

**The Seattle Public Library**  
Board of Trustees Meeting  
**12:00 p.m. Thursday, November 21, 2024**

Howard S. Wright Family & Janet W. Ketcham Meeting Room 2, Level 4  
1000 Fourth Ave., Seattle, WA 98104

**Remote Listen Line:**

Dial: 213-282-4570 / Phone conference ID: 143 167 933#

**Watch Live:**

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

Meeting ID: 245 318 841 310 / Passcode: xcmvHz

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

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**Agenda**

A. CALL TO ORDER

B. APPROVAL OF AGENDA

C. PUBLIC COMMENT

D. CONSENT

1. Minutes of October 29, 2024 Special Library Board Meeting
2. Minutes of October 31, 2024 Regular Library Board Meeting

E. CHIEF LIBRARIAN REPORT

1. Chief Librarian Report

F. OLD BUSINESS

G. NEW BUSINESS

1. The Seattle Public Library 2024-2033 Strategic Plan
2. 2025 Operation Plan Draft
3. Second and Third Quarter 2024 Levy Report
4. 2025 Library Board Meeting Dates
5. Union Report
6. Updates from Library Board Members

H. EXECUTIVE SESSION

I. ADJOURN

J. NEXT LIBRARY BOARD MEETING: Dec. 12, 2024

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

## **Unapproved Board Minutes**

Board of Trustees Special Meeting

The Seattle Public Library

October 29, 2024

### CALL TO ORDER

A special meeting of The Seattle Public Library (SPL) Board of Trustees was called to order by Library Board Vice President Yazmin Mehdi on October 29, 2024 at 2:41 pm, when Library Board trustees joined members from the boards of The Seattle Public Library Foundation, the Friends of The Seattle Public Library, and the Library Foundation's Emeritus Board for a work session. The meeting was held at the Central Library.

### STRATEGIC PLANNING

Chief Librarian Tom Fay welcomed nearly 50 attendees. He provided a high-level overview of the Library's strategic plan. Mr. Fay discussed the priorities and structure of the strategic plan and laid out a view of anticipated opportunities and challenges for the Library moving through the next decade, as well as the resources needed to provide quality library services in the coming years.

### ADJOURN

The meeting was adjourned the meeting at 4:25 p.m.

## **Unapproved Board Minutes**

Board of Trustees Meeting  
The Seattle Public Library  
October 31, 2024

### CALL TO ORDER

The regular meeting of The Seattle Public Library (SPL) Board of Trustees was held on October 31, 2024. Library Board President W. Tali Hairston called the meeting to order at 12:02 p.m. Vice President Yazmin Mehdi and trustees Carmen Bendixen, Ron Chew, and Faith Pettis were in attendance. The meeting was conducted with a remote attendance option via video conference.

### APPROVAL OF AGENDA

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

### PUBLIC COMMENT

Public comment was accepted via email, in person at the Central Library, and online in the remote meeting. One public comment regarding the Library's meeting room use policy was received via email by all Library Board trustees.

### CONSENT

Library Board Vice President Yazmin Mehdi said the September Finance Report shows personnel expenditures to date are expended at both 68% and 74%, and she asked for clarification. Chief Librarian Tom Fay said the funds should be expended at the 74% level; however, there are some discrepancies due to issues arising from the City of Seattle's new payroll system, Workday. Ms. Mehdi said she understood that the table reflects what should have been expended, while the bar chart reflects what has actually been expended. Mr. Fay agreed.

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 his report this month mentions a November 17 rental of the auditorium at the Central Library. He said this is the issue to which the public comment email refers. Mr. Fay said a group called Women's Declaration International rented the room for private use, and their meeting is not endorsed or sponsored by the Library in any way. Mr. Fay said this group has been met with protests in Portland and San Francisco due to their views about transgender women and women's rights. He said the Library is often questioned as to why it allows such groups to use Library spaces. He said libraries allow all groups to use their spaces, regardless of their viewpoints. Mr. Fay said he asked attorney Gary Smith from the Seattle City Attorney's Office to discuss basic precedent and context around this issue.

Attorney Gary Smith said when the Library opens up its meeting rooms for use by the public, the First Amendment is at play and the Library is limited on what restrictions it can apply to those meeting rooms. Mr. Smith said the legal standard is that restrictions must be reasonable and viewpoint neutral, with viewpoint neutral being key here. He said reasonable restrictions can be imposed, such as a restriction of exchange of currency in the meeting rooms, which would be a reasonable restriction that, applied across the board, and would be defensible. He said when it comes to being viewpoint neutral, restricting or preventing a particular group's use of a meeting room based on particular viewpoints they had expressed in the past, or may wish to express while using the meeting room, does raise First Amendment issues. He said the Library is limited on

what restrictions and limitations it can apply to those seeking to use the meeting rooms based on the First Amendment. Mr. Smith said the Board may contact him directly with specific questions.

Mr. Fay thanked Mr. Smith and said information has been messaged to Library staff and the community. Mr. Fay said he wanted to be very clear that The Seattle Public Library affirms, values, and celebrates transgender and gender-diverse people. He said the Library strongly believes that the conversations about women's rights should include, not exclude, the voices and concerns of trans women so that such conversations can lead to a positive, safe and inclusive future for all women. He said the Library hopes that all dialogues the Library has and sees coming through the Library lead to more discussion, understanding, acceptance, and tolerance to make the world a better place.

Ms. Mehdi thanked Mr. Smith for joining the meeting. She said it is helpful to be reminded about exactly how the First Amendment plays into what the Library does with respect to meeting rooms. She said it is known that libraries have to include books and resources in their collection that some people don't like. She said that is the virtue of living in a democracy with free speech. She said other viewpoints are not always pleasant, but the Library undermines its efforts to make books available to people in places where their books are being censored if the Library also censors. She thanked Mr. Smith for laying out the First Amendment restrictions.

Library Board Trustee Ron Chew asked what the Library staff are feeling in anticipation of the event. Mr. Fay said many staff have concerns for either their own personal safety or that of family and friends, as they or others may be part of the LGBTQ+ community. He said there is always tension between the First Amendment protections we all take advantage of every day, and the equity concerns that also exist to make sure all voices are amplified. Mr. Fay said he wants to be sure it is known that all are welcome at the Library, and are welcome to provide counter viewpoints if they so choose. He said that is a strength of having meeting rooms. Mr. Fay said if the Library were to take away meeting rooms, it would take resources away from everyone to have dialogue, and that would be a huge loss. He said the Library will always have constant tension between the First Amendment and the equity and amplification of those who have been excluded historically. He said the First Amendment does good in the sense of allowing everyone freedom of speech and expression. He said the Library still stands as the foundational institution that supports those freedoms.

Mr. Fay said he will be having more discussions with staff. He said he has a monthly Open Hours leadership session every month, and the next session is November 5, at which this topic will be discussed. He said he will always listen to staff ideas about things that could change, or how they could change. He said some things are not changeable, as Mr. Smith has laid out from a legal perspective. Mr. Fay said the Library is trying to communicate better, and make sure folks know about events sooner. He said this event is being held after hours to help ensure that staff are safe, and they may not have to deal with the event issues in the moment. He said the Library has done many things to try to alleviate some of the concerns, but it will never alleviate all concerns. Mr. Fay thanked Mr. Smith for his attendance.

Mr. Fay said, regarding other items in his Chief Librarian's Report, last month he traveled to Winthrop, WA to attend the bi-annual Washington State Public Library Directors meeting. He said this group is important and works to finalize the agenda for upcoming state legislative work to advance policy around public libraries. He said the group is a 501C4 and employs a lobbyist for the legislative session, as well as trying to move legislation and/or defend from various legislative endeavors. Mr. Fay said this year's legislative agenda centers on requesting a legislative study to look into e-book and e-audiobook pricing, and to bring publishers and distributors to the table with public libraries and other interested parties. He said the work is to ensure that the legislature is aware of the impacts of the pricing, and the accessibility issues it creates for rural library systems that cannot afford to provide much access to these materials. He said the goal is to look at how public libraries might be able to have models that also include the ability to buy some materials in perpetuity. He said, in many cases, libraries are not currently

able to purchase digital titles in perpetuity, which means that they will never see e-materials collections that have the depth and breadth that they have in the physical collection. Mr. Fay said, in relation to the First Amendment and freedom of expression, it would be a shame not to have all of the thoughts that come from authors made available in e-materials in the decades to come. He said libraries truly are repositories for thought, and library leaders want to make sure this issue is in legislative leaders' minds moving forward. Mr. Fay said libraries know that publishers may have some concern about this effort, but libraries want to have a dialogue with them to look at issues of sustainability and access. He said the perpetuity model would allow libraries to have the material long after the publishers may have an interest in publishing it. Mr. Fay said the State has a few initiatives in front of it that may make the budget challenging, but the group will attempt to get funding and support to move the study forward.

Mr. Fay said he attended the Friends' Volunteer celebration at their Georgetown facility. He said it was great to see volunteers and talk to them about the work they are doing. He said it was a very fun event with some of the Library's biggest supporters. Mr. Fay said he was also on the east coast this month for two events, the first of which was as a guest speaker at the Baltimore County Public Library's (BCPL) Leadership Forum, along with two colleagues from LA County Public and Salt Lake City Library system. He said the forum was attended by 60 of BCPL's supervisors, managers and leaders who had great questions. He said it's always good to see how other libraries are thinking and the work they are doing. Mr. Fay said he went straight to Philadelphia from Boston to attend the Urban Libraries Council's (ULC) Annual Leadership Forum. He said about 300 people attended the "Trust, Transformation, and Tomorrow" themed forum. He said it is always good to be at this forum to talk about national concerns such as e-books, and ULC is also bringing advocacy into its work. Mr. Fay said the effort will need greater coordination to start moving the work at the federal level. He said he also attended a small pre-conference around philanthropic growth, which was focused on the executive director level. He said the event covered best practices, and a consultant spoke about new trends in the philanthropic world. Mr. Fay said he will share the meeting packet with Foundation CEO Brian Lawrence. He said many libraries have a lot of questions for libraries like Seattle and Boston who have big foundations, and the forum was a good opportunity to answer questions and share best practices.

Mr. Chew asked Mr. Fay about the Green Lake Branch reopening. Mr. Chew said Mr. Fay did a wonderful job of convening the presenters and ribbon cutting, and Board President Tali Hairston did as well. Mr. Chew said it was a wonderful event with spectacular energy. Mr. Fay said it is always wonderful to open or reopen a library. He said after the challenges of construction, it is the best part of the job to see the faces of patrons as they walk in. Mr. Fay said it was great to see kids and teens in the new children's and teen areas, and people using the whole facility. He said a State legislator and City delegation participated, and Deputy Mayor Wong and Councilmembers Strauss and Woo also spoke, following Mr. Hairston who led the remarks. Mr. Fay said he appreciated everyone's attendance at the event. He offered thanks to the Capitol Improvement team for stewarding the project through construction challenges and advocacy for federal funds for the project and new electric vehicle charging stations. He thanked Green Lake Branch staff for their hard work in moving materials in and readying the branch for opening day. Mr. Fay said he appreciated the support of Jessyn Farrell and the Office of Sustainability who have been team players in every project the Library does. He also thanked Department of Neighborhoods Director Jennifer Chao. Mr. Fay said, regarding Landmarks, this was a rare occasion where a request for a Carnegie was granted, enabling the Library to replace the small, wooden 19<sup>th</sup> Century shelving with modern shelving. He said the change makes a big difference and creates space to move around, space for more tables, and more welcoming space for people to sit, study and enjoy.

Mr. Chew said Mr. Fay's presentation at the All Boards Meeting was also wonderful. He said the meeting was excellent and many attendees remained engaged even during the social hour. He said Mr. Fay's presented on future planning and a realistic assessment of the kinds of resources that will be needed. He said Mr. Fay did a great job of putting everyone on the same page to imagine what the next 10 years could look like. Mr. Fay said the All Boards meeting is an important

opportunity to level-set with everyone before bringing the Strategic Plan to the Library Board in November. He said the affiliated boards are the Library's advocates and ambassadors, and it is important for them to get a high-level overview of the elements of the strategic plan and future levy effort. Mr. Chew said he learned a lot and was impressed that attendees were skipping the food in order to hear Mr. Fay answer more questions and describe more of the vision.

## **Systems Reports**

### *Friends of The Seattle Public Library Update*

Friends of The Seattle Public Library's Board President Angel Sauls said the Green Lake Branch re-opening and the All Boards meeting were both amazing. Ms. Sauls said The Friends of the Seattle Public Library's mission is to elevate the Library and inspire the love of reading in our communities. She said the Friends love this mission and the work they do, which keeps them quite busy. She thanked the Friends staff, contract workers, board members, and volunteers for being exceptional and allowing the Friends to advocate as needed to bring their mission to bear. She thanked them for their dedication in support of the mission.

Ms. Sauls said some of the Friends' 2023-2024 accomplishments include advocacy and direct support of the Library. She said this year Friends Board and Joint Advocacy Committee members participated in a legislative visit, wrote letters to City Councilmembers, attended meetings at City Hall, and participated in the Public Library Action Network. She said they have deepened their teamwork with the Foundation and look forward to productive future projects.

Ms. Sauls said last year the Friends accepted more than 37,452 donated books and sold 19,306. She said they have recirculated more than 17,105 books back to the community through a long list of organizations including the Seattle King County Health Clinic, Books for Prisoners, Ballard Food Bank, the Seattle VA Medical Center, and Little Free Libraries. She said, so far this year, the Friends have accepted over 20,000 donated books, have recirculated an equal number back to community members, and sold an additional 40,793 books through the FriendShop and regular monthly used book sales events.

Ms. Sauls said for nearly 16 years the Friends have participated in the Renee B. Fisher Books For Teachers grants. She said for the past several years they have conducted monthly events to connect Title One school teachers with free books for their classrooms. She said sign-ups for the events fill quickly and teachers report how excited their students are when the new books get added to their classroom libraries. She said in 2024, the Friends have provided more than 7,600 books to 94 teachers at 30. She said, since 2009, the Friends have connected more than 1,800 teachers with more than 142,371 books. Ms. Sauls said another successful ongoing community program is providing "owl totes" for young readers. She said children ages six and under signing up for their first Library card receive a cloth tote bag to carry their first stack of books home. She said the Friends have distributed 2,975 totes to new library card holders this year, and more than 30,483 totes to young readers since 2015.

Ms. Sauls thanked Business Director Lisa Lee and the 60 volunteers at the FriendShop and Georgetown locations. She said book sales and pop ups continue to thrive. She said the Friends transitioned out of their Lander St. Vintage Market space to a new, bigger and brighter Georgetown location which has proven successful as a book-filled space open to community. She said Books For Teachers events and book sales are also held at the space. She said the Friends have also continued excellent partnerships with Collins Books and Freeway Book Carts. Ms. Sauls said the Friends had several recent pop-up book sales including one at the Greenwood Branch that was accompanied by a musician from Rainbow City. She said there will be pop-ups at Beacon Hill and Broadway in December, and the Friends will again have a booth at the Gates Foundation and Discovery Center Holiday Marketplace. She said the Friends also participated in a number of community events this year including Juneteenth, Capitol Hill Pride, SOPA Supa, Columbia City Farmers Market, and Rainier Valley Food Bank. She said most of the events were co-tabled with partners from the Foundation, sitting side-by-side and helping each other.

Ms. Sauls said the Library, Friends, and Foundation entered into an agreement in July, 2023, to create principles for working together to support the Library through advocacy, grassroots awareness, and fundraising to reduce confusion among donors. She said the Foundation is the public fundraising entity for the Library, with the Friends agreeing to continue its grassroots advocacy and programming projects. She said the organizations are enjoying an amazing collaboration that is emblematic of their joint advocacy. Ms. Sauls said the Friends also finalized a new operating agreement between the Friends and the Library which describes the Friends' commitment to the Library, and vice versa, and condenses myriad existing agreements into one document for clarity. She said the Friends will be undertaking strategic planning work in the coming year to align with the Library's plan, and as a step forward for their mission-driven work.

Ms. Sauls thanked Mr. Fay, his team, and the Foundation for their collaboration. She said the Friends are grateful for the Foundation, and thanked previous CEO Jonna Ward, current CEO Brian Lawrence, Board President Sarah Stanley and Senior Director of Communications and Advocacy Will Livesley-O'Neal. Ms. Sauls said the teams have an amazing relationship in joint advocacy and co-tabling, and the Foundation is graciously providing an annual grant to the Friends to support the Friends programming objectives. She said the grant directly assists the Friends in community outreach and advocacy and the Friends are very grateful for the support.

Ms. Sauls said the Friends annual meeting in November will mark the start of the New Year for the Friends as well as the beginning to bring 2024 to a close. She said they are pleased to host Seattle author Laurie Frankel as their guest speaker and invited the trustees to join the meeting. Ms. Sauls said she is pleased to be continuing in the role of the Friends Board President for the coming year. She said she has learned a lot this year and looks forward to putting that knowledge to further use and continued advocacy for the Library.

Library Board Vice President Yazmin Mehdi said, as the Library Board's liaison to the Friends Board, it has been a pleasure to work with the Friends for another year. She said the energy, excitement, and dedication of the Friends is wonderful. She said the Library is lucky to have the Friends as grassroots advocates. Mr. Fay said he appreciates the energy and joy that Ms. Sauls brings to the work, and it is apparent in how the Friends Board and all of the volunteers work together. He said it was like family watching folks at a recent celebration of volunteers, and it takes strong leadership to do that. He thanked Ms. Sauls for her work.

#### *The Seattle Public Library Foundation Update*

The Seattle Public Library Foundation's Board President Sarah Stanley said she joined the Foundation in 2019 to use her experience in non-profit strategic planning, education, and media to help to make an impact. She said she has been a library patron since childhood, and believes in the mission of equity and opportunity that libraries provide. She said The Seattle Public Library Foundation's mission is to inspire the community's philanthropic support of, advocacy for, and pride in the Library. She said the Library and Foundation share the vision of a vibrant community where imagination and opportunities thrive. Ms. Stanley said the Foundation invests money to support 47 Library programs focused on equity and education, enrichment and economic opportunity that are above and beyond public funding. She said they also cultivate relationships to bring funding, resources, and opportunities to the Library, and they serve as advocates and an external voice for SPL with policy makers. She said the Foundation loves the Library.

Ms. Stanley said one of her goals as president for 2024-2025 was to execute a successful transition plan, honoring departing CEO Jonna Ward and hiring a successor. She said the Foundation is thrilled to have Brian Lawrence as the new CEO. She said it was also very important to ensure a knowledge transfer so that the Foundation could be positioned to be sustainable and ready to move forward, so the Foundation Board had a Search and Transition Team to allow for a smooth transfer. She said they capitalized on the transition by using the national search process to strengthen awareness of the Foundation nationally and locally. Ms. Stanley said another goal was to partner effectively with the Library on levy planning. She said a planning process was begun to ensure the right people are in the right place the Foundation Board

has a clear understanding of their role. Ms. Stanley said the Foundation will also be doing strategic planning next year and many Foundation Board members will serve on that committee. She said another goal was growing the financial health of the Foundation, and the last goal was to build board capacity in advance of levy planning and strategic planning. She said the Foundation Board wants to know everyone is in the right place with information needed to make decisions. She said board work should be fun, rewarding, and a desirable experience.

Ms. Stanley said through September the Foundation has raised \$5.9 million this year, compared with last year's \$3.3 million at this time. She said they are at 80% of their fundraising goal. She said core fundraising comes from individuals, organizations and board members, as well as transformational estate gifts. She said the Foundation is in a very strong financial position and she is very proud of their board engagement and fundraising. She said they have signed more than 270 appeal letters this year, and board members are on target to achieve a goal of five fundraising events for 2024, with the last being held on November 13th.

Ms. Stanley said, in the area of board development, the Foundation is evaluating and cultivating almost 75 candidates for recruitment. She said they are passionate about the Library and are future donors, volunteers, and advocates, if not board members. She said, in the area of advocacy, they have added more than 180 members to the Public Library Action Network (PLAN) platform to alert advocacy supporters how to support the Library. She said the Foundation's spring advocacy around the hiring freeze and hours reduction left a powerful impression on policy makers and may have contributed to the limited budget cut for the Library in the mayor's budget.

Ms. Stanley said, in the area of donor engagement, the Foundation is on pace to host 14 donor events this year, which include CEO meet and greets at the Northeast, Ballard, West Seattle, and Douglass-Truth branches, with a potential of more continuing into early next year. She said the Foundation has held author events at the Central Library and branches. She said they have also held online webinars and will be holding their first charitable trust webinar in November, hosted by board member Tyler Mickey, which is open to everyone at the Library as well as patrons.

Ms. Stanley said in the area of Diversity, Equity and Inclusion (DEI), over the past two years, the Foundation had been researching and discussing how to put a DEI lens on their investment policy and were able to do that with the help of their financial partners of their investments. She said the Foundation Board has passed a new DEI investment policy and their portfolio is now invested with a DEI lens. She said the Foundation has held multiple board sessions to practice talking about their DEI commitment. She said they continue outreach to engage communities, and to talk about representation on the board. She said Foundation staff is piloting using Library resources and LinkedIn Learning to engage in DEI training, and the board will be doing the same next year.

