

Library Business Plan

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Unalaska Public Library

Unalaska Public Library educates, enriches, and inspires community members by connecting them to the world and each other.

March 2025

Prepared by Karen Kresh



EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The Unalaska Public Library Business Plan is prepared by the City Librarian with oversight from the Director of Parks, Culture, and Recreation. The purpose of this document is to:

- Provide Unalaska City Council, city administration, and community members with a clear understanding of the goals and objectives that guide development of services, programs, collections, and facilities offered by the Unalaska Public Library;
- Ensure that library programs and services are aligned with the library's mission, goals, and objectives;
- Ensure that the library budget is directly connected to its mission, goals, and objectives;
- Ensure that the Unalaska Public Library continues to be relevant and responsive to the changing needs of the community.

The Unalaska Public Library is part of the Department of Parks, Culture, and Recreation in the City of Unalaska. The library provides access to a wide variety of resources, programs, and services in relation to its mission statement.

Library Mission Statement

Unalaska Public Library educates, enriches, and inspires community members by connecting them to the world and each other.

Library Goals for FY26:

1. Evaluate and update library collections, services, and programs to reflect community changes and patron needs.
2. Promote and increase access to the library's digital offerings.
3. Encourage literacy and promote reading.
4. Develop a team of library staff who are knowledgeable, confident, creative, and invested in the library's mission.
5. Connect with other organizations and volunteers to expand library programs and reach new patrons.

More information about library goals and objectives may be found in the **Goals & Objectives** section of this document.

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BACKGROUND

The Unalaska Public Library was founded in 1995 in order to support Unalaska's growing family sector and its vibrant fishing and seafood processing industry. Growing from humble beginnings using donated materials in the WWII-era Burma Road Chapel, the Unalaska Public Library now occupies a 12,300 square foot facility built in 1999 and expanded in 2023. Today, patrons have access to **over 30,000 circulating items**, nine public internet access workstations, public laptops, **free wireless internet access**, the Ray Hudson Room with **local historical information**, two study rooms, and two conference rooms.

In addition to the library facility and materials that provide the community with access to information, resources, and community space, the library also provides a variety of services. Library staff offer **exam proctoring, faxing and printing, voter registration, and notary services**. The library acts as a **United States Passport Acceptance Facility** and offers passport photo services. Library staff also offer a wide variety of **programming for all ages**, encouraging literacy, lifelong learning, and community connections. In recent years, the library has increased its online offerings, including improved access to **eBooks, digital magazine and audiobook downloads, streaming video, and language learning**.

The library has developed partnerships with local organizations and other libraries to improve its services and offerings. The library has partnered with local organizations such as **Unalaska Community Broadcasting, the Unalaska City School District, Museum of the Aleutians**, and the **Ounalashka Corporation** for programs and grant opportunities. Unalaska Public Library is a member of OCLC WorldCat, which provides Unalaska patrons with **access to books and movies worldwide** and allows library users across the state access to Unalaska's library collection via interlibrary loan. Unalaska is also a member of Alaska Library Network, providing access to eBooks, magazines, and audiobook downloads for community members.

Looking ahead, the library must adapt in order to keep up with the changing and growing needs of the community. In FY24 and FY25, we began rebuilding and updating our programming and promoting new resources available in the newly expanded library. **In FY26, we will work on updating the library collection, promoting online and other alternative collections and resources, developing a knowledgeable and creative staff, and implementing the department-wide Parks, Culture, and Recreation comprehensive plan.**

FACILITY



LOCATION

64 Eleanor Drive

CONTACT

P.O. Box 1370
Unalaska, AK 99685
P: (907) 581-5060
F: (907) 581-5266

OPERATING HOURS

Monday – Friday 10:00 am – 9:00 pm
Saturday – Sunday 12:00 pm – 6:00 pm

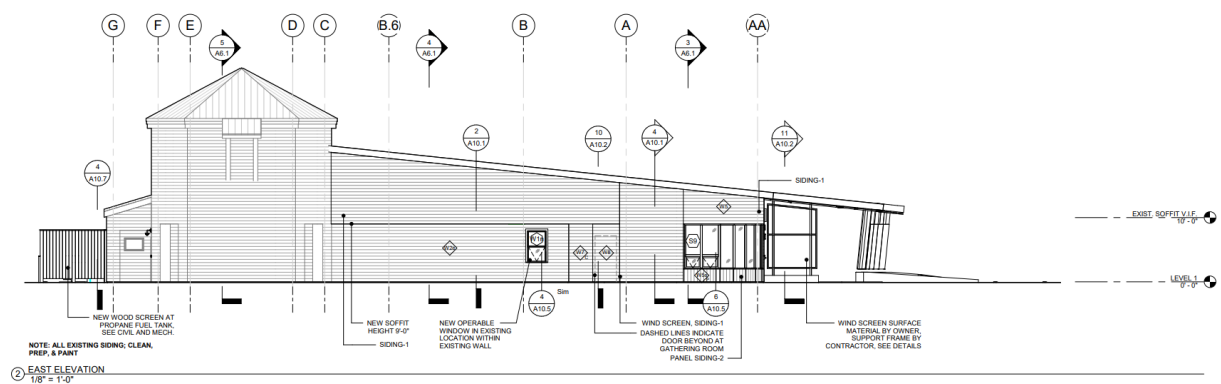


Image is East Elevation of the recent library expansion, which opened in April 2023.

We are very excited to be settling into our expanded and renovated library! Library staff still receive frequent positive comments from visitors and long-time residents alike about the improved library facility. In the 2024 PCR Master Plan Survey, 99% of respondents rated the quality of the library facility as “excellent” or “good.”

When fully staffed, the library has at least two Library Assistants on duty during open hours. During peak times and shift changes, in order to provide efficient patron service and maintain order in the building, there are three to four Library Assistants working for short periods. On rare occasions, during periods of staff leave, the library is sometimes open with one Library Assistant, however we avoid this when possible, to maximize safety and customer service.

More details about library staffing may be found in the **People** section of this plan.

The library offers a circulating collection of books, movies, and periodicals. Library Assistants carry out the day-to-day maintenance of this collection under direct supervision of the City Librarian.

Collection maintenance includes selecting, ordering, cataloging, and classifying new materials, circulating and re-shelving existing materials, and weeding outdated and worn materials. The library also offers a reference room with specialized local history and Alaskan materials.

