

Seattle Public Library

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Department Overview

Seattle Public Library (SPL), founded in 1891, includes the world-renowned Central Library, 26 neighborhood libraries, and a robust "virtual library" available 24/7 through SPL's popular website and Mobile Services. The Central Library and 26 neighborhood libraries provide essential services such as library collections, computers and Wi-Fi access, meeting rooms and study rooms, along with programs that promote lifelong learning, civic engagement, and economic vitality.

SPL is governed by a five-member Library Board of Trustees, who are appointed by the Mayor and confirmed by the City Council. The Revised Code of Washington (RCW 27.12.240) and the City Charter (Article XII, Section 5) grant the Board of Trustees "exclusive control of Library expenditures for Library purposes." The Library Board adopts an annual Operations Plan in December after the City Council approves SPL's budget appropriation.

Budget Snapshot

	2023 Actuals	2024 Adopted	2025 Proposed	2026 Proposed
Department Support				
General Fund Support	60,105,204	62,046,000	68,449,495	71,547,770
Other Funding - Operating	26,618,716	27,794,022	30,455,575	31,802,612
Total Operations	86,723,920	89,840,022	98,905,070	103,350,382
Capital Support				
Other Funding - Capital	14,749,799	5,937,000	8,375,000	7,587,000
Total Capital	14,749,799	5,937,000	8,375,000	7,587,000
Total Appropriations	101,473,719	95,777,022	107,280,070	110,937,382

Budget Overview

The City's 2025-2026 Proposed Budget maintains core services for the Seattle Public Library. The department will continue to maintain consistent operating hours, offer a robust physical and electronic collection, and invest in community programs, while also engaging in national efforts such as providing access to banned books and advocating with lawmakers to address sharply escalating costs for digital materials.

The General Fund revenue forecast for the City's 2025-2026 Proposed Budget is insufficient to cover all anticipated Citywide costs. General Fund reductions were identified to mitigate this shortfall. To preserve critical City services due to the General Fund deficit, budget adjustments were made in the areas of information technology and library materials; the department also increased its staff vacancy rate savings and used accumulated fund balance savings to address the shortfall.

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Incremental Budget Changes

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	Dollars	FTE
2025 Beginning Budget	98,215,022	-
Baseline		
Bargained Annual Wage and Market Wage Increases to Base Budget	9,137,061	-
Citywide Adjustments for Standard Cost Changes	1,248,372	-
Proposed Operating		
Final Adjustments for Standard Cost Changes	(308,216)	-
Library Materials Reduction	(350,000)	-
Information Technology Reduction	(100,000)	-
Increase Vacancy Savings Rate	(390,000)	-
Use of Library Levy Fund Balance	-	-
Proposed Technical		
Revenue Adjustments	-	-
Fund Balancing	(172,169)	-
Revenue Fund Balancing	-	-
Total Incremental Changes	\$9,065,048	-
Total 2025 Proposed Budget	\$107,280,070	-

Description of Incremental Budget Changes

Baseline

Bargained Annual Wage and Market Wage Increases to Base Budget

Expenditures \$9,137,061

This centrally administered change adjusts appropriations to reflect the Annual Wage Increases and Market Adjustments, as outlined in the agreements between the City and the Coalition of Unions or other standalone Unions, for personnel costs included in this department's baseline budget. This includes increases to salary, FICA, Medicare, retirement, overtime and temporary labor.

Citywide Adjustments for Standard Cost Changes

Expenditures \$1,248,372

Revenues \$166,187

Citywide technical adjustments made in the baseline phase reflect changes to internal services costs, including rates from the Department of Finance & Administrative Services, Seattle Information Technology Department, Seattle Department of Human Resources, and for healthcare, retirement, and industrial insurance charges for the

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department. These adjustments reflect initial assumptions about these costs and inflators early in the budget process.

Proposed Operating

Final Adjustments for Standard Cost Changes

Expenditures	\$(308,216)
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Citywide technical adjustments made in the proposed phase reflect changes to internal services costs, including rates from the Department of Finance & Administrative Services, Seattle Information Technology Department, Seattle Department of Human Resources, and for healthcare for the department. These adjustments reflect final decisions about these costs made during the Proposed Phase of the budget process.

