File #: BIR-27-014, **Version:** 1

TAMRMS#: B05

BUDGET INFORMATION REQUEST (BIR) - Library Guidelines regarding Bill 28
Requested by: Councillor Biermanski
Date of Request: October 24, 2026
Date Response Due: October 30, 2026
Confidential: No

QUESTION

With regard to the planned Bill 28 guidelines, have any books in our COSA Public Library been previously reviewed for pornographic content at time of purchase?

RESPONSE

The St. Albert Public Library operates a public service funded partially by the City of St. Albert, through outside agency funding, governed under the authority of the Alberta Libraries Act. See attached response from St. Albert Public Library to BIR-27-014.

Report Date: 10/29/2026
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St. Albert Public Library

MEMO

BUDGET 2027 BIR RESPONSES

Date: October 28, 2026

To: City Council through City of St. Albert Administration

From: Laura Winton, CEO

BIR-27-009

"Does the library look into partnership funding for special or cultural events?"

Requested by Councillor Biermanski

Response:

Yes. St. Albert Public Library actively seeks grant funding, contributions from partners, and sponsorships to support special and cultural events as well as services. In 2026, the following programs were supported by grant, sponsorship or partner funding: Summer Reading Game, Roonyi and Punyi Children's programming, St. Albert Reader's Festival, Tea and Bannock Programs, Job Supports, One Seed, One Library program.

BIR-27-014

"With regard to the planned Bill 28 guidelines have any books in our COSA public library been previously reviewed for pornographic content at time of purchase?

Requested by Councillor Biermanski

Response:

Library materials are selected by professional librarians guided by the Library's Materials Selection Policy and supported by professional reviews, tools, and industry resources. This selection framework excludes pornography without requiring a separate review of each item at the time of purchase. St. Albert Public Library does not purchase or lend pornography.

Our collection serves all ages and includes materials with sexual content, such as adult fiction and DVDs, health and sexuality resources, and age-appropriate materials for teens. The Library does

not exclude material solely because it contains sexual content. In keeping with our core value of intellectual freedom, we select materials that respond to community needs and interests across the full spectrum of ages and perspectives represented in our community.

BIR-27-022

"What dollar amount from Library Budget is typically transferred to Library reserve each year?"

Requested by Councillor Biermanski

Response:
The Library began including transfers to reserves in its operating budget in 2026 following a period without budgeted contributions dating back to 2017. In 2026 the budgeted transfer was $60,000. In 2027 the budgeted transfer is $100,000.

BIR-27-023

"Of the 49 Library events in 2026 what percentage are outside engagement vs classes or public events, and which of the three has contributed most to the 575 growth in attendance?"

Requested by Councillor Biermanski

Response:
The 49 events represent additional Outreach programs (programs offered outside the library, in the community) between March and September 2026 compared with the same period in 2025. These included multigenerational literacy programs, park-based programs, and an increased presence at community events such as Love St. Albert and Clean and Green River Fest.

Total Outreach attendance increased by 575. Multigenerational programs had the largest percentage increase in attendance (137%), followed by adult programs (75%), special events (73%), and children's programs (13%). These percentages describe growth within each outreach program category; they do not identify which contributed the largest number of additional attendees. Growth reflects both additional programs and changes in attendance at programs offered in both years.

St. Albert Public Library

POLICY

Materials Selection

Policy 6.2

Approved: 2004-4
Reviewed: 2004-4
Review cycle: Minimum every 3 years

6.2.1 Service Philosophy

In support of the St. Albert Public Library's mission, materials are selected to meet the needs and interests of the citizens of the community. Collections are the heart of the Library and are essential in fulfilling its goals and mission.

6.2.2 Responsibilities

i. Library Responsibilities

Ultimate responsibility for selection of materials rests with the CEO, who operates within the policies established by the Library Board. This authority is delegated to Library staff who are members of the selection team.

ii. Patron Responsibilities

The Library notes that some materials are controversial and that any given item may offend some patrons. While library staff are available to assist individuals and groups to select material, the ultimate responsibility for the choice of materials lies with the patron.

iii. Parent/Guardian/Caregiver Responsibilities

The Library provides access to its materials to all patrons. Responsibility for children's use of materials rests with parents and guardians. Selection decisions are not restricted by the possibility that children may obtain materials that their parents consider inappropriate. The library believes in the freedom of the individual and the rights and obligations of parents to maintain their own values in their children.