Patrons have access to eight public computer stations for all ages. In addition, there is one public computer station for children and teens, located near the Children’s Room, and a learning station with educational games inside the Children’s Room. Free wireless internet is available throughout the building. Management of the public computers and wireless network is primarily done by City of Unalaska Information Systems (IS) staff, with support from library staff.

The library building also offers meeting, study, and program space in the new Community Room, the Dan Masoni Conference Room and two new study rooms. Study rooms are available free of charge. Community Room and Conference Room use is free of charge for non-profits, the City of Unalaska, and community groups. Rental rates for other bookings are outlined in the City of Unalaska Schedule of Fees and Services.

In addition to the study and meeting rooms, the library also provides enclosed and separate Children’s and Teen spaces.





Library Internet

For the library, the library internet contract comprises all public internet access, including wired and wireless connections. The staff stations are on the city network and do not use this shared connection.

Unalaska Public Library selected GCI as our internet provider for FY24-FY28 through a competitive bidding process mandated by the federal E-Rate program, which partially funds this service. Under this contract, the library receives **25 Mbps with managed firewall services for \$108,576 per year**. This allows us to more than double the bandwidth available to library patrons for a slightly reduced cost compared to previous years, even including firewall and E-Rate consultant costs.

In order to navigate the complex E-Rate filing process, the library works with a consultant from E-Rate Advantage. This ensures that the library files all documents and follows all processes in order to get funding from E-Rate and comply with their program requirements.

Grant and E-rate funding pay for the majority of the library's internet costs. For more information on the library's internet funding, see the **Budget** section of this business plan.

Improving internet speed has historically been the #1 request from patrons when asked how library services could be improved. Since switching to a high-speed connection in July 2023, we have seen a steep decline in patron frustration and comments about the slow internet speed.

Library Collection

Library staff are constantly working to improve the library collection and make sure that it reflects the needs and interests of the community. We receive many comments from patrons new to the community exclaiming over the books and other materials available to check out, from bestsellers to award-winning books and local history resources.

Attention to the library collection includes purchasing new items, rearranging space so that popular collections have room to grow, replacing damaged or missing items, reducing the size of outdated collections, and discarding out of date and unpopular materials.

We have recently added and developed the following collections:

- LEGO sets for checkout
- Board Games
- Sewing machines
- Tagalog and Spanish-Language children's books

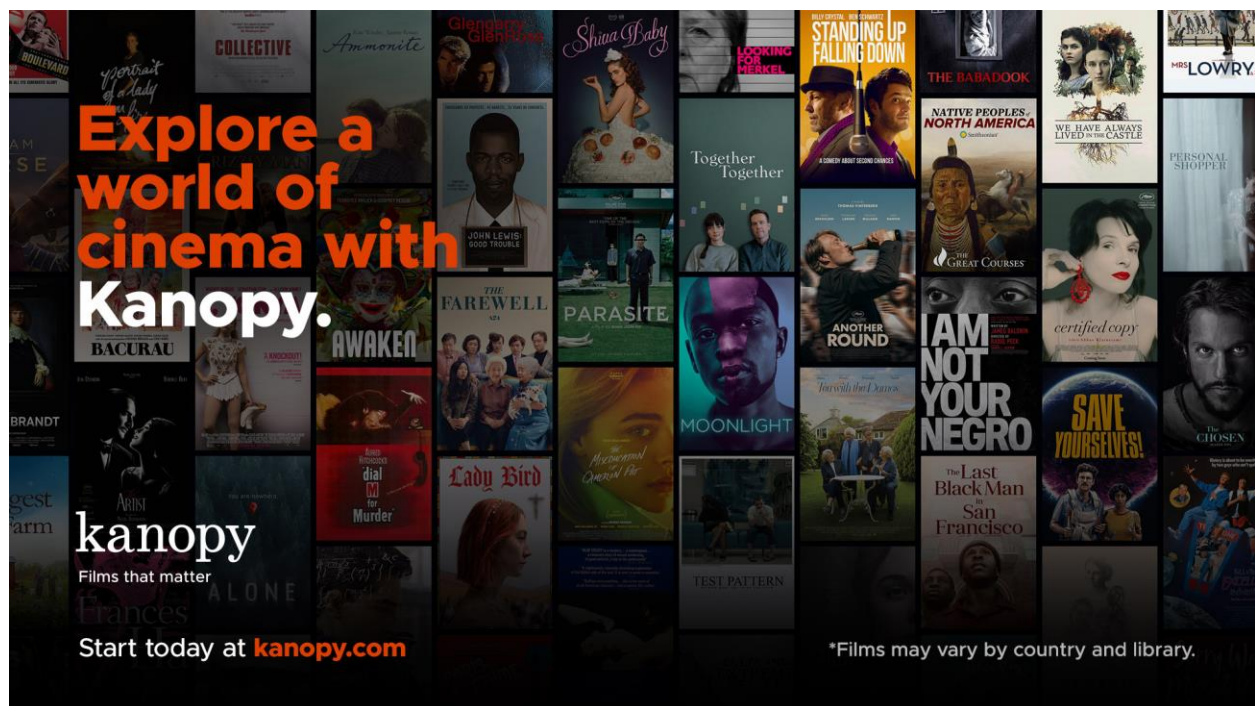
In FY26, we will reduce the size of the DVD collection and add new collections in that shelf space, based on state and national library trends and community and staff input. We will work with local organizations and volunteers to find new homes for excess DVDs that are no longer popular.



