



“Libraries for All” Levy Renewal Proposal

March 28, 2019

"Libraries for All" 2019:

Protecting Our Investment, Planning for the Future



2019 "Libraries for All" Levy Renewal
Proposal

Submitted March 28, 2019

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A Letter from Mayor Durkan



Dear Neighbor:

We know that to build a city of the future, we must expand access to education and opportunity, promote equity, and lift up the places where communities, particularly historically underserved communities, can come together. For decades, The Seattle Public Library has embodied these important values, and has been an open and affordable place where everyone, no matter who they are, can learn.

With the 2012 Library Maintenance and Operations Levy set to expire at the end of this year, we must act to sustain and enhance our libraries, and ensure The Seattle Public Library (SPL) is poised to become a library of the future. That's why I am pleased to transmit my Libraries for All proposal to be placed on the ballot this year.

Guided by community input, this proposal would make seven years of investments in critical areas, including:

- Maintaining critical Seattle Public Library services: Libraries for All would fully fund current SPL services including free access to 2.3 million physical and digital items for more than five million annual visits by Seattle residents.
- Expanding hours and access: My proposal would add nearly 5,000 operating hours per year for branches across the entire city, and maintain current investments to support year-round operations.
- Eliminating fines for overdue materials: Nearly 20 percent of SPL patron accounts are blocked due to fines or fees. By eliminating unnecessary and in many cases inequitable fines, we can reopen the doors of our libraries for many more patrons.
- Improving technology services and digital access to continue bridging the digital divide: We are investing to improve public high-speed internet access, increase our stock of e-books, audiobooks, and streaming services, and advance digital equity.
- Making critical maintenance and seismic retrofits: My proposal would support preventative infrastructure maintenance and fund seismic retrofits for three of the SPL Carnegie libraries: Columbia City, Green Lake, and University branches.

We understand the changing needs of Seattle's diverse communities and are committed to listening to and meeting those needs. When we invest in our public libraries, we invest in education, opportunity, and equity for the whole community.

I look forward to continuing to work with our communities to maintain and expand the great work of The Seattle Public Library.

Sincerely,

Jenny A. Durkan

A Letter from the Chief Librarian and Library Board President

March 28, 2019

The "Libraries for All" 2019 Renewal seeks to protect our city's investment in a strong Library system now and into the future. This plan supports the continued delivery of essential Library services and positions us to be responsive to and supportive of the public's changing needs over time.

The development of this plan was guided by thoughtful contributions from Library patrons and the broader Seattle public in Community Conversations across the city and in a survey, with over 26,000 residents participating, that confirmed their interests for the Library continue to be: keeping libraries open when they need us, providing a robust collection of books and materials, improving computer and online services and maintaining our buildings.

These community priorities have remained consistent since the passage of the original seven-year \$123 million Maintenance and Operations (M&O) Levy enthusiastically supported by voters in 2012.

Since then, the Library has encountered dramatic shifts in our service to the community, with over 100,000 new residents now calling Seattle home, an ever-growing societal reliance on technology, and far too many people getting left behind in a booming economy. The Library has long been a national leader for our innovative approaches to collection development, community programming, and even world-class architecture, but importantly, our offerings have become a lifeline for many right here at home.

We have responded to these changing dynamics by prioritizing equity as a business goal and developing strong partnerships that help us provide services and educational resources to those most in need. With them, we are able to help job seekers prepare resumes, support small business owners in achieving their goals, prepare students to compete in a global economy, and offer people from all walks of life access to high-speed internet, digital literacy resources, author readings, museum passes, community meeting spaces for civic discourse, and so much more.

While the city's General Fund continues to provide the bulk of the Library's budget, the Levy has represented approximately one-quarter of our total annual budget since 2013 and is a critical source of funding to ensure we can maintain core services and meet those important community needs.

For these reasons, we ask for consideration of this proposed renewal and enhancement of the Library M&O Levy because it will benefit children, adults and seniors – regardless of status or background – in every neighborhood of our growing city.



Marcellus Turner
Chief Librarian




Jay Reich
Library Board president



Our Vision and Priorities



Our Mission

Bringing people, information and ideas together to enrich lives and build community.

Our Vision and Priorities

The Seattle Public Library's values and priorities are in close alignment with those of the city of Seattle and Mayor Durkan, who envisions an affordable and inclusive city of the future.

Similarly, the Library board of trustees and Library administration envision a Seattle where imagination and opportunity thrive for all residents, and we work diligently to anticipate and plan for the future of Library services in support of that vision.

Our commitment to equity and inclusion

The Seattle Public Library seeks to include and represent all community voices in the development of our programs, collections and services so that we can anticipate and meet the needs of Seattle's many diverse communities.

We work to level the playing field for Seattle's historically underserved communities by reviewing our processes to identify and eliminate barriers to access.

We are a proud and committed partner in the effort to eliminate structural racism within the city of Seattle through the Race and Social Justice Initiative (RSJI). In support of this effort, the Library Board implemented a Race and

Social Justice policy in 2018 to commit Library resources to correcting institutional practices that may perpetuate social inequities. Library staff and leadership evaluate the impacts of our services, hiring practices, policies and more to ensure we serve all Seattle communities well.

Our work extends to our largest, longest-running and most popular programs and services—such as Summer of Learning, Seattle Reads and our Bookmobile service—where we have conducted equity analyses to identify areas of improvement.

In addition, we have recently developed new initiatives to reach our goal of serving all Seattleites equitably, including a fine forgiveness

program for teens, community listening sessions at shelters and elsewhere, free after-school meals for students, free courtesy phones at the Central Library, and an in-Library social worker who connects patrons to social services.

Ongoing financial support from the Library Levy helps ensure our doors are kept open and our buildings are well-staffed and maintained to carry out this important work. More information about several of our efforts can be found in the "Our Community Impact" section of this proposal, as well as on our website at www.spl.org/equity.

The Future of Libraries

Building the Library of the future

As the only institution providing free educational and informational access to all, it is critical that libraries evolve to meet the changing needs of the communities they serve.

Throughout our 129-year history, The Seattle Public Library continues to rise to that challenge. Whether it's helping our patrons explore new technologies such as 3D printing and virtual reality, reimagining our physical spaces to support varying community needs, or building a collection of digital books and

resources for the modern reader, the Library remains responsive and relevant to everyone.

In support of the city's future needs, the Library is proposing funding for the four priority areas identified in 2012 and reaffirmed by the public in 2018:

- maintain open hours
- grow our physical and digital collections
- make ongoing technology improvements
- maintain our buildings

In the "Levy Components" section of this proposal, you will see what we have accomplished, and what we plan to accomplish, in those four areas.



A Plan Shaped by the Community

The 2019 “Libraries for All” proposal reflects community priorities for delivering essential services now and for the next generation of users. Conversations with patrons across the city, as well as thousands of comments received from surveys, helped shape the plan.



Public engagement

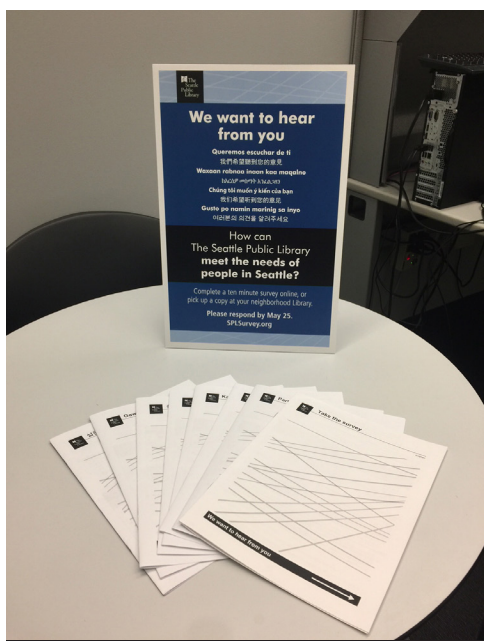
Listening to the community is a regular part of how the Library evaluates and develops services the public wants, expects and needs. Library staff members from around the system meet with educational groups, nonprofits, businesses, cultural and social service organizations to better understand their needs and what Library services are most valuable to them. In addition, Chief Librarian Marcellus Turner holds Community Conversations in libraries and at community locations across the city to discuss service priorities.

