

Seattle Public Library

Overview

The Seattle Public Library's facilities include 26 branch libraries and the Central Library, as well as leased storage and shops space. In 2008, the Library completed the final building projects of an extensive, system-wide capital program known as "Libraries for All" (LFA). The LFA program increased the amount of physical space by 80% to a total of over 600,000 square feet, greatly increasing the demands on the Library's major maintenance program.

The subsequent 2012 Library Levy provided an essential seven-year funding stream to maintain the five new and 22 updated libraries that had been renovated, expanded or replaced during LFA. The 2012 levy concluded at the end of 2019, and with passage of the 2019 Library Levy, the Library embarked in 2020 on its current seven-year asset preservation program which includes seismic retrofits at three century-old Carnegie-era branches.

Library buildings can be divided into four major categories:

1. There are ten buildings designated as historic landmarks, including seven Carnegie-era libraries (built in the early 1900s) and three modern buildings.
2. Eleven branch libraries are either LFA new construction (eight buildings) or non-landmarked buildings developed between the 1950s and the 1970s (three buildings).
3. Five small library branches are essentially storefronts, four of which are part of larger buildings.
4. The Central Library is a 12-story 363,000 square foot building that serves as headquarters and hub of the library system. It houses the materials distribution system, Library administration, a 375-seat auditorium and public meeting rooms, large public areas for reading and access to 330 public computers, a data center housing system-wide servers, and the Central Library collection of books and materials.

The Library Major Maintenance program provides ongoing funding for work that preserves or improves building integrity, efficiency and functionality.

Thematic Priorities

The Library's Capital Improvement Program (CIP) projects generally fall into one or more categories: asset preservation, operational efficiency, environmental stability, public service improvements, and safety and security.

Asset Preservation

The overriding priority of the Library's capital program is to extend the useful life of its buildings. As the Library's buildings have all surpassed the ten-year mark since the conclusion of the final Libraries for All bond projects, the buildings require attention to flooring, casework, finishes and restroom fixtures. Major repairs and replacement to roofs, building envelopes, HVAC and other critical building systems, doors, windows, flooring and casework are also examples of asset preservation items funded through the Library's CIP budget. The 2019 Levy also included additional funding for three Carnegie-era branch seismic retrofits.

Nearly all of the Library's non-IT \$5 million 2022 Proposed CIP Levy budget can be predominantly classified as asset preservation work. There are also elements of enhanced safety, improved access, energy efficiency and environmental sustainability. Approximately \$2 million is budgeted for the Green Lake branch seismic retrofit project as promised in the 2019 voter-approved levy; additional planning/design costs may be incurred for either or both of the University and Columbia branch seismic projects as well. The balance of Levy CIP funding will pay for mechanical systems replacement at multiple branches (tentatively Greenwood, Northgate, Southwest and West Seattle); fire panel upgrades at several branches (to be determined by an upcoming assessment), and any additional urgent ADA accessibility issues system wide.

Some multi-year branch initiatives have been slowed due to the COVID-19 pandemic and will likely carry into 2022. The major projects may include necessary improvements at the Library's newly-acquired maintenance shop and storage site, exterior work/access improvements at the Douglass-Truth branch, roof and mechanical systems replacement at Capitol Hill branch, mechanical systems replacement at Broadview branch and roof repairs at Queen Anne and Lake City branches.

The iconic Central Library often requires a significant portion of CIP funds, usually distributed over multi-year projects. Historically, larger, complex and challenging projects have been planned and staged sequentially to minimize the impact on Library services to patrons. While there are no new scheduled 2022 projects at the Central Library, it's possible ongoing major sewer repair and repair to the damaged southwest corner of Central's Level 1 could extend into 2022, depending upon availability of contractors and materials.

While these projects are essential for preserving the Library's physical assets, many of them also contribute to the Library system's other essential themes: operational efficiency, environmental sustainability, and improved service to the public.

Library Operational Efficiency; Environmental Sustainability; Safety and Security of Public/Staff

The Library delivers direct services to Seattle residents, who expect highly functional and welcoming library buildings. Major maintenance work carried out under these priorities supports:

- upgrades to help the Library reduce operating costs while minimizing impact to the public;
- renovations to enhance the environmental sustainability of Library buildings; and
- repairs and improvements that augment the safety of library facilities (immediate safety concerns and building integrity are highest priority).

