

2019 Levy Renewal

Libraries for All

2020-2026

Select Committee on the 2019 Library Levy
March 28, 2019

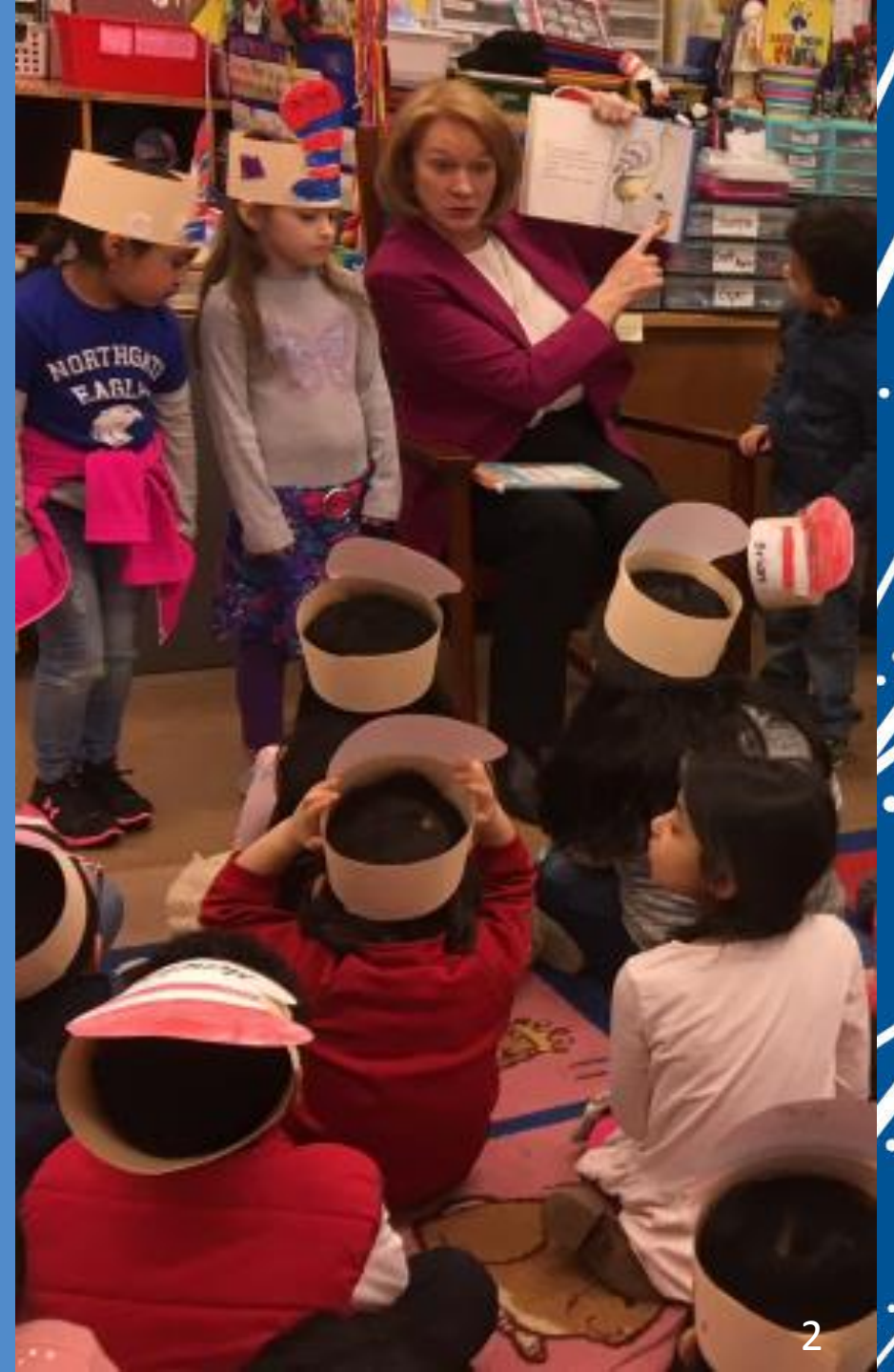
Chief Librarian and Executive Director, Marcellus Turner



A Message from Mayor Jenny A. Durkan on her “Libraries for All” Proposal

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 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 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 (SPL) is poised to become a library of the future.**





Our Mission:

Bringing people, information and ideas together to enrich lives and build community.



Listening to the community

Over the last two years, the Library has hosted six Community Conversations.

