



SEATTLE CITY COUNCIL

Libraries, Education, and Neighborhoods Committee Agenda

Wednesday, February 25, 2026

9:30 AM

Council Chamber, City Hall
600 4th Avenue
Seattle, WA 98104

Maritza Rivera, Chair
Joy Hollingsworth, Vice-Chair
Dionne Foster, Member
Eddie Lin, Member
Alexis Mercedes Rinck, Member

Chair Info: 206-684-8804; Maritza.Rivera@seattle.gov

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Council Chamber Listen Line: 206-684-8566

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SEATTLE CITY COUNCIL
Libraries, Education, and Neighborhoods
Committee
Agenda
February 25, 2026 - 9:30 AM

Meeting Location:

Council Chamber, City Hall, 600 4th Avenue, Seattle, WA 98104

Committee Website:

<https://www.seattle.gov/council/libraries-education-and-neighborhoods>

This meeting also constitutes a meeting of the City Council, provided that the meeting shall be conducted as a committee meeting under the Council Rules and Procedures, and Council action shall be limited to committee business.

Members of the public may register for remote or in-person Public Comment to address the Council. Please register in advance in order to be recognized by the Chair. Details on how to register for Public Comment are listed below:

Remote Public Comment - Register online to speak during the Public Comment period at the meeting at <https://www.seattle.gov/council/committees/public-comment>. Online registration to speak will begin one hour before the meeting start time, and registration will end at the conclusion of the Public Comment period during the meeting.

In-Person Public Comment - Register to speak on the public comment sign-up sheet located inside Council Chambers at least 15 minutes prior to the meeting start time. Registration will end at the conclusion of the Public Comment period during the meeting.

Please submit written comments no later than four business hours prior to the start of the meeting to ensure that they are distributed to Councilmembers prior to the meeting. Comments may be submitted at Council@seattle.gov or at Seattle City Hall, Attn: Council Public Comment, 600 4th Ave., Floor 2, Seattle, WA 98104. Business hours are considered 8 a.m. - 5 p.m. Comments received after that time will be distributed after the meeting to Councilmembers and included as part of the public record.

Please Note: Times listed are estimated

A. Call To Order

B. Approval of the Agenda

C. Public Comment

Members of the public may address items on the agenda and matters within the purview of the committee. Please register in advance to be recognized by the Chair.

D. Items of Business

1. Seattle Public Library 2019 Levy Background and Overview

Supporting Documents: [Presentation \(added; 2/25/26\)](#)

Part 2

Briefing and Discussion

Presenters: Tom Fay, Executive Director and Chief Librarian, Rob Gannon, Kai Tang, and Kiersten Nelson, Seattle Public Library

E. Adjournment



Legislation Text

File #: Inf 2839, **Version:** 1

Seattle Public Library 2019 Levy Background and Overview



The Seattle Public Library Library Levy Background

Feb. 25, 2026

www.spl.org/Levy

Agenda

Levy Overview

- Library Budget
- Levy Categories

Administration & Central Costs

Hours & Access

- Open Hours

Helping Children

- Early Learning & Literacy

Feb. 19 Presentation: Collections, Building Maintenance, Technology & Online Services