It should also be noted that major Levy-funded IT projects, which can be categorized under operational efficiency and service to the public, were moved to the Library's CIP in 2021. The 2022-2027 Proposed CIP budget includes \$3.2 million in 2022 for upgrading Library enterprise equipment and beginning the replacement of SPL's Integrated Library System for processing and tracking books and materials.

Public Service Improvements

There are no projects solely dedicated to public service improvements scheduled for 2022. Public service improvements mostly encompass work that enhances the library patron experience, such as Reimagining projects that have been completed over the past few years (Rainier Beach, Lake City,

Ballard, Beacon Hill, Highpoint, South Park and Northeast). These projects typically entail increased meeting room space; better connectivity for devices; lowered shelving and improved layout for enhanced sightlines/security/accessibility; and updated carpet, paint and restrooms. Public service improvements are being considered concurrent with the three projects to improve seismic stability (Green Lake, University and Columbia branches), scheduled over the life of the seven-year levy. Construction at the Green Lake branch is scheduled to begin in late 2022. Ultimately, funding will determine whether the scope of these three seismic retrofit projects includes public service improvements.

Project Selection Criteria

In selecting major maintenance work to accomplish each year, the Library evaluates the preservation of building integrity, impact on safety to the public and staff, importance of the work to core library building functions, operational efficiency gains (both economic and environmental), and opportunities to improve or preserve service to the public.

The Library conducts condition assessments and updates information based on inspection by the capital program manager and facilities maintenance staff. The Library obtains professional evaluations of roofs, mechanical, HVAC and lighting systems to flag deficiencies and identify areas where the capital program may be able to reduce operating costs. Library public services managers develop proposals to change the functional use of library space. These proposals are evaluated for feasibility, cost and urgency, and capital program staff works with Library services managers to scope alternatives. Public input also plays a role in project planning. The Library senior management team has ultimate responsibility for authorizing and prioritizing functional building modifications.

Many library facilities are open seven days per week during normal operations, which requires careful planning and staging of projects to keep libraries open as much as possible while capital improvement work is underway. Flexibility is critical to respond to building issues as they emerge.

CIP Highlights

The Library's 2022-2027 Proposed CIP provides a base level of support for asset management during the period when all buildings have surpassed the ten-year mark from their LFA construction or renovation. The 2019 Library Levy provides a total of \$8.2 million (including Seismic/URM and IT Capital allocations) in 2022. The total 2022 REET allocation to the Library is \$1,287,000. The Library will receive \$862,000 in base Real Estate Excise Tax (REET) funding, which is budgeted toward initial planning/design for the Columbia and University branch seismic projects. There is an additional \$425,000 from the Municipal Energy Efficiency Project, which includes \$300,000 for Green Lake electrical/HVAC upgrades concurrent with the seismic retrofit project, and \$125,000 toward Broadview HVAC repairs/electrification.

As mentioned above, the major effort for the Library's CIP in 2022 will be the continued design and then initial construction for the Green Lake branch seismic retrofit. The ultimate aim of this project is to complete seismic and ADA upgrades; with the recent approval of a \$1.8 million Washington State Department of Commerce grant, the project scope has been expanded to include air-conditioning, electrification, additional ADA access improvements, and a reconfigured elevator.

2022-2027 Proposed Capital Improvement Program

CIP Revenue Sources

Historically, Real Estate Excise Tax (REET) was the primary source of funding for the Library's CIP, with an additional smaller allocation from the General Fund. In 2012, the Library worked with the Mayor and City Council to develop a Library levy proposal that voters approved in August of that year. One of the core areas the levy funds is major maintenance. Upon passage of the 2012 Library Levy, the City shifted most major maintenance funding from REET/General Fund to the levy, which provided a significant increase in major maintenance funding for major maintenance projects. The 2019 Library Levy continues support to preserve the Library's capital assets including significant investments in seismic upgrades for three branches.