Ms. Stanley said, regarding Library funding, the Foundation has been working closely with SPL this year to provide flexible funding, recognizing that the hiring freeze and ransomware attack have impacted programs and services. She said flexible funding will allow the Library to fully leverage the Foundation dollars. She said the Foundation anticipates increasing their funding to SPL next year to \$5.2 million, which is a 17% increase.

Ms. Stanley said collaboration is very important and the Foundation is grateful for the Friends. She said she visited the Friends' new Georgetown location, where it was wonderful to see their books and curating. She said she appreciates their efforts on the Joint Advocacy Committee. She said the Foundation Board strives to be partners with the Chief Librarian, Library Board, Library staff, and Foundation staff. She said she is grateful for Mr. Fay's leadership, saying he is inspiring, innovative and impactful. She said she feels hopeful about the future of the Library. She said, looking ahead, the Foundation is planning a large-scale fundraising event in 2025, and said if anyone is interested in being a part of the event, to reach out to Mr. Lawrence.

Ms. Stanley said the Foundation is strong and positioned in a good place to support the Library going into 2025. She said she is very grateful for the Library's leadership in this city. She said the



Library is very important to the community and the Foundation is ready to support the Library's levy efforts. She thanked the Library Board trustees for their volunteer work and service to the Library. Mr. Fay thanked Ms. Stanley for her leadership during the Foundation's CEO transition, which is never easy, especially when filling a legacy position. He said it requires careful thought to steward a board through the process while still seeing growth and progress in support to both the Library and the PLAN network. Mr. Fay thanked Ms. Stanley for her work and support.

### **Union Report**

President of AFSCME Local 2083 Jessica Lucas said she wanted to answer the question of how staff are feeling about the meeting room reservation on November 17. Ms. Lucas said she was not speaking for herself, but rather for people who have spoken to her. She said the main sentiment she has heard is that allowing the group to speak does not uphold the Library's vision of being a safe place and one where diverse groups, including the LGBTQ community, can find themselves reflected, have value, and be respected. She said staff that are experiencing the fallout from this event are feeling this disrespect in their workplace. She said some patrons have called to say they feel disrespected, and often the staff they are speaking with are also the most affected. Ms. Lucas thanked the Board for listening. Mr. Fay thanked Ms. Lucas for bringing those voices forward. He said it is important. He said that is also done in regular leadership meetings as well, and said that it takes partnership between leadership and labor as the teams move through challenges.

### **Updates from Library Board Members**

Library Board Trustee Faith Pettis thanked Ms. Lucas for bringing her comments forward. Ms. Pettis said it hurts her heart to hear those stories, and she sympathizes. Ms. Pettis said she attended the Green Lake Branch re-opening. She said Green Lake was one of her three childhood libraries and it was very fun to see the reopened space which was light, bright, well-organized, and felt like it had a lot more materials than she remembered as a kid. She said it was wonderful to see the support and partnership from the City with the Deputy Mayor, several department heads, two Councilmembers and a staffer from a third Councilmember's office. Ms. Pettis said she also enjoyed the All Boards meeting. She said she also had the opportunity to meet with Brian Lawrence and one of the officers of the Foundation for a deep dive orientation on the work of the Foundation. Ms. Pettis said it was good to get an overview of what the Foundation hopes to do, she recognizes the importance of the partnership, and she appreciated Mr. Lawrence's time.

Regarding the Green Lake Branch, Mr. Fay gave kudos to the project team and architecture firm for creating more public space in the building without expanding the footprint. He said the project removed the gas furnace and excavated to do structural work, which created a great deal of additional space. He said the project created study rooms and additional restrooms and expanded the meeting room. He said removing the fossil fuel system will keep about 30 metric tons of carbon out of the air. He said the project was an amazing piece of work the City should be proud of. Mr. Fay said there is a clear delineation of where the Library has its independence and where the Board of Trustees has fiduciary and policy-setting oversight. He said he has never wanted to be hands-off with the City because the Library and City are stronger when they work together. He said the Mayor's "One Seattle" motto came to fruition at the Green Lake Branch re-opening.

Mr. Chew said next year he will be the new AARP State President for Washington State. He said he attended his first Executive Council meeting, and when he mentioned his connection with the Library, everyone's eyes lit up and they said that AARP has programs throughout the SPL branches. Mr. Chew said he is hoping to extend those relationships. Mr. Chew said the day before he had two separate conversations in which he mentioned his excitement about the Green Lake Branch re-opening and he said the University Branch was next; he said the excitement of the others to have their branch next in line for upgrades was palpable.

ADJOURN

Board President Tali Hairston adjourned the meeting at 1:09 p.m.



# The Seattle Public Library

**Date:** November 21, 2024  
**To:** Library Board of Trustees  
**From:** Tom Fay, Executive Director and Chief Librarian  
**Re:** November 2024 Chief Librarian's Report

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1. On October 28, the Library re-opened the Green Lake Branch following a lengthy closure for seismic retrofitting and mechanical upgrades. Results of the project bring building safety improvements, new study rooms and restrooms, a larger meeting room, updated shelving, more staff workspace, improved ADA access, new electric vehicle charging stations, and more public space for patrons to use and enjoy. The re-opening celebration featured remarks by Deputy Mayor Greg Wong, Councilmembers Dan Strauss and Tanya Woo, Office of Sustainability and Environment Interim Director Jessyn Farrell, Department of Neighborhoods Director Jenifer Chao, and Library Board President Tali Hairston. The celebration was attended by many others, including City Historic Preservation Officer Sarah Sodt, branch project architect Matt Aalfs of BuildingWork, and Library Board Trustees Ron Chew and Faith Pettis. Big kudos to the Capitol Improvement team for stewarding the project through construction challenges and advocating for federal funds, and to the Green Lake Branch staff for their hard work in preparing the branch for re-opening and serving their community.
2. On October 29, members of the Library Board, Foundation Board, Friends Board, and Emeritus Board came together for an All Boards meeting. The meeting was an opportunity to provide these stakeholders with an update and high-level overview of the Library's strategic plan. The board members are key to supporting and advocating for the Library, and will be major partners in moving the Library through strategic plan phases for future services.
3. On October 30, I attended a meeting with Mayor Harrell and City of Seattle department directors at the Microsoft Campus in Redmond. The meeting was an opportunity to learn from industry experts about the potential benefits of AI to City work and expand thinking about using technology to improve systems, create efficiencies, and solve old problems in a new way. Use scenarios included government support of small business start-ups, building public safety capacity, streamlining land use permitting, data sharing, and coordination for regional efforts such as homelessness and transit.
4. On October 31, I attended a celebration at the University of Washington iSchool to recognize their incoming fifth Distinguished Practitioner in Residence (DPiR), Dr. Tracie D. Hall and to honor past and present DPiRs. Dr. Hall is the former Executive Director of the American Library Association and brings a wealth of experience and knowledge to the role.

5. On November 2, I attended the Friends Board's Annual Meeting. The online meeting featured guest speaker local author Laurie Frankel, as well as reviewing 2024, and looking forward to the upcoming year.
6. Also on November 2, I spoke at a Book Club of Washington event on book banning and censorship. The event was attended by an engaged audience, and held at the Folio in the Pike Place Market.

Meetings and events during this reporting period:

- a. Board Meetings: Monthly Library Board of Trustees meeting; monthly meeting of Library and Friends leadership; monthly Friends Board meeting; Friends Annual Meeting; bi-monthly Foundation Board meeting.
- b. Standing Meetings: Compensation Committee; Senior Management Team; Monthly Managers meeting; Union/Leadership meetings; Foundation CEO/Chief Librarian bi-monthly meetings.
- c. Library Meetings, Talks, Interviews and Visits: KCLS Director meetings; Metro area library director meetings; speaker at Book Club of Washington event; UW iSchool DPiR event; ULC Director/CEO weekly meetings; Books Unbanned Programming Partners.
- d. City Meetings, Events and Programs: Deputy Mayor and department heads meeting; Mayor Harrell meeting on AI at Microsoft Campus.

# LIBRARY AT A GLANCE



## **IN FOCUS:** Mobile Services

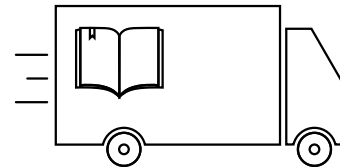
The Library's Mobile Services program brings library resources directly to residents with limited ability to visit in person.

### Overview: Mobile Services

The Library's Mobile Services program provides a range of services for Seattle residents with limited ability to visit a library location. Mobile Services operates four vehicles, including one electric bookmobile, and reaches senior housing, assisted living facilities, pre-schools and individual residences.

These services foster community connection, with a focus on keeping patrons engaged with library resources and providing social opportunities.

### Senior Housing and Nursing Home Visits

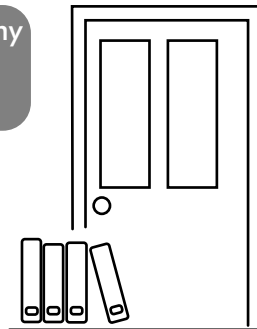


The Library sets up monthly "lobby stops" in community rooms of senior housing and assisted living facilities, where patrons can browse materials, check out holds, get e-book assistance, and participate in tablet lending programs. In nursing homes, staff provide room-to-room delivery for residents who cannot leave their rooms.

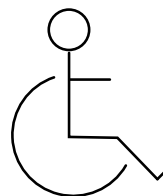
### Home Service Options

"Every month they arrive with my many books, and their smiles and kindness." -patron

For patrons who are unable to travel to the Library, Mobile Services provides books by mail and a home delivery service.



### Delivering Enrichment Resources



Mobile Services delivers deposit kits to adult care facilities, which include books, DVDs, music CDs, and materials for themed activities, as well as quarterly book drop-offs to the VA hospital and King County correctional facilities.

### Who Does Mobile Services Reach Each Month?



"Without this service those of us without transport, and 'of age', would be totally unable to access REAL books." -patron

### Joy and Discovery with Preschool Mobile Visits



Mobile Services offers a preschool "walk-on" bookmobile that visits preschools serving low-income families and children with disabilities, allowing students and teachers to pick up holds and borrow books.

Equity, Learning and Engagement - Economic Development Services  
 November 6, 2024  
 Jay Lyman, Supervising Librarian

**Library to Business (L2B) helps those furthest from economic justice start and grow businesses and nonprofits**

Library to Business (L2B) welcomes those starting and growing businesses and nonprofits. The Library to Business team currently includes a Supervising Librarian and a Library Associate IV in CEED (who support the work system-wide) and eight librarians across the system. Each librarian on the team spends some of their L2B time facilitating Business Information Appointments, and some also do community engagement, outreach, and program planning and implementation. Each individual brings different interests and skills to the team - and that is a strength our patrons benefit from! Each year the team works closely with dozens of partners to design and develop programs and services for specific prioritized audiences. Some successful programs are repeated each year and others are retired to leave room for new programs our patrons need. Some programs and services that happened in 2024 are highlighted below.



The L2B Team worked with a local company, [Growing Contigo](#), to offer a series of **workshops in Spanish on topics related to starting and growing a business**. Business Owners came to south-end branches to learn how to; form a Limited Liability Company (LLC), build a business website, understand the differences in being a contractor and an employee, and many other relevant topics. Growing Contigo and most of the presenters they convened offer free consulting hours to qualifying Seattle residents through the Office of Economic Development’s [Accounting and Business Consulting \(ABC\) program](#).

The library, [Denkyem Co-op](#) and other partners offer a regular **open collaborative space called CoLab at Beacon Hill Branch**. CoLab is a space for Collaboration, Community and Coworking: a multifaceted approach to activate space for community - specifically Black Business owners - to engage, learn, and network in meaningful ways. Patrons bring questions and problems they are working on and those in the room problem solve and learn together.

[Business Information Appointments](#) continue to be the most sought-after L2B service and they are in high demand for nonprofit and for-profit patrons alike. Patrons ask for information about potential customers, competitors, and trends in their market. Nonprofits learn how to search the Foundation Directory Online which, thanks to the Seattle Public Library Foundation (SPLF), they can now access from every SPL branch. Librarians help patrons navigate to free technical assistance programs where mentors help with expertise in business strategy, licensing, compliance, and more. The May 2024 cybersecurity event negatively impacted the team’s ability to facilitate appointments for several months, and we estimate that we will facilitate about a quarter fewer appointments than we would have in 2024. Our patrons continued to seek help, and the series of [five short videos on using library tools](#) that we created last fall in collaboration with [BlackFox Studios](#) helped meet some of their short term needs while they were waiting for librarians to assist more fully.



In partnership with [Office of Economic Development](#), local companies, and volunteer attorneys, the library continues to offer **Legal Consults** where patrons learn directly from specialists in Corporate Law and Intellectual Property Law. Patrons [connect with the volunteer attorneys individually](#) in these virtual, free, and confidential sessions. In these pro-bono learning-based consults, the attorneys can’t perform work on their behalf, but they can answer questions generally based on their situation.

A low personal credit score can negatively impact the terms and eligibility for business financing. This fall, in partnership with [Take Charge Credit Consulting](#) L2B has offered free and confidential one-on-one [Credit Consultations](#) where patrons receive customized lists of actionable steps they can take to improve their credit.

Since 2017, the library has been part of the [Muslim Community Finance Coalition \(MCFC\)](#) which convenes conversations with community members, nonprofit finance orgs, and others to build better Shari’a-compliant (interest free) finance options for Muslim-owned businesses. Muslims who seek to live in accordance with Shari’a principles are unable to access conventional loan products because of a prohibition against charging or paying interest. Two local MCFC nonprofits have been working closely with Islamic scholars to develop products that comply with Shari’a principles and also work within their own accounting and underwriting processes. No easy task! One of the finance partners, [Craft3, is piloting new interest-free \(riba-free\) finance products](#) that were developed from what they learned in MCFC. These are still very early pilot programs and they are adapting procedures based on feedback from participants.



For the second year, L2B has hosted the [GSBA’s 9-Week Accelerator Program](#) at the Central Library. Participants learn a wide range of business skills and work directly with GSBA’s experts as they launch or grow a business. The library’s primary role is to provide equipment and space for those in the program, but L2B team members attend the events where they connect and share about other L2B resources that will help the participants.

For decades, SPL has referred patrons to [SCORE’s](#) mentoring services where they get free customized help starting and growing a business. This year, **Seattle SCORE also made all their workshops virtual and free** which opened up a new opportunity to partner with them on programs. L2B team members now partner with SCORE to teach classes on how to research a market using library tools and team members participate in a monthly three-hour hands-on business planning workshop where patrons develop a unique value proposition and a lean business plan.

### Impacts, Outcomes and Yearly Numbers

- *Impact: The Library enables patrons to participate in the economic growth and development occurring in and around Seattle. The Library helps reduce the cost of doing business, lowers barriers to entrepreneurship of all types and helps develop a stronger workforce.*
- *Patron focused outcome: Entrepreneurs in all stages of business activity will turn to the library for assistance using library resources so that they can make informed decisions about their businesses.*
- *Patron focused outcome: Because of increased understanding of library services, partner organizations will refer clients to the library so that they can access people and unique tools that will help their clients develop and build their businesses.*
- *Library focused outcome: Library staff develop greater knowledge of business funders, technical assistance organizations and other community-based organizations so that they will be able to make better referrals to partner organizations based on patron needs.*

Year-over-year Program stats	# Business Information Appointments*	# of Programs Hosted and/or participated in	# of participants reached at the programs*	# of attendees at UW Entrepreneurial Law Clinic Consults*	Personal or Business Credit Consultations
2020	270	97	1780	60	na
2021	280	100	1900	90	na
2022	290	65	1900	190	8
2023	320	79	1780	240	19
2024 (YTD to 10/1)	165	56	1159	67	3

*\*Note: historical appointments and program participant numbers are rounded down to the nearest decade to make it easy to scan.*



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# The Seattle Public Library

## 2024-2033 Strategic Plan

DRAFT for the Library Board of Trustees and Public Comment

## Message from the Chief Librarian and Executive Director, Tom Fay

Dear Library patrons and community partners,

For 133 years, the services offered by The Seattle Public Library have been highly valued, well used, and well supported by the people of Seattle. As the Library looks ahead to the next 10 years, it recognizes that the changing needs of our community and increasing pressures of our era place a new level of importance on how the Library approaches its work.

Over the last two years, we have listened as you have told us what you need from your Library system. Patrons have told us that they want more diverse programming, across all age groups, and more access to books and information. Patrons see the Library as key to expanding their access to information and increasing their connection to our community.

Community partners have told us they need more library staff members who can engage with them and support their work. These organizations see the Library as a key partner that can increase their community impact.

With this input, the Library has developed a future vision for the next 10 years. In this vision, the Library maintains its core services and expands its role. Our expertise in information services will be leveraged to support organizations that are striving to make positive and lasting impacts in our city. Our programs and collections will help increase community literacy, empowerment and enrichment.

For decades, the Library has been an all-ages destination for discovery and learning. In more recent years, we have worked to learn more about, and respond to, the emergent needs of the people who call Seattle home. Our work in this area has been important but has also been limited in scale. The Library must increase its ability to respond as our city struggles to find solutions to an insufficient social safety net, declining social cohesion, and a strained public education system.

An example of what this might look like is illustrated by our Social Services Team. Everyone that steps foot in our libraries has intellectual, cultural, and entertainment needs, but to fully access all the library has to offer, our patrons first need to have their basic needs met. To foster a sense of belonging for all of our patrons, regardless of circumstances, the Social Services Team develops resources, creates and strengthens partnerships with social services agencies, and offers trauma-informed public programs, such as “Coffee and Conversations” and resource fairs. Recognizing that all library staff work with patrons who are experiencing homelessness or are otherwise in crisis, the team also supports our staff's ability to connect patrons to vital resources and make them feel safe and welcome in all of our spaces.

This example is just one way the Library has evolved to make a positive difference in our community. We collaborate with community organizations to support historically excluded communities, families furthest from economic justice, refugees and immigrants, early learners, children, teens, young adults and seniors.

To sustain and expand these efforts into the future, we must develop new strategies, tactics and priorities. We must be more planful in our outreach and engagement. We must develop even greater



cultural competency to increase community use of our system. This plan provides us guidance and outlines priority actions to make progress in these efforts.

With a service focus on **literacy, empowerment and enrichment**, we intend to create programs, services, collections and spaces that build a greater sense of **community belonging**.

With an organizational focus on **capacity building, facilities improvement, technology innovation and sustainability**, we intend to make the Library a more **resilient organization** to best serve the people of Seattle.

The future we envision builds on our existing strengths, including our world-class staff, buildings, collections, programs and services. It reinforces and expands the importance of relationships and connection. It also requires us to change and grow, building new skillsets, such as emerging technology knowledge or new language skills. It will require us to evaluate and adjust our hiring, training and retention strategies.

As we look toward our future, we believe the Library must:

- Prioritize equity in our actions, services and outcomes.
- Continue and expand free access to books and information.
- Increase access, including for those with limited English proficiency.
- Develop more community programming that improves people's lives.
- Serve as a community hub and connector.
- Create and facilitate positive change.
- Listen to and reflect diverse voices and viewpoints.
- Commit to putting people first.

As this plan launches, I acknowledge there are significant challenges ahead – fiscal challenges, culture wars, climate change, rapid technological advances, increasing inequities and more. This plan is ambitious, but The Seattle Public Library believes it is an organization well-positioned to help community members access, navigate and understand information that is important to them. We believe our work can enrich and empower people in our community. We believe our work can lead to an increased sense of community belonging and a more resilient Library.

I am excited about our future. I look forward to working with our community and staff to create an impactful and transformational library system over the next ten years.

THANK YOU to everyone who contributed to this effort. It would not have been possible without input from thousands of patrons, hundreds of staff, dozens of partner agencies and organizations, and our expert consultants.

Tom Fay  
Chief Librarian and Executive Director  
The Seattle Public Library

# Mission, Vision, Values, Principles

Successful strategies require a strong mission, a clear vision, organizational values that align with the values of the community, and guiding principles. These will act as a consistent reference in times of change or challenge.

## Our Mission

The Seattle Public Library's mission is to bring people, information and ideas together to enrich lives and empower community.

## Our Vision

We envision The Seattle Public Library as the central hub of an equitable and connected city where knowledge flourishes, and people find inspiration and a sense of belonging.

## Our Values

The Library's values serve as a guide for how we interact with our community and each other. They include:

### Care

- The Library cares about the well-being of our community.
- We are committed to patron safety and confidentiality, in person and online.
- We are committed to supporting intellectual freedom and a healthy democracy.
- We are committed to transparency, accountability and good stewardship.

### Connection

- The Library values people by listening and responding to their needs.
- We are committed to seeking equitable outcomes for historically excluded people.
- We are committed to teamwork and collaborative community building.
- We build positive connections, emphasizing respect and dignity for all people.

### Learning

- The Library is an all-ages destination for learning and discovery.
- We offer a large and diverse collection of books and other materials for free.
- We host engaging programs tailored to community needs and interests.
- We promote and support early learning and lifelong literacy and learning.

