

Q3|2020

The Seattle Public Library  
**LEVY REPORT**

# EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

## Road to reopening

---

The Library levy measure approved by Seattle voters in August 2019 provided a clear framework for how the public investment would be used to restore, maintain and improve Library services. This report, which covers activities and spending for the third quarter of 2020, continues the series of updates for the Library Board of Trustees and the public established with the 2012 levy to document implementation of levy priorities and accomplishments.

Last August, Seattle voters overwhelmingly approved a seven-year, \$219.1 million property tax increase to maintain and enhance Library services from 2020 through 2026. Enhancements include: additional Library hours; elimination of overdue fines; improved collections; more investment in technology; safer, cleaner buildings; and additional programming and services for children and under-served communities. Many of these enhancements came out of priorities identified through a 2018 community survey that assessed public satisfaction with existing Library programs and services and gauged interest in potential new service offerings. More than 26,000 Seattle residents responded to this survey.



As noted in our two previous quarterly reports, at the beginning of 2020, we fulfilled two key voter promises: eliminating overdue fines and adding an hour of Library service at each branch on Sundays. By March, however, the Library was forced to make an unprecedented pivot in response to the global pandemic. Working closely with the city to make decisions, we closed all Library facilities starting on March 14. Facilities have remained closed to the public, although we have added limited services, including restroom access in five locations, starting in April. Soon after closure, we began enhancing and launching new virtual services to serve a newly homebound population that was grappling with unprecedented challenges, while also starting to plan how to loan physical materials. In accordance with Governor Inslee's Safe Start plan, the Library began offering material returns in July and launched a Curbside Pickup Service in August.

In addition to the challenge of launching new services while our facilities remained closed to the public, the Library also faced a reduction in General Fund resources due to deteriorating economic conditions. In the spring, the Mayor reduced the Library's 2020 General Fund budget by \$2.8 million (5%). In addressing these cuts, the Library prioritized protecting core services and staffing, with a continuing focus on equity. Savings for 2020 are being achieved by not filling vacancies, cutting discretionary purchases, redirecting funds received from The Seattle Public Library Foundation (SPLF) and redirecting levy resources that had been dedicated to expanding Library services for hours and programming in 2020. A total of \$1.58 million of levy funds were redirected to support Library operations previously funded by the General Fund.

In September, the Mayor submitted her 2021 budget, which included a \$5.8 million (10%) cut to Library General Fund resources. While the Library Board will not approve the 2021 Operations Plan until December, the board approved using \$1.36 million of 2019 levy funds previously allocated for expanded hours and programming for 2021 and \$138,000 of unexpended 2012 levy funds to offset General Fund

cuts in 2021. The Library Board provided the following guidance in preparing the 2021 Operations Plan:

- Protect staffing and operate creatively to deliver Library services widely across the city
- Use one-time monies wisely and ensure enough capital funding for long-term needs and uses
- Respond to the social issues and needs of the city
- Honor levy promises and commitments to voters

This report focuses on how the Library is adapting services in the core levy program areas — Hours and Access, Collections, Technology and Online Services, Children’s Programming and Maintenance — during this unprecedented time. It also shows how the Library is delivering on its promises to voters and where, due to circumstances, we are not able to meet our targets in the short term.

## LEVY ACCOMPLISHMENTS: HOURS & ACCESS

### Expanding access and equity during COVID

---

The Hours and Access category of the 2019 levy supports operating hours in neighborhood branches and the Central Library; providing access to Library programs and services in the community; and outreach and engagement services throughout the city.

Many elements of this levy category relate to expanding access to Library resources and services for prioritized audiences — communities historically underrepresented in the use of Library services — by reducing barriers to using the Library such as late fees and limited open hours on weekends and in the evenings. In the first week of January, we eliminated fines for overdue materials and began opening our branches one hour earlier on Sundays. The Sunday hours add was the first step in a planned addition of more than 10,000 new Library hours each year funded by the levy; however, because of COVID-related closures and city-requested budget cuts, the Library has had to defer additional hours through 2021.

What we have done instead is develop a new model of service to allow our patrons to access physical books and materials again, with an unwavering focus on prioritizing communities most in need of physical materials and safety for patrons and staff. We have also continued to expand our virtual offerings to meet the changing needs of our patrons during the COVID-19 crisis.