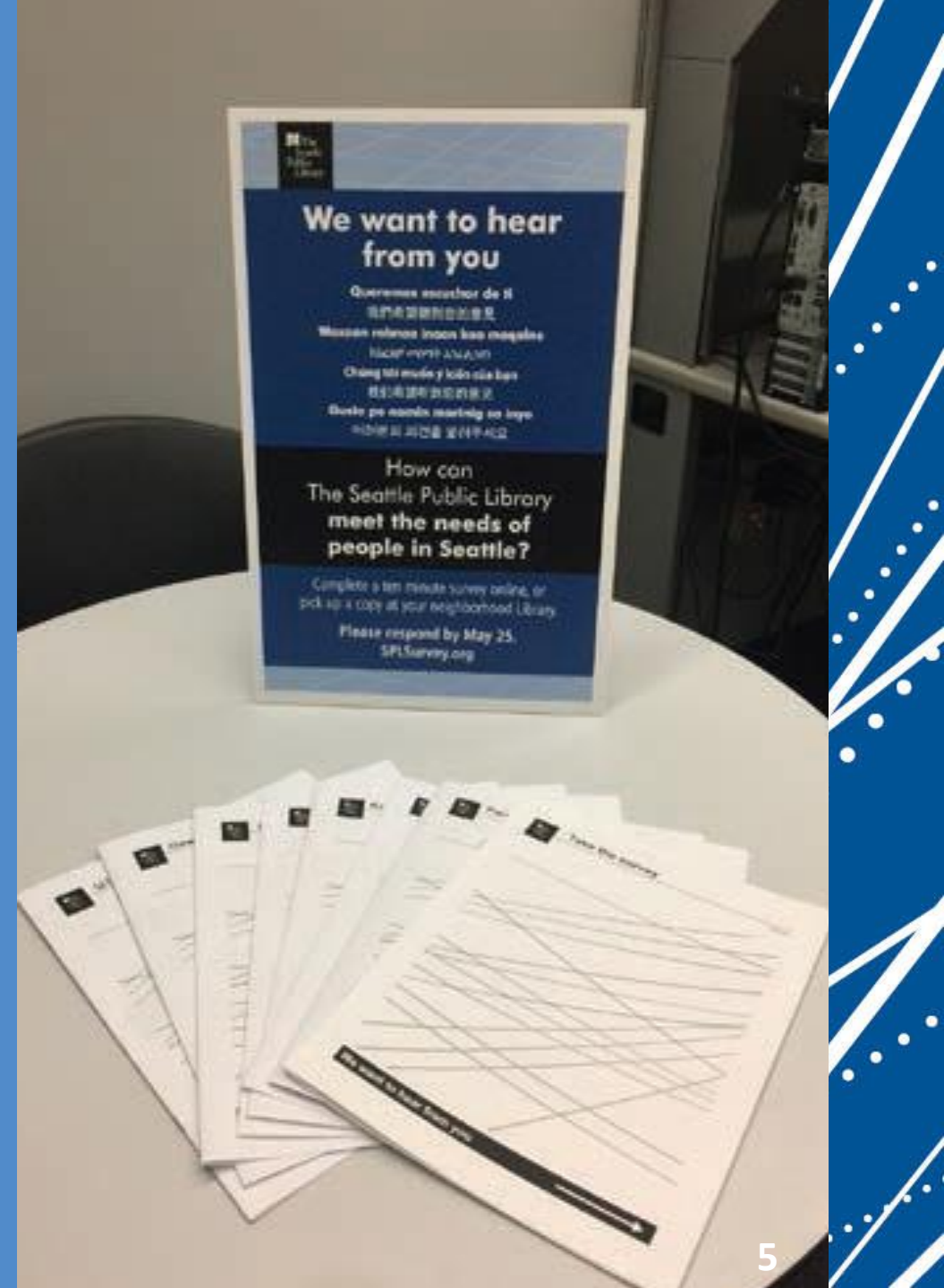
- 2100 Building (2017)
- Central Library (2017)
- Rainier Beach Branch (2017)
- Columbia Branch (2018)
- Southwest Branch (2018)
- Northeast Branch (2018)





Consistent Community Priorities

- In a 2012 survey, 33,000+ Seattle residents told us they wanted:
 - more open hours,
 - more robust collections,
 - updated technology, and
 - clean and safe buildings.
- In 2018, more than 26,000 residents re-affirmed these priorities.





What we heard

In 2018, Seattle residents told us their Library should:

- provide a robust collection in the formats they want,
- provide computers and internet access to those who may not have them, and
- provide programs and services to high-needs communities.