Library Materials Reduction

Expenditures	\$(350,000)
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Revenues	\$(350,000)
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Physical material reductions include modest decreases to magazine and newspaper subscriptions, reference books, DVDs and Blu-Ray Discs, and adult fiction audio and printed materials. SPL will initiate the first year of a three-year phase-out of music CDs from its collection. SPL will also end its subscription to the ProQuest database due to its escalating cost and utilization. Seattle residents can continue accessing ProQuest via the King County Library System.

Information Technology Reduction

Expenditures	\$(100,000)
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Revenues	\$(100,000)
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As a result of continuous improvement programs started in 2022, SPL can decrease its budget for information technology accessories such as cabling. SPL is also updating its cost model for redundant equipment replacement, which will achieve efficiencies and result in savings. SPL will forgo purchases of new hybrid meeting carts while retaining maintenance and services for carts currently in ten branch locations. SPL will also consolidate e-mail-based patron notification and marketing capabilities to a more cost-effective platform without impacting customer service.

Increase Vacancy Savings Rate

Expenditures	\$(390,000)
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Revenues	\$(390,000)
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In the post-COVID crisis period, SPL has budgeted an approximately 4% staff vacancy rate. This item increases the budgeted staff vacancy rate to 5.5% to capture additional General Fund savings and prevent service-level reductions. SPL will prioritize positions essential to keeping open hours at library branches and maintaining 2019 levy operations commitments.

Use of Library Levy Fund Balance

Expenditures	-
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Revenues	\$(1,900,000)
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This item uses accumulated fund balance with the 2012 and 2019 levies, involving a revenue reduction to the Library operating fund reflecting a General Fund reduction, and reappropriation of levy funds. This one-time use of fund balance allows SPL to avoid service-level reductions in 2025 and 2026.

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Proposed Technical

Revenue Adjustments

Revenues \$9,867,804

This item reflects projected increased revenue for parking, fines and fees, printing and space rentals. 2025 will mark the first year since the outset of COVID-19 that total-Library generated revenue levels are projected to return to pre-pandemic levels. This item also aligns levy property tax revenues and interest earnings for 2025 and 2026 with SPL's long-term financial plan.

Fund Balancing

Expenditures \$(172,169)

This is a technical adjustment to bring the beginning balance for the 2019 Levy Fund into alignment with the spending plan associated with the voter approved 2019 Library Levy, in addition to net cost impacts associated with a labor bargaining agreement.

Revenue Fund Balancing

Revenues \$5,926,557

This is a technical item to record a fund balancing entry for the 2012 Library Levy Fund and 2019 Library Levy Fund, which are primarily managed by this department.

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Expenditure Overview

Appropriations	2023 Actuals	2024 Adopted	2025 Proposed	2026 Proposed
SPL - BC-PL-B3000 - Capital Improvements				
10410 - Library Fund	3,001,723	-	-	-
14500 - Payroll Expense Tax	1,545,815	-	-	-
18100 - 2012 Library Levy Fund	1,429,744	-	-	-
18200 - 2019 Library Levy Fund	7,242,545	5,859,000	7,989,000	6,982,000
30010 - REET I Capital Fund	1,436,255	78,000	386,000	605,000
Total for BSL: BC-PL-B3000	14,656,082	5,937,000	8,375,000	7,587,000
SPL - BO-PL-B1ADM - Administrative/Support Service				
10410 - Library Fund	10,230,968	10,229,098	11,541,462	12,075,901
18200 - 2019 Library Levy Fund	2,842,954	3,635,383	4,148,634	4,356,324
Total for BSL: BO-PL-B1ADM	13,073,922	13,864,481	15,690,096	16,432,226
SPL - BO-PL-B2CTL - Chief Librarian's Office				
10410 - Library Fund	553,175	557,753	636,999	669,210
18200 - 2019 Library Levy Fund	187,000	100,000	100,000	100,000
Total for BSL: BO-PL-B2CTL	740,174	657,753	736,999	769,210
SPL - BO-PL-B4PUB - Library Program and Services				
10410 - Library Fund	49,211,770	50,123,930	53,009,090	55,539,236
14000 - Coronavirus Local Fiscal Recovery Fund	(1)	-	-	-
18100 - 2012 Library Levy Fund	159,068	-	700,000	-
18200 - 2019 Library Levy Fund	19,019,197	20,686,626	23,845,251	25,445,856
Total for BSL: BO-PL-B4PUB	68,390,035	70,810,556	77,554,340	80,985,092
SPL - BO-PL-B5HRS - Human Resources				
10410 - Library Fund	2,649,412	2,595,286	2,777,446	2,916,792
18200 - 2019 Library Levy Fund	61,246	37,209	29,450	30,390
Total for BSL: BO-PL-B5HRS	2,533,892	2,632,495	2,806,895	2,947,182
SPL - BO-PL-B7STR - Institutional & Strategic Advancement				
10410 - Library Fund	1,158,616	1,203,937	1,346,500	1,404,445
18200 - 2019 Library Levy Fund	687,239	670,801	770,241	812,229
Total for BSL: BO-PL-B7STR	1,352,783	1,874,737	2,116,740	2,216,673
SPL - BO-PL-B9LA - Leadership and Administration				
10410 - Library Fund	56,993	-	-	-
Total for BSL: BO-PL-B9LA	56,993	-	-	-