Online Resources

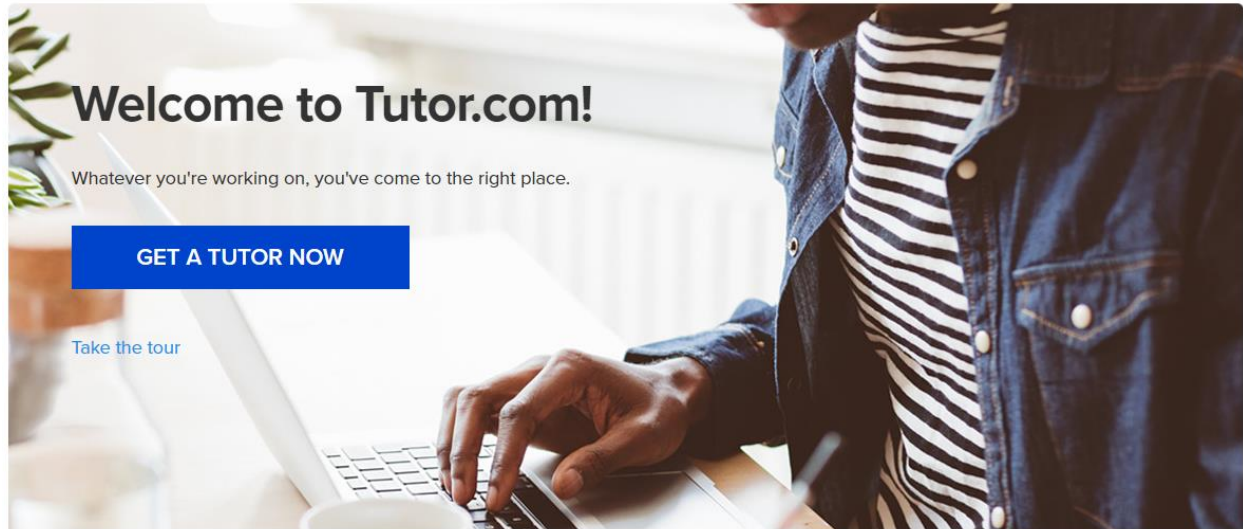
Ebooks, audiobooks, and magazines are also available for checkout through the Alaska Digital Library. We continue to add copies based on community interests and requests, and we have worked with Unalaska Community Broadcasting to educate patrons on how to access this free resource.

In FY24, in response to a patron request, we added access to Kanopy, which is a streaming video service that is free for library card holders. In FY25, we added access to Mango, a language learning database and app, and we digitized our collection of Aleutian Region historical newspapers, making them available online. **In FY26, we will work to increase awareness of these digital offerings and consider subscribing to a database that provides patrons with free access to Alaskan and national newspapers.**



The library's catalog is fully searchable online, and patrons may log in to their accounts to place holds, renew items, and check due dates. This service is not widely used at the moment, and now that Unalaska has high speed internet, we will work to make patrons aware of these options. **In FY26, we will update our integrated library system and work to clean up the catalog and user database, making sure that all item and patron records are accurate and up to date.**

Through the Statewide Library Electronic Doorway (SLED), the library provides patrons with access to live online homework help through Tutor.com, as well as access to resources for homework, language learning, test preparation, and historical research. There is no cost from the library budget for access to these important resources. Funding is provided by IMLS (Institute for Library and Museum Services) and the State of Alaska.



SERVICES & PROGRAMS

In addition to library collections, online resources, reference help, computer and internet access, and the library facility, the Unalaska Public Library offers various services to community members.

Public Notary

Each full-time and part-time library staff member is registered as a Notary Public with the State of Alaska, and notary services are provided free of charge during library hours. Library staff are not able to notarize mortgage closing documents.

Passport Acceptance

The Unalaska Public Library acts as a Passport Acceptance Facility for the United States Department of State. All eligible library staff are official passport acceptance agents. In order to become an acceptance agent, a staff member must be a U.S. citizen, must take an online training course and pass a test, and must pass a review course each year. The library is the only Passport Acceptance Facility on the island. In FY24, a Dept. of State representative visited the library to complete an Acceptance Facility Inspection, which the library passed. All passport and acceptance facility charges are determined by the U.S. Department of State.

Passport Photos

Patrons use this service not only for passport applications submitted through the library but also for renewal applications they submit by mail independently, and occasionally for other documents such as immigration records. With limited options on the island, patrons have expressed appreciation for this additional service.

Printing, Photocopying, Scanning, and Faxing

Patrons are able to print, photocopy, scan, and fax documents at the library. Copying and printing may be done in black and white or color. Some of these services are provided without charge for nonprofits and schoolwork. All relevant fees are outlined in the City of Unalaska Schedule of Fees and Services.

Exam Proctoring

Students pursuing education through distance programs are able to take exams proctored by library staff. There is no charge for proctoring services. In FY25, the library proctored exams from institutions such as the State of Alaska, the University of Alaska Fairbanks, and the ServSafe Certified Food Manager program.

Interlibrary Loan

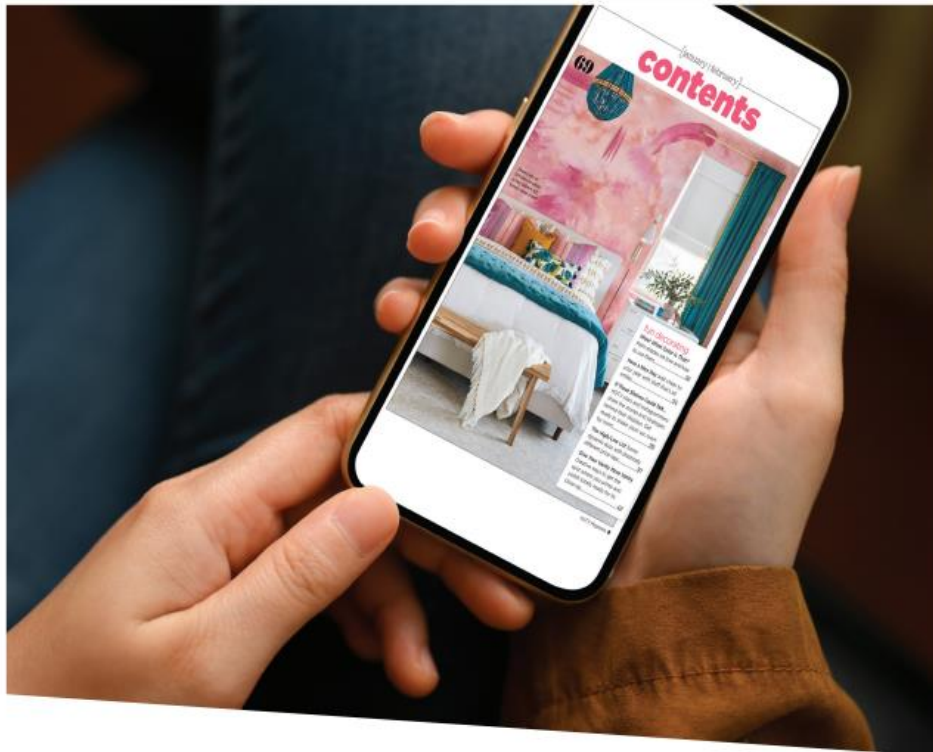
Library patrons have access to library materials from across the state and, in some cases, the country, via interlibrary loan. This service is provided free of charge unless the lending institution charges a lending fee; in that case, the fee is passed on to the patron.