### Launching an ambitious new service: Curbside

---

The biggest Library development in the third quarter was the launch of a new service model to safely deliver physical Library materials to patrons: a no-contact [Curbside Pickup Service](#). Planning started in May, when the Library formed a cross-divisional reopening workgroup charged with planning a safe and phased restart of Library services. The workgroup had to

navigate many layers of complexity. Sub-groups developed health protocols on everything from daily temperature checks to where and how staff could eat; a new staffing configuration in cohorts (small, fixed groups) to minimize infection risk and spread; a quarantine system for materials; and much more. We needed to completely reconfigure Library spaces to accommodate materials processing and quarantine and we needed to schedule enough custodial staff to meet appropriate cleaning requirements for high-touch surfaces and restrooms. We also had to figure out how to work with a scheduling app called MyLibro to facilitate no-contact pickup of holds. Finally, we had to develop marketing and communications plans for the changes ahead.

## First, returns

Friday, March 13, the last day we were open before the Library's COVID-related closure, was our highest-circulation day on record. More than 100,000 items were checked out on that day alone, and a total of more than 407,000 items were in the hands of our patrons when the Library stopped lending physical materials. In late July, we started reversing that wave by opening book drops three days a week at nine locations. Just a few days later, we began accepting returns at the Central Library and two other locations. By the end of September, we had 12 locations open for returns.

## Then, Curbside Service

On Aug. 6, we began offering Curbside Pickup of books and materials at the Central Library. For patrons with scheduled appointments (either through MyLibro or by phone), we pre-checked-out materials and placed them in paper bags with bonus materials like Book Bingo cards and Your Next Skills bookmarks. For patrons who were unable to check out books through the holds system, we created Grab & Go bags by genre filled with uncatalogued paperbacks and board books. The day went smoothly and book drops were at capacity in 45 minutes.

By Aug. 18, seven locations (the Central Library plus six branches) were open three days a week for Curbside Service. Each location had its own set of advantages and challenges; cohorts worked closely to innovate and refine procedures, sharing ideas across locations. And then a wholly unexpected challenge rocked the Library system in mid-September; due to smoke-related air quality issues, we were forced to close for five days, which caused a cascade of issues related to rescheduling holds through the MyLibro app. By the end of September, we were still catching up.

Despite these challenges, Curbside activity is booming. By the beginning of September, the Ballard Branch — the busiest Curbside location — was serving between 100 and 200 scheduled appointments a day, plus many walk-ups. On Sept. 19, the first day Curbside was open after closures related to wildfire smoke, the Ballard Branch served a total of 543 patrons, including 348 appointments and 195 walk-ups. In August and September, we had just over 20,000 scheduled Curbside appointments and walk-ups.



Patrons at the Central Library before the first Curbside opening

**“[While waiting at Broadview], I noticed how each librarian had to work around and away from each other as you went about your tasks. It looked like a ballet: movement, position, pass, turn, twist.”**

— A patron, via Bibliocommons

## Mobile on the road again

We also restarted our Mobile Services, which serves patron groups that have been especially affected by the COVID-19 pandemic, such as homebound seniors, people living with disabilities and preschool children living in low-income households. In mid-August, Mobile Services started making no-contact deliveries, modifying all delivery procedures to ensure that patrons would be able to get their books, movies, music and tablets while minimizing the risk of COVID-19 exposure.

Since that time, Mobile Services has started no-contact deliveries of holds and pickups of returns at 73 of its adult stops and for 45 of our home service patrons. By the end of September, 17 of Mobile's preschool stops had begun receiving monthly boxes of books and music for their classrooms. We are now safely getting Library materials to 73% of our pre-closure stops each month. One home service patron, upon receiving her first delivery of books after several months told Library staff "This is a dream come true!"



Preparing to make a no-contact delivery for Mobile Services

## Marketing new services, reaching new users

Effectively communicating our new services has been essential to success. In July, we launched a Road to Reopening web page ([spl.org/RoadtoReopening](http://spl.org/RoadtoReopening)) as a central location for updates to our public. A separate Curbside page ([spl.org/Curbside](http://spl.org/Curbside)) shares details on how to use the scheduling app or walk-up service. We have also sent targeted emails to patrons of specific home branches about Curbside locations in their region, and posted various kinds of signage at Curbside branches to remind patrons about social distancing, Peak Picks and more.