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Department Total **101,473,719** **95,777,022** **107,280,070** **110,937,382**

** FTE totals are provided for informational purposes only. Changes in FTEs resulting from City Council or Human Resources Director actions outside of the budget process may not be detailed here*

Budget Summary by Fund Seattle Public Library

	2023	2024	2025	2026
	Actuals	Adopted	Proposed	Proposed
10410 - Library Fund	66,862,656	64,710,003	69,311,495	72,605,584
14000 - Coronavirus Local Fiscal Recovery Fund	(1)	-	-	-
14500 - Payroll Expense Tax	1,545,815	-	-	-
18100 - 2012 Library Levy Fund	1,588,812	-	700,000	-
18200 - 2019 Library Levy Fund	30,040,182	30,989,019	36,882,575	37,726,798
30010 - REET I Capital Fund	1,436,255	78,000	386,000	605,000
Budget Totals for SPL	101,473,719	95,777,022	107,280,070	110,937,382

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Revenue Overview

2025 Estimated Revenues

Account Code	Account Name	2023 Actuals	2024 Adopted	2025 Proposed	2026 Proposed
330020	Intergov-Revenues	-	27,000	27,000	27,000
333110	Ind Fed Grants	80,538	-	-	-
334010	State Grants	1,839,000	-	-	-
335060	Judicial Salary Contrib-State	220	-	-	-
341050	Word Proc/Printing/Dupl Svcs	106,652	95,000	100,000	105,000
350130	Library Fines and Fees	116,639	115,000	120,000	120,000
360290	Parking Fees	337,309	345,000	377,000	390,000
360300	St Space Facilities Rentals	109,521	135,000	150,000	150,000
360310	Lt Space/Facilities Leases	23,396	-	-	-
360340	Concession Proceeds	1,380	1,500	1,500	1,500
360350	Other Rents & Use Charges	1,519	-	-	-
360380	Sale Of Junk Or Salvage	67,528	85,000	85,000	85,000
360540	Cashiers Overages & Shortages	(266)	-	-	-
360900	Miscellaneous Revs-Other Rev	7,020	1,500	1,500	1,500
397010	Operating Transfers In	60,105,204	62,045,691	68,449,495	71,547,770
397200	Interfund Revenue	-	-	166,187	177,814
Total Revenues for: 10410 - Library Fund		62,795,660	62,850,691	69,477,682	72,605,584
400000	Use of/Contribution to Fund Balance	-	1,859,313	1,859,313	1,859,313
Total Resources for:10410 - Library Fund		62,795,660	64,710,004	71,336,995	74,464,897
331110	Direct Fed Grants	(1)	-	-	-
Total Revenues for: 14000 - Coronavirus Local Fiscal Recovery Fund		(1)	-	-	-
311010	Real & Personal Property Taxes	810	7,000	1,000	-
360010	Investment Interest	-	-	7,000	-
Total Revenues for: 18100 - 2012 Library Levy Fund		810	7,000	8,000	-
400000	Use of/Contribution to Fund Balance	-	(7,000)	692,000	-
Total Resources for:18100 - 2012 Library Levy Fund		810	-	700,000	-
311010	Real & Personal Property Taxes	31,003,602	31,604,000	31,920,000	31,750,000

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360010	Investment Interest	-	150,000	500,000	100,000
Total Revenues for: 18200 - 2019 Library Levy Fund		31,003,602	31,754,000	32,420,000	31,850,000
400000	Use of/Contribution to Fund Balance	-	(764,981)	4,462,575	5,876,798
Total Resources for:18200 - 2019 Library Levy Fund		31,003,602	30,989,019	36,882,575	37,726,798
Total SPL Resources		93,800,071	95,699,023	108,919,571	112,191,696

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Appropriations by Budget Summary Level and Program

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SPL - BC-PL-B3000 - Capital Improvements

The purpose of The Seattle Public Library Capital Improvements Budget Summary Level is to provide major maintenance to Library facilities, which include the Central Library and all branch libraries, to help ensure building integrity and improve functionality for patrons and staff.