## **Guiding Principles**

The Library's guiding principles are fundamental standards we embed in our work. These include:

### **Equity**

We apply equity principles to our work to expand Library access. While equality treats all people the same, regardless of the differences between them, equity recognizes relevant differences between people. Equity works to overcome the disadvantages and obstacles that prevent historically excluded people from accessing or fully benefiting from Library services. We are committed to advancing equity, diversity, inclusion and accessibility at all levels of our organization. In alignment with the City of Seattle's Race and Social Justice ordinance, we work to uncover and dismantle institutionalized racism in our organization and to advance racial, social and economic justice in the Seattle community. To learn more about the Library's commitment to equity, visit [www.spl.org/equity](http://www.spl.org/equity).

### **Intellectual Freedom**

We serve all people, and all people are welcome in the Library. Our materials, programs, resources and services are free and available to all people regardless of their origin, age, background or views. We promote and protect freedom of thought, freedom of expression and the freedom to explore new information and ideas. We respect the right of all people to choose for themselves what to read, listen to or watch. Intellectual freedom is essential for a healthy democracy and fundamental to the mission of the Library. Learn more about the Library's commitment to intellectual freedom by visiting [www.spl.org/intellectualfreedom](http://www.spl.org/intellectualfreedom).

## Areas of Impact

The Library has identified six **areas of impact** we believe will lead to positive change in our community and within the organization. These impact areas were identified with guidance from community members, Library patrons, staff, community partners and other invested parties. You can learn more about our research and community engagement processes at [www.spl.org/Future](http://www.spl.org/Future).

### Community impact areas

We will work to help individuals and families **in our community** make measurable progress in the following areas:

- Literacy
- Empowerment
- Enrichment

Through these impact areas, we intend to cultivate a stronger sense of community **belonging**.

### Organizational impact areas

We will also work to make measurable progress **within the Library** in the following areas:

- Funding
- Increased capacity
- Buildings, technology and sustainability

Through these impact areas, we intend to make the Library a **resilient organization** well into the future.

### The Library's role in the community

Our ability to make transformational changes in these areas requires us to be clear about our role within the community.

In the development of this plan, we noted the Library will:

- provide free public spaces where all are welcome;
- connect people to free books and information, resources and to each other;
- conduct outreach, engagement and programming outside of our buildings;
- collaborate with other organizations to maximize community impact; and
- co-design programs and services with members of the community.



## Community Impact: **Literacy**

Literacy and learning were severely affected during the COVID-19 pandemic. Children and teens experienced losses in reading and math. Adults fell behind in vocational training and higher education. Now more than ever, it is imperative that the Library expands its literacy and learning offerings. The Library will help people turn information into knowledge.

While data shows signs of recovery in literacy and learning, the recovery is uneven. These setbacks have deepened educational and vocational gaps for people of color. The Library can play a significant role in helping these communities recover.

Literacy, including the ability to read, also includes understanding and navigating information, environments and societal systems or situations. Misinformation spreads rapidly. It has become difficult for people to understand what resources they can trust. As a trusted source of information, the Library plays a critical role in supporting information and many types of literacies – digital, financial, language, health and more.

**OUR GOAL: Help people access the skills, resources and opportunities they need to read, learn and navigate their lives. We will work with partners to build and strengthen networks of support that lead to positive impacts for priority literacy areas. We will provide access to more books and materials that support lifelong learning and student success.**

### **LITERACY OUTCOMES:**

The Library will provide programs, collections, services and other resources to:

- Help children, teens and young adults build a love for reading and learning.
- Help students read at or above grade level.
- Support the needs of early learners and adult learners.
- Expand the Library's Language Access Plan to ensure that non-English speakers and patrons with limited English proficiency have full access to the Library.
- Reduce Library access barriers for Seattle Public Schools students.
- Help people of all ages navigate social systems in their daily lives.

### **PRIORITY ACTIONS: Steps we will take**

The Library will:

- Increase the collections budget to:
  - ∅ add more depth, breadth and diversity in the collection;
  - ∅ better support the needs of students; and
  - ∅ respond to increased interest in e-books and e-audiobooks.
- Increase efforts to collaborate with publishers.
- Build sustainable digital collections for future generations. Encourage a move away from transitory subscription models.
- Increase and expand programs and services for children and youth. Foster positive, lifelong connections to reading and learning.
- Maintain and expand programs supporting financial, digital, educational, medical and other literacies.
- Collaborate with community organizations providing literacy support and advocacy. Help build a resource network of support for regional literacy goals.
- Co-locate book kiosks or lockers with partners throughout the city. Increase community access to books and information.
- Provide training and access to artificial intelligence (AI) and other emerging technologies. Explore AI research with area colleges and universities. Implement AI technologies to enhance patron service and workplace efficiency.
- Strengthen partnership with Seattle Public Schools, especially Title I schools. Provide more Library resources to students at their schools.
- Evaluate effectiveness of Library literacy programs. Evaluate based on language access needs, patron comprehension and patron confidence levels.



## Community Impact: **Empowerment**

As stated in our mission, the Library brings people, information and ideas together to enrich lives and empower community. People feel empowered when they have the freedom, confidence and resources to pursue their life goals.

The Library supports people in pursuit of their goals, interests and socioeconomic well-being. This includes supporting skill development, entrepreneurial support, the freedom to read, self-expression and more.

We will offer information services, classes and events that empower people, families and communities. We will connect people to organizations that can support them. We will co-design programs with community members. We will represent diverse viewpoints.

There is significant community value to these efforts. For example, in 2022, we utilized the Urban Libraries Council's Business Value Calculator to estimate that the Library provides a market value of nearly \$5 million annually in business services to Seattle area entrepreneurs and business professionals.

The Library provides many other valuable services to the community. Patrons can get assistance building resumes, learning new skills or languages, finding jobs, achieving citizenship, learning how to write or how to use technology.

The Library believes all people should feel welcome and have access to opportunities that will improve their lives.

**OUR GOAL: Help people build confidence and skills to pursue and achieve their life goals. We will expand programming that improves student success. We will prioritize equity, diversity, inclusivity and accessibility, as they are key to empowerment for all.**

**EMPOWERMENT OUTCOMES:** The Library will provide the community:

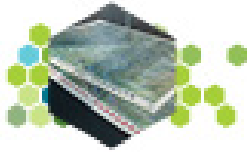
- Accessible and inclusive collections, programs, services and spaces.
- Opportunities to celebrate the freedom to read, personal expression and community diversity.
- Cutting-edge technologies that support current and emergent job and life skills.
- Friendly, knowledgeable and culturally competent staff who engage, listen and deliver responsive services.

## **PRIORITY ACTIONS: Steps we will take**

The Library will:

- Establish programming standards and a quarterly calendar of programs and events.
- Develop outreach and engagement strategies for co-creation of programs with community.
- Develop strategies for incorporating technology into outreach and engagement.
- Develop deeper relationships with partner and local organizations that understand community needs.
- Expand outreach, engagement and programming capacity to:
  - ☒ provide more entrepreneurial support;
  - ☒ strengthen community business networks;
  - ☒ help people build social and economic capital;
  - ☒ deliver digital learning and literacy opportunities more equitably;
  - ☒ narrow the digital divide for all ages; and
  - ☒ provide more programs, classes and workshops for older adults
- Establish qualitative outcomes for the Library's skill-building workshops, vocational training and career development programs.
- Support community participation in the current and future workforce. Provide skill-building workshops, vocational training and career development programs.
- Provide access to modern technologies with an emphasis on reducing the digital divide.
  - ☒ Provide continuing development opportunities for staff who serve children, teens and young adults. Incorporate technologies such as augmented and virtual reality, robotics and coding.
- Implement Youth and Family Learning strategies that focus on:
  - ☒ early literacy;
  - ☒ reading at grade level by 3rd grade, and;
  - ☒ reading for comprehension to develop critical thinking and math proficiency from middle school through high school.
- Develop and incorporate accessibility policies and procedures as a standard practice for all public spaces, collections, programs and services.





## Community Impact: **Enrichment**

Enriching activities help people explore and discover a greater sense of themselves and the world around them. People can enrich their lives through books, music, films, TV, performances, cultural celebrations, community discussions and more.

Since the 2020 pandemic, depression rates have reached all-time highs in the U.S. Our community, and the broader world, has been navigating an epidemic of loneliness and isolation. Connecting with others is an important way to enrich life. The Library can offer many avenues toward full and enriched lives.

The Library looks to foster joy, encourage curiosity and provide meaningful experiences and opportunities to connect with others. Our approach will encourage learning, acceptance and care for people in our community and the world.

**OUR GOAL: Provide collections, programs, services and spaces that bring joy and connection to people's lives.**

### **ENRICHMENT OUTCOMES:**

The Library will champion and celebrate:

- The joy of reading in our programs and physical and digital collections.
- The diverse voices and talents of our community.
- The preservation of local history, including the contributions of historically excluded people and cultures who created Seattle.
- Intellectual freedom and civic engagement in our programs and collections.
- Experiences and opportunities that build community and cultivate a sense of belonging.

### **PRIORITY ACTIONS: Steps we will take**

The Library will:

- Increase representation of diverse voices to better inform policies, building design, collections, programs and services.
- Establish new partnerships to activate spaces and programs that lead to shared positive experiences across backgrounds and cultures.

- Expand programs that encourage self-expression through art, writing and other creative activities.
- Promote and highlight local experts, authors, musicians and artists to strengthen community knowledge and pride.
- Increase the Seattle Room collection budget to provide more materials focused on Seattle and the Pacific Northwest. Provide more materials from diverse communities that have contributed to our local history.
- Increase Special Collection digital asset management and preservation capabilities. Increase public access to important historical materials for generations to come.
- Continue Books Unbanned and develop new programming to counter censorship and misinformation.



## Organizational Impact: **Funding**

The majority of the Library's funding is provided by the City of Seattle's General Fund, with 61% of the budget provided by this resource in 2024. The Library's financial well-being and ability to deliver services to the public are closely tied to the performance of the local and national economy.

We are grateful to Seattle voters for approving a seven-year, \$219.1 million Library Levy in 2019 to support, maintain and expand core Library services. The Levy provides 30% of the Library's overall 2024 budget. Over the years, the Library has become increasingly reliant on the levy to maintain buildings, enhance technology and maintain and grow programs and services.

Library services rely on consistent funding. The Library's funding resources need to support ongoing and increasing costs related to personnel, collections, facilities, technologies, programs and information services.

The Library's current funding streams result in cycles of growth followed by impactful reductions. These cycles can disrupt longer-term continuity of service and progress toward our goals.

**OUR GOAL: Align existing and financial resources to support current and future community needs, and explore funding resources beyond the City's general fund and seven-year levies.**

### **FUNDING OUTCOMES:**

The Library will:

- Develop a 2026 levy proposal to support the community's Library needs from 2027-2033.
- Explore opportunities to supplement or replace seven-year levy funding cycles.
- Seek additional private giving in collaboration with The Seattle Public Library Foundation.
- Modernize and streamline internal systems to ensure effective management of public and philanthropic funds.

- Partner with The Seattle Public Library Foundation and the Friends of the Seattle Public Library to advocate for the benefits and importance of libraries.

**PRIORITY ACTIONS: Steps we will take**

The Library will:

- Assess community and organizational needs to inform the development of a 2026 Library Levy proposal.
- Ensure strategic organizational alignment with Foundation and Friends to secure private giving and advocacy.
- Hire a grant writer and grants administrator to support federal, state and county grants.
- Collaborate with public library directors in Washington and the Washington State Library. Ask the Legislature to provide state funding for library collections and capital projects.
- Collaborate with peer libraries and library organizations to increase federal and philanthropic support nationwide.
- Work statewide and nationally with publishers and other libraries to address the rising costs of e-materials.



## Organizational Impact: **Capacity**

The Library is an organization of people serving people. Our staff are the heart and soul of the Library's work. In recent years, libraries and their workers are serving new kinds of community roles. Libraries are called on to provide access to information and knowledge, emerging technology assistance, shelter from inclement weather, social services support and more. Staffing these needs has been challenging. Even minor reductions to the Library's budget can result in reduced hours of operation or inconsistent service due to lack of staff.

These community realities take more staffing, time and, in some cases, special expertise. The Library sees a need for community access to subject matter experts in many areas, such as social services, technology, security, education and more. As a free and safe space where everyone is welcome, library workers help people in all stages of life with many varied needs.

Library workers need strong teams at each of our buildings to provide this level of service. With library roles evolving, we want to make sure staff feel supported and proud of their work in our community. This means ensuring staff have the systems, infrastructure and development opportunities they need to do their jobs.

To best support our community, Library staff should understand and reflect the neighborhoods they serve. This means having the time and skills it takes to conduct meaningful neighborhood outreach and engagement with Seattle residents. It means ensuring our recruitment and hiring strategies bring in talent that aligns with our goals and values.

**OUR GOAL: Build organizational capacity and capability through new recruitment, training and retention approaches, and improved systems and processes. We seek to be a desirable workplace and an employer of choice in our community.**

### **CAPACITY OUTCOMES:**

The Library will:

- Enhance, expand and support a workforce that is diverse and culturally competent in working with Seattle communities.
- Increase staffing levels to support open hours, provide secure and welcoming spaces, increase programming and improve access.
- Determine new skill sets and aptitudes to support current and future community needs.

- Increase staff sense of satisfaction, purpose and belonging at work.
- Foster staff empowerment, learning, development and upward mobility.

### **PRIORITY ACTIONS: Steps we will take**

The Library will:

- Establish an office of Diversity, Equity, Inclusion and Accessibility (DEIA). That work will include:
  - ☒ Hiring a DEIA director;
  - ☒ Establishing an organizational baseline from which the Library can improve equity outcomes;
  - ☒ Develop recruitment, development and retention practices through a DEIA lens; and
  - ☒ Update and consolidate the Library's Diversity Action Plan and its Diversity, Equity, Inclusion and Accessibility policy.
- Provide more resources and training for supervisors and managers in support of their staff.
- Develop a holistic wellness program for staff that can lead to greater staff well-being.
- Develop new onboarding strategies for staff.
- Increase opportunities and support for staff training and development.
- Assess current organizational structure, staff roles and skill sets. Determine changes needed to support our vision.
- Identify and co-create training opportunities with staff that improve employee and community outcomes.
- Establish service guidelines throughout the system to improve the patron and staff experience.
- Acquire and implement scheduling software for more efficient and effective deployment of staffing.



## Organizational Impact: **Buildings, Technology & Sustainability**

Our buildings include Seattle’s world-renowned Central Library; 26 neighborhood branch libraries, 10 of which are historic city landmarks; and a maintenance and operations center where books are sorted and distributed.

The Library has worked to reduce its carbon footprint and convert building systems away from fossil fuels. The Library lacks a dedicated funding stream for not only this work, but also the ongoing maintenance of its high-use public facilities. We have sought support for building needs and upgrades through voter-approved Levy funds, private donations, federal and state grants and other one-time funding sources.

As our buildings age, the Library projects capital maintenance needs of more than \$150 million over the next 25 years. A longer-term, sustainable approach is needed to maintain and enhance these beloved, but aging, buildings. We must also ask ourselves if our buildings are in the right places and whether they are sized to serve their neighborhoods into the future. Do they have the right amenities and configurations to accommodate future generations of library patrons?

Our public buildings are increasingly being called on to serve multiple roles: centers of learning and knowledge, community meeting and gathering spaces, heating and cooling centers during inclement weather, clean air centers during wildfire smoke, daytime respite for people experiencing housing instability, and more.

To serve these many functions, our buildings need to be flexible, adaptable and accessible in design. They must be safe, clean, well-maintained and welcoming to all. The Library must use new technologies to meet operational and environmental sustainability goals, especially as the climate continues to change.

**OUR GOALS: Implement sustainable maintenance and upgrade practices for Library buildings and technologies. Decrease our carbon footprint. Develop a strategic initiatives plan for information technology that improves the patron experience in-person and online.**

### **BUILDINGS, TECHNOLOGY AND SUSTAINABILITY OUTCOMES:**

The Library will:

- Be innovative in approach to capital improvements, facilities management, accessibility and beautification of library buildings.
- Reduce the Library’s carbon footprint by meeting or exceeding the City’s carbon reduction goals annually.

- Use new technologies to assess and improve the effectiveness of Library systems.
- Maintain secure, safe and welcoming spaces in our buildings and on our digital channels.
- Ensure patron confidentiality and privacy through enhancements to cybersecurity technologies

### **PRIORITY ACTIONS: Steps we will take**

The Library will:

- Reimagine Library spaces to best serve current and future Library patrons. This work will include:
  - Securing funding to carry out planning and design work;
  - Collaborating with community members, architects and designers;
  - Creating an equity evaluation tool to prioritize projects;
  - Improving accessibility in physical and virtual spaces;
  - Developing and implementing a plan to move all Seattle libraries away from fossil fuels;
  - Enhancing transportation options at libraries, such as bicycle parking, transit stops and electric vehicle charging;
  - Establishing a solar roof replacement program when library roofs exceed their useful lives; and
  - Designing spaces to be flexible, adaptable, accessible and culturally responsive.
- Evaluate facility technologies, and develop a multi-year plan for modernization, including evaluations of:
  - Building access and controls;
  - Environmental controls;
  - Security cameras and building alarms;
  - Fume detection; and
  - Fire suppression systems.
- Prioritize capital funding to complete the Columbia Branch seismic upgrade.
- Convert the Library's vehicle fleet to electric or hydrogen models.



- Hire a cybersecurity specialist and create a program that further improves the Library's cybersecurity posture.
- Identify and pilot Library kiosks at three non-library locations to offer physical materials, Wi-Fi, e-books and e-audiobooks.
- Launch a new Library mobile app in 2025.
- Contract for and deploy a new integrated library system.
- Purchase and install new self-checkout stations throughout the system.
- Hire a security and emergency management manager.
- Conduct a security audit to:
  - Determine the number of security officers needed to keep our spaces secure;
  - Assess current and future security officer training needs, and modify security deployment models;
  - Review security procedures and practices;
  - Assess security needs, and include security enhancement projects into a comprehensive capital improvement plan;
  - Determine the potential for integrating Library security services and social services; and
  - Enhance staff training for personal safety in the workplace.

## Implementation

### Phases by Funding Cycles

This plan spans 10 years, through 2033. Full adoption of this plan will require an well-sequenced and iterative approach to implementation that considers our financial resources in each phase.

We have identified three distinct implementation phases, outlined below, that account for the City of Seattle’s biennial budget cycles, future library levies, and other funding opportunities we intend to pursue. Each phase will begin with evaluating Library resources to determine our ability to achieve our goals.

#### **Phase I: 2024-2026**

In this phase, the Library will implement and improve work already underway and will begin to implement select priority actions. This phase will focus on conducting assessments of finances, buildings and operations to inform planning for future phases. In this phase, the Library will work with the City of Seattle in development of the 2025-2026 biennial budget. We will also plan for the renewal of the Library Levy in 2026.

#### **Phase II: 2026-2028**

In this phase, the Library will focus on new and expanded activities outlined in this plan that will be made possible by a proposed Library Levy renewal in 2026. The Library will work with the City of Seattle in development of the 2027-2028 biennial budget. We will also conduct architectural and design work to inform a reimagining of our spaces that will help determine budget needs, proper funding mechanisms and priorities for each project. The Library will assess the potential for capital bond measures and a private comprehensive fundraising campaign.

#### **Phase III: 2028-2034**

In this phase, the Library will pursue a capital bond measure to support maintenance and upgrade needs for Seattle’s public libraries. We will also work with our partner, The Seattle Public Library Foundation, to start a comprehensive fundraising campaign. During this phase, the Library will work with the City of Seattle in developing three biennial budgets (2029-2030, 2031-2032, and 2033-2034). We will also begin planning for another proposed levy renewal in 2033.



## **Report our Progress**

The Library will publish a Strategic Plan Outcomes and Impacts report within our annual Operations Plan, which will include recent accomplishments, upcoming actions, and any adjustments made to our original plan.

## **Assessing our Resources**

This Strategic Plan requires ongoing assessment of Library resources in support of our goals. Our approach to planning will be agile and iterative in support of a 10-year timeframe.

Many resources are needed to support this plan, but assessing the following resources is key:

- Funding
- Staffing
- Collections
- Partnerships
- Buildings and technology

In our assessments, we must understand the serious challenges and risks that face public libraries:

- Short-term and long-term economic downturns resulting in revenue declines
- Limited capacity to carry out needed work, such as engagement and program development
- Rapidly evolving technologies, which are costly to acquire, maintain and upgrade
- Aging buildings and deferred maintenance, which increases cost and complexity of improvements
- Climate change and its impact on our community and to library buildings
- Social and political pressures that challenge the fundamental role of public libraries



# The Seattle Public Library

## Memorandum

Date: November 21, 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: **Draft 2025 Operations Plan**

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The Operations Plan draft provides an updated view of how the document is taking shape coming out of Board's framework review earlier in the fall. Feedback and direction is welcome at this stage and the document will be undergoing continuous work between now and the end of November. The final version will be presented to the Board at your December meeting. Budget information included at this stage is in draft form and is subject to revision.

### **Key Remaining Dates in Budget Process**

A summary of the remaining key milestones and schedule to complete the budget development process are provided below.