Library survey on programs and services

In 2018, the Library conducted a survey of Seattle residents and Library patrons to better understand the public’s satisfaction with current programs and services, and to gauge interest in potential future offerings. The public reaffirmed that Library hours, technology, building maintenance and collections—particularly meeting the increasing demand for more electronic materials—were priorities.

The survey was available in English, Spanish, Simplified Chinese, Traditional Chinese, Mandarin, Somali, Vietnamese, Tagalog and Korean. More than 26,000 responses were received.

Survey respondents also said they supported the Library’s work in education—giving everyone the opportunity to learn and excel—and helping to level the playing field for underserved populations, particularly the economically disenfranchised. In addition, Seattle residents said it was important for the Library to continue to innovate and keep up with changing community needs.



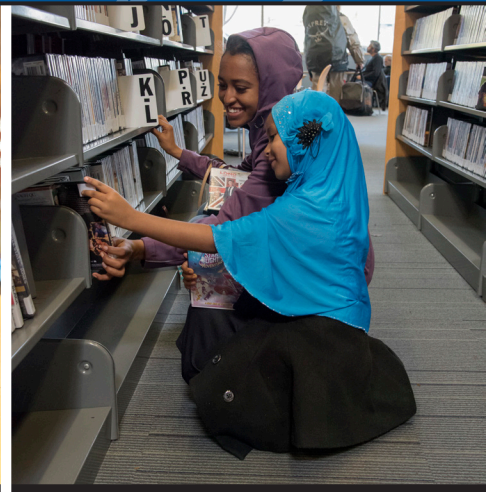
The History of the Library Levy



**1998 bond measure
for buildings**



**2012 maintenance &
operations levy**



**2019 "Libraries
for All" proposal**

Investing in the future

Voters overwhelmingly supported the 1998 Libraries for All bond measure, which touched every library in the system, renovating or replacing the Central Library and every neighborhood library, and adding four new branches. The libraries were uniquely tailored to their neighborhoods while also providing updated books and technology. Our 27 locations are community anchors, offering educational resources and assistance, as well as safe and welcoming spaces for study, work and neighborhood events and programs.

After the building program was completed, there was a remarkable surge in Library usage. Circulation of books and other items nearly doubled between 1998 and 2007. During this same time period, in-person visits increased by 57%. Today, over 62% of Seattle residents have Library cards.

Preserving the vision

After years of deep budget cuts, Seattle voters passed a Levy to help stabilize the Library budget. The Levy not only restored many services cut but helped meet the growing and changing needs of the community.

The Levy provided:

- More hours systemwide, including Sunday hours at all locations
- New computers and printers systemwide, and an updated website
- A larger collection of materials and books, including more popular materials – such as Peak Picks – and more e-books, e-audiobooks, movies and music
- Fully funded building and capital maintenance budgets at all 27 locations

Protecting our investment, planning for the future

Without a source of additional sustainable funding when the current Levy expires in 2019, we once again would need to look at substantial reductions in Library hours, the collection budget and our investments in technology and maintenance. The Library Levy provides approximately one-quarter of the Library's overall budget.

We cannot sustain a budget reduction of that size without severe impacts to core services.

The Levy renewal proposal before the City Council is for \$213.3 million over seven years (2020 - 2026).

Investments in Critical Needs to Maintain Current Service

In addition to proposing sustained funding for the four Levy Components identified in 2012 and reaffirmed by the community in 2018, the Library proposes additional investments for the following critical needs:

Integrated Library System

The Library's mission critical Integrated Library System has been in operation since 2005 and has passed its expected life cycle. This hardware and software system is the primary business platform for managing the procurement of books and materials, processing materials through manual and automated check-in and self-checkout processes and, most importantly, provides a discovery layer that provides patrons access to the wealth of resources available to them on any device, at any time of the day or night.

A new system would provide the Library an opportunity to create efficiencies by integrating other important business functions such as purchase orders, financial accounting, point of sale, and a new Automated Material Handling System. It would also allow the Library to offer more mobile, intuitive, friendly access to materials and services, more patron preference and personalization management, and the integration of new voice technology supported by a number of devices and services on the market today.

Proposed investment: \$4 million

Modern infrastructure for internet access

The Library strives to provide the best connection speeds for the information needs of our patrons, residents and visitors. Currently, the internet bandwidth consumed by SPL patrons grows by two to three percent each month, which leads to the doubling of the volume of network traffic every two to three years. Wi-Fi connections continue to increase as well (currently at over 5,000 connections per day). To accommodate the expanded bandwidth usage and network requirements of High Definition content, the levy would support the upgrading of all network switch hardware over the life of the levy. Additionally, to further meet the information needs of our patrons and residents, the levy would support upgrading the aging Wi-Fi infrastructure at the Central Library and at all 26 branches. These critical network devices are the backbone to all current and future library electronic services and internet access for patrons.

Proposed investment: \$4 million

New e-material

In less than six years, digital material circulation has exceeded 30% of total circulation at a cost three times higher than comparable print materials. Digital content is ubiquitous, and e-books and streaming media are the fastest growing formats in our collection. As digital content, technology and licensing models evolve, these formats are also the most costly and volatile. E-books and e-audiobooks can cost 3-5 times more than their physical counterparts, and streaming media is often offered at a cost-per-use model. These respective costs are compounded by their adoption and growth rates – which are between 20-30% year over year – and can be further exacerbated by changes in the industry and marketplace. Additional funding would ensure digital collections can continue to grow, as well as meet demand, while also preparing the Library for future developments.

Proposed investment: \$5 million

Investments in Equity and the Future of Libraries

In order to serve the needs of all Seattle residents equitably now and into the future, the Library is proposing the following investments:

Planning for the future

As technology evolves, reader habits change, and community needs become more diverse and fragmented, we believe it is critical that libraries stay ahead of these trends to make sure we are anticipating and meeting the city's complex needs. To plan for the future, The Seattle Public Library proposes funding to develop an informed prediction of the future of library work with a long-term outlook, in partnership with other information industry and library industry institutions. This work would be based on the changing work of libraries globally, in U.S. metropolitan areas, and in the Seattle community specifically. It would look at economic, demographic and societal trends—including technology, globalization, communications, education, self-learning, affordability, and more. This work would inform future use of library spaces, staff development, and recruitment and training, as well as anticipate new job classifications to respond to our future program of service.

Proposed investment:
\$300,000

Expanded hours

Providing Library access when the community needs us was identified as the top priority for Seattle's Library system in a 2018 public survey. A proposal for expanded open hours would include opening all branches at noon on Sundays and adding hours to the Delridge, Green Lake, High Point, International District/Chinatown, NewHolly, South Park and Wallingford branches. These branches were identified through equity assessments and community input.

Proposed investment:
\$5.8 million

Digital equity

City-allocated Cable Fund revenues, which currently support the Library's Digital Equity and Wi-Fi HotSpot Program, are declining and will likely lead to programmatic cuts. This investment would provide the Library a stable funding source to support patron internet access, through devices like HotSpots, for those who cannot afford regular access, as well as digital literacy and digital learning programming.

Proposed investment:
\$5.3 million

Eliminating fines

Overdue fines are a financial barrier to access and a deterrent to using Library services. Those that can benefit most from the Library, such as low-income youth and families, are most impacted by fines. By eliminating overdue fines, the Library can level the playing field for Seattle

residents who cannot afford to pay fines, allowing us to truly deliver on our promise to provide access to all. Over 50 library systems have successfully eliminated overdue fines to see increased patronage and circulation, including peer urban and urban county systems.

