



City of Seattle

Mayor Jenny A. Durkan

Honorable Bruce A. Harrell, President
Seattle City Council
City Hall, 2nd Floor
Seattle, WA 98199

March 26, 2019

Dear Council President Harrell:

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

With the 2012 Library Maintenance and Operations Levy set to expire at the end of this year, we must act to sustain and enhance our libraries, and ensure The Seattle Public Library is poised to become a library of the future. That's why I am pleased to transmit to the Seattle City Council my Libraries for All proposal to be placed on the ballot this year. The Seattle Public Library Board of Trustees passed a resolution recommending the City Council approve the proposed levy package at its March 19 meeting.

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



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

- Making critical maintenance and seismic retrofits: My proposal would support preventative infrastructure maintenance and fund seismic retrofits for three of the SPL Carnegie libraries: Columbia City, Green Lake, and University branches.

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

I look forward to continuing to work with you and members of the City Council to maintain and expand the great work of The Seattle Public Library.

Sincerely,



Jenny A. Durkan
Mayor of Seattle