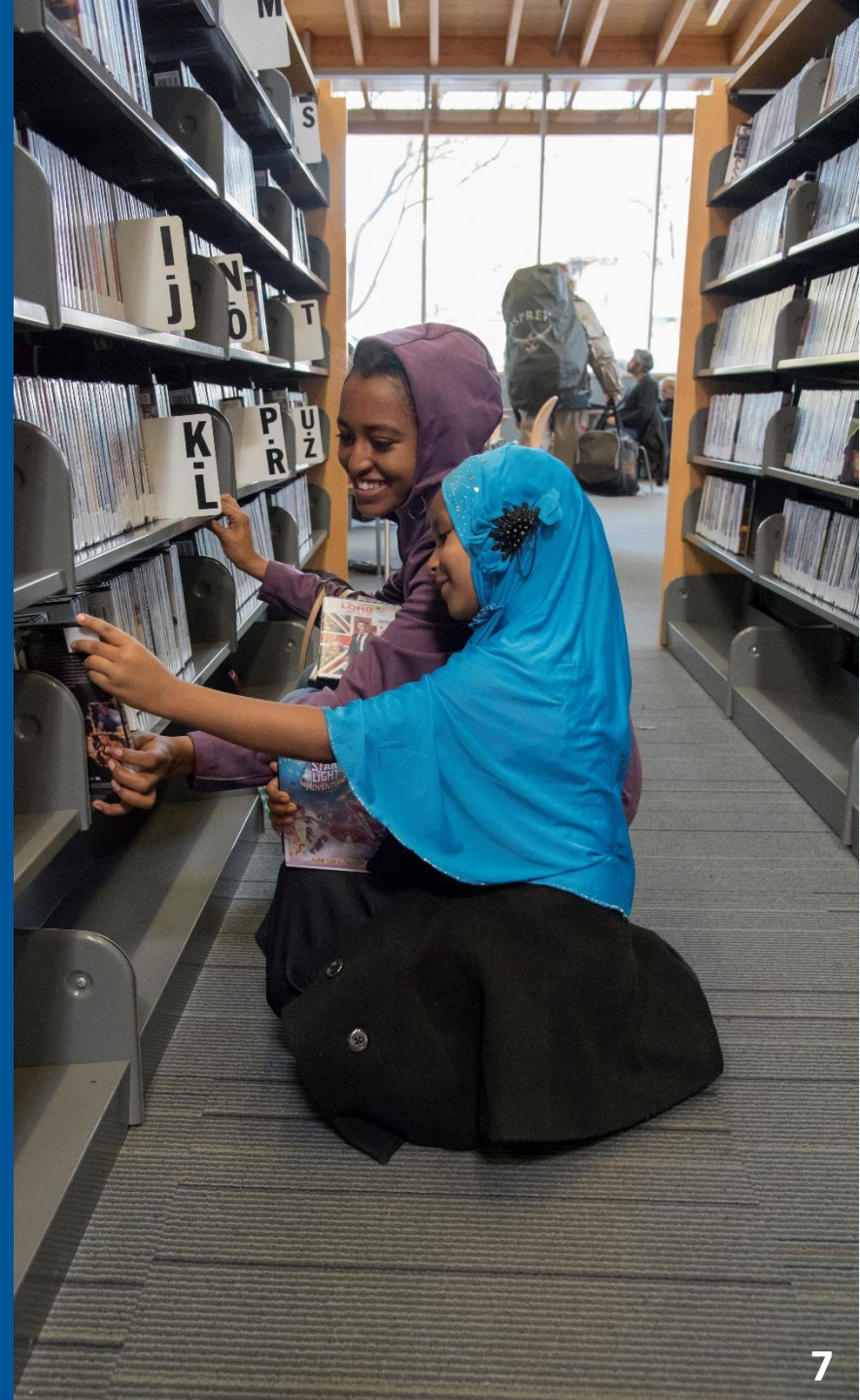
Seattle values libraries

Nine out of ten Seattle residents agree the Library is:

- an essential city service,
- worth the investment,
- an improvement to the overall quality of life, and
- a critical educational resource.

Two out of three Seattle residents said they had used the Library within the last six months.

Source: 2018 Library Programs and Services Assessment





Technology for All

Maintaining Current Levy Investments

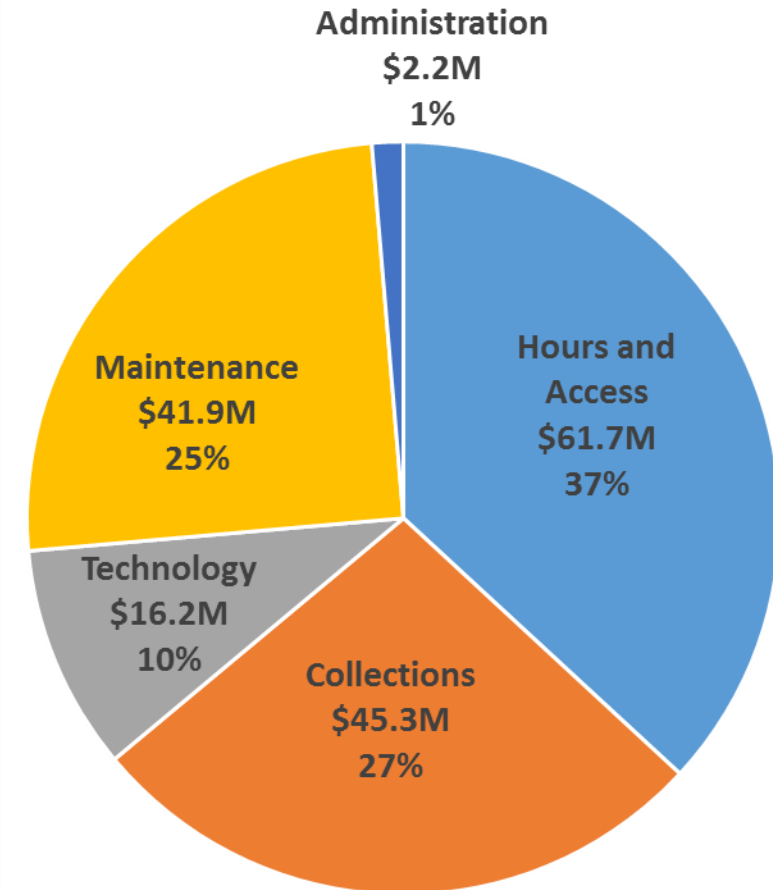


Current levy investments

- Hours and Access
- Collections
- Technology and Access
- Maintenance
- Preserve existing core services*

To maintain existing services, total levy amount would be \$167.4 million or \$66 per year for the median assessed value home.

