

The Seattle Public Library
Board of Trustees Meeting
12:00 p.m. Thursday, March 28, 2024

Washington Mutual Foundation Meeting Room 1, Level 4
1000 Fourth Ave., Seattle, WA 98104

Remote Listen Line:

Dial: 213-282-4570 / Phone conference ID: 920 219 516#

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<https://www.microsoft.com/microsoft-teams/join-a-meeting>

Meeting ID: 262 314 544 289 / Passcode: xidtaY

-To submit public comment in writing, email: library.board@spl.org.

-To provide public comment in person at the Central Library, sign up in the meeting room.

-To provide public comment remotely, join meeting with link above and enter your full name in Q&A.

Agenda

A. CALL TO ORDER

B. APPROVAL OF AGENDA

C. PUBLIC COMMENT

D. CONSENT

1. Minutes of February 29, 2024 Regular Library Board Meeting
2. January 2024 Finance Report

E. CHIEF LIBRARIAN REPORT

1. Chief Librarian Report
2. System Report
 - a. Seattle Reads 2024: Stesha Brandon, Literature and Humanities Program Manager

F. OLD BUSINESS

G. NEW BUSINESS

1. 2022-2023 Library Race and Social Justice Initiative Report
2. 2023 Year End Levy Report
3. 2023 Seattle Public Library Foundation Grant Award Summary Report
4. Donor Recognition – Children’s Area, Southwest Branch
5. Union Report
6. Library Foundation and Friends of the Library Updates
7. Updates from Library Board Members

H. EXECUTIVE SESSION

I. ADJOURN

J. NEXT LIBRARY BOARD MEETING: April 25, 2024

(For more information, call Laura Gentry, head of the Communications Office, at 206-915-9028.)

Unapproved Board Minutes

Board of Trustees Meeting

The Seattle Public Library

February 29, 2024

CALL TO ORDER

The regular meeting of The Seattle Public Library Board of Trustees was held on February 29, 2024. Library Board President Tali Hairston called the meeting to order at 12:06 p.m. Vice President Yazmin Mehdi and trustees Carmen Bendixen and Ron Chew were in attendance. Trustee Jay Reich was unable to attend. The meeting was conducted with a remote attendance option via video conference.

APPROVAL OF AGENDA

It was moved and seconded to approve the agenda with one change noted: the addition of a Union Report as the first item under New Business; the motion carried unanimously.

PUBLIC COMMENT

Public comment was accepted via email, in person at the Central Library, and online in the remote meeting. There were no public comments.

CONSENT

It was moved and seconded to approve the consent agenda as published; the motion carried unanimously.

CHIEF LIBRARIAN REPORT

Chief Librarian Report

Mr. Fay said the Summer of Learning presenter wasn't available today and that her report would come to a future meeting. He said the Finance Report that the Board approved in the Consent Agenda was a wrap up of fiscal year 2023. Mr. Fay said Head of Finance and Accounting Nick Merkner and his team put a massive amount of work between November and February, including evening and weekend hours, into the process of closing out the books, processing and reconciling, ensuring that spending aligns as budgeted and presented in the Operations Plan, and preparing the report. He said the report also shows good highlights from the year. Mr. Fay said areas of revenue, such as the Central Library parking garage, are not yet to pre-pandemic levels, but are seeing better increases than in recent years. Mr. Fay thanked Mr. Merkner, the Finance Team, and Director of Administrative Services Rob Gannon for their work and efforts which often go unnoted.

Mr. Fay said the Communications Team, led by Head of Communications Laura Gentry, has worked to create "virtual open office hours" for Library staff with Library leaders. He said the entire senior team comes together for about an hour online to connect with staff. He said the sessions are an open forum for questions. He said the first session primarily focused on staff questions around the hiring freeze, and more related questions followed in the second session this week. Mr. Fay said the office hours give staff a chance to engage with leadership and get questions answered regarding information that may not have filtered down to them. He said about 80 staff members attended the first session, and about 65 attended the second. He said the timing will change throughout the year in effort to offer more staff an opportunity to participate and ask questions. He said he appreciates the

amount of work that has gone into creating the sessions, as well as the leadership team coming together and being prepared to answer questions from staff.

Mr. Fay said the Library has continued discussions and meetings with new members of the Seattle City Council. He said the Library gave a briefing to Councilmember Maritza Rivera in February and has also had the opportunity to talk with Councilmember Cathy Moore. He said he would be giving a presentation on Library operations to the Council's Libraries, Education and Neighborhoods Committee at their March 14 meeting, which would be available to watch live or recorded on the Seattle Channel.

Mr. Fay said he attended the twice-yearly Washington Public Library Directors meeting with colleagues from across the state on February 8 and 9. He said there was good discussion on a number of topics including artificial intelligence, capital improvements, trauma informed care, and many more. Mr. Fay said the Seattle Times and the Library are piloting a monthly book recommendation column, the first of which was published on February 9 in which Reader Services Librarian Misha Stone wove together themes of the Super Bowl and Valentine's Day for a fun kick off. Mr. Fay said he and members of the Friends and Foundation attended Library Legislature Day in Olympia on February 14. He said there was a lot of library love, and the group appreciated the opportunity to meet with 14 of the 15 Seattle legislators. Mr. Fay said he also attended the Knight Foundation's annual Library Leadership Conference in Miami. He said the Knight Foundation supports democracy by funding free expression and journalism, arts and culture and communities. He said Seattle been invited to this forum for the past two years, and last year the SPL Foundation received a \$150,000 grant from the Knight Foundation for the Library Support Network. Mr. Fay said he shared the stage with MacArthur Foundation President John Palfrey in a presentation he was asked to join during the conference. He said it was a great opportunity to meet another large library funder.

Mr. Fay said the Library Programs and Services Director position has been filled. He said the Library will be welcoming Kai Tang in mid-March. He said she is coming from Richland Library in Columbia, South Carolina where she is currently Director of Library Experiences in the branches. He said she leads Una Voz, a staff group dedicated to language justice, and the amplification and encouragement of Spanish-speaking, English as a Second Language, and English Language Learners; and she is also a champion for an Asian American Pacific Islander Employee Resource Group. He said Ms. Tang joined the South Carolina and Columbia Food Policy Committees, focused on increased access to healthy foods, combatting food deserts and food swamps, and advocating for policies to address food insecurities. Mr. Fay said SPL is excited to have her join the team.

Mr. Fay said the November 2023 Library-At-A-Glance report is in this month's Chief Librarian's Report in the meeting packet. He said in the original report, an indicator arrow was incorrectly placed. He said that has been corrected and the report is included in the packet for the record. Mr. Fay said the current Library-At-A-Glance report has great information about the print book collection and its use. He encouraged trustees to read the report, as it looks deeply into data on the Library's physical collection. He said there is also a report on the Artist in Residence Program report provided by the Equity, Learning, and Engagement Services Team.

Library Board Vice President Yazmin Mehdi said she was curious about the higher percentage of checkouts being renewals and why that would be. Mr. Fay said about a year and a half ago, the Library changed its policy on renewals so that items without holds would renew automatically. He said this avoids extra notifications and aggravations of materials coming due when no one is waiting for them at that time and is much more convenient for borrowers. Library Board Trustee Carmen Bendixen asked if the goal of having the whole leadership team at the virtual office hours was in

being able to address a wide variety of questions and issues. Mr. Fay said yes. He said the Senior Leadership Team used to include four directors, but has been expanded to include 13 leaders representing a broader and deeper swath of the organization.

Ms. Bendixen asked if there was any update on the Green Lake Branch reopening. Mr. Fay said Seattle City Light has mostly finished their work, and the wrap up work is underway with the contractor. He said an electric vehicle charging system is being installed. He said the Library anticipates the project wrapping up within another couple of months, but does not yet have a firm date. He said the Northeast branch will open next week and will have air conditioning. Mr. Fay said when the Green Lake project wraps, the system will have three more buildings with air conditioning. He said the Library is making great progress on creating climate resilient spaces throughout the system. He gave kudos to the Library's Capital Improvements team for pushing projects through and doing a great job staying on top of contractors and other city departments. He said he appreciates the work of Head of Capital Improvements Program Dennis Reddinger, as well as his project managers. Ms. Mehdi said most of the Library's delegation would like to be invited to the Green Lake Branch when it reopens. Mr. Fay said Community Partnerships and Government Relations Program Manger Kiersten Nelson will coordinate that work. He said Library Board trustees will also receive notifications. Ms. Mehdi said Ms. Nelson and the Foundation's Senior Director of Communications and Advocacy Will Livesley-O'Neill did a terrific job of staffing and organizing Library Lobby Day. She said it was amazing how many people participated and how many legislators they were able to visit. Mr. Fay said a colleague approached him mid-day and said it used to be that Seattle didn't attend, but they were very much in attendance now. Mr. Fay said showing up and advocating is definitely noticed. He said the work the SPL Foundation and Friends have put into creating an advocacy network is most certainly paying off.

NEW BUSINESS

Union Report

President of AFSCME Local 2083 Anne Cisney said the Union had stepped away from giving reports for a while during bargaining. She said they were pleased to be returning. Veronica Hapgood introduced herself as a library associate IV at the Central Library in Reference and Reader Services. She said she has been with the Library for eight years, a Union steward for seven, and has helped to negotiate two contracts. She said the Library's negotiation process is quite different from the City's, which is to SPL's advantage. Ms. Hapgood said using interest-based bargaining allows the Union and Library administration to come together as equal partners and problem solvers. She said, as Union Co-facilitator, and on behalf of the Union negotiations team, she wished to thank Library administration negotiators for their partnership and trust in the process, especially as they worked through many transitions in the past year. She said everyone who participated in negotiations was committed to the partnership and the process, including Human Resources Director Brian Sharkey, who came on at the very end and from a very different negotiation perspective. Ms. Hapgood said by engaging an interest-based bargaining with openness, trust, and mutual respect, the Library achieved a great contract that strengthens the organization and the Joint Labor Management Partnership. She said it is a contract that everyone should be incredibly proud of. She said the Union members voted a resounding yes to the contract and said they look forward to full contract ratification from the Library Board, and to its implementation.

2023-2026 Local 2083 Collective Bargaining Agreement; Wage Increase and Retro Pay for Non-Represented Employees

Human Resources Director Brian Sharkey thanked Ms. Cisney and Ms. Hapgood for the excellent introduction and for highlighting all of the hard work that went into the bargaining process. Mr.

Sharkey said the meeting packet contains the bargaining agreement, as well as the red-lined version. He said the bargaining was an 18-month process, and he arrived at the Library toward the end of the process, though he was part of the coalition team for the City. He said the contract covers a four-year term from January 2023 through the end of December 2026. Mr. Sharkey shared his screen, showing the “Summary of Changes” document (pages 22-26 of the meeting packet) and read through the document in detail for the Library Board. He said it was an incredibly collaborative process and he was lucky to join at the end when much of the work had already been done. He gave kudos to the Union bargaining team as well as the Management bargaining team for a great many hours spent in a very collaborative but still difficult process. Mr. Sharkey said there would be two separate actions requested of the Board. He said the first is consideration of the new labor agreement so that the Library can close the ratification process and implement the new contract language; and the second is consideration for wage increases for non-represented Library employees including market rate or merit adjustments for the DPP and APEX employees as well.

Mr. Fay thanked Mr. Sharkey, Ms. Cisney, Ms. Hapgood, and everyone on the team who did this work over the past 18 months. He said the work was a big commitment and many folks gave up a lot of personal time as well to make this happen. He offered kudos for continued collaboration through many changes on both sides in terms of who was able to participate at various times. He said the Library greatly appreciated the Union’s collaboration.

Ms. Mehdi said she had several questions to provide context for the public. Ms. Mehdi asked what “DPP/APEX” employees are. Mr. Sharkey said DPP is the discretionary pay program, and APEX is accountability pay for executives. Ms. Mehdi asked what the “boot allowance” is. Mr. Sharkey said it is a footwear allowance for staff to be reimbursed for required footwear purchases. Ms. Mehdi said the previous contract was 2019-2021, the new contract is 2023-2026, and she asked what happened to 2022. Mr. Sharkey said the Library and the whole City of Seattle did a one-year contract extension agreement during the COVID pandemic. He said since it was such a chaotic time, there was agreement that it was not the right time to bargain a full contract, so a one-year temporary extension deal was reached.

Ms. Mehdi said she understood that the City does bargaining with the Coalition of Unions which makes determinations the Library accepts. She asked if the Library does its own bargaining on those topics. She also asked how much of the Library’s new contract is actually language or negotiation that comes to the Library from the City. Mr. Sharkey said the Library does participate as part of the Coalition, and also takes a separate look at all of the terms before formally accepting them. He said Local 2083 is formally outside of the coalition and not bound to those terms but often recognizes that those terms are beneficial for the Library as well. Ms. Cisney said she sees the Library as being in the Coalition, but also being operationally or technically separate. She said the goal of Local 2083 has always been to incorporate the spirit of the Coalition agreement, although 2083’s language is often a little different from what other Coalition local language is. She said there is more massaging 2083 needs to do to ensure that what is brought in is really a benefit and is well-worded for the Library’s labor/management purposes. Mr. Sharkey said, in response to what percentage of the contract is Coalition language, that certainly all of the cost of living increases are straight from the Coalition. He said it is the same with the other economics, such as the boot allowance and shift differential. He said things that are unique to the Library include fixed scheduling. He said by and large, the economic pieces with money attached are pretty straightforward from the Coalition. Mr. Sharkey said some of the non-economic and more operational pieces are specific to the “small table” or just the table with the Library’s management and Union.

Ms. Mehdi said a lot of the operational pieces seem to be affecting the scheduling of staff. She said she recognized that anything that adds complexity to scheduling makes it complicated to staff the libraries. She asked for comment on that, and how scheduling of staff in buildings was thought about as the negotiation happened. Library Board President Tali Hairston asked to expand on Ms. Mehdi's question to include fixed scheduling as a significant change and asked for further information. Mr. Sharkey said this issue was mostly settled before he joined the bargaining team. He said because it is a big shift, the team felt it was important to have a joint labor-management implementation team, and also to include specific reopener language so that the team will formally sit back down at the table within a year to look at it again. Ms. Cisney said in Union reports over the years, the Union has been talking about how, since the Great Recession, staffing has become increasingly tight. She said, during the Great Recession, the Library scaled back to a very thin staffing model, and has been trying to operate the Library in a very challenging staffing and scheduling situation ever since. She said the way manifests in scheduling has created challenges, both operationally to meet needs at work with the public, and in terms of staff's ability to manage what they need to do at work and what they need to do at home. Ms. Cisney said there has been a lack of predictability in how staff have been able to work. She said fixed scheduling will address the need to have more predictability for both the Library and its staff, so that staff will be where the Library needs them at the right time, and staff will also be able to plan their working and home lives. Ms. Hapgood agreed that predictability will make sure that staff can have lives outside of the Library, while also being able to show up at the Library as their best selves. Ms. Hapgood said scheduling has presented challenges for a lot of staff who are struggling, and the hope is that fixed scheduling will allow more predictability and stability for the Scheduling Office and for Library staff. She said the Library will be able to know where the people are and where they need to be, and staff will be able to create a better work life balance, knowing when they will be working for the full year.

Mr. Fay said he has been a proponent of fixed scheduling for quite a while. He said the way scheduling was done at SPL was crazy-making for him when he joined the organization. He said it makes it very difficult for staff to plan their lives, childcare, adult care, and any of the things staff need to do as humans. He said this is a good mix of what the Library had as well as fixed scheduling. He said the success of the new system remains to be seen, which is why the team wants to have a check-in after implementation. He said there can always be unintended consequences, which will be worked through as they are discovered, but he believes the change is good for both the staff members and the Library. He said staff will have more predictable schedules as well as more effective mechanisms to swap than what has been in place in the past.

It was moved and seconded to approve the 2023-2026 Labor Agreement between The Seattle Public Library Board and the Washington State Council of County and City Employees, AFSCME, AFL-CIO Local 2083 as published, including a retroactive payment of the annual wage increase for employees represented by this labor agreement; the motion carried unanimously.

It was moved and seconded to approve authorizing the Chief Librarian to apply the same annual wage increase adjustments to non-represented employees outside of the DPP/APEX program for the four-year period 2023-2026; and to apply commensurate merit and/or market rate adjustments for DPP/APEX employees, including retroactive payments for both groups; the motion carried unanimously.

Ms. Mehdi and Mr. Hairston congratulated the team, and Mr. Hairston thanked the team for their hard work.

