



**Regular Meeting of the Library Board of Trustees
Tuesday, April 21, 2026 – Central Library Lecture Room
3:30 p.m.**

Minutes of Actions and Decisions of the Library Board of Trustees of the Bellingham Public Library as authorized by RCW 27.12.210 and SEC. 7.02 Charter of the City of Bellingham.

Board Members Present: Rebecca Craven, Kristy Van Ness, Kendra Bradford, Deborra Garrett, and Shirin Deylami
City Council Library Liaison: Not present.
Library Management Staff: Rebecca Judd, Annette Bagley, Katrina Buckman, Bethany Hoglund, Jon McConnel, Jennifer Vander Ploeg and Madeline Rosenvinge
FOBPL Representative: Carol Comeau, Friends of BPL Board Liaison
Guest Presenter: None.

Call to order and introductions: Regular session was called to order at 3:31 p.m. by Chair, Rebecca Craven.

Approve/modify agenda: Shirin Deylami moved to approve the agenda. Kristy Van Ness seconded. Motion carried.

Public comment: None.

Consent agenda: In answer to a question, Jon McConnel provided additional context on recent database usage trends, noting a significant increase in activity within the Gale curriculum resources following Bellingham Public Schools' discontinuation of Gale funding last fall, as well as a notable rise in readership of The Economist. A second question was raised regarding the grants line on page 15 of the packet. Library staff will research and report back at the May meeting. Kendra Bradford moved to approve the March 17, 2026 Regular meeting minutes and the March 2026 performance and activity measures and financial reports. Shirin Deylami seconded. Motion carried.

Board Chair report: Rebecca Craven wished everyone a happy National Library Week and National Library Workers Appreciation Day. She and Kristy Van Ness attended the Friends Annual Meeting on Saturday and expressed appreciation for the opportunity to thank the Friends. She reminded Trustees that picture day would take place following the meeting. The next Board meeting will be held at the

Fairhaven Branch Library in the Fireplace Room; Trustees will meet at the book drop in front of the library.

Board member reports: None.

City Council liaison report: None.

Friends of BPL report: Carol Comeau thanked Trustees who attended the Friends Annual Meeting and shared that the presentations on the renovation project and Library services were well received. She reported that the next four-day book sale will take place May 20–23 and that officer elections have been completed. The Friends anticipate being able to use the Bellis Fair space for book sales during the renovation. Carol also noted recent changes in the Bellingham School District's library staffing model and expressed interest in how this may affect student access to ConnectEd.

Library Director report: Director Rebecca Judd conveyed apologies from the Mayor's Office for not being able to attend but noted they plan to return next month. She thanked the Friends for providing treats and recognition for staff during National Library Week. Rebecca highlighted the article in the packet written about the recent Seattle Public Library levy proposal, which will be on the Aug 4 ballot.

National Library Week: Resolution in Honor of National Library Workers

Appreciation Day – Action Item (see packet materials): Chair Rebecca Craven read the proclamation (*See attachment #1 at the end of the minutes.*) Kristy Van Ness moved to approve the resolution. Deborra Garrett seconded. Motion carried.

1st Quarter Action Plan report (see packet materials): Rebecca Judd provided an overview of first-quarter progress, emphasizing that most work centers on preparing for the Central Library renovation. Staff committees and workgroups continue to meet regularly to coordinate logistics for temporary workspaces, the Bellis Fair multipurpose space, and planning for holds pickup and materials storage. The major donor campaign and the youth renovation committee also remained key areas of focus throughout the quarter. In addition to renovation-related efforts, staff continued progress on the new materials vendor contract and maintaining strong accessibility standards ahead of the extended compliance deadlines.

Open Hours Level of Service Draft Revision - Discussion (see packet materials) The Board discussed the draft levels of service in Rebecca Judd's presentation (*See attachment #2 at the end of the minutes*). Discussion focused on balancing system-wide consistency with the differing needs of individual branches, particularly the Central Library. Trustees also considered priorities should funding limitations prevent full implementation, including expanded evening hours and phased approaches to increased service.

Board members discussed whether the proposed standards adequately reflect community growth and increasing demand for library services. They expressed support for greater consistency in branch hours, and specific language about evening and weekend hours. Trustees emphasized the importance

of long-term planning as the community and library system continue to grow. Chair Rebecca Craven stated the item would return next month for further discussion and possible Board action.

Statistical Trends: Inputs and Outputs through 2025

- Jon McConnell, Head of Digital Services presented his annual statistics report. *(See attachment #3 at the end of the minutes).*

Central Library Renovation Update: Rebecca Judd invited suggestions for community groups that may appreciate a renovation presentation. She shared that the most recent detailed design cost estimate came in lower than expected, allowing some previously removed elements to be added back into the project. Planning is also progressing on several related initiatives, including discussions with Parks and Recreation about adding a children’s play feature at Lee Memorial Park and preparing for exterior improvements funded through Representative Larsen’s \$850,000 allocation. The Library is awaiting the official award letter, after which work will need to proceed quickly. Staff intend to coordinate exterior upgrades - such as improvements to the plaza and the main and children’s entrances- with the building closure period to maximize efficiency. The Board expressed agreement with the direction of the exterior scope of work, as well as the children’s play feature at Lee Memorial Park.

Fundraising Committee update: The Capital Campaign Committee continues to meet monthly. Members discussed messaging strategies around what the Library hopes people will think, feel, and do after hearing about the project. Library Giving Day raised \$17,998.06 between March 26 and April 18.

Day Center Update: The City is working on property acquisition and has issued an RFP for a service provider. Proposals are due April 24. County and City partners, including the Whatcom County Health and Community Services, are involved.

New Business:

- None.

Agenda items for next meeting:

- Level of Service Standards Discussion.

Meeting adjourned at 5:19 p.m.

Next Regular Library Board Meeting – May 19, 2026 – Fairhaven Branch Library Fireplace Room – 3:30 p.m.

Chair, Library Board of Trustees

ATTEST

Secretary, Library Board of Trustees

Bellingham Public Library



RESOLUTION OF THE BELLINGHAM PUBLIC LIBRARY BOARD OF TRUSTEES

In Honor of National Library Week and National Library Workers Day
April 21, 2026

WHEREAS, National Library Week is celebrated April 19–25, 2026, under the theme “Find Your Joy,” a national observance sponsored by the American Library Association recognizing the vital role libraries and library workers play in transforming lives and strengthening communities; and

WHEREAS, April 21, 2026 is National Library Workers Day, a day set aside to recognize the valuable contributions made by all library workers, whose collective effort makes libraries work; and

WHEREAS, the Bellingham Public Library serves all residents of Bellingham - providing access to collections, programs, technology, and community gathering spaces that are essential to the life of this community; and

WHEREAS, the staff of the Bellingham Public Library demonstrate daily commitment to equitable access, intellectual freedom, and the dignity of every person who walks through our doors - and do so with consistency, professionalism, and care; and

WHEREAS, BPL staff continue to serve with skill, creativity, and compassion through an extraordinary period that includes planning for the Central Library renovation and the relocation of services during that transition; and

WHEREAS, the Board of Trustees recognizes that the library’s reputation for excellence - reflected in circulation rates and visit counts that rank among the highest in Washington State - is inseparable from the people who show up every day to make it possible;

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the Bellingham Public Library Board of Trustees hereby expresses its deep appreciation and gratitude to every member of the Bellingham Public Library staff for their expertise, dedication, and service to this community; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Board of Trustees encourages the residents of Bellingham to find their joy at the library this week - and to thank a library worker for helping make that possible.

Adopted by the Bellingham Public Library Board of Trustees on April 21, 2026.

Chair, Rebecca Craven

Vice Chair, Kristy Van Ness

Trustee, Kendra Bradford

Trustee, Deborra Garrett

Trustee, Shirin Deylami

Bellingham **Public Library**

Level of Service Standards Open Hours

Proposed Update
April 2026

RECOMMENDATION

The Board is asked to adopt a revised Level of Service framework for open hours that:

- removes a separate standard for Central and branches
- adds three access dimensions: evening access, weekend access, and uniform weekday access
- establishes open hour ranges of 48–56 hours (Low), 57–64 hours (Medium), and 65–72 hours (High) per location per week
- supersedes the standard adopted June 21, 2016, effective upon adoption

1. Introduction

The Bellingham Public Library connects our community with each other and the world. How well we fulfill that mission depends in significant part on when our libraries are open - and on whether those hours work for the people we serve.

This proposal updates the Level of Service standard for open hours. It fulfills Priority 3 of the Board-adopted 2026–2027 Bridge Strategic Plan and responds to the City’s 2025 Comprehensive Plan, which identifies addressing open hours as a vital planning priority.

Three changes are proposed. First, a systemwide open hours standard is applied equitably to all library locations, replacing the separate Central Library and branch library standards adopted in 2016. Second, open hours standards are expressed as ranges rather than a single number at each level, more accurately reflecting how library open hours are staffed.

A third change adds access dimensions the 2016 standard did not measure: evening access, weekend access, and uniform weekday access. These come directly from what Bellingham residents communicated to us.

2. The Planning Record

2016: LOS standards adopted. The Board established open hour benchmarks based on state standards, national data, and regional practice: 56, 64, and 68 hours per week for the Central Library, and 28, 36, and 40 for branches.

2017: City Council directed progress toward Medium or High service. Following the BERK Services and Funding Models Study, the Council voted unanimously to direct the administration to prioritize Medium or High service levels. That direction has guided BPL’s planning work ever since.

2019: Community Conversations and Strategic Plan. Conversations with 343 Bellingham residents identified equity, access, and connection as core community values. The 2020–2025 Strategic Plan committed to improving access across all parts of the city, including plans for library service in the north area of Bellingham.

2022: Facilities Master Plan documented the access gap. The Godfrey’s Associates Facilities Master Plan found that a north side library was not only warranted but required. It also proposed that limited hours at Barkley and Fairhaven had a significant effect in dampening use.

2023: Bellis Fair Branch opened. The City’s 2025 Comprehensive Plan describes this as a significant step in improving geographic equity in library access across the city.

2025: City of Bellingham Capital Facilities Plan and Comprehensive Plan adopted. The City’s long-range plan references, through the Capital Facilities Plan, a gap in providing uniform open hours across all library locations and identifies standardizing hours as a priority. Each branch location lists expanded hours as a long-term service goal.

2026: Bridge Strategic Plan adopted. The Board adopted updating the LOS standards for open hours as Priority 3 of the 2026–2027 Bridge Strategic Plan.

3. Community Need

What residents said: The 2022 Facilities Master Plan survey asked 980 residents to identify their most desired library improvements. Open more hours came first - named by 475 people, ahead of more digital content, more books, and expanded programming. Their written comments were specific about what kind of hours matter:

"Because I work 8 AM – 5 PM... it is very difficult for me to utilize print resources... I would love to see evening hours expanded at the Central Library at least a couple days a week."

"Open until 8pm would work!"

"I THINK THE LIBRARY SHOULD BE OPEN ON SUNDAYS."

"Would really prefer it be open at consistent hours on weekdays (e.g., 10–2 every day instead of some days 10–2 and some days 2–6)."

"More hours at the Barkley location... it would mean we could borrow physical books more often."

What the data showed: The Godfrey’s Associates consultants, reviewing service area mapping and usage data, proposed that limited hours at Barkley and Fairhaven had a significant effect in dampening use of those locations. Hours are not simply an operational metric. They determine whether residents use the library at all.

Three access dimensions: Across all of BPL’s community engagement, three themes appear consistently. These are the dimensions the proposed framework adds to the 2016 standard:

- Evening access: open hours for working residents and students outside standard daytime schedules.

- Weekend access: open hours for families, students, and working adults whose weekday availability is limited.
- Uniform weekday access: maintains identical weekday hours across all locations, providing a predictable and equitable experience where all sites are open or closed at the same times.

4. The Current Standard and Its Limitations

The 2016 standard was built on sound research, and the proposed framework retains its benchmarks. However, it no longer fully reflects current conditions. Since 2016, population growth - especially in the north and east areas of the city - has increased demand for access, alongside an evolving understanding of what residents need from library services.

Building size and configuration are already addressed by the separate square footage LOS standard. Hours measure when a library is accessible. A smaller library can be open the same number of hours as a larger one.

Adopted 2016 Standard

Service Level	Central Library (hrs/week)	Branch Libraries (hrs/week)
Low / Minimal	56	28
Medium / Operational	64	36
High / Optimal	68	40

. Proposed Level of Service Framework

The proposed framework makes the 2016 benchmarks the anchor points of service ranges, applies them to all locations equally, and adds the access dimensions that community engagement identified as most important.