Proposed investment:
\$8 million

Seismic retrofitting

A 2016 survey conducted by the Seattle Department of Construction and Inspection (SDCI) identified 7 unreinforced masonry (URM) facilities in the Library's property portfolio requiring varying degrees of seismic retrofit to reduce the risk of injury and loss of life during an earthquake. Three of the seven Library facilities fell within the high-vulnerability category: the

Columbia, Green Lake and University branches. Recommendations from the city's Unreinforced Masonry Policy Committee advised high-risk buildings be addressed within the next seven years. An investment in seismic retrofitting for these three branches would allow the Library to meet those recommendations.

Proposed investment:
\$13.8 million

Keeping Our Pledge – Open Hours

The 2012 Levy enabled us to:

- Add more than 6,000 new hours systemwide.
- Open all Library locations on Sundays.
- Expand hours at two of our busiest branches, Columbia and Northgate, from five days to seven days a week.
- Restore Friday hours at the High Point, International District/Chinatown, South Park and University branches.
- Restore staff at eight of our smallest branches to provide patrons with assistance.
- Add staff at the Central Library to address a growing demand from patrons who wanted to learn how to use computers.
- Add classes, workshops and outreach events throughout the system, as a result of the extra hours.
- Add security and custodial staff members.
- Eliminate an annual week-long closure of the entire Library system due to budget cuts.



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Ensuring libraries are open and accessible to all is critical for students, working parents, job seekers, immigrants, refugees, low-income families and people experiencing homelessness. The Library is the only institution that provides free and equal access to educational resources, computers and technology for all ages and backgrounds. Through extensive outreach in 2012 and 2018, the public continues to prioritize open hours as a key community need.

With a focus on providing equity and opportunity for all residents, renewal of the Library Levy would mean:

- Adding extra morning and evening hours at the High Point, International District/Chinatown and South Park branches
- Adding Friday hours at the Delridge, Green Lake, NewHolly and Wallingford branches
- Expanding Sunday hours for one additional hour by opening all branch locations at noon
- Maintaining additional hours and staffing added systemwide as part of the 2012 levy

Proposed funding for Open Hours:

\$67.5 million (about \$9.6 million annually) **32% of levy**

Complete financial information on page 22.

Keeping Our Pledge – Collections



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In 2012, we made a commitment to provide a collection of books and materials to meet growing and changing needs, and the community reaffirmed in 2018 that this is the Library's primary role. Use of e-materials, which are more expensive than print books, has soared in recent years, and we expect this area to grow and evolve for the foreseeable future.

Renewal of the Library Levy would mean:

- Maintaining and expanding our robust collection of physical and digital materials
- Investing more in e-materials—such as e-books, e-audiobooks, and streaming and downloading services—to keep pace with growing demand
- Eliminating Library fines to minimize financial barriers to accessing Library services
- Maintaining and improving the popular “no holds, no wait” Peak Picks collection
- Continuing to support investment in collecting and digitizing local history materials

The 2012 Levy enabled us to:

- Significantly expand our collection of popular materials, enabling us to shorten wait times for holds and increasing the variety and depth of the physical collections.
- Make significant investments in e-books and e-audiobooks to address a growing demand.
- Launch the “Peak Picks” collection systemwide in November 2017, creating immediate access for all patrons to current, popular and high-demand materials.
- Launch “Available Now” – an online service making it easier to find e-books and e-audiobooks available for immediately check-out.
- Increase access to local history resources by digitizing more of the Seattle Room Collection.
- Launch popular online offerings, including video, music and movie streaming services, a digital newsstand and digital comics.
- Support the Library Wi-Fi hotspot lending program by adding staff to manage over 900 devices.

Proposed funding for Collections:

\$58.2 million (about \$8.3 million annually) **27% of levy**

Complete financial information on page 22.

Keeping Our Pledge – Technology

The 2012 Levy enabled us to:

- Replace all internet-enabled public desktop computers and staff computers with new PC hardware, larger monitors and more software options.
- Upgrade public printers and copiers, installing new integrated scanning/copying and printing devices capable of mobile printing in all branches, and giving patrons the ability to print to large-format papers, or double-sided and high-resolution color documents.
- Launch a redesigned website and online catalog, making our system fully responsive on all devices.
- Install audiovisual equipment, including new widescreen TVs and cable connections, in meeting rooms at neighborhood branches and making lighting and acoustical improvements to the Microsoft Auditorium at the Central Library.
- Upgrade self-checkout systems in the Central Library and all branches to make it easier and faster for patrons to check out materials.
- Offer more than 400 computer classes per year to teach patrons how to use email, the internet, popular software, and more.
- Leverage Levy resources to launch an in-building technology lending program, which allows patrons to borrow laptops and tablets for use inside Library facilities.



2019 Levy Renewal Proposal

Every resident needs access to information technology and the internet to be successful in this increasingly digital world. The Library helps bridge the digital divide by providing free access to high-speed internet access, digital literacy courses, online learning resources, computers, tablets and more. These offerings help Library patrons complete homework assignments, seek employment, conduct market research for businesses, and grow their skills.

Renewal of the Library Levy to support technology would mean:

- Replacing infrastructure that supports public high-speed internet and Wi-Fi access
- Replacing the outdated software and hardware system that manages procurement and patron access to the collection of books, articles and resources
- Providing equitable technology access—including Wi-Fi HotSpots, digital literacy courses and digital media learning opportunities—to ensure underserved communities are not left behind in an increasingly digital world
- Continuing to upgrade and replace public technologies, such as computers, laptops, tablets, printers, copiers and software on a timely basis
- Continuing to maintain and enhance our redesigned website

Proposed funding for Technology

\$29.4 million (about \$4.2 million annually) **14% of levy**

Complete financial information on page 22.

Keeping Our Pledge – **Maintenance**



2019 Levy Renewal Proposal

The current Library Levy provides funding for nearly 100% of major maintenance funds for all 27 locations, including the world renowned Central Library. Between 1998 and 2008, the Library replaced or renovated every library in the system and added four new branches. The 2012 Library Levy enabled us to fund preventive and major maintenance, devoting resources to keeping our facilities in good repair and protecting the public's investment.

Renewal of the Library Levy would mean:

- Maintaining our regular preventive maintenance program
- Preserving a budget to complete major maintenance work
- Carrying out seismic retrofit work at the historic Columbia, Green Lake and University branches to protect these historic Carnegie-era buildings from earthquakes

The 2012 Levy enabled us to:

- Establish a regular preventive maintenance program for our buildings, inspecting our equipment and identifying and correcting problems before they became emergency repairs.
- Expand our in-house custodial service and secure new cost-saving vendor contracts for floor, carpet and upholstery cleaning, escalator maintenance, and interior and exterior window washing at all branches.
- Complete needed capital repair and improvement projects at every library, and with prudent use of Levy resources, we now have another 50 projects slated, all aimed at keeping our facilities welcoming, safe and in good working order.
- Leverage Levy funds to make major improvements, such as re-roofing, re-carpeting, and adding power and data connections that support the needs of the modern Library user.
- Refurbish the Ballard, Beacon Hill, Capitol Hill, High Point, Greenwood, Lake City, Northeast and Rainier Beach branches. Refurbishments are planned for the South Park Branch in 2019.

Proposed funding for Maintenance

\$55.7 million (about \$8.0 million annually) **26% of levy**

Complete financial information on page 22.

Our Community Impact



With restored open hours and stable funding, the Library has been able to extend its reach into more communities and better understand what Seattle residents need from their Library. Through that work, we are able to analyze and adjust our approach to collections, programming, policies, technology and beyond to ensure we're building the Library of the future right now.

Our year-round approach to community partnering and community listening has allowed us to stay in touch with the needs of the city, even as the city itself continues to change. We extend our services well beyond our buildings by bringing our services to area schools, women's shelters, senior centers, people experiencing homelessness, and more.