Our annual Library Card Sign-Up campaign in September provided another opportunity to promote new services as well as our digital collection and programs. This year, we broadened our typical campaign to focus on instant digital access to e-books, Curbside Pickup Service and our many new virtual programs. The campaign included ads in English, Spanish and Chinese and daily social media posts on our English and Spanish channels. These efforts resulted in over 75,000 impressions on social media, over 1,200 social media engagements and over 500 ad clicks. In September, over 800 new borrowers were approved. We added over 2,000 new borrowers in the third quarter.



## **Working with Seattle Public Schools to support remote learning and improve Library access**

Since March, the Library has leveraged our strong relationships with Seattle Public Schools (SPS) and hundreds of community partners to help youth and families who were thrust into the world of remote learning without adequate support. We created new online resources, expanded the reach of Library Link to elementary school children, worked with schools to share Library resources, and adapted our single biggest program for children — Summer of Learning (with funding from The Seattle Public Library Foundation) — to an online platform.

On the Library's [Student Success](#) website, we created a new remote learning web area that curates dozens of free virtual learning resources by grade level and launched [Exploration Guides](#), collections of resources that encourage students to explore on their own. In September, we took a further step to support K-5 remote learning by hiring Ayan Adem as a program manager using levy funds. Adem will collaborate with SPS to focus on supporting students in achieving reading proficiency by third grade and continuing reading support for learning through fifth grade which leads to success in middle school and higher level math. This fall, Adem will work with children's and teen librarians to help implement a new online tutoring system as well as provide low-tech support for families using new technologies introduced by SPS for virtual instruction.

## **Connecting small businesses to free legal advice**

In the third quarter, the [Library to Business](#) program hosted 77 virtual one-on-one business appointments, including 31 legal consults through Webex. While the Library has offered individual assistance to aspiring entrepreneurs since 2015, the COVID environment has added even more challenges for small business owners and requires significant staff effort to stay on top of the ever-changing landscape of relief programs and reopening guidelines.

In addition to its core programs, the Library to Business team partnered with UW School of Law's Entrepreneurial Law Clinic on an offering tuned to the COVID era: a series of free legal consultations for small businesses and nonprofits on topics such as corporate law, intellectual property law and employment law. This effort is supported in part through a grant from the UW Population Health Initiative.

Starting in July and continuing through March 2021, librarians and lawyers (working on a pro bono basis) are teaming up to help entrepreneurs navigate the business world during this very uncertain time, offering invaluable customized support.

Jennifer Fan, director of the Entrepreneurial Law Clinic and assistant professor of law at UW, noted in a letter to Chief Librarian Marcellus Turner, the exceptional work of Library staff in recruiting diverse entrepreneurs to "ensure that the programming reached as wide an audience as possible." Fan also expressed her hope that this collaboration between librarians and lawyers "becomes a model for other libraries and law schools throughout the country."

**“Their input and thoughts will, no doubt, save me and my business thousands of dollars down the road.”**

— Participant in the Entrepreneurial Law Clinic

## LEVY ACCOMPLISHMENTS: COLLECTIONS

### Building robust collections in print and digital formats

The 2019 levy commits resources to maintaining and expanding the Library's collection of physical and digital materials. The levy includes additional funding for e-books, e-audiobooks and streaming services; money to continue and expand the Peak Picks collection; and funds to support the acquisition and digitization of local history items. With the General Fund cuts in 2020, a portion of the levy funds originally allocated to expand levy hours and programming has been redirected to the collection to maintain the Library's purchasing power for Library materials. In 2020, the levy is funding 56% of the Library's total revised budget for books and materials. In addition to levy and General Fund resources, the Library also receives generous support for collections from The Seattle Public Library Foundation and The Friends of The Seattle Public Library.