Library Foundation and Friends of the Library Updates

Mr. Hairston said the Library Foundation Board did not meet in February. Ms. Mehdi again thanked the Friends and Foundation, and Ms. Nelson and Mr. Livesley-O'Neill for organizing Library Lobby Day, which she said was a great opportunity to get to know some of the Friends and Foundation Board members who are incredibly dedicated volunteers. Ms. Mehdi said the Friends Board had a great meeting in February. She said the Friends Board has been auditioning potential new board members, which have been an interesting mix of people, which she can tell by the books they are reading. She said three potential new members attended the February meeting. Ms. Mehdi said the Friends Board will be at capacity soon, so new applications won't be reviewed until later in the year. She said Mr. Livesley-O'Neill attended the meeting and provided an update and historical information for new and current members, including a report on Library Lobby Day. She said the Friends are ready to expand their Georgetown location and have found a space in a nearby building. She said the lease is still to be signed, but the agreement is in the process of being finalized, with hopes of moving into the space in May. Ms. Mehdi said the Friends are doing a terrific job of bringing interesting new people onto their board, being creative about how they do their work, and thinking about new ways of doing the work. She said the Friends are very keen on the grassroots work of just getting more Library supporters out among the people who use the libraries. She said they have a retreat coming up on March 16. Ms. Mehdi said the Friends gave away 495 books at the Seattle King County Health Clinic, and they have some "Books for Teachers" events coming up in March where teachers get to come in to pick books for their classrooms.

Updates from Library Board Members

Ms. Mehdi asked if any trustees would be attending upcoming conferences. Library Board Trustee Ron Chew said he would be interested in attending the American Library Association (ALA) conference in California. Mr. Fay asked Executive Assistant Amy Lawson to send the information to the trustees. He said the Public Library Association (PLA) conference is truly dedicated to public library issues, while ALA includes all types of libraries and is a massive conference. He said PLA would be held at the first of April in Columbus, Ohio, and ALA would be in San Diego in June.

ADJOURN

Board President Tali Hairston adjourned the meeting at 1:00 p.m.



The Seattle Public Library

Memorandum

Date: March 28, 2024

To: The Seattle Public Library Board of Trustees

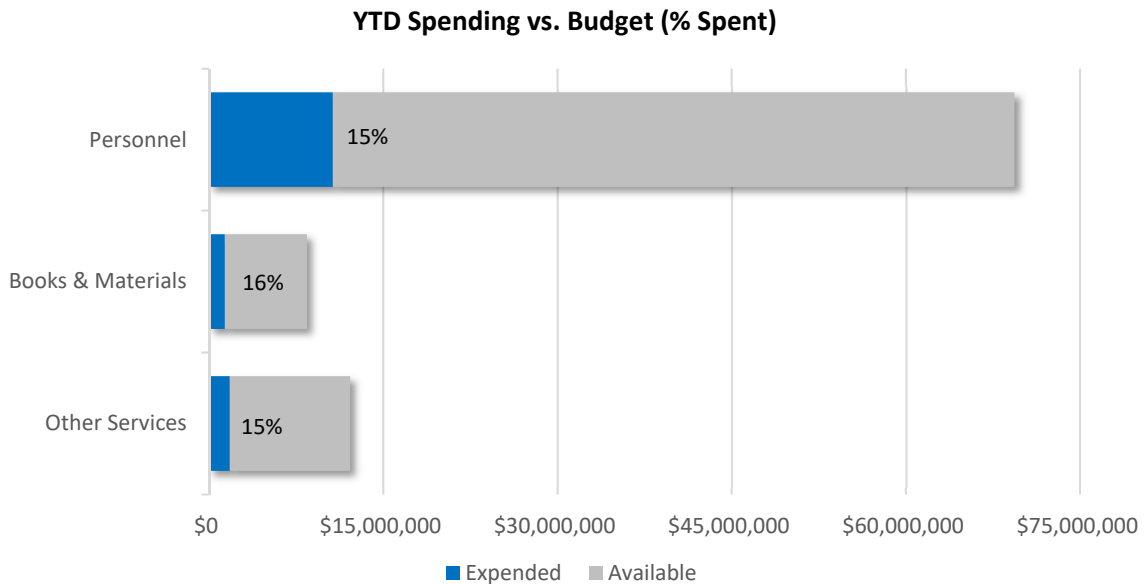
From: Tom Fay, Executive Director and Chief Librarian
Rob Gannon, Director of Administrative Services
Nicholas Merkner, Head of Finance and Accounting

Subject: **January & February 2024 Financial Reporting**

Overview

Overall, the Library has expended **15%** of its operating budget with **16%** of the year elapsed. This is in line with the prior year when the Library had also expended **15%** of the operating budget. Total expenditures at the end of the month were \$13.8 million.

The chart below provides a high level overview of year-to-date spending by budget group, and also helps to illustrate relative sizes within the Library’s operating budget.



Personnel Services

Personnel costs represent the largest category of expenses at the Library and make up 77% of the revised operating budget. As of this report there have been **five pay periods processed** (with the first pay period of the year split between 2023 and 2024, resulting in only two days from that pay period charged to the current year)—as such we expect 16% of the personnel budget to be expended. Spending is on target at **15%**.

Non-Personnel Services

The largest individual category of expenditures within the non-personnel budget is related to library books and materials—this category represents 9% of the revised operating budget. Spending is as expected at **16%**.

Other services which represent 14% of the adopted budget—and include equipment, services, and supplies—are **15%** expended.

Revenues

Library generated revenues collected during the period under review are **\$113,000**—representing a 14% collected rate. This \$113,000 represents a \$32,000 increase in revenues compared to the same period from 2023. Revenues are not projected to fully recover to pre-pandemic levels in the current year (\$805,000 projected in 2024 vs \$866,000 pre-pandemic). Assuming current operational trends hold, the Library is projected to be on pace for fully restored revenue collection in 2025 (\$866,000). The Financial Services team will continue to monitor actual revenue collections and highlight outliers as part of this monthly report.

Action Requested: Library Board consideration of January and February 2024 Operating Budget financial reporting for approval at March 28, 2024 meeting. Comments or feedback are welcome.

Expenditure Control for February 2024

Amounts in \$1,000s	Revised Budget*	Current Month Expenditures	Year to Date Expenditures	% Expend	Balance of Budget
Personnel Services					
Salaries	44,899	3,245	6,779	15%	38,119
Benefits	24,451	1,898	3,883	16%	20,568
Personnel Services Sub-Total	\$69,349	\$5,144	\$10,662	15%	\$58,687
Books and Library Materials					
Books & Materials	8,428	809	1,360	16%	7,068
Books and Library Materials Sub-Total	\$8,428	\$809	\$1,360	16%	\$7,068
Other Services and Charges					
Central Costs	3,027	250	499	16%	2,528
Equipment - IT & Facilities	1,421	90	225	16%	1,196
Office Supplies, Printing & Postage	308	15	31	10%	277
Operating Supplies	549	24	43	8%	507
Other Expenses	640	54	72	11%	567
Other Maintenance	568	64	84	15%	484
Phone, Wireless & Internet	484	13	43	9%	441
Professional Services	369	17	17	4%	353
Software	873	80	256	29% (A)	617
Staff Training & Travel	185	5	5	3%	180
Vehicle Costs	319	26	58	18%	261
Facilities - Space Rental & Utilities	1,977	236	381	19%	1,596
Facilities - Building & Grounds Maint	1,032	65	71	7%	961
Facilities - Garage Debt Service	403	-	-	0%	403
Other Services and Charges Sub-Total	\$12,154	\$937	\$1,784	15%	\$10,370
TOTAL LIBRARY OPERATING BUDGET	\$89,932	\$6,889	\$13,806	15%	\$76,126

Footnotes:

* Includes \$92k related to prior year grant carry-forward

(A) Software renewal schedule does not align with calendar year--costs expected to align with budget by year-end.

Revenue Control for February 2024

	Revenue Budget	Current Month Revenue	Year to Date Revenue Collected	% Collected
Operations Plan Other Library Revenue				
Lost Material Fees	115,000	7,795	19,846	17%
Central Library Parking Garage Fees	345,000	25,512	53,184	15%
Copy Services/Pay for Print	95,000	8,958	16,264	17%
Space Rental (Private & Inter-Departmental)	162,000	10,645	14,153	9%
Book Sale Consignment	85,000	4,804	9,816	12%
Coffee Cart & Miscellaneous (vending machines, etc.)	3,000	-	101	3%
TOTAL LIBRARY GENERATED REVENUES				
	\$805,000	\$57,714	\$113,364	14%

Footnotes:

Expenditure Control for January 2024

Amounts in \$1,000s	Revised Budget*	Current Month Expenditures	Year to Date Expenditures	% Expend	Balance of Budget
Personnel Services					
Salaries	44,899	3,534	3,534	8%	41,365
Benefits	24,451	1,985	1,985	8%	22,466
Personnel Services Sub-Total	\$69,349	\$5,519	\$5,519	8%	\$63,831
Books and Library Materials					
Books & Materials	8,428	551	551	7%	7,877
Books and Library Materials Sub-Total	\$8,428	\$551	\$551	7%	\$7,877
Other Services and Charges					
Central Costs	3,027	250	250	8%	2,777
Equipment - IT & Facilities	1,421	135	135	10%	1,286
Office Supplies, Printing & Postage	308	16	16	5%	292
Operating Supplies	549	19	19	3%	530
Other Expenses	640	19	19	3%	621
Other Maintenance	568	20	20	3%	548
Phone, Wireless & Internet	484	30	30	6%	455
Professional Services	369	(0)	(0)	0%	369
Software	873	176	176	20% (A)	697
Staff Training & Travel	185	0	0	0%	184
Vehicle Costs	319	32	32	10%	287
Facilities - Space Rental & Utilities	1,977	145	145	7%	1,832
Facilities - Building & Grounds Maint	1,032	6	6	1%	1,026
Facilities - Garage Debt Service	403	-	-	0%	403
Other Services and Charges Sub-Total	\$12,154	\$847	\$847	7%	\$11,307
TOTAL LIBRARY OPERATING BUDGET	\$89,932	\$6,917	\$6,917	8%	\$83,015

Footnotes:

* Includes \$92k related to prior year grant carry-forward

(A) Software renewal schedule does not align with calendar year--costs expected to align with budget by year-end.

Revenue Control for January 2024

	Revenue Budget	Current Month Revenue	Year to Date Revenue Collected	% Collected
Operations Plan Other Library Revenue				
Lost Material Fees	115,000	12,051	12,051	10%
Central Library Parking Garage Fees	345,000	27,672	27,672	8%
Copy Services/Pay for Print	95,000	7,306	7,306	8%
Space Rental (Private & Inter-Departmental)	162,000	3,508	3,508	2%
Book Sale Consignment	85,000	5,013	5,013	6%
Coffee Cart & Miscellaneous (vending machines, etc.)	3,000	101	101	3%
TOTAL LIBRARY GENERATED REVENUES				
	\$805,000	\$55,650	\$55,650	7%

Footnotes:



The Seattle Public Library

Date: March 28, 2024
To: Library Board of Trustees
From: Tom Fay, Executive Director and Chief Librarian
Re: March 2024 Chief Librarian's Report

1. March 1-3 I attended the Washington Library Association conference in Spokane. This annual conference is a statewide gathering of library professionals and a valuable opportunity to gain education and share information and best practices in a regional setting.
2. I'm pleased to report that the Northeast Branch reopened on March 4! The branch had been closed since November 2023 for major renovations, including the modernization of its mechanical and electrical systems and the replacement of its gas-powered furnace with an electric HVAC system. We are excited to be able to offer improved airflow and air-conditioning at this location! Full services are again available at the Northeast Branch, and patrons are again able to select the branch as their preferred holds pickup location, as well as reserving meeting rooms. The Northgate Branch, which had temporarily expanded its open hours while the Northeast Branch was closed, has returned to its normal schedule.
3. On March 5, the Social Services Team hosted a resource fair here at the Central Library on Levels 3 and 4. Collaborating with many community partners, the Library offered an opportunity for patrons to learn about some of the social services resources available to them. Activities included food, portrait drawing, haircuts, foot care, free books from the Friends, and much more. Kudos to our Social Services Team and their incredible network of 20 participating community partners!
4. On March 14, Director of Institutional and Strategic Advancement Rick Sheridan and I gave a "Library 101" briefing to the Seattle City Council's Library, Education, and Neighborhoods Committee. We heard personal stories of Library connection from several councilmembers and received many engaged questions. We were grateful for the Committee's time and interest, and were pleased for the opportunity to present an overview of the Library system's operations, work, and goals. We look forward to developing deeper relationships and creating opportunities for substantive information sharing with the Council.
5. On March 19, the Library reduced the maximum number of holds allowed on digital books in OverDrive from 25 to 10, and alerted patrons through multiple communications channels a week prior. As the demand for e-books and e-audiobooks has soared in recent years, accelerated by the pandemic, annual checkouts of digital books have almost tripled from 2015 to 2022. During this time period, the Library has done our best to meet patron demand,

but because of the way digital books are priced and licensed for libraries, meeting the demand has come at a cost that has become unsustainable. Holds are the largest contributing factor in increasing costs for digital books. To maintain reasonable wait times, the Library buys additional copies of a title when patrons place more holds on it. In 2023, 62% of the Library's spending on digital books was because of holds placed on high-demand titles. Library costs for high-demand digital books have nearly tripled since 2015. We did not make this change lightly. Our Selection Services team conducted extensive analysis of data on pricing and checkout trends and comparisons with peer library systems before making this decision. As part of managing costs for digital books, we have also recently changed our holds ratio goal for digital books from 1:5 to 1:7. The selection team actively monitors and adjusts this ratio through the year as part of managing costs.

Meetings and events during this reporting period:

- a. Board Meetings: Monthly Library Board of Trustees meeting; monthly meeting of Library and Friends leadership; Library Foundation Board meeting.
- b. Standing Meetings: Compensation Committee; Senior Management Team; Monthly Managers meeting; Union/Leadership meetings; Foundation CEO/Chief Librarian bi-monthly meetings; Strategic Planning Core Team meetings; Library Programs & Services Leadership Team.
- c. Library Talks, Meetings, Interviews and Visits: Metro area library director meetings; Puget Sound Library Directors quarterly meeting; Washington Library Association conference.
- d. City Meetings, Events and Programs: "Library 101" briefing for Councilmember Rivera and staff; Deputy Mayor Wong and department directors meeting; Mayor's Cabinet Meeting; Downtown Seattle Association's State of Downtown annual meeting.

LIBRARY AT A GLANCE



IN FOCUS: In-Person Visits

The Library enhances traffic analysis capabilities with advanced sensor installations.

Overview: In-Person Visits

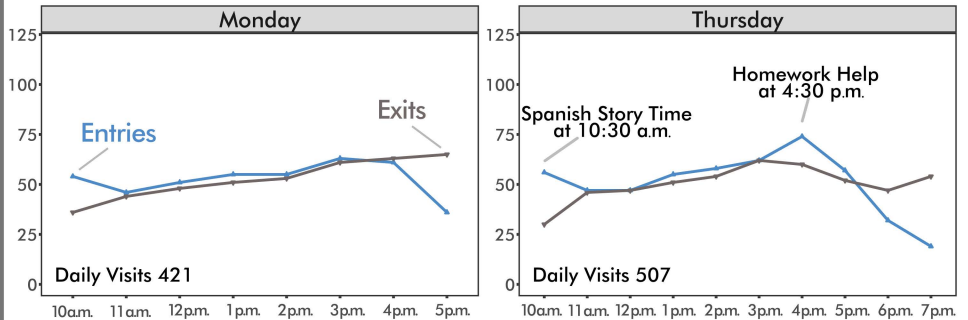
The Library recently installed new sensors across all locations to count people going in and out of the Library, enhancing our understanding of peak traffic times and the impact of open service hours.

The previous generation of sensors, which were not configured to differentiate between entries and exits, had begun to fail and could not be repaired.

Based on data collected from November 2023 through February 2024, we have been able to observe peak times of day and the impact of programming on Library use.

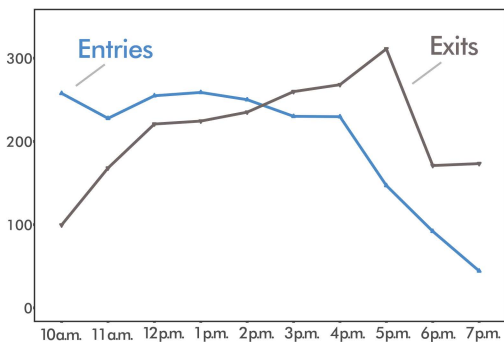
Programming Increases Visits at Branch Location

Entries and exits by the hour at the Lake City Branch



Hourly data reveals programming's significant influence on attendance at various locations, illustrated by this Lake City Branch traffic chart. Apart from entry peaks at opening and exit peaks at closing, an equal number of people enter and exit each hour, suggesting quick visits. However, programming triggers spikes in visits just before story times, Homework Help sessions, and Play and Learn events.