2019 Baseline Levy Renewal (\$167.4 million)



* Preserve hours and collection investments that would have otherwise been cut in 2013 budget



Explaining the change in renewal cost

- State law limits property tax growth to 1% per year – meaning levy revenue only grows by 1% a year during the seven-year period.
- The cost of inflation and projected levy spending is almost always higher than 1%.
- Levies are generally structured so they collect more revenue than what is spent for the first half of the levy – and then use that revenue to support the costs in the second half of the levy.
- We plan expenditures to ensure we can provide at least the same level of service every year of the levy.
- The cost of baseline levy renewal is based on delivering the same level of service as in the last year (2019) of the 2012 Levy.

Proposed New Levy Investments

2019 Levy Renewal Proposal	7-year Levy Amount
Straight-up renewal with only inflation increase (2020-2026)	\$167.4 M
Add \$13 million of critical needs to maintain existing services <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Replace Library Operating System • Internet Access – replace core and branch switches • E-Material Budget Increase 	<u>\$180 M</u> \$4.0 M \$4.0 M \$5.0 M
Planning for the Future	\$0.2 M
Eliminate Fines	\$8.0 M
Add Hours at 7 branches – focus on equity	\$5.8 M
Seismic Retrofit at 3 branches: Columbia, Green Lake, University	\$13.8 M
Digital Equity	\$5.3 M
Grand Total*	\$213.3 M

*Numbers do not total due to rounding



More Open Hours

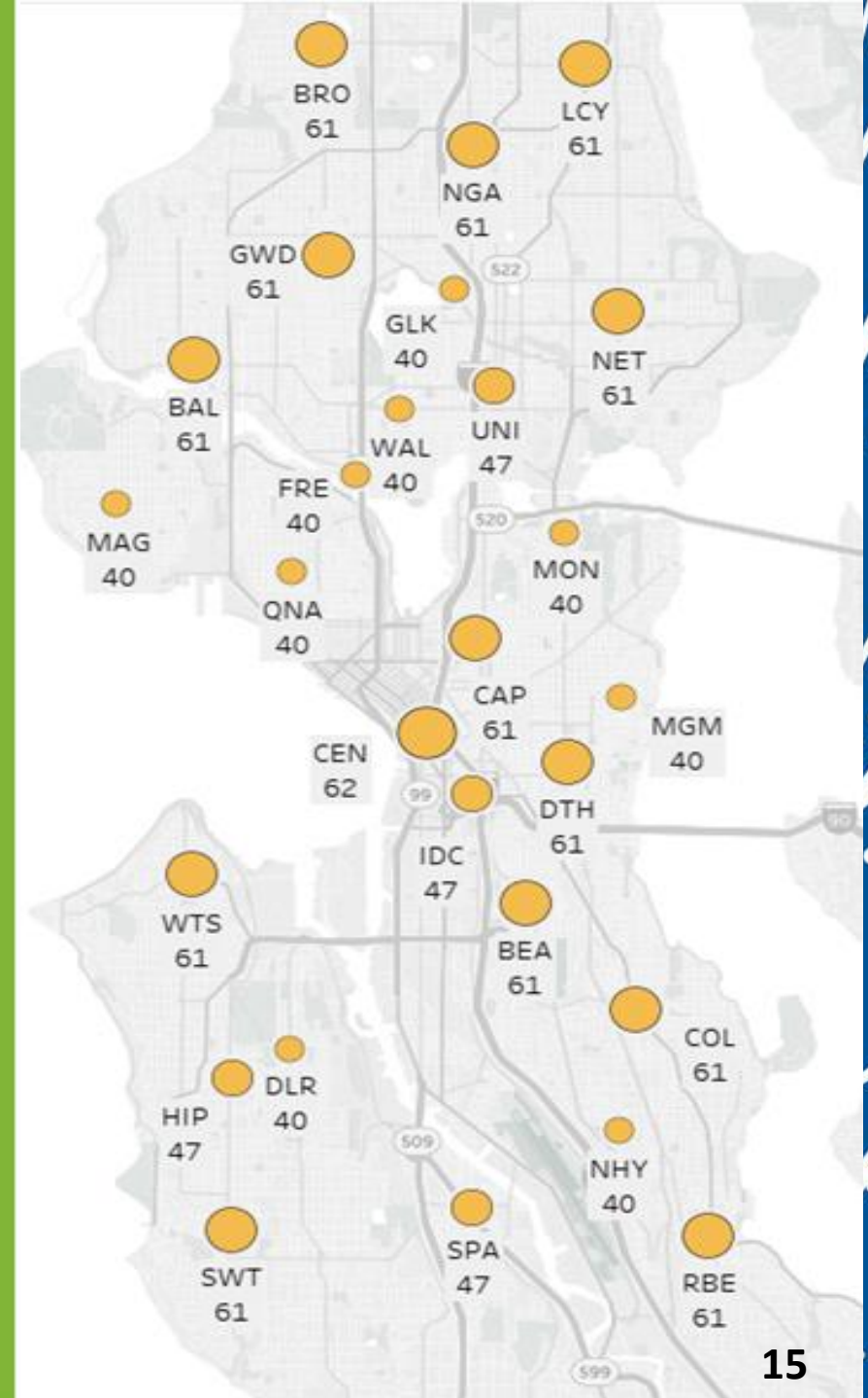
- Additional open hours are the number one community priority.
- Proposal adds nearly 5,000 open hours per year across the City.
- Hours adds were selected using an equity lens.
- These new hours provide more access to collections, technology, meeting spaces, instruction and assistance.