#### More materials in formats patrons prefer

To the delight of patrons and staff alike, [Peak Picks](#) are available once again! Because safety protocols around COVID prevent patrons from browsing the collection, it took some creative thinking to reimagine Peak Picks, our no-holds, no-wait collection of high-interest titles, in our new environment. Starting in August, Curbside Pickup locations offered “daily specials” — 10 to 12 titles a day — and created displays with cover images and a brief description that provides patrons with an opportunity for discovery while minimizing contact with staff. Peak Picks relaunched with notable fiction such as Yaa Gyasi's “Transcendent Kingdom,” Elena Ferrante's “The Lying Life of Adults,” and Brit Bennett's “The Vanishing Half”; and nonfiction that includes “Caste” by Isabel Wilkerson, “Hidden Valley Road” by Robert Kolker and “Vesper Flights” by Helen Macdonald. Patrons have enthusiastically welcomed its return. As one Facebook commenter said, “THIS is what we need more of, SPL! So glad Peak Picks is available again.”



Peak Picks display, Central Library

#### Digital checkouts continue to boom

The pandemic accelerated the long-term trend of patrons' shift from physical to digital materials. More than 90,000 patrons checked out Library materials using [OverDrive](#) in the third quarter of 2020, an increase of 23% over the third quarter last year. Overall checkouts from OverDrive increased by 28%, while checkouts for children's materials in the third quarter increased by 101% compared to the third quarter of 2019. Going into the fall, monthly digital circulation appears to be leveling off, which is typical for this time of year. As General Fund resources have become more constrained due to budget reductions, we have reduced spending on physical materials, redirected levy funds to collections and relied more heavily on Foundation funds to support our continued acquisition of e-materials.

## Dial a story, 2020 style

No internet? No problem — at least when it comes to finding a well-told tale. In July, the Library launched SPL Lit Line in English and in Spanish. This phone service, a creative use of our voice mail system, was designed to help Library patrons with limited technology stay connected to literature, history and their Library while unable to visit us in person.

Patrons simply call 206-386-4656 and listen to a recording of a story, article or poem. A roster of 60 staff take turns doing the readings. SPL Lit Line had 654 calls in the month of August, and also received several positive stories in the media.



A staff member reading for Lit Line

## Making Seattle history more accessible

This summer, Special Collections launched the [COVID-19 Community Collection](#), our first community crowdsourcing project, to document the local impact of the pandemic. We created an [online submission form](#) and asked people to share their stories with us so that we could proactively preserve their thoughts and experiences during this unique period in history. By Sept. 30, we had received over 150 file submissions from 34 different people. Contributors offered insight into their daily lives, sharing details about working at a COVID testing site, facing sudden unemployment, managing the switch to online learning, receiving cancer treatment and reacting to the Black Lives Matter movement and the upcoming election. Submissions include not only personal stories but also photographs, poetry, artwork, songs, podcasts and video. We will be adding to this collection for the foreseeable future and encourage everyone to contribute.



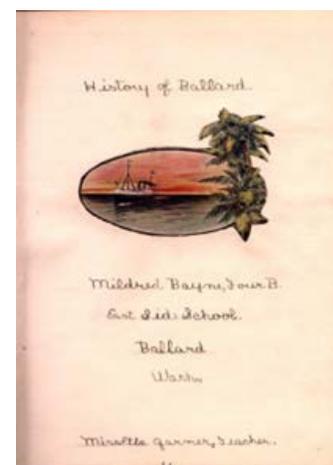
Seattle está unido/Seattle United artwork by Amaranta Sandys, March 2020

## Seattle Collection acquires a slice of Ballard history

During the third quarter, the curator for the Seattle Collection continued to purchase material, thanks to the rise of virtual book fairs and online outreach from book and manuscript dealers.

An important addition was the very scarce 1943 Christmas issue of the weekly Minidoka Irrigator newspaper, which chronicles the lives of Japanese-Americans incarcerated during World War II at the Minidoka Relocation Center in Hunt, Idaho.

Perhaps the most charming recent addition was a bound manuscript volume from 1905 that was created by students at Ballard's East Side School for display at the 1905 World's Fair in Portland. The student essays covered many aspects of Ballard, which was incorporated as a city in 1890 prior to its annexation to Seattle in 1906. Research on the student contributors provides a glimpse into the lives of early Ballard residents.