Voter Registration

Each eligible library staff member is a voter registrar with the State of Alaska, and patrons may register to vote at the library.

Technical Assistance & E-Book Downloading

Library staff regularly assist patrons who are using library computers with technical questions. Common requests for assistance include printing troubleshooting, assistance with MS Word, Excel, or PowerPoint, and sending email attachments. Staff also assist patrons with borrowing eBooks, audiobooks, and magazines for free through the Alaska Digital Library's Libby App.



Your favorite magazines,
available on your device.

Libby.

The library reading app



Library Programs

Library staff offer a wide variety of programming for all ages. Programs are developed in response to professional library training and trends, staff creativity and expertise, and community input via patron comments and Library Advisory Committee suggestions.

One of the library goals that emerged during the PCR Comprehensive Planning process was increased program offerings. Since we have no staff dedicated specifically to programming, we will explore partnerships with other organizations and paid volunteers, as well as allocating staff time and training in order to meet this goal.

Program series in FY26 will include the following:

Family Story Time: This weekly interactive program helps children develop early literacy skills, provides an opportunity for social connections between parents, and supports parents in encouraging their children's development.

PCR 360 Library Time: With the reopening of the expanded library, PCR 360 resumed visiting the library on Fridays to hear a story from staff, do an activity, and explore the books and resources in the Children's Room.

Lego Club: This is a bimonthly time for creativity, construction, and learning through play. This program has sessions for children ages preschool through fourth grade. It also offers a weekend programming option for parents who aren't able to attend library programs during the week.

1,000 Books Before Kindergarten:

This national initiative encourages parents and caregivers to read 1,000 books with their child before they start kindergarten.

Summer Reading Program: Each summer, the library hosts a reading incentive program for all ages. Summer reading programs for K-12 students help to combat summer learning loss while school is not in session. For preschoolers, summer reading helps encourage early literacy and school readiness, and for adults, reading encourages lifelong learning and enrichment. In addition to offering prizes over the summer, the library also traditionally hosts a variety of themed summer programming that supplements our reading incentives.



Winter Reading Programs: These programs encourage reading for all ages during the winter months, which are prime reading time in our part of the world! We offer Book Bingo for all ages, as well as an elementary reading incentive program.

Book Club: We currently host a monthly Cookbook Club and a monthly Book Club and plan to continue at least one of these series in FY26.

Monthly Special Programs: We will aim to offer at least one special program per month for families and/or all ages. Special programs in FY25 included a poetry reading, fairy tale tea party, stuffed animal sleepover, and Halloween costume contest.



PEOPLE

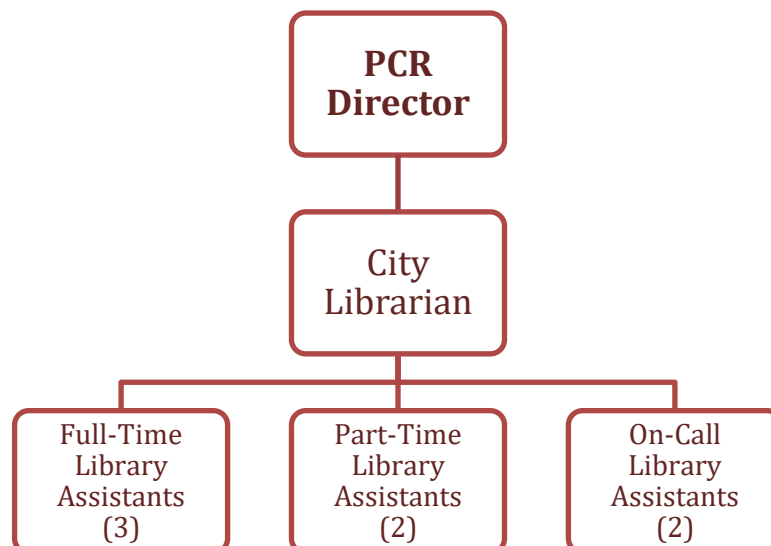
City Librarian

The City Librarian oversees the day-to-day operations and services of the Unalaska Public Library. This position also prepares and manages the library budget, administers multiple library-related grants, develops large-scale library projects with a focus on mission and goals, oversees development of the library collection, supports and supervises Library Assistant staff, and acts as a liaison with the Library Advisory Committee and Friends of the Library. The City Librarian receives direct supervision from the Director of Parks, Culture, and Recreation.

Library Assistants

The City of Unalaska employs three full-time and two part-time Library Assistant staff. They are responsible for providing customer service and assistance, maintaining accurate library records, checking items in and out, answering reference questions, protecting the privacy of library patron records, providing technical assistance to library users, providing public notary, voter registration, and passport acceptance services, performing collection development tasks such as processing new books and weeding old items, and providing programs for the public.

The City also employs two On-Call Library Assistants. These workers have been extremely helpful in keeping our public service point staffed and customer service levels high during times of staff family leave, sick leave, and vacation. Addition of these two positions has also allowed us to improve safety by drastically reducing occasions when staff work alone while we are open to the public. They also help staff to maintain manageable workloads and allow our small staff more flexibility in scheduling personal leave.



Staff Development

The City Librarian regularly attends the Alaska Library Association and American Library Association annual conferences. She also belongs to the DirLead group, which includes the directors of the twenty largest libraries in Alaska, and attends their annual seminar, which includes meetings and multi-day leadership training. Attendance at these conferences and meetings helps our library to remain on track with emerging trends in the library field.

With a relatively new Library Assistant staff, we plan to focus on staff training and development. For the first time in FY25, we will send one of the Library Assistants to a national conference. **In FY26, we are again proposing funding for a Library Assistant to attend an annual library conference off-island.** We have also offered multi-week online courses for Library Assistant staff in areas like children's services and reference, which contributes to their library expertise and investment.

It will benefit our patrons to provide more staff with an off-island perspective on public library programs and trends, and training opportunities will help staff feel valued and supported. Virtual and in-person training opportunities support our FY26 goal to develop a team of library staff who are knowledgeable, confident, creative, and invested in the library's mission.