#### November

- Wednesday, November 13<sup>th</sup> to Friday, November 15<sup>th</sup> – Councilmembers vote on amendments
- Tuesday, November 19 – Councilmembers vote on final budget legislation and technical amendments.
- **Thursday, November 21<sup>st</sup> – Library Board of Trustees Reviews Draft Operations Plan**
- Thursday, November 21<sup>st</sup> – City Council Adopts Budget

#### December

- Monday, December 2<sup>nd</sup> – Operations Plan submitted for Board review
- Thursday, December 12<sup>th</sup> – Library Board adopts Operations Plan

*Attachment: Draft 2025 Operations Plan*

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**Action Requested:** Presented for informational purposes only. Comments and additional direction are welcome.



# The Seattle Public Library

## 2025 Operations Plan – Draft

The Seattle Public Library’s 2025 Operations Plan describes the first year of planned activity inside the City’s biennial 2025-2026 budget cycle and the sixth year of a seven-year, voter-approved, \$219.1 million Library Levy. This plan summarizes planned spending information under the City’s 2025 Adopted Budget (General Fund, Library Levy, Library-generated revenue, Real Estate Excise Tax), in addition to private funding resources from Library gift funds and grant awards provided by The Seattle Public Library Foundation and other entities. The Library Board of Trustees is responsible for monitoring Library funds appropriated through the City’s budget.

The Library Board Policy on Race and Social Justice and the City of Seattle’s Race and Social Justice Initiative—a commitment to eliminate racial disparities and achieve racial equity—help guide the use of these funds and all aspects of Library operations.

### **Economy and Revenue<sup>1</sup>**

Despite the Federal Reserve keeping interest rates high, the national economy showed notable resilience and growth in the first half of 2024. Since then, the labor market has cooled, with Seattle’s employment growth, unfortunately, trailing the nation. The regional forecast projects growth of only 0.7% in 2024, down from 1.9% expected in the spring. Most of the uncertainty and downside economic risks for our region are tied to the path of the labor market, rather than inflation. Employment growth in Seattle has been mixed with gains in some sectors largely offset by declines in the tech and information sectors. Additionally, the City continues to struggle with reduced demand for office space and elevated vacancy rates, which are affecting economic and revenue growth in the City. However, like the nation, the regional economy is still likely to avoid a recession as there is currently no expectation of overall net job loss and employment is expected to grow modestly even as hiring slows.

Going into 2025, the City’s General Fund projected a deficit of \$251 million, or about a 15% shortfall. This deficit was due to a number of factors, including General Fund revenues growing slower than the rate of growth for general government costs, the end of significant one-time federal COVID relief grants, and a plan to begin using all of the Payroll Expense Tax revenues to pay only for restricted purposes, rather than general government. As part of the City’s budget development process, there were structural changes proposed to the payroll tax to allow the city to use these revenues more flexibly in the future, however reductions to spending, including targeted layoffs of some City employees were required.

While the Library was required to absorb a General Fund reduction of \$2.74 million, we were fortunate to be able to avoid elimination of positions.

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<sup>1</sup> Information contained in this section is drawn from the 2025 Budget Book as proposed by the Mayor to the Seattle City Council.

## City Council Budget Actions

Any City Council budget actions will be discussed here.

### I. Overview of the 2025 Operations Plan relative to the Adopted 2024 Plan

To provide a comprehensive picture of the Library's 2025 planned spending, the Operations Plan includes both Operating and Capital budgets. The 2025 Library budget across all funding sources—including private gift and grant support—is **\$112 million**. This amount is **\$10 million** higher than the prior year (a **9%** increase). This net increase is largely due to finalization of a new collective bargaining agreement, in addition to variation in the 2025 Capital Budget—nearly all of which is in accordance with the long-term capital financial plan. Some of the high-level changes to the Library's 2025 budget are as follows (summarized view of year-to-year changes provided as Attachments 1 and 2):

#### Operating Budget Changes

- Continuation of a \$1.7 million reduction in General Fund support associated with COVID-19 era budget balancing determinations
- Deployment of \$1.9 million in prior-period accumulated levy fund balance that will allow the organization to stave off service level reductions. This will create a sizeable structural deficit in the Library budget that we must address during the following biennium.
- \$450,000 in total non-labor reductions, which includes cuts to Information Technology (\$100,000) and the books and materials collection (\$350,000)
- **\$527,000** in additional gifts and grants from The Seattle Public Library Foundation and other private sources for collections, programming, and early learning
- Adjustments to Central Costs, annual wage increases, benefit rate changes, health care, and other inflationary changes added \$10.4 million in operating resources. These resources are largely dedicated to designated cost pools and do not carry programmatic flexibility.

#### Capital Budget Changes

- Library Levy capital support increased by \$2.1 million. This is in accordance with the long-term capital plan as the budget included one-time increases to account for seismic retrofit and unreinforced masonry project costs.
- REET capital project support increased by \$308,000. This increase is in accordance with the City's long-term capital financial plan.

### II. Strategic Plan

This year's Operations Plan is notably informed by the draft Seattle Public Library 2024-2033 Strategic Plan. The plan provides a vision for the next 10 years by both maintaining a focus on core Library services and creating opportunities to expand our role serving the city. The plan seeks to leverage the Library's expertise in providing information services to our community. It looks to build out our programs and collections to increase community literacy, empowerment and enrichment. The plan acknowledges the many challenges we face now and in the coming years, including

constrained fiscal resources, rapid technological change, and stressed systems critical to supporting community health, but orients the Library to navigate those obstacles rather than succumb to them.

The 2025 Operations plan incorporates elements of the draft Strategic Plan into its conventional format—a structure closely aligned with the investment areas and promises established in the 2019 Library Levy. Both will inform the development of the levy renewal proposal for consideration in 2026.

With a service focus on **literacy, empowerment and enrichment**, we intend to create programs, services, collections and spaces that build a greater sense of **community belonging**.

With an organizational focus on **capacity building, facilities improvement, technology innovation and sustainability**, we intend to make the Library a more **resilient organization** to best serve the people of Seattle.

The future we envision builds on our existing strengths, including our world-class staff, buildings, collections, programs and services. It reinforces and expands the importance of relationships and connection. It also requires us to change and grow, building new skillsets, such as emerging technology knowledge or new language skills. It will require us to evaluate and adjust our hiring, training and retention strategies.

As we look toward our future, we believe the Library must:

- Prioritize equity in our actions, services and outcomes.
- Continue and expand free access to books and information.
- Increase access, including for those with limited English proficiency.
- Develop more community programming that improves people’s lives.
- Serve as a community hub and connector.
- Create and facilitate positive change.
- Listen to and reflect diverse voices and viewpoints.
- Commit to putting people first.

### III. Priority Areas within Library Operations

#### A. Hours and Access

Library open hours mean access to technology, collections and resources, programs and knowledgeable staff for information and referral. To this end, Public Services staff are versed in the role the Library plays in creating a more equitable community with increased opportunity for low income and historically marginalized individuals and families in Seattle. The Library’s largest expenditure is related to personnel, representing \$xx million, or xx% of total Library resources. One of the Library’s key investments in this area is:

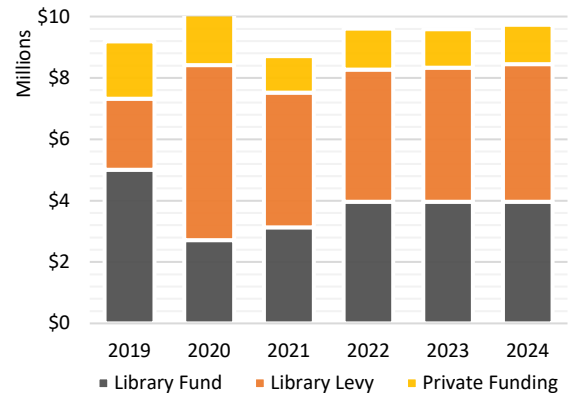
**\$TBD** for item A (*Funding Source*)

**\$TBD** for item B (*Funding Source*)

## B. Books and Materials

When considering the purchase of materials to be added to the collection, the Collection Services team applies an equity lens that factors in audiences, categories and formats, while also focusing acquisitions on titles that reflect underrepresented voices, including those from people of color, the LGBTQ+ community and other marginalized groups. Circulation trends have rebounded, and over xx million items are circulated per month.

Figure 1: Materials Budget by Funding Source



The Library provides \$xx million (xx% of the overall budget) to support the purchase of books and materials, and the movement of those materials across the system. These resources are provided via a combination of General Fund, Library Levy and private gifts (a summary of which can be seen in Figure 1). Key investments in the 2025 books and materials budget include:

**\$TBD** for item A (*Funding Source*)

**\$TBD** for item B (*Funding Source*)

## C. Technology and Online Services

The digital environment provides increasing opportunities to participate in the information society, although some individuals and families can face serious barriers to access. These barriers, often referred to as the “digital divide,” may include a lack of affordable internet connectivity; lack of internet ready devices; or a lack of skills, knowledge, or means to access digital resources. The Library plays an important role in helping bridge the digital divide by providing access to patrons who lack this capability at home.

According to a survey conducted by the Library, one-third of Seattle residents said they relied on Library computers or Wi-Fi networks to access the internet and other digital resources. The Library provides free access to digital devices (desktop computers, laptops and tablets) that can be used to search online resources, connect to the internet, or use popular software. Our wireless internet access is provided free to patrons and has experienced exponential growth as patron preferences shift toward mobile access. Additionally, patrons can use their Library card to check out a portable Wi-Fi hot spot. Key investments in this area for 2025 include:

**\$TBD** for item A (*Funding Source*)

## D. Literacy and Early Learning

Libraries play an important role in fostering literacy, particularly for those who have historically faced barriers to access, such as immigrants and refugees, and those developing literacy skills, such as preschool and elementary students. A key investment in this priority area for 2025:

**\$TBD** for item A (*Funding Source*)



### **E. Building and Facility Support**

As part of the 1998 Library's for All capital campaign, the Library remodeled and replaced a number of our branches. Many of these renovations and buildings are now over 20 years old and in need of ongoing and careful oversight and maintenance to protect the public investment. The Library utilizes an internally developed and actively managed Comprehensive Facilities Plan to surface and direct where investments are needed throughout the system. However, resulting from budget reductions taken during the COVID-19 pandemic, several building maintenance projects were deferred to future periods. This is not an optimal approach, as timely and ongoing maintenance is less expensive than emergency repairs and replacements—this is particularly salient when considering the iconic and unique buildings present in the Library property portfolio.

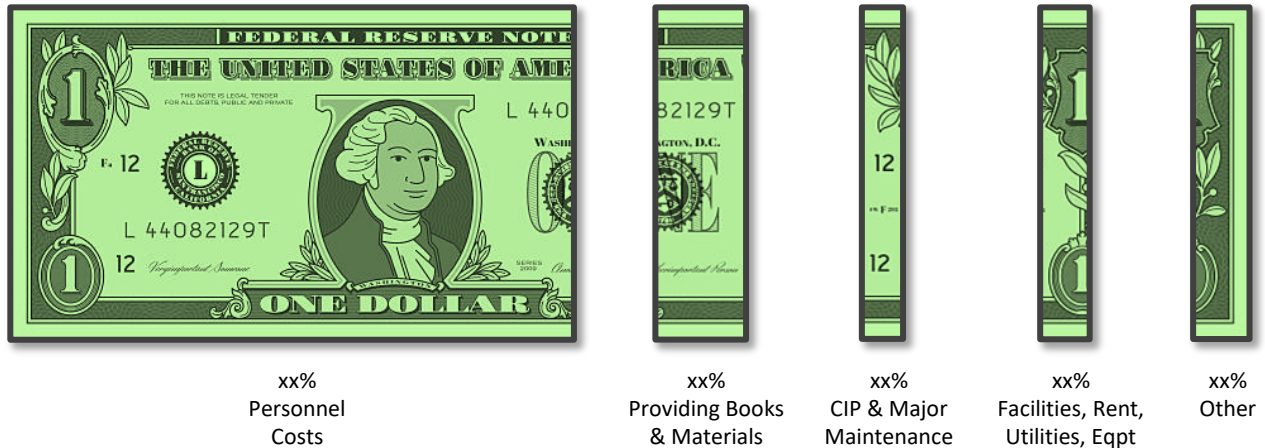
Our buildings provide a forum where patrons can read or study in a comfortable environment, listen to interesting and engaging speakers, participate in meaningful community events, or find daytime respite. \$xx million, or xx% of Library resources, support keeping our facilities open, clean, functional, and welcoming to all. A key investment in our building operations are:

**\$TBD** for item A (*Funding Source*)

## IV. Operations Plan Overview by Personnel, Collections, and Buildings

There is an overarching and larger scale framework within which our priority areas fall, these consist of: 1) Personnel, 2) Books and Materials, and 3) Buildings. Relative investments of Library resources among these categories are shown below, along with an illustration of how \$1.00 is spent at the Library using this lens. Due to the unique nature of Library services and how they are provided to the public, Library work is inherently people-oriented—meaning the majority of our resources are dedicated toward personnel. Additional department level budget information can be seen on Attachment 1.

**Figure 2: How \$1.00 is spent at the Library and the Proposed Budget**

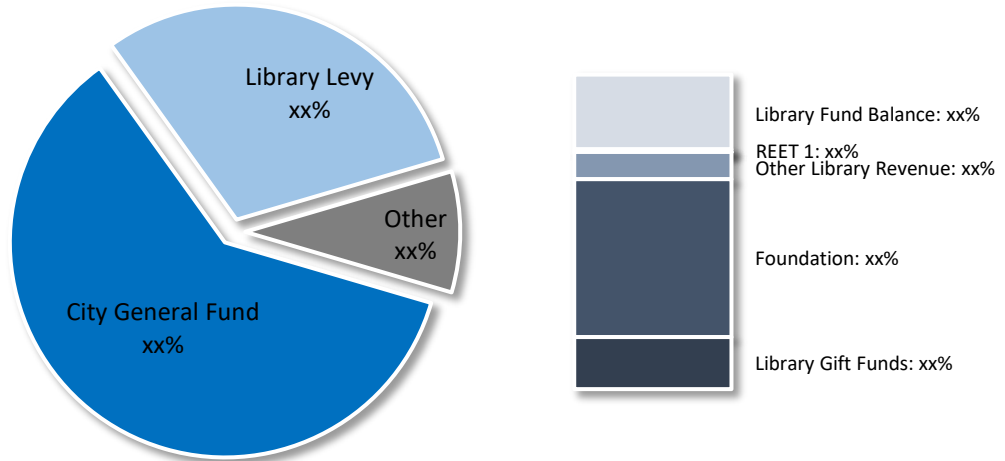


Amounts in \$1,000s	2025 Proposed	%
<i>Personnel</i>		
Public Services, Collections & Access	\$xx	xx%
All Other Departments	\$xx	xx%
<i>Personnel Sub-Total</i>	\$xx	xx%
<i>Providing Books &amp; Materials</i>		
Books & Materials Collection	\$xx	xx%
Collection Processing & Distribution	\$xx	xx%
<i>Providing Books &amp; Materials Sub-Total</i>	\$xx	xx%
<i>Buildings</i>		
Capital Improvements & Major Maintenance	\$xx	xx%
Utilities, Maintenance, Rent, Equipment	\$xx	xx%
<i>Other</i>		
Direct Programming Supplies	\$xx	xx%
City Central Costs	\$xx	xx%
Software	\$xx	xx%
Other	\$xx	xx%
<i>Other Sub-Total</i>	\$xx	xx%
<b>Total</b>	<b>\$xx</b>	

## V. Operations Plan Overview by Funding Source

The design and development of the Library budget occurs against a backdrop of equity impacts associated with the City’s Language Access Plan (Library plan included as Attachment 3), as well as the City’s Race and Social Justice Ordinance and the Library Board policy on Race and Social Justice (Attachment 4). Library operations are supported by three main funding sources: City appropriation of General Fund support, an annual allocation from the seven-year, voter-approved Library Levy, and private gift funds—which include annual grants from The Seattle Public Library Foundation.

**Figure 3: Operations Plan by Funding Source**



Amounts in \$1,000s	2024 Adopted	2025 Proposed	% Change
<i>Operating Fund</i>			
City General Fund (Operating)	\$61,883	\$xx	xx%
2019 Library Levy (Operating)	\$25,194	\$xx	xx%
Other Library Revenue	\$778	\$xx	xx%
Interdepartmental Support	\$27	\$xx	xx%
Use of Library Fund Balance	\$2,212	\$xx	xx%
<i>Operating Fund Sub-Total</i>	<i>\$90,094</i>	<i>\$xx</i>	<i>xx%</i>
<i>CIP</i>			
2019 Library Levy (CIP)	\$5,859	\$xx	xx%
REET I (CIP)	\$78	\$xx	xx%
JumpStart Payroll Expense Tax (CIP)	\$0	\$xx	xx%
<i>CIP Sub-Total</i>	<i>\$5,937</i>	<i>\$xx</i>	<i>xx%</i>
<i>Gifts and Grants</i>			
Seattle Public Library Foundation*	\$4,672	\$xx	xx%
Gift Funds (Balch, Bunn, other)	\$1,490	\$xx	xx%
<i>Gifts and Grants Sub-Total</i>	<i>\$6,162</i>	<i>\$xx</i>	<i>xx%</i>
<b>Total</b>	<b>\$102,193</b>	<b>\$xx</b>	<b>xx%</b>

\* Grant awards approved by The Seattle Public Library Foundation Board of Directors

**A. General Fund**

With **TBD%** of the budget provided by this resource, the Library’s financial well-being and our ability to deliver services to the public is closely tied to the performance of the local and national economy. Revenues forecast to be collected as part of the City’s 2025 General Fund are insufficient to cover all anticipated City-wide costs, resulting in difficult asks being made of departments as part of the biennial budgeting process—the Library in particular needed to absorb a reduction of \$2.74 million in General Fund support. In developing the requested reduction scenarios, the Library’s goals are to keep promises made to Seattle voters as part of the 2019 Library Levy, minimize layoffs, retain capacity to make progress in implementing the Library’s strategic plan, and continue to deliver on partnerships and programming to our service communities. The following modifications were made relating to General Fund resources:

- \$1,900,000** associated with existing costs that will be funded via one-time use of accumulated fund balance instead
- \$350,000** to reduce the books and materials budget
- \$100,000** to reduce the IT budget
- \$400,000** in funding to be recaptured via increased savings from holding positions vacant for extended periods

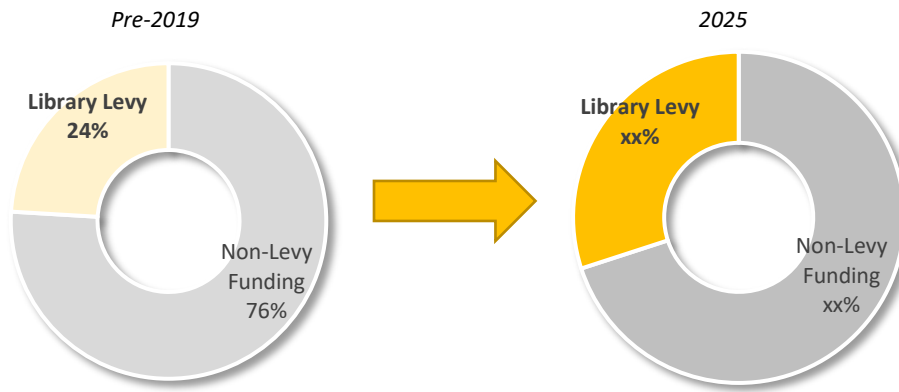
While the 2025 budget includes \$68 million in General Fund resources, which represents a **TBD% increase** over the prior year, the Library did not receive inflationary adjustments beyond those associated with wage increases stemming from adoption of the Collective Bargaining Agreement, benefit rate increases, and City Central Cost changes. Of note, Central Costs represent services provided by the City to departments, who are then billed for those services. In terms of the Library budget, there is a commensurate adjustment to offset central costs and the budget—resulting a net effect of zero from an available dollars perspective.

Amounts in \$1,000s	2024 Adopted	2025 Proposed	% Change
Hours & Access	\$28,444	\$xx	xx%
Providing Books & Materials	\$13,425	\$xx	xx%
Technology & Online Services	\$4,358	\$xx	xx%
Literacy & Early Learning	\$560	\$xx	xx%
Building & Facility Support	\$7,516	\$xx	xx%
Administration	\$4,817	\$xx	xx%
City Central Costs	\$2,764	\$xx	xx%
<b>Total</b>	<b>\$61,884</b>	<b>\$xx</b>	<b>xx%</b>

**B. 2019 Library Levy**

In August 2019, Seattle voters approved a seven-year, \$219.1 million 2019 Library Levy renewal to support, maintain, and expand core Library services, renewing a \$122 million Library Levy that was first passed in 2012. With the passage of the 2019 Library Levy, the Library increased our dependence on time-limited voter-approved funding. In 2024, the levy will provide TBD% of the Library’s total budget, which is up from 24% pre-2019 Library Levy.

**Figure 4: Pre-2019 Library Levy Budget % Compared to Current-Year Budget %**



Each year, the Library Board of Trustees allocates available levy funds through the Operations Plan. More information on 2019 Library Levy categories, including how they map back to the budget can be found on Attachment 5.

