is back, and it's now a citywide service that makes borrowing tools as easy as placing a hold on a book. With online requests and pickup available at any branch, Austinites no longer need to trek to a single location. They can grab what they need right in their own neighborhood. The updated system comes with a few new guidelines, including 21-day checkouts, in-person returns at circulation desks, and a one-time waiver for first-time borrowers, all designed to keep the collection circulating smoothly.



Centennial Planning Updates

August at Austin Public Library was marked by defining moments, and none more significant than Austin City Council's decision to designate Austin a Book Safe Harbor, reaffirming the city's commitment to protecting the freedom to read and intellectual freedom. The measure, introduced by The Library Foundation and championed through the Austin Library Commission, signaled strong support for equitable access to library materials at a time when book challenges are escalating across Texas. Council members emphasized the importance of diverse stories, and Austin Public Library affirmed its century-long responsibility to provide them.

Alongside this historic milestone, Centennial celebrations continued across the city. University Hills kicked off the month with its 40th Anniversary Arcade Day. It was a high-energy afternoon of video game battles, giant board games, button-making, and Bananarchy treats that brought generations together in true neighborhood style. The excitement carried into the announcement of the Centennial Library Card Art Contest winners—three standout designs by Ishana Jain, Yaretzi Nicole Cruz Santiago, and Lyle Lewis, selected from more than 10,000 community votes and set to debut in September.

Rounding out the month, retired and long-time librarians gathered at the Faulk Building (now the Austin History Center) for the Homecoming History Harvest, a heartwarming event hosted by the Austin History Center Association. Librarians shared and recorded decades of memories, digitized artifacts from their careers, and reflected on the "only in a library" moments that shaped APL's past as we look toward our next century.





Special Events Updates

In August 2026, Central Library Event Services hosted a total of 19 events, including 16 rentals, 3 co-sponsorships, plus 2 film/photography requests. Total estimated attendance of 2,671.

Co-sponsorship partners include:

- Mayor of Austin's Office – Growing Up Austin on 8/20
- Austin History Center Association - History Hour: An Austin History Enthusiasts Event on 8/20
- City Council District 6 Office – Library Safe Harbor Resolution Press Conference on 8/26

COA Department events include:

- Austin Equity and Inclusion – Cesar Chavez Street Renaming Community Meeting on 8/11 (rental)
- Mayor of Austin's Office – Growing Up Austin on 8/20 (co-sponsorship)
- City Council District 6 Office – Library Safe Harbor Resolution Press Conference on 8/26 (co-sponsorship)

Events breakdown:

Total Events	Rentals	Co-sponsorships	Film & Photography	Total Attendance
19	16	3	2	2,671

Budget and Expenditures

APL Finance	Fiscal Year 2026 (10/1/2025 - 09/30/2026)	
Total Budget	$	80,005,822
Materials Budget		
FTEs		462.55
Year to Date (General Fund) Expenditures, as of 08/31/2026	$	70,120,840
Year to Date Revenues, as of 08/31/2026		
Non-Resident Library Card Fee	$	292,731
Passport Services	$	526,808
Parking	$	444,391
Gift Shop	$	391,554
NCL Café Tenant	$	183,032
Facility Rentals	$	532,880
Donations, including Recycled Reads	$	164,739