Program Expenditures	2023 Actuals	2024 Adopted	2025 Proposed	2026 Proposed
Capital Improvements	13,938,197	5,322,000	8,375,000	7,113,000
IT Infrastructure	811,601	615,000	-	474,000
Total	14,656,082	5,937,000	8,375,000	7,587,000

**FTE totals are provided for informational purposes only. Changes in FTEs resulting from City Council or Human Resources Director actions outside of the budget process may not be detailed here*

The following information summarizes the programs in Capital Improvements Budget Summary Level:

Capital Improvements

The purpose of the Capital Improvements program is to support the delivery of capital improvements.

Expenditures/FTE	2023 Actuals	2024 Adopted	2025 Proposed	2026 Proposed
Capital Improvements	13,938,197	5,322,000	8,375,000	7,113,000

IT Infrastructure

Expenditures/FTE	2023 Actuals	2024 Adopted	2025 Proposed	2026 Proposed
IT Infrastructure	811,601	615,000	-	474,000

SPL - BO-PL-B1ADM - Administrative/Support Service

The purpose of the Administrative Services Program is to support the delivery of library services to the public through providing services such as financial services, capital and operating budget planning and management, facilities maintenance and landscaping, and security services.

Program Expenditures	2023 Actuals	2024 Adopted	2025 Proposed	2026 Proposed
Administrative Services	805,885	971,778	1,049,482	1,081,752
Business Office	1,591,533	1,674,611	2,228,346	2,404,145
Event Services	484,762	762,829	862,307	908,162
FAC Services	8,167,765	10,455,263	11,549,960	12,038,166
Security Services	2,263,866	-	-	-
Total	13,073,922	13,864,481	15,690,096	16,432,226

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The following information summarizes the programs in Administrative/Support Service Budget Summary Level:

Administrative Services

The purpose of the Administrative Services Program is to support the delivery of library services to the public.

	2023 Actuals	2024 Adopted	2025 Proposed	2026 Proposed
Expenditures/FTE				
Administrative Services	805,885	971,778	1,049,482	1,081,752

Business Office

The purpose of the Business Office Program is to support the delivery of administrative services.

	2023 Actuals	2024 Adopted	2025 Proposed	2026 Proposed
Expenditures/FTE				
Business Office	1,591,533	1,674,611	2,228,346	2,404,145

Event Services

The purpose of the Events Services Program is to support Library-hosted as well as private events and programs in order to make Library facilities and meeting rooms more available to the public.

	2023 Actuals	2024 Adopted	2025 Proposed	2026 Proposed
Expenditures/FTE				
Event Services	484,762	762,829	862,307	908,162

FAC Services

The purpose of the FAC Services Program is to maintain and secure the Library's buildings and grounds so that library services are delivered in safe, secure, clean, well-functioning and comfortable environments.

	2023 Actuals	2024 Adopted	2025 Proposed	2026 Proposed
Expenditures/FTE				
FAC Services	8,167,765	10,455,263	11,549,960	12,038,166

Security Services

	2023 Actuals	2024 Adopted	2025 Proposed	2026 Proposed
Expenditures/FTE				
Security Services	2,263,866	-	-	-

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SPL - BO-PL-B2CTL - Chief Librarian's Office

The purpose of the Chief Librarian's Office is to provide leadership for the Library in implementing the policies and strategic direction set by the Library Board of Trustees, and in securing the necessary financial resources to operate the Library in an effective and efficient manner. The Chief Librarian's Office serves as the primary link between the community and the Library, and integrates community needs and expectations with Library resources and policies.