6.2.3 Selection Principles

i. Community-Focused

Selection is focused intently on materials people in St. Albert want. Close attention is paid to statistics, surveys and demographic information to ensure collections reflect the needs and interests of the community.

The St. Albert community is diverse and evolving, consisting of individuals of various ages, races, faiths, education levels, incomes, sexual orientations, ethnic backgrounds, and languages spoken. St. Albert, as part of the metro Edmonton area, has a stable economic climate, a vibrant arts community, many higher educational institutions and a wealth of active civic and cultural organizations. The Library meets the needs of this diverse community with collections that emphasize:

* Recreational reading, listening, and viewing for all ages
* Early literacy and other initiatives for children
* Lifelong learning for adults
* General research, especially in areas of local interest and subjects in high demand
* Artistic, creative and literary resources
* Information and fact-finding services
* Business, career and professional development materials

ii. Customer-Driven

Patron demand is an over-riding principle of selection. Other criteria for selecting materials are secondary to the question, “Will someone want to use this material?” Popular materials are the focus of selection, with frequent review of waiting lists and other measures of demand. Multiple copies of popular books are added as required.

Patrons are encouraged to suggest titles for the collection. Unless the material requested falls outside the Materials Selection Policy the suggestions will be purchased. Out-of-print, prohibitively expensive or unusually esoteric titles will be borrowed from other libraries.

iv. Cost-Effective

Economy and efficiency are the guiding principles for acquiring materials. While Canadian and Albertan suppliers are preferred, the Library will use whoever can get materials to patrons as quickly as possible for the lowest possible cost.

v. Community Partners

The St. Albert Public Library exists in a context of a larger metropolitan area, with a rich variety of other information providers and other community resources available to St. Albert citizens. The Library has partnerships and cooperates with many local and area organizations with the goal of providing the best possible service to patrons, including:

vi. Other Libraries

Selection reflects the reality that through *The Alberta Library* and other cooperative arrangements, access to the specialized collections of a large city public library system and high-quality academic libraries is available nearby.

vii. Other Community Resources

Selection acknowledges that cooperative arrangements exist with community information providers, literacy organizations, business information providers and each has expertise in its niche.

viii. The Education Community

It is the responsibility of schools to provide materials which support their curricula. The library does not duplicate the school library collections. The library provides materials which complement and augment the needs of students. The library acquires textbooks if they are useful sources of information on a subject for general readers.

6.2.4 Selection Criteria

Following from the Selection Principles above, materials selection shall take the following criteria into consideration:

- Relevance to community needs
- Community demand
- Suitability of format for library use
- Relationship of subject to existing collection
- Timeliness and/or permanent value
- Quality of writing, production, and illustration
- Recommendations by critics, reviewers and patrons
- Budget and space considerations
- Availability at other area libraries
- Local, Alberta or Canadian content
- Accuracy, authoritativeness, originality, insight, importance
- Contribution to balance of treatment of a controversial subject

6.2.5 Selection by Format

New formats are considered and collections established when a significant portion of the community wants the format and has access to the necessary technology. As with traditional formats, selection follows the principle of listening and responding to community needs.

6.2.6 Special Collections

Notwithstanding the selection principles above, the Library maintains special collections of materials based on criteria other than community demand. These include:

- French Language Materials
- Multilingual Materials
- Government Publications
- Local History
- Adult New Reader (Literacy and ESL)
- Career Resource Centre

6.2.7 Donations

The Library accepts gift materials with the explicit condition that they are not necessarily to be added to the collection. The library reserves the right to dispose of gifts not added to its collection. Generally donated items not added to the collection are sold at Library book sales.

6.2.8 Weeding and Replacement of Materials

Weeding is the continuous systematic review and withdrawal of materials to maintain a viable and useful collection. Staff use criteria including use, duplication, age and damage to determine items for withdrawal. Replacement of items depends upon the demand for the title, the availability of more current or better materials on the subject. In general, withdrawn materials are sold at Library book sales. Occasionally last copies of Adult Fiction books are sent to the University of Alberta's BARD (Book and Record Depository) collection.

6.2.9 Reconsideration of Materials

Any individual who objects to specific materials in the collection may fill out a *Request for Reconsideration* form available from the Library website. The material will be reviewed by appropriate staff and a written response will be sent to the individual making the request. The final decision concerning materials rests with the CEO.