2026 Library Budget

Operating budget

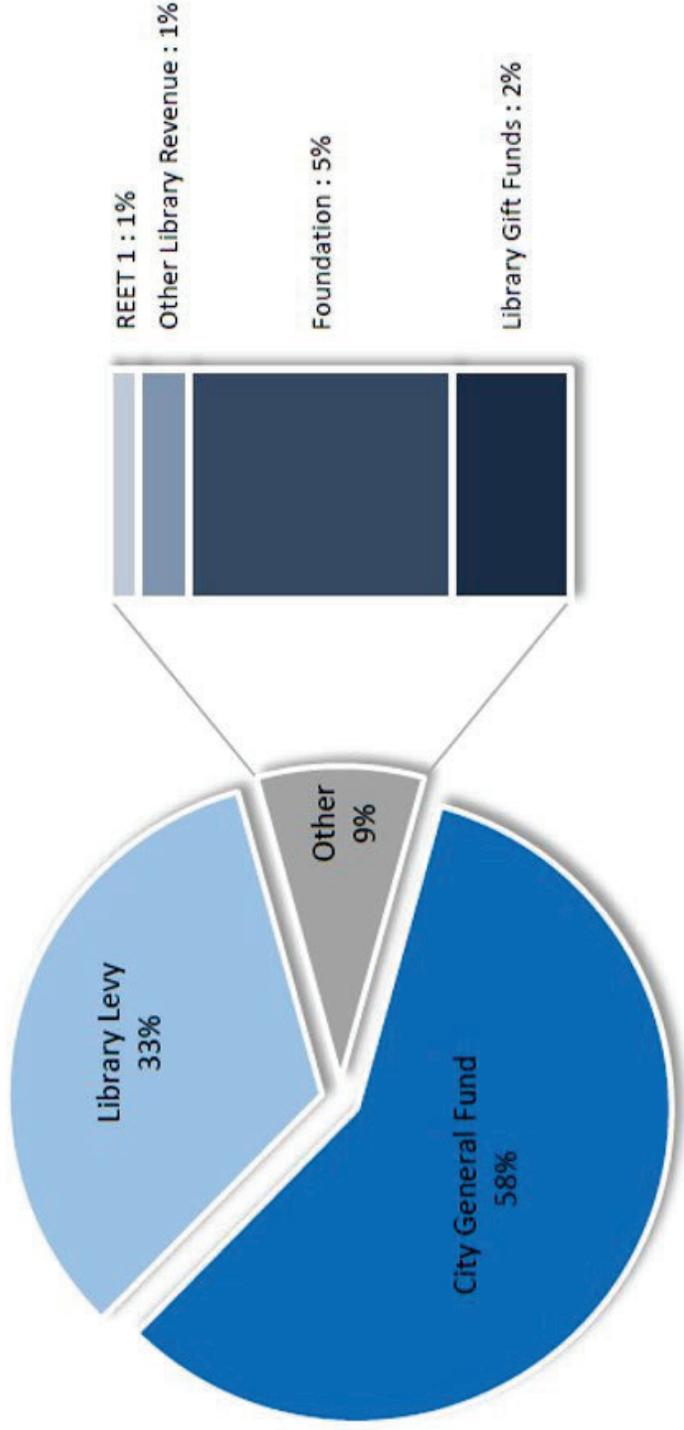
\$102.5M

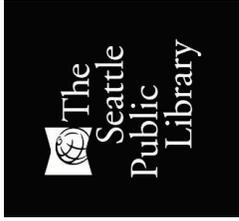
- \$35.7M from levy

Capital budget