In this section, we will share examples of how the Library is doing more than ever to:

- Expand education and opportunity for all
- Help bridge the digital divide
- Showcase Seattle's diverse array of voices
- Respond to critical community needs
- Leverage our resources to accomplish more with the help of community partners

Our Community Impact

Expanding Education and Opportunity

Library staff members are educators, and we're committed to giving everyone the opportunity to learn and excel. We offer over 10,000 free educational programs each year for people of every age, including early learning activities that help our youngest patrons develop reading and language skills, Homework Help for school-age children, test prep classes for high school students, tutoring for adults, and computer classes for seniors.

The Library truly is the city's classroom.

Supporting Seattle's Youth

Summer break threatens academic gains made by children and youth throughout the school year. The Seattle Public Library's "Summer of Learning," our largest educational program, has been supporting Seattle's youth since 1919. For 100 years, this program has continued to provide fun, yet educational programming for children and teens.

In addition, nearly every fourth- and fifth-grader in Seattle Public Schools participates in an annual Library literacy program called the Global Reading Challenge, which involves reading and studying 10 books in a trivia-style competition.

Supporting Lifelong Learning for All

The Library develops learning programs for all ages and walks of life. Raising A Reader promotes the shared book experience for early learners, which helps develop the parent-child bond and early literacy skills. Our Homework Help and Learning Buddies programs support school-age children with the help of teen and adult community volunteers. We offer a number of adult education classes, including Adult Education Tutoring, Tech Help, Microsoft certification classes, and more.

We also have classes that teach job seekers how to find jobs, entrepreneurs how to start businesses, immigrants how to become citizens, and newcomers to the U.S. how to learn the English language.

Educational Programs that Supported All Ages in 2018

Summer of Learning:

Over 45,000 kids and families participated

Raising A Reader:

Over 1,600 children learned early literacy skills

Homework Help:

Over 12,000 students helped at 11 locations

Learning Buddies:

500 students mentored by 90 high school volunteers during 1,426 visits

Tech classes:

1,500 people took 181 tech classes to develop new skills

Language learning:

215 adults got help learning English



Our Community Impact

Bridging the Digital Divide

An increasing reliance on digital access is an expense too costly for many households to bear. The Library has responded to this growing need by developing infrastructure and programming to expand citywide access to computers and other digital devices, electronic materials and resources, and digital literacy concepts.

Promoting Digital Learning

As the importance of technology and digital media increase in the personal and professional lives of Seattle residents, the Library's Digital Media and Learning Program teaches people of all ages and from all walks of life how to use existing and emerging technologies to improve their daily lives.

- In 2018, approximately 700 youth attended 57 workshops covering robotics, location-based mobile game development and more.

Minimizing the Digital Divide

The Library's Digital Equity Program serves Seattle residents who lack reliable internet access and digital literacy skills by facilitating over 2.5 million public computer and Wi-Fi sessions a year.

- In 2017, our Wi-Fi HotSpot lending program served 405 families who were able to study, complete homework assignments, look for a job, or simply stay in touch with friends and family.

Evolving Physical and Digital Collections

The Seattle Public Library has the third-highest usage of digital material in the nation, evidence that Seattle readers have come to rely on our growing collection of e-books, e-audiobooks and more.

At the same time, our physical books are more relevant than ever, thanks to creative solutions that get popular titles into patrons' hands faster.

- The Library has grown its digital collections by over 55,000 titles since 2012 and increased the availability of those titles by adding over 290,000 copies overall.
- We launched Peak Picks, our "no holds, no wait" collection of popular titles, in 2017.
- Our new "Floating Collection" model of delivering books gets relevant titles to every Seattle neighborhood faster than ever before. Since 2016, nearly two million items have floated from one location to another, and each float saved an average of five days of transit time.



Our Community Impact

Showcasing Diverse Community Voices

The Library is finding new ways to showcase the creative gifts of Seattle's diverse communities, provide opportunities for those communities to shape our work, and make sure all Seattle residents feel heard, represented and celebrated in our programs and collections.

Curating Programs with Community

Each year, the Library's Public Engagement program partners with the Seattle Art Museum (SAM) to host "Legendary Children," a community-curated night of performance by and for Seattle's queer and transgender people of color.

- In 2018, the event drew 1,100 people to SAM for a welcoming and inclusive night of art, dance, music, books and more.

Developing Inclusive Collections

Funding from the 2012 Levy enabled the Library to add or expand its World Language collections for children, young adults, and adults at several branches, as well as enabling an increase in World Language e-books and e-audiobooks in our digital collection. Expanded language collections included Amharic, Chinese, French, German, Italian, Somali and Spanish.

Supporting Children Year-round

In 2018, our largest educational program, Summer of Learning, served over 45,000 youth and families. The program reached more audiences last year by simplifying and translating the program booklet in seven languages. Seattle youth from three community organizations – Little Brook Youth Corps, Special Olympics, and Seal Sitters – were invited to help develop the booklet and were compensated for their contributions.

Supporting Language Needs for Children

The Library offers story times for Seattle's babies, toddlers, preschoolers and their families, available in Chinese, English, Somali and Spanish. These story times help nurture a connection to language and culture for new immigrant families and allow parents with low English proficiency to read with their children. The Library holds over 2,500 story times in multiple languages a year, which attract approximately 100,000 participants.

Celebrating Seattle's Music Community

The Library's online music sharing service, PlayBack, reflects the diversity and abundance of Seattle's music scene. The collection includes albums by nearly 200 artists, representing all genres of music from a wide range of backgrounds and identities, as curated by people well-known in the local music landscape.



Our Community Impact

Responding to Critical Community Needs

Since the passage of the 2012 Levy, Seattle has seen record growth with over 100,000 new residents and an economic boom that presents opportunity for some and serious challenges for others. The Library has a long history of supporting the community in changing and challenging times, and we continue to do so today. As one of the few free public resources available to all, we take seriously our responsibility to serve those most in need. As information experts, we connect our patrons with resources they need to reach their goals.



Providing Critical Services for Those Most in Need

As the region has experienced a growing wealth gap and a sharp increase in homelessness, the Library has spent time with impacted individuals and service organizations to understand their circumstances, needs and barriers to success. We have worked diligently to increase community access to Library services, as well as to lifeline services such as health care, shelter, food, internet and phone service, and more:

Social Service Referrals:

Since 2017, the Library has provided 1,800 social service referrals to 1,154 patrons through an in-house partnership with the Downtown Emergency Service Center. This partnership allows us to connect patrons to housing, employment, health care, food, clothing, bus tickets and more. Another partnership with Veterans Supportive Services helps us connect veterans and their families with services from our Central Library and Ballard Branch.

Wi-Fi HotSpots:

Our collection of Wi-Fi HotSpots – first launched in 2015 – has extended high-speed internet access to many homes that do not have the financial resources to stay digitally connected. A separate long-term lending collection of hotspots allows us to bring the internet to Seattle's day shelters, people experiencing homelessness, low-income housing communities, and more.

Bookmobile:

Our Bookmobile service extends Library access to preschools, senior centers, group homes, nursing homes and community events. Since 2013, we have been evaluating and adjusting our approach to ensure those who need the service most are prioritized. Our preschool stops now primarily serve low-income families in publicly funded schools, and we proudly support the Seattle Preschool Program.

Free Tax Help:

Our free Tax Help program helped nearly 7,000 patrons in 2018 with the support of United Way of King County and AARP. At the Central Library alone, 541 hours of Tax Help produced \$3.8 million in refunds for 3,781 low- and moderate-income community members.

Courtesy Phones:

The Central Library's new courtesy phones allow those who do not have reliable access to cell phone service to make needed local calls for free.