Amounts in \$1,000s	2024 Adopted	2025 Proposed	% Change
Hours & Access	\$13,692	\$xx	xx%
Providing Books & Materials	\$5,931	\$xx	xx%
Technology & Online Services	\$2,670	\$xx	xx%
Literacy & Early Learning	\$381	\$xx	xx%
Building & Facility Support	\$1,947	\$xx	xx%
Major Maintenance (CIP)	\$5,244	\$xx	xx%
Major Maintenance (IT)	\$615	\$xx	xx%
Administration	\$573	\$xx	xx%
<b>Total</b>	<b>\$31,053</b>	<b>\$xx</b>	<b>xx%</b>

**Levy – Operating Fund**

In 2025, the Library continues to fulfill levy commitments. The Library will be scheduled to open 21 more hours per week than before the start of the 2019 levy. Air conditioned public spaces have become an increasingly important community need throughout the city as summer temperatures climb, wildfire smoke becomes more prevalent, and many lack air conditioning in their homes. With the recent installation of air-conditioning at Northeast, Southwest, and Green Lake branches and upgrades to air-conditioning at Broadview, Capitol Hill and NewHolly branches, unscheduled closures due to excessive heat in the summer should be reduced. In 2025, we will continue to offer seven weekly play and learn groups, exceeding our levy commitment to fund up to six groups. We will also continue to offer social service support to at-risk youth through our community resource specialist program. Our Social Service Team has leveraged resources in branches and in the community to provide a robust array of services to our patrons.

2025 brings expanded City-wide Central Costs allocations to the Library Levy—until 2024, these costs were funded by the General Fund, but represent expenditures associated with City IT, labor relations, payroll, financial system licensing, and other forms of centralized support. Other highlights of levy funding for 2025 include fine-free access to the books and materials collection, investment in e-materials and our no-holds no-wait Peak Picks collection, digital equity through the Wi-Fi hot spot program, and enhanced levels of building maintenance and branch security.

### Levy – Capital Improvement Program

Of the Library's 26 neighborhood branches, seven are Carnegie-era branches that are considered historic city and state landmarks. These branches—Douglass-Truth, Columbia, Fremont, Green Lake, University, Queen Anne and West Seattle—are unreinforced masonry buildings, which means the buildings are at an increased risk for damage during a seismic event. The current seven-year levy, passed by voters in 2019, included planned funding for seismic retrofits at the three of the most vulnerable branches: Green Lake, University and Columbia. In 2024, the Green Lake retrofit (including electrification, HVAC upgrades, accessibility improvements and interior remodel) was completed. The 2025 budget includes levy funding for the University branch seismic retrofit project, which will commence construction early in the year. The Library has also received a federal FEMA grant to assist in funding electrification/HVAC upgrades at five branches (University, Columbia, Fremont, Queen Anne and West Seattle).

The levy also continues to provide capital funding for the Library's major maintenance program, performing critical maintenance to ensure the Library's 28 facilities (Central Library, 26 neighborhood branches, and a Maintenance Operations Center) are in good repair and preserved for future generations. The focus for 2025 projects will continue to be mechanical systems replacement, repair and electrification of branch libraries — with emphasis on the FEMA grant locations listed above. Those branches were prioritized based on immediate maintenance needs, air-conditioning status, years since last remodel, and proximity to other branches. The 2025 capital project plan is included as Attachment 6.

### **C. Other Capital Improvement Program Support**

Capital improvement projects may carry large fund balances as timelines shift and are influenced by external factors, project complexity, supply chain disruptions and materials shortages (more likely with historically-landmarked buildings), and the availability of qualified contractors in a competitive local construction market (also often related to historically-landmarked buildings). Projects require ample planning and are often multi-year in nature—as a result, the Library may have carryforward resources that span multiple fiscal years. A long-term capital improvement program is submitted to the City Budget Office each year and is included as Attachment 7.

### Real Estate Excise Tax (REET) – Capital Improvement Program

The 2025 Operations Plan includes a total of \$386,000 in REET funding, which is tax revenue generated from property sales in Seattle. The total \$386,000 is dedicated to construction costs associated with the University branch seismic retrofit project (which includes upgrades to, and electrification of, the branch's mechanical and HVAC systems).

### **D. The Seattle Public Library Foundation**

The Seattle Public Library Foundation helps the Library equitably enhance its collections, offer activities for all ages, pilot new and innovative initiatives, and enrich our program of service for our community. It supports the Library by securing and managing donations from individuals, businesses and other foundations to enhance levels of Library service beyond what public funding alone is able to provide. The Foundation's goal is to expand the reach of the Library, not to supplant funding for core Library operations. The Library submits grant requests and provides

support where needed, however the final award amount, as well as the efforts funded, is at the discretion of The Seattle Public Library Foundation Board of Directors.

Amounts in \$1,000s	2024 Adopted	2025 Proposed	% Change
Hours & Access	\$1,322	\$xx	xx%
Providing Books & Materials	\$1,735	\$xx	xx%
Technology & Online Services	\$428	\$xx	xx%
Literacy & Early Learning	\$698	\$xx	xx%
Major Maintenance (CIP)	\$210	\$xx	xx%
Administration	\$279	\$xx	xx%
<b>Total</b>	<b>\$4,672</b>	<b>\$xx</b>	<b>xx%</b>

**E. Library Gift Funds**

The Library receives investment earnings from two main funds, the Robert C. Bunn Trust and the Albert S. Balch Trust, which enhance Library services and support new initiatives. There are also designated contributions made to the Library that must be spent in accordance with donor restrictions. The allocation and approval for spending authority of Library gift funds occurs as part of the Operations Plan. Detail on items funded for 2025 can be found on Attachment 8.

**F. Library Enterprise Revenues**

The Library has limited opportunities for revenue generation, with said resources used to help support core operations. Library enterprise revenues have been on a slow path to recovery. 2025 is projected to mark the first year where Library revenues exceed their pre-pandemic levels— however, this does not account for lost revenue growth that may have occurred in during the interceding periods, nor does it account for lost the purchasing power of these dollars due to generation high inflation over this span. These funding sources provide approximately **TBD%** of the Library’s 2025 budget.

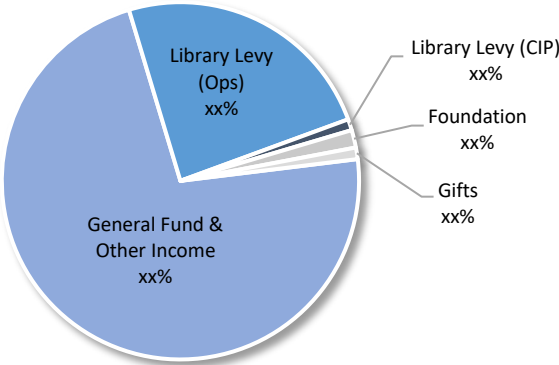
Amounts in \$1,000s	2024 Adopted	2025 Proposed	% Change
Lost Material Fees	\$115	\$120	xx%
Central Library Parking Garage Fees	\$345	\$377	xx%
Copy Services/Pay for Print	\$95	\$100	xx%
Space Rental	\$135	\$177	xx%
Consignment Fees	\$85	\$85	xx%
Miscellaneous Revenue	\$3	\$3	xx%
<b>Total</b>	<b>\$778</b>	<b>\$862</b>	<b>xx%</b>

## VI. Staffing Levels by Funding Source

The 2025 Library budget contains **xx positions (xx FTE)**—funded via multiple sources (Figure 5).

**Figure 5: FTE by Funding Source**

	2024 FTE	2025 FTE	% Change
General Fund & Other Income	439.1	xx	xx%
Library Levy (Operations)	146.7	xx	xx%
Library Levy (CIP)	6.2	xx	xx%
Foundation	9.7	xx	xx%
Gift Funds (Bunn & Balch)	6.4	xx	xx%
<b>Total</b>	<b>608.1</b>	<b>xx</b>	<b>xx%</b>



### A. Vacancies

As Library employees leave for reasons such as retirement or in search of other opportunities, their position will go unfilled for a period of time—in the simplest of terms, this period when a position is unfilled represents a period of labor cost savings. Assuming full employment for an entire year is unrealistic; as such, salary savings assumptions are built into the budget forecasting an organization-level vacancy rate.

In order to balance the budget for 2025, the Library was required to increase our target vacancy savings rate. This will represent an increase to the length of time the Library will need to hold positions vacant—although prioritization for positions imperative to delivering stabilized hours and maintaining minimum staffing levels will occur. A **TBD%** salary savings assumption is included as part of the 2025 budget. The Library Financial Services team will closely monitor actual savings and expenditures to ensure appropriation authority is not over-expended.

### B. Accrued Vacation and Sick Leave Payouts for Retirement & Other Separations

Staff turnover due to cyclical separations jumped in 2021; however, 2022 and 2023 have represented a return to pre-pandemic averages. While staff retirements remained relatively steady, the ranks of Library employees reaching retirement age, but who have yet to announce their retirement, are significant. As of October 2024, The Library had **149 employees eligible for retirement** (compared to 128 employees in November 2023), with an estimated liability of **\$1.9 million** (compared to \$1.4 million in November 2023).

While the Library has been able to manage these payouts within our annual appropriation (against agency-wide vacancy savings), this approach is not a guarantee of sufficient resources regarding the future liability. Library separation and retirement payouts over the past three years are as follows:

	2021		2022		2023	
	Count	Amount	Count	Amount	Count	Amount
Separation Payouts	61	\$191,000	33	\$137,000	37	\$133,000
Retirement Payouts	15	\$207,000	12	\$151,000	17	\$201,000
<b>Total</b>	<b>76</b>	<b>\$398,000</b>	<b>45</b>	<b>\$288,234</b>	<b>54</b>	<b>\$334,000</b>



## VII. Future Risks

In any given year, the Library is faced with risks that can impact our operations in a multitude of ways. Two to three high priority risk areas will be analyzed as part of this section.

- Ongoing threat of cyberattacks on library assets and technology infrastructure
- Pressures of social issues on staff and safety/security in our buildings
- Aging building portfolio
- Mid-year cut to the General Fund budget

## VIII. Opportunities

To sustain and expand these efforts into the future, we must develop new strategies, tactics and priorities. We must be more playful in our outreach and engagement. We must develop even greater cultural competency to increase community use of our system. This plan provides us guidance and outlines priority actions to make progress in these efforts.

With a service focus on **literacy, empowerment and enrichment**, we intend to create programs, services, collections and spaces that build a greater sense of **community belonging**.

With an organizational focus on **capacity building, facilities improvement, technology innovation and sustainability**, we intend to make the Library a more **resilient organization** to best serve the people of Seattle.

The future we envision builds on our existing strengths, including our world-class staff, buildings, collections, programs and services. It reinforces and expands the importance of relationships and connection. It also requires us to change and grow, building new skillsets, such as emerging technology knowledge or new language skills. It will require us to evaluate and adjust our hiring, training and retention strategies.

As we look toward our future, we believe the Library must:

- Prioritize equity in our actions, services and outcomes.
- Continue and expand free access to books and information.
- Increase access, including for those with limited English proficiency.
- Develop more community programming that improves people's lives.
- Serve as a community hub and connector.
- Create and facilitate positive change.
- Listen to and reflect diverse voices and viewpoints.
- Commit to putting people first.

## IX. Closing Summary

Recovery from the cybersecurity event will continue to take shape in 2025, with the Library also looking to shore up consistency of service as it relates to access for our patrons. The Library Levy provides necessary resources to provide ongoing Library programs and services, and although the current Library Levy is set to end in 2026, the strategic planning on how to approach this is already

well underway. Considering other large scale projects on the Library’s horizon, it will be critical to work collaboratively with City leadership to develop a plan for sustainable funding longer term.

**Attachments (Proposed)**

1	2025 Operations Plan compared to 2024 Adopted Budget
2	Key Changes in 2025 relative to 2024 Adopted Budget
3	Library Language Access Plan
4	Library Board Race and Social Justice Policy
5	2019 Library Levy Categories & Budget Cross-walk
6	2025 Capital Improvement Projects
7	Long-Term Capital Improvement Program Plan
8	Library Gift Fund Project Listing
9	Library Organizational Chart



# The Seattle Public Library

**Date:** November 21, 2024

**To:** Library Board of Trustees

**From:** Tom Fay, Executive Director and Chief Librarian  
Jan Oscherwitz, Library Levy Administrator  
Elisa Murray, Digital Communications Strategist

**Re:** **Second and Third Quarter 2024 Levy Report**

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## **Background**

We are in the fifth year of our seven-year \$219.1 million 2019 Library Levy. This report, which covers activities and spending for the second and third quarters of 2024, continues the series of ongoing updates for the Library's leadership team and board of trustees to document implementation of the levy priorities and accomplishments. It describes the way the Library has responded to changes in how our patrons use the Library and how we are using levy resources.

In our typical levy report, we report on one quarter at a time. Due to the significant impacts of a ransomware attack on the Library that occurred over Memorial Day weekend and affected Library operations through early September as we restored services, we are reporting on Q2 and Q3 in a combined report.

## **2024 Q2-Q3 Highlights**

The 2019 Library Levy provides 39% of the Library's revised total 2024 budget of \$124.5 million. The Library spent \$25.8 million of the revised 2024 levy budget of \$48.8 million, or 47%. Much of the lag in spending budget authority is associated with the major maintenance and technology capital program, which continues to experience delays due to supply chain issues, among other challenges. This report also provides information on the remaining \$0.4 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 Q2-Q3 2024, the Library experienced unprecedented challenges that were unforeseeable when the levy was proposed in 2019, including most recently, a hiring freeze imposed in January and a cyberattack that occurred on May 25, 2024. While these challenges had major impacts on our day-to-day operations, our staff remained focused on fulfilling levy promises and delivering high-quality library services.

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

At the start of Q2, to navigate the impacts of a citywide hiring freeze, we reduced hours at most locations while Library leaders worked with the City Budget Office and the Mayor to better understand our staffing situation. In late June, we implemented a summer hours schedule to minimize unexpected closures and meet community need during the summer months. Between the beginning of April and the end of September, although we were open less than in Q1, the Library was able to stabilize operations and significantly reduce unexpected closures. In late

September, we implemented a new fall hours schedule that increased open hours by 6% and began planning for a significant increase in hours in late January 2025 that would bring us above 2019 levels and closer to our levy promises.

In Q2 and Q3, despite the cyberattack-related impacts on technology access, we continued to offer many signature Library events and programs, including author events, story times, Homework Help, Summer of Learning programs, and a celebration for the 20<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the Central Library, which opened in late May 2004. During our recovery from the cyberattack, while technology services such as printers and computers were not available, our Social Services team added programs to help patrons meet basic needs and find connections. In addition to our regular Coffee & Conversations offerings, we held our first-ever Young Adult Resource Fair (YARF) at the Central Library, and a Lake City Resource Fair, partnering with North Helpline.

**Collections: We promised a robust collection of books and materials**

We continued to make significant investments in both digital and physical materials. In mid-March, we reduced the maximum number of holds patrons could place on e-books and e-audiobooks at one time from 25 to 10. This change, in addition to previous measures, positioned us to better manage costs and continue to provide a broad and diverse selection of digital books to meet patron demand all year. From May 25 to June 12, the ransomware attack on the Library took OverDrive offline entirely. Despite the change in our holds policy, the 19-day disruption in OverDrive service and the two-month suspension of purchases of new e-titles and copies, digital book circulation was still strong. Physical circulation was also impacted by the cyberattack. We continued checking out physical materials throughout our recovery, but were unable to add new materials for more than two months and encouraged patrons to keep their materials. We added 51 Peaks Picks titles in Q2 and Q3. The popular no-holds no-wait collection is fully funded by the levy.

**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 Q2 and Q3 2024, the 850 hot spots in our general collection were checked out over 1,800 times, and we worked with community partners to make 151 new long-term loans of hot spots in our outreach collection to provide more stable internet access to communities disproportionately impacted by the digital divide. As our IT team shifted its priorities to securing and restoring our technology systems, it accelerated its timeline for rebuilding our internal systems to make them more modern and secure. We also made some progress on developing a mobile application. We conducted usability testing with Library staff, potential users and community stakeholders with two selected vendors.

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

In Q2 and Q3, we hosted 1,488 in-person weekly Play and Learn programs at seven different branches, with attendance exceeding 4,100. Most Play and Learn programs were bilingual, offered in English and Amharic, Chinese, or Somali. We also offered 450 story times at 21 branches, the Central Library and in the community.

**Maintenance: We promised to maintain buildings for the next generation**

Our facilities and custodial staff completed more than 2,500 work orders in Q2 and Q3, including regular pressure washing of the 5<sup>th</sup> Avenue plaza at the Central Library. The Green Lake Branch seismic retrofit project neared completion by the end of Q3 and the branch was scheduled to reopen in October, a major milestone. The University Branch is scheduled to close for construction for its seismic retrofit project in late 2024.

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Action required/requested: Board review and consideration of the 2024 Q2-Q3 Levy Report for approval at the November Library Board meeting.

2024 Q2/Q3

# The Seattle Public Library LEVY REPORT



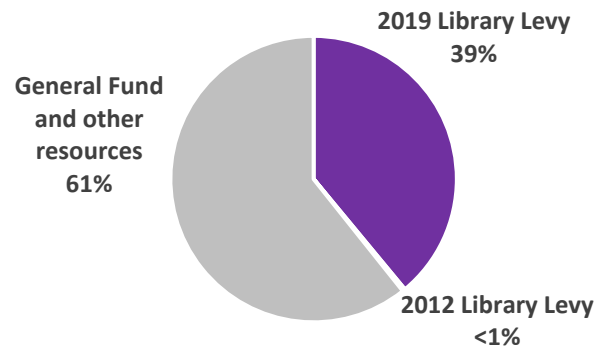
## Recovering from ransomware attack, stabilizing hours

### 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 2024, the 2019 Levy accounts for \$48.8 million (39%) of the Library's total revised budget of \$124.5 million. The 2012 Levy provides \$363,000 of carryover budget from prior years. Other sources including the City's general fund, state and federal grants, private funds and Library fund balance account for the remainder. Through Q3, the Library spent 47% of the revised budget from the 2019 Levy and 32% from the 2012 Levy. Underspensing was largely due to delays in implementing the major maintenance and technology capital programs.

**2024 Library Revised Budget (\$124.5M)**



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 Q2 and Q3 2024, continues the series of updates the Library has provided for the Board of Trustees and the public since 2013.

### An unprecedented cybersecurity event

In our typical levy report, we report on one quarter at a time. Due to the significant impacts of a ransomware attack on the Library that occurred on Memorial Day and impacted operations through early September, we are reporting on Q2 and Q3 in a combined report. Below, we summarize the impacts of the event and our recovery, and you will see references to its impacts throughout the report.

Early on Saturday, May 25, our IT team discovered that the Library had experienced a ransomware attack. Ransomware is a type of malicious software, or malware, that prevents access to systems through encryption processes. The bad actors who conduct these criminal acts typically demand a ransom in return for restoration of systems.

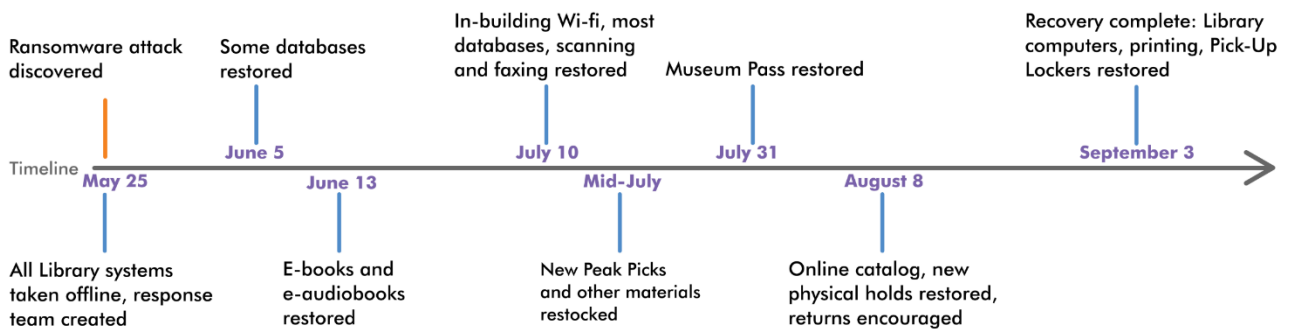
Over Memorial Day weekend, our IT team, with guidance from Library leadership, worked around the clock to contain the attack, which included taking most of our technology systems offline. We set up a cross-divisional response team with external cybersecurity consultants. We notified the Seattle Police Department and the FBI, and we remained in close communication with the City of Seattle throughout our response to this event. We then worked to develop communications for Library staff and patrons to help them understand the scale of this event and the impacts it would have on Library services.



Our IT team created a phased plan to securely restore the Library’s services and began executing it. Given recent high-profile ransomware attacks at other libraries, we anticipated a lengthy recovery. We were not fully back online until after Labor Day.

Throughout the event, all library buildings remained open, our in-person programs continued, and our staff provided extraordinary customer service while facing extraordinary limitations. For example, staff initially used a manual checkout system so that patrons could continue checking out physical materials.

### Ransomware Recovery



They created lists of local resources, such as free printing, Wi-Fi and computer access that the Library could not provide during this time. They created new programs to engage patrons and help them discover materials during a time in which shelves were not being restocked and popular titles, such as Peak Picks, were being exhausted.