LOS Level	Hrs / week per location	Access Expectations — Per Location
Low / Minimal	48 – 56	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> At least 2 hours after 6:00 PM weekly Half day Saturday hours Uniform weekday schedule
Medium / Operational	57 – 64	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> At least 4 hours after 6:00 PM weekly Full day Saturday and Sunday Uniform weekday schedule
High / Optimal	65 – 72	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> At least 6 hours after 6:00 PM weekly Full day Saturday and Sunday Expanded, uniform weekday schedule

Open hour ranges reflect how library hours work in practice. A library operating at 60 hours provides meaningfully similar access to one operating at 64 hours - both are delivering at the Medium level. Ranges also allow schedules to be built around actual community use patterns and operational realities.

The access expectations scale with level of service standard: 2 evening hours at Low, 4 at Medium, 6 at High. Each applies per location.

Where Bellingham Stands Today

BRANCH	2026 Weekly Hours	2026 Hours Standard	Evening Access after 6pm	Weekend Access	Uniform Weekday Hours
Central	48	Low	✗	✓	✓
Fairhaven	24	Below Low	✗	✓	✗
Barkley	24	Below Low	✗	✓	✗
Bellis Fair	23	Below Low	✗	✓	✗

6. National Context

The American Library Association does not set prescriptive open hours standards for public libraries in the United States. ALA's position is that each library serves a different community with different needs, and that hours should be determined through local planning rather than national mandates. The IFLA/UNESCO Public Library Manifesto (2022) reflects the same principle internationally, stating that library services require "sufficient opening hours convenient to the users" - leaving the definition of sufficient to local determination.

Washington State does not publish open hours standards for local public libraries. Standards from peer states confirm that BPL's benchmarks remain well-grounded:

- Indiana (590 IAC 6-1-5, reaffirmed 2023) requires Class A libraries to provide 55 hours per week including four evenings and one weekend day.
- New York State requires 55 hours for libraries serving 25,000–99,999 residents and specifies that hours should include morning, afternoon, evening, and weekend access based on community needs.
- Georgia's 2024 standards set benchmarks of 40 hours per week (minimal), 55 hours per week (essential), and 72 hours per week (optimal).

Uniform hours across locations: Several systems have recently moved toward standardized hours as an explicit equity and access strategy.

Spokane Public Library (Washington, 2025). Beginning June 2025, Spokane moved all seven locations to a single uniform schedule, citing three reasons: patrons can plan visits more easily, differing schedules create confusion, and consistent hours simplify staffing.

Toronto Public Library (Ontario, 2024–2025). Toronto extended Sunday hours to all 100 branches by October 2025. A 2024 expansion at participating branches produced a 44% increase in visits at those locations.

7. Conclusion

The distance from where the system stands today to higher levels of service for open hours is significant. Currently, three of four library locations operate below the Low service level. No location offers evening hours, and none are open on Sundays. The City Council's 2017 direction to prioritize Medium or High service levels remains an important guiding commitment that has yet to be fully realized.

Reaching Medium service levels will require increased and sustained investment. The Board's Bridge Strategic Plan identifies the development of a sustainable funding model as Priority 4 - the logical next step following adoption of this framework. The community has clearly expressed what it wants from its libraries, and this framework establishes a shared standard against which progress can be measured.

Advancing toward these higher service levels for open hours will require ongoing partnership between the Board, the City, and the community.

BOARD ACTION

The Board is asked to approve the proposed Level of Service framework for Open Hours, superseding the standard adopted June 21, 2016, effective upon adoption.

DRAFT

Appendix A: Example Schedules by Service Level

The following schedules illustrate what each service level might look like in practice. They are not prescriptive - specific weekly schedules are set operationally based on staffing, use patterns, budget, and program needs. Two options are shown for each level, reflecting different approaches to evening access. All schedules assume system-wide consistency with locations observing the same hours weekdays, evenings and weekends.

Low / Minimal — 48 to 56 hours per week

Example	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat	Sun	Total hrs	LOS
A1: 2 evenings to 7 PM	10-6	10-6	10-7	10-7	10-6	10-6	—	50 hrs	Low
A2: 1 evening to 8 PM	10-6	10-6	10-6	10-8	10-6	10-6	—	50 hrs	Low

- Green = evening access after 6:00 PM. Both examples provide 2 evening hours per week.
- Gold = weekend access. Saturday meets the Low access expectation.

Medium / Operational — 57 to 64 hours per week

Example	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat	Sun	Total hrs	LOS
B1: 4 evenings to 7 PM	10-7	10-7	10-7	10-7	10-6	10-6	10-6	60 hrs	Med
B2: 2 evenings to 8 PM	10-6	10-8	10-6	10-8	10-6	10-6	10-6	60 hrs	Med

- Both Examples: 7 days open, full weekend access - meets Medium access expectations.
- B1 distributes evening access across four nights. B2 concentrates it on two nights.

High / Optimal — 65 to 72 hours per week

Example	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat	Sun	Total hrs	LOS
C1: 7 days to 7 PM	9-7	9-7	9-7	9-7	9-7	9-7	9-7	70 hrs	High
C2: 3 evenings to 8 PM	9-6	9-8	9-8	9-8	9-6	9-6	9-6	69 hrs	High

- C1: 9 AM to 7 PM all seven days - 70 hours, 7 evening hours. Maximum breadth and consistency; every day of the week is the same experience for patrons.
- C2: 9 AM to 6 PM daily, three evenings to 8 PM - 69 hours, 6 evening hours. Serves the patron who cannot arrive before 7 PM on designated late nights.
- Both examples: full weekend access, 9 AM opening, meets High access expectations on all three dimensions.

Appendix B: Planning Documents and Sources

Bellingham Public Library Level of Service Standard - Open Hours, adopted June 21, 2016.
Bellingham Public Library Board of Trustees.

Bellingham Public Library Services and Funding Models Study. BERK Consulting, December 2017.

Community Conversations Report to the Bellingham Public Library Board of Trustees. August 2019.

Bellingham Public Library 2020–2025 Strategic Plan. Adopted January 2020.

Bellingham Public Library Facilities Master Plan. Godfrey's Associates, Inc., September 2022.

The Bellingham Plan: Bellingham's Comprehensive Plan for Growth. Adopted December 15, 2025 (Ordinance 2025-12-039). City of Bellingham.

Bellingham Public Library Bridge Strategic Plan 2026–2027. Adopted January 2026.

Indiana Public Library Standards, 590 IAC 6-1-5 (reaffirmed October 2023). Indiana Library and Historical Board.

New York State Minimum Standards for Public Libraries, Standard 7: Hours. New York State Library.

Georgia Public Library Standards 2024. Georgia Public Library Service.

American Library Association. ALA Standards and Guidelines. American Library Association.
[Ala.org/tools/guidelines/standardsguidelines](https://ala.org/tools/guidelines/standardsguidelines)

International Federation of Library Associations and Institutions (IFLA). IFLA/UNESCO Public Library Manifesto 2022. The Hague: IFLA, 2022.

"New Library Hours Starting June 8." Spokane Public Library, May 2025. spokanelibrary.org

"All 100 Toronto Public Library Branches Now Open Sundays." Toronto Public Library, October 17, 2025. tpl.ca

Stats



Structuring an annual stats report around COVID has run its course, so ...

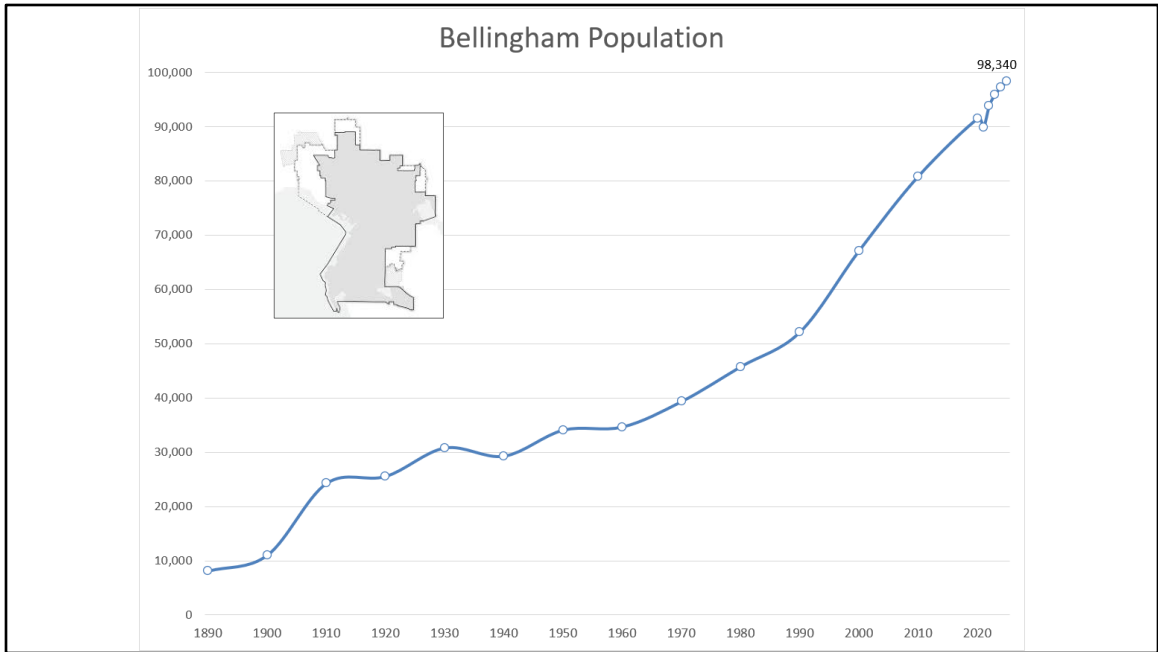
- Annual Stats
- Level of Service
- Impacts of Hours Changes

...this year I'm re-envisioning this a bit. It'll start with some classic stats of continuing interest, with comparisons to peers. But we'll also be looking at some more recent numbers on things that are specific to us.
Ready to blast through some numbers?

RCW 27.12.260: Annual Report of Trustees

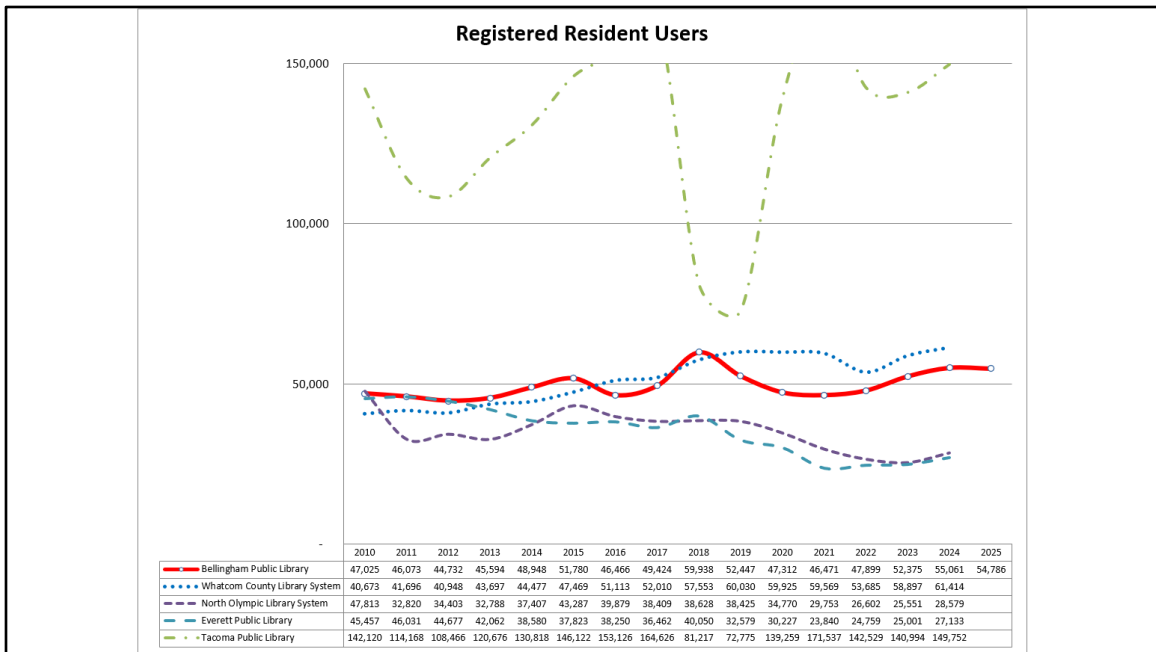
- At the close of each year the board of trustees of every library shall make a report to the legislative body of the governmental unit wherein the board serves, showing the condition of their trust during the year, the sums of money received for the library fund from taxes and other sources, the sums of money expended and the purposes of the expenditures, the number of books and periodicals on hand, the number added during the year, the number retired, the number loaned out, and such other statistics and information and such suggestions as they deem of public interest. A copy of this report shall be filed with the state librarian.
- [**1935 c 119 § 12**; RRS § 8226-12. Prior: **1909 c 116 § 8**; **1901 c 166 § 8.**]

Quick reminder -- Libraries in Washington State are required to submit metrics to their sponsoring jurisdictions, and to the State Librarian. Nowadays there's an online tool to submit stats.