Central Library Peak Traffic at 2 p.m. Average visits by time of day



From 10 a.m. to 2 p.m. on most days, the Central Library experiences more entries than exits. After 2 p.m., the trend reverses, with more exits than entries until closing. The 2 p.m. to 3 p.m. hour witnesses peak foot traffic on most days. Unlike neighborhood branches, regular programming at the Central Library doesn't lead to clear spikes in visits, but programs often align with the hours of highest entry.

Average Daily Branch Visits by Weekday

	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday	Sunday
Greenwood Branch	621	656	700	633	589	663	627
Ballard Branch	577	673	625	675	595	656	648
Capitol Hill Branch	512	564	553	539	492	519	463
Lake City Branch	421	507	504	507	397	443	382
Broadview Branch	417	447	442	407	372	430	352
Beacon Hill Branch	353	358	399	357	351	412	350
Douglass-Truth Branch	285	335	323	298	271	271	259
Southwest Branch	300	280	283	279	272	326	280
West Seattle Branch	269	246	248	282	256	297	297
Columbia Branch	282	269	275	242	254	296	267
University Branch		304	271	308	319	308	319
Rainier Beach Branch	279	269	286	246	266	237	217
High Point Branch	244	288	273	260	206	243	210
Queen Anne Branch		272	263	239	230	305	281
Magnolia Branch		227	254	218	202	250	259
Fremont Branch		165	184	168	158	208	210
Intl. Dist. / Chinatown Branch	135	166	175	166	132	151	116
South Park Branch	89	119	131	127	93	85	54
Madrona-S. Goldmark Branch		111	105	106	97	113	100
NewHolly Branch	63	79	70	98	65	66	55
Delridge Branch	74	70	77	62	68	70	60



Weekday analysis reveals fairly consistent daily visits at each branch location, with the lowest usage typically occurring on either Sunday or Monday. The Greenwood Branch sees the highest average visitors, while the Delridge Branch has the least. This chart excludes branches closed for construction (Green Lake and Northeast branches) and locations undergoing sensor calibrations (Montlake, Northgate, and Wallingford branches).

3/13/2024 – Public Services Regions – North Regions (NER, NWR)

Dawn Rutherford, Northwest Region Manager and Rachel Scott, Northeast Regional Manager

Impact and Outcomes Statements

- 1) *Our community becomes stronger as a result of library activities that are inclusive, draw diverse participants, and promote understanding*
- 2) *Access to opportunities becomes more equitable in our community*

North Regions Adult Services Librarians Support for System-Wide Initiatives, Services and Programs

Adult service librarians (ASLs) across the system serve as leaders in their branches and local communities. They build relationships with patrons and community partners while providing direction to the team at their branch on services to these communities. Additionally, ASLs work together with program managers in the Community Engagement and Economic Development (CEED) team to develop, implement and evaluate system-wide services and programs that meet prioritized community needs.

The northeast and northwest regions have seven ASLs and one supervising librarian who work together and with others throughout the system to meet the needs of adults in north Seattle. These librarians are Eric Grob at Northgate, Shadee Berger at Northeast, Josefina (Josie) Ávila at Lake City, Paige Chernow at University, Jason Davis at Greenwood, Alan Jacobson at Broadview, Andrea Gough at Green Lake, and Daniel Nguyen at Wallingford.

In 2023 ASL in the north regions spent over 325 hours collaborating on projects with CEED, our social services team, and readers' advisory staff.

Workforce Development and Adult Basic Education

- **Library to Business** supports entrepreneurial endeavors in underserved communities with information, education, plus networking and referral assistance. Team members Eric and Josie provide weekly direct consultations with patrons. Josie is our only librarian at SPL offering L2B appointments in Spanish and has been receiving increasing requests for appointments from Spanish speakers wanting to start their businesses in Washington. She reports that “it has been a very rewarding experience to be able to help out my community in this way.”
- **Your Next Job** Paige is a part of the system-wide team that has pivoted from providing individual patron appointments (needed more during the pandemic) to producing resources for staff training so that all information staff can better provide support to job seekers.
- **Adult Tutoring** sessions have been ongoing at Broadview throughout 2023. In 2024, we will be adding Adult Tutoring at Lake City and Rainier Beach branches.
- **Conversation Circles** programs are being held at the Beacon Hill, Delridge and Northgate branches, as well as virtually. By hosting these programs in the branches, patrons can physically come together and build community with others living nearby. Additionally, these programs are serving as an entry point to library services for many. Patrons have registered for library cards and begun using library services after attending the programs.
- **Your Next Skill** is a service where patrons can submit a request through our website to learn any skill, hobby or language and our librarians work to curate a personalized learning plan. This service is available to adults, as well as children and teens. Shadee and Daniel lead this service in 2023 and now mentor newer librarians who have joined the team.



IT HAS BEEN A VERY REWARDING EXPERIENCE TO
BE ABLE TO HELP MY COMMUNITY IN THIS WAY

-JOSIE ÁVILA

Insecurely Housed Adults

Librarians and other staff serve insecurely housed patrons every day inside our buildings. Librarians also host resource fairs, bringing together community resources so patrons have one point of access to our community partners. Librarians and program managers conduct regular outreach to [Tiny House Villages](#) to talk to residents about Library services including hardship waivers, programs, library cards, reader's advisory, nearby social service providers, and hand out paperbacks and library swag. Hotspot need is critical. Jason reports that "each resident that visited with us commented how important those hotspots are to them and thanked the library for them, and for working to try to get them online again." Paige shared that after offering hardship waivers "one woman had tears in her eyes when she told me that she had not been in a library for more than 10 years due to her account fines, but she could not wait to come back". At a different Tiny House site, one resident approached Paige shyly and asked if the library has GED study materials. She disclosed that she wanted to pursue this for years but was embarrassed to ask at the library. Paige shared several resources, and the patron was excited to come to the branch.

In 2023 the Social Services team formed a Social Services Work Team to bring together a librarian from each region to work with Social Services staff on ongoing projects and services that connect patrons to social services. That team is producing resource lists, planning programming including resource fairs and harm reduction programs and providing supplies for branches to distribute to patrons in need.

Reader Engagement

Though libraries have taken on many new roles recently, books remain one of our favorite ways to connect with patrons. North region librarians support system wide reading initiatives in many ways. Paige participates in the [Peak Picks](#) workgroup, dedicated to providing patrons with a rich browsing experience that allows them to discover new voices with a focus on authors of color and local authors. Andrea helps lead the ShelfTalk team, encouraging staff to share their current reading passions with readers through the [ShelfTalk blog](#).

[Your Next Five](#) (YN5) is a service where patrons can submit a request through our website to receive a personalized reading list curated by our librarians.

Paige, Andrea and Eric are regular contributors to this service which is offered for all ages. This asynchronous readers' advisory service connects patrons to custom-made reading suggestions. It also helps librarians build their Readers Advisory skills. A patron sent the following in "thank you so much! I had not used this service before and really liked the results. SPL and SPL librarians are awesome!" Another patron shared "I just wanted to write to say thank you for your response to my email. I was looking for some new book recommendations and I was completely floored by the thoughtfulness and thoroughness of your answer."

I WAS LOOKING FOR SOME NEW BOOK
RECOMMENDATIONS AND I WAS COMPLETELY
FLOORED BY THE THOUGHTFULNESS AND
THOROUGHNESS OF YOUR ANSWER

In addition to these on-demand booklists, Paige and Andrea also coordinate adult booklists (both print and [online](#)) for the Library, which highlight and promote areas of the collection of interest to patrons. An annual program that is supported by both YN5 and booklists, is the delightful [Book Bingo](#) collaboration with [Seattle Arts and Lectures](#). In 2023 the [Seattle Reads program](#) brought author, Julie Otsuka to the Lake City library and the Greenwood Senior Center to talk about their book [The Swimmers](#).

Older Adults and Lifelong Access

Older adults are a high percentage of residents in north Seattle. Eric and Andrea are on the older adults work team where they provide feedback on initiatives to program manager Emily Billow, help staff programs at partner locations, and bring older adult programs to branches. This team helped bring back [gold cards](#) to library patrons and partnered with Age Friendly Seattle's [Civic Coffee program](#).

In 2024, the library is collaborating with an organization called Worry-Free Wednesdays to offer end-of-life planning workshops, both virtually and in-person. We are planning several of these in-person workshops for north Seattle. We are also going to host Medicare 101 workshops at multiple branches.



Emily and Josie pose with a patron at a Civic Coffee program

Emily and Eric are in the planning stages of a “memory café” type program at Northgate which may expand to additional branches after a pilot launch. This will be an open and welcoming space at the library for individuals with dementia and memory loss and their care partners. Though there is demand for this type of programming in Seattle, there are currently no regularly scheduled programs for this population at SPL. The program will be adapted based on participant feedback and what we hear from community.

Bridging patrons to community partners through their local branch. In 2023 this included working with

- [Seattle Housing Authority](#) to provide access to [Housing Choice Vouchers](#)
- [King County Public Health](#) to provide vaccination clinics
- [Orca Lift](#) to providing a channel for low-income patrons to get Orca cards at a discount
- [El Centro Dela Raza](#) to connect Veterans of Color to services
- [InterConnection](#) to provide an avenue for patrons to recycle old electronic devices

Alan and Broadview shared that the InterConnection event held in October resulted in **2094** pounds of old electronics being recycled or refurbished for community members in need. Alan started Connection Cafe, a program at the Broadview branch that creates a space for patrons to come and connect with service providers in the community.

Our communities are strengthened by the collaboration between CEED program managers and branch ASLs. Branch ASLs support each other’s work with local community by contributing to system-wide initiatives, programs and services when possible, to build capacity for colleagues at other locations who are working with prioritized community in and around their local branch.

Supporting Staff through Robust HR Systems March 12, 2024

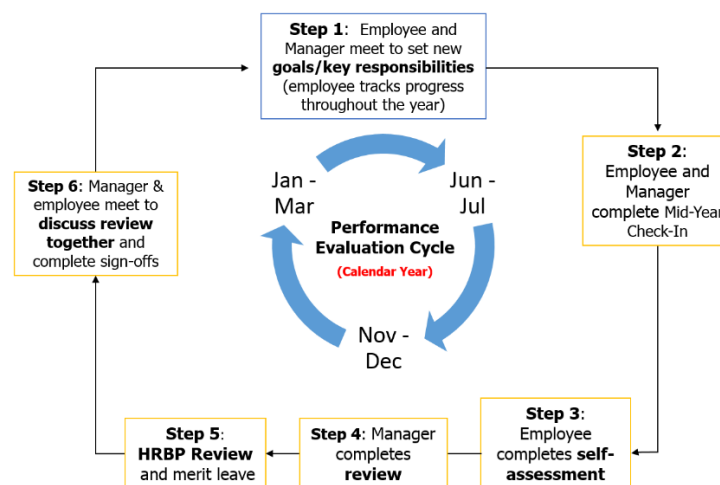
With contributions by HR Performance Advisor Melody Melodia, Training and Development Manager Morganne Denae, and Safety Officer Jessica Guy. Compiled and edited by HR Director Brian Sharkey.

In 2024 the SPL Human Resources (HR) team focuses on the creation of tools and systems to empower leaders and individual contributors to thrive at work. Staff are increasing their knowledge and utilization of the E3 performance management system, co-creating relevant trainings and learner profiles, and participating in building an even more thoughtful culture of safety. This brief report will highlight some of the key plans and successes in these three areas.

Performance

SPL now enters our second year on the E3 performance management system led by HR Advisor Melody Melodia. The E3 name stands for Equity + Engagement + Expectations. E3 is a digital tool and performance appraisal process designed to create a standardized, equitable, and valuable evaluation experience. This online system is based on shared competencies used for recruitment, hiring, evaluation and development that encompass the race and social justice initiative (RSJI) principles and drive our organizational culture.

The primary focus during the launch of this new system was to encourage a partnership between employees and managers to discuss goals and share both positive and constructive feedback consistently throughout the year. The implementation has not been without challenges: many managers with a large group of direct reports were overwhelmed in assessing employee's performance this past year while learning and adjusting to the new tool. In 2024 SPL will continue to focus on re-enforcing the user navigation as well as the basic structure of the performance cycle.



Training

2024 brings a host of great training initiatives and opportunities led by Training and Development Manager Morganne Denae. Here are a few of the priority projects:

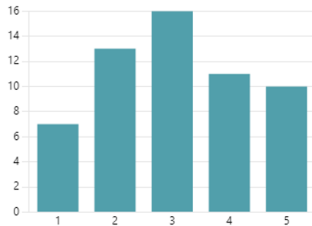
- New Hire Onboarding Overhaul
 - o Our goal for 2024 is to create a robust plan for each role at the library with resources and training opportunities relevant to their role. This will include a New Hire Playbook, which outlines the

onboarding process from the beginning, allowing new staff to not only have a clear roadmap to their development but also empowering them to take an active role in their onboarding.

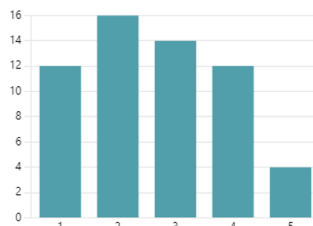
- Equity, Race and Social Justice workshops for staff
 - o Our goal is to provide support to all our staff to increase their knowledge of equity, race and social justice topics, while also providing hands-on experience with applying this knowledge in their day-to-day job. This training program for staff will be multi-faceted and delivered in a variety of formats.
- Update existing mandatory training
 - o As an organization, we have certain trainings that are mandatory in order to stay compliant with local, regional and statewide policies with a focus on moving toward industry best practices.
- Revise external training guidelines for staff
 - o We identified with our training survey this year that many staff are unaware of their opportunities for external training, or find the request process confusing and cumbersome. In partnership with the Labor Management Committee, we intend to revise our existing guidelines to ensure easy access to training opportunities for all staff.

These are a few sample responses from the training survey that helped inform the 2024 training workplan:

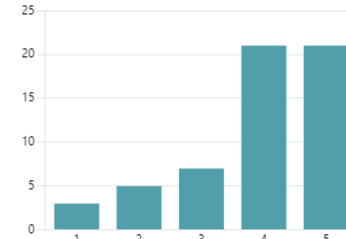
During onboarding, I was shown where to get the information I need to succeed at my job. – 3.07 Avg. Rating



Our organization offers enough training opportunities to keep my knowledge and skills up to date. – 2.66 Avg. Rating



During onboarding, my colleagues went out of their way to help me adjust to this organization. – 3.91 Avg. Rating



Safety

Jessica Guy, Health and Safety Manager, joined Seattle Public Library’s Human Resources team in September of 2023. She brings experience from the manufacturing and education sectors where she practiced occupational safety for a variety of workgroups. With Jessica’s oversight, our robust and dedicated Safety Committee reviews each injury and the corrective actions taken to prevent a similar event. Currently, there are 20 active committee members and four open positions. Members are either selected or elected to represent a work group or branch region. Documentation of each meeting is stored on SharePoint and includes meeting minutes, agenda, and injury reports accordance with record retention rules.

When an injury does occur, an accident investigation is performed by the injured employee’s supervisor to identify the root cause of the incident and implement control measures that will prevent further injury. In 2023, eighteen work related injuries occurred. These resulted in 457 days away from work. 169 days, or 36.9% of all days away from work resulted from a single incident. Job transfer and work restrictions were accommodated for 358 days. Accommodating work restrictions allows an injured employee to remain at work and contribute to the library’s mission in an alternate capacity. Assigning alternate work to an injured employee has positive effects on maintaining staffing levels and improving morale of the injured employee.



The Seattle Public Library

Date: March 28, 2024

To: Library Board of Trustees

From: Tom Fay, Executive Director and Chief Librarian
Jan Oscherwitz, Library Levy Administrator

Re: **Fourth Quarter and Annual 2023 Levy Report**

Background

By April 15 of each year, the Library is required to submit an annual levy report to the Mayor and Council. Each quarter, the Library Board of Trustees reviews and approves a quarterly report that documents implementation of levy priorities and accomplishments. These quarterly reports are intended to detail our progress in implementing the levy and describe how levy proceeds have been used to restore, maintain and improve core Library services. This annual report, which covers the whole year with an emphasis on the fourth quarter, will be shared with the Mayor and Council after Board approval. The Library is scheduled to present the annual levy report to the Council's Libraries, Education and Neighborhoods Committee on Thursday, April 25, 2024.