A 1905 Ballard history written by local students

### Keeping our technology up to date

---

The 2019 levy promises around technology include replacing infrastructure for public internet access; replacing outdated technology for acquisition and circulation; dedicated funding for digital equity offerings; and maintaining/upgrading public technologies and the spl.org website. While our buildings have remained closed, we continue to innovate in the online space, especially our [YouTube presence](#), which now includes author programs and Seattle Writes, as well as a separate [Kids YouTube channel](#) with many types of story times, STEAM programs and much more. We have also made numerous improvements to our website; adding more online support of virtual events and a new intake form for the Your Next Job service in Chinese (in addition to English and Spanish). We have also continued to update an extensive list of resources for [COVID-19 relief](#). For each new service we have also created “friendly urls,” meaning short spl.org addresses to make it easier for patrons to remember, such as [spl.org/ExplorationGuides](#), [spl.org/RemoteLearning](#), and so on.

#### Replacing hardware and software

Our efforts to modernize Library technology continued with the upgrading of all branch staff computers to the Windows 10 operating system, as well as the replacement of outdated servers to reduce hardware outages and costs. Three branches had new Wi-Fi technology installed to improve performance and coverage; new technology is scheduled to be installed at the remaining branches by the end of the first quarter of 2021. We relocated computers and other technology to improve staff workflow at branches offering Curbside Service. We also continued to make improvements to remote connectivity to support staff telework in response to the COVID-19 pandemic and introduced multiple cybersecurity changes to provide a more secure computing environment for staff and patrons.

#### Digital equity and the HotSpot circulation program

At the start of the year, the Library’s celebrated [HotSpot loan program](#) had an inventory of 925 hot spots — 675 available to any Library cardholder for 21 days, and 250 loaned on a long-term basis to communities who could most benefit. This program is now largely funded by the levy.

When the Library closed its physical locations, the checkout period for hot spots in circulation was extended through the end of third quarter. Recognizing that access to the internet was essential during this public health crisis, the Library began working with partners on loaning additional hot spots on a long-term basis to locations such as tiny home villages. Since March, we have acquired 75 additional hotspots as part of the COVID response, funded by The Seattle Public Library Foundation. In June, we were notified that we would receive CARES grant funding for an additional 50 hotspots through the Washington State Library. The 125 new hotspots will be dedicated to outreach efforts with community partners.

After learning that students and families associated with Seattle World School (SWS), Seattle Public Schools’ most culturally and linguistically diverse school, were experiencing challenges with currently available low-cost and free internet options, we partnered with a community provider, Kandelina (formerly known as

**“I’m so grateful for the partnership, the speed with which you moved, and for the resources we are getting to kids as we speak.”**

– Justin Hellier, strategic advisor for Seattle’s Department of Parks and Recreation

Vietnamese Friendship Association), to address this issue. In August, we distributed 50 hot spots and learning kits to 50 SWS families, which included learning supplies and information on Library programs and services. We also recently worked with Seattle’s Department of Parks and Recreation to loan 35 hot spots on a temporary basis to 15 city sites providing childcare to help children access remote learning.

## **Increasing access to video conferencing**

Event Services and Information Technology staff continued to support staff and public use of video conferencing for reaching a newly homebound population. We continued to host board meetings using Webex where the board can see each other, staff participants make presentations to the board, and the public can view and listen to the meeting via Webex video conference, or call in and listen by phone; past board meetings can be viewed on the Seattle Channel. While libraries are closed, staff are using this technology for meetings and virtual programs with the public. Our support for virtual Library programs has expanded; the Seattle Writes programs began in September and continued into October. They were our first foray into virtual support and we have developed the capability to stream programs to our social media channels — which will be a big part of our work for the remainder of the year (including Seattle Reads programs and others).

## **LEVY ACCOMPLISHMENTS: SUPPORTING CHILDREN**

### **Expanding early learning options for children**

---

#### **Planned programs delayed, virtual programs launched**

In the area of children’s programming, the 2019 Levy promises additional support for Library early learning programs for children ages 0 to 5. These programs were originally slated to start in June, but have been delayed due to our building closures. Savings related to delays in programming funded by the levy have been used to offset reductions in General Fund resources and to hire a project manager to support K-5 remote learning in Seattle Public Schools (see p. 5).