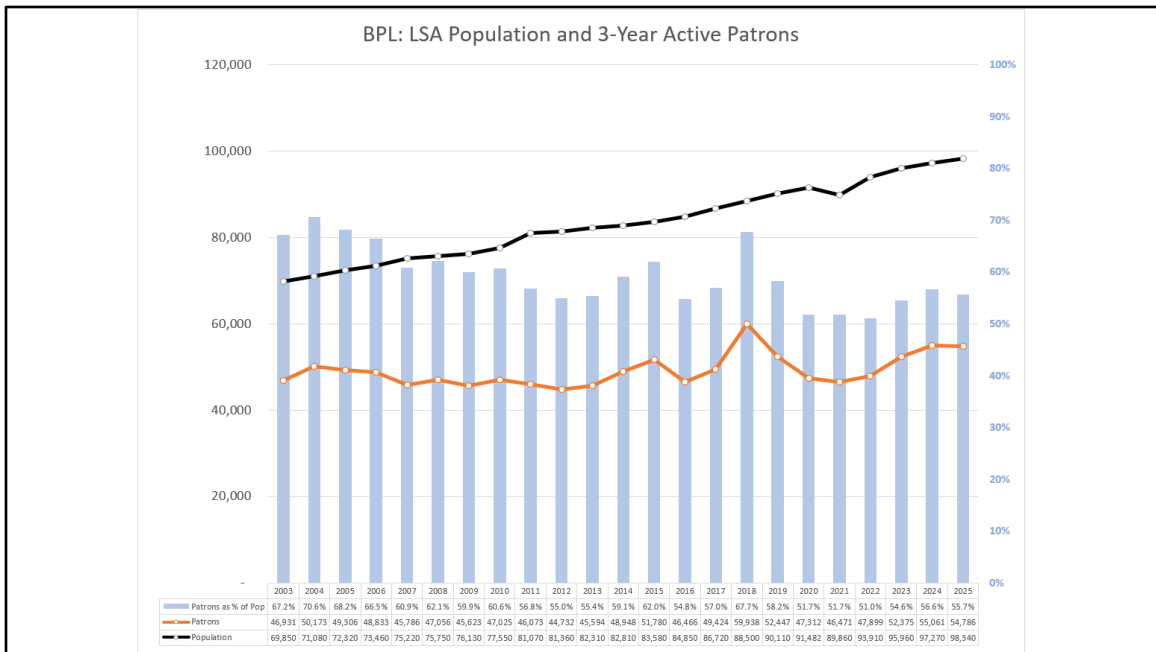


To start, let's set our context. We serve the residents of our Legal Service Area, who are the people who live in the city limits of Bellingham. The Washington State Office of Financial Management publishes an annual estimate of each jurisdiction's population – then when we report stats, the State Library already has that data. OFM's 2025 estimate of Bellingham's population was up 1.1% over 2024, a slower rate of increase than in recent years. 2023 was 2.2%, and 2024 was 1.4%.

So we have the people who CAN be cardholders, and then we have the people who ARE cardholders....

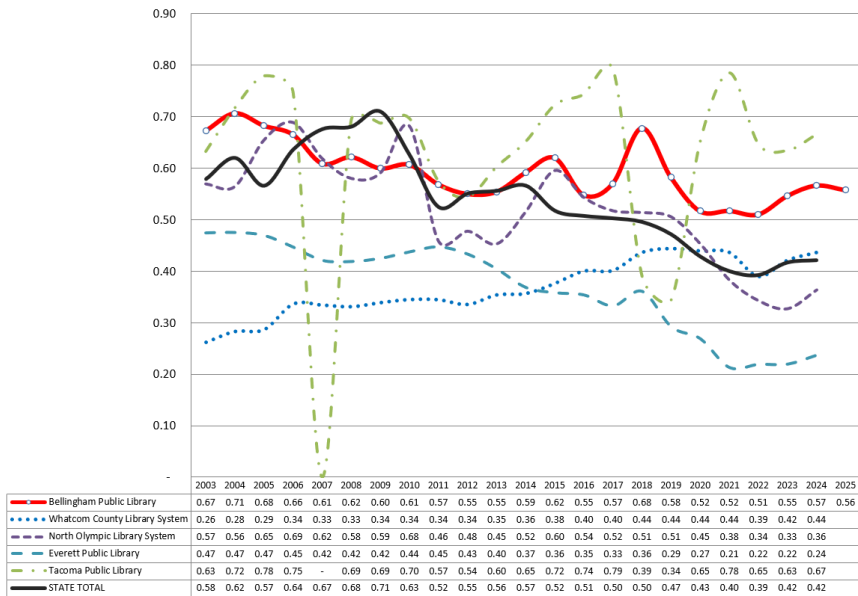


... and cardholders are the folks from our jurisdiction who have signed up for an account. The 2025 number is down slightly from 2024. These are ACTIVE accounts for folks who live, work, own property, or go to school in Bellingham, and the account is used or created within the past 3 years, per the State's definition of 'active'. And some other selected WA libraries are shown for comparison.

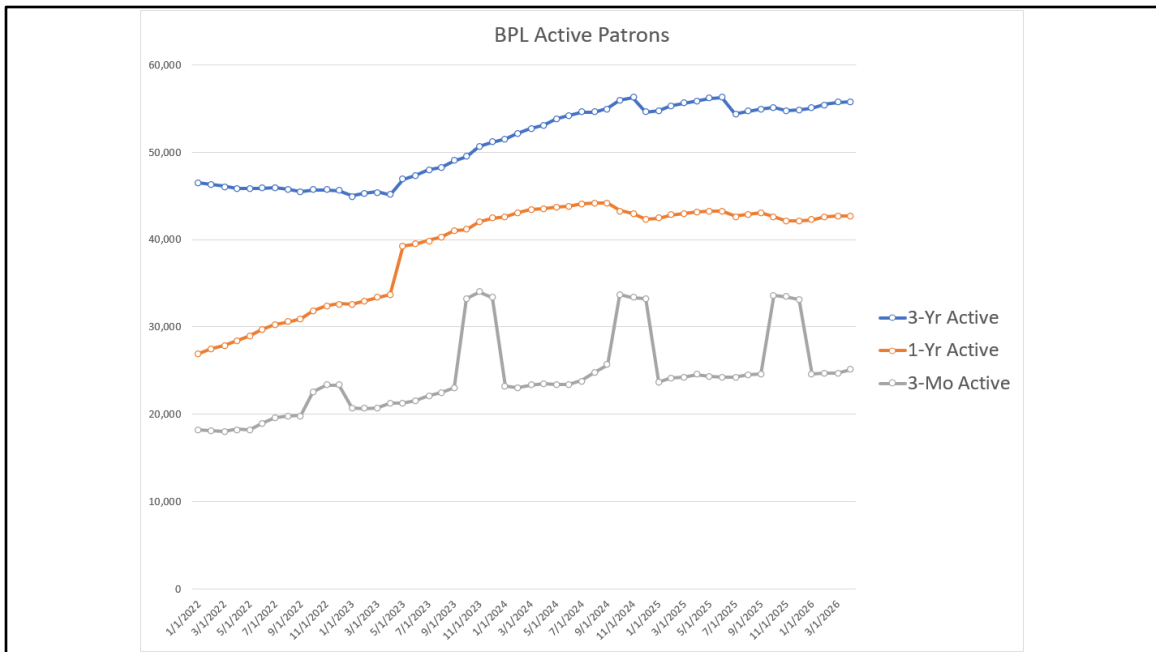


When you combine Population and Registered Users (lines) you can calculate the rate of cardholdership (bars). Higher is better, from our perspective. In 2025 our Population increased while cardholders declined, so the rate declined, by nearly one percentage point.

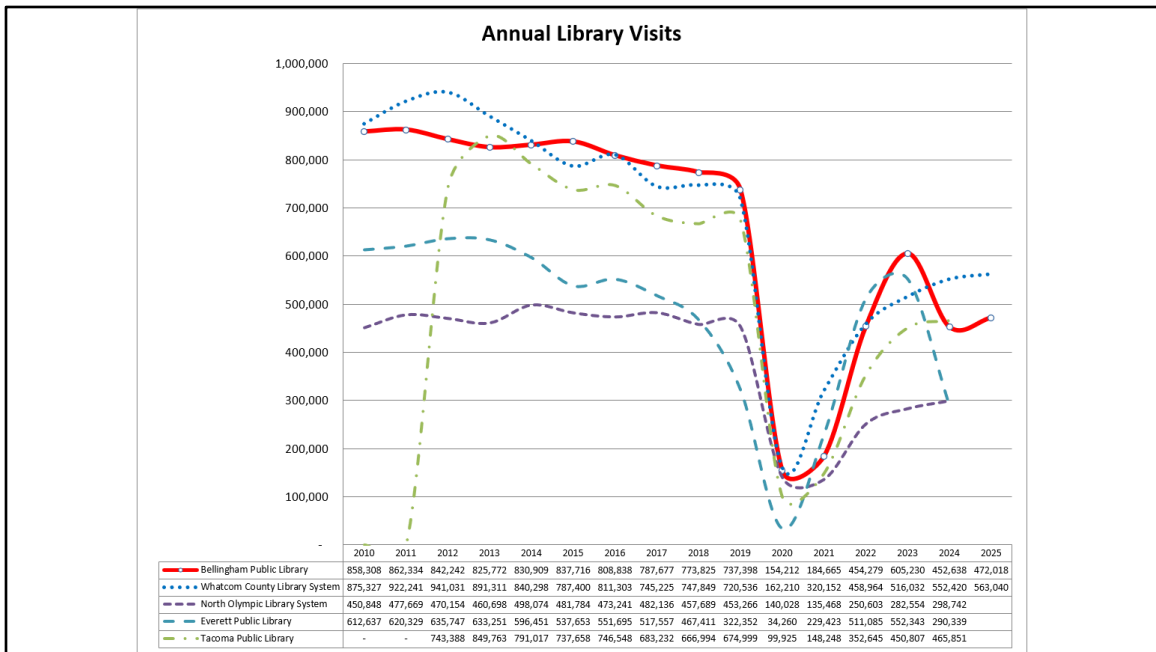
Registered Users as % of Service Population



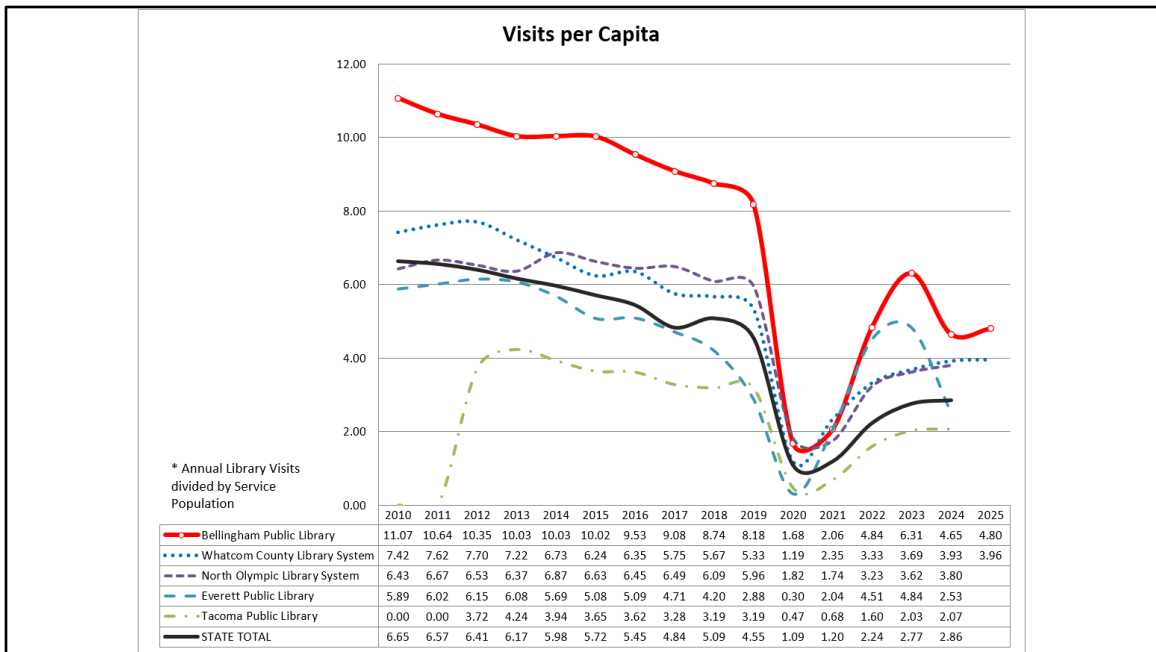
Here's what our cardholdership rate looks like over the long term, compared to some other libraries and the state as a whole. We're currently well above the state's rate. WCLS has been closing in on us.