Re-entry Help for Former Inmates:

Giving formerly incarcerated people easier access to needed resources upon re-entry into society helps lower their risk of returning to prison and helps keep communities safer. The Library has partnered with the Washington State Library and the Municipal Court Resource Center to sign up inmates for Library cards before re-entry so they can get access to job classes, computers, books, and more. A specialized class helps teach them how to prepare and apply for work after incarceration.

Our Community Impact

Accomplishing More with Partners

Our partnerships increase the reach and impact of the Library and help us serve more of Seattle's diverse population of entrepreneurs, children, parents, educators and others. As the cost of living rises, our partnerships help level the playing field for individuals and families who may otherwise get priced out of iconic Seattle experiences and needed professional services.

Supporting Small Businesses

Our Library to Business program offers 100 classes and workshops each year with support from partners, including Business Impact NW, El Centro de La Raza, Greater Seattle Business Association, Mercy Corps NW, the Office of Economic Development, SCORE, the Small Business Administration, Ventures, and many more. Our business librarians are trained to help with all aspects of business research, and the program offers skill-building workshops, networking events, one-on-one informational appointments and research tools. Since its launch in 2015, the program has helped 8,000 Seattle entrepreneurs learn more about starting or growing their business.

Expanding Access to Literary and Cultural Opportunities

Seattle Writes:

Every year, the Library hosts Seattle Writes, a series of workshops, classes and writing circles supported by notable local writers and partners such as Hugo House and the Society of Children's Book Writers and Illustrators. In 2018, nearly 1,500 people participated in the series.

Somali Children's Board Books:

In 2018, the Library partnered with five Somali families, Seattle Public Schools, Seattle Housing Authority and the Somali Family Safety Task Force to write and publish two Somali language children's board books: "Baro Af-Soomaali," a book that teaches children the alphabet, and "Baro Tirinta Af Soomaaliga," a book that teaches children numbers zero through 12. The books, available in print and online at spl.org, are the result of a community request for more Somali language materials for children.

Museum Pass:

Our Museum Pass program allows Library cardholders to gain free entry to 17 museums and cultural institutions in the city, including the Woodland Park Zoo, the Seattle Aquarium and MoPOP. In 2018, 102,020 people used their Library card to gain free entry to Seattle museums and other cultural institutions.



"Libraries for All": By the Numbers

Key Library System Statistics

2013-2018 (current Levy period)

- 86 million in-person and online visits
- 70 million items circulated
- 1.8 million people attended 60,000 events and classes
- Over 12.8 million public computer and Wi-Fi sessions
- 4.6 million questions answered

2019 Proposed Library Levy Renewal at a Glance

The final recommendations

In response to the people of Seattle, on March 19, 2019, the Library Board approved specific service recommendations for a Levy renewal addressing four essential priorities:

- Keep libraries open when patrons need them.
- Provide a robust collection of physical and digital books and materials.
- Improve computer technology and online services.
- Maintain buildings for the next generation.

Proposed Levy Renewal Funding for Library Services

2020-2026 (Levy period)

Estimated Allocation of Levy Proceeds	7-year cost
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Improve Hours & Access	\$67.5 million
Improve Collections	\$58.2 million
Improve Technology	\$29.4 million
Improve Maintenance:	\$55.7 million
Levy Administration	\$2.4 million

Total	\$213.3 million
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- \$85 per year for median home owner
- About \$7 per month for a median homeowner, an increase of \$3 from median homeowner payments on 2012 Library Levy

A Closer Look at the **Downtown Region**

Downtown Region

Central Library

1000 Fourth Ave.

Council District 7

The Central Library is an architectural marvel and a functioning library serving the downtown neighborhood, Seattleites from across the city, and visitors from around the world. We develop services and programs responsive to the needs of our neighbors, including families, students, entrepreneurs, workers, day care providers, agencies serving youth and homeless individuals, as well as organizations focused on arts, technology, employment, law and more. With capacity to host large gatherings, the Central Library partners with a wide range of organizations that need large meeting space at low or no cost.



The Microsoft Auditorium regularly features free cultural programs for the public, such as author readings and opera previews, as well as candidate debates and forums on current issues. The Language Center is popular for those seeking English language skills and citizenship resources. The Library Equal Access Program provides resources for blind, low vision, deaf and hard of hearing individuals. The more than 300 public computers in the building are in regular use.

The Seattle Room, located on Level 10, is a treasure trove of local history and is regularly populated by writers, historians, students and educators—all services and programs supported by funds from the 2012 Library levy.

Nearly 4,000 people visit this world-renowned building each day, requiring a robust maintenance program to ensure the Central Library provides a welcoming environment for all.

2012 Levy-funded improvements included:

- Add new public restrooms.
- Replace the north and south doors at the Fifth Avenue entrance.
- Improve lighting, refurbish the public elevators, retread public escalators, and replace the Level 3 flooring — all sorely needed upgrades to a popular and heavily used building.
- Replace acoustics, lighting and audiovisual equipment in the auditorium.
- Improve the gallery space on Level 8.



"I needed hard facts and numbers to prove my business was worth scaling. Librarian Jay Lyman was the first person I reached out to through the Library to Business program to help with this task. The results were more than I could have hoped for. This deep dive showed me just how much market was out there and how much of that market I could capture."

— Logan Niles, Pot Pie Factory
Central Library patron

A Closer Look at the **Mid-City East Region**

Mid-City East Region Services, Programs, Key Levy Provisions

The 2012 Library Levy allowed us to expand hours, improve access to services and programming, and restore staff to provide patrons with assistance. It also funded facility refurbishments and upgrades. Renewal of the Levy in 2019 would provide a source of stable funding, ensuring the Library's continued delivery of consistent, quality services for all.



"Our branch is a huge resource for my family. I can do my homework while my daughter has a safe place to read or explore kid-friendly web sites online. We love the feel of coming to our Library. It is like a safe, cozy corner for us to snuggle up in and enjoy getting lost in a good book."

-Sharail Butler,
Madrona-Sally Goldmark Branch patron

Capitol Hill Branch

425 Harvard Ave. E.

Council District 3

The Capitol Hill Branch is located in one of the most vibrant shopping, restaurant and entertainment districts in Seattle. The neighborhood is proud of its role as a well-established center for Seattle's LGBTQ community. The Capitol Hill Branch offers a comfortable, light-filled space where people can find resources for personal growth, entertainment, education and enlightenment. "Coffee and Conversations" is a warm and welcoming program, open to all, and is designed to be especially helpful to people having trouble finding stable housing.

2012 Levy-funded improvements included:

- New carpeting and flooring.
- A repainted and refurnished quiet study room.
- Reconfigured space and a more welcoming entryway.
- New data and electrical boxes for charging and connecting devices.
- A new laptop bar.

A Closer Look at the **Mid-City East Region**

"The Library is my second home. I am here at least once a week and often more. The staff is wonderful – I have been bringing my granddaughter since she was a toddler and she felt so much at home that she felt comfortable asking our librarians for all sorts of books. Coming here is a treat for both of us."

—Marci Hobbs
Montlake Branch patron



Douglass-Truth Branch

2300 E. Yesler Way

Council District 3

The Douglass-Truth Branch is an integral part of the Central District's vibrant history, and is a rich resource for children, youth and families. We offer a range of programs, including story times, Homework Help and Teen Space – a program that connects around 25 teens each school week with job resources and service learning opportunities. By fostering relationships with community organizations, such as the Northwest African American Museum, we bring relevant programs and services to the neighborhood. This branch houses the African-American Collection of Literature and History, which contains more than 10,000 items of literature, music, magazines and films, with a strong emphasis on Seattle and Northwest area history.

2012 Levy-funded improvements included:

- Upgraded lighting to create a more welcoming and safe environment.

Madrona-Sally Goldmark Branch

1134 33rd Ave.

Council District 3

Nestled between the Central District and Lake Washington, the Madrona-Sally Goldmark Branch is a popular spot for neighbors to study, work, read or pick up materials they have placed on hold. With Levy support, we have created a space with resources, services and programming to serve people from all walks of life. After school, children and tweens come in to do their homework, read or spend time with friends. In the evenings and mornings, patrons use our computers and Wi-Fi – a valued benefit to households that lack access to technology or the internet.