Although we haven’t been able to launch new in-branch early learning programs, we have continued to innovate with our online programs, with weekly virtual story times on Facebook Live and the [Kids’ YouTube channel](#) through August. With Seattle Public Library Foundation support, we have also reached audiences with new kinds of story times, and created and printed early learning packets for distribution through community partners.

## **New story times for important audiences**

In the third quarter, with support from The Seattle Public Library Foundation, we created new kinds of virtual story times to serve prioritized audiences. In partnership with the Bureau of Fearless Ideas, a Greenwood teen librarian worked with BIPOC (Black, Indigenous or people of color) teens to develop and host live programming for young children focused on social-emotional learning, early literacy and mindfulness.

With a goal of amplifying youth voice and community content creation, this series was titled “Black Joy and Mindful Movements.” The teen interns gained presentation and project management skills and helped us learn about ways to incorporate mindfulness and social-emotional learning into youth programming. We reached an estimated 600-800 people with the story times and received many positive comments. One teen said that “reaching so many people and families during this tough time ... was the best and most meaningful thing I did all summer.”

To serve children with special needs such as autism or sensory processing disorder, the Library Equal Access Program (LEAP) created a virtual version of its All Abilities Story Time, partnering with Arc of Seattle. This story time aired five times on Zoom as part of an Inclusion Festival in August to a registered audience of 54 families. Beyond choosing books with broad diversity of age appeal, race and ethnicity and ability, we mailed Sensory Story Time program kits and a visual schedule to registered families in advance of the story time and followed best practices for engagement and participation. We have also partnered with Arc of King County on a Spanish All Ability story time that’s been running twice a month since July, and are planning Teen All Ability programs for the winter.

## **Learning at Home packets to community partners**

We also worked on getting physical learning materials to families with young children, responding to community requests for non-digital learning supports for preschoolers. Our Early Learning team developed a Learning at Home Together activity packet in eight languages that was filled with fun early literacy activities for preschoolers and their families to do together at home. Available as a download from The [Summer of Learning website](#), we printed 6,000 booklets using Library Foundation funds — with accompanying alphabet and animal cards — that were available to be distributed to our community partners. Although this work was designed to address an immediate need in the time of COVID, this booklet will be a permanent early learning publication with periodic updates.

**“My little girl was so excited to see a Black girl that looks like her and mommy.”**

– An attendee of a “Black Joy and Mindful Movements” story time

**“It is always so good for my heart to be in spaces that center access and inclusion.”**

– Parent participant in a virtual All Abilities Story Time

## LEVY ACCOMPLISHMENTS: MAINTENANCE

### Protecting our investments

---

The 2019 Levy promised to maintain Library buildings, preserve funding for major maintenance and add resources to undertake earthquake retrofits for [historic Columbia, Green Lake and University branches](#).

#### **Routine maintenance: Keeping our facilities clean and safe**

The maintenance of our facilities is essential for creating a clean, safe, accessible environment at the Library, which is especially important as we learn to operate during a pandemic. At the City's request, in late April, the Library reopened restrooms at four branches and the Central Library to support insecurely housed patrons lacking restroom options during COVID-19. To protect the public and our staff, the Library established protocols for cleaning facilities in accordance with guidelines provided by Public Health — Seattle & King County. Our custodial/janitorial staff are provided with personal protection equipment (PPE) such as surgical or N-95 masks, depending on the type of cleaning being done; sleeved aprons; eye protection; and gloves. Through the third quarter, maintenance staff, along with security officers and Public Services staff, continued to support this service.

In June, the Library hired Dana Stahl, a certified industrial hygienist, as the Library's first safety and health manager. Among her other duties, Stahl has been working with the Reopening Committee to make sure the Library is doing everything we can to work safely with the public during the pandemic. She has also provided COVID training to all staff.

In the third quarter, the maintenance team prepared select Library locations for Curbside Pickup by relocating furniture throughout the branches, building sneeze guards, measuring out social distancing for staff and patrons, and outfitting exterior spaces with signage and social distance stickers or painting on sidewalks and plazas. The maintenance staff continued to perform preventative maintenance activities throughout the system and repaired several locations damaged by acts of vandalism. Staff also completed a large HVAC system upgrade at the Central Library and continues to prepare the newly acquired Maintenance and Operation Center (MOC) in Georgetown for workshop use and warehouse storage.