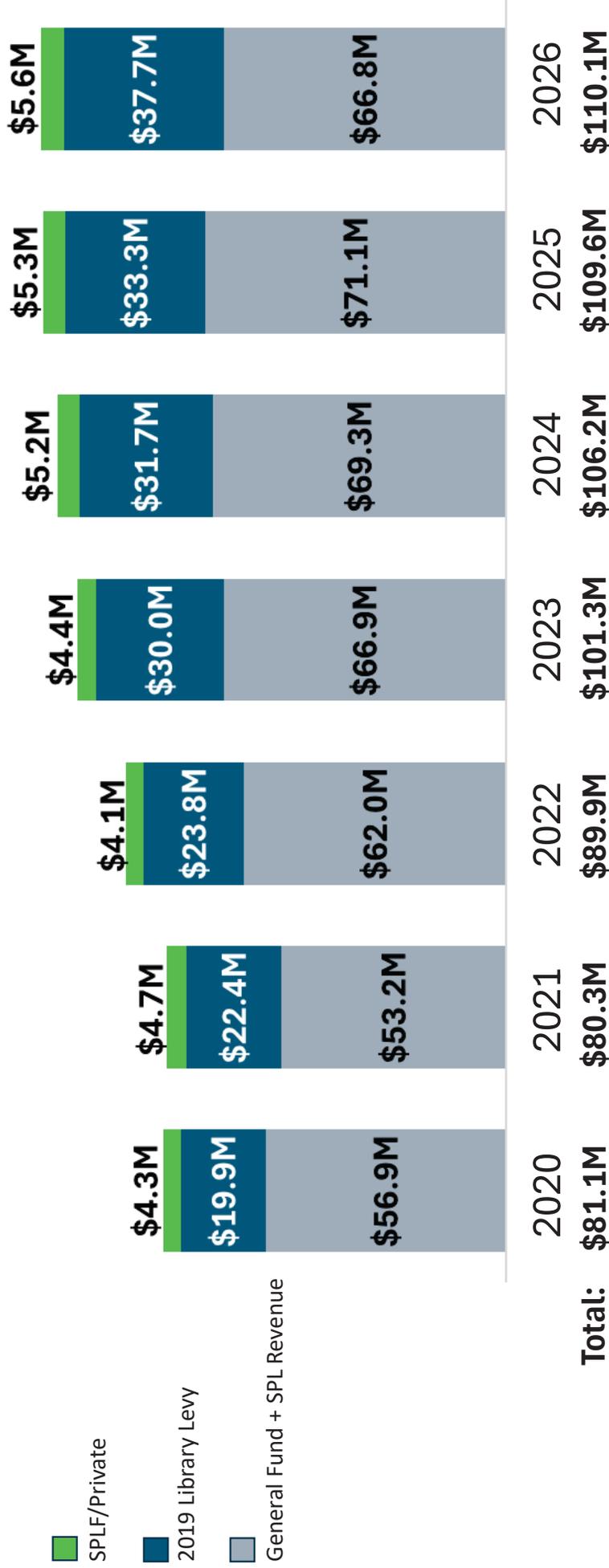
\$2.6M

- \$2.0M from levy
- \$605k from REET





Library Budget: By Funding Source



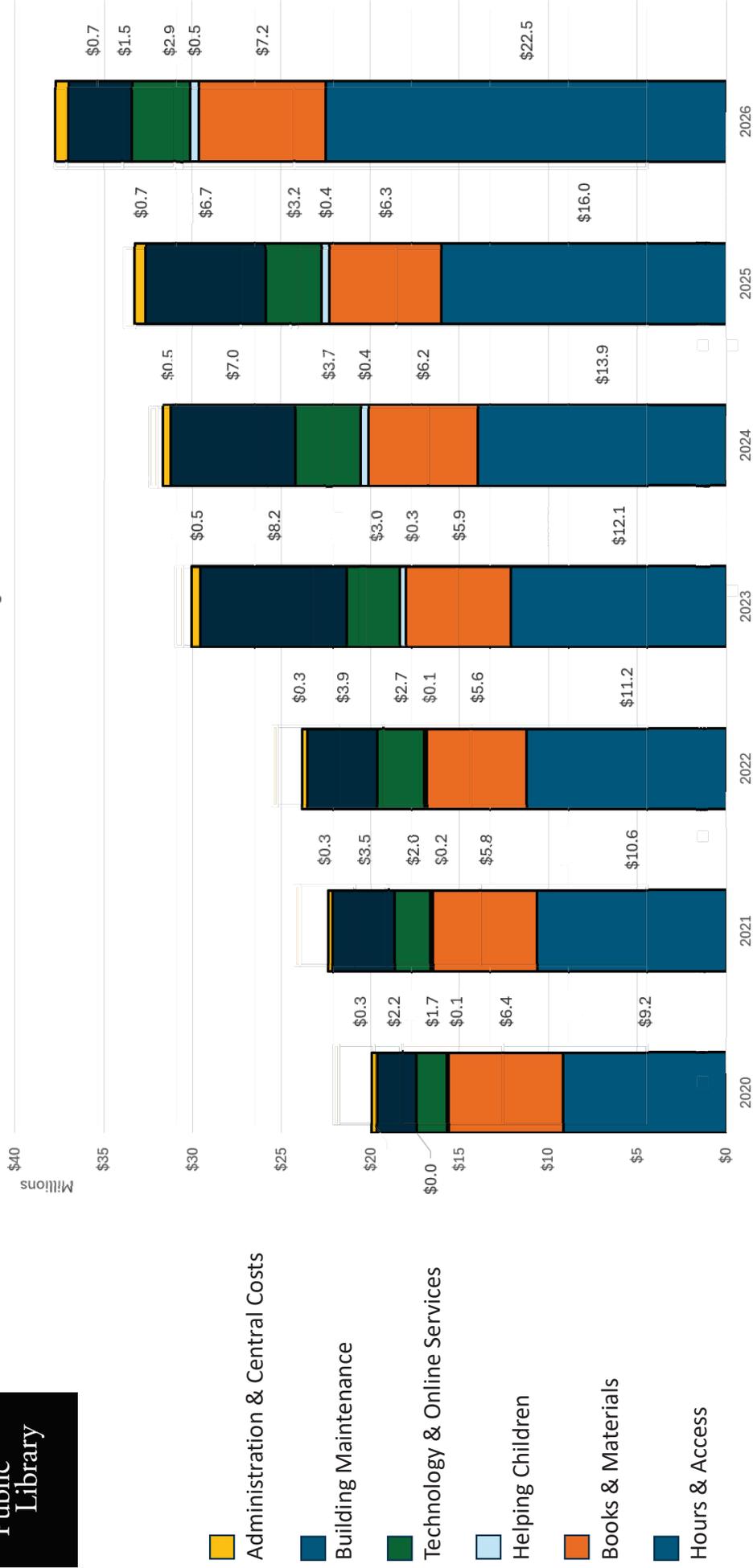