Impacts on our internal systems were significant. Our HR team, for example, because we were disconnected from the city’s payroll system, had to do payroll manually through several cycles, working long hours to make sure that staff could get paid on time. Our communications and marketing teams, without access to normal communications channels, such as a staff intranet and the Library’s public website, developed strategies for keeping patrons and staff informed, highlighting transparency and accountability. With limited access to our spl.org website for weeks, we communicated to patrons

through regular updates on our blog and social media channels. To communicate with our staff of 700, who had limited access to email and the internet, we used a combination of whiteboard updates (some called it the new intranet), print newsletters, and team meetings. We were also responding to many inquiries from the media and community members wanting to know more about the attack.

As our IT team worked to bring back services for patrons, they accelerated security upgrades for our staff and internal systems on a very ambitious timeline. (See the Technology Access section below for more details.)

The Library received strong support from city leaders and community members. Patrons kept their materials when we asked them to, and many responded enthusiastically as services were brought back online. Community members sent us hundreds of messages to let us know how much they valued not just Library services, but our staff and our spaces.

With the recovery process complete, we are working with a forensics specialists to investigate impacts to any personal data that may have been affected during the attack. We will notify individuals directly if we find this has occurred. We are also working with a consulting firm to conduct an after-action review of our response to this cybersecurity event that will bring further transparency to our response. We expect that to be completed by the end of 2024 and we will make it available publicly.

## Other highlights: Celebrating newly air-conditioned branches and other milestones, stabilizing hours

In Q2 and Q3, while navigating an extremely disruptive cybersecurity event, the Library continued to do its best to meet our levy promises and be responsive to our community's needs. Here are a few highlights of accomplishments and challenges from April through September, 2024, which you will find detailed in more depth in this report.

**Stabilizing open hours for patrons:** At the start of Q2, the Library was participating in a citywide hiring freeze due to a projected 2025 budget deficit facing the City's General Fund. To navigate the impacts of reduced staffing levels, we reduced hours at most locations. In late June, we implemented a summer hours schedule to minimize unexpected closures and meet community need during the summer months, which included prioritizing access at larger locations equipped with air conditioning and at heavily used branches where in-building resources are in high demand. Between the beginning of April and the end of September, although we were scheduled to be open 13% fewer hours than in Q1, the Library was able to stabilize operations and significantly reduce unexpected closures. In late



While offline, we delivered print newsletters to Library staff twice a week.



September, we implemented a new fall hours schedule that increased open hours by 6% and began planning for a significant increase in hours in late January 2025 that would bring us above 2019 levels and closer to our levy promises.

**More libraries now equipped with air conditioning:** Thanks to the 2019 levy and other funding sources, two additional branches offered air conditioning to patrons during the summer of 2024, the Southwest Branch and the Northeast Branch. With the reopening of the Green Lake Branch, 22 out of 27 locations will offer air conditioning. In August 2024, the Mayor's Office announced a new FEMA grant that will bring air conditioning to the final branches without it.

**New types of social services programs.** During a time in which key technology services for our most vulnerable populations were not available, our Social Services team, supported in part by levy funds, piloted new programs to help patrons meet basic needs and find connections. We held our first-ever Young Adult Resource Fair (YARF) at the Central Library, which featured local social service providers and community organizations for young people, as well as a Lake City Resource Fair, partnering with North Helpline and Lake City community advocates.

**20 years of the Central Library:** In May 2024, we celebrated a significant milestone, the 20th Anniversary of the Central Library. The iconic glass-and-steel library, which first opened its doors to 25,000 people, on May 23, 2004, is still visited by 1,500 people a day. It has earned its reputation as a beloved landmark not just for its design, but as a literary and artistic home for Seattle, and a neighborhood library branch for those who live and work downtown.

**Progress on a strategic plan:** Our progress on finalizing and rolling out a new strategic plan was delayed while the Library focused on recovery from the cyberattack. Informed by the participation of dozens of community organizations, the plan aims to help us build organizational resiliency and navigate a range of 21st century challenges, while seeking to improve community outcomes, particularly for vulnerable people and marginalized communities; and champion belonging and inclusion. It also lays the groundwork for the development of a 2026 Library Levy proposal. A final copy is expected to go to the Library Board of Trustees for their consideration in mid-November.

The remainder of this report provides more detail about how the Library has continued to adapt 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.

### 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 2024 for the Hours and Access category is \$13.8 million.

### Operating challenges in implementing expanded hours continue

The 2019 Library Levy promised expanded hours above 2019 levels. The Library took a first step toward expanded hours in January 2020 by adding an additional hour to each neighborhood branch library every Sunday. By mid-March 2020, however, the Library shut its doors completely in response to the pandemic and it took several years to rebuild staffing capacity, both in number and position type, to begin expanding hours to fulfill our levy promises. The Library spent much of 2021 reopening all locations and 2022 stabilizing staffing and open hours.

In 2022, we hired over 160 new staff to meet and exceed pre-pandemic open hours and expanded hours in 2023. In Q1 2024, we were open nearly 18,000 hours, 7% more than in 2019. The additional open hours increased community access to Library collections, information services, computers, printers, programming and public spaces. However, by the end of Q1, we began to experience a high number of vacancies due to a hiring freeze. The Library, a non-executive City of Seattle department with authority to authorize its own hiring policies, implemented a hiring freeze in January 2024 in tandem with a citywide hiring freeze to address 2025 budget challenges anticipated by the City.

By March 2024, we were experiencing a staffing shortage that was leading to unexpected closure days for some branches. In April, to stabilize hours, the Library reduced scheduled hours by 13% from the Q1 schedule and 7% from the 2019 baseline. In late June, we implemented a summer hours schedule that shifted the open hours of some branches without air conditioning to earlier in the day when temperatures were cooler to minimize heat-related closures, and made other adjustments to meet community need in the summer months. Between middle of April through the end of September, although we were open less than in Q1, the Library was able to stabilize operations and significantly reduce unexpected closure days compared to the end of March and the beginning of April.

As we worked to address potential 2025 budget challenges with the City of Seattle, we were able to once again begin hiring staff to build back our open hours. In late September, we implemented a new fall hours schedule that increased the number of open hours systemwide by 6%, from 1,283 hours per week to 1,360 hours per week. When the Green Lake Branch reopens in Q4 2024, the Library will be operating at 99% of our 2019 hours. To bring us above that baseline and closer to our levy promises of added hours, we also began planning for a significant increase in hours in late January 2025.

## **Reducing barriers to Library services**

Beyond Library hours, the levy supports improving access to Library services for everyone, especially those who face barriers to using Library resources.

When our systems were taken offline in May 2024, we continued checking out physical materials to patrons in library locations, initially using handwritten paper forms, and moving to checkout spreadsheets in Excel when this became secure. We encouraged patrons to keep their materials until further notice and extended all patron due dates until we were able to restore access to our check-in and processing/sorting systems. We also simplified our “claims returned” process to address possible discrepancies in accounts as a result of incident-related data loss. We worked with digital resource vendors to restore access to each digital platform as quickly as possible. Some resources such as Kanopy were restored almost immediately, and access to e-books and e-audiobooks through OverDrive/Libby, was restored less than three weeks after the incident.

We also actively promoted our resources once they were available again. This year's Library Card Sign-up Month coincided with final services coming back online from the cybersecurity event. This inspired our theme, “Welcome Back to Your Library,” which encourages patrons to explore everything they missed -- and discover new-to-them programs and services. It also included an interactive component: Branches put up posters asking “What do you love about Your Library?” and encouraged patrons to write their responses on sticky notes. We received hundreds of comments and kudos.



## In-person and virtual programs and services

During a time when many of our technology systems were offline, the Library's in-person programming continued mostly without interruption, playing an important role in keeping our communities connected to the Library, each other and our resources.

In some cases, staff added programs to support patrons, such as toddler story times, movie screenings, and community engagement activities. One branch created a "1980s time travel adventure," and a Central Library reference librarian brought out a vintage typewriter to type responses to patron inquiries.



A Homework Help volunteer tutor works with a student.

During the school year, Homework Help, held at nine branches, continued to be an important program for K-12 students, although students were affected by the lack of Wi-Fi access during the outage. In Q2, we offered 189 Homework Help sessions, with attendance exceeding 1,750. Homework Help restarted in mid-September for the 2024-25 school year and by the month's end, over 475 students had attended 43 Homework Help sessions.

The Central Library hosted 92 public events during Q2 and Q3, including the 20<sup>th</sup> anniversary celebration of the Central Library in May. Highlights of the celebration included public tours, a display on Level 3 and a special event with Lara Swimmer, Central Library photographer and author of "Reading Room: New and Reimagined Libraries of the American West." The milestone was covered by several media outlets including the Seattle Channel, which produced a [short feature story](#).

In September, the Library hosted the first naturalization ceremony at the Central Library auditorium since 2019. Thirty eligible candidates took the Oath of Allegiance and became United States citizens in front of family and friends. Another highlight was an exhibit at the Central Library's Level 8 Gallery honoring Seattle Gay News' 50<sup>th</sup> anniversary.

"Parable of the Sower" by Octavia Butler was the Library's [Seattle Reads](#) selection for 2024. Because Butler was a writer with deep local roots and global influence, Seattle Reads collaborated with community partners across the city on programs related to "Parable," including book discussions, panels and performances. A kickoff event attended by 75 people was held at the Douglass-Truth branch on May 2. Four additional book discussions were held at Library branches during May and June. Additional events



inspired by Butler’s work were held at community locations such as Langston Hughes Performing Arts Institute, ARTE NOIRE and Wa Na Wari, as well as some held virtually.

## **In-house Social Services team: Resource fairs and more**

Our in-house Social Services Team continued to create safe and welcoming community spaces and events, provide referrals to lifeline services and make a difference in our patrons’ lives. Comprising a social services librarian, a senior community resource specialist and a levy-funded community resource specialist focused on youth up to age 26, this team provides expertise to the Library on social services 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.

“You’ve gone above and beyond. The number of people you serve, and the things you do for us – we appreciate you being here.”

- Patron receiving support from Social Services Team

During Q2 and Q3, the Social Services Team recorded 480 interactions with patrons, most of which involved one or more referrals to external resources such as shelter, housing, and legal assistance. The Library continued to offer “Coffee & Conversations” at the Central Library every other week, drawing 600 participants to 14 events. Weekly Young Adult Drop-ins, co-hosted by Children & Teen Services and Social Services, drew more than 100 young adults, several of whom the team assisted with accessing shelter and other supportive services. One participant said, “This is what I have to look forward to every Friday. The shelter doesn’t open until 9 p.m.” Thirty-five people attend three social services drop-in programs at the International District Chinatown Branch.

On July 23, the Social Services Team collaborated with the Children & Teen Services and Youth & Family Learning Services teams to hold the Library’s first Young Adult Resource Fair at the Central Library, which drew 250 attendees. The fair brought together social services providers and community organizations serving young people, including shelters, medical providers, employment resources, pet care, and more. Attendees also took photos at the Youth in Focus photo booth, created zines and other art projects, “shopped” for clothes a clothing closet, and received care from a foot clinic. Rapid Relief Team’s mobile kitchen



Young Adult Resource Fair, Central Library, July 2024

cooked and served 500 burgers during the event. One attendee said, “I have never seen a library do so much!”

In August, the team worked with the North Helpline and Lake City community advocates to host the first Lake City Resource Fair inside and outside the Lake City Branch, which drew around 300 attendees, including many families and young children. In addition to highlighting neighborhood resources, the fair allowed attendees to access services that aren’t usually available in the Lake City neighborhood such as DOL2Go, the State’s mobile ID and driver’s licensing unit and the mobile medical van.

The team also collaborated with branch staff and FareStart to launch a weekly [Mobile Market](#) on the plaza of the NewHolly Branch, bringing fresh produce to the neighborhood. Patrons can receive a free \$25 voucher from the Library to redeem at the market and can also shop using [SNAP/Washington Food Assistance Program](#) benefits. In the first four weeks, the market served 92 households.



Fare Start Mobile Market, NewHolly Plaza

## 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 2024, the 2019 Levy provided \$5.9 million in the Collections category, including \$4.5 million for books and materials.

### **Digital collections heavily used despite changes in hold policies and service interruption**

Although digital books continued to be very popular with our patrons, OverDrive users and checkouts in Q2 and Q3 declined compared to recent quarters. This decline was likely due to two factors: the recent changes we implemented in our holds policies and the cyberattack that interrupted access to OverDrive in late May to mid-June.

In mid-March, the Library reduced the maximum number of holds allowed for OverDrive from 25 to 10 at one time to manage escalating costs of digital books and meet patron demand for a diverse selection of digital books all year.

From May 25 to June 12, OverDrive was offline entirely in response to the cyberattack. We restored access on June 13, and patrons could once again check out e-books and place holds through OverDrive, a relatively quick recovery compared to many of our services and one that was celebrated by patrons. As one commenter said, “Wonderful news! Thank you for the continued communication through what has to be an incredibly challenging time for everyone at SPL.” Full access was restored on July 26, when the Library could again purchase new content and additional copies.

Checkouts of digital books showed remarkable resilience despite these factors. Q2 was the first quarter since late 2022 that showed a decline in digital book checkouts and users. Patrons still checked out over 1.1 million items in Q2 and 1.3 million items in Q3.

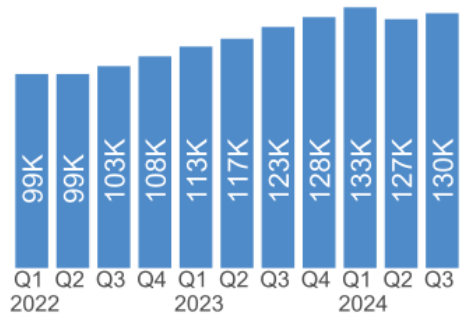
To help patrons discover titles and to amplify underrepresented voices we regularly create curated reading lists in OverDrive and promote them to patrons. At a time when the number of holds were reduced and service was interrupted, these readings lists were especially helpful in directing patrons towards e-books and e-audiobooks that were immediately available for checkout. Q3 curated lists promoted a wide variety of content, from legends, myths, fables and fairy tales retold for adults to cookbooks for grilling and the outdoors and fiction and nonfiction books that share a common theme.

## Investments in digital materials

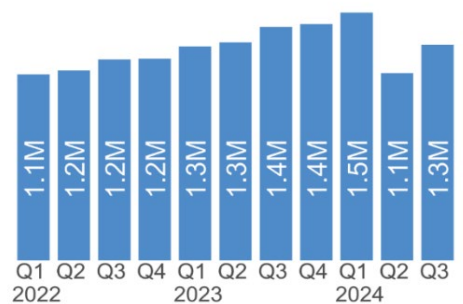
Recent changes we made to manage costs for digital books, including the new holds limit and a higher holds-to-copies ratio, show early signs of success. We purchased more digital titles (28,000) and fewer copies (48,000) during Q2 and Q3 2024 compared to the same period in 2023 (20,000 titles and 58,000 copies). This was due both to changes to our purchasing policies and our inability to purchase any content from late May through late June. When we resumed purchasing in late June, we ordered many titles we had missed in the prior weeks, but we did not need to buy as many additional copies to fulfill holds.

In Q2 and Q3, levy funds were used to expand the Library’s World Languages e-book and e-audiobook collection. We purchased 380 titles for adults and 299 titles for children in 11

Count of patrons who checked out e-books



Count of e-book checkouts

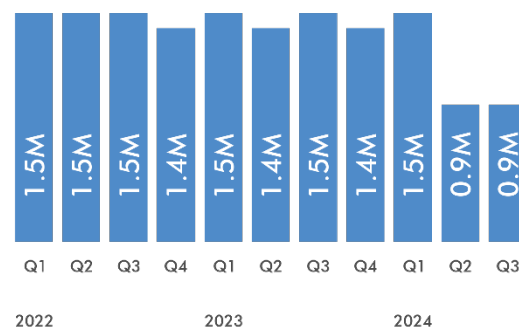


languages available in OverDrive (Arabic, Chinese, French, German, Italian, Japanese, Korean, Russian, Spanish, Ukrainian, and Vietnamese). Highlights include “The Swimmer,” the 2023 Seattle Reads selection by Julie Otsuka, in several languages and e-audiobook editions of children’s titles including “The Lion, the Witch, and the Wardrobe” in Spanish; “Harry Potter and the Chamber of Secrets” in Chinese; and Volume 1 of the “Keeper of the Lost Cities” series in French.

## Investments in physical materials

The levy funds the breadth and depth of the physical collection as well as supports getting materials to patrons faster. Physical book circulation has been steady the past couple of years, but it was also affected by the cybersecurity attack. In Q2 and Q3, patrons checked out more than 1.7 million physical items (including renewals) compared to the 2.9 million items that were checked out in Q2 and Q3 of 2023. Although patrons could still check out physical materials available on the shelves, we did not add new titles for over two months, and asked patrons to keep their checkouts. Staff took extra measures to help patrons find on-shelf books and discover new titles during the time when the catalog was inaccessible.

Count of physical checkouts and renewals



[Peak Picks](#), the Library’s signature no-holds, no-wait collection of high-interest titles, was especially affected. From the end of May until the middle of July, existing Peak Picks titles were almost completely checked out, leaving the Peak Pick displays bare. Over 40,000 Peak Picks were checked out by 16,000 patrons in Q2 and Q3, compared to 74,000 Peak Picks checked out by 22,000 patrons during the same period in 2023. The Library ordered 30 Peak Picks titles in the second quarter, but only 20 went out before all systems were taken offline; the remaining 10 titles were among the first books made available to patrons once we were able to process materials again. In good news, Peak Picks also reached a significant milestone in Q2, with one million checkouts since it started in 2017.



The Library used this image on social media to announce the return of new Peak Picks.

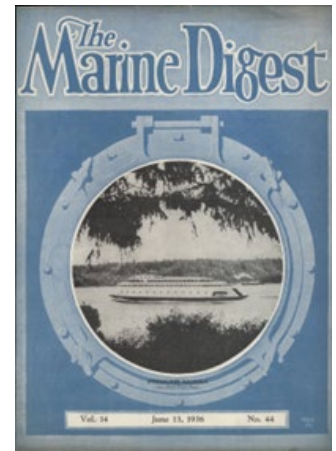
The cybersecurity event also impacted orders for new titles, and only 21 Peak Picks titles were added in the third quarter. Nonfiction highlights included “The Backyard Bird Chronicles,” by novelist Amy Tan; “Rebel Girl” by musician and riot grrrl



movement founder Kathleen Hanna; "Knife," Salman Rushdie's deeply personal account of surviving an assassination attempt; "Autocracy Inc.," Pulitzer Prize winner Anne Applebaum's alarming account of how autocracies work together to undermine the world; and "Lovely One," a memoir by Supreme Court Justice Ketanji Brown-Jackson. Fiction highlights include the 2024 Seattle Reads title, "Parable of the Sower," by Octavia Butler originally published in 1993; Kalliane Bradley's debut, "The Ministry of Time"; Rachel Kushner's Booker Prize and National Book Award-nominated latest, "Creation Lake"; and Louise Erdrich's masterwork "The Mighty Red."

## More local history online and in the Seattle Room

The levy funds support the Seattle Collection by funding the Seattle Room curator and digital librarian. In Q2, we made over 1,500 issues of the Seattle-based "[Marine Digest](#)" available in our Seattle Room Digital Collections. The magazine, founded in 1922 by Jackson B. Corbet as a resource for local maritime news, provides important documentation of a core local industry. News coverage includes regional news on maritime topics, domestic and international trade updates and information about ships and shipping companies. The collection currently includes issues from 1922 through 1954 and is fully text searchable. We will eventually digitize the full back-run of this publication (through 2008). We are grateful to Mike Daigle and the Northwest Publishing Center for donating a physical set of back issues and for providing permission to digitize the collection.



In Q2, the Seattle Room curator continued to prioritize the purchase of material documenting Seattle's Black community. Highlights include a 1971 photo of Doug Barnett, founder of Black Arts West Theatre; a 1990 photo featuring Mayor Norm Rice at Seattle's "Back Home Banquet for Brothers," attended by 1,000 Black men supporting youth mentorships; and a photo of Rex Jones, Seattle's Urban League's Associate Director of Employment, shown with applicants for the League's Skills Bank program.



An important Q3 acquisition was a photograph of Werner Lenggenhager (1899-1988), the Swiss immigrant, Boeing employee and photographer who created a photographic record of Seattle's architecture, monuments and scenery. Over the course of his life, Lenggenhager gave nearly 30,000 prints of his photographs to The Seattle Public Library. The Library has digitized over 4,800 of Lenggenhager's photographs, which are available in the Werner Lenggenhager Photograph Collection.

"Some persons contribute time to charitable causes. My pictures are my small contribution to the city."

- Werner Lenggenhager, 1955

In Q3, without tools to digitize documents for much of the quarter, we focused our attention on physical processing of archival collections. We reboxed collections into acid-free boxes and folders, organizing materials and describing them in finding aids. We also completed processing for several collections, including the [Seattle Room church and religious ephemera collection, 1880-2021](#), the [Seattle Room labor union ephemera collection, circa 1900s-2000s](#), the [Ernest H. Keene theater magazines and programs, circa 1917-1960s](#), the [Capitol Hill Seafair parade float collection, circa 1959-1961](#) and the [McChord Air Force Base photographs, circa 1940s](#).

## 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 provides \$2.7 million in budget authority to support technology operating expenses in 2024 and \$6.2 million, including \$5.6 million in carryforward, for the technology capital program, which includes updating and replacing the Integrated Library System (ILS).