#### **Major maintenance: Preserving our facilities for the next generation**

In 2020, the levy provides \$4.2 million in budget authority for major maintenance, including \$1.5 million for seismic retrofit work at the Green Lake Branch. Where possible, the Library leverages levy funds with other resources, such as city Real Estate Excise Tax (REET) revenue, state and federal grants and private monies, to make our spaces more flexible, efficient, and responsive to the needs of current and future Seattle residents.

The Library's major maintenance program has been slowed by both COVID-related closures and restrictions and budget reductions. Our REET funding was reduced by \$100,000 in 2020 and is proposed to be further reduced by \$360,000 in 2021. To make up for lost REET revenues and to supplement levy funds, the Library is actively pursuing grant opportunities for upcoming seismic

projects. We have made the recommended list for a \$1.8 million Washington Department of Commerce's Library Capital grant, which is expected to be awarded by late April 2021. The Library is also exploring whether we can qualify for a federal Building Resilient Infrastructure & Communities (BRIC) grant.

The Library completed two major projects in third quarter: the restoration of rotted and deteriorated landmarked windows at the Queen Anne Branch and upgrades to the lighting controls at the Central Library. By replacing the system, the facility team will now have more centralized control of light programming and timing, even from a remote location. The Library also repaired the berm in front of the Fourth Avenue entrance to the Central Library that had been damaged in an accident in April 2017. That project should be fully complete by the end of the year.

Continuing major projects include replacement of the parking garage door (which should also be completed in the fourth quarter) and upgrades to the freight elevator (tentative completion early 2021) at the Central Library; roof repair assessments at Lake City and Queen Anne branches; and planning and design for seismic improvements at Green Lake Branch and exterior access improvements at Douglass-Truth Branch. We intend to publicly bid systems upgrades at the Library's Maintenance and Operations Center in the fourth quarter.

## A springboard for innovation

---

In addition to the core levy-supported activities outlined in this report, the Library constantly seeks out additional ways to creatively meet the changing needs of our communities, working closely with community partners. While such programs are largely funded with the generous support of The Seattle Public Library Foundation, they couldn't happen without levy funding to support staffing and provide access to Library materials and resources.

Below are recent examples of innovative Foundation-funded programs that are extensions of levy priorities.

**Partnerships in online learning:** Over the summer, we launched online versions of three programs that connect teens and children in shared goals of learning and leadership. Through a partnership with the NewHolly community and Seattle Housing Authority, a virtual Learning Buddies program recruited 10 teens at NewHolly who mentored and read to 20 children from the same community over a seven-week period. The program aimed to provide teens with workforce development and career readiness skills — including a stipend — while supporting elementary students (mostly K-3) with critical one-on-one literacy and math support.

Through a partnership with Seattle Public Schools, a virtual Team Read program paired early readers with 25 trained teen coaches who served 100 to 120 youth. In partnership with the California Academy of Sciences, we created a virtual Bug Safari Teen Intern program. Teen librarians from the Southwest Region supported teen interns to create simple videos on topics such as scientific observation and insect habitat, which were aired on the Library's Kids' YouTube channel.

**Reaching children with physical books:** With libraries, community centers and schools closed, our Early Learning team moved into action in the spring to understand needs of the BIPOC community, which was disproportionately and inequitably impacted during this health, economic, and educational crisis. We began a pilot project to create best practices for supporting BIPOC families by working closely with community-based organizations to order and distribute books that reflected youth's experiences and met their wishes and needs. Over the next few months, with support from The Seattle Public Library Foundation, the Library worked with more than 65 community partners to distribute more than 20,000 children's books at locations ranging from food banks to community organizations to tiny home villages. 2,500 of those books were in world languages.

**One-on-one help for jobseekers:** Launched in June to directly respond to the COVID-related economic and unemployment crisis, [Your Next Job](#) is a service that offers free, one-on-one help with job and unemployment questions by phone, online or text messaging. Funded with support from The Seattle Public Library Foundation and U.S. Bank Foundation, Your Next Job works with partners such as King County Library System, Seattle Jobs Initiative and Puget Sound Welcome Back Center to reach people inequitably impacted by COVID-19, particularly focusing on immigrant and refugee, BIPOC and low-income communities. Services are offered in 10 languages.