Annual Levy Funding: Funding Source by Percentage

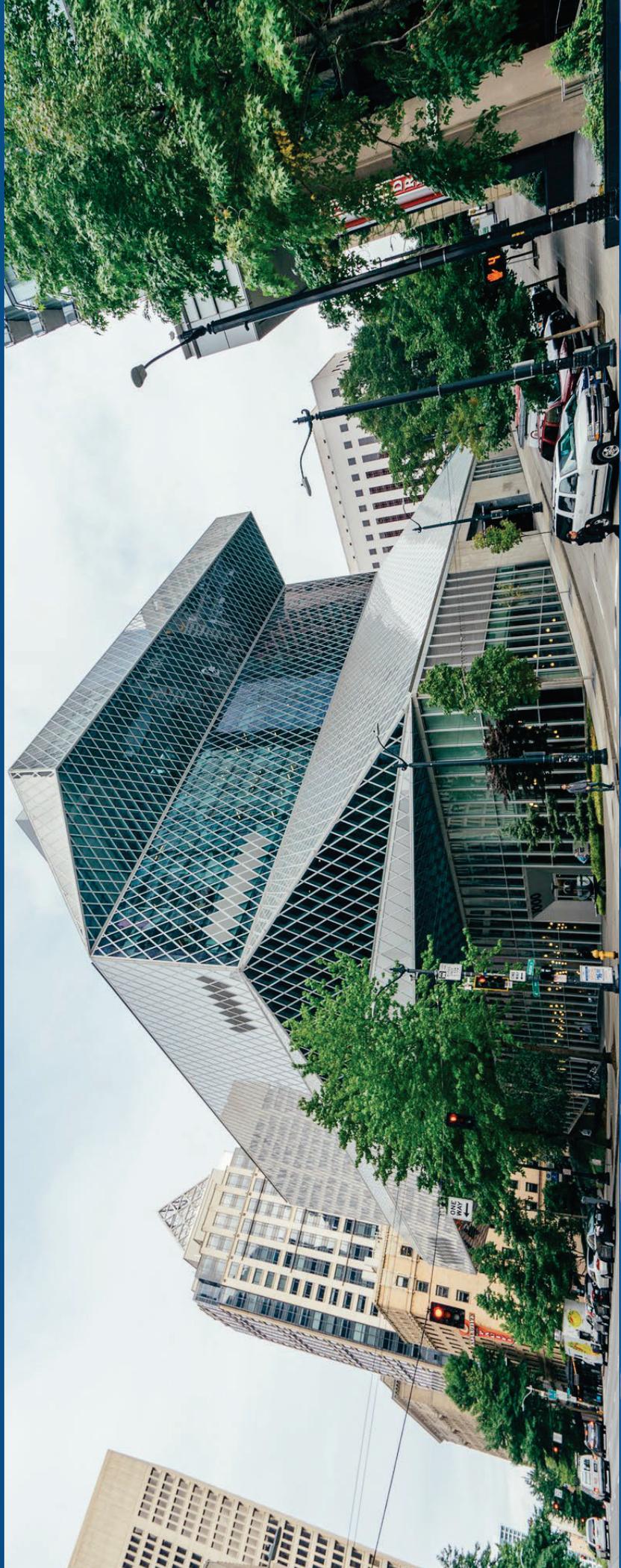




Annual Levy Funding: By Category



Administration & Central Costs





Overview