Program Expenditures	2023 Actuals	2024 Adopted	2025 Proposed	2026 Proposed
Chief Librarian's Office	740,174	657,753	736,999	769,210
Total	740,174	657,753	736,999	769,210

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SPL - BO-PL-B4PUB - Library Program and Services

The purpose of the Library Programs and Services Division is to provide services, materials, and programs that benefit and are valued by Library patrons. Library Programs and Services provides technical and collection services and materials delivery systems to make Library resources and materials accessible to all patrons.

Program Expenditures	2023 Actuals	2024 Adopted	2025 Proposed	2026 Proposed
Collections and Access	21,597,875	19,997,248	21,114,594	21,785,949
Information Technology	7,214,050	6,075,289	6,382,026	6,672,052
Public Library Services Admin	2,049,826	-	-	-
Public Services	36,730,588	44,738,019	50,057,720	52,527,090
Service Units	5,164,144	-	-	-
Total	68,390,035	70,810,556	77,554,340	80,985,092

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The following information summarizes the programs in Library Program and Services Budget Summary Level:

Collections and Access

The purpose of the Collection and Access Services Program is to make library books, materials, databases, downloadable materials, and the library catalog available to patrons and to provide a delivery system that makes Library materials locally available.

Expenditures/FTE	2023 Actuals	2024 Adopted	2025 Proposed	2026 Proposed
Collections and Access	21,597,875	19,997,248	21,114,594	21,785,949

Information Technology

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The purpose of the Information Technology Program is to provide public and staff technology, data processing infrastructure and services.

Expenditures/FTE	2023 Actuals	2024 Adopted	2025 Proposed	2026 Proposed
Information Technology	7,214,050	6,075,289	6,382,026	6,672,052

Public Library Services Admin

Expenditures/FTE	2023 Actuals	2024 Adopted	2025 Proposed	2026 Proposed
Public Library Services Admin	2,049,826	-	-	-

Public Services

The purpose of the Library Programs and Services Program is to administer public services, programs, and collection development and access.

Expenditures/FTE	2023 Actuals	2024 Adopted	2025 Proposed	2026 Proposed
Public Services	36,730,588	44,738,019	50,057,720	52,527,090

Service Units

Expenditures/FTE	2023 Actuals	2024 Adopted	2025 Proposed	2026 Proposed
Service Units	5,164,144	-	-	-

SPL - BO-PL-B5HRS - Human Resources

The purpose of Human Resources is to provide responsive and equitable services, including human resources policy development, recruitment, classification and compensation, payroll, labor and employee relations, volunteer services, and staff training services so that the Library maintains a productive and well-supported work force.

Program Expenditures	2023 Actuals	2024 Adopted	2025 Proposed	2026 Proposed
Human Resources	2,410,962	2,632,495	2,806,895	2,947,182
Safety & Health Services	122,930	-	-	-
Total	2,533,892	2,632,495	2,806,895	2,947,182

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The following information summarizes the programs in Human Resources Budget Summary Level:

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Human Resources

The purpose of Human Resources is to provide responsive and equitable services, including human resources policy development, recruitment, classification and compensation, payroll, labor and employee relations, volunteer services, and staff training services so that the Library maintains a productive and well-supported work force.

	2023 Actuals	2024 Adopted	2025 Proposed	2026 Proposed
Expenditures/FTE				
Human Resources	2,764,494	2,632,495	2,806,895	2,947,182

Safety & Health Services

	2023 Actuals	2024 Adopted	2025 Proposed	2026 Proposed
Expenditures/FTE				
Safety & Health Services	122,930	-	-	-

SPL - BO-PL-B7STR - Institutional & Strategic Advancement

The purpose of the Institutional and Strategic Advancement division is to provide planning and support functions, including strategic analysis, government relations, community partnerships and external and internal communication, to help the City Librarian shape the strategic direction, work and culture of the Library in pursuit of its mission. The division ensures that the public is informed about services and programs offered by the Library.

Program Expenditures	2023 Actuals	2024 Adopted	2025 Proposed	2026 Proposed
Institutional & Strategic Advancement	1,352,783	1,874,737	2,116,740	2,216,673
Total	1,352,783	1,874,737	2,116,740	2,216,673

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SPL - BO-PL-B9LA - Leadership and Administration

Program Expenditures	2023 Actuals	2024 Adopted	2025 Proposed	2026 Proposed
Citywide Indirect Costs	56,993	-	-	-
Total	56,993	-	-	-

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