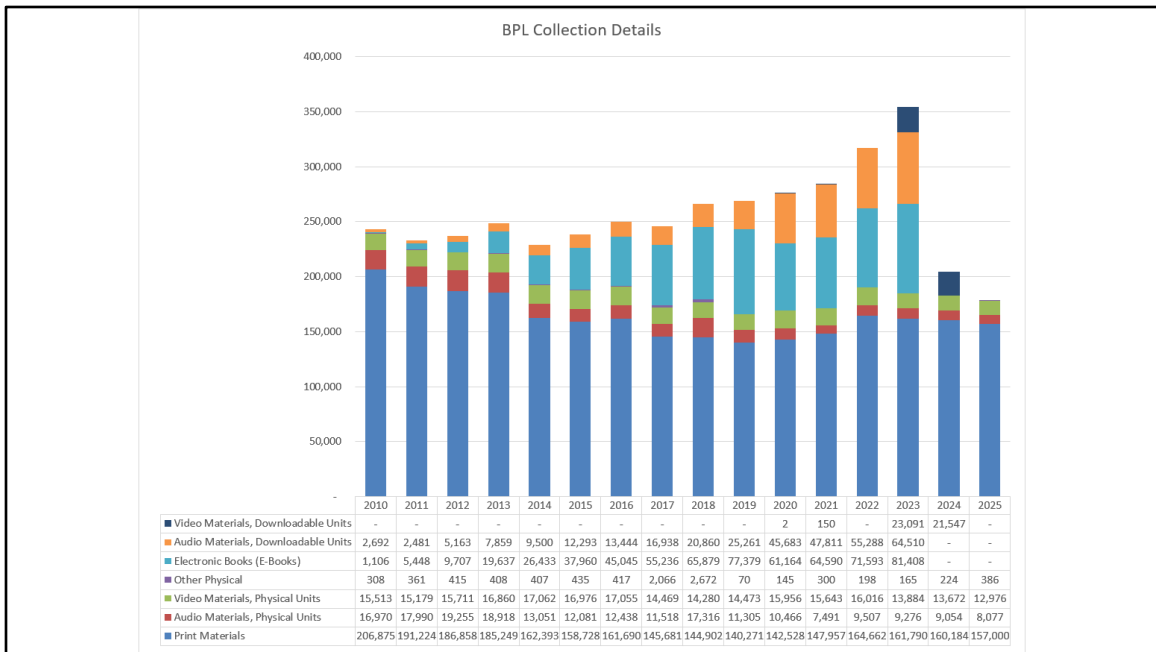
Here's a view that looks at cardholders slightly differently. Instead of just the State's definition of Active, this also looks at 3-month and 1-year active accounts, monthly since 2022. The jumps in 3-month numbers are an artifact of the ConnectED program. We had a long climb back from the pandemic, and then flattened out in 2025. The steady-state numbers are just under 25,000 patrons who borrow or login at least once a quarter, and about 42,000 who interact with their accounts annually.



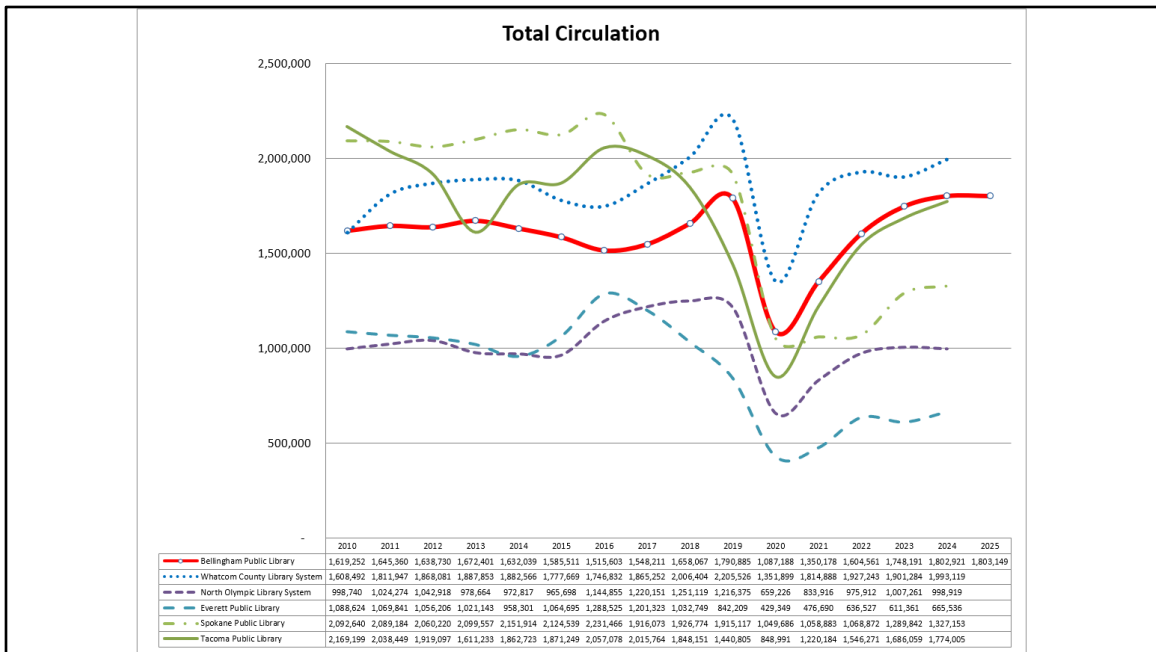
So we have the people we interact with. Among the ways people can interact with us is to visit our buildings, which we measure with door counters. In 2024 we installed new, more accurate counters, and our count dropped a bit. In 2025 we recovered some of that ground, which may put us on a different trajectory than we were seeing from 2010 to 2019.



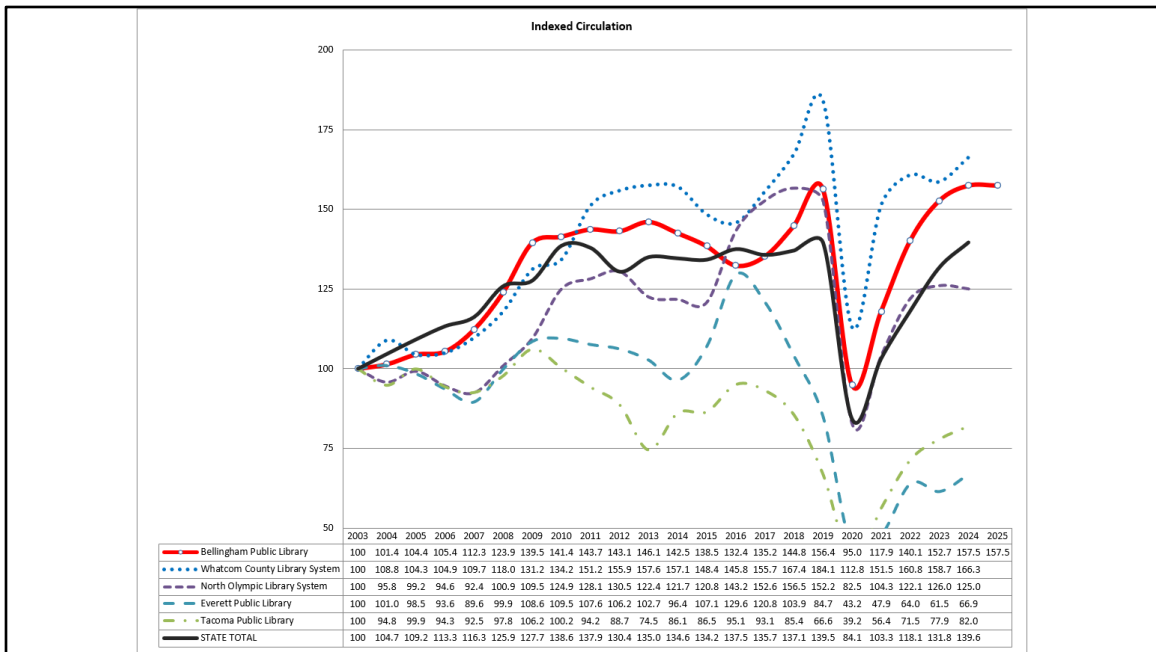
When visits are normalized by the size of our population, we continue to be well above the State average, but we're down more than half from what we used to see before digital circulation became such an important component of our service!



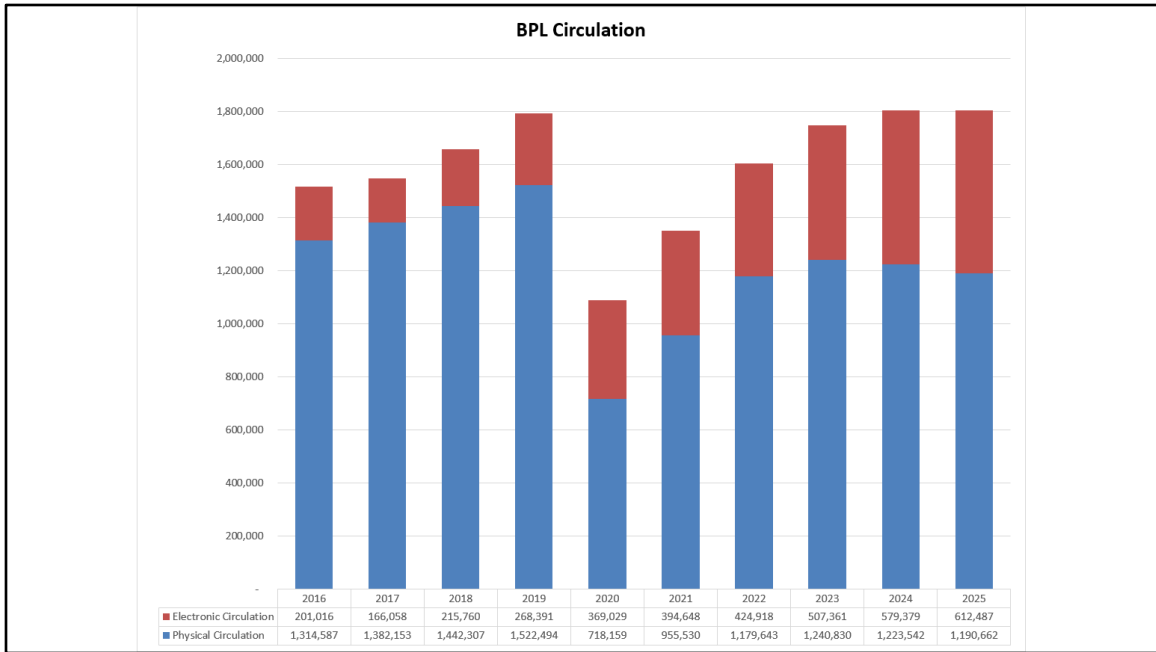
Among the things folks come to visit us for is to borrow things from our collection, like books and DVDs. Our physical collection has decreased in size, from historic numbers, but we’re mostly flat right now. Meanwhile, counting electronic collections continues to evolve. The State Library has stopped counting circulation of electronic items as part of Collections, so we’re left only counting physical items.