#### Digital equity and the HotSpot 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 the Library's [HotSpot program](#), which continues to provide mobile internet access through our general collection and through targeted outreach with key community organizations. In Q2, the 850 hotspots in our general collection were checked out 1,245 times. In Q3, these items were checked out 614 times. During the technology outage, we redirected 60 Wi-Fi hotspots to connect our staff to the internet.

"Sure glad we have Wi-Fi. Cool how the Library cares about community."

- Nickelsville resident

In Q2, our Outreach Team was limited in its ability to loan hotspots due to impacts of the cyberattack. But while we only recorded 27 new loans, we extended lending periods whenever possible to ensure our partners had reliable coverage. In Q3, as the Library restored services, we were able to loan 124 outreach hotspots. Our partners and patrons expressed their relief and appreciation for the restoration of library resources.

In Q3, we also established a new partnership with the Seattle World School Scholarship and Mentorship Program, an organization that helps refugee and immigrant students transition from high school to college or vocational training. In September, the Library loaned 14 hotspots to the Seattle World School Scholarship and Mentorship Program through the end of the school year in June 2025.

During Q2 and Q3, Library staff connected with program participants at classes, meetings and celebrations. They visited Nickelsville residents at their Central District and Northlake locations, met with Spanish-speaking program participants at Casa Latina and Villa Comunitaria and helped coordinate an end-of-summer party at Low Income Housing Institute (LIHI) Village. These events provide Library staff opportunities to learn more about the communities they work with and share information about library resources.

“Thank you to the technical team who have done some heavy lifting to get you all back up and running after the cyberattack. Job well done!”

- LIHI Community Advisory Committee Member

## **Ransomware disruptions in technology access, building more secure systems**

Patrons’ access to technology services was significantly disrupted by the ransomware attack. For several months afterwards, our IT team’s main priority was to secure and restore our systems and rebuild them when necessary. In the days after the attack, working with cybersecurity consultants, our IT team worked around the clock to take the Library’s internal and public-facing systems offline, secure them, and create a phased recovery plan for restoring services and internal systems.

Key recovery milestones included restoring access to e-books and e-audiobooks through OverDrive in mid June; access to in-building Wi-Fi, a range of databases and scanning and faxing on July 10; and restoration of the online catalog on August 8, which allowed patrons to once again place holds. The day after Labor Day, Sept. 3, we restored public computers, printers, Pick-Up Lockers, and the Suggest a Title form, which meant that the recovery was almost fully complete. Moving forward, the Library is continuing to improve our overall security posture with new or expanded capabilities and the addition of a new full-time cybersecurity analyst position.

“Thank you so much for your hard work to get everything restored. I knew I loved the Library, but seeing how much I miss it really drives it home.”

- Library patron

Use of public computers and printing predictably declined from late May through September because of the outages. In Q2, 17,000 patrons printed 311,000 pages, a decline of 18% and 27%, respectively, compared to Q2 2023, and in Q3, 17,700 users printed 287,000 pages, a decline of 20% and 34% compared to Q3 2023. Computer use saw similar declines, with usage

decreasing by 33% in Q2 and 69% in Q3 compared to 2023. Scan EZ use also declined significantly. To help patrons find alternatives, staff created lists of nearby resources (even drawing maps on occasion!). The impact of the outages highlighted the Library's essential and unique role in providing free technology services for many in our community, who rely on computers, Wi-Fi and printing for everything from job applications to entertainment.

As part of our recovery work, the IT team also drastically accelerated its timeline for rebuilding our internal systems to make them more modern and secure. Early in the recovery process, they accelerated implementation of multifactor authentication for all staff, and reset all passwords. This work occurred in just three days, rather than the weeks-long timeline they had planned prior to the cyberattack. IT also accelerated the Library's shift to Microsoft 365's (M365) cloud-based platforms; constructed an entirely new intranet; and re-imaged all public and staff computers, including installing the latest version of the Microsoft 365 suite, with help from Seattle IT.

Because of the cyberattack, progress on the development of a new mobile app to increase access to the Library system, enhance the online patron experience and attract new audiences was delayed. Just before the cyberattack, Library staff tried out the demo apps provided by the two finalists from our vendor selection process. The project was paused but started up again in Q3 with work by AnthroTech, a human-centered usability design and testing firm, to further assess the finalist demo apps. After conducting their own expert usability and accessibility review, they invited patrons to test the apps during several sessions at the Douglass-Truth and Lake City branches in September. In selecting patrons for usability testing, we prioritized people with disabilities and communities most impacted by the digital divide, including communities of color, seniors, low-income and limited proficiency or non-English speaking communities. We anticipate selecting a vendor in Q4 and anticipate the app will be launched in Q1 or Q2 2025.

## LEVY ACCOMPLISHMENTS: SUPPORTING CHILDREN

### Expanding early learning options for children

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#### Children's programming brings people into the Library

The 2019 Levy provides about \$390,000 for Library early learning programs for children ages 0 to 5, in 2024. In Q2 and Q3, during the time in which our technology services were unavailable, our early learning programs continued uninterrupted, providing an important point of engagement and support for families.

A key early learning program supported by the levy is Kaleidoscope Play and Learn, drop-in neighborhood-based play groups for the Family, Friend and Neighbor Caregiver (FFN)

community. Early childhood educators facilitate weekly 90-minute sessions at seven branches, which are available to children between the ages of birth to 5. Parents, caregivers and children are guided through a variety of developmental activities, including open-ended play, circle time and sharing, which promote early learning. The Library provides meeting room space, access to group supplies and financial support to local community-based groups who facilitate these groups.

We currently offer weekly Play and Learn programs at the Beacon Hill, Columbia, Delridge, Lake City, NewHolly, Rainier Beach and South Park branches. In Q2 and Q3, 148 levy-funded Play and Learn sessions were held at these branches, with attendance of over 4,100. Most programs operate year round, except for the groups at the Delridge and South Park branches, which operate on the Seattle Public Schools calendar. Most programs are bilingual and are offered in English and Spanish, Chinese, Amharic or Somali.

The sessions are highly valued by parents and caregivers. In June, participants in a Play and Learn focus group conducted by our partner Denise Louie Education Center, said that the programs give their children additional social skills (especially sharing) and more exposure to spoken language. Parents and caregivers at the Play and Learn sessions at South Park and Delridge branches (which are conducted in Spanish and English) have been especially appreciative of the support provided to help understand children’s language development in a bilingual environment.



Play and Learn session at Lake City Branch

To further support Play and Learn, our children’s librarians provide early literacy support, promote library programs and services and build connections with family, friend and neighbor caregivers. BrightSpark Early Learning Services, the umbrella organization that administers the Kaleidoscope Play and Learn program, provides curriculum support and program evaluation.

In Q2 and Q3, the Library also led more than 450 story times in 22 locations both in our libraries and at other community locations, with attendance of over 16,400. Our offerings included world language story times in Spanish and Arabic and a perennial patron favorite, Firefighter Story Time which we offered at 14 branches in Q2 and Q3.

We continued to offer a robust menu of virtual programs through our [Kids’ YouTube channel](#), including 165 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 10,000 times between April and September. Our most popular video, first published in 2020, continues to be “What Firefighters Wear.” This 4-minute video garnered nearly 4,800 views in Q2 and Q3.

## 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 provides about \$2 million in budget authority in 2024 to support routine maintenance and \$17.3 million, including \$12 million in carryover funds to support major maintenance and seismic work. The 2012 levy provides an additional \$250,000 in carryover funds in 2024.

#### **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 between April and September, completing more than 2,500 work orders, despite being understaffed due to the limitations on hiring. The janitorial/custodial team completed 700 work orders. In addition to their daily job duties, our janitorial/custodial staff regularly pressure washed the plazas at the Central Library and conducted frequent additional restroom cleanings.

The facilities team completed over 1,800 works orders in Q2 and Q3, performing activities that ranged from maintaining the Automated Materials Handling System (AMHS) to performing walkthroughs and filter replacements for the HVAC systems to maintaining and repairing the fire and sprinkler system.

#### **Major maintenance: Preserving libraries for the next generation**

The 2019 levy provides \$5.2 million in 2024 budget authority and \$12 million in carryforward authority for major maintenance and seismic work (nearly \$10 million of the carryforward authority is allocated to seismic retrofit work). The 2012 levy provided an additional \$250,000 in remaining carryforward authority. The Library spent nearly \$1.5 million in Q2 and \$649,000 in Q3 of 2019 levy funds on seismic and major maintenance work, for a total of \$4.18 million year-to-date.

During Q3, we began preparing for a major capital improvement milestone: the reopening of the historic Green Lake Branch after a 20-month seismic retrofit project funded primarily by the levy. In addition to the retrofit, the renovation included the addition of an electric HVAC system to reduce carbon emissions and provide air conditioning; a new elevator and exterior ramp to increase accessibility; new and improved restrooms; the addition of study rooms and a

community gallery; and other interior changes to provide more usable space for patrons. The reopening was planned for late October.

In Q2 and Q3, we made progress on our efforts to add modern HVAC systems to all locations, which will increase the Library's ability to serve as a refuge from heat and wildfire smoke and reduce our carbon footprint. The Library continued to make final adjustments to the 2023 Capitol Hill HVAC/electrification project and expects to complete this work in Q4. Once the Capitol Hill HVAC/electrification project is completed and the Green Lake Branch reopens, 22 of 27 SPL locations will offer air-conditioned public spaces. A significant upgrade of the Central Library's HVAC system, which needed chiller repairs in Q2 to maintain cooling this past summer, is on the horizon for 2025 and beyond.

In late August, the Mayor's Office and the Library jointly announced that the Library was awarded a [Federal Emergency Management Agency \(FEMA\) Hazardous Mitigation Grant](#), which will provide partial funding for priority HVAC/electrification projects (including the Columbia, Fremont, Queen Anne, University and West Seattle branches). The \$5.2 million FEMA grant covers only part of the cost of each project, so timing of those projects is contingent upon supplemental funding decisions.

The University Branch seismic retrofit project was publicly bid in Q3 with bids due in late October. The branch is tentatively scheduled to close for construction during Q1 2025. As mentioned in previous reports, due to scope expansion, material scarcity and exponential increases in construction costs, the project may face a budget 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 technical expertise, which can be beyond current Library staff capacity. Timeliness of funding decisions, especially at the federal level, varies and depends upon political factors beyond the Library's control. Without adequate federal and state grants or other city or private funding, we are likely to have insufficient resources to undertake the third seismic project (the Columbia Branch) planned in the 2019 levy.



Patron enjoying newly air-conditioned Northeast Branch on the hottest day of the summer.

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## **Risks, opportunities and the path ahead:**

As you'll read in our year-end report, our staff continue to adapt, enhance and launch services and programs to help our communities respond to the challenges they face. Here's a quick preview:

- 2024-2033 Strategic Plan Adoption
  - Cyber Security Event After Action Report
  - Green Lake Branch project complete and branch reopened
  - App Vendor Selection
-



## 2024 Financials

The 2019 Levy accounts for \$48.8 million (39%) of the Library's total revised 2024 budget of \$124.5 million. The Library spent \$23 million in funds from the 2019 Levy and \$0.1 million in funds from the 2012 Levy through Q3. Through Q3, the Library spent 47% of the revised budget from the 2019 Levy and 32% from the 2012 Levy. Underspending was largely due to delays in implementing the major maintenance and technology capital programs.

Spending tables below show the 2024 Operations Plan Budget plus encumbrances and unspent budget authority from prior years in the revised budget columns. Carryover budget authority of \$17.7 million from the 2019 levy and nearly \$363,000 from the 2012 levy is available for spending in 2024. Due to a reporting lag caused by the citywide migration to the Workday payroll system, labor costs for two pay periods in September are not reported in the year-to-date numbers reflected below. When these costs are loaded into the financial system, they will be reflected in the appropriate accounting period.

<b>2019 Levy</b>	<b>Operations Plan</b>	<b>Revised Budget</b>	<b>YTD Expenditures</b>	<b>Available</b>	<b>% Spent</b>
Hours & Access	13,692,000	13,818,277	9,977,201	3,841,076	72%
Providing Books & Materials	5,931,000	5,870,749	4,126,443	1,744,307	70%
Technology & Online Services	2,670,000	2,608,499	1,673,568	934,931	64%
Literacy & Early Learning	381,000	390,396	260,266	130,131	67%
Building & Facility Support	1,947,000	2,015,011	1,168,415	846,596	58%
Administration	573,000	578,566	346,067	232,500	60%
CIP	5,859,000	23,520,884	5,402,326	18,118,559	23%
<b>Total</b>	<b>31,053,000</b>	<b>48,802,384</b>	<b>22,954,285</b>	<b>25,848,099</b>	<b>47%</b>

<b>2012 Levy</b>	<b>Revised Budget</b>	<b>YTD Expenditures</b>	<b>Available</b>	<b>% Spent</b>
Technology & Online Services	98,932	98,932	-	100%
Routine Maintenance	9,250	9,250	-	100%
CIP	254,878	8,224	246,655	3%
<b>Total</b>	<b>363,060</b>	<b>116,405</b>	<b>246,655</b>	<b>32%</b>

**Table 1. Scheduled weekly hours in 2024 compared to 2019 baseline**

Location	2019	Jan 1- Mar 4, 2024	Mar 5 -Apr 11, 2024	Apr. 12 -Jun 18, 2024	Jun 19 -Sep 24, 2024	Sep 25 - Dec 31, 2024
Ballard Branch	60	62	62	62	62	62
Beacon Hill Branch	60	56	56	52	56	56
Broadview Branch	60	62	62	54	54	54
Capitol Hill Branch	60	62	62	52	60	60
Central Library	62	62	62	62	62	62
Columbia Branch	60	56	56	48	48	56
Delridge Branch	39	56	56	56	48	48
Douglass-Truth Branch	60	62	62	54	62	60
Fremont Branch	39	48	48	40	40	40
Green Lake Branch*	39	CLOSED	CLOSED	CLOSED	CLOSED	48
Greenwood Branch	60	62	62	62	62	62
High Point Branch	46	62	62	54	58	56
International District/Chinatown Branch	46	62	62	54	46	48
Lake City Branch	60	62	62	54	54	62
Madrona-Sally Goldmark Branch	39	48	48	32	32	40
Magnolia Branch	39	48	48	40	40	40
Montlake Branch	39	48	48	32	37	40
NewHolly Branch	39	56	56	48	40	48
Northeast Branch	60	CLOSED	56	48	48	48
Northgate Branch	60	60	56	48	40	40
Queen Anne Branch	39	48	48	40	40	40
Rainier Beach Branch	60	56	56	52	56	56
South Park Branch	46	62	62	54	62	58
Southwest Branch	60	56	56	48	48	48
University Branch	46	48	48	48	40	40
Wallingford Branch	39	56	56	40	40	40
West Seattle Branch	60	56	56	48	48	48
<b>Total Weekly Hours</b>	1,377	1,416	1,468	1,282	1,283	1,360
<b>Hours as a % of 2019 baseline</b>		<b>103%</b>	<b>107%</b>	<b>93%</b>	<b>93%</b>	<b>99%</b>

\* Green Lake Branch re-opens Oct. 28, 2024



# The Seattle Public Library

Date: November 21, 2024  
To: Library Board of Trustees  
From: Tom Fay, Executive Director and Chief Librarian  
Amy Lawson, Executive Assistant/Library Board Staff Liaison  
Subject: Proposed Library Board Meeting Schedule 2025

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Listed below are proposed dates for regular Library Board meetings in 2024. Proposed dates assume continuance of meeting the last Thursday of the month, with earlier meeting dates in November and December to accommodate winter holidays.

Trustees will consider special meeting dates separately as needs arise.

Proposed 2025 Regular Meetings of The Seattle Public Library Board of Trustees:

Thursday, January 30, 12:00 p.m.  
Thursday, February 27, 12:00 p.m.  
Thursday, March 27, 12:00 p.m.  
Thursday, April 24, 12:00 p.m.  
Thursday, May 29, 12:00 p.m.  
Thursday, June 26, 12:00 p.m.  
Thursday, July 31, 12:00 p.m.  
Thursday, August 28, 12:00 p.m.  
Thursday, September 25, 12:00 p.m.  
Thursday, October 30, 12:00 p.m.  
Thursday, November 20, 12:00 p.m.  
Thursday, December 11, 12:00 p.m.

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**Action Required/Requested:** Request Board consideration of proposed 2025 meeting dates for approval at November 2024 meeting.



# The Seattle Public Library

**Date:** November 12, 2024  
**To:** Library Board of Trustees  
**From:** Jessica Lucas, President, AFSCME Local 2083  
**Re:** **November Union Report**

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Hello Library Board of Trustees,

We have had positive movement when the Fixed Scheduling MOU was signed and posted for staff to see. We hope that having that document will help with some communication issues around what was negotiated and how that is manifesting in the process of creating those schedules. We will continue to work the joint Fixed Scheduling team to iron out the rough spots.

There are still quite a few problems with Workday, some of which may affect members' taxes and supplemental retirement contributions for this and next year. Others are still going without some of their pay or having vacation and sick leave charged instead of other leaves, leaving them with no vacation or sick leave balances.

We want to thank Shawna Dennard for her guidance and stewardship during her interim HR Directorship. She has been instrumental in keeping things going in the right direction during this difficult time. We all wish this could have been a more normal experience for her.

We also want to thank everyone in HR for helping with these payroll issues and working directly with the city to get situations corrected. There is still a way to go before things are fully corrected, but without their help, we could be in a much worse place.

And finally, thank you to Management for working with the City to escalate Workday issues for staff and for advocating for a better budget in 2025.

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**Action required/requested:** Informational only.



The Seattle Public Library

## NEWS RELEASES - September & October 2024

Date	Title
30-Oct-2024	<a href="#">The Seattle Public Library Expands Online Language Access in Traditional Chinese - SEATTLE PUBLIC LIBRARY 擴大繁體中文在線語言存取範圍</a>
29-Oct-2024	<a href="#">Renovated Green Lake Branch Reopens With Celebration That Draws Neighbors, Families, City Leaders</a>
23-Oct-2024	<a href="#">The Renovated Green Lake Branch Reopens on Monday, Oct. 28 with Celebration</a>
18-Oct-2024	<a href="#">Celebre El Día de los Muertos con la Biblioteca Pública de Seattle / Celebrate Day of the Dead with the Seattle Public Library</a>
11-Oct-2024	<a href="#">Accessible Voting Event Offers Audio Assistance with Voting at the Central Library on October 19</a>
30-Sept-2024	<a href="#">October Author Readings and Events with The Seattle Public Library</a>
26-Sept-2024	<a href="#">“Midlife: Private Parts in Public”: Angela Garbes Explores Female Middle Age in New Event Series at The Seattle Public Library</a>
19-Sept-2024	<a href="#">Celebrate the freedom to read during Banned Books Week at the Library</a>
12-Sept-2024	<a href="#">Ayuda Gratuita Con las Tareas de la Biblioteca Pública de Seattle Comienza la Semana del 16 de Septiembre en Nueve Sucursales</a>
12-Sept-2024	<a href="#">The Seattle Public Library's Free Homework Help Starts the Week of Sept. 16 at Nine Locations</a>
11-Sept-2024	<a href="#">USCIS Holds Special Naturalization Ceremony at the Central Library</a>
11-Sept-2024	<a href="#">The Library's new fall hours schedule to begin on September 25</a>



The Seattle Public Library

**MEDIA COVERAGE - September & October 2024**

Date	Organization	Headline	Details	Link
29-Oct-2024	Secret Seattle	<a href="#"><u>Seattle Library's Green Lake Branch Has Reopened At Last</u></a>	The renovated Green Lake branch of the Seattle Public Library is now open after a seismic retrofit, accessibility upgrades, and more.	<a href="https://secretseattle.com/seattle-library-green-lake-branch/">https://secretseattle.com/seattle-library-green-lake-branch/</a>
24-Oct-2024	Seattle's Child	<a href="#"><u>SPL's Green Lake Branch reopens October 28</u></a>	The Seattle Public Library's (SPL) historically landmarked Green Lake Branch will reopen on Monday, Oct. 28 at 10 a.m., after the completion of a 20-month renovation project funded by the 2019 Library Levy.	<a href="https://www.seattlechild.com/green-lake-library-reopens/">https://www.seattlechild.com/green-lake-library-reopens/</a>
21-Oct-2024	The Seattle Collegian	<a href="#"><u>Grab a library card and get a free ebook, tutoring, and museum ticket</u></a>	However, it is surprising that the Seattle Public Library (SPL) provides thousands of free services beyond just books: e-books, museum tickets, English conversation circles, and more. At this point, it is proper that a library is a place offering various experiences.	<a href="https://seattlecollegian.com/grab-a-library-card-and-get-a-free-ebook-tutoring-and-museum-ticket/">https://seattlecollegian.com/grab-a-library-card-and-get-a-free-ebook-tutoring-and-museum-ticket/</a>
21-Oct-2024	KUOW	<a href="#"><u>What do women and female orcas have in common? A lot in midlife</u></a>	Seattle author Angela Garbes has found a distinctly Pacific Northwest way to talk about female middle-age: a conversation about orcas, featuring a whale researcher who goes only by Giles.	<a href="https://www.kuow.org/stories/women-female-orcas-common-midlife-experiences">https://www.kuow.org/stories/women-female-orcas-common-midlife-experiences</a>