2023 Annual Levy Report

The 2019 Library Levy provided 37% of the Library's revised total 2023 budget of \$132 million. The Library spent \$30 million of the revised 2023 levy budget of \$49.5 million, or 61% of the revised levy budget. Much of the lag in spending budget authority is associated with the capital program, which continues to experience delays due to supply chain issues, a labor shortage and other pandemic-related impacts. This report also provides information on the remaining \$1.9 million of budget authority from the 2012 Library Levy.

In its 2019 levy proposal to voters, the Library laid out a clear framework for how levy proceeds would be used to maintain and enhance Library services in the areas of Hours and Access, Collections, Technology and Online Services, Children's Programming and Maintenance. In 2023, the Library continued to experience staffing, operational and environmental challenges that were unforeseeable when the levy was proposed in 2019. While these challenges disrupted some of our day-to-day operations, we made progress on delivery and planning toward key levy promises.

Hours and Access: We promised to keep libraries open when patrons need them

The Library significantly expanded hours and service levels in the spring of 2023. Despite operational challenges related to construction, heat and staffing, we were open 70,000+ hours systemwide in 2023, compared to 61,000+ hours in 2022 and 68,000+ hours in 2019. With our expanded hours schedule, once the Green Lake Branch's seismic retrofit is complete, we will be open 133 more hours per week compared to 2019,

In 2023, we resumed many programs, offering 36 author events at the Central Library and restarting story times at our branches. Our Social Services Team, formed in 2022, continues to

serve our patrons with the highest needs. The team provided over 900 referrals and support to patrons for housing, food, clothing, mental health, employment and other needs. They also launched a “Coffee and Conversations” program at the Central Library. These informal gatherings bring patrons in need of social services together with Library staff on a weekly basis and often result in social service referrals as well as much-needed connection.

Collections: We promised a robust collection of books and materials

We continued to make significant investments in both digital and physical materials while responding to increased demand for digital books as costs for these materials continued to sharply rise. We also added an array of materials as a result of our collection diversity audits and made some highly popular e-books more available through simultaneous-use licenses. We continued to enhance our physical collection by buying more copies of popular materials, including Peak Picks, our popular no-hold, no-wait collection of in-demand titles.

Technology and Access: We promised to improve computer and online services

Our levy-funded hot-spot program continues to provide internet access through our general collection and through targeted outreach with key community organizations. In 2023, the 850 hot spots in our general collection were checked out over 6,500 times, and we worked with 16 community organizations to make 372 loans of the 250 hot spots in our outreach collection to provide more stable internet access to communities disproportionately impacted by the digital divide.

We also used levy funds to replace 368 staff and public computers and invested in 17 hybrid meeting carts, which include 4K high-definition cameras, 75-inch displays and meeting control touchscreens. These carts allow for hybrid (in person and online) meetings at Library locations.

Children’s Programming: We promised to add more programming for children ages 0-5.

By the end of the year, we were offering in-person weekly Play and Learn programs at seven different branches. In 2023, new Play and Learn groups were established at Delridge and NewHolly branches and sessions were offered in Amharic as well as English at the Columbia Branch. Annual attendance at Play and Learn offered in Library branches exceeded 4,600. During 2023, we offered 542 story times at 18 branches, the Central Library and in the community. Our offerings included world language story times in Spanish and Arabic and a perennial patron favorite, Fire Fighter Story Time.

Maintenance: We promised to maintain buildings for the next generation

Our facilities and custodial staff completed more than 7,000 work orders in 2023, including 1,200 in Q4 alone. Our security staff continued early morning patrols at Ballard, Lake City and several other branches to help ensure our buildings were safe and secure as they opened each day.

As noted earlier, our Capital Improvement Program continues to experience unfortunate delays due to widespread supply chain issues and labor shortages. Despite these challenges, we continued construction on the Green Lake Branch seismic retrofit project, and we completed sewer repairs at Douglass-Truth Branch; a roof replacement at the Queen Anne Branch; the interior build-out and installation of the Automated Materials Handling (AMH) system; exterior painting of the Maintenance and Operations Center; and high-priority ADA restroom accessibility improvements to the Madrona-Sally Goldmark, Capitol Hill, Montlake, Northeast and Rainier Beach branches. We also installed a new AC system at Capitol Hill branch and made substantial progress on installation of AC systems at Southwest and Northeast branches.

Action required/requested: Board review and consideration of the 2023 Annual Levy Report for approval at the March 2024 Library Board meeting.

2023 Annual
The Seattle Public Library
LEVY REPORT



Play and Learn group at South Park Library

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Expanding services and navigating transitions

Levy background

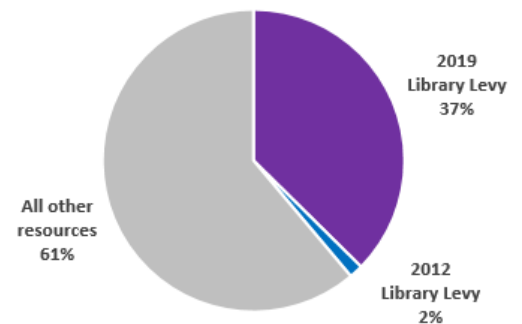
In August 2019, Seattle voters overwhelmingly approved (76%) a seven-year, \$219.1 million property tax levy to maintain and enhance Library services from 2020 through 2026, renewing a seven-year \$122.6 million levy that expired at the end of 2019.

In 2023, the 2019 Levy accounts for \$49.5 million (37%) of the Library's total revised budget of \$132 million. The 2012 Levy provides \$2 million (2%). Other sources including the City's general fund, state and federal grants, private funds and Library fund balance account for the remainder. The Library spent \$107 million (81% of its revised budget) in 2023, including \$30 million of 2019 Levy funds and \$1.6 million of 2012 Levy funds. Most of the levy budget underspend was related to multiyear projects in the Library's Capital Improvement Program and those funds carry over into 2024.

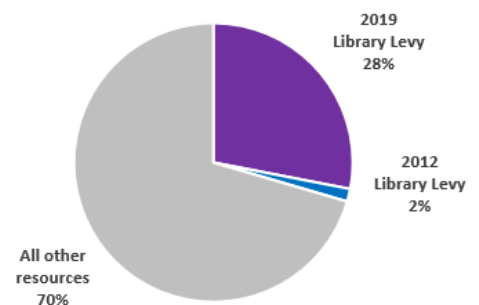
As part of its proposal to voters, **the Library laid out a clear framework for how 2019 Levy proceeds would be used to maintain services that had been funded by the 2012 Levy and provide additional services and programs over the seven-year levy period.** This report, which covers levy activities and spending for 2023 with an emphasis on Q4, continues the series of quarterly levy updates the Library has provided for the Board of Trustees and the public since 2013.

Beyond renewing 2012 Levy commitments, the 2019 Levy provides support for additional Library hours; elimination of overdue fines; improved collections and technology; safer, cleaner buildings; specialized programming and services for children; and development of a plan for the future of Library service.

2023 Library Revised Budget (\$132M)



2023 Library Spending (\$107M)



2023 highlights: expanded hours and services; more challenges

In 2023, the Library fulfilled many levy promises while continuing to respond to unanticipated challenges in keeping our facilities safe and open. In 2023, we significantly increased hours and service levels to access our resources in person, while continuing to offer a robust portfolio of online resources.

As you'll read in this report, we have continued to adapt to our new operating environment to meet the needs of Seattle residents in the levy investment areas of Hours and Access, Collections, Technology and Online Services, Children's Programming and Maintenance.

Planning for the future of the Library

In 2023, the Library made significant progress on developing a strategic plan to guide the Library over the next 10 years, which was one of the Chief Librarian's key priorities for the year. Using levy funds, we contracted with Territory, a consulting firm specializing in strategic plans, and Práctica Consulting, a firm tasked with performing qualitative analysis to reduce Library, facilitator and employee bias from the feedback we received. The Library engaged internal and external stakeholders to help guide our efforts to realize the hub future we had identified in our Foresight process. After extensive stakeholder engagement in the spring and an all-day retreat for the Strategic Planning Core Team in the summer, the Library held an employee town hall in September to update employees on the Strategic Planning Process, report back on the results of a staff survey and solicit feedback on the emerging plan.

In October, we conducted a follow-up survey for staff on the direction of the strategic plan. The 200 responses we received from this survey provided valuable insight on strategic plans of themes of equity, community belonging, enrichment, empowerment and staff retention.

In late October, we launched a public survey on the strategic plan, which was translated into 16 languages, and received 1,700+ responses. In November, the Board of Trustees updated The Seattle Public Library Foundation and The Friends of the Seattle Public Library board members on the plan, including a preview of the draft values and impacts. By the end of the year, the Library made a [Draft Strategic Framework](#) available to the public. We are working towards finalizing the strategic plan, with final adoption by the Board of Trustees anticipated in 2024.

“When I look at what we’re trying to do with the Strategic Direction, we’re talking about the transformational impact of belonging, and of being a resilient community. ... That is going to create more equitable opportunities for all.”

– Tom Fay, Chief Librarian, in an interview with [The Urbanist](#) about the strategic plan

Opening doors and increasing access

The Hours and Access category of the 2019 Levy supports operating hours in neighborhood branches and the Central Library; providing access to Library programs and services in the community; and outreach and engagement services throughout the city. Many elements of this levy category relate to increasing access to Library services through measures such as eliminating late fees and adding open hours. The revised levy budget in 2023 for the Hours and Access category is \$13.3 million.

In January 2020, we eliminated overdue fines, restoring Library access to 18,000 patrons who had their accounts previously suspended due to fines. With this change, the Library reduced the number of suspended accounts by half. Since then, the materials return rate has stayed the same and we have even seen a slight decrease in the number of items that are never returned. Also in January 2020, the Library started opening our branches one hour earlier on Sundays, the first step in what was intended to be more than 10,000 new Library hours annually systemwide funded by the levy. Then the pandemic began. After several years of COVID closures, restrictions and related staffing challenges, the Library was able to restore open hours to pre-pandemic levels in early 2023. In March and April 2023, we began expanding open hours to fulfill the levy promise. With this expansion, Library locations were scheduled to be open 133 more hours per week than in 2019, upon completion of the seismic renovation of Green Lake Branch. (See Table 1.) And although unscheduled closures (more on that below) reduced our actual open hours in 2023, our libraries were open more hours than in any year since 2009.

With our new schedule, we made numerous changes, including the following:

- More hours on Saturdays at 13 branches
- More hours on Sundays at all branches and the Central Library
- Earlier weekday openings at 13 branches
- Monday closures instead of Friday closures at six-day branches
- Earlier closures (6 p.m.) on Mondays at the Central Library and branches open on Mondays
- Changed the mix of branches open for extended schedules to prioritize branches identified as Levy priorities.

Although most branches added hours in 2023, some experienced minor reductions compared to 2019. Library hours have expanded the most at the South Park, Delridge, NewHolly, International District/Chinatown, and High Point branches. The Beacon Hill, Northeast and Rainier Beach branches have seen slight reductions in weekly open hours compared to 2019, but we have installed pickup lockers to provide 24/7 access to physical holds. Pick-up lockers are now in five locations.



Pickup locker at Broadview Branch

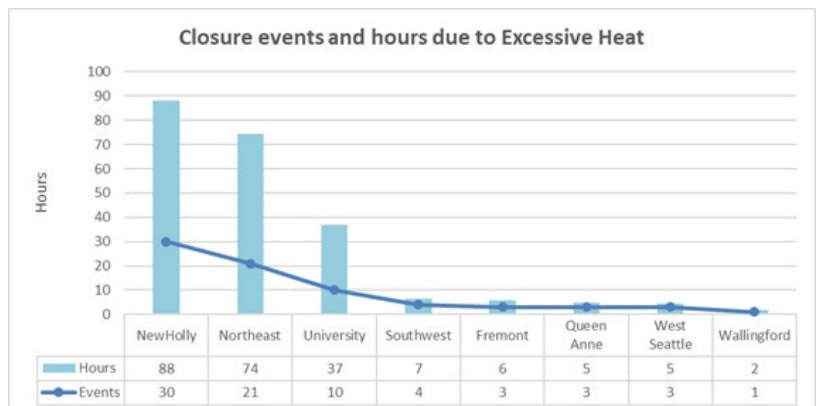
The additional open hours have increased community access to Library collections, information services, computers, programming and public spaces. In November, we began collecting comprehensive data from our new people-counting system that allows us to track entrances and exits at each location by the hour. With additional insights into patron use of the Library, we will be able to evaluate the effectiveness of our new hours and help make adjustments to our schedule. Based on preliminary entrance data, our new hours on Saturday and Sunday mornings are popular at many branches, although evening hours at many locations are not receiving much traffic unless programming occurs that drives patron attendance.

Post-COVID Operating Challenges Continue

As in 2022, we did experience some unplanned closures because of excessive heat, insufficient staffing and other issues, but overall, our libraries were open for 98% of our scheduled hours in 2023, for a total of over 70,000 hours. This compares to 61,000+ actual open hours in 2022 and 68,000+ hours in 2019, our pre-pandemic baseline.

Excessive heat in buildings without air conditioning was the most common reason for an unexpected closure. From June to mid-September, we adjusted weekday schedules at several branches that lacked air conditioning (Fremont, NewHolly, Northeast and Southwest branches) to take advantage of the cooler morning hours and to reduce closures in the afternoons and evenings.

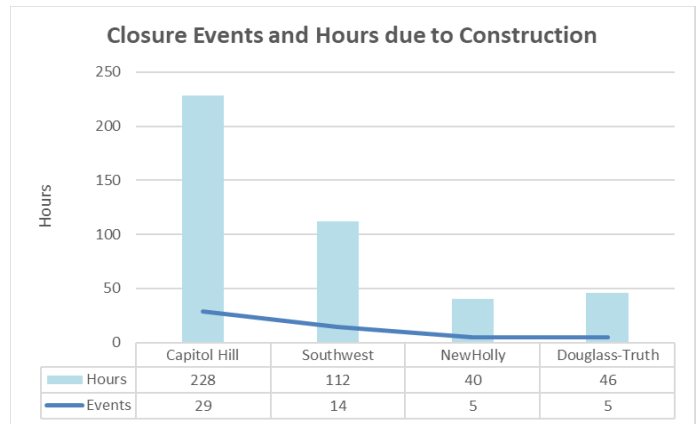
This seasonal adjustment resulted in fewer unplanned closures due to extreme heat than in the summer of 2022. However, a rule change in July by the State Department of Labor and Industries, which set the acceptable maximum for sustained indoor room temperature at 80 degrees for locations without air conditioning, contributed to unscheduled branch closures. (The Library’s past practice was to close branches when indoor air temperature reached



85 degrees.) The Library’s eight branches without air conditioning had to close 75 times in 2023 because of excessive indoor temperatures.

We will be in a better position next summer. In the fall of 2023, we replaced or added air conditioning at the Capitol Hill, Northeast and Southwest branches; a new HVAC system was also added at the NewHolly Branch by the Seattle Housing Authority, which operates the space that houses the library. By next summer, including the addition of air conditioning at the Green Lake Branch as part of its seismic retrofit, 22 of the Library’s 27 locations will have air conditioning, and we should experience fewer heat-related closures, as well as reducing our overall carbon footprint.

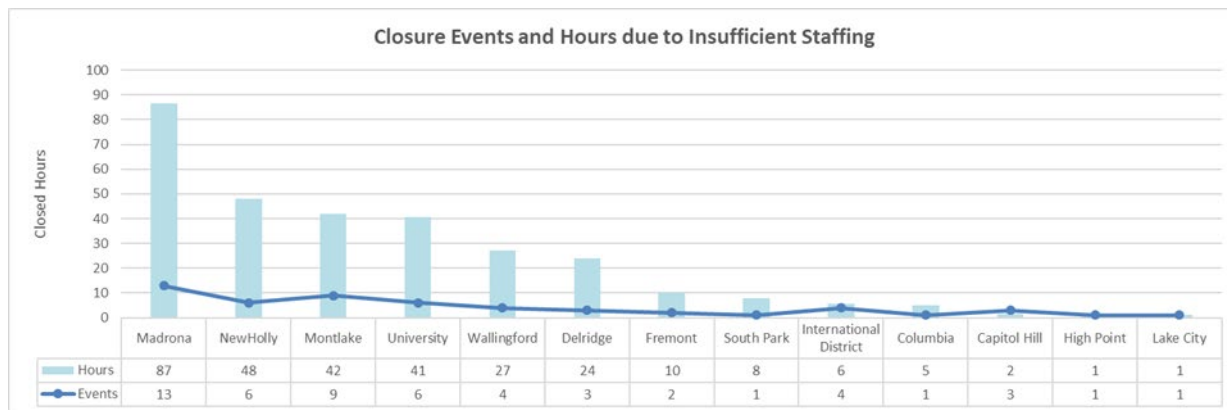
The second most common reason for branch closures was related to construction work. In addition to the year-long closure at the Green Lake Branch for the seismic retrofit project and a projected six-week planned closure at the Northeast Branch to install a new HVAC system (which are both excluded from the chart because they were scheduled), the Library also had to close the Capitol Hill, Douglass-Truth, NewHolly and Southwest branches temporarily to accommodate necessary construction.



