

# 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 has embarked on a new 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 \$6.8 million proposed 2021 Levy CIP budget can be predominantly classified as asset preservation work, though the largest projects will also provide some combination of enhanced safety, improved access and environmental sustainability. Roughly \$5 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 necessary improvements at the Library's newly-acquired maintenance shop and storage site; roof repairs/replacement at the Columbia branch (if the repairs cannot be deferred until the seismic retrofit project scheduled for 2025), resealing of parking lots at multiple branches across the system, reconfiguration of the ADA parking space at the Montlake branch for code compliance, and any additional urgent ADA accessibility issues system wide.

Some multi-year branch initiatives were deferred due to the COVID-19 pandemic and will likely carry into 2021. The major projects include exterior work/access improvements at the Douglass-Truth 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. The scheduled 2021 projects at the Central Library, include planning and design for Level 3 Lighting Improvements and Level 4 Computer Lab upgrades.

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, have been moved to the Library's CIP. The 2021 budget includes \$2 million for 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 2021. Public service improvements were considered possibly concurrent with the three projects to improve seismic stability (Green Lake, University and Columbia branches) scheduled over the life of the seven-year levy (though construction at the Green Lake branch is unlikely to begin until 2022). However, as outlined below in the "CIP Revenue Sources" section, funding reductions associated with the COVID-19 pandemic

have added uncertainty into the Library's plans to include public service improvements to its three seismic retrofit projects.

### **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 2021-2026 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 \$8.8 million (including Seismic/URM and IT Capital allocations) in 2021. The Library will receive \$400,000 in base Real Estate Excise Tax (REET) funding, which is budgeted for the Green Lake seismic project.

As mentioned above, the major effort for the Library's CIP in 2021 will be the continued planning and design for the Green Lake branch seismic retrofit. The ultimate aim of this project is to complete seismic and ADA upgrades; if supplementary funding is secured, the scope could be expanded to include air-conditioning, electrification (to eliminate reliance on fossil fuels), additional ADA access improvements, and a reconfigured elevator. Toward that end, the Library and the Office of Sustainability and Environment have applied for a Washington State Department of Commerce grant for the Green Lake branch project.

The Library's other major project for 2021 is continuing Phase 1 work at the maintenance and operations center at 5516 4<sup>th</sup> Ave S. The scope includes plumbing upgrades, accessibility modifications for existing restrooms, lighting control upgrades, and potential structural improvements for future HVAC and photovoltaic requirements (in line with transition from fossil fuels).

## **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 (so branches could be used as summer cooling centers); 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. While REET funding alone would not fund elevator upgrades and other ADA accessibility improvements, it is considered part of the funding picture that would allow upgrades to Green Lake, Columbia and University branches beyond the base seismic retrofits.

## **Summary of Upcoming Budget Issues and Challenges**

### COVID-19 Pandemic

One challenge that was not foreseen at the beginning of 2020 is the adversity posed by the COVID-19 pandemic. While the pandemic has hit Library operations hardest, Library capital projects have felt the impact as contractors and vendors have experienced staff shortages due to illness or 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 have also prompted reexamination of project scope in some of the larger Library projects. As the impact of the pandemic

persists, continued adaptation of library spaces to maintain the safety of both public and staff may be needed.

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. The Central Library hosts 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 important 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 were 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. 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.

## **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 October 2019, the Library acquired a building and parking lot at 5516 4th Ave S, which will replace its current leased maintenance shop and storage space at 6345 6th Ave S (the lease expires at the end of March 2021). Work is necessary at the purchased site to upgrade the electrical service for increased HVAC power requirements, along with future conversion from fossil fuels and potential electric vehicle charging. The space also requires a structural upgrade, new fire alarm and

sprinkler systems, workshop ventilation improvements, and ADA accessibility upgrades. Contingent upon available funding, the Library will attempt to maximize the amount of improvements it can accomplish before occupation, as the work will be less expensive and less intrusive if done before the building is occupied on a full-time basis.