Library Advisory Committee

The Unalaska Public Library Advisory Committee is comprised of seven individuals who are appointed by the Mayor and confirmed by the Unalaska City Council. Members serve staggered three-year terms. The Director of Parks, Culture, and Recreation and the City Librarian serve as ex-officio members of the Committee. Committee members are required to be residents of the City of Unalaska and serve in a purely advisory role. The library meets monthly, with the exception of June, July, and August, and their meetings are open to the public. Meeting agendas and minutes are available on the City of Unalaska website.

Current members of the Library Advisory Committee:

M. Lynn Crane, Chair
Karen Macke, Vice Chair
Debra Hanson-Zueger
Virginia Hatfield
Cat Hazen
Estkarlen Magdaong
Ellis Berry

Friends of the Library

Friends of the Unalaska Public Library is a non-profit corporation registered with the State of Alaska. This group runs the used book sale in the library and manages the Little Free Library at the Tom Madsen Airport. Friends of the Library support library programs with fundraising and proceeds of the book sale room at the library.

Current Friends of the Library Board Members:

Rowena Gulanes, President
Ruth Marquez, Treasurer
AnnaMarie Ammons
Amanda Schmahl
Sean O'Donnell

GOALS & OBJECTIVES

Core Library Goals

The Library Advisory Committee determined these seven long-term goals with assistance from the City Librarian. The Committee periodically reviews and approves these goals and last revised them in February of 2025. These core goals guide budget decisions and consideration of new programs and services.

1. Develop a free popular materials library that reflects the needs, interests, and diversity of the community.
2. Provide free programs for all ages.
3. Provide resources for both independent learning and formal education.
4. Spark imagination and curiosity for all ages.
5. Collect and provide access to Aleutian and Alaskan history materials.
6. Serve as a gathering place for individuals and groups.
7. Provide resources and technology that support community business needs.

Special Goals for FY26

In addition to the six core goals listed above, we have several special goals for FY26:

FY26 Goal #1: Evaluate and update library collections, services, and programs to reflect community changes and patron needs.
Strategies: <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Offer at least one special program per month that will bring in new library users.• Continue to weed library materials that are old, outdated, or unpopular.• Decrease the size of the DVD collection.• Add section for “Library of Things,” such as sewing machines, games, and craft supplies.• Research and consider creating a Strategic Plan that will guide library services from FY26 – FY28.

FY26 Goal #2: Promote and increase access to the library's digital offerings.**Strategies:**

- Work with the library's digitization vendor to build a website to host the new Aleutian Region historical newspaper archive.
- Partner with local organizations such as Unalaska Community Broadcasting and Museum of the Aleutians to promote the library's online resources.
- Continue to add materials to online collections.

FY26 Goal #3: Encourage literacy and promote reading.**Strategies:**

- Add new materials to the library collection, with emphasis on children's and adult popular materials and local history/local interest resources.
- Promote reading through special displays, targeted and increased publicity, and passive programming.
- Continue to offer weekly story time for ages 0 – 6 and after-school program library visits for grades 1st – 4th.
- Visit classes at Unalaska City School District at least one time per year, and encourage classes to take field trips to the library.

FY26 Goal #4: Develop a team of library staff who are knowledgeable, confident, creative, and invested in the library's mission.**Strategies:**





- Send the City Librarian and one Library Assistant to at least one conference or continuing education opportunity.
- Continue to add to the comprehensive Procedures Manual for staff.
- Encourage library staff to present at least one program and one display in their area of interest at the library.







FY26 Goal #5: Connect with other organizations and volunteers to expand library programs and reach new patrons.**Strategies:**




- Recruit volunteers to offer programs such as after-school tutoring and multilingual story times.
- Work with statewide organizations such as the Southeast Regional Resource Center and USCIS to offer ESL, citizenship, and/or GED workshops.
- Continue to encourage local organizations to host programs in the library's meeting spaces.

BUDGET

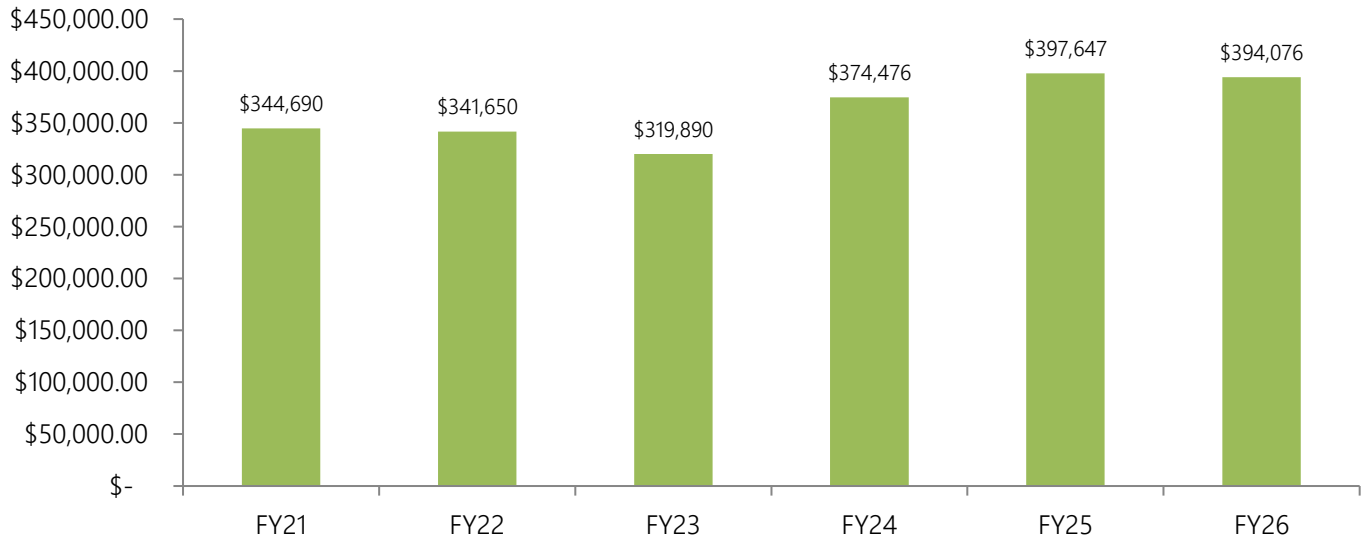
In FY26, our total budget request is 1% lower than the FY25 budget, primarily because of a one-time digitization project that was funded in the FY25 budget.