Facilities Services Updates



APL Facility Services

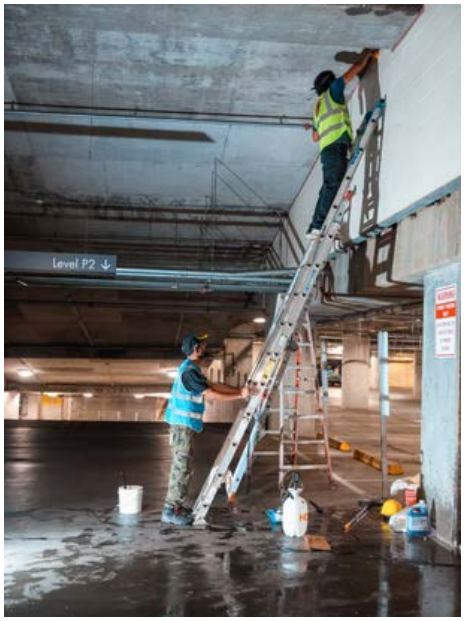
APL 2018 Bond Project Timeline

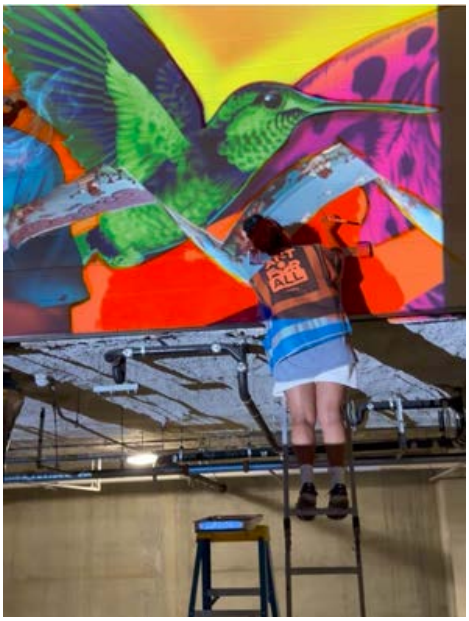


2026 Bond

The Austin Public Library's 2026 Bond Development initiative aims to strengthen communities by positioning libraries as central hubs for education, resources, and connection. The program focuses on expanding access, enhancing facilities, and integrating sustainable practices to meet the city's growth—ensuring equitable opportunities for learning, health, and cultural engagement.

Austin voters will consider a 2026 bond measure that would fund a $20 million expansion of Oak Hill Branch Library and invest $15 million in Phase 1 for a future Colony Park Branch Library.



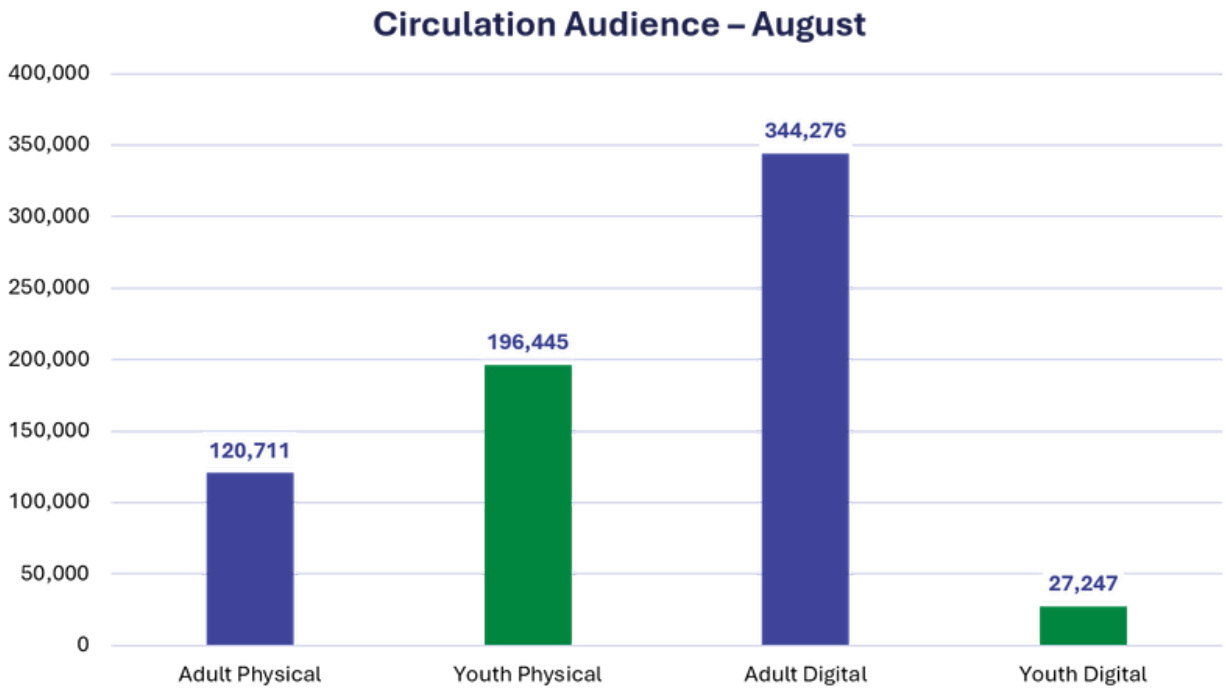


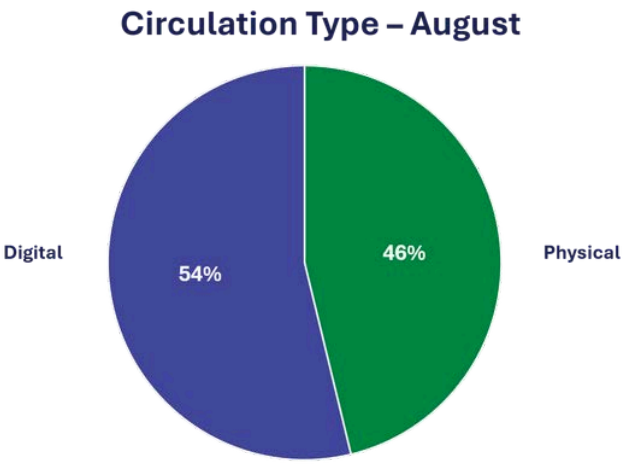
Data & Numbers



APL Data and Numbers

(as of August 30th)