17-Oct-2024	South Seattle Emerald	<a href="#"><b>Simple Steps Elders Can Take to Prevent Falling at Home</b></a>	Photo: A Matter of Balance workshop held at the Douglass-Truth Branch in partnership with The Seattle Public Library and funded by Pacific Hospital PDA.	<a href="https://southseattleemerald.org/news/2024/10/17/simple-steps-elders-can-take-to-prevent-falling-at-home">https://southseattleemerald.org/news/2024/10/17/simple-steps-elders-can-take-to-prevent-falling-at-home</a>
15-Oct-2024	Seattle Refined	<a href="#"><b>Beyond the Books: 10 surprising perks at The Seattle Public Library</b></a>	But these days, libraries offer a lot more than reading materials. Elisa Murray, Communications Specialist with SPL, says, "In recent decades, the public library has become a vibrant community hub."	<a href="https://seattlerefined.com/lifestyle/beyond-the-books-10-surprising-perks-at-the-seattle-public-library-spl-central-library-branch-resources-programs-king-county-pnw">https://seattlerefined.com/lifestyle/beyond-the-books-10-surprising-perks-at-the-seattle-public-library-spl-central-library-branch-resources-programs-king-county-pnw</a>
11-Oct-2024	West Seattle Blog	<a href="#"><b>16 options for the rest of your West Seattle Friday</b></a>	Southwest Artist Showcase: Visit the Southwest Library (9010 35th SW) to see the art in this year's Southwest Artist Showcase. The library is open today until 6 pm.	<a href="https://westseattleblog.com/2024/10/15-options-for-the-rest-of-your-west-seattle-friday/">https://westseattleblog.com/2024/10/15-options-for-the-rest-of-your-west-seattle-friday/</a>
9-Oct-2024	The Seattle Times	<a href="#"><b>6 books by artists at this year's Short Run Comix Festival</b></a>	The Seattle Public Library loves to promote books and reading. This column, submitted by the library, is a space to share 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.	<a href="https://www.seattletimes.com/entertainment/books/6-books-by-artists-at-this-years-short-run-comix-festival/">https://www.seattletimes.com/entertainment/books/6-books-by-artists-at-this-years-short-run-comix-festival/</a>
8-Oct-2024	West Seattle Blog	<a href="#"><b>Here's what's up for your West Seattle Tuesday</b></a>	Southwest Artist Showcase: Southwest Library (9010 35th SW) is open noon-8 pm today – drop in any time to see what's on display for this year's Southwest Artist Showcase.	<a href="https://westseattleblog.com/2024/10/heres-whats-up-for-your-west-seattle-tuesday-5/">https://westseattleblog.com/2024/10/heres-whats-up-for-your-west-seattle-tuesday-5/</a>

6-Oct-2024	Good E-Reader	<a href="#"><u>Libraries are starting to decrease the number of holds on ebooks</u></a>	Earlier in the year, Seattle Public Library lowered the number of holds from 25 to 10.	<a href="https://goodereader.com/blog/digital-library-news/libraries-are-starting-to-decrease-the-number-of-holds-on-ebooks"><u>https://goodereader.com/blog/digital-library-news/libraries-are-starting-to-decrease-the-number-of-holds-on-ebooks</u></a>
2-Oct-2024	West Seattle Blog	<a href="#"><u>West Seattle Wednesday: 15 notes</u></a>	Southwest Artist Showcase, Toddler Story Time, and Homework Help	<a href="https://westseattleblog.com/2024/10/west-seattle-wednesday-15-notes/"><u>https://westseattleblog.com/2024/10/west-seattle-wednesday-15-notes/</u></a>
1-Oct-2024	West Seattle Blog	<a href="#"><u>Admiral Neighborhood Association dine-out benefit, Sound Transit 'drop-in' Q&amp;A, RainWise info, more for your West Seattle Tuesday</u></a>	Southwest Artist Showcase: First of four days to bring your work to Southwest Library (9010 35th SW) for this year's Southwest Artist Showcase, as explained in our preview. Library hours today are 12 pm-8 pm.	<a href="https://westseattleblog.com/2024/10/admiral-neighborhood-association-dine-out-benefit-sound-transit-drop-in-qa-rainwise-info-more-for-your-west-seattle-tuesday/"><u>https://westseattleblog.com/2024/10/admiral-neighborhood-association-dine-out-benefit-sound-transit-drop-in-qa-rainwise-info-more-for-your-west-seattle-tuesday/</u></a>
30-Sep-2024	West Seattle Blog	<a href="#"><u>West Seattle Art: Your annual chance to show your work at Southwest Library is almost here!</u></a>	Artists of all skill levels and talents are invited to be part of the annual Southwest Artist Showcase at Southwest Library. The four-day window to bring in your creations for display starts tomorrow.	<a href="https://westseattleblog.com/2024/09/west-seattle-art-your-annual-chance-to-show-your-work-at-southwest-library-is-almost-here/"><u>https://westseattleblog.com/2024/09/west-seattle-art-your-annual-chance-to-show-your-work-at-southwest-library-is-almost-here/</u></a>
30-Sep-2024	The Seattle Medium	<a href="#"><u>October 2024 Author Readings And Community Events With The Seattle Public Library</u></a>	Library's press release, reprinted.	<a href="https://seattlemedium.com/seattle-public-library-october-events/"><u>https://seattlemedium.com/seattle-public-library-october-events/</u></a>
27-Sep-2024	Seattle Lesbian	<a href="#"><u>Seattle Public Library Presents: 'Midlife: Private Parts in Public'</u></a>	"By highlighting a period of transformation that is decades long but rarely discussed publicly, Garbes has created a series that is urgent and essential, like all of her work," said Stesha Brandon, Literature and Humanities manager at The Seattle Public Library.	<a href="https://www.theseattleslesbian.com/2024/09/seattle-public-library-presents-midlife-private-parts-in-public/"><u>https://www.theseattleslesbian.com/2024/09/seattle-public-library-presents-midlife-private-parts-in-public/</u></a>



27-Sep-2024	KUOW	<a href="#"><u>Recovery from cyberattack costs Seattle Public Library over \$1 million</u></a>	While officials acknowledge there are no guarantees of complete security, they believe their systems are now more robust.	<a href="https://www.kuow.org/stories/recovery-from-cyberattack-costs-seattle-public-library-over-1-million"><u>https://www.kuow.org/stories/recovery-from-cyberattack-costs-seattle-public-library-over-1-million</u></a>
27-Sep-2024	MyNorthwest News	<a href="#"><u>Seattle Public Library will spend \$1M responding to ransomware attack</u></a>	Thursday, Library Director of Administrative Services, Rob Gannon, told his board of trustees the money includes \$800,000 in consulting fees and \$200,000 for extra technology costs. According to Chief Librarian Tom Fay, the money will also paid out of the 's 2024 budget of the Seattle Public Library by the end of the year because it doesn't meet the City of Seattle's cyber liability policy deductible, which is also \$1 million.	<a href="https://mynorthwest.com/3992226/seattle-public-library-will-spend-1m-responding-to-ransomware-attack/"><u>https://mynorthwest.com/3992226/seattle-public-library-will-spend-1m-responding-to-ransomware-attack/</u></a>
27-Sep-2024	The Seattle Times	<a href="#"><u>Seattle Public Library to spend \$1M on response to ransomware attack</u></a>	The Seattle Public Library expects to spend about \$1 million responding to a May ransomware attack by the end of 2024 and is still investigating what, if any, personal data hackers stole. Library officials expect to have a report within four to six weeks on what type of data hackers exfiltrated and whether the data contained personal information, said Rob Gannon, director of administrative services, during a board of trustees meeting on Thursday.	<a href="https://www.seattletimes.com/seattle-news/seattle-public-library-to-spend-1m-on-response-to-ransomware-attack/"><u>https://www.seattletimes.com/seattle-news/seattle-public-library-to-spend-1m-on-response-to-ransomware-attack/</u></a>

26-Sep-2024	KUOW	<a href="#"><u>From SeaTac to the public library, high-profile hacks are plaguing the region. Why?</u></a>	There was also a crippling ransomware attack on Seattle Public Libraries back in May, which put their book checkout and online systems in limbo for months.	<a href="https://www.kuow.org/stories/from-seatac-to-the-public-library-high-profile-hac"><u>https://www.kuow.org/stories/from-seatac-to-the-public-library-high-profile-hac</u></a>
26-Sep-2024	SDOT Blog	<a href="#"><u>Play Street event fosters fun, laughter, and social connection for older adults in South Park</u></a>	On September 24, we hosted a Play Streets community event in South Park geared toward older adults, in partnership with the Seattle Public Library and South Park Senior Center. The event featured games, chair yoga, salsa dancing, food and refreshments, and even a live DJ!	<a href="https://sdotblog.seattle.gov/2024/09/26/play-street-event-south-park/"><u>https://sdotblog.seattle.gov/2024/09/26/play-street-event-south-park/</u></a>
24-Sep-2024	KING 5	<a href="#"><u>New Day NW - Add these books to your fall reading list</u></a>	Video: Misha Stone and Jane Singer from Seattle Public Library list their top six books to read this fall.	<a href="https://www.king5.com/video/entertainment/television/programs/new-day-northwest/add-these-books-to-your-fall-reading-list-new-day-nw/281-3b8ca911-bd1f-40ce-b565-d4d8dc0f77ad"><u>https://www.king5.com/video/entertainment/television/programs/new-day-northwest/add-these-books-to-your-fall-reading-list-new-day-nw/281-3b8ca911-bd1f-40ce-b565-d4d8dc0f77ad</u></a>
23-Sep-2024	Seattle's Child	<a href="#"><u>Seattle Public Library celebrates the freedom to read</u></a>	According to SPL, Books Unbanned cardholders have more than doubled to over 10,300 since it launched in 2023. In that time, cardholders checked out more than 73,000 unique titles, with a total of 250,000 checkouts. In the past six months, the Library has renewed Books Unbanned cards for 2,900 youth.	<a href="https://www.seattlescchild.com/seattle-public-library-banned-books-week/"><u>https://www.seattlescchild.com/seattle-public-library-banned-books-week/</u></a>

20-Sep-2024	The Seattle Times	<a href="#"><u>Books don't harm young people. Book bans do</u></a>	<p>The results are impressive. Since The Seattle Public Library launched the nation's second Books Unbanned initiative (booksunbanned.com) in April 2023, more than 10,000 young people from across the U.S. have signed up for a free e-card from SPL that allows them access to its collection of digital books. To put that in perspective, it is as if the library built a new branch and welcomed thousands of teen and young adult readers through the doors. But instead of a new building, this program has been built by positive word-of-mouth and voracious young readers.</p>	<a href="https://www.seattletimes.com/opinion/books-dont-harm-young-people-book-bans-do/"><u>https://www.seattletimes.com/opinion/books-dont-harm-young-people-book-bans-do/</u></a>
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20-Sep-2024	Broadband Breakfast	<a href="#"><u>Offshore Actor' Caused Cyberattack on Seattle Public Library</u></a>	On Thursday, Laura Gentry, SPL's Head of Communications, disclosed in an email to Broadband Breakfast that the cyberattack came from "an offshore actor that is not affiliated with a nation state or terrorist organization." Like many cyber criminals, the outfit that targeted the SPL sought ransom. "The group demanded a considerable amount of money, one that the Library could not have afforded even if we had considered paying their ransom, which we did not do," Gentry said.	<a href="https://broadbandbreakfast.com/offshore-actor-caused-cyberattack-on-seattle-public-library/">https://broadbandbreakfast.com/offshore-actor-caused-cyberattack-on-seattle-public-library/</a>
18-Sep-2024	Seattle Bike Blog	<a href="#"><u>Thursday: Central Library hosts Anna Zivarts talk about 'When Driving Is Not An Option'</u></a>	Anna Zivarts is giving a free talk 7 p.m. Thursday (September 19) at the Central Branch Library downtown about "how improving our transportation system with nondrivers in mind will benefit everyone."	<a href="https://www.seattlebikeblog.com/2024/09/18/thursday-central-library-hosts-anna-zivarts-talk-about-when-driving-is-not-an-option/">https://www.seattlebikeblog.com/2024/09/18/thursday-central-library-hosts-anna-zivarts-talk-about-when-driving-is-not-an-option/</a>
17-Sep-2024	Queen Anne & Magnolia News	<a href="#"><u>Public library new fall hours schedule starts Sept. 25</u></a>	Library's press release, reprinted.	<a href="https://queenannene.ws.com/news/2024/sep/17/public-library-new-fall-hours-schedule-starts-sept-25/">https://queenannene.ws.com/news/2024/sep/17/public-library-new-fall-hours-schedule-starts-sept-25/</a>
13-Sep-2024	KUOW	<a href="#"><u>Casual Friday with Lex Vaughn and Danielle Marie Holland</u></a>	And speaking of cyberattacks, the Seattle Public Library is finally back at full capacity. It's time to start getting the most out of your library card.... And a password app.	<a href="https://www.kuow.org/stories/casual-friday-with-lex-vaughn-and-danielle-marie-h">https://www.kuow.org/stories/casual-friday-with-lex-vaughn-and-danielle-marie-h</a>

12-Sep-2024	KING 5	<a href="#"><u>60th annual Alpha Kappa Alpha Library Tea</u></a>	For more than 6 decades the women of Alpha Kappa Alpha have been supporting the African American Collection at the Douglass-Truth library branch.	<a href="https://www.king5.com/video/news/local/60th-annual-alpha-kappa-alpha-library-tea/281-fd9ed386-9561-464a-8dc0-d34101af85bc"><u>https://www.king5.com/video/news/local/60th-annual-alpha-kappa-alpha-library-tea/281-fd9ed386-9561-464a-8dc0-d34101af85bc</u></a>
11-Sep-2024	West Seattle Blog	<a href="#"><u>Seattle Public Library announces fall hours; no additions, few changes for branches in West Seattle</u></a>	The Seattle Public Library has announced its fall schedule, which increases its systemwide open hours by six percent – 77 more hours, from 1,283 hours per week to 1,360 hours per week. None of those added hours will be in West Seattle; we compared the fall schedules for local branches to the current schedules – (corrected) two branches have changes.	<a href="https://westseattleblog.com/2024/09/seattle-public-library-announces-fall-hours-no-additions-few-changes-for-branches-in-west-seattle/"><u>https://westseattleblog.com/2024/09/seattle-public-library-announces-fall-hours-no-additions-few-changes-for-branches-in-west-seattle/</u></a>
10-Sep-2024	The Seattle Times	<a href="#"><u>10 surprising things you can do with a Seattle Public Library card</u></a>	The Seattle Public Library loves to promote books and reading. This column was submitted by the library to highlight lesser-known library services. Find out more at spl.org.	<a href="https://www.seattletimes.com/entertainment/books/seattle-public-library-shares-tips-on-what-your-library-card-offers/"><u>https://www.seattletimes.com/entertainment/books/seattle-public-library-shares-tips-on-what-your-library-card-offers/</u></a>
5-Sep-2024	Broadband Breakfast	<a href="#"><u>Cybersecurity Pilot Program Launched by FCC to Defend Schools, Libraries</u></a>	Recent incidents underscore the urgent need for such protections. The Seattle Public Library was hit by a ransomware attack in late May that took the institution three months to recover from, with public computers becoming operational again just this Tuesday.	<a href="https://broadbandbreakfast.com/cybersecurity-pilot-program-launched-by-fcc-to-defend-schools-libraries/"><u>https://broadbandbreakfast.com/cybersecurity-pilot-program-launched-by-fcc-to-defend-schools-libraries/</u></a>

4-Sep-2024	The Stranger	<a href="#"><u>Slog AM: Pier 58 Contractor Sues City, UK Suspends Some Arms to Israel, Emu Missing</u></a>	The library is fully operational: YAY! For the past four months, the Seattle Public Library has dealt with the aftermath of Memorial Day ransomware attack. Hackers took down its website, public computers, its loaning system, Wi-Fi, and e-book and audiobooks. The library kicked the Wi-Fi back on last month, and now public computers are back. It's still working with forensic specialists to determine who launched the attack and the full extent of what the hackers got their hands on.	<a href="https://www.thestranger.com/slog-am-pm/2024/09/04/79678615/slog-am-pier-58-contractor-sues-city-uk-suspends-some-arms-to-israel-emu-missing"><u>https://www.thestranger.com/slog-am-pm/2024/09/04/79678615/slog-am-pier-58-contractor-sues-city-uk-suspends-some-arms-to-israel-emu-missing</u></a>
4-Sep-2024	KIRO 7	<a href="#"><u>Seattle Public Library systems back up after May ransomware attack</u></a>	Services at the Seattle Central Public Library are finally back up and running. That means you can now make returns, use computers, and browse the online catalog again.	<a href="https://www.kiro7.com/news/local/seattle-public-library-systems-back-up-after-may-ransomware-attack/IW46MFRFBBAFPO2R4YTL4XTFZE/"><u>https://www.kiro7.com/news/local/seattle-public-library-systems-back-up-after-may-ransomware-attack/IW46MFRFBBAFPO2R4YTL4XTFZE/</u></a>
3-Sep-2024	KUOW	<a href="#"><u>Tuesday Evening Headlines</u></a>	WA kids are missing school at a high rate, all systems are back online at the Seattle Public Library, and we dig into the uncommon practice of ballot curing. It's our daily roundup of top stories from the KUOW newsroom, with host Patricia Murphy.	<a href="https://www.kuow.org/stories/tuesday-evening-headlines-24"><u>https://www.kuow.org/stories/tuesday-evening-headlines-24</u></a>

3-Sep-2024	Cascade PBS	<a href="#"><u>All Seattle Public Library services restored after cyberattack</u></a>	The public can now access public computers and all services that had been unavailable since the attack on Memorial Day. Other restored services include wi-fi, printing, the online catalogue, e-books and audio books. The library is also allowing people to return their books and other physical materials, after asking patrons to hold onto them during the outage.	<a href="https://www.cascadepbs.org/briefs/2024/09/all-seattle-public-library-services-restored-after-cyberattack"><u>https://www.cascadepbs.org/briefs/2024/09/all-seattle-public-library-services-restored-after-cyberattack</u></a>
3-Sep-2024	West Seattle Blog	<a href="#"><u>FOLLOWUP: Seattle Public Library services now all 'back online'</u></a>	That means you can again use the library's public computers and SPL Lockers, plus its "Suggest a Title" is back. SPL said via X/Twitter that this "means that all of our services are back online and ready for you to use. Thank you for your patience, support and kind words this summer as we worked to restore our services."	<a href="https://westseattleblog.com/2024/09/follow-up-seattle-public-library-services-now-all-back-online/"><u>https://westseattleblog.com/2024/09/follow-up-seattle-public-library-services-now-all-back-online/</u></a>
3-Sep-2024	KING 5	<a href="#"><u>Seattle Public Library fully operational after ransomware attack in May</u></a>	By early August, Wi-fi was back in the libraries and staff computers were operating. And now, public computers are back online and will remain online for the foreseeable future, after implementing protective measures.	<a href="https://www.king5.com/article/news/local/seattle/seattle-public-library-fully-operational-aransomware-attack-may/281-2c76dfd6-dd81-4e00-9d73-9acb0abd0888"><u>https://www.king5.com/article/news/local/seattle/seattle-public-library-fully-operational-aransomware-attack-may/281-2c76dfd6-dd81-4e00-9d73-9acb0abd0888</u></a>

3-Sep-2024	The Seattle Times	<a href="#"><u>Computers are back at Seattle Public Library</u></a>	Visitors can now use public computers at Seattle Public Library, three months after a ransomware attack shut down much of its system. Patrons can also now suggest new items to add to the library collection and use pickup lockers.	<a href="https://www.seattletimes.com/seattle-news/computers-are-back-at-seattle-public-library/"><u>https://www.seattletimes.com/seattle-news/computers-are-back-at-seattle-public-library/</u></a>
3-Sep-2024	Madison Park Times	<a href="#"><u>Seattle Public Library hosts readings, community events</u></a>	The Seattle Public Library is kicking off September with an amazing lineup of author and community events, including New York Times bestselling author Aiden Thomas (“Celestial Monsters”), Lambda finalist Garth Greenwell (“Small Rain”) and reproductive health expert Dr. Karen Tang (“It’s Not Hysteria”) in conversation with Tik Tok sensation Jane Park Kang. You’ll also get a chance to make letterpress book art during Banned Books Week.	<a href="https://madisonparktimes.com/news/2024/sep/03/seattle-public-library-hosts-readings-community-events/"><u>https://madisonparktimes.com/news/2024/sep/03/seattle-public-library-hosts-readings-community-events/</u></a>
2-Sep-2024	Latino News Network	<a href="#"><u>Seattle Public Library elevates Latinx representation and access</u></a>	At the South Park Branch, staff exhibit students from Concord International Elementary Schools’ bilingual book reports on coral reefs in Honduras and Guatemala. Projects like these are displayed proudly around the library, cementing a sense of community.	<a href="https://latinonewsnetwork.com/education/seattle-public-library-elevates-latinx-representation-and-access/"><u>https://latinonewsnetwork.com/education/seattle-public-library-elevates-latinx-representation-and-access/</u></a>