Object	FY26 Proposed	FY25	% Change & Justification/Description
53260 – Training Services	\$1,600	\$1,600	This line includes registration for AkLA annual conference and ALA annual conference for the City Librarian, as well as one conference for a Library Assistant.
53300 – Professional Services	\$4,400	\$4,400	Covers the E-Rate funding consultant, as well as background checks.
53490 – Other Technical Svcs	\$1,000	\$8,000	 In FY25, this line, combined with a grant line, covered the one-time cost to digitize the Aleutian Region Newspaper microfilm collection. In FY26, this budget will cover digitization of new microfilm reels.
54110 – Water/Sewerage	\$2,400	\$2,400	Projected cost based on use in FY25, plus 10% for rate increases.
54210 – Solid Waste	\$7,200	\$7,200	Projected cost based on use in FY25, plus 18% for rate increases.
54230 – Custodial Services/Supplies	\$50,800	\$50,000	 Custodial services and supplies for the library building. Increased slightly due to rising costs of janitorial supplies.
54300 – Repair/Maint. Svcs.	\$1,500	\$1,000	 New copier in FY23. Increased to account for potential copier maintenance after three years of use.
55310 – Telephone/Fax/TV	\$2,100	\$2,100	Covers telephone and fax services for the library building.
55320 – Network/Internet	\$9,000	\$9,000	This represents the city's portion of the public internet connection, which is also partially paid from the 56451 grant line.
55903 – Travel and Related Costs	\$17,400	\$16,000	 Covers City Librarian costs for travel to AkLA, ALA, and DirLead conferences, plus one conference for a Library Assistant. Increased to account for increases in airline and hotel costs and a recent reduction in state travel grant funds.

Object	FY26 Proposed	FY25	% Change & Justification/Description
55905 – Postal Services	\$5,300	\$4,450	 Outgoing mail items. Budget determined by Finance; this amount is based on their recommendation.
55906 – Membership Dues	\$1,200	\$1,000	 Covers institutional and individual memberships to the Alaska Library Association, individual membership to the American Library Association, and institutional membership in the Alaska Library Network. Increased to cover estimated price changes in FY26.
55907 – Permit Fees	\$550	\$550	Licensing permit to show movies in the library.
56100 – General Supplies	\$22,500	\$14,000	 Increased due to increased programming in FY26, purchase of “library of things” for checkout, and creation of an art catalog profiling public art in the library. This line also includes reading program prizes, kits and equipment for checkout, and staff uniforms.
56101 – Safety Supplies	\$150	\$150	Emergency materials, such as flashlight batteries and first aid supplies.
56120 – Office Supplies	\$9,500	\$9,000	 Covers all office supplies for the library. Increased for inflation, particularly for printer/copier toner for the public machine.
56150 – Computer Hardware/Software	\$4,500	\$3,000	 Covers technology purchases such as printers, laptops, and monitors. Increased to cover purchase of a 3D printer for public use.
56220 – Electricity	\$30,000	\$30,000	Electricity costs for library building. Estimate based on use in FY25, plus 6.5% for projected increases.
56230 – Propane	\$6,500	\$8,500	 This was a new line in FY25, for propane for the library fireplace. This FY26 estimate shows a more realistic figure, based on use over the past year.
56240 – Heating Oil	\$21,000	\$21,000	Heating oil costs for library building. Projected cost based on FY25 use.

Object	FY26 Proposed	FY25	% Change & Justification/Description
56270 – Diesel for Equipment	\$2,000	-	New line in FY26. This will cover diesel costs for a planned new generator.
56310 – Food/Bev/Related for Programs	\$2,000	\$2,000	Refreshments at library programs and public meetings.
56330 – Food/Bev/Related Emp Apprctn	\$500	\$500	These funds allow us to purchase refreshments for staff meetings. Also provides staff with snacks on Library Workers Day.
56400 – Books & Periodicals	\$68,150	\$68,150	These funds purchase books, movies, magazines, newspapers, and historical materials, as well as membership in Alaska Digital Library, which allows patrons access to free eBook and audiobook checkouts. They also fund access for library staff to OCLC WorldCat, where library materials records are downloaded into the library database.
56450 – Grants (Supplies)	\$0.00	\$18,000	 -100% This grant covered the one-time cost for the library's microfilm digitization project. We will not be applying for this grant again in FY26.
56451 – Grants - Telecommunications	\$108,576	\$99,797	 9% This budget line records our two largest grants that help to pay for the library's internet connection. We will likely receive more OWL (Online with Libraries) funding than anticipated, which accounts for the increase.
56452 – Grants - Circulating Materials	\$13,000	\$13,000	Records grants from the Alaska State Library and IMLS for purchase of library materials.
56453 – Grants - Travel	\$1,250	\$2,850	 -56% Decreased due to anticipated loss of one travel grant from the Alaska State Library.
Total:	\$394,076	\$397,647	