More Open Hours - Sundays

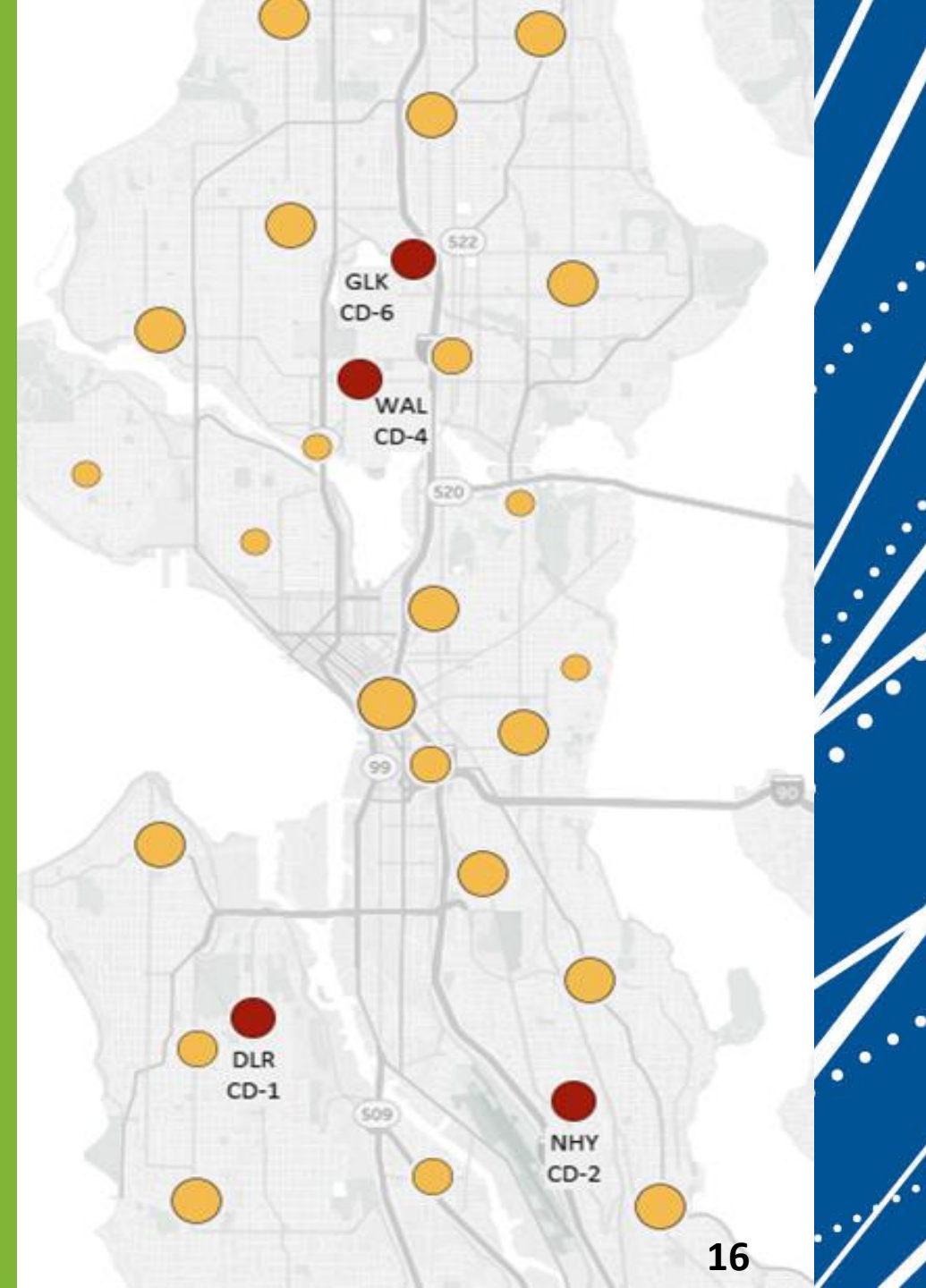
- All branches to open at noon, adding more than 1,300 hours per year.
- 28% of respondents in the 2018 Library survey wanted more weekend hours.
- These hours provide more computer access when people need it.
- Demand for computers is greatest during open hours on Sundays.