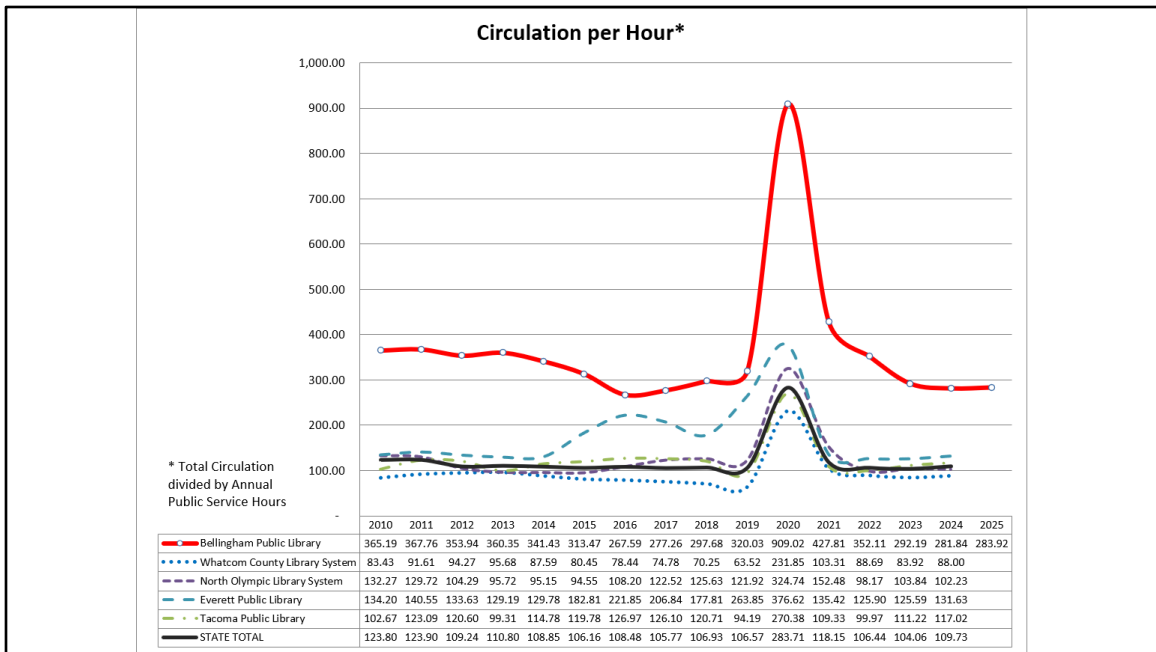
Speaking of circulation, the State Library is still counting borrows of some digital things as Circulations, and our total Circulation increased again in 2025, though only slightly – just 228.



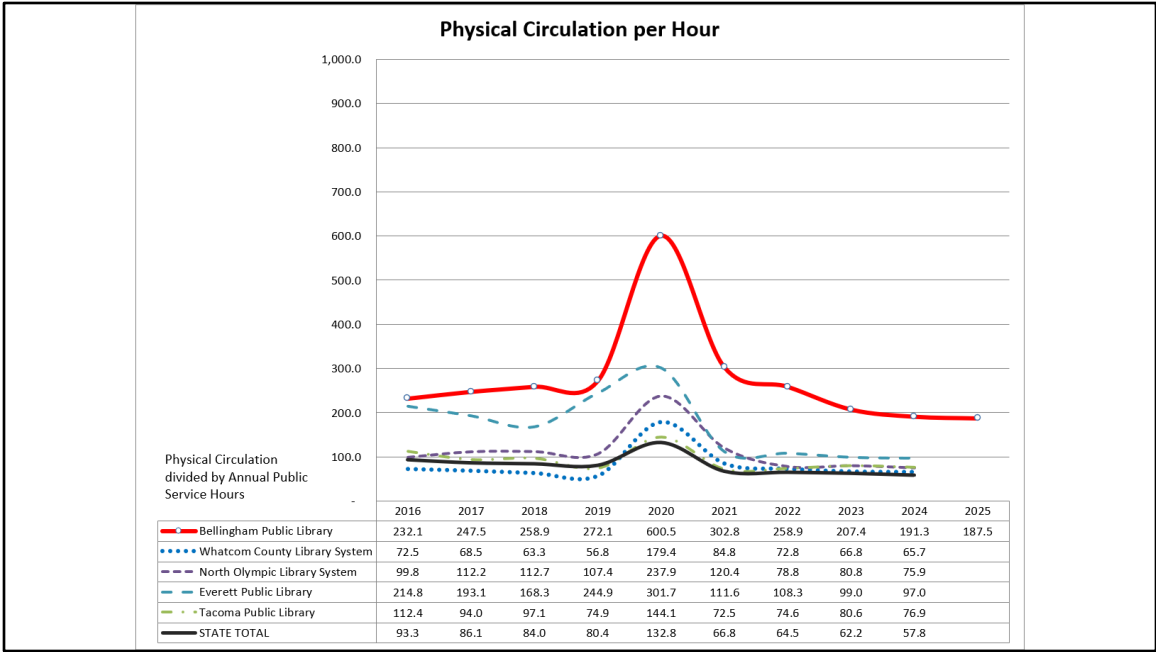
Indexed to 2003 we are still well up, while some other libraries are below their historic levels of circulation. Both BPL and WCLS are above where State libraries are as a whole.



But an increasing proportion of our circulation activity is for our digital stuff. Circulation of physical items decreased in 2025 while digital circ. continued its rise.

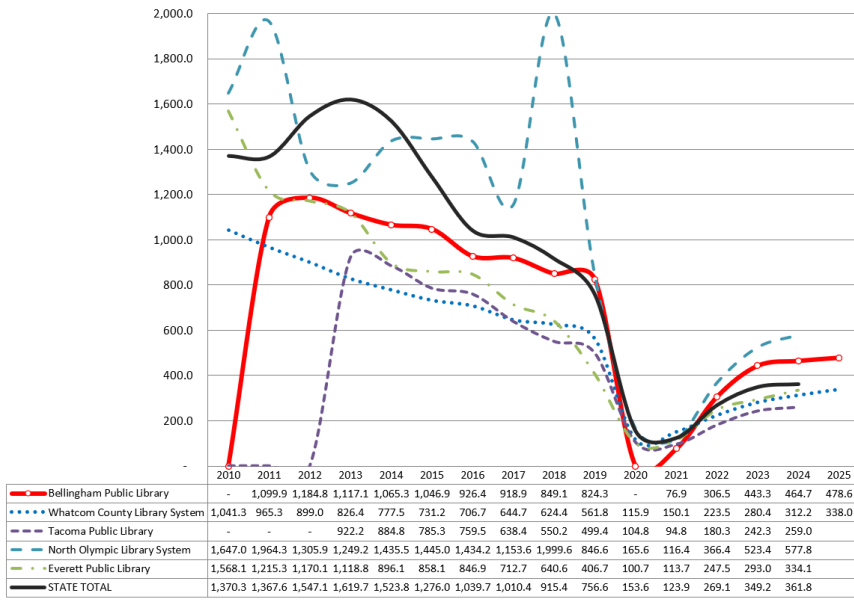


Circ. per open hour increased a tick in 2025, though the relevance of this measure continues to evolve since digital circ. is divorced from open hours.

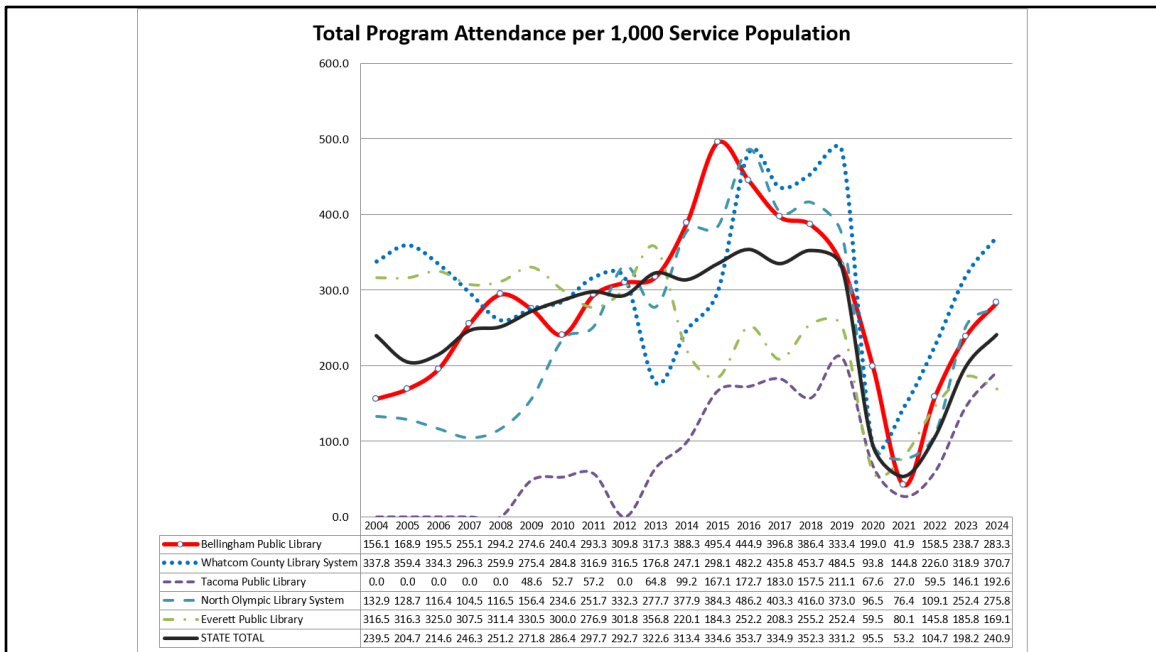


Meanwhile, when we look at just physical circ. per open hour, we see a negative trend. We were still above 3 times the statewide average in 2024, though.

Public Internet Computer Sessions per 1,000 Pop.

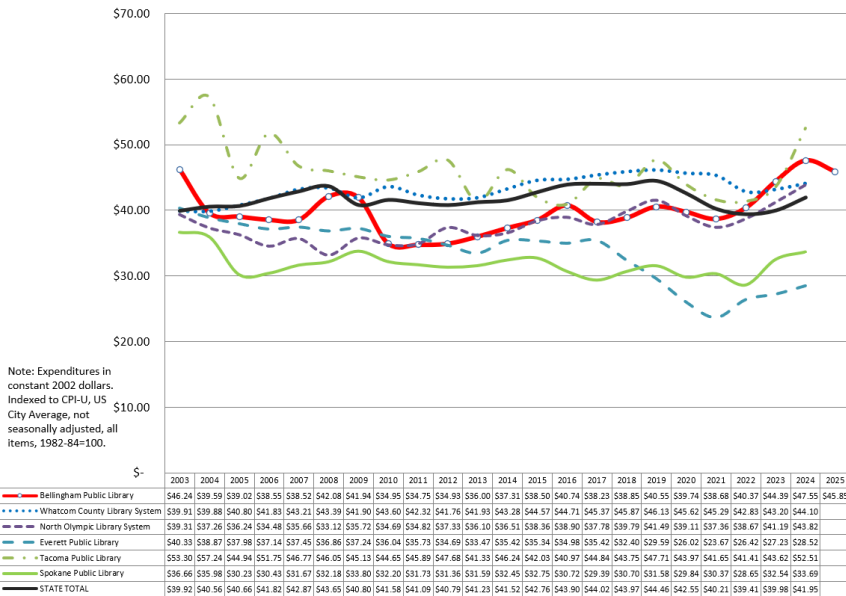


Another thing people visit us for is to use our public access computers. Computer sessions per capita have increased for five years in a row for both BPL and WCLS. Statewide they increased for 2022, '23, and '24. It's possible we've found the level below which demand isn't able to be diverted. Before the pandemic it was looking like demand would just keep dropping, but since the pandemic it has kept increasing.