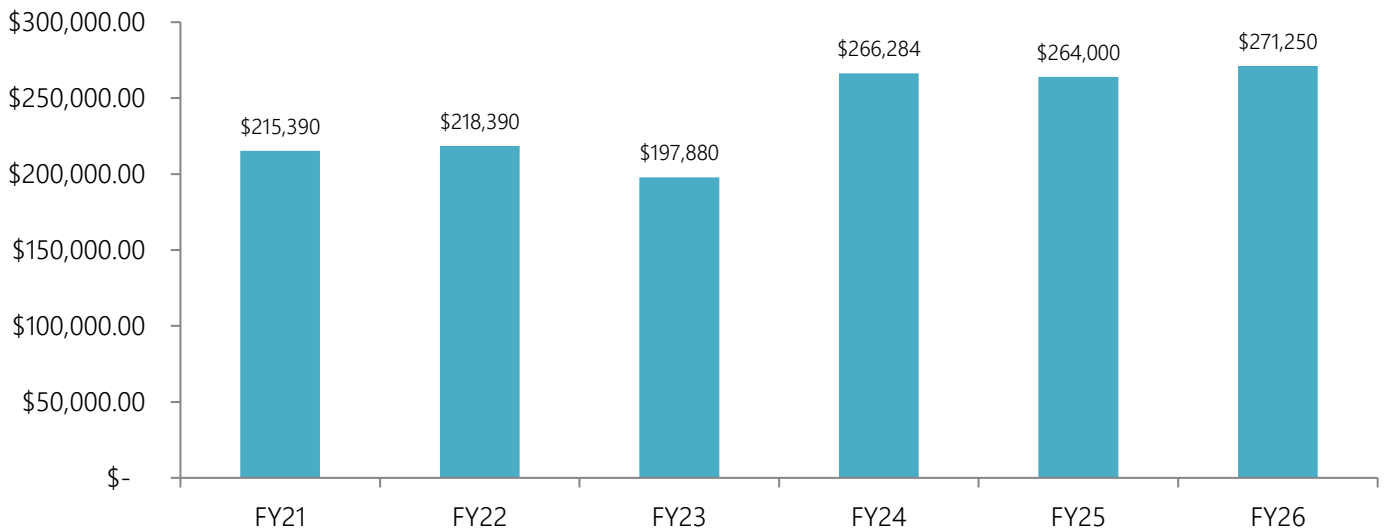
Operating Budget History: With Grants



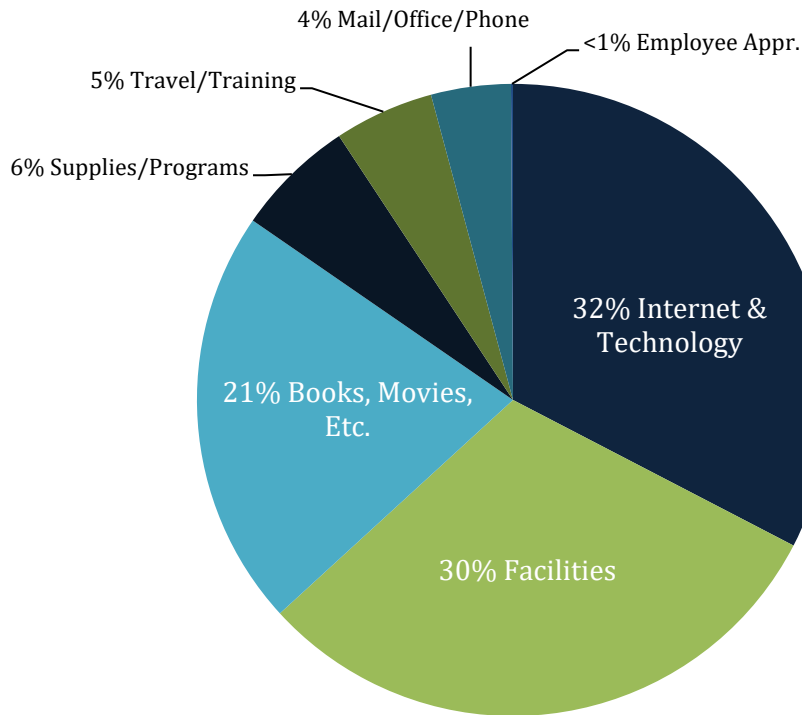
Grants make up a large portion of the library's operating budget, and we generally do not cut lines that have corresponding revenue from a grant unless we anticipate a decrease in available grant funds.

Operating Budget History: Without Grants

The large increase in FY24 was due to the reduction in E-Rate grant funding from 60% to 50%.

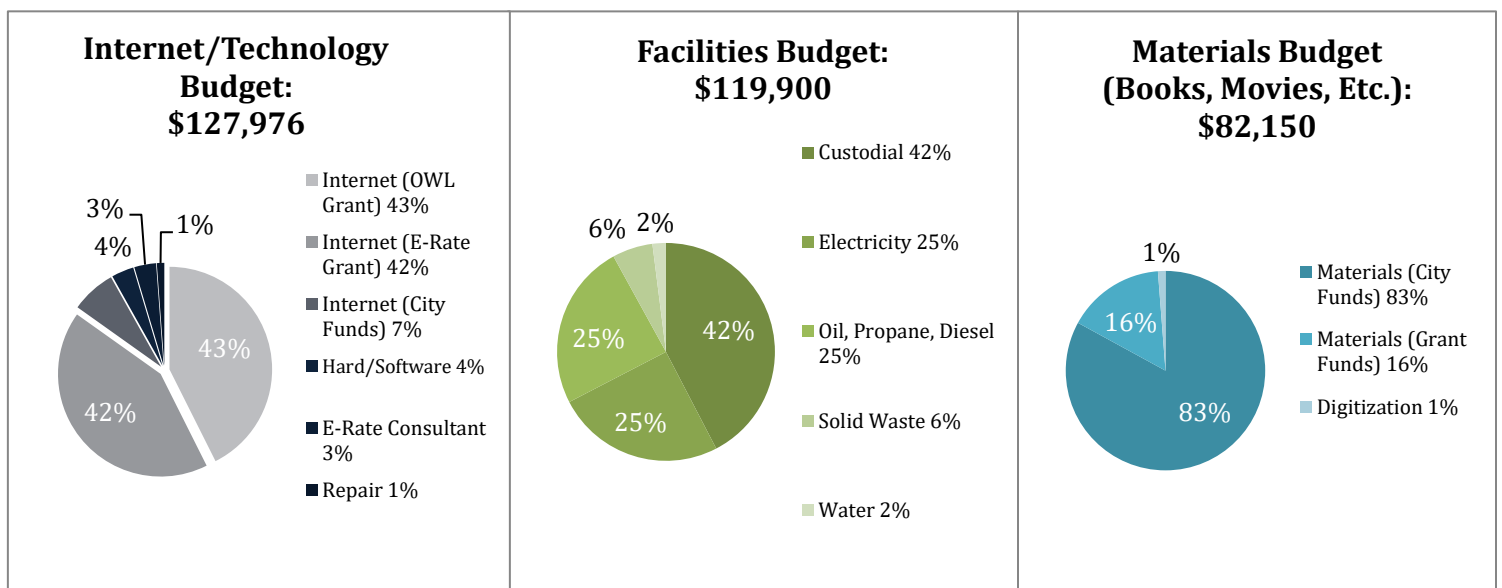


Library FY26 Operating Budget: \$394,076



In most years, we have seen three main categories of the library budget that are fairly evenly divided, at approximately 30% of the budget each, although the book proportion has decreased in FY26:

1. Internet/Technology costs,
2. Facilities,
3. Books, movies, magazines, and other library materials



Grants

Stability of Grant Sources

The grants listed in the table below have been stable for many years, but the library has recently noted signs of disruption and uncertainty. In FY25, the State of Alaska PLA Grant was cut by more than 70%, then fully restored after a public advocacy effort. The nationally-funded Native American Library Services Grant may be affected by recent Executive Orders calling for a federal funding freeze and elimination of the funding source, the Institute for Museum and Library Services (IMLS).