More Open Hours - Fridays

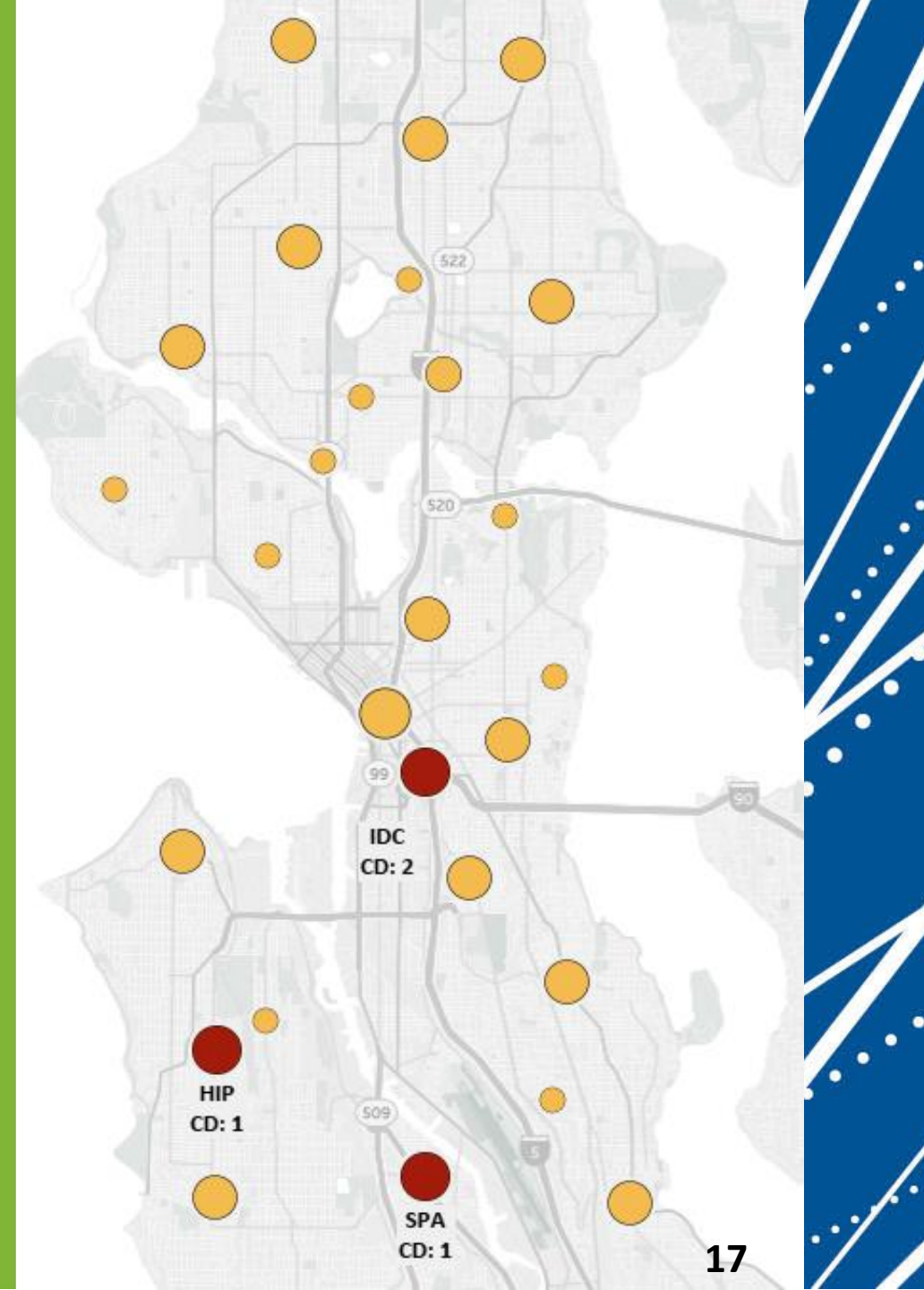
- Adds Friday hours to Delridge, NewHolly, Green Lake and Wallingford branches.
- Adds nearly 1,500 hours per year and moves four more branches to 7-day a week service.
- Branches selected to address equity.





More Open Hours – Mornings and Evenings

- Expands morning and evening hours at High Point, International District/Chinatown and South Park branches.
- Adds nearly 2,200 open hours per year, including two additional mornings (10 am opening) and two additional evenings (8 pm closing) each week.
- Based on an equity assessment, we continue to bring these branches into alignment with other 7-day branches.





More Collections Investment

Support patrons' preferences for:

- greater investment in a variety of print materials,
- digital materials such as e-books and e-audiobooks,
- digital access to music, films, tv, comics and magazines, and
- faster access to popular materials in all formats.





Impact of digital circulation

Digital materials now account for nearly 1 in 3 items circulated, up 284% since 2012.

- E-books/e-audiobooks can cost 3-5 times more than their physical counterparts.
- Digital materials have complex and changing licensing and pricing arrangements.
- Digital materials are fine-free, reducing the amount of revenue available to support operations.