2012 Levy-funded improvements included:

- Expanded hours to include Sundays, adding 243 more open hours a year.
- Restored reference staff to provide in-depth resource assistance.

Montlake Branch

2401 24th Ave. E.

Council District 3

The Montlake Branch is a vibrant hub in the neighborhood. The Betty Bennet Simpson Reading Area provides a welcoming space to read the paper or browse magazines. Adults, tutors and college students make use of table areas, while community groups – including two long-time book groups – enjoy access to the Don G. and Jane Markham Abel Meeting Room. Children gather for story time, or to try out the newest craft or activity. And a partnership with Boyer Children's Clinic, which works with children with neuromuscular disorders or developmental delays, ensures children of all abilities are invited to explore resources and attend programs.

2012 Levy-funded improvements included:

- Expanded hours to include Sundays, adding 243 more open hours a year, improving access to services and programs.
- Restored reference staff to provide in-depth information assistance.

A Closer Look at the **Mid-City West Region**

Mid-City West Region Services, Programs, Key Levy Provisions

In addition to expanded hours and restored staff, the Library Levy has provided funding to complete interior and exterior refurbishments, renovations and repairs, including important ADA improvements at the Queen Anne Branch. Renewal of the Levy in 2019 would provide a source of stable funding, ensuring the Library's continued delivery of consistent, quality services to all.



Ballard Branch

5614 22nd Ave. N.W.

Council District 6

The Ballard Branch, noted for its unique architectural design and "green" roof, is the busiest of all our neighborhood branches, with over 380,000 visits in 2018. Serving families, seniors, long-time residents, and newcomers, branch programming reflects the varied needs of the community, from literary events like Poetry Potluck, book club groups and author readings, story times and Board Game Sundays for families, to drop-in events offering free Tax Help, job resources, housing and social services.

2012 Levy-funded improvements included:

- Major interior refurbishments, including new carpet and comfortable seating areas.
- Improved exterior lighting for the comfort and safety of patrons.

Fremont Branch

731 N. 35th St.

Council District 6

For more than a century, the Fremont Branch has served the informational and cultural needs of the surrounding neighborhood. Today, the branch has a collection of books and media for all audiences, Wi-Fi, public computers, and comfortable seating areas, all housed in a historic landmark building with unique, Mission Revival architectural features. The lower-level meeting space regularly hosts a story time program for children, a conversation group for English language learners, writing workshops, and local history events.

2012 Levy-funded improvements included:

- Expanded hours to include Sundays, adding 243 more open hours a year.
- Restored reference staff who are able to provide in-depth information assistance.
- Completed restroom renovations.
- Repaired interior stairs, roof, windows and exterior.

Magnolia Branch

2801 34th Ave. W.

Council District 7

The Magnolia Branch is considered the crown jewel of the neighborhood – recognized as an example of classic Northwest design with distinct Japanese influences. The branch features furniture designed by master craftsman George Nakashima and a bench crafted from a fallen tree outside the library. The Dean and Mary Thornton Children's Area is often packed and the Jim Thixton and Carol Bennett Thixton Meeting Room serves as a community gathering space. Our librarians frequently partner with the nearby Daybreak Star Indian Cultural Center on educational and cultural programs and events.

2012 Levy-funded improvements included:

- Expanded hours to include Sundays, adding 243 more open hours a year.

A Closer Look at the **Mid-City West Region**



"Mental stimulation from reading books has helped my physical well-being after my fall several years ago. I use the Library to invigorate my brain – it's like chess or checkers – which in turn improves my gait."

Carolann Duescher, 75,
Ballard Branch patron

Queen Anne Branch

400 W. Garfield St.

Council District 7

The Queen Anne Branch opened on New Year's Day 1914 and has been an essential part of the neighborhood ever since, serving everyone from seniors, families, children and teens to millennial adults. Many are drawn to the beautiful brick building, leaded and stained glass windows and newly remodeled skylight. All can enjoy a quiet place to work and study, to attend programs such as story time or a book group, or to pick up popular Peak Picks titles, great music CDs, or popular movies.

2012 Levy-funded improvements included:

- Expanded hours to include Sundays, adding 243 more open hours a year.
- Exterior ADA improvements to the branch parking lot.



"My Library visits motivate me to get out of the house as I love the architecture of the branch and look forward to the welcoming environment. I am self-educated and read outside the normal realm, plus I like listening to music and can still check out CDs from the Library."

Gilbert Crow
Magnolia Branch patron

A Closer Look at the **Northeast Region**

Northeast Region Services, Programs, Key Levy Provisions

The 2012 Library Levy allowed us to bring needed resources to each branch in this region. We were able to expand core services and add programming for children, teens and adults. Levy support was particularly critical to completing significant improvements to these facilities, including interior refurbishments, exterior renovations and upgraded building maintenance. Renewal of the Levy in 2019 will provide a source of stable funding, ensuring the Library's continued delivery of consistent, quality services to all.



"My child goes crazy when she sees children's librarian Nancy Pew. Nancy has instilled a lifelong love of reading in my daughter. She loves to pretend she's Nancy the librarian as she hosts a story time for her stuffed animals."

Diana Quintero-Perez
Lake City Branch patron

Lake City Branch

12501 28th Ave. N.E.

Council District 5

The Lake City Branch is the community hub for a vibrant and growing neighborhood. Our story times and tutoring for students and college readiness programs are particularly popular. We partner with the Hunger Intervention Program to offer healthy snacks for kids and teens. Talk Time programming and our World Languages collections support the needs of the community. Levy support made it possible to provide comfortable reading and work areas, meeting and study rooms, and access to free technology, including a computer area and laptops for in-Library use.

2012 Levy-funded improvements included:

- A significant remodel, adding approximately 1,600 square feet of space by opening up the entrance and corridor. The renovated interior includes flexible spaces to accommodate individual study, team work projects and community meetings.



A Closer Look at the **Northeast Region**

"Every day I count my blessings. Without the Library, I wouldn't have gotten housing. They can give you so much information since they're so dialed into the community. It's a place I can go to look things up in a peaceful way and not be on the street."

Cameron "Kai" Campbell
University Branch patron



Northeast Branch

6801 35th Ave. N.E.

Council District 4

Northeast Branch patrons are voracious readers, which explains why the branch circulates more books than any other branch in the system. With Levy support, this facility offers quiet study and reading areas, as well as a staff with expertise in recommending books and assistance with technology questions. Story time, one of the most popular programs at this branch, is held in the recently upgraded children's area. This Library location offers two book groups, including one specifically for seniors, as well as popular cultural programs.

2012 Levy-funded improvements included:

- An extensive remodel, including expansion of the children's area by 50% to support early learning activities.
- New furniture and more self-service checkout stations.
- Upgraded computers for children and adults.

Northgate Branch

10548 Fifth Ave. N.E.

Council District 5

The Northgate Branch shares a campus with a bustling community center at the heart of a rapidly growing neighborhood. The boom in residential development has brought a stream of new patrons through the doors – a pace that will likely increase with the arrival of light rail to the neighborhood in 2021 and the redevelopment of the Northgate Mall. Levy support has enabled us to provide popular programming for children and teens, like Homework Help and story times offered in English, Mandarin Chinese, Somali and Spanish. The quarterly English as a Second Language (ESL) classes fill rapidly, and the branch's study rooms are in constant use.

2012 Levy-funded improvements included:

- Expanded service from five to seven days a week, adding 1,335 more open hours a year.
- Added educational programming, particularly for youth and patrons learning English.
- Expanded access to computer technology.