Levy funding is insufficient to fully cover costs associated with patron and programmatically-driven renovation projects, significant building infrastructure renovations and adjustments, or replacement of major building systems at the Central Library and larger branches. Since passage of the 2012 Library Levy, REET revenue has continued to provide additional funding for targeted efforts, such as the Library's Reimagining Spaces initiative (which sought to enhance Library physical spaces to better address changing patron and community needs) or large-scale major maintenance requirements not anticipated during the planning of the levy.

REET revenue plays a vital role in supporting projects that are beyond the scope of the Library's levy-funded major maintenance program. For example, while the levy remains the primary funding source for the seismic retrofit projects at Green Lake, Columbia and University branches, additional funding is necessary to pursue building upgrades that would be considerably less expensive if performed concurrent with the seismic work. Contingent upon funding, those upgrades could include the addition of air-conditioning; elevator additions/improvements to increase access for patrons with mobility challenges; mechanical system modernization and electrification for increased energy efficiency and reduced reliance on fossil fuels; and other interior enhancements.

As mentioned above, the Library, with significant assistance from Office of Sustainability and Environment, recently received approval for a \$1.8 million Washington State Department of Commerce grant for the Green Lake branch seismic retrofit. The project scope has been expanded to include air-conditioning, electrification (to eliminate reliance on fossil fuels), additional ADA access improvements, and a reconfigured elevator. The Library will continue to seek outside resources to augment the scope of both University and Columbia branch seismic project as well.

Summary of Upcoming Budget Issues and Challenges

COVID-19 Pandemic

One challenge that was certainly not foreseen prior to 2020 – and affecting most of 2020 and 2021 – was the adversity posed by the COVID-19 pandemic. While the pandemic hit Library operations hardest, Library capital projects also felt the impact as contractors and vendors experienced staff shortages due to illness and layoffs, and social distancing and other efforts to reduce viral transmission have slowed the progress of many projects at various stages (planning, design and construction). Funding reductions also prompted reexamination of project scope in some of the larger Library projects. As the impact of the pandemic persisted, adaptation of library spaces to maintain the safety of both public and staff were

required and implemented. It is unknown how long that impact of the pandemic will linger into the future.

The following issues and challenges will need to be addressed in the coming months and years:

Aging Buildings and Infrastructure

Library buildings are among the most intensively-used City facilities in Seattle. Prior to the pandemic, the Central Library hosted over 1.2 million visitors annually, with library branches serving over 3.6 million visitors. The Library's historic landmark buildings have unique features such as brick facades, slate roofs and other details. When undertaking maintenance and repair work, it is essential to use designs and materials consistent with their landmark status – all factors that increase major maintenance costs. The Central Library poses a different set of challenges; a building of its size, complexity and intensity of use requires significant annual major maintenance to preserve core functionality and continually improve building efficiency. All of these factors are considered in establishing the major maintenance component of the Library's ongoing major maintenance program.

Seismic Preparedness

A 2016 survey conducted by the Seattle Department of Construction and Inspection identified seven unreinforced masonry (URM) facilities in the Library's property portfolio requiring seismic retrofit to reduce the risk of injury and loss of life during an earthquake. The survey classified buildings into three categories of vulnerability (critical, high, and medium) with regard to life safety impacts. Three of the seven Library facilities - Green Lake, University and Columbia branches - fell within the high-vulnerability category (with the remainder in the medium-vulnerability category) and the Library Board of Trustees identified those branches as a critical issue to be addressed. The 2019 Library Levy funded seismic retrofits for those three Carnegie-era branches for the period between 2020 and 2026.

As the URM projects will necessitate closure of the branches for a year or more, other needed building improvements will also be scheduled concurrently. Contingent upon available funding, work may entail roof and envelope restoration; elevator and mechanical system upgrades; interior renovation (including electrical, carpeting, furniture and finishes); and efforts to ensure ADA compliance and equitable access.

Adjusting to a Changing Climate

The Library is also adapting to a changing climate, often working with the Office of Sustainability and Environment to identify potential areas for improved energy efficiency and, per mayoral directive, to lessen the Library's reliance on fossil fuels. Several branches – including most of the landmarked branches – are not air-conditioned, and rising summer temperatures can lead to closures which impact patrons and Library operations. The Library is exploring logistics and funding options to add air conditioning to high-use branches that currently lack air-conditioning, which would increase branch comfort year-round and also allow those branches to serve as cooling centers during extreme heat events.