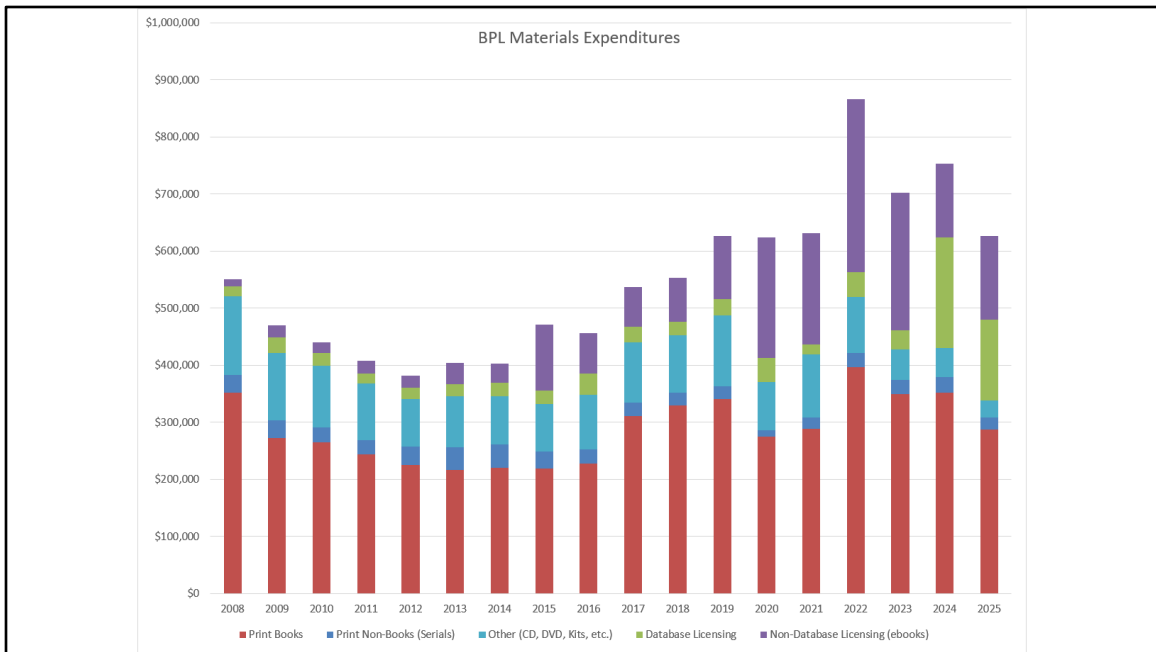


People also visit us to attend programs. For programming numbers, we don't yet have the 2025 numbers fully compiled. But all the other 2024 numbers are available so we can see that among these peer libraries, all but Tacoma had rates of program attendance per capita continue to rebound from the drop during the pandemic. We're continuing to outpace the statewide number by a little bit.

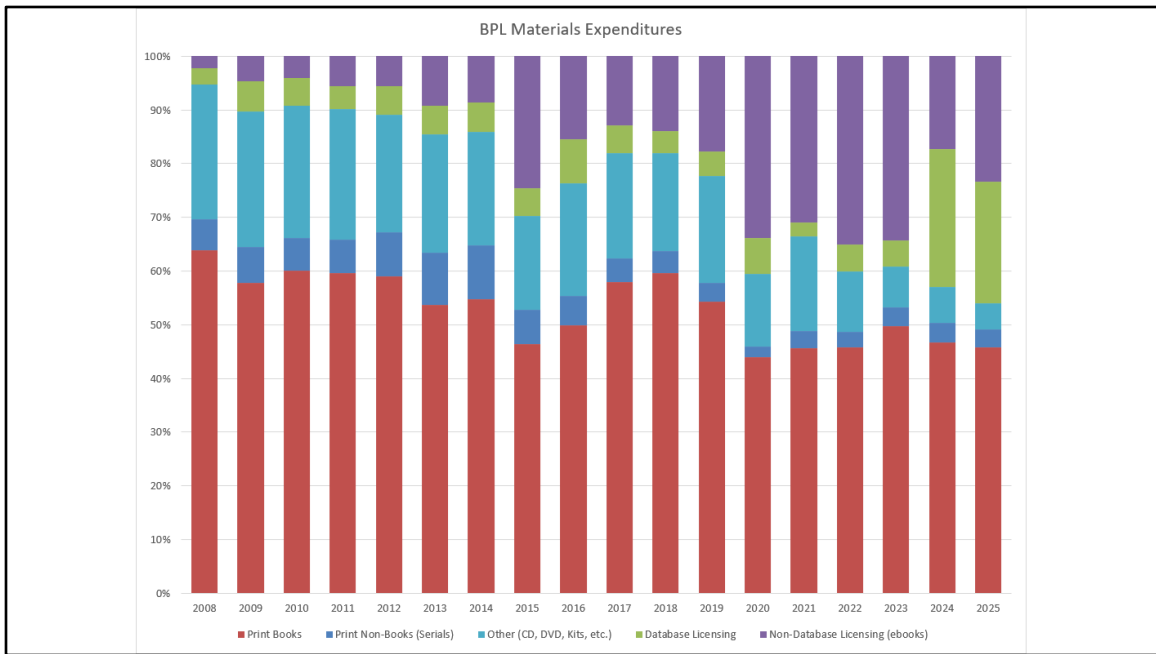
Total Operating Expenditures per Capita, adjusted for inflation



All of these services cost money, which is tracked as expenditures. Here's a view of our expenditure per capita, in constant dollars, since 2003, compared to some peers. For many years our spending power tracked well below where the state libraries as a whole were. We have turned that around since 2021 with three years of increases that brought us up above the previous recent high of \$46.24 in 2003. However, in 2025 we dropped back below.



Looking at just Materials Expenditures (in unadjusted dollars), we had a significant decrease in 2025, bringing us back to where we were in 2019, 2020, & 2021. But with inflation since then, the purchasing power is less. Note: in 2024 there was a change in how the State Library categorized Database Licensing and ebook costs that accounts for the change in the split between those two categories.



The trend of digital resource spending increasing relative to physical items is continuing.

Level of Service Standards

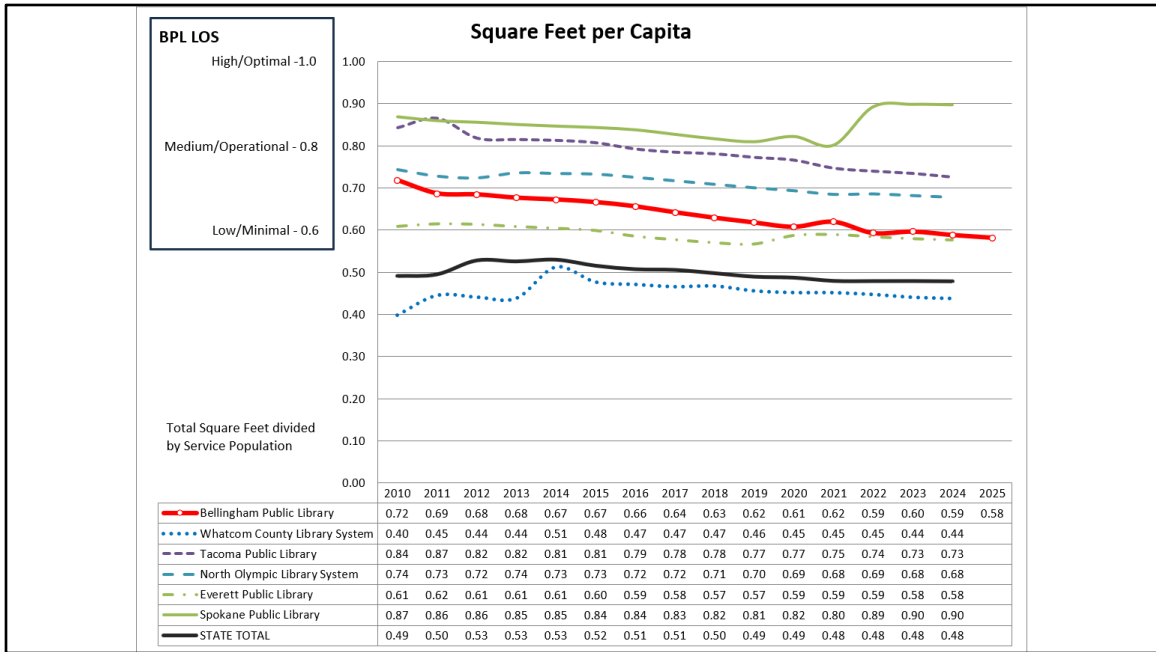
So that has been a quick trip through some of the basic numbers we report to the State Library and otherwise track.

Next I want to look at how we are tracking relative to our established Level of Service Standards.

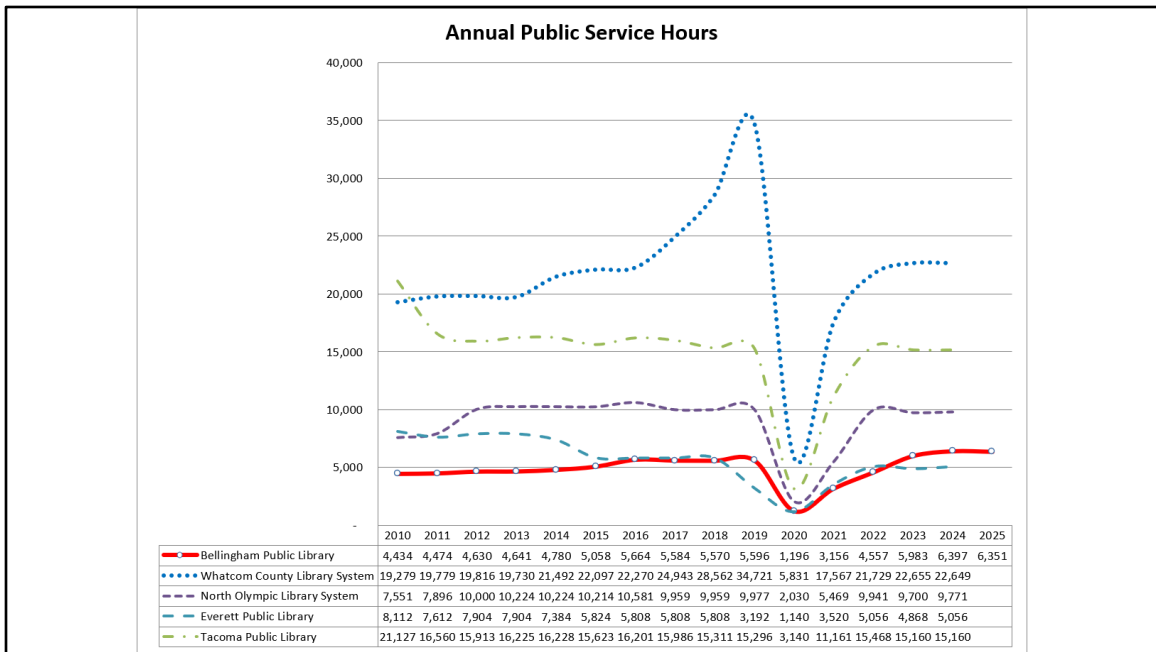
LOS

- Library Facilities
- Open Hours
- Library Materials
- Library Staff

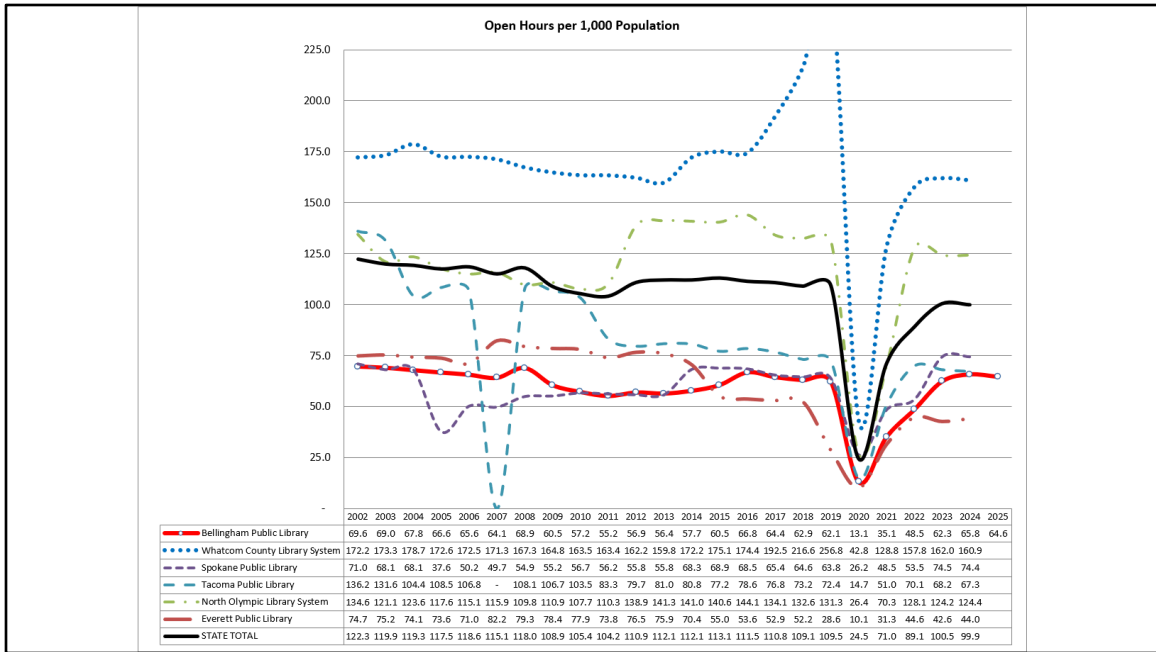
We have 4 LOS standards:



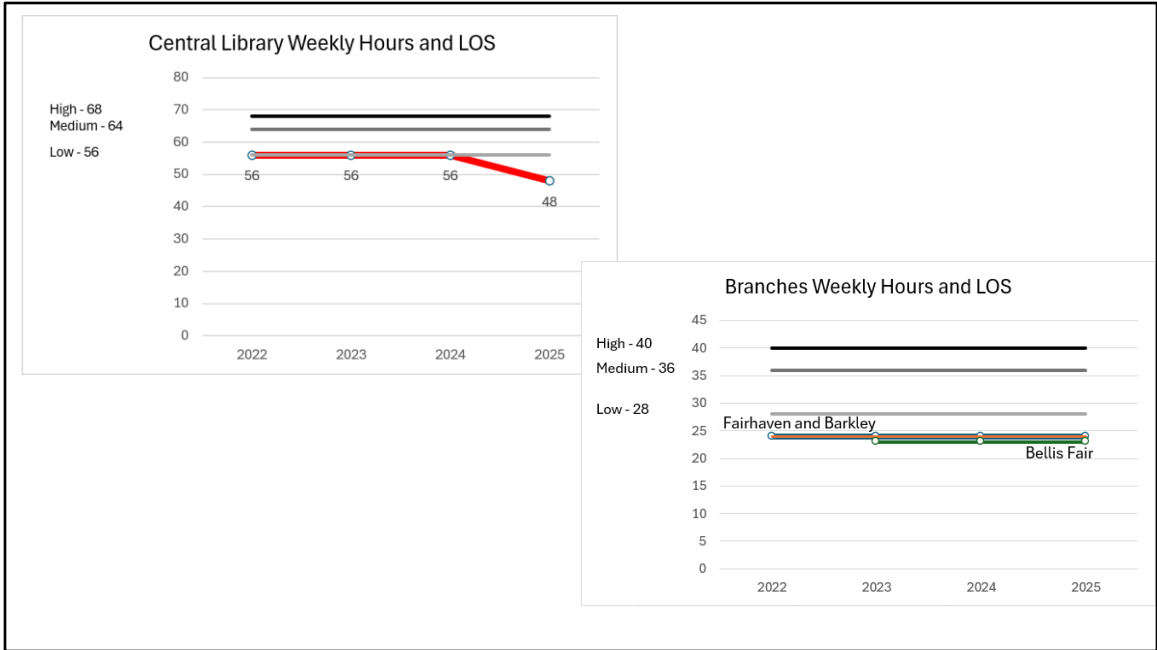
First is the Facilities Level of Service, measured in Square Feet per Capita. As Service Area population grows, this metric will drop over time unless we add facilities. The increase in 2021 was due to the decrease in population, while the increase in 2023 is due to the addition of the Bellis Fair Branch. Since 2023 we have dropped back below the Low/Minimal threshold of 0.60 sq. ft. per capita.



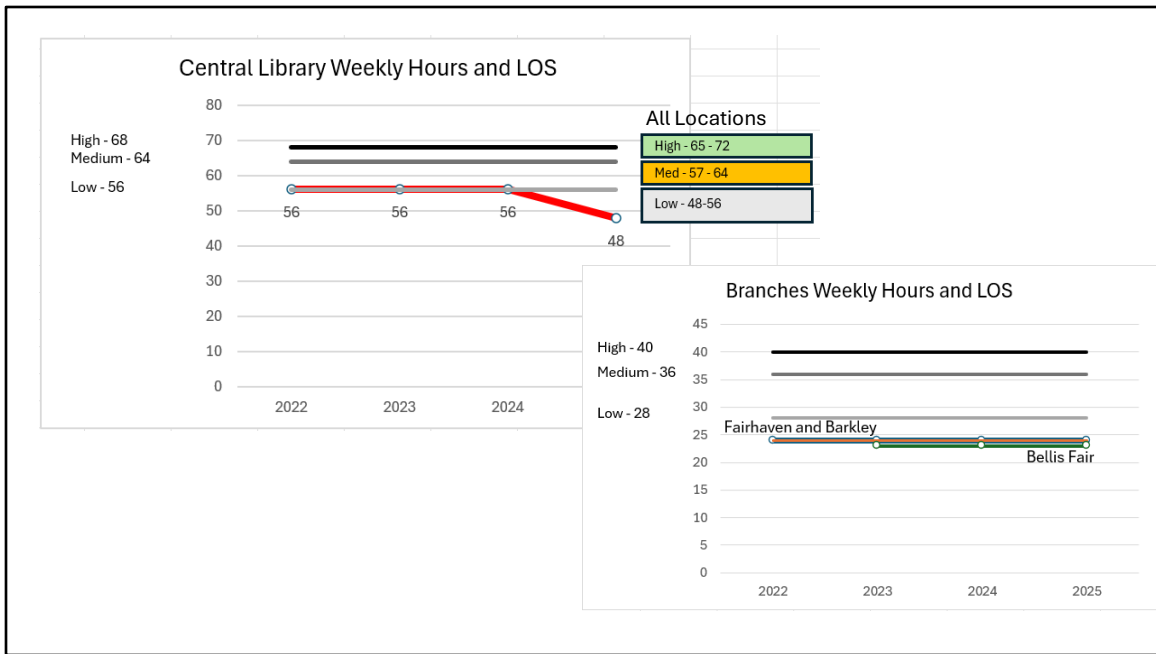
Next LOS is Open Hours. There are different ways of looking at hours. One way is the way we report them to the State, which is a combined total of hours for the year. We had a small decrease in total hours in 2025, down from our record amount in 2024.



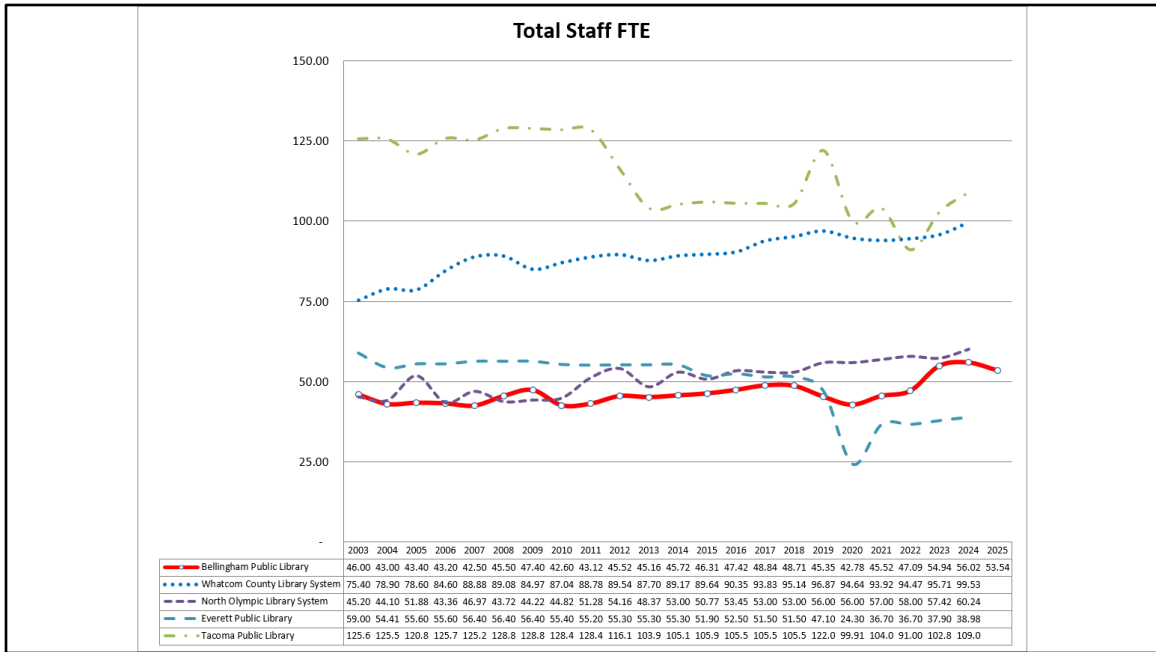
However, we're right in-line with where we've historically been on a per-capita basis.



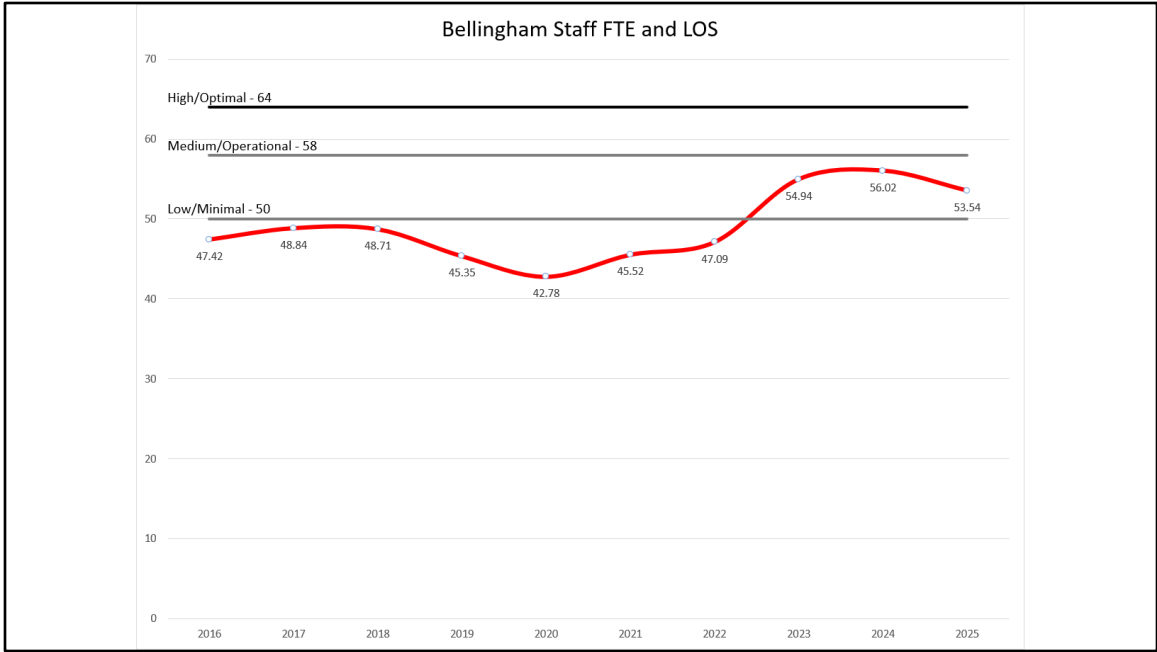
Our Open Hours LOS is defined on hours per week. At the end of 2025 our weekly hours are below Low for all branches. As mentioned earlier in the meeting, this Level of Service metric is currently being revised.



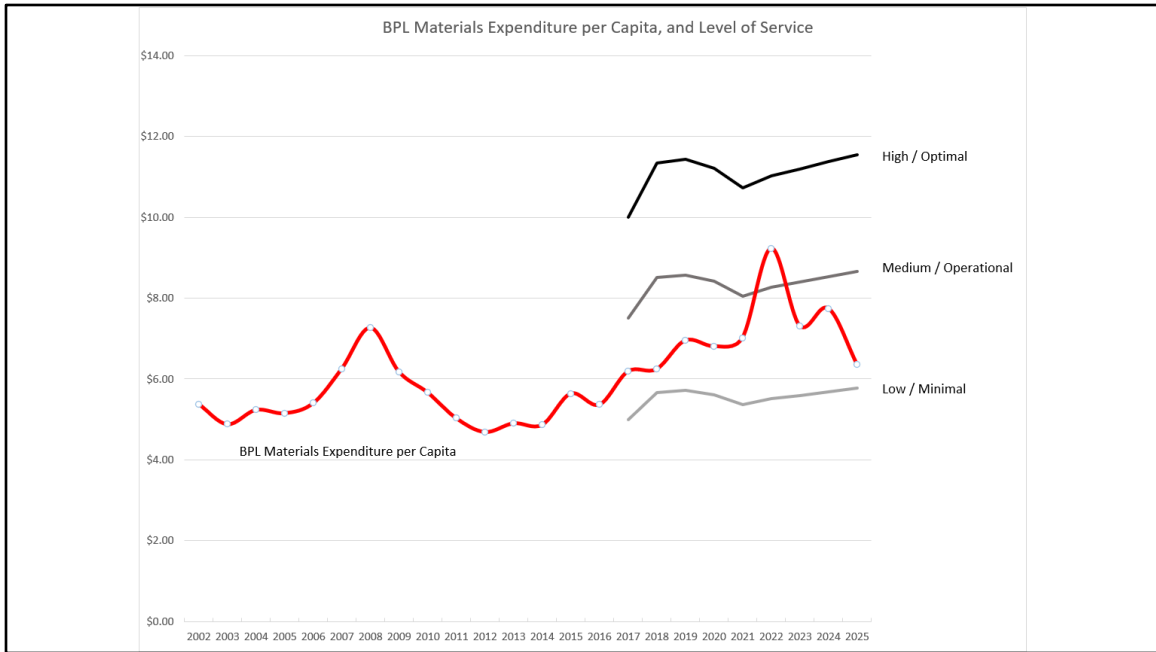
And here's what the hours portion of the draft open hours LOS looks like. For Central we're currently at the bottom of Low, and the Branches are below Low.