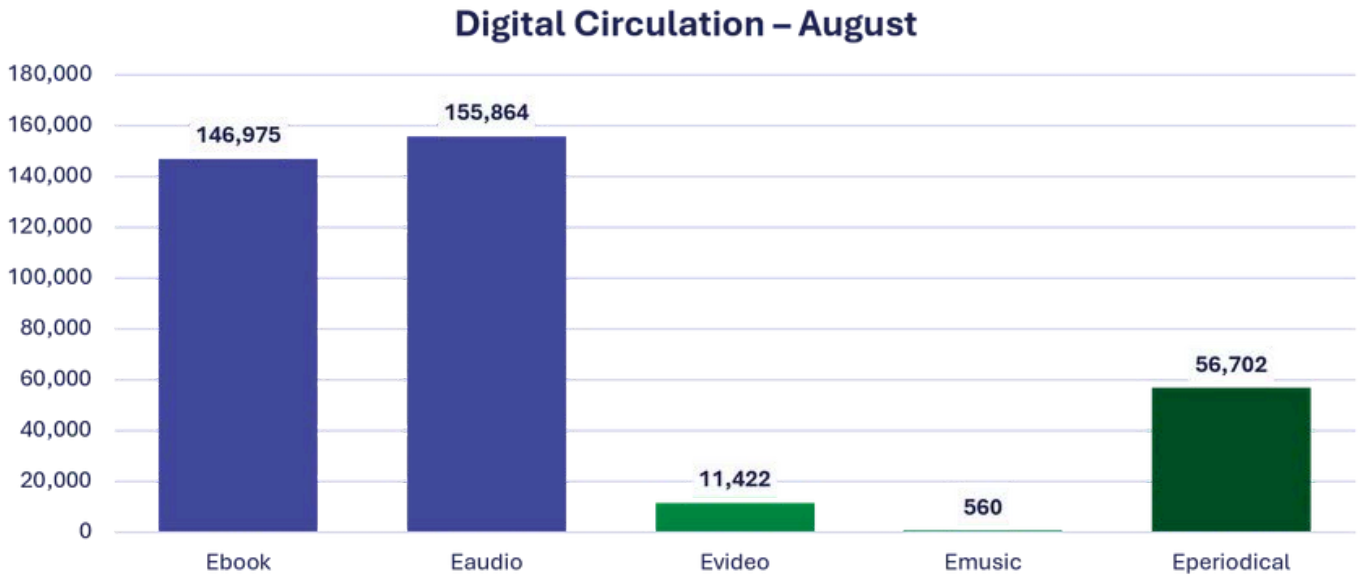
Cardholders

344,780

Active

8,813

New

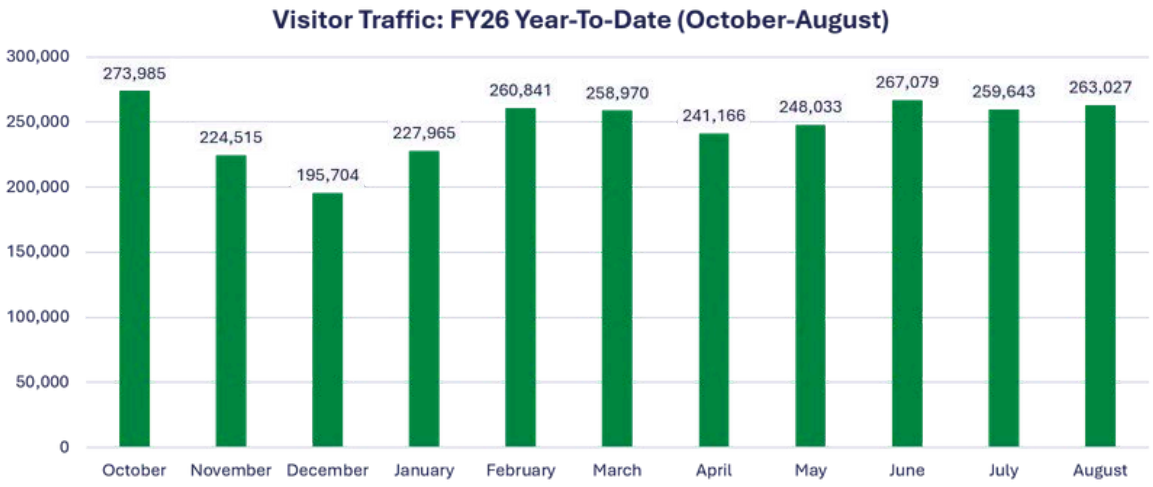


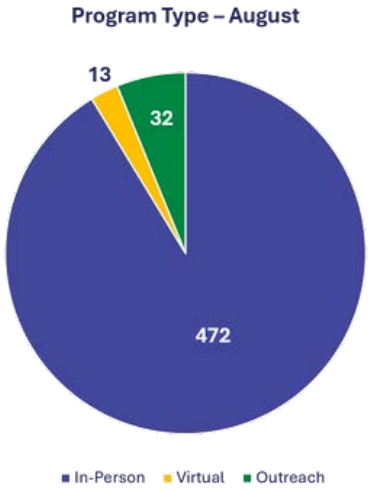
Digital Access

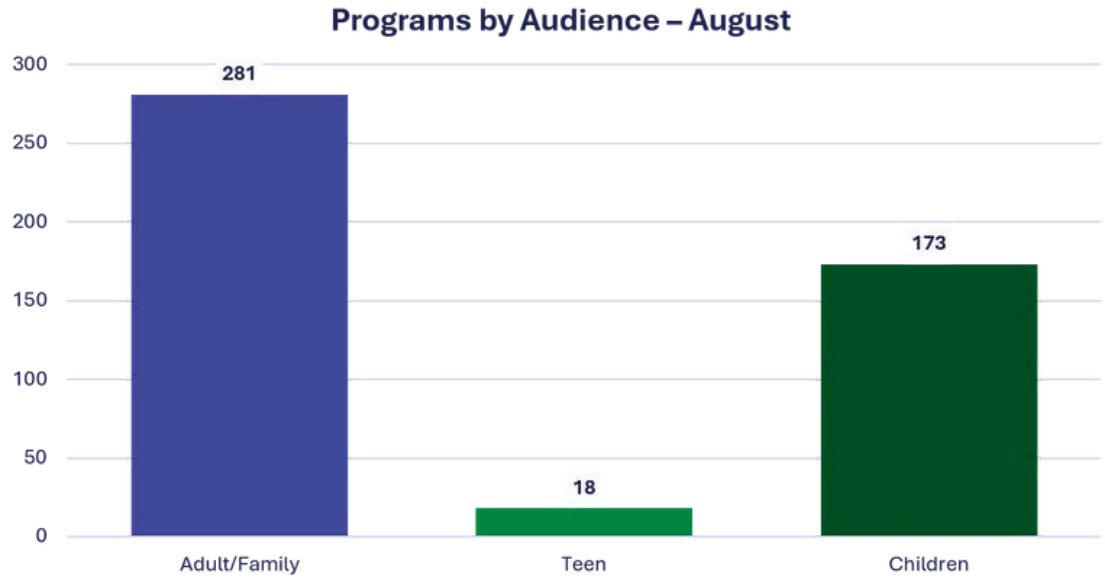
35,555
WiFi Connections

30,842
Computer Sessions




Visitor Traffic: FY26 Year-To-Date (October-August)
300,000
250,000
200,000
150,000
100,000
50,000
0
273,985
224,515
195,704
227,965
260,841
258,970
241,166
248,033
267,079
259,643
263,027
October
November
December
January
February
March
April
May
June
July
August


Program Type – August
13
32
472
In-Person
Virtual
Outreach


Programs by Audience – August
300
250
200
150
100
50
0
281
18
173
Adult/Family
Teen
Children

Program Participants
18,373

Visitors
263,027

Active Volunteers
167



Winning Design: Children (0–12)
"The Library's 100th Birthday Party"

Designed by Ishana Jain

Winning Design: Teens (13–17)
"Austin Public Library's Next Century"

Designed by Yaretzi Nicole Cruz Santiago





Winning Design: Adults (18+)
"Inspiring All to Discover, Learn, and Create"

Designed by Lyle Lewis