University Branch

5009 Roosevelt Way N.E.

Council District 4

The University Branch has served the University District for over 100 years. Patrons love the classic feel of this Carnegie library, as well as the programs and services we have developed to meet the neighborhood's needs. A weekly drop-in session for homeless youth provides computer access, job searching assistance, snacks and access to social service providers. Through outreach in the community, this branch makes books available to the University District food bank. Our programs on housing and job readiness are well-attended, and a high demand for access to technology is well-served by our FlexTech collection of laptops and tablets, available for in-library use.

2012 Levy-funded improvements included:

- Expanded hours to include Fridays and Sundays, which represent an additional 600 hours a year.
- Needed maintenance repairs, including upgrades to the sewage and storm drainage system, exterior access and building windows.

A Closer Look at the **Northwest Region**

Northwest Region Services, Programs, Key Levy Provisions

The Levy enabled us to open the Green Lake and Wallingford branches on Sunday and add reference staff to provide in-depth information assistance in Wallingford. The boost in hours has meant more access to materials, computer equipment and staff, as well as the continuation of popular programs, such as story times for families, Homework Help for students, workshops for job seekers and ESL classes for newcomers to the U.S. Renewal of the Levy in 2019 would provide a source of stable funding, ensuring the Library's continued delivery of consistent, quality services to all.



Broadview Branch

12755 Greenwood Ave. N.

Council District 5

The Broadview Branch is a critical resource and meeting place for residents. We offer after-school meals for children and students, in partnership with Food Lifeline and United Way AmeriCorps. On Saturday mornings we offer adult tutoring, which provides instruction in literacy and language skills, and citizenship assistance. Public computers, a scanner and printer allow the community to access essential services such as employment and business resources, housing assistance and naturalization information. The open, airy and bright design of the building draws in neighbors and encourages them to stay and read.

2012 Levy-funded improvements included:

- Upgraded computer equipment, software and copier.
- Improved building maintenance.

Green Lake Branch

7364 E. Green Lake Dr. N.

Council District 6

The Green Lake Branch is a popular neighborhood destination for children, families and adults. Educational and cultural activities reflect community interests, ranging from story time to popular poetry readings to opera previews. This Carnegie library offers a meeting room that is in continuous use and boasts a tremendous rate of foot traffic, bolstered in part by our proximity to Green Lake Park. As this rapidly growing neighborhood continues to attract new residents and new Library card holders, our branch strives to foster a welcoming sense of community through author, craft and technology events.

2012 Levy-funded improvements included:

- Expanded hours to include Sundays, adding 243 more open hours a year.
- Upgraded computers, software and copier.
- Improved building maintenance.

Greenwood Branch

8016 Greenwood Ave. N.

Council District 6

The Greenwood Branch has long been a staple of this North Seattle community, and a 2017 refurbishment has attracted even more patrons, including entrepreneurs, students, new readers, job seekers, and neighbors seeking to be more involved in their community. We host a monthly networking event for local social service providers, and we partner with the Greenwood Boys & Girls Club to offer peer tutoring and mentorship programs to support local teens in leadership and academic development. The Greenwood community loves to read, making this branch the most popular Peak Picks site in the system.

2012 Levy-funded improvements included:

- Needed interior improvements, including a refurbished children's area, consolidated service desk, new seating options, and ample electrical outlets for personal devices.
- Upgraded computers, software and copier.
- Improved building maintenance.

A Closer Look at the Northwest Region



"This is our first visit to the Broadview Library and we are going to keep coming back after swimming lessons to visit the library and get lunch!"

Amelia Wedmore
Broadview Branch patron

Wallingford Branch

1501 N. 45th St.

Council District 4

Although the Wallingford Branch is one of our smallest locations, it is a popular pick-up location for book holds, making this facility an essential portal, connecting this densely populated neighborhood to the rest of the Library system. Our staff also actively brings the Library to the community, offering computer classes at the local senior center, bringing STEM programming to the Boys & Girls Club, and supporting early literacy at FamilyWorks. Working closely with our neighbors at Solid Ground, our public computers and FlexTech lending laptop program connect insecurely housed patrons with essential employment and social service resources.

2012 Levy-funded improvements included:

- Expanded hours to include Sundays, adding 243 more open hours a year.
- Restored staff, providing in-depth information assistance and improved access to community programming.
- Upgraded computer, software and copier.
- Improved building maintenance.

"I used to bring my first daughter, Quinn, to your baby story times. I met another mom and her child there and then she became my best friend! I kept bringing Quinn to your story times for over 3 years, and then started bringing Claire when she was born."

Amanda Worley
Greenwood Branch patron



A Closer Look at the **Southeast Region**

Southeast Region Services, Programs, Key Levy Provisions

The 2012 Library Levy allowed us to respond to the community's needs by significantly increasing hours, enhancing access to Library resources, upgrading equipment and facilities, and providing services and programs. Renewal of the Levy in 2019 would provide a source of stable funding, ensuring the Library's continued delivery of consistent, quality services to all.



"If every day I stayed home, I would feel it is very boring. Not only am I taking a class, I am meeting new people and making new friends. For my future, my long-term goal, my dream, is to be a Chinese language teacher for children, or maybe work in the library."

Yufen
Beacon Hill Branch patron

Beacon Hill Branch

2821 Beacon Ave. S.

Council District 2

The Beacon Hill Branch is a welcoming, light-filled facility often filled to capacity with people of all ages and backgrounds. With Levy support, the branch is able to offer a wide array of programs and activities for children, teens and adults, including story times for children and families in English, Mandarin Chinese, and Spanish, and after-school learning assistance for students. Programs and services for adults include ESL classes, a book group, technology support workshops, and more. The branch functions as a community hub and offers access to multilingual books and newspapers.

2012 Levy-funded improvements included:

- Significant interior refurbishments, including a reconfigured children's and teen area, improved furnishings and additional power outlets for charging devices.
- Added staff available to assist with the informational needs of small business owners.

Columbia Branch

4721 Rainier Ave. S.

Council District 2

The Columbia Branch is a high-traffic hub in a fast-growing neighborhood. With increased open hours, our staff can support more programs that prepare children and youth for school success, such as Homework Help, Spanish story times and Learning Buddies. We work with local organizations to serve neighborhood readers and writers year-round with the Writers Read, Seattle Writes and Writing Circles programs, as well as support for book groups. Our specialized computer work station for visually impaired patrons helps those who rely on the nearby Washington State Department of Services for the Blind.

2012 Levy-funded improvements included:

- Expanded service from five to seven days a week, adding 1,335 more hours a year.
- Expanded World Languages Collection with more physical and digital materials in Amharic, Somali and Spanish.
- Programming for writers to highlight their work.

A Closer Look at the **Southeast Region**

"My boys look forward to coming to the Library every week for Detective Cookie's Chess Club. It's a highlight of their week! As a home-schooling family, the Library is also a critical part of my boys' education as I depend on it for resources to support what we are learning at home."

Amy Ephrem
Rainier Beach Branch patron



International District/ Chinatown Branch

713 Eighth Ave. S.,
Council District 2

The International District/Chinatown Branch is located inside International District Village Square II, an affordable housing complex. With Levy support, we are able to provide needed access to books and other materials, computers and study rooms. Chinese speakers from across the city have access to our bilingual staff, our special collection of Chinese language materials, and our Mandarin Chinese story time for children – a popular year-round program. Although the branch is small – at less than 4,000 square feet – this facility is well used by the community, particularly the two study rooms that are available to individuals and groups.

2012 Levy-funded improvements included:

- Expanded hours to include Fridays and Sundays, adding 600 more hours a year.
- Restored staff able to provide in-depth information assistance.

NewHolly Branch

7058 32nd Ave. S.

Council District 2

The NewHolly Branch is housed within a campus of learners that includes a high school tutoring program, jobs center, South Seattle Community College branch, child care centers and more. We serve one of Seattle's most diverse communities. Our partners include key campus agencies such as the Seattle Housing Authority and Neighborhood House. Most patrons are children and teens, and our staff offers our youngest visitors quality educational programming, such as English and Somali language story times, after-school Homework Help, the Learning Buddies mentorship program, and the ever-popular Teen Time.