In the next 2-3 years, the U.S. Supreme Court will review a case deciding the future of funding for the USAC/E-Rate Program. On March 17, 2025, the Alaska State House passed Joint Resolution 6 to request that Congress preserve E-Rate funding.

These grants are not for special programs – they fund basic library services, such as public internet and purchase of new books. We will continue to budget and apply for them. If any of these grants are disrupted in FY26, the City Librarian and PCR Director will work with the City's Grants Management Coordinator to try to identify alternative funding sources.

Funding Source	Amount
USAC/E-Rate	\$54,059
OWL (Online with Libraries)	\$54,517
PLA (Public Library Assistance)	\$7,000
Native American Library Services (IMLS)	\$6,000
Continuing Education	\$1,250
Total Library Grants in FY26	\$122,826

USAC/E-Rate Grant

This federal money from the FCC subsidizes the library's internet connection. The amount of the subsidy is based on National School Lunch numbers supplied by Unalaska City School District. In the recent past, this funding paid 60% of the shared internet cost. **Since FY24, E-Rate has paid for 50% of internet costs, a decrease due to the reduction in UCSD students eligible for the National School Lunch Program.** This money is paid directly to the internet provider, not to the City of Unalaska. The library contracts with a consultant to complete the application and maintain associated documentation for E-Rate.

The U.S. Supreme Court will review a case on E-Rate funding in the next 2-3 years. If E-Rate funding becomes unavailable, the city will need to decide whether to pay this amount from the general fund, decrease the library's budget elsewhere, or decrease the library's internet bandwidth.

OWL (Online with Libraries) Grant

This money from the state, distributed by the Alaska State Library, helps to pay for the library's internet connection. In FY25, Unalaska's OWL Grant was \$54,517. Like USAC, these grant funds increase or decrease based on the cost of internet service. **As of the writing of this business plan, it looks like OWL will be funded again at the FY25 level in FY26.** However, in the past, funding for this line item in the state budget has been threatened. As with the uncertainty surrounding E-Rate, if the state discontinues this funding program, the city will have to determine the best path forward for public internet at the library.

PLA (Public Library Assistance) Grant

This money, distributed by the Alaska State Library, is sent to each library in the state that meets their minimum standards for library operations. These standards include number of operating hours, money spent on library materials, and continuing education for library staff. This amount usually varies between \$6,000 - \$7,000 each year, which we spend on library books. In FY25, this grant was cut by more than 70% for all libraries and then fully restored after a public advocacy effort. We anticipate that we'll learn the FY26 grant amount in August of 2025. The application and annual report for this grant are completed by the City Librarian.

Native American Library Services Basic Grant

This federal money from IMLS is received by the Ounalashka Corporation and distributed to the Unalaska Public Library. The City Librarian applies for the grant with assistance from OC staff. The amount of the grant award is \$6,000 each year, and it is used to purchase books for the library collection. With the future of IMLS uncertain, it is hard to anticipate what will happen with this grant in the coming year. We have applied for the FY26 grant already and will monitor the developing situation with IMLS.

State Library CE (Continuing Education) Grant

This money, distributed by the Alaska State Library, is reimbursement for a library staff member's travel to a library conference or continuing education opportunity. Funds are limited, and the maximum amount of reimbursement per library is \$1,250.

Miscellaneous Other Grants

Occasionally, a one-time, unanticipated grant opportunity will arise, and if it fits within our mission, goals, and staff capacity, we will apply for it. For example, in FY25, the library received a \$18,000 Interlibrary Cooperation Grant from IMLS through the Alaska State Library for digitization of our Aleutian Region newspaper collection on microfilm.

LOOKING AHEAD

Library Staffing

The Unalaska Public Library's staff is an asset to the City of Unalaska. In the Needs Assessment Survey for the City of Unalaska PCR Comprehensive Plan, **91% of respondents reported that their needs were fully or mostly met by the library**, which presents a quantifiable measure of library staff performance. In a 2021 survey by the City of Unalaska Planning Department, the only City service with a higher approval rate was the Fire Department. The library is fortunate to have a group of Library Assistants who care about the library and community and show up every day to provide excellent service.

Library staff constantly strive to provide core library services, continue popular programs, and offer new and innovative programs, materials, and services. Maintaining a relevant and updated library collection takes time and expertise, and quality programming requires the same. Services such as passport photos, notary services, and exam proctoring remain in high demand. These services are extremely valuable to our patrons and also require time, skill, and attention from library staff.

In 2023, several longtime library staff members resigned, and we are still rebuilding the library team's expertise, knowledge, and capacity to offer creative new programs. **This summer, we plan to send one Library Assistant to an off-island conference**, since training and professional library resources on the island are limited. In FY26, staff will continue to hone their expertise by trying out new special programs and projects, and the City Librarian will encourage staff to pursue training and education in the library field.

While the library staff is currently near full capacity, there is room for growth in program offerings and new services and technologies for library patrons. The PCR Comprehensive plan, developed in FY25 with input from community and staff members, called for placing a greater focus on library programs. We plan to accomplish this goal with a combination of staff efforts, community partnerships, and volunteer recruitment.

Library of Things

With the extra shelf space created by scaling back the DVD collection, **we plan to create a “library of things” in FY26** for patrons to check out. Other libraries in Alaska have successfully offered items like metal detectors, ice cream makers, telescopes, videoconference equipment, and wifi hotspots. In Unalaska, this collection will be in addition to the special items we already check out, such as sewing machines, board games, and LEGO sets.

Library staff plan to brainstorm a list of potential items, with input from the Library Advisory Committee, and then survey the community on what types of items they’d like to be able to check out.



Conclusion

It is our privilege to serve this community and improve the quality of life in Unalaska by providing excellent library services, programs, and facilities. We look forward to another year of educating, enriching, and inspiring our patrons in Unalaska.