Future Projects / What is on the Horizon

Maintenance and Operations Center

For several years, the Library sought a permanent location for its off-site maintenance shop, storage and Library delivery vehicle parking. In March 2021, the Library acquired a building and parking lot at 5910 Corson Ave S, which replaced its leased maintenance shop and storage space at 6345 6th Ave S. Work is

necessary at the Corson site to upgrade the electrical service for increased HVAC power requirements, along with future conversion from fossil fuels. The space also requires workshop ventilation improvements, better insulation and eventual roof replacement.

ADA Improvements - Library

Project No:	MC-PL-B3012	BSL Code:	BC-PL-B3000
Project Type:	Ongoing	BSL Name:	Capital Improvements
Project Category:	Improved Facility	Location:	Various Locations
Current Project Stage:	N/A	Council District:	Multiple
Start/End Date:	N/A	Neighborhood District:	Not in a Neighborhood District
Total Project Cost:	N/A	Urban Village:	Not in an Urban Village

This project represents ADA improvements for The Seattle Public Library, and includes work on accessible paths and adjustments to casework, restroom fixtures, and railings.

Resources	LTD Actuals	2021 Revised	2022	2023	2024	2025	2026	2027	Total
Real Estate Excise Tax I	1,005	50	-	-	-	-	-	-	1,055
Total:	1,005	50	-	-	-	-	-	-	1,055
Fund Appropriations / Allocations ¹	LTD Actuals	2021 Revised	2022	2023	2024	2025	2026	2027	Total
REET I Capital Fund	1,005	50	-	-	-	-	-	-	1,055
Total:	1,005	50	-	-	-	-	-	-	1,055

O&M Impacts:

¹Funds are appropriated through the Adopted Budget at the Budget Summary Level. All Amounts shown above are in thousands of dollars

Central Library Infrastructure Improvements

Project No:	MC-PL-B3013	BSL Code:	BC-PL-B3000
Project Type:	Ongoing	BSL Name:	Capital Improvements
Project Category:	Improved Facility	Location:	Central Library 1000 4th Ave
Current Project Stage:	N/A	Council District:	Council District 7
Start/End Date:	N/A	Neighborhood District:	Downtown
Total Project Cost:	N/A	Urban Village:	Not in an Urban Village

This project provides for improved infrastructure at the 363,000 square foot Central Library. Central requires substantial infrastructure work to achieve operational efficiency and set the stage for its eventual programmatic re-imagining. Changes to Central also require additional lead time for planning and design, due both to its unique physical configuration/infrastructure and iconic architectural status. Typical improvements may include, but are not limited to, structural and mechanical repairs or improvements, safety and security upgrades, lighting and signage enhancements, and wall and floor surface repairs.

Resources	LTD Actuals	2021 Revised	2022	2023	2024	2025	2026	2027	Total
Real Estate Excise Tax I	1,617	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	1,617
Total:	1,617	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	1,617
Fund Appropriations / Allocations ¹	LTD Actuals	2021 Revised	2022	2023	2024	2025	2026	2027	Total
REET I Capital Fund	1,617	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	1,617
Total:	1,617	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	1,617

O&M Impacts:

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IT Infrastructure

Project No:	MC-PL-B3100	BSL Code:	BC-PL-B3000
Project Type:	Ongoing	BSL Name:	Capital Improvements
Project Category:	Rehabilitation or Restoration	Location:	Various Locations
Current Project Stage:	N/A	Council District:	Multiple
Start/End Date:	N/A	Neighborhood District:	Multiple
Total Project Cost:	N/A	Urban Village:	Multiple

This project represents system-wide Information Technology (IT) Infrastructure improvements for The Seattle Public Library, including enterprise equipment upgrades and integrated library system (ILS) replacement.