The third LOS standard is Staff FTE. In 2025 our FTE dropped below where we'd gotten up to in 2023.



And here is our standard with our FTE back to 2016. Currently we are above the Low threshold.



Our fourth and final LOS standard is for Library Materials Expenditure per Capita. The standards are defined to adjust relative to the cost of materials. In 2025 our Materials Expenditures per Capita dropped back to where were in 2017 & 2018. This was due both to budget cuts, and to the trouble our main book vendor had with filling orders.

Impacts of Changes to Hours

Finally, I want to talk about ways in which we can see impacts from the recent changes to our open hours.

Three Recent Hours Schemes

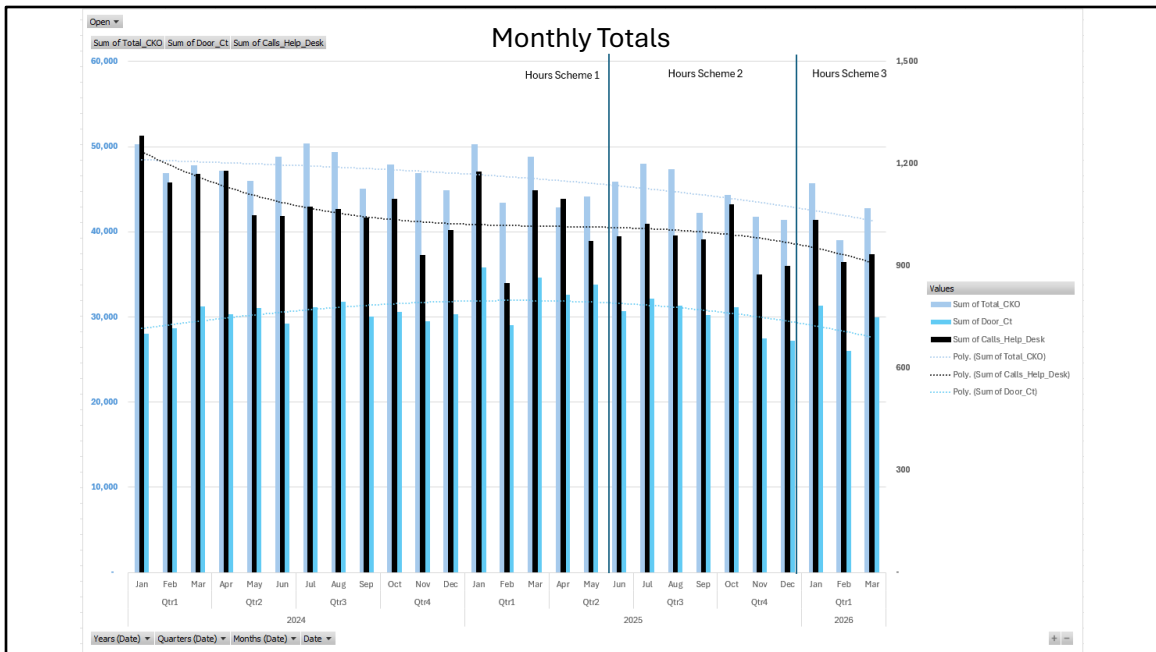
- through May 31, 2025
- June 1 to Dec. 13
- Dec. 14 on

In 2025 we changed our hours twice – on June 1, and again on Dec. 14. On June 1 we reduced open hours at Central by 4 while adding 4 hours to Bellis Fair. On Dec. 14 we ended open hours on Sundays at Central and Bellis Fair.

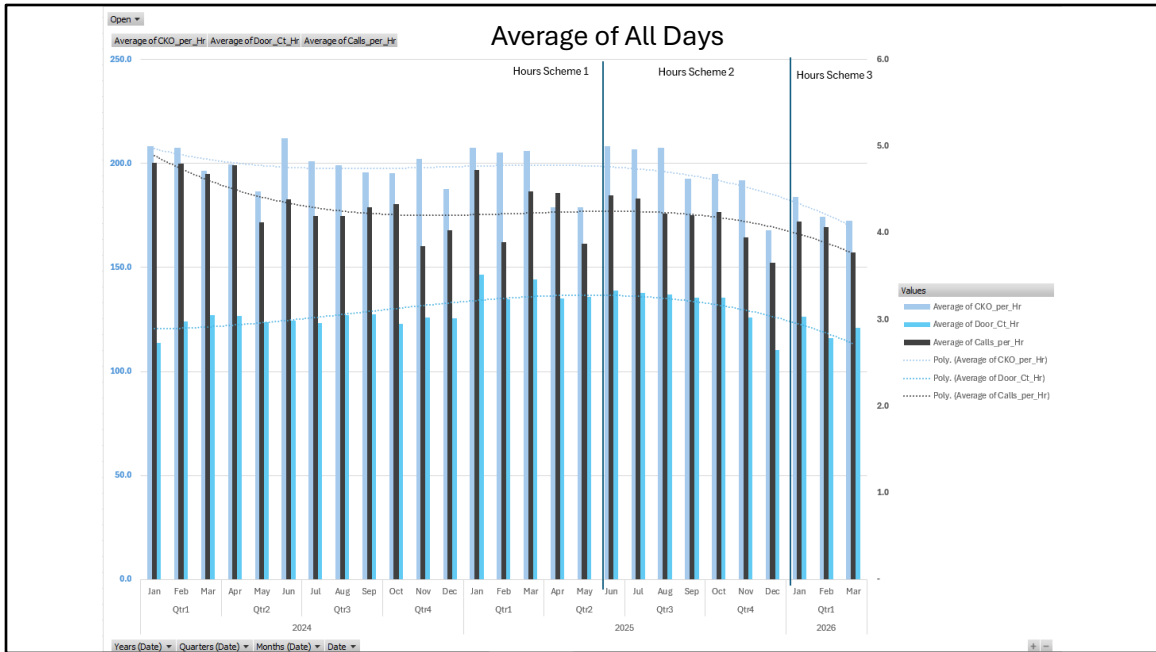
Changes in:

- Door count at Central (main + lower)
- Check-outs at Central
- Phone calls to our main public service line

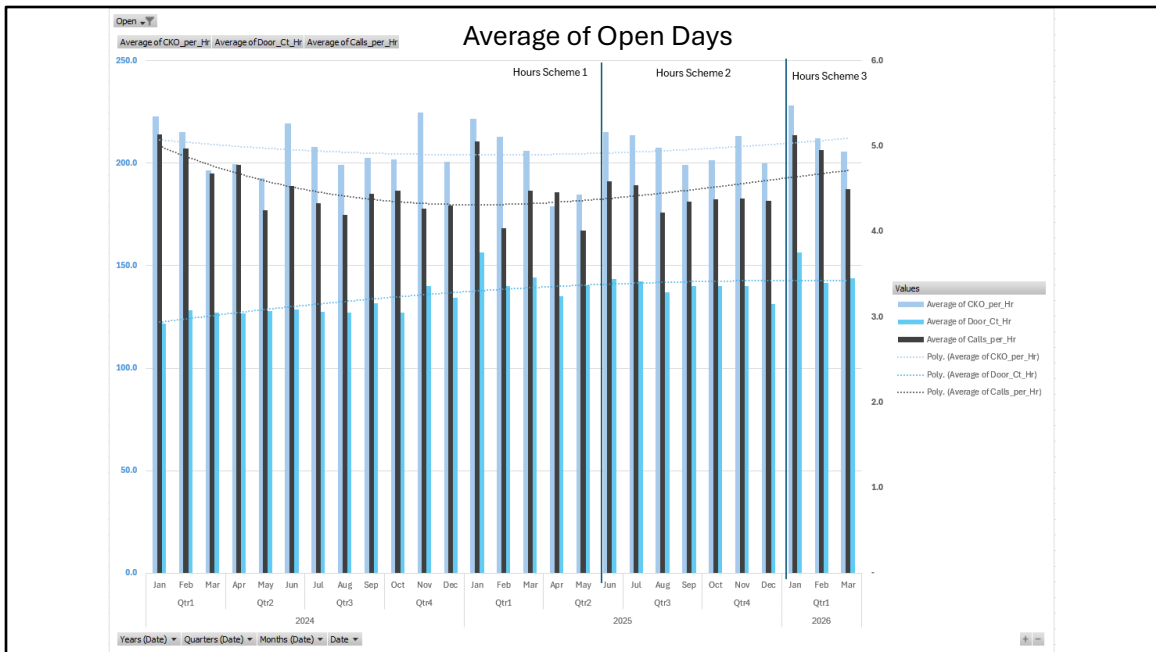
Generally, when offering less service we'd expect provision of service to decrease. And we do see drops in total service measures. Some measures that we have consistent data on are daily door count at the Central Library; daily CKO at Central; and phone calls to our main help line. I've pulled together numbers from Jan. 1, 2024 through March 31, 2026.



First, there's a lot going on here. There are three measures on two Y-axes [blue bars = left axis | black bars = right axis], and each also shows a 3rd-order polynomial trend line – it can track multiple inflections through the data. You're seeing monthly totals for those three measures, Total CKOs at Central; Total Door Count at Central; and Total Calls to our main Help Desk line (answered at Central). Looking at monthly sums, the metrics are all trending down.



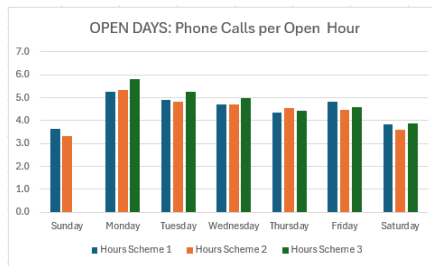
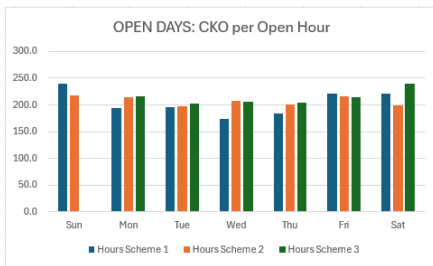
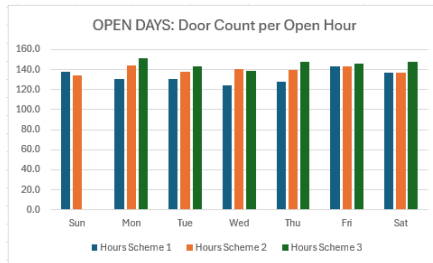
When we look at metrics hourly, trends were initially down for CKO/hr & Calls/hr, with a slight increase for Door Count/hr. In Hours Scheme 2 all turned down, with further declines in Hours Scheme 3.



BUT! All of those are looking at every day – but as of Hours Scheme 3 we’re no longer open every day (and we’ve always had holidays). When we look at transactions per open hour only over the days we’re open, trends are UP on all three metrics, at least when averaged monthly.

We report monthly totals to the Board, and yearly totals to the State Library. Totals may decrease even when staff are working harder if they’re shoehorning a little less work overall into substantially fewer hours.

I will note that there’s an annual trend showing in these metrics where January is highest, trending down through May, then resetting up in June and drifting down through Oct. So the fact this looks at Jan. – Mar. ’26 could skew the trends. We’ll have to wait and see.



Here's a view of those hourly numbers for metrics at Central looking only at when we're open. Sliced into the three time periods, the Third hours scheme, closed Sundays starting Dec. 14, has the highest rate of Door Count per Hour on 5 days of the week; and the highest rates for both CKO's per Hour and Phone Calls per Hour on 4 days per week. So we may be seeing decreases to our metrics overall, but we're seeing increases in the rate per hour. We need to be careful about staff getting overwhelmed with demands if fewer hours are available to provide service.

Questions?



Thank you for letting me run through some numbers for you. What questions do you have about them?