2012 Levy-funded improvements included:

- Expanded hours to include Sundays, adding 243 more open hours a year.
- Restored staff capable of providing in-depth information assistance.

Rainier Beach Branch

9125 Rainier Ave. S.

Council District 2

With Levy support for staff and materials, we offer programs to meet the needs of the community, including story times in English and Somali, after-school Homework Help, a chess club for kids, teen drop-in space, adult education tutoring, writing circle support and more. We provide books, materials and computers for those seeking to improve their English language and digital literacy skills, as well as study rooms that are regularly used by community groups.

2012 Levy-funded improvements included:

- Significant refurbishments, creating a quiet zone for adults, after-school space for teens, a new multipurpose meeting room, and a business center.
- The Library's first digital media studio, providing technology and software tools that artists and entrepreneurs need to fulfill work-related and creative pursuits.
- An expanded World Languages Collection, with more physical and digital materials in Amharic, Somali and Spanish.

A Closer Look at the **Southwest Region**

Southwest Region Services, Programs, Key Levy Provisions

The 2012 Library Levy enabled us to add a significant number of hours, restore needed staff, complete major maintenance upgrades and expand our collections. With Levy support, libraries in this region are able to offer more than 80 programs aimed at meeting the unique needs of the neighborhoods they serve – one of the most popular being our LibraryLab series. This program provides an intergenerational, hands-on approach to science, technology, engineering, arts and math (STEAM) concepts. In 2018, over 1,500 participants programmed robots, built roller coasters, and created 3-D sculptures. Renewal of the Levy in 2019 would provide a source of stable funding, ensuring the Library's continued delivery of consistent, quality services to all.



Delridge Branch

5423 Delridge Way S.W.

Council District 1

Sharing a building with affordable housing units in a rapidly developing neighborhood, the Delridge Branch provides critical digital access and information assistance, small business consultations, early learning opportunities, and academic support for youth. We are a convenient holds pickup location and we offer popular materials to browse and a welcoming, comfortable space for all. An active programming hub, we are at our best when we are buzzing with activities such as hands-on learning programs, creativity workshops in our Arts & Crafts Studio, or digital media workshops to help master new technologies.

2012 Levy-funded improvements included:

- Expanded hours to include Sundays, adding 243 more open hours a year.
- Restored staff capable of providing in-depth information assistance.

High Point Branch

3411 S.W. Raymond St.

Council District 1

The High Point Branch in southwest Seattle serves as a vibrant, welcoming space. With support from Levy resources, seniors, students, families, and especially children and teens enjoy the living room feel of the branch and use the space for studying, job searching, browsing collections of popular books, movies and music, and gathering with friends and neighbors. Our programming – which includes Homework Help, Team Read, Game On!, Drop-In Chess, and Kids Cafe after-school meals – makes the branch a great resource for neighborhood youth who regularly visit after school.

2012 Levy-funded improvements included:

- Expanded hours to include Fridays and Sundays, adding 600 more open hours a year.
- A major refurbishment that included new seating options, plentiful electric outlets for device charging, a laptop bar for teens and a new self-checkout station.
- An expanded World Languages collection, adding physical and digital materials in Amharic, Somali and Spanish.

South Park Branch

8604 Eighth Ave. S.

Council District 1

The South Park Branch opened in 2006 as an instantly beloved gathering space. The South Park Neighborhood Association's "South Park Hero Awards" considers the branch a contender for the title almost every year. With Levy support, we're able to offer popular programs such as family-friendly ESL classes, small business assistance, digital media programs and art workshops as well as cultural events that bring families together. The branch provides a study room used frequently by tutors and small groups, and specially designated areas for children and teens.

2012 Levy-funded improvements included:

- Expanded hours to include Fridays and Sundays, adding 600 more hours a year.
- An expanded World Languages Collection, adding physical and digital materials, along with a story time program, in Spanish.
- Restored staff capable of providing in-depth information assistance.
- Refurbishments slated for 2019.

A Closer Look at the Southwest Region

"The High Point Branch is a place where our son met some of his first friends, at the age of 3, and we've built lasting friendships with those families. To our family, the Library is more than just a place to check out books; it is a consistent part of our week – it's our community!"

The Huggins Family
(Rufaro, Kayla, and Ahmir)
High Point Branch patrons



Southwest Branch

9010 35th Ave. S.W.

Council District 1

Affectionately known by neighborhood children as "the big yellow library," the Southwest Branch is the largest and busiest in southwest Seattle. The Levy supports a wide array of programs, services and collections. You will find Teen Service Learners designing service projects, building leadership skills and making lasting friendships. Entrepreneurs, study groups, and adult learners enjoy our quiet, comfortable study tables, while seniors appreciate lively discussion programs and access to popular books and media. Our caring staff brings all of these groups together annually for a Community Artists' Showcase, which exhibits and celebrates the artistic contributions of our patrons.

2012 Levy-funded improvements included:

- Exterior improvements and reconfigured parking to improve patron access.

West Seattle Branch

2306 42nd Ave. S.W.

Council District 1

With support from the 2012 Levy, the West Seattle Branch is able to offer contemporary services in a pleasant Carnegie-era facility that has nurtured reading and learning for generations. Heavily used – especially by seniors, young families and new residents – the branch is a reader's delight, with one of the highest-circulating "Peak Picks" collections in the system. Our Math Buddies program matches teen volunteers with elementary school students to play and build math skills. Our story times pack the meeting room in the mornings, while music lovers, history buffs, writers and more gather for concerts, lectures, workshops and other activities that convene community.

2012 Levy-funded improvements included:

- Improved accessibility with new entry ramps, rebuilt front steps and lighted handrails.

"Partnering with the Library works wonderfully for the Senior Center of West Seattle. Because of the breadth of knowledge Library instructors bring, we are not only able to offer a wide variety of classes, but also to accommodate participants' requests for classes on specific topics. If the Library staff doesn't already have a class developed for a particular request, they are willing to create one!"

Cherie Schumacher,
program coordinator,
Senior Center of West Seattle
West Seattle Branch patron



Our Pledge of Accountability

The Library has a strong record of good stewardship of public tax dollars and is committed to responsibly using Levy funds to support the public's priorities for core Library resources and services.

Keeping our commitment

In 1998, Seattle voters placed their trust in the Library to renovate or replace every library in the system and add four new branches. That 10-year effort, which involved 27 separate construction projects, was completed on time and on budget – an example of our exceptional commitment to deliver on that trust. The public was involved and updated regularly.

In 2012, Seattle voters passed a Library Maintenance and Operations Levy to support hours, collections, technology and building maintenance. The Library has delivered on its pledges in all four core service areas, in addition to leveraging funds through community partnerships and The Seattle Public Library Foundation.

Our pledge for transparency

Should we receive Levy renewal funding, the Chief Librarian and Library Board of trustees would continue to show how we use Levy dollars through annual progress reports that document how we have restored, maintained and improved core services. Annual progress reports would be posted on the Library's website and submitted to you each year.

Our continued engagement with the public

The Library will continue to engage the public, allowing us to listen to the needs and interests of Seattle's communities. We will do so through community meetings, periodic surveys, focus groups and consultations with key community partners.

Thank you

We offer our sincere thanks to Mayor Jenny Durkan, whose leadership and support has helped us get to this point, along with the assistance of Councilmembers Debora Juarez and Sally Bagshaw. We thank the entire City Council for making sustainable Library services a priority for the people of Seattle. We thank our partners at The Seattle Public Library Foundation and the Friends of The Seattle Public Library for enabling the Library to do more with the help of donor and volunteer support. Finally, we are grateful for the thousands of Seattle residents who have engaged with us in open houses, community conversations and surveys over the last several years. Their input – and long-standing support – has been instrumental in helping us address their priorities.