Between April and the end of the year, the Capitol Hill Branch closed for a total of 29 days for a roof replacement and installation of a new electric HVAC system that is more efficient and reliable while reducing our carbon footprint. The Douglass-Truth Branch was closed for five days for repair of a broken sewer pipe, which required major excavation at the branch. The NewHolly Branch was closed for five days for installation of a new HVAC system. The planned Northeast Branch closure for the installation of a new electric HVAC system was extended (11 extra days in 2023 and 70 more days overall) because of electrification issues discovered and remedied by Seattle City Light. The Southwest Branch was closed for 14 days for the installation of a new electric HVAC system.

Staffing issues also contributed to the occurrence of unplanned closures, exacerbated by a surge in leave usage and modifications to minimum staffing levels at various Library locations. Before the pandemic, several branches operated with a minimum staffing requirement of three staff members, as outlined in our Collective Bargaining Agreement. However, because of a post-pandemic increase in volatile patron incidents, we re-evaluated safety measures for staff and patrons and revised how branch locations are staffed, including new minimum staffing level targets and a requirement for a minimum of two lead-eligible staff members for all open hours.

In 2023, we closed branches 54 times due to insufficient staffing for a total of 300 hours. Many were preemptive closures, which provided patrons advance notice. While closures related to insufficient staffing occurred at branches throughout the system, they were most frequent at the Madrona-Sally Goldmark, NewHolly, Montlake and University branches.



Other factors also led to unscheduled closures and delayed openings. These included security issues in and around our buildings and facilities issues such as gas leaks, power outages, and pest control issues. Together, these factors caused 51 closure events for a total of 169 lost hours.

The frequency and severity of security incidents in and around our buildings has not leveled off. Rules of Conduct violations resulted in nearly 600 exclusions over the course of the year and resulted in early closures and lockdowns at several branches. To mitigate the impact of the security challenges, the Library has added more security officers over the last five years. The levy now funds eight of the 21 security positions; four more than were funded in the 2012 levy. This has helped the Library more effectively respond to safety issues and to better weather normal levels of staff turnover. In 2024, the Library intends to upgrade and install security cameras at branches with a high number of security incidents and expand our security vehicle fleet to improve effectiveness of our security operations.

Our security team conducted nearly 5,000 branch patrols in 2023, including early morning patrols at high-incident branches to ensure our buildings were clean and safe before opening. This approach has proven successful and continues in 2024.

Reducing barriers to Library services

Beyond expanding Library hours, the levy supports improving access to Library services for everyone, especially those who face barriers to using Library resources. As discussed in the previous section, a key element of our 2019 levy included the elimination of overdue fines for Library materials, which had disproportionate impacts on lower-income communities.

In addition to eliminating late fees, we continue to refine our borrowing policies to improve equitable access. In 2023, we expanded the age range of our Foundation-funded Fresh Start program, which offers one-time waivers of lost material fees for young adults. Fresh Start was previously available to patrons ages 12-19 and has been expanded to serve patrons up to age 26, which aligns this program with other Youth and Family Learning programs. We have also made it easier for any patron to request a waiver for lost-item fees [online](#).



Calling patrons by the name they want to be called makes our Library more welcoming and inclusive. In 2023, we updated our [Library card application](#) to make it clear that patrons are welcome to sign up for a Library card using their preferred first name. We also updated our web page and provided flyers in Library branches with information about changing your name on your Library account.

As Library hours have expanded post pandemic, overall Library use has also increased, but there are still disparities. Evaluation of use data since 2020 shows that Library patrons living in the highest equity priority neighborhoods (as defined by the City's [Office of Planning and Community Development](#)) have been slower to resume borrowing Library materials than residents in the rest of the city. In 2023, we conducted empathy interviews with more than a dozen patrons from parts of the city that fell into the two highest equity priority quintiles. While reasons for no longer borrowing physical Library materials



Patrons enjoying the Beacon Hill Branch

varied, many lapsed patrons told us that during the pandemic, they got out of the habit of going to the Library. In 2024, we intend to dig deeper into our findings from this research and to cross-reference with door-count data to help understand when and where additional hours are most impactful.

In-person and virtual programs and services

The Library continues to make strides in bringing back in-person programming. From January to June, we offered about 16 sessions a week of our popular in-person Homework Help program at eight branches. When we resumed the program for the 2023-2024 school year in September, we offered 20 weekly sessions at nine branches. Students get homework support, play academic games, read and work on academic skills. Free snacks are always provided. Ninety percent of Homework Help students reported their parents speak a language other than English at home, and the vast majority of students served by the program are youth of color. More than 1,100 K-12 students visited Homework Help in 2023, supported by more than 180 adult volunteer tutors. Total attendance at Homework Help exceeded 4,400 in 2023.

Last spring, we once again offered in-person Tax Help sessions in partnership with United Way of King County at the Central Library. Tax Help also returned to branch locations, with long-time partner AARP and new partner PMI Savvy offering sessions at 10 branches. Together, 147 Tax Help Sessions were offered between late January and mid-April, and an additional 21 were offered between May and July. Over 3,300 tax returns were filed at Library locations in 2023.

In 2023, the Library relaunched one of our most beloved early learning programs: in-person story time. Once again, children gathered with caregivers and librarians in libraries across the city to listen to stories, sing, move, connect with each other, and experience other benefits of early learning that will serve them throughout their life. Last year, the Library hosted more than 540 story times, with attendance of 18,000.

We also held nearly 220 levy funded Play and Learn sessions, with total attendance of 4,600. This levy-funded program is described in more detail in the Children’s Programming section of this report.

We launched our 104th Summer of Learning program, which invited youth to explore their past, present and future. To complement the program, we created multilingual downloadable materials, available online or at local branches throughout the summer. Summer of Learning participants were once again invited to a free end-of-summer celebration at the Burke Museum of Natural History and Culture at the end of August.

Over the course of the year, with support from the Seattle Public Library Foundation, the Library hosted 36 author events at the Central Library. Highlights included readings by Bonnie Garmus, author of “Lessons in Chemistry” in January, the celebration of the 25th Anniversary of Seattle Reads, the Library’s citywide book group, featuring Julie Otsuka author of “The Swimmers” in May, Abraham Verghese, author of “The Covenant of Water” in June, James McBride author of “The Heaven and Earth Grocery Store” in September and Timothy Egan, author of “A Fever in the Heartland” in November. In the fall, the Library also hosted a three-part series, guest-curated by Frank Abe, about John Okada, the author of the seminal Japanese-American novel, “No-No Boy.”



A family celebrating Summer of Learning at the Burke Museum event

Beyond author events, the Library hosted programming that ranged from Ladies Musical Club concerts to entrepreneurial workshops. In October, the Library hosted “A Tale of Two Cities,” a business resource open house where small business champions from Minneapolis and Seattle came together in-person and virtually for a unique learning and networking opportunity to discuss building a more inclusive urban economy. When possible, the Library strives to record live events and make them easily discoverable by patrons looking to catch up on past events. In 2023, we combined our podcasts (audio) and YouTube (video) on our website. We have created pages for [Author Recorded Events](#), [Business Recorded Events](#), [Learning Recorded Events](#), and [Civic Recorded Events](#) and intend to expand offerings in 2024.

We have also been working to improve our ability to offer hybrid options at our programs and events. The Library has deployed 17 hybrid carts throughout the system. These carts include 4K high-definition cameras, 75-inch displays and meeting control touchscreens which allow for hybrid (in person and online) meetings at Library locations. We have tested the functionality of the carts at several staff meetings and used them for an all-staff Town Hall in September, attended by hundreds of staff (including 230+ individual and staff group logins). As we test these carts and learn more, we are preparing to use this technology for public programs at the Central Library and at neighborhood branches. Our goal is to offer accessible hybrid options for our communities going forward.

In-house Social Services team

In 2022, we launched our new Social Services team, which includes a social services librarian, a senior community resource specialist and a community resource specialist, funded by the levy to focus on services for youth up to age 26. By bringing on this team, we shifted from a contract model to an in-house model. This team provides expertise to the Library on social service resources, coordinates with other providers, works closely with our security team to support staff in de-escalation and trauma-informed practices and assists patrons in need of referrals or who are in crisis. The team meets regularly with Library staff throughout the system to share information and engage in problem solving.



Social Services staff boxing emergency supplies for branches

In 2023, the team forged relationships with REACH, the Salvation Army, the Seattle Fire Department’s Health One team, the City’s HOPE Team, Catholic Community Services and Public Health-Seattle & King County to provide access to services and resources to our patrons and has also initiated contact with 29 other organizations for potential future partnerships. The team provided 934 referrals and support to patrons for housing, food, clothing, mental health, employment and other needs. They also hosted 14 “Coffee and Conversations” at the Central Library. These informal gatherings, attended by more than 400 people, bring patrons in need of social services together with Library staff on a weekly basis. These gatherings make patrons feel welcome at the Library and often result in social service referrals. A similar staff led program occurred weekly at the Ballard Branch.

“I am profoundly grateful to the Coffee and Conversations staff for very cordial, welcoming, very informative, accommodating environment and encouragement.”

- Coffee and Conversation participant

Teen librarians and the Social Services team co-host weekly Young Adult Drop-Ins at the Central Library. Drop-ins offer teens and young adults a chance to connect with Library staff to ask questions, get assistance navigating social services and other resources, and engage in creative pursuits like button-making and collage. Teen Feed, a local non-profit partner, provides hot meals for attendees, and we provide snacks, coffee, tea and craft supplies.

Promoting the Library

As we continue to restore services, we have worked to reintroduce Seattle residents to our in-person offerings. In the fall, we launched our 2023 Library Card Sign-Up Month Campaign. Titled

“Free To,” the campaign highlights the Library’s free offerings and celebrates the freedom to read and explore ideas free from censorship. For the end-of-year holiday email, we expanded this well-received campaign by creating [videos](#) with five staff members that highlighted their personal experiences at the Library. We hope this campaign will continue to foster and explore diverse viewpoints and further demonstrate the importance of intellectual freedom at the Library.

We have also used our website to highlight and create more awareness around what we have previously called “Special Collections” at the Library. Under the new umbrella term “[Unique Collections](#),” we have designed pages on our website to showcase the unique content in each collection, which range from the African American Collection to the ZAPP Zine Collection. We will continue to add more visual content to the website as we promote these diverse collections throughout 2024.

LEVY ACCOMPLISHMENTS: COLLECTIONS

Building robust collections in print and digital formats

The 2019 Levy commits resources to maintaining and expanding the Library’s collection of physical and digital materials. The levy includes additional funding for e-books, e-audiobooks and streaming services; continuation of Peak Picks; and funds to support the acquisition and digitization of local history items. In 2023, the 2019 Levy provided \$5.9 million in the Collection category, including \$4.6 million for books and materials.

A more inclusive collection

The Library completed its two-year diversity audit of the collection. In 2023, more than 500 titles and 2,300 copies were added that amplify marginalized and underrepresented voices and perspectives for all audiences across print and digital formats. Over the two-year period, more than 1,300 titles and 4,000 copies were added as a result of the audit.

Digital collections reaching more people

An increasing number of Library users continue to access our electronic resources. Over 174,000 patrons downloaded more than 5.4 million digital books (e-books and e-audiobooks) through OverDrive in 2023, including 1.4 million in Q4 alone. These annual numbers represent a 15% increase in users and items checked out compared to 2022. Use of our streaming services held steady in 2023. We saw a slight increase in the number of patrons using Kanopy, our most popular video streaming service (nearly 17,000 in 2023), and a slight decrease in the number of patrons using hoopla, a service that provides streaming music, movies, TV and comics (just over 13,000 for 2023). E-materials accounted for 7.4 million (55%) of 13.4 million total circulation in 2023.

Our digital books reached youth across the country. In April, using funds provided by The Seattle Public Library Foundation, we launched Books Unbanned in partnership with Brooklyn Public Library, offering teens and young adults across the nation a library card that provides free access to the Library's e-book and e-audiobook collections. The card, available via a simple online form, is intended for youth ages 13 to 26 outside the Library's service area. Intellectual freedom is a core value of The Seattle Public Library. Books Unbanned helps counter the series of increasingly coordinated and effective efforts to remove books from public and school libraries across the nation. Books Unbanned cardholders have access to the OverDrive collection, with a maximum of 10 checkouts at a time. In 2023, over 7,500 Books Unbanned borrowers, representing every U.S. state and territory, checked out over 100,000 digital items.



Banned Books display, Broadview Branch

We purchased nearly 113,000 digital copies during 2023, 3% more than in 2022, creating a selection of new materials of greater depth and breadth. We used levy funds to expand the World Language Collection, acquiring 800 copies of e-books and e-audiobooks for adults and more than 700 copies for children in languages other than English, including an opening day collection of 160 titles in Japanese for patrons of all ages. We now offer e-books and e-audiobooks in 11 other languages: Arabic, Chinese, French, German, Italian, Japanese, Korean, Spanish, Russian, Ukrainian and Vietnamese for adults and children.

We also used levy funds to provide unlimited access to the e-book and e-audiobook versions of "The Swimmers" by Julie Otsuka in advance of the Seattle Reads programs. During this period, this title was checked out over 6,600 times, making it one of the most popular items in our collection in 2023.

The impact of increased demand for digital materials

Increased demand for e-books and e-audiobooks has put significant pressure on the Library budget. Annual checkouts of digital books have almost tripled from 2015 to 2022, as have our costs. The Library has done our best to meet patron demand, but meeting the demand has come at a cost that has become unsustainable because of the high cost of digital books for libraries.

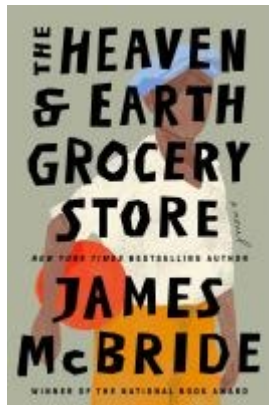
Holdings are the largest single factor in increasing costs for digital books. To maintain reasonable wait times, the Library buys additional copies of a title when it accrues more patron holds. In 2023, 62% of the Library's spending on digital books was because of holds placed on high-demand titles. Library costs for high-demand digital books have nearly tripled since 2015.

To address these challenges, the Library's selection staff are in the process of evaluating a range of ideas for managing our digital book costs so that we can continue providing a broad and

diverse selection of digital books and meet patron demand through the end of the year. The selection team actively monitors and adjusts the number of holds that trigger purchases through the year as part of managing costs. We are also reducing the digital holds limit for patrons in 2024.

Building physical collections, adding language, and making holds available 24/7

In Q4, patrons checked out more than 1.4 million physical items (including renewals), bringing the year's total to 6 million, about the same as 2022. More than 124,000 people checked out physical Library materials in 2023, compared to about 113,000 in 2022, an increase of about 9%. We added over 211,000 physical items to our collection using funds from all sources. We added three new pick-up lockers at the Northeast, Beacon Hill and Broadview branches in 2023 with funds from The Seattle Public Library Foundation and American Rescue Plan Funds. These lockers provide access to our physical collection when branches are closed by allowing patrons to pick up materials at any time of day, helping us deliver on our levy promise of more materials when patrons want them.



[Peak Picks](#), the Library's no-holds, no-wait collection of high-interest titles funded by the levy continues to be popular. In 2023 we added 118 Peak Picks titles and over 18,000 copies, including 31 new titles and 5,100 copies in Q4 alone. Fiction highlights include "The Berry Pickers," by Amanda Peters, winner of the 2021 Indigenous Voices Award for Unpublished Prose; "Let Us Descend," Jesmyn Ward's wrenching and beautifully told story of a young enslaved woman on a rice plantation in the Carolinas; and Alice McDermott's "Absolution," an evocative character study of American women in 1963 Saigon. Nonfiction highlights include "How to Say Babylon," Safiya Sinclair's memoir about her journey from a strict Rastafarian upbringing in Jamaica to finding her own voice as a poet in America; "City on Mars,;" Kelly and Zach Weinersmith's hilarious investigation into space settlement; and "Prequel," Rachel Maddow's page-turning account of public servants and private citizens who thwarted a far-right contingent.

