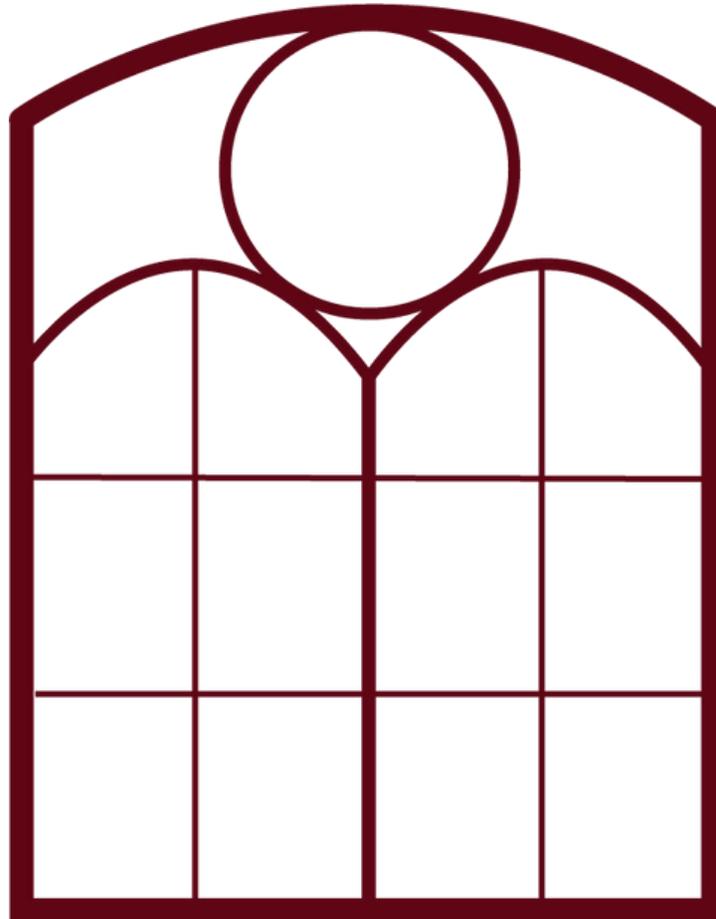


# PEABODY INSTITUTE LIBRARY

Peabody, Massachusetts



SUPPORTING YOUR STORY

**LONG RANGE PLAN**  
**FY25-30**

## **VISION**

Supporting Your Story

## **MISSION**

The Peabody Institute Library empowers the community by providing innovative services, diverse resources, dynamic programs, and welcoming spaces that support education, creativity, cultural enrichment, and lifelong learning for all.

## **VALUES**

Lifelong Learning

Community Connectedness

Service

Accessibility

Inclusivity

## **METHODOLOGY**

The Peabody Institute Library began the Long Range Planning process in November 2023. As part of the process, the library conducted six focus groups with staff, department heads, stakeholders, community partners, and library patrons of various ages. One focus group was for library staff and was facilitated by Massachusetts Library System consultant, Oscar Lanza-Galindo. Additional focus groups were facilitated by the Library Director, Assistant Director, and Department Heads. One focus group was offered at each library location at a different time of day.

A short survey was conducted from January to June 2025 to gather public input, available in English, Spanish, Portuguese, and Albanian. Physical copies of the surveys were distributed in all three libraries and were also available online through the library's website. Participation was promoted through flyers, social media, and through the library's programming e-newsletter and monthly brochures. 129 surveys were received and tallied.

The Library Director, Assistant Director and Department Heads reviewed focus group and survey responses. Using this data, Administrators and Department Heads then identified the library's values, wrote the library's vision statement and identified the goals and objectives presented in this long-range plan document.

## **LIBRARY PROFILE**

The Peabody Institute Library is the public library for the City of Peabody, Massachusetts. It was established in 1852 through the vision and generosity of George Peabody, for whom the city was named.

An elected board of twelve library trustees is responsible for setting policy and overall administration of the Peabody Institute Library. The Board of the Peabody Institute Library meets monthly.

The Peabody Institute Library has a main location and two branch libraries that provide service to the Peabody community. The library's collection provides materials in many formats: books and e-books, magazines and e-magazines, audio books (CDs and e-audio), music (CD and downloadable), movies (DVDs and streaming), documentaries and TV shows (DVDs and downloadable), video games, and online databases. The current collection totals approximately 140,000 items. Circulation is approximately 258,000 items per year from its 17,891 registered borrowers.

Community meeting rooms are available in all library locations for city and local non-profit group use. The community room at the West Branch Library is also used as an early voting polling location for national or statewide elections.

The library sponsors a wide array of programs which include book discussion groups, concerts, lecture series, drop-in technology help, film screenings, yoga and meditation, craft programs, story times, and social meet-ups including a new parenting group and a homeschool group.

For the past 12 years, the library has offered English Conversation Circles led by staff and volunteers to help residents strengthen their English speaking skills. In January 2025, the library expanded these services by launching a weekly Citizenship Study Group, designed to help participants prepare for the U.S. civics test.