**Connecting authors to readers:** Starting in June, the Library began to host virtual author programs. Highlights included a short video series of writers showing their home libraries; a talk by beloved Library alum Nancy Pearl on her new book “The Writer’s Library”; and the Sept. 15 release party of “Seismic: Seattle, City of Literature,” an anthology of essays edited by Kristen Millares Young and published by the Seattle City of Literature. We also redesigned the [author programs page](#) on our website to showcase videos of past virtual events and a new author podcast page; and began planning a month-long Seattle Reads celebration of Indigenous and Native voices for October.

**Serving older adults at a time of great need:** Older adults in the region have faced extraordinary challenges during the pandemic, ranging from increased medical costs to social isolation to challenges with digital access. Since spring, with the support of The Seattle Public Library Foundation, the Library has partnered with community organizations to identify and develop programs and services that are supportive of this large demographic. During the third quarter, Library programs for ages 50+ have ranged from a popular “Medicare Made Clear” series to a series of interactive and intergenerational arts programs with Silver Kite to a “Ducks in a Row” end-of-life planning series with People’s Memorial Association. Other program partners include Age Friendly Seattle/Seattle Human Services, University of Washington Memory and Brain Wellness Center, Seattle Parks and Recreation, and the Washington Poison Center. The Library offered around 36 programs for older adults in the third quarter, with a total attendance of about 850.

---

## Looking Forward:

As you’ll read in our next levy report, our staff continued to adapt, enhance, and launch services and programs to help our community respond to the COVID-19 crisis. Here’s a quick preview:

- More Curbside Service locations
- Planning for resuming in-person services
- Online tutoring service launches

## Q3 - Financials

The COVID-19 pandemic has impacted City operations and destabilized City finances. The combination of a steep decline of revenue and a sharp increase in spending created a large hole in the City's 2020 budget. This gap required the Mayor to rebalance the 2020 budget and request significant budget cuts from City departments. For the Library, this meant a \$2.8 million (5%) reduction of General Fund resources and \$100,000 in REET resources in 2020. Reductions were achieved by freezing vacant positions, cutting discretionary purchases, redirecting funds received from The Seattle Public Library Foundation and using levy savings from implementation delays in programming and services to support core Library operations. A total of \$1.58 million of 2020 levy funds was redirected to support Library operations previously funded by General Fund resources. Spending tables below reflect budget realignments. Large remaining balances of budget authority in the CIP are related to COVID and budget uncertainties. Some large projects in the 2019 levy are in their earliest planning stages. Several large projects from the 2012 levy were put on hold this year as we determined whether we had resources to undertake them. Unspent budget authority for these projects will carry forward into 2021.

2019 Levy	Revised Budget	YTD Exp	Available	% Spent
Hours & Access	10,203,593	6,996,449	3,207,144	69%
Collections	6,709,951	4,399,603	2,310,348	66%
Technology & Online Services	2,701,323	1,038,091	1,152,232	38%
Children's Programming	136,000	76,157	59,843	56%
Routine Maintenance	1,514,736	916,076	598,660	60%
Administration	430,397	224,606	205,790	52%
Major Maintenance	4,190,000	742,450	3,447,550	18%
<b>Total</b>	<b>\$25,886,000</b>	<b>\$14,386,220</b>	<b>\$10,923,530</b>	<b>57%</b>

2012 Levy	Revised Budget	YTD Exp	Available	% Spent
Hours & Access	-	4,845	(4,845)	N/A
Collection	200,000	166	199,834	0%
Technology & Online Services	1,034,602	332,215	702,388	32%
Routine Maintenance	963,207	116,277	846,930	12%
Administration	250,000	215,330	34,670	86%
CIP	3,612,974	226,175	3,386,799	6%
<b>Total</b>	<b>\$6,060,783</b>	<b>\$895,008</b>	<b>\$5,165,776</b>	<b>15%</b>

*Revised budget for 2012 levy includes 2019 carry over operating budget authority. 2012 levy administration expenses reflect 2019 COLA that was paid out in 2020.*