### ADA Improvements - Library

<b>Project No:</b>	MC-PL-B3012	<b>BSL Code:</b>	BC-PL-B3000
<b>Project Type:</b>	Ongoing	<b>BSL Name:</b>	Capital Improvements
<b>Project Category:</b>	Improved Facility	<b>Location:</b>	Various Locations
<b>Current Project Stage:</b>	N/A	<b>Council District:</b>	Multiple
<b>Start/End Date:</b>	N/A	<b>Neighborhood District:</b>	Not in a Neighborhood District
<b>Total Project Cost:</b>	N/A	<b>Urban Village:</b>	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	2020 Revised	2021	2022	2023	2024	2025	2026	Total
Real Estate Excise Tax I	983	72	-	-	-	-	-	-	1,055
<b>Total:</b>	<b>983</b>	<b>72</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>1,055</b>
Fund Appropriations / Allocations <sup>1</sup>	LTD Actuals	2020 Revised	2021	2022	2023	2024	2025	2026	Total
REET I Capital Fund	983	72	-	-	-	-	-	-	1,055
<b>Total:</b>	<b>983</b>	<b>72</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>1,055</b>

**O&M Impacts:**

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

### Central Library Infrastructure Improvements

<b>Project No:</b>	MC-PL-B3013	<b>BSL Code:</b>	BC-PL-B3000
<b>Project Type:</b>	Ongoing	<b>BSL Name:</b>	Capital Improvements
<b>Project Category:</b>	Improved Facility	<b>Location:</b>	Central Library 1000 4th Ave
<b>Current Project Stage:</b>	N/A	<b>Council District:</b>	Council District 7
<b>Start/End Date:</b>	N/A	<b>Neighborhood District:</b>	Downtown
<b>Total Project Cost:</b>	N/A	<b>Urban Village:</b>	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	2020 Revised	2021	2022	2023	2024	2025	2026	Total
Real Estate Excise Tax I	1,617	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	1,617
<b>Total:</b>	<b>1,617</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>1,617</b>
Fund Appropriations / Allocations <sup>1</sup>	LTD Actuals	2020 Revised	2021	2022	2023	2024	2025	2026	Total
REET I Capital Fund	1,617	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	1,617
<b>Total:</b>	<b>1,617</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>1,617</b>

**O&M Impacts:**

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

## Library Major Maintenance

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

<b>Resources</b>	<b>LTD Actuals</b>	<b>2020 Revised</b>	<b>2021</b>	<b>2022</b>	<b>2023</b>	<b>2024</b>	<b>2025</b>	<b>2026</b>	<b>Total</b>
2019 Library Levy Funding	-	4,701	8,837	8,215	8,359	5,859	7,989	6,982	50,942
General Fund	3,295	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	3,295
Real Estate Excise Tax I	5,991	1,826	400	500	600	459	474	673	10,923
Seattle Voter-Approved Levy	4,447	3,613	-	-	-	-	-	-	8,060
Seattle Voter-Approved Levy	13,952	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	13,952
<b>Total:</b>	<b>27,684</b>	<b>10,140</b>	<b>9,237</b>	<b>8,715</b>	<b>8,959</b>	<b>6,318</b>	<b>8,463</b>	<b>7,655</b>	<b>87,171</b>
<b>Fund Appropriations / Allocations<sup>1</sup></b>	<b>LTD Actuals</b>	<b>2020 Revised</b>	<b>2021</b>	<b>2022</b>	<b>2023</b>	<b>2024</b>	<b>2025</b>	<b>2026</b>	<b>Total</b>
2012 Library Levy Fund	18,399	3,613	-	-	-	-	-	-	22,012
2019 Library Levy Fund	-	4,701	8,837	8,215	8,359	5,859	7,989	6,982	50,942
General Fund	440	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	440
Library Fund	2,855	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	2,855
REET I Capital Fund	5,991	1,826	400	500	600	459	474	673	10,923
<b>Total:</b>	<b>27,684</b>	<b>10,140</b>	<b>9,237</b>	<b>8,715</b>	<b>8,959</b>	<b>6,318</b>	<b>8,463</b>	<b>7,655</b>	<b>87,171</b>

## O&amp;M Impacts:

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