The Peabody Institute Library houses numerous objects of historical and artistic significance. These include a gold-framed miniature enamel portrait of Queen Victoria, and a US Congressional Medal presented to George Peabody for his work in support of public education. The Library also possesses a set of world-renowned Birds of America elephant folios of John James Audubon and other artifacts of local or national historical interest.

Library staff participate in civic organizations and initiatives including the Rotary Club of Peabody, Peabody Area Chamber of Commerce, Peabody Cultural Collaborative, the Peabody Homelessness Task Force, the North Shore Adult Education Partnership, the Peabody Education Foundation, and a variety of additional committees. The library collaborates with a wide array of governmental, business, and non-profit groups to serve the needs of the community. These partners include Citizens Inn, Northeast Arc, NSCAP, the Peabody Public Schools, the Peabody Historical Society, Coordinated Family and Child Engagement, and others. These valuable partnerships bring new ideas, resources, and audiences to the library.

In 2007, the Trustees established the Peabody Institute Library Foundation, Inc. to support major initiatives and encourage planned giving and larger gifts to the Peabody Institute Library.

The Peabody Institute Library Foundation raises approximately \$20,000 per year to support library programs and services. The Foundation assists in purchasing furniture, restoring art, and supporting large-scale programming such as literary lectures and concerts. The organization will continue to be the major source of programming funds.

## ASSESSMENT OF USER NEEDS

Results of community focus groups and surveys show that community members generally approve of the service, collections, and programs currently offered by the library. Over 92% of those who responded to the survey said they feel welcomed when they visit the library. Staff were described as “knowledgeable,” “friendly,” “helpful,” “personable,” and “welcoming.” 75% of respondents answered that they used library services within the last week. Still, they have clear ideas for how the library can continue to expand and adapt its services to meet the ever-changing needs of the community.

Focus group participants identified several interconnected community needs, including literacy and bilingual support; technology access and digital skills; adult life skills and career development; housing, food, and support for the homeless; legal, immigration, and reentry services; addiction recovery resources; and the library’s role as a welcoming, year-round safe space and central hub for information. Through focus group participation and survey results, the library was able to establish goals and objectives for the next five years.

## GOALS & OBJECTIVES

### 1. EXPAND PATRON-FOCUSED SERVICES THROUGH STAFF DEVELOPMENT

The Peabody Institute Library will deliver exceptional service experiences for all patrons by investing in staff training and development. By strengthening onboarding practices and providing consistent, high-quality customer service training, the library will ensure that staff interactions reflect our commitment to professionalism and community-centered service.

- Create a standardized and supportive onboarding process that equips new staff with the knowledge, tools, and confidence needed to succeed in public service roles.
- Implement regular, interactive training for all staff that focuses on communication, cultural competency, and service excellence.

- Encourage staff to share ideas, feedback, and experiences to strengthen patron services.
- Align service expectations and training across all public service desks to ensure that patrons receive the same high standard of care at every library location.

## **2. IMPROVE LIBRARY SPACES**

The Peabody Institute Library will enhance existing library spaces to ensure they are safe, accessible, and welcoming. The library will prioritize thoughtful updates to facilities and infrastructure that improve user experience, promote inclusion, and support evolving services.

- Improve the functionality and appeal of indoor and outdoor spaces to better support diverse patron needs and uses.
- Enhance accessibility features across all locations to ensure equitable use for individuals of all abilities.
- Modernize library spaces with technology and infrastructure improvements that support communication, wayfinding, and flexible use.
- Ensure that space upgrades reflect community input and align with broader goals of inclusivity, adaptability, and sustainability.

## **3. ENHANCE PROGRAMMING TO SERVE ALL ABILITIES AND INTERESTS**

The Peabody Institute Library will develop and diversify library programming to be inclusive, accessible, and engaging for patrons of all abilities and interests.

- Offer programs at varied days and times to increase accessibility and participation.
- Design and implement programs specifically tailored for diverse populations, fostering a welcoming and supportive environment.
- Curate diverse, equitable, and inclusive programming and resources that reflect the cultural and social complexity of the community.
- Broaden program topics and formats to appeal to a wide range of interests, ages, and abilities.

## 4. EXPANDING OUR REACH

The Peabody Institute Library will broaden its connection to the community by enhancing outreach efforts, increasing access to resources, and fostering stronger partnerships.

- Strengthen outreach efforts to connect with a broader range of community members.
- Enhance communication and program delivery to increase accessibility and participation.
- Expand access to resources and information to better serve community needs.
- Build and deepen local partnerships to support collaborative community engagement.

## 5. IMAGINING THE FUTURE

The Peabody Institute Library will adapt to the future by embracing new technology and providing innovative programming and materials to the community.

- Provide opportunities for patrons to build confidence and skills through technology training and support.
- Remain flexible and responsive to shifting community needs through thoughtful planning and service development.
- Regularly assess community feedback to help improve services and keep them relevant.



*Approved by the Board of Library Trustees, September 2, 2025*