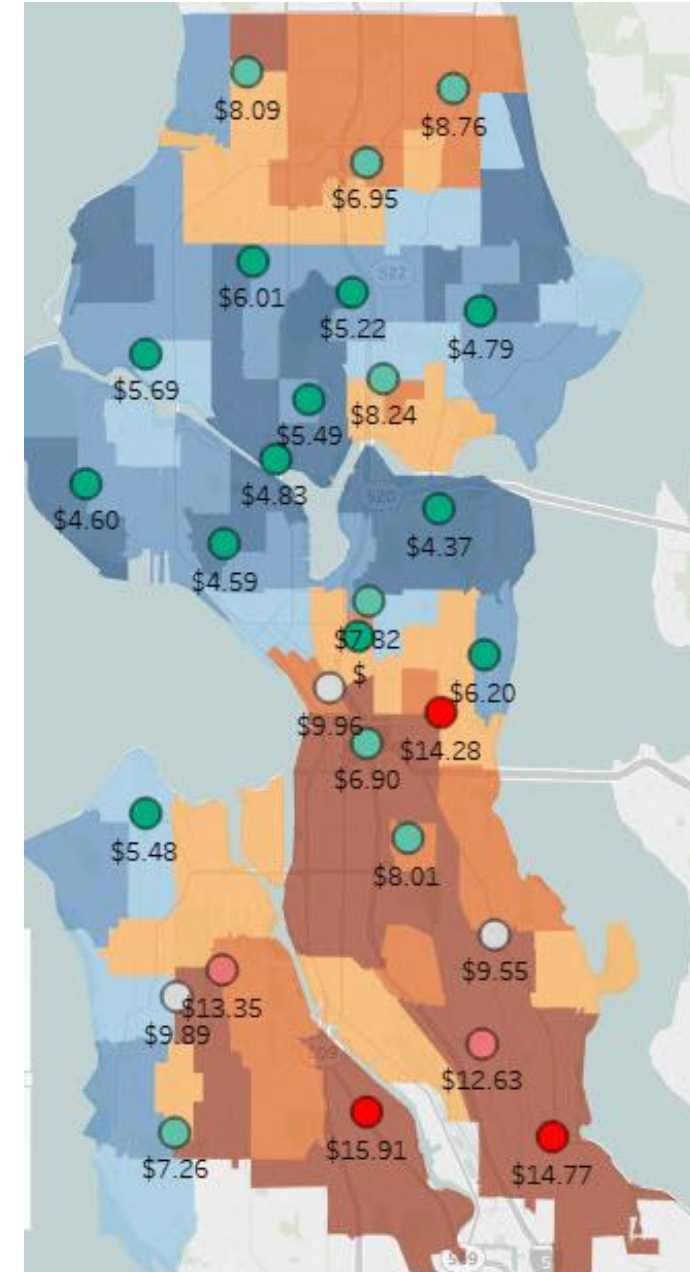
Format	Library cost per copy	License Type
Hardcover	\$ 16.90	Own
Large Print	\$ 20.18	Own
Audiobook	\$ 47.88	Own
ebook	\$ 55.00	24 month lease
eaudio	\$ 95.00	Own



Eliminating fines on physical materials.

- Policy adopted by Board in January 2018 directs Library to reduce barriers to access.
- Research indicates fines have little influence on when materials are returned.
- It also shows fines have a disproportionate impact on low-income patrons.
- Library data show higher average balances and greater numbers of blocked accounts in lower-income areas.

Average account balance
by branch location

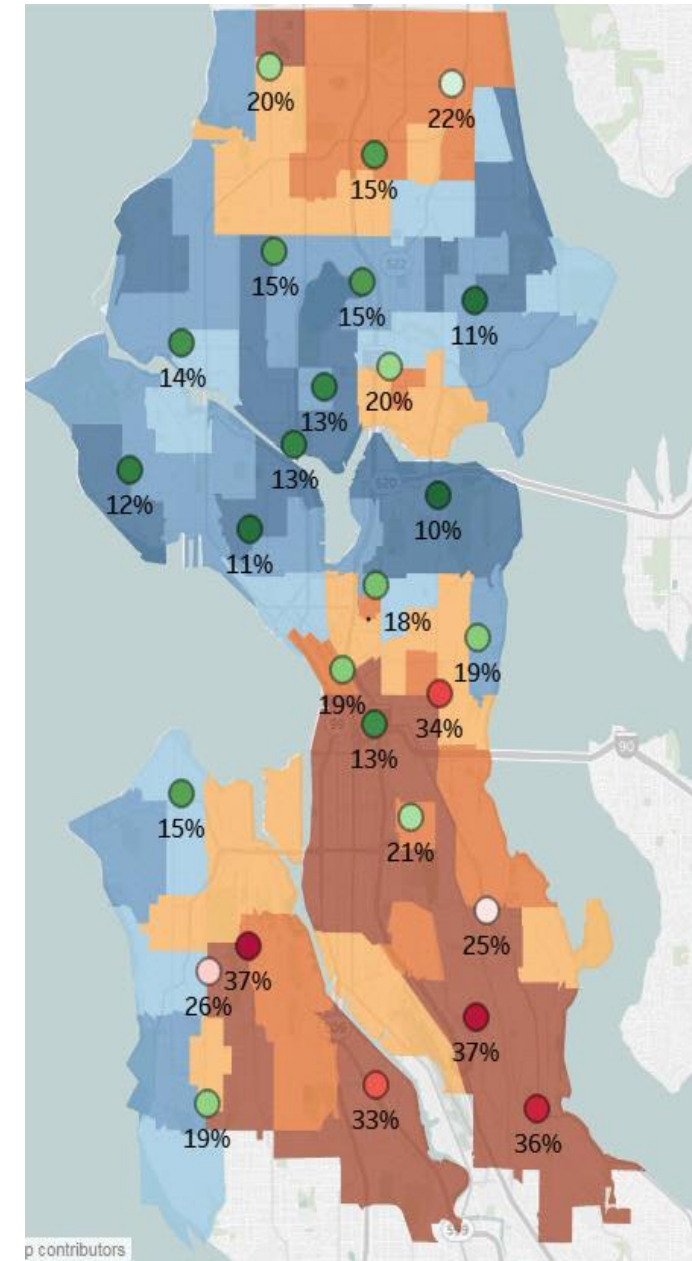




With no fines, what will stop people from keeping physical materials?