Resources	LTD Actuals	2021 Revised	2022	2023	2024	2025	2026	2027	Total
2019 Library Levy Funding	-	2,000	6,382	2,418	1,230	-	948	-	12,978
Total:	-	2,000	6,382	2,418	1,230	-	948	-	12,978

Fund Appropriations / Allocations¹	LTD Actuals	2021 Revised	2022	2023	2024	2025	2026	2027	Total
2019 Library Levy Fund	-	2,000	6,382	2,418	1,230	-	948	-	12,978
Total:	-	2,000	6,382	2,418	1,230	-	948	-	12,978

O&M Impacts: NA

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Library Major Maintenance

Project No:	MC-PL-B3011	BSL Code:	BC-PL-B3000
Project Type:	Ongoing	BSL Name:	Capital Improvements
Project Category:	Rehabilitation or Restoration	Location:	Various
Current Project Stage:	N/A	Council District:	Multiple
Start/End Date:	N/A	Neighborhood District:	Multiple
Total Project Cost:	N/A	Urban Village:	Multiple

This ongoing project provides for major maintenance to Library facilities, which include the 363,000 square foot Central Library and 26 branch libraries as well as storage/shops facilities. Typical improvements may include, but are not limited to, structural and mechanical repairs or improvements, safety and security upgrades, lighting and signage improvements, wall and floor surface repairs, landscape and exterior hard surface repairs, and projects that enhance service delivery or facilitate operational cost-savings at our libraries. This project preserves building integrity and improves functionality, and provides responsible management of the Library’s building assets to ensure their long-term operational use. The project was created in 2009 in connection with midyear budget reductions to facilitate efficient asset management.

Resources	LTD Actuals	2021 Revised	2022	2023	2024	2025	2026	2027	Total
2019 Library Levy Funding	1,094	10,410	1,833	5,941	4,629	7,989	6,034	-	37,930
General Fund	3,295	(1,700)	-	-	-	-	-	-	1,595
Real Estate Excise Tax I	6,891	1,616	1,287	598	401	418	637	685	12,534
Seattle Voter-Approved Levy	4,835	2,759	-	-	-	-	-	-	7,594
Seattle Voter-Approved Levy	13,952	500	-	-	-	-	-	-	14,452
Use of Fund Balance	-	1,700	-	-	-	-	-	-	1,700
Total:	30,067	15,285	3,120	6,539	5,030	8,407	6,671	685	75,804
Fund Appropriations / Allocations¹	LTD Actuals	2021 Revised	2022	2023	2024	2025	2026	2027	Total
2012 Library Levy Fund	18,787	2,793	-	-	-	-	-	-	21,580
2019 Library Levy Fund	1,094	10,876	1,833	5,941	4,629	7,989	6,034	-	38,396
General Fund	440	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	440
Library Fund	2,855	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	2,855
REET I Capital Fund	6,891	1,616	1,287	598	401	418	637	685	12,534
Total:	30,067	15,285	3,120	6,539	5,030	8,407	6,671	685	75,804

O&M Impacts:

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Major Capital Equipment

Project No:	MC-PL-B3200	BSL Code:	BC-PL-B3000
Project Type:	Ongoing	BSL Name:	Capital Improvements
Project Category:		Location:	
Current Project Stage:	N/A	Council District:	Multiple
Start/End Date:	N/A	Neighborhood District:	
Total Project Cost:	N/A	Urban Village:	

This project represents system-wide major depreciable equipment purchases for The Seattle Public Library, such as the Library's Automated Materials Handling System (AMHS).

Resources	LTD Actuals	2021 Revised	2022	2023	2024	2025	2026	2027	Total
2019 Library Levy Funding	-	34	-	-	-	-	-	-	34
General Fund	-	1,700	-	-	-	-	-	-	1,700
Seattle Voter-Approved Levy	-	466	-	-	-	-	-	-	466
Total:	-	2,200	-	-	-	-	-	-	2,200

Fund Appropriations / Allocations ¹	LTD Actuals	2021 Revised	2022	2023	2024	2025	2026	2027	Total
2012 Library Levy Fund	-	466	-	-	-	-	-	-	466
2019 Library Levy Fund	-	34	-	-	-	-	-	-	34
Library Fund	-	1,700	-	-	-	-	-	-	1,700
Total:	-	2,200	-	-	-	-	-	-	2,200

O&M Impacts: N/A

¹Funds are appropriated through the Adopted Budget at the Budget Summary Level. All Amounts shown above are in thousands of dollars