Although Peak Picks checkouts were down slightly in Q4 due the ongoing closure of the Green Lake branch and the unexpected length of the closure of the Northeast branch, Peak Picks circulation was nearly 4% higher in 2023 than in 2022. By the end of 2023, patrons checked out nearly 950,000 Peak Picks, and we are on track to reach one million checkouts in 2024! The most popular Peak Pick during Q4 was the novel “The Heaven and Earth Grocery Store” by James McBride. The most popular Peak Pick for the year was Bonnie Garmus’ “Lessons in Chemistry.”

Top Ten Peak Picks for 2023:

1. “Lessons in Chemistry,” Bonnie Garmus
2. “Foster,” Claire Keegan
3. “A Fever in the Heartland,” Timothy Egan
4. “The Wager,” David Grann
5. “Yellowface,” R.F. Kuang
6. “Hello Beautiful,” Ann Napolitano
7. “Remarkably Bright Creatures,” Shelby Van Pelt
8. “The Guest,” Emma Cline
9. “Tomorrow, and Tomorrow, and Tomorrow,” Gabrielle Zevin
10. “Pasta for All Seasons,” Michela Tartaglia

Expanding our local history collections and making them more accessible

In 2023, we moved our digital assets related to our local history collections to a cloud-based solution to add capacity and improve redundancy and retention capabilities. Last year, we added over 800 items to our Seattle Room digital collections highlighting local history. This included the addition of over 200 items to our [Black Culture and History collection](#).with support of a Washington State Digital Heritage grant; new photographs in our [Century 21 Digital Collection](#) highlighting the 1962 World’s Fair; and more images in our [Werner Lenggenhager Photograph Collection](#), which shows views of Seattle and Washington State from the 1950s to the 1980s. We had over 43,000 unique users to the site, an increase of 3,000 people over the previous year. These users visited the site over 54,000 times.

This year we passed an important milestone with the Werner Lenggenhager Collection, completing digitization of over 6,000 images in collection of nearly 30,000 photographs. In the fourth quarter we added images that depicted [homes in the Central District](#) and [various street scenes from the University District](#).

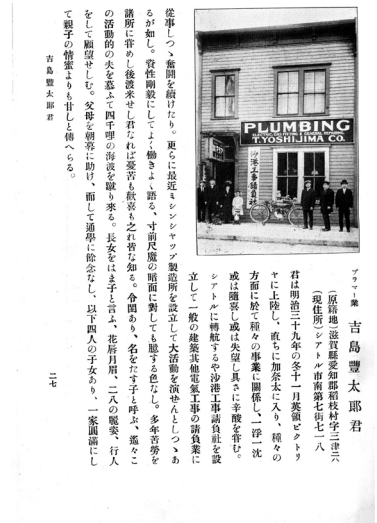
Another highlight from the fourth quarter included the digitization of John Caldwell’s [World War II era drawings](#) to add to our Black Culture and History Collection. Caldwell was a Black serviceman who passed through the city in the 1940s and spent time at Seattle’s segregated Camp George Jordan located on the south side of Spokane St. between First Avenue S. and Second Avenue S. Soldiers at the camp helped with war-time transportation logistics. Caldwell’s drawings, which include portraits of women and celebrities as well as a sketch of the Camp, are especially important because Camp George Jordan is largely absent from the historical record.



Camp George Jordan, John Caldwell ca. 1940s

During 2023, the Library acquired 130 photographs, 20+ photos albums and over 300 photo postcards, documenting life in Seattle and the changing urban landscape from the 19th century to the present day. In addition, two major Seattle book collectors donated important books to the Seattle Collection, including “Rambles Through the Northwest”(1884) and “Reports of the Governor of Washington Territory” for 1884, 1885 and 1886 — the latter inscribed by Governor Watson Squire. Finally, the Library acquired the archives of the Seattle Milk Fund (founded 1907), the Governor Eugene Semple Family Collection, and the annotated menu collections of two local restaurant reviewers through donations.

In 2023, the Library also acquired an extremely scarce biographical directory of Japanese immigrants in and around Seattle published in 1914. The volume includes biographical sketches of more than 100 Japanese immigrants from the Seattle area, most illustrated with halftone portrait photos. As there are no other recorded institutional holdings of this book in the U.S or Japan, this volume is a remarkable addition to the Seattle Collection. This rare item will provide researchers with a wealth of detailed information about the Japanese community in Seattle in the early 20th century.



Japanese Directory, 1914

LEVY ACCOMPLISHMENTS: TECHNOLOGY

Keeping our technology up to date

The 2019 Levy promises around technology include dedicated funding for digital equity offerings; replacing infrastructure for public internet access; replacing outdated technology for acquisition and circulation; and maintaining and upgrading public technologies and the spl.org website. Since the start of the pandemic, our presence online has grown. The levy provided \$2.5 million in budget authority to support technology operating expenses in 2022 and \$5.7 million, including \$2.5 million in carryforward, for the technology capital program.

Digital equity and the Hot Spot circulation program

Internet access is a critical need for everything from job-seeking help to social connection to remote learning. The 2019 Levy is the primary funding source for our [HotSpot program](#), and we have been able to leverage levy funding with additional Foundation and federal funds to offer more hot spots in the community.

Our levy-funded hot spot program continues to provide internet access through our general collection and through targeted outreach with key community organizations. In 2023, the 850 hot spots in our general collection were checked out over 6,500 times, and we worked with 16 community organizations to make 372 loans of the 250 hot spots in our outreach collection to provide more stable internet access to communities disproportionately impacted by the digital divide. These include loans of shared hot spots at 12 tiny house villages, a service we have been providing since 2018, as well as hot spots to tent cities and other temporary shelters. Along with lending hot spots from the outreach collection, Library staff also have provided regular outreach visits to connect with people and share information about Library resources. Last year, we upgraded our devices to the latest model offered by our hot-spot provider. Devices were last upgraded in 2018.

“I can't imagine a more useful service in today's age than access to Wi-Fi. The Library has done an amazing thing granting access to the world for those who are currently without Wi-Fi. Thank you.”

- Patron borrowing general circulation hot spot

At the end of the year, our outreach hot-spot team held community listening sessions with 13 partners who are from and work with Seattle communities most impacted by the digital divide to help improve program design in 2024 and beyond.

Expanding access to computers, scanners and more

In 2023, our technology team continued to modernize and improve the Library's technology. We upgraded 368 public and staff computers that had reached the end of their useful lives. We also replaced 40 printers no longer supported by the manufacturer. In 2023, nearly 39,000 patrons used Library computers almost 340,000 times. This is about 10% more people and sessions compared with 2022. Average session length increased from 55 minutes in 2022 to an hour in 2023.

The Library continued to be a central hub for community printing, with the number of pages printed increasing by 41% from 1.2 million to 1.7 million year over year. We have made it easier for patrons to use cash to use the printers and for our financial staff to audit usage of the machines. In addition, in the 4th quarter, we introduced a new model of printers with fast printing capability. During 2023, our ScanEZ stations, which offer free faxing and scanning as well as translation, became available at all locations and experienced 96% growth in usage from 146,000 to 283,000 pages.

While the use of public-facing Library technology has increased with the expansion of open hours over the last two years, the demand for desktop computers has declined as patrons have shifted to their own devices and Library laptops. In 2023, Library technology staff studied computer usage statistics and determined that the desktop inventory could be reduced by up to 30% without impacting availability of computers to our patrons. By right-sizing the number of desktops, we are able to free up resources to invest in high-demand technology, including additional laptop capacity, ScanEZ stations and upgraded print kiosks. We began removing excess desktops from branches in the fourth quarter and will continue removing them through 2024. We added a total of 14 laptops available to the public at eight branches; the number of laptops at the Columbia,

University and International District/Chinatown branches doubled.

In 2023, we leveraged levy funds with funds available through the E-rate program, a federal program that provides rebates for eligible internet service and hardware expenses. Funded in part through the E-rate program, we made substantial infrastructure upgrades that will help ensure our libraries have dependable internet access. These included new network switches on nine out of 11 floors at the Central Library, with emergency power deployed to nine branches.

The 2019 Levy includes \$4 million to support the replacement of the existing Integrated Library System (ILS) system upgrades. In 2022, the Library worked with a consultant to develop a roadmap for this work, including replacing the discovery layer and make investments in digital asset management. This process included in-depth discovery sessions across all library functions. Due to staffing constraints, the Library deferred the planned Request for Proposal process to solicit responses from the ILS market until 2024.

LEVY ACCOMPLISHMENTS: SUPPORTING CHILDREN

Expanding early learning options for children



Play and Learn group at Lake City Branch

More Play and Learn programs and Restarting In-Person Story Times

The 2019 Levy promised additional support for Library early learning programs for children ages 0 to 5, providing about \$280,000 to support this effort in 2023. A key element of our early learning program is our continued support for the Kaleidoscope Play and Learn program, which offers drop-in neighborhood-based play groups for the Family, Friend and Neighbor Caregiver (FFN)

community. Weekly sessions, which are facilitated by early childhood educators, are available to children between the ages of birth to 5. Parents, caregivers, and children are guided through a variety of developmental activities that promote early learning. The Library has historically partnered with local community-based organizations and agencies to offer these programs by providing meeting room space and access to group supplies. Additionally, our children's librarians have provided early literacy support, promoted library programs and services and built connections with family, friend and neighbor caregivers. Prior to the pandemic, five Play and Learn programs were offered weekly at Beacon Hill, Broadview, Columbia, Lake City, and Rainier Beach branches.

As part of the 2019 levy, the Library had planned to establish up to six additional weekly sessions, either offering a second session per week at branches that already had programs or at branches that had previously not offered Play and Learn. The plan was to launch the new groups in late 2020. With the closures of library facilities in March 2020, however, all in-person children's programming went on hiatus, and some levy funding for Play and Learn was re-directed to address other emergent needs, including support for remote learning for children in grades K-5.

We restarted Play and Learn programming in late 2022 at Beacon Hill, Columbia, Lake City and Rainier Beach branches with long-time partners, Chinese Information and Service Center and Denise Louis Education Center. We also partnered with Villa Comunitaria to launch a group at South Park Branch in late 2022 and a second group at Delridge Branch in 2023. Also, in 2023, we worked with East African Community Services to launch a group at NewHolly branch. Overall, we offered 219 Play and Learn sessions at seven Library branches with a total attendance of 4,680. We currently offer programs in Spanish, Chinese, Amharic, Somali and English.

“We are seeing the results of our increased outreach efforts (at Columbia Branch). There are now 5 Amharic speaking families that attend the group.”

–Karen Greene Smith, Kaleidoscope Play and Learn Coordinator Denise Louie Education Center

Each year, BrightSpark, the umbrella organization that administers the Kaleidoscope Play and Learn program, evaluates survey responses from program participants from all Play and Learn programs in King County. As a result of participating in Play and Learn, more than 80% of the 191 Play and Learn parents and caregivers who responded to the 2023 survey said that they are more likely to read, look at books or tell stories with the child in their care and better understand that children develop school readiness skills when they play. Eighty-seven percent reported that they feel more supported as a parent or caregiver in their community.

In April, we brought back in-person story times and other early learning programs for the first time since the pandemic. In developing our early learning programs for 2023, the Library listened to and worked with community groups to develop programs that advance our equity goals, are culturally appropriate, and, when possible, community led. During 2023, we offered 542 story times at 18 branches, the Central Library and in the community. Our offerings included world language story times in Spanish and Arabic and a perennial patron favorite, Fire Fighter Story Time. Total attendance at these programs exceeded 18,000.



Fire Fighter Story Time at Lake City Branch

Beyond in-person offerings, we continued to offer a robust menu of virtual programs through our [Kids' YouTube channel](#), including 179 different videos of story times, Play and Learn programs, Early Learning at Home programs, and children's activities online that are available to the public to enjoy at any time. Overall, our children's videos were viewed over 39,000 times. Our most popular video, first published in 2020, "What Firefighters Wear" garnered over 21,000 of those views.

LEVY ACCOMPLISHMENTS: MAINTENANCE

Protecting our investments

The 2019 Levy promised to maintain Library buildings, preserve funding for major maintenance and add resources to undertake seismic retrofits for the [historic Columbia, Green Lake and University branches](#). The 2019 Levy provided about \$2 million in budget authority in 2022 to support routine maintenance and \$12.9 million to support major maintenance and seismic work.

Routine maintenance: Keeping our facilities clean and safe

Keeping the Library clean, safe and accessible is an important levy priority. The members of janitorial/custodial team and facilities team were busy this past year, completing approximately 7,000 work orders. The janitorial/custodial team completed 4,000 for the year, including 400 work orders in the Q4. In addition to their daily job duties, they conducted deep cleanings of contaminated restrooms and worked on the detection and eradication of bedbugs and other pests

within some of our branches. They also kept the exterior of the Central Library clean by pressure washing the Fourth Avenue, Spring Street and Fifth Avenue plazas at least once every two weeks. They did similar work at the Ballard Branch, continuing to address the impacts of an increase in encampments of the insecurely housed near Library property, which required daily pick-up of garbage and weekly pressure washing of the exterior plaza to keep the Library and the adjacent Neighborhood Service Center presentable and accessible to the public. Other important maintenance work was performed by our vendors, including window washing (including of the nearly 10,000 windows at the Central Library) and the deep cleaning of all hard surface floors and carpets at our locations.



New Automated Materials Handling System at the Maintenance and Operations Center

The facilities team completed over 3,000 works orders for the year, including 800 in the Q4, performing activities that ranged from maintaining the Automated Materials Handling System (AMHS) (which went live in its new location in Q3) to performing safety checks and walkthroughs for the HVAC systems to addressing ongoing issues with the elevators with Eltec, our elevator service provider, and more.

Major maintenance: Preserving libraries for the next generation

The 2019 Levy provided \$7.6 million in 2023 budget authority and \$10.8 million in carryforward authority for major maintenance and seismic upgrades. The 2012 levy provided an additional \$1.3 million in carryforward authority. In Q4, the Library spent nearly \$1.88 million (\$7.2 million for the entire year) of 2019 levy funds on seismic, major maintenance and IT capital work, and over \$718,000 of 2012 levy funds (\$1 million for the entire year).

Projects completed during 2023 included: Exterior access improvements and emergency sewer repairs at the Douglass-Truth Branch; roof replacement at the Queen Anne Branch; the interior build-out and installation of the Automated Materials Handling System (AMHS) and exterior painting of the Maintenance and Operations Center; and high-priority ADA restroom access improvements to the Madrona-Sally Goldmark, Capitol Hill, Montlake, Northeast and Rainier Beach branches.

Construction for the Green Lake Branch seismic retrofit project is continuing through early 2024. As of Q4, the University Branch seismic retrofit remained in the permitting phase; the branch is tentatively scheduled to close for construction later in 2024. As mentioned in previous reports, due to scope expansion, material scarcity and significant increases in construction costs, the project may face a shortfall of \$5 to \$6 million.

The Library continues to pursue federal and state funding opportunities to supplement levy funding for both seismic and HVAC/electrification projects. However, applying for, monitoring and reporting on federal and state funding requires substantial staff resources, and often requires technical expertise, all

of which can be beyond current Library staff capacity. Timeliness of funding decisions, especially at the federal level, varies and is dependent upon political factors beyond the Library's control.

Should the Library fail to secure federal and state grants or should the City further reduce the Library's REET allocation, it is likely that there will be insufficient resources to undertake the third seismic project (the Columbia Branch) planned in the 2019 levy.

Progress on other significant projects during Q4 included completion of sewer repairs at the Douglass-Truth branch. HVAC/mechanical systems units were also installed on the Capitol Hill Branch roof, and the final punch list items for the roof itself should be finished in Q1 2024. Finally, electrification upgrades (with the notable addition of air conditioning) were nearly completed for two branches: the Southwest Branch, with system control punch list items to be addressed in Q1 of 2024; and the Northeast branch, which is scheduled to reopen March 2024.

Risks, opportunities and the path ahead:

As you'll read in our 2024 first quarter report, our staff continue to adapt, enhance and launch services and programs to help our community respond to the COVID-19 crisis and beyond. Here's a quick preview:

- Release of the Library's new 10-year Strategic Plan
- The challenges of managing e-book and e-audiobook demand
- Operational changes related to new union contracts
- Analysis of expanded hours

2023 Financials

The 2019 Levy accounted for \$49.5 million (37%) of the Library's total revised 2023 budget of \$132 million. The Library spent \$30 million in funds from the 2019 Levy and \$1.6 million in funds from the 2012 Levy.

Spending tables below show the 2023 Operations Plan Budget plus encumbrances and unspent budget authority from prior years in the revised budget columns. Carryover budget authority of \$16.5 million from the 2019 levy and nearly \$2 million from the 2012 levy were available for spending in 2023. We spent 61% of the 2019 Levy's revised 2023 budget authority and 81% of the 2012 Levy's revised 2023 budget authority.

2019 Levy	2023 Ops Plan	2023 Revised	2023 YTD	% Revised Budget	
	Budget	Budget*	Exp.	Available	Spent
Hours & Access	13,283,000	13,248,402	12,107,668	1,140,734	91%
Collections	5,800,000	5,907,076	5,867,566	39,510	99%
Technology & Online Services	2,563,000	2,408,817	2,242,341	166,476	93%
Children's Programming	301,000	366,308	338,398	27,910	92%
Maintenance	1,832,000	2,152,110	1,777,084	375,026	83%
Administration	300,000	492,916	452,743	40,172	92%
Capital Improvement Program	8,894,000	24,904,429	7,242,545	17,661,884	29%
Total	32,973,000	49,480,059	30,028,348	19,451,712	61%

Includes \$496k in operating carry-forward and \$16M in capital carry-forward budget authority

2012 Levy	2023 Ops Plan	2023 Revised	2023		% Revised Budget
	Budget	Budget*	Expense	Available	Spent
Technology & Online Services	-	258,000	159,068	98,932	62%
Buildings & Facilities Support	-	9,250		9,250	
Capital Improvement Program	-	1,684,622	1,429,744	254,878	85%
Total	-	1,951,872	1,588,812	363,060	81%

Entire 18100 budget consists of carry-forward budget authority

Table 1. Scheduled weekly hours in 2023 compared to 2019 baseline

	2019 Baseline	Jan.-Mar. 2023	Apr. hours expansion	Nov. adjustment for NET closure	When Green Lake Opens
Ballard Branch	60	59	62	62	62
Beacon Hill Branch	60	57	56	56	56
Broadview Branch	60	57	62	62	56
Capitol Hill Branch	60	55	62	62	62
Central Library	62	54	62	62	62
Columbia Branch	60	53	56	56	56
Delridge Branch	39	40	56	56	56
Douglass-Truth Branch	60	55	62	62	62
Fremont Branch	39	40	48	48	48
Green Lake Branch	39	33	CLOSED	CLOSED	56
Greenwood Branch	60	61	62	62	62
High Point Branch	46	47	62	62	62
International District/Chinatown Branch	46	42	62	62	62
Lake City Branch	60	61	62	62	62
Madrona-Sally Goldmark Branch	39	40	48	48	48
Magnolia Branch	39	33	48	48	48
Montlake Branch	39	40	48	48	48
NewHolly Branch	39	33	56	56	56
Northeast Branch	60	57	56	CLOSED	56
Northgate Branch	60	57	56	60	56
Queen Anne Branch	39	35	48	48	48
Rainier Beach Branch	60	59	56	56	56
South Park Branch	46	47	62	62	62
Southwest Branch	60	45	56	56	56
University Branch	46	47	48	48	48
Wallingford Branch	39	40	56	56	48
West Seattle Branch	60	45	56	56	56
Total Weekly Hours	1,377	1,292	1,468	1,416	1,510
Hours as a % of 2019 baseline level		94%	107%	103%	110%



The Seattle Public Library

Memorandum

Date: March 1, 2024

To: The Seattle Public Library Board of Trustees
The Seattle Public Library Foundation Board of Directors

From: Tom Fay, Executive Director and Chief Librarian
Kiersten Nelson, Community Partnerships & Government Relations Manager

Subject: 2023 Seattle Public Library Foundation Grant Award Summary Report

In 2023, The Seattle Public Library (SPL) expended nearly 100 percent of The Seattle Public Library Foundation (SPLF) \$5.132 million grant award, leaving \$8,230 unspent. This memo summarizes both the Library's spending and programmatic outcomes.

Spending Summary -- 2023 Foundation Award

Funding Priority	2023 Award	2023 Spending	Balance Remaining
Providing Books & Materials	\$1,742,131	\$1,991,052	(\$248,921)
Hours & Access	\$1,187,075	\$1,066,240	\$120,835
Literacy & Early Learning	\$826,758	\$706,861	\$119,897
Technology & Online Services	\$373,344	\$359,690	\$13,654
Major Maintenance	\$733,342	\$732,855	\$487
Administrative Support	\$258,950	\$259,554	(\$604)
Branch Restricted Donations	\$10,000	\$7,118	\$2,882
Total	\$5,131,600	\$5,123,371	\$8,230

The Library is exceptionally pleased to note that it utilized nearly all of the grant award from The Seattle Public Library Foundation in 2023. This spending summary highlights the significant programmatic efforts undertaken by staff in 2023 thanks to the generosity of the Foundation and its donors, and the impacts seen from that work.

The grant provided by The Seattle Public Library Foundation represents the most important programmatic funding for our Library system, and is directly responsible for enhancing the library experience of our patrons. Especially when leveraged with resources from the City of Seattle and the voter approved Library levy, this funding maintains critical, system wide multi-year programs and initiatives.

There was relief and stability in 2023 as the Library returned to mostly pre-pandemic levels of operations. Programs resumed at higher levels and operated in various formats: hybrid, virtual, and in-person based on staff and patron feedback. The Foundation resources proved extremely valuable, allowing the Library to remain nimble and focus on serving the needs of patrons. The Foundation graciously modified standing grant restrictions as appropriate, enabling the Library to realign funds to address the dynamic service and budgetary environment posed by the fluidity of post-pandemic realities. The Library appreciates the flexibility provided by the Foundation's trust based philanthropy, which allowed the reprogramming of resources within a funding priority to support our work.

In 2023, \$5.123 million was expended from the \$5.131 million Foundation grant, achieving a spend rate of 99.9 percent. Of the money, approximately \$355,000 in funds have been accrued and are in the process of being paid by the Library's finance team for items including furniture for Green Lake and the Northeast HVAC project. The increased funding level over the 2022 grant allocation was due in part to a handful of carry-forward grants awards.

Including *The Seattle Post-Intelligencer (PI)* archives purchase, the Library achieved a spend rate of 114 percent for Providing Books & Materials, 100 percent for Major Maintenance including funding to complete the Northeast and Southwest HVAC system replacements, and 100 percent for Administrative Support. Categories with underspend include Hours & Access with a 90 percent spend rate, Literacy & Early Learning with an 85 percent spend rate, and Technology & Online Services with a 96 percent spend rate.

Key reasons for overspend or underspend are as follows:

- Providing Books & Materials: The Library overspent in this area purchasing the remainder of *The Seattle Post-Intelligencer* digital archives for the years of 1986-present.
- Technology & Online Services: The Library's underspend in this area stemmed from the Microsoft Licensing project's reallocation of grant funds.
- Literacy & Early Learning: The 75 percent of this funding priority's underspend came from three programs: World Story Time, Storytime & More, and Innovation & Rapid Response. This accounted for 11 percent of the total funding for Early Learning and Literacy.
- Administrative Support: All funds were expended in this category which includes consideration costs, professional development, and research & learning programs.
- Major Maintenance (CIP): 100 percent of this grant award was expended including support for the Northeast and Southwest HVAC/air conditioning upgrades.

Below you will find information and stories from patrons on how the grants provided by The Seattle Public Library Foundation for 2023 impact our service priorities, the community, and our shared values.

Providing Books & Materials

Granted: \$1,742,131

Expended: \$1,991,052

2023 Foundation grants included contributions to the African American, Biography and Literary Classics, Children's, Seattle Room, Preservation of the Collection, eBooks, and General Collection areas. It also funded pick-up lockers, the Japanese Collection, the Read-Along Books Collection, and important archival materials from *The Seattle Post-Intelligencer*. This support allowed for the ongoing development of these respective collections to enhance community experiences with the Library. The Foundation also funded the Books Unbanned program that provides digital library cards to youth (ages 13-26) across the United States and its territories, and access to the Library's entire

electronic collection. SPL was the first library system in the nation to join the Brooklyn Public Library in this endeavor to increase information access to children and young adults. Foundation funding also enabled the Library to meet customer expectations for electronic and physical materials, as patrons' content consumption continue to shift rapidly to more digital formats.

Service Priorities:

Technology and Access, Seattle Culture and History, Community Engagement

Community Impact:

By accessing and using the Library collection, Seattle's diverse communities are informed, entertained and enriched.

Why this matters:

The collection is the Library's most visible and most used service. The Foundation enables SPL to achieve a level of collection excellence that would otherwise not be possible. In 2023, the Library continued to respond to community needs by increasing investment in digital materials and offering more ways to access physical materials through pick-up lockers.

The Library returned to levels of service last seen pre-pandemic. Purchasing and distribution of physical materials skills honed during the pandemic allowed staff to make the most of the Library's Books and Materials grant. With a generous and specific grant, the Library was able to expend all the funds to bolster the Japanese language collection with the purchase of 1,270 copies of 437 books. Additionally, the Library launched a small Hawaiian language children's book collection.

The Holds Pick-up Locker program continued to expand in 2023. In addition to the Foundation grant, the Library secured funds from the State of Washington to install a locker at the Ballard Branch. Plans are in place to add additional unique ways across the system to increase access to materials. SPL also reallocated Foundation funds to purchase the remaining portion of the digital archives of *The Seattle Post-Intelligencer* that had not already been obtained.

Patron Experience:

"Raising A Reader is such an important program to be able to offer our families. In addition to the books, our literacy events really provide families with important read aloud information and tips. So grateful for this program!"- Parent Child+, El Centro de la Raza

A is for Apple shared with the Library that, "the books were greatly used and appreciated by all of the parents and caregivers in not only helping them to process their own feelings of the disruption of safety [from the drive-by shooting that occurred outside the daycare] but also how to talk with their children about it."

By the Numbers:

- SPL had 5.48 million OverDrive and e-materials checkouts and 5.47 million print items checkouts in 2023 thanks to Foundation support.
- 12,000 books were purchased and distributed through the Summer of Learning program. 100 percent of the books went to prioritized audiences with the majority of books by BIPOC authors and illustrators.
- The Library added a total of 325,379 items to the circulating collection (113,658 e-books/audio and 211,721 physical items), a four percent increase from 2022.

Hours & Access

Granted: \$1,187,075

Expended: \$1,066,240

This category of 2023 Foundation awards included enrichment programming such as lectures, author programs, and discussions on art, history, and social justice. It also supported art, music and performance programs, engaging communities of color, supporting Seattle's most disadvantaged communities, and ensuring community members and leaders have a voice in the curation of our work. It allowed for continued outreach in Job and Life Skills programming as well as Workforce and Career Development. All of this work would not have been possible without Foundation support.

Service Priorities:

Technology and Access, Seattle Culture and History, Community Engagement, Youth and Family Learning

Community Impact:

Our community becomes stronger and access to opportunities becomes more equitable as a result of Library activities that are inclusive, draw diverse participants, and promote understanding.

Why this matters:

Despite Seattle being one of the most educated large cities in the US and possessing a robust economy prior to 2020, the pandemic highlighted the stark disparities the city faces running along racial and immigrant lines, as well as gender and sexual identities. As the City transitions to a post-pandemic reality, community members needing support rely on Library resources to address a stressful environment. Our focus is on finding ways in which Library resources can be utilized to empower the lives of individuals and community groups, especially those furthest from racial, economic, digital and social justice.

Patron Experience:

"So far, I have learned some advanced grammar. My pronunciations are also corrected from time to time. They are important because that's what I need to learn." Job & Life Skills participant.

"I'm so happy that I got my citizenship! The first time I look at the person [the interviewer], I was very nervous. But, because I learn a lot here [at Adult Education Tutoring], the question is easy for me. Before that, I didn't know anything, which is why I failed two times." – Selina, a patron who attended all but one citizenship class ahead of her Naturalization Exam.

When asked why the Library's language and business programs are important, Kayako said: "Most important is it is free. And it is very useful which is why I am here every week. It is very nice; I can improve my English. The people are nice and you even have this classroom for me when my hearing is not good enough." Kayako, Library to Business and Job & Life Skills participant.

"I'm so happy and grateful that the bookmobile comes to Hilltop House! It reminds me of those thrilling days of yesteryear (1949) when the Seattle Public Library's bookmobile visited us on our school playground!" – Book Mobile patron

Recently, Carrie, a new patron, was introduced to the tablets and hotspots that we loan. The patron was overjoyed to discover that through SPL she has access to the digital editions of the New York Times and Washington Post, saying "Is this Christmas?" I walked her through the steps to access them and wrote them down for her. She said that using the tablet was difficult at first, but now she can't imagine going without. – Carrie, a Book Mobile patron

By the Numbers:

- Citizenship classes are conducted by Seattle-based community partner Asian Counseling and Referral Service (ACRS). 38-44 hours of instruction per class are offered every quarter for 4-5 cohorts. Classes are two days a week for two hours a day. Since the pandemic and until the fourth quarter of 2023 all classes were online; in the fourth quarter ACRS introduced 2 cohorts of hybrid classes and one hybrid cohort will continue in 2024, with the rest remaining virtual.
- At the end of 2023, SPL was providing monthly visits or deliveries to 28 preschools, 68 adult facilities/buildings and 2 tiny house villages. The Library also provided services to 83 individuals through Books by Mail and made monthly deliveries to 32 home service patrons. SPL also brought the bookmobile to 11 special events this year, reaching over 2,600 people.
- The Seattle Reads 25th Anniversary was celebrated for several months, and included an exhibit at Central Library, author visits with Julie Otsuka, and other auxiliary programs. The Library distributed nearly 2,000 uncatalogued copies of *The Swimmers* throughout the community and more than 7,500 copies circulated between March and May 2023. Seattle Reads hosted four programs with Julie Otsuka in May 2023 and roughly 600 people attended the events in real time. The Library also got permission to post the recording of the event on SPL's YouTube channel for a limited time. More than 250 people watched the video during that time.

Literacy & Early Learning**Granted: \$826,758****Expended: \$706,861**

To succeed in life, all young people – from preschool through high school – need to be exposed to and engaged with a variety of high-quality learning experiences. As a leading learning institution, SPL provides these learning experiences as part of its commitment to serve youth and families.

Foundation funded projects for 2023 included high profile programs such as the Global Reading Challenge and the Summer of Learning. After seeing increased learning gaps for non-English speakers and school aged children, the Library focused on putting the appropriate staff in place to develop long term plans to address youth and teen programming. The community reacted positively to the return of a full year of Homework Help. The program expanded to nine branches across the city, with a focus on disadvantaged population centers.

World Story Time relaunched in full force in April. Lake City was able to launch its first World Story Time in Arabic, a first for this region as well. SPL also increased its multilingual book giveaways in partnership with community partners and organizations serving prioritized communities.

Service Priorities:

Community Engagement, Youth and Family Learning

Community Impact:

By providing a welcoming and relevant place of learning, Seattle's diverse communities learn, grow, and problem solve together for a better community.

Why this matters:

Inequities inside and outside of Seattle's K-12 public schools have affected educational outcomes for historically marginalized students for generations. To address these disparities, youth need to have access to programs and services that affirm them, their language and their culture; provided an opportunity to improve reading; gain digital literacy skills; and develop work and life skills to succeed in college and career pathways.

The Seattle Public Library's traditional slate of outreach and programming for Literacy & Early Learning turned a corner in 2023 in allowing staff to increase programming frequency and reliability. This slow ramp up moved into high gear as the year progressed. As community organizations rebounded from the impacts of the pandemic, SPL saw increased engagement from these groups to increase programming.

SPL also completed a new multiyear Memorandum of Agreement with Seattle Public Schools to greatly benefit students and staff by more easily developing programs based on student needs and staff availability. As the school years are an important time of learning and development, the Library continues to find new and different ways to reach young students. SPL's Early Learning and Teen Program managers developed programs grounded in racial equity data and in response to the greatest needs for the community's students and families.

Patron Experience:

"Homework Help provides my two sons a great space to learn and be curious. It also helps that all of the homework help volunteers are caring. While my boys are learning, I get time to build my job skills. As a busy mom of two, I appreciate this time so much." –Columbia and Rainier Beach Branch Parent

"I had a middle schooler coming to my gaming program that was struggling with connecting with his peers. He would often have angry or tearful outbursts towards his friends during game play. He came to every game session... [after one session and a big reaction] we sat separately for a bit so that he could calm down and tell me what was going on. We talked about feelings, emotions, and healthy ways to express them. I could tell he felt heard and that he trusted me to discuss something he was struggling with and actively working on... The next session, he worked on regulating his emotions in an upsetting moment, and ran up to me afterwards, proud of himself. I told him that I had noticed and that he was doing great, and he was beaming at his efforts being acknowledged." – Broadview Librarian, Teen Programming

"Story time was so special, I told everyone that this was the very first time since March 2020. The staff was so welcoming and I ended up having 14 people. There was someone there that just happened to be at the library with his family, he mentioned that he works for the Library Foundation and that they allocate budget for programs like ours, he seemed amazed to see the turnout and the interaction with children and families. He said he was happy we are back! I am so happy to be back!" - Xiomara Melgar, Spanish storyteller, and their reflections from first Beacon Hill session post pandemic.

"I wasn't good at reading, and I was (a level) K, but now I'm a higher level. Now I read other books when I'm not at Team Read." – Student Reader

By the Numbers:

- Teen Feed and Central's Young Adult Drop-in hosted 29 sessions providing five hot meals a week in partnership with Teen Feed. One of the most requested items for young adult drop-ins is hot meals.
- The Summer of Learning program distributed more than 13,000 books.
- Team Read prevented summer reading loss and provided school year reading support for first through third grade students. 40 percent of Seattle students who were at least one grade level behind at the beginning of the year progressed to be at or above grade level at the end of the year.
- 1,200 children ages 18 months to five years participated in the Raising a Reader program.

- In 2023, the Homework Help program received 4,402 drop-in visits with a total of 1,131 unique users.
- World Language Story Time had over 800 views of their multilingual content on SPL's YouTube channel and there were more than 4,000 views of early learning content.

Technology & Online Services

Granted: \$373,344

Expended: \$359,690

2023 Foundation funding supported Technology and Online Services, which provided SPL patrons with opportunities to learn and experience technology programs rooted in the principles of connected learning, design and computational thinking. Programs funded through this priority area include KidsTeam, Esports, Digital Art, and Nourishing Minds.

Service Priorities:

Technology and Access, Community Engagement, Youth and Family Learning

Community Impact:

By building digital equity, The Seattle Public Library supports Seattle's diverse communities in building a future where everyone has the opportunity to thrive.

Why this matters:

Socio-economic disparities often limit access to technology that underrepresented populations have, including to quality programs supporting design and computational thinking skills. Through relationship building with youth, parents, caregivers, elderly care facilities, community partners, and disadvantaged community advocates, the Library is responding to the desire for people to be exposed to and gain technological skills, which are increasingly important in all aspects of the economy.

Research shows that teen mental health has been greatly impacted since the start of the pandemic. The Seattle Public Library's teen mental health program, which was launched in response to the COVID-19 pandemic, aims to bring attention to the critical importance of mental health during this challenging time. Through a variety of initiatives and partnerships, the Library was able to raise national awareness of the mental health concerns faced by individuals and communities during the pandemic. Last year, SPL received funding from the Institute of Museum and Library Services (IMLS) for nearly \$250,000 through 2025.

In 2023, with support from SPLF and IMLS, SPL continued building resources to support teen mental health. These programs included the *Nourishing Minds* project which developed resources like a cookbook, a quick guide, and a card deck for resources to help staff assist teens. The KidsTeam program continued working with the University of Washington to co-design with teens and kids and explore how younger kids can learn about misinformation and disinformation.

The Art for Community Voices program, a partnership with the Seattle Housing Authority, is an original initiative aimed at engaging underrepresented youth from South Seattle and focuses on blending traditional digital art practices with community representation exploration. And finally the Esports Program innovatively works in partnership with Aspire Growth Youth. The program counts on the expertise and experiences of college-age Esports players who serve as online coaches and mentors for high school students in Seattle.

Patron Experience:

"I got to practice my procreate knowledge and skills by helping the kids with creating their design digitally. As someone who is very passionate about art and design, it was a really enjoyable experience for me to see how all the teens were so excited to learn how to use these tools for their own art. I enjoyed helping the teens develop their own design, watching their ideas flow until they landed on a final design that represented their own values, culture and community. This program reminded me how important inclusive design is, especially for diverse youth. As an intended informatics student at the University of Washington, it felt good to be a part of a program that focused on creating digital literacy, and taught local youth how we can use technology for good." – Arts for Community Voices intern

By the Numbers:

- Digital Media and Learning held 68 in-person, virtual, and hybrid programs serving more than 800 people.

Major Maintenance

Granted: \$733,342

Expended: \$732,855

The Library focused maintenance grant funds on interior upgrades to Library branch furniture. Locations that received new furniture include Green Lake and Central. Additionally, the Foundation generously gave funds to fill the gap between what the City Council awarded the Library and the cost of the work for upgrading the HVAC and air-filtration systems at the Southwest and Northeast Library branches. Despite some delays in the reopening of the Northeast Branch, the systems will be fully operational for what will likely be a warm and potentially poor air quality summer.

Service Priorities:

Re-Imagined Spaces in branches across the entire system.

Community Impact:

By using Library facilities, Seattle's diverse communities are able to work, enjoy, and create together in spaces that meet their needs and challenge their minds.

Why this matters:

Libraries are truly one of the last free and democratic spaces in our country. There is no requirement of purchase, membership, or transaction. It is a place that is on the front lines of some of the most pressing issues facing cities across the nation. As a result, we need to adapt our physical spaces to meet the needs of our patrons and maximize our spaces to match how our community uses them. By creating an environment that is able to sustain operations during extreme weather events, the Library will continue to serve all people of the community at times when they may need safe, clean spaces the most.

Branch Restricted Donations

Granted: \$10,000

Expended: \$7,118

On occasion, the Foundation receives grant funds directed for very specific services and branch locations. Annually, the South Park branch receives a \$10,000 programs grant.

Administrative Support

Granted: \$258,950

Expended: \$259,554

The majority of this grant covers Foundation related support activities such as a portion of the SPL liaison to the Foundation, and a portion of Administrative Services (Business Office and Finance) resources to manage Foundation grants and related expenses. The grant award in 2023 was for \$258,950. The Chief Librarian's office used nearly all of the funds allotted for consideration costs as well as funds for Service Priority Research and Learning.

Administrative Support grant resources also enable senior leaders' conference attendance and professional development opportunities. The use of these funds continues to expand since pandemic restrictions have lifted.

Service Priorities:

Technology and Access, Seattle Culture and History, Community Engagement, Youth and Family Learning, Re-Imagined Spaces

Community Impact:

With expert staff, The Seattle Public Library can provide cutting edge programs and services that reflect our community's desires and steward the institution for future generations.

Why this matters:

As the Library develops its strategic plan and how to address the changing needs of the community, funding from The Seattle Public Library Foundation is important. It supports effective grant oversight and management to address this evolving world, and provides learning opportunities for key Library staff to share best-practices with other institutions and anticipate how to meet the future needs of Seattle.

Action Required/Requested: Informational only. No action requested.



The Seattle Public Library Foundation

Memorandum

Date: March 13, 2024

To: The Seattle Public Library Board of Trustees
Tom Fay, Chief Librarian and Executive Director

From: Brian Lawrence, Deputy Executive Director
The Seattle Public Library Foundation

Subject: Donor Recognition in Library Facilities – Children’s Area, Southwest Branch

We are pleased to share an honoring opportunity for an individual who has made a lifetime gift to The Seattle Public Library Foundation (SPLF) to benefit The Seattle Public Library (SPL). Because of the significance of this gift, the donor warrants recognition in our Library system based on current policy and practice.

In compliance with the SPL policy [Donor Recognition in Library Buildings](#), we are notifying the Library Board and Chief Librarian of this commitment.

Janet Maurer Daggatt Children’s Area at the Southwest Branch

Janet Maurer Daggatt (1930-2023) was a longtime Seattle native and successful entrepreneur who grew up in West Seattle. She had a deep love for books and was recognized by a major Seattle company for reading in excess of 1,000 digital e-books. For a period, she lived in California and served on the board of the Rancho Mirage Library and Observatory. Upon her return to Seattle, she became a longtime supporter of The Seattle Public Library Foundation and deeply loved the Library’s literacy programs for children.

Before her passing, Janet was making plans to leave her entire estate to The Seattle Public Library Foundation. Upon her death, the Foundation has worked with the executor of her estate and her family to honor Janet’s wishes to dedicate a space in her honor.

In addition to the named space gift, Janet’s legacy will live on through the Janet Maurer Daggatt Fund for Children’s Books and Programs, as well as a gift to support children’s programming in 2024.

The named space at the Southwest Branch will be using similar font specifications that are complimentary to the architectural style and consistent in size with named spaces in other similar branches.

Action Required/Requested: Informational only; no action requested at this time. Discussion and comment welcome.

For the community...

As you approach the entrance to the Southwest Branch of The Seattle Public Library in West Seattle, artist Katherine Kerr welcomes visitors with “Anthology,” an artist installation which includes five sets of bronze hands that hold objects inspired by the community. Connected to the sculptures are words inscribed on the walkway. These words embody what Janet stood for, and they articulate how The Seattle Public Library can help our neighbors in a powerful and profound way.

Live

Learn

Blossom

Promise

Become



Janet at the 2019 Discover Your Library Luncheon.

Janet Maurer Daggatt

Janet’s love for the Library was evident every time she attended a Foundation event. You could always find her engaged in deep conversations with board members, learning from staff about programs, or listening intently to authors and thought leaders. An incredible donor since 2005, Janet’s loyalty to the mission was seen year after year in her annual giving, and culminated by her incredible legacy gift. To continue Janet’s history of support, we propose the following:

SHORT-TERM COMMITMENT

A one-time investment in SPL’s children and youth programming. The Foundation supports more than a dozen children and teen programs, ranging from Raising a Reader, to Digital Media Learning, to afternoon Homework Help.

LONG-TERM COMMITMENT

Establish the Janet Maurer Daggatt Fund for Children’s Books and Programs. Through a board-designation, a quasi-endowment will be established in her honor to generate annual funds to be used for children’s books and programs in perpetuity.

Each year going forward, the Foundation will provide the family with an Endowment Report detailing the impact to children and families across the system.

(Over)



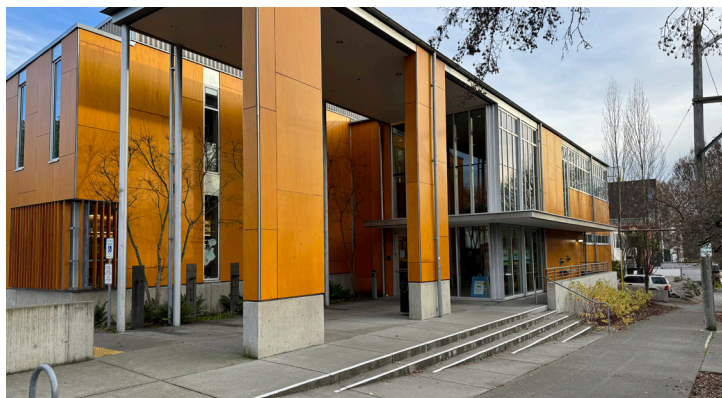
Sample rendering of the Janet Maurer Daggatt named Children's Area at the Southwest Branch. Letters will be 3" stainless steel. Subject to the approval of The Seattle Public Library's Board of Trustees.

Legacy Commitment

To recognize Janet's commitment to serving traditionally under-served communities, the Foundation will create the Janet Maurer Daggatt Children's Area in the neighborhood where Janet was raised, West Seattle.

Named spaces not only honor those who give, but remind others about the importance of supporting the institution that is loved by so many.

The named space will continue for the useful life of the building.



Southwest Branch Facts

- Remodeled and expanded in 2007
- The most widely used West Seattle location, with a circulation of more than 300,000 materials annually
- Approximately 90,000 visitors annually, with an average visitation of approximately 7,000 patrons per month
- Dedicated children's area, with an average of 8,500 children and teen materials circulated per month
- 22 computers with Internet access
- Dedicated Spanish collection
- Regular programming and partnerships includes Story Times, Southwest Artist Showcase, Compudopt (free computers for kids), Southwest Historical Society, Seattle Public Schools BRIDGES, South Seattle College, Neighborhood House, White Center Food Bank, Seattle Housing Authority, Baron St. P-Patch, and more!



The Seattle Public Library

NEWS RELEASES

Date			Title
02	01	2024	Path With Art Opens "Winter Visions" Exhibit at The Seattle Public Library's Central Library
02	05	2024	Ijeoma Oluo to Discuss How Everyday People Can Fight Oppression and Change the World on Friday, Feb. 27 at Langston Seattle
02	13	2024	Fall in Love With These Author Readings and Community Events at The Seattle Public Library
02	16	2024	Obtenga ayuda gratuita para preparar su declaración de impuestos en 11 sucursales de la Biblioteca Pública de Seattle



The Seattle Public Library
MEDIA COVERAGE

Date	Organization	Headline	Details	Link
1-Feb-2024	KGFW-AM	Lexington Public Library launches One Book, One Community program	The library is introducing the One Book, One Lexington program this year. Similar programs are common across the country. The first “One Book” program was launched by librarian Nancy Pearl in 1998 while she was executive director of the Washington Center for the Book in the Seattle Public Library. One Book programs can be found in other Nebraska communities. There is a One Book, One Nebraska program sponsored by the Nebraska Center for the Book, and One Book programs in Lincoln, Omaha, and Cozad.	https://kgfw.com/2024/02/01/lexington-public-library-launches-one-book-one-community-program/
8-Feb-2024	Seattle Met	The Case for Reading as a Self-Care Activity	We have what truly is one of the coolest libraries around in the Seattle Central Library. I missed its stacks and signature glass-and-steel design when it was closed. Plus, Summer Book Bingo, a collab between the Seattle Public Library and SAL, is my official summer kickoff.	https://www.seattlemet.com/health-and-wellness/2024/02/reading-self-care-wellness-seattle

8-Feb-2024	The UW Daily	The Daily Editors' Book Club January: Toshikazu Kawaguchi's 'Before the Coffee Gets Cold'	Our ever-committed Photo Editor, Emma Ottosen, took advantage of public library resources in her pursuit of joining the book club. "I read it up until the point where there was time travel," Ottosen said. "And then my Libby time expired." Jokes aside, Libby is a fantastic resource to access digital books from the Seattle Public Library.	https://www.dailyuw.com/arts_and_culture/community/the-daily-editors-book-club-january-toshikazu-kawaguchi-s-before-the-coffee-gets-cold/article_9bb7eb14-c650-11ee-92d7-b3eac4d88811.html
9-Feb-2024	The Seattle Times	Celebrate Valentine's Day and the Super Bowl with 5 football romance books	The Seattle Public Library loves to promote books and reading. This column, submitted by the library, will be a space to promote reading and book trends from a librarian's perspective. You can find these titles at the library by visiting spl.org and searching the catalog.	https://www.seattletimes.com/entertainment/books/celebrate-valentines-day-and-the-super-bowl-with-5-football-romance-books/
12-Feb-2024	The Seattle Times	Rant and Rave: Check found in library book	RAVE to the Seattle Public Library patron who found a check made out to me in a book I recently returned and submitted it to library staff. Rave to SPL for contacting me about what to do with it!	https://www.seattletimes.com/life/lifestyle/rant-and-rave-check-found-in-library-book/

15-Feb-2024	The UW Daily	<u>Citing staffing and budgeting issues, Odegaard has no plans of returning to a 24-hour schedule</u>	Marcu added that the limited spaces in Odegaard have encouraged her to discover new study gems outside of campus as well. "It's also fun to explore on the weekends, to go out of the U-District and try new coffee shops and study spots," Marcu said. "I've also heard that a lot of people go to the [Seattle Public] Library downtown because it's huge and it's beautiful."	<u>https://www.dailyuw.com/news/citing-staffing-and-budgeting-issues-odegaard-has-no-plans-of-returning-to-a-24-hour/article_8708a75a-cbad-11ee-b3b5-7f3b373ca58b.html</u>
15-Feb-2024	West Seattle Blog	<u>WEEKEND PREVIEW: Story Time Sunday with Kraken mascot Buoy at West Seattle Library</u>	"When the Seattle Kraken mascot Buoy came to West Seattle a little over a year ago, a big crowd turned out. This weekend, Buoy's back – for a Story Time at the West Seattle (Admiral) Library on Sunday morning (February 18)."	<u>https://westseattleblog.com/2024/02/week-end-preview-story-time-sunday-with-kraken-mascot-buoy-at-west-seattle-library/</u>

16-Feb-2024	KIRO News Radio / MyNorthwest	<u>Mayfield: What has Seattle elementary students embracing such weighty fiction?</u>	So how on earth are these 10 and 11 year olds so motivated to read with such depth and cultural relevance? The Seattle Public Library. Each year since 1995 the library in our city has been organizing something called the Global Reading Challenge. Students in 4th and 5th grades are offered a selection of 8 books carefully selected by librarians. The students are challenged to read the books and then form teams of 6 or 7 students. Those teams meet for roughly 6 weeks and discuss the books, quiz each other on the contents and encourage one another to keep reading.	<u>https://mynorthwest.com/3951169/mayfield-what-has-seattle-elementary-students-embracing-such-weighty-fiction/</u>
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