- The Library has a vested interest in getting materials back on time and is developing a revised return policy to achieve that outcome.
- Fees would still be assessed for materials that are damaged or lost.
- Accounts will still be blocked and patrons will not be able to check out materials, when items are damaged, lost or not returned in a timely manner.

Percent of accounts blocked by branch location





The experiences of other libraries

- 50+ jurisdictions have eliminated overdue fines.
- Other libraries that have eliminated fines have seen an increase in patron usage.
- When late fines are eliminated, patrons are more likely to return overdue materials.

Fine-Free Urban Libraries

Baltimore County Public Library

Columbus Metropolitan Library

Denver Public Library

Enoch Pratt Free Library

Kitsap Regional Public Library

Nashville Public Library

Salt Lake City Public Library

San Diego Public Library

Sno-Isle Library System



Technology and Online Services

- Replace equipment that supports public high-speed internet access.
- Replace the operating system which enables the Library to:
 - buy materials,
 - manage holds and checkouts, and
 - provide the means for patrons to explore our collection.





Technology and Online Services

- The Levy will provide a stable funding source for those Library programs currently supported by Cable Franchise Fee such as the SPL HotSpot Program.
- Cable Franchise Fee (CFF) revenue is declining as more Seattle residents “cut the cord” on cable service.





Maintenance

Provides earthquake retrofits for the most vulnerable Carnegie libraries to ensure health and safety of patrons and staff:

- Columbia Branch
- Green Lake Branch
- University Branch





Future of Libraries

Supports the Library's efforts to plan and prepare for the future of library services.

The Library will partner with leaders from other libraries, businesses, and non-profit organizations in this effort.



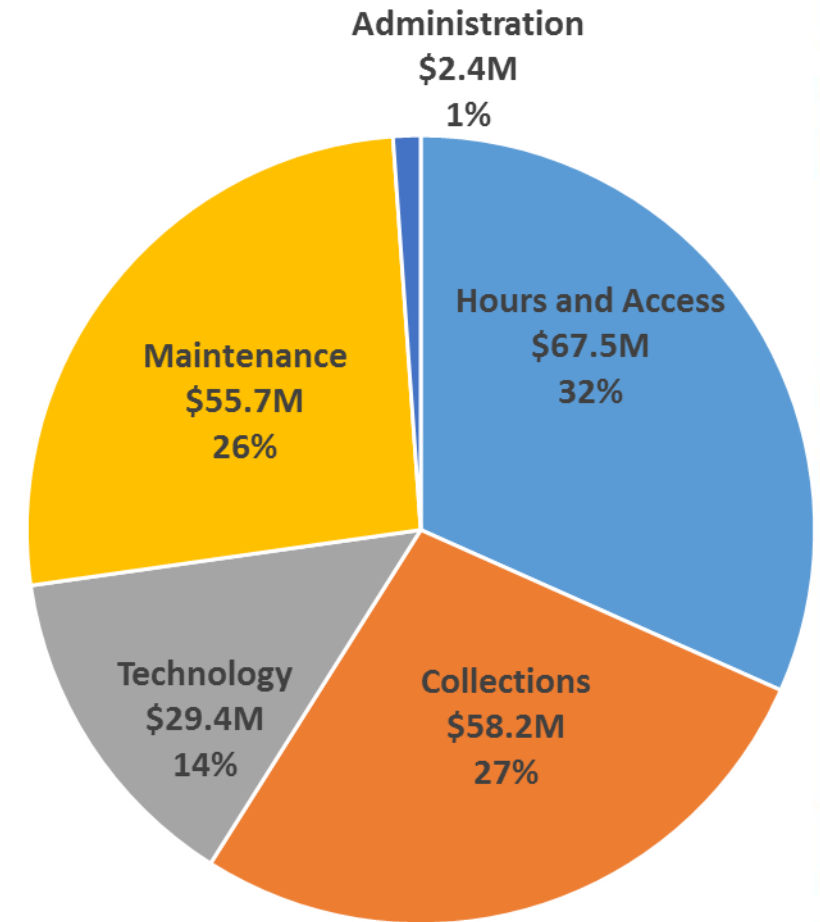
Proposed Levy Package Costs



Proposed Levy Renewal

Investment Area	Average Annual Cost per Year (millions)	7-year Cost (millions)	Estimated Annual Cost to Median Household
Hours & Access	\$ 9.6	\$ 67.5	\$ 26.87
Collections	\$ 8.3	\$ 58.2	\$ 23.19
Technology	\$ 4.2	\$ 29.4	\$ 11.72
Maintenance	\$ 8.0	\$ 55.7	\$ 22.16
Levy Administration	\$ 0.3	\$ 2.4	\$ 0.98
Total	\$ 30.47	\$213.3M	\$ 84.92

2019 Proposed Library Levy Renewal by Investment Area (\$213.3 million)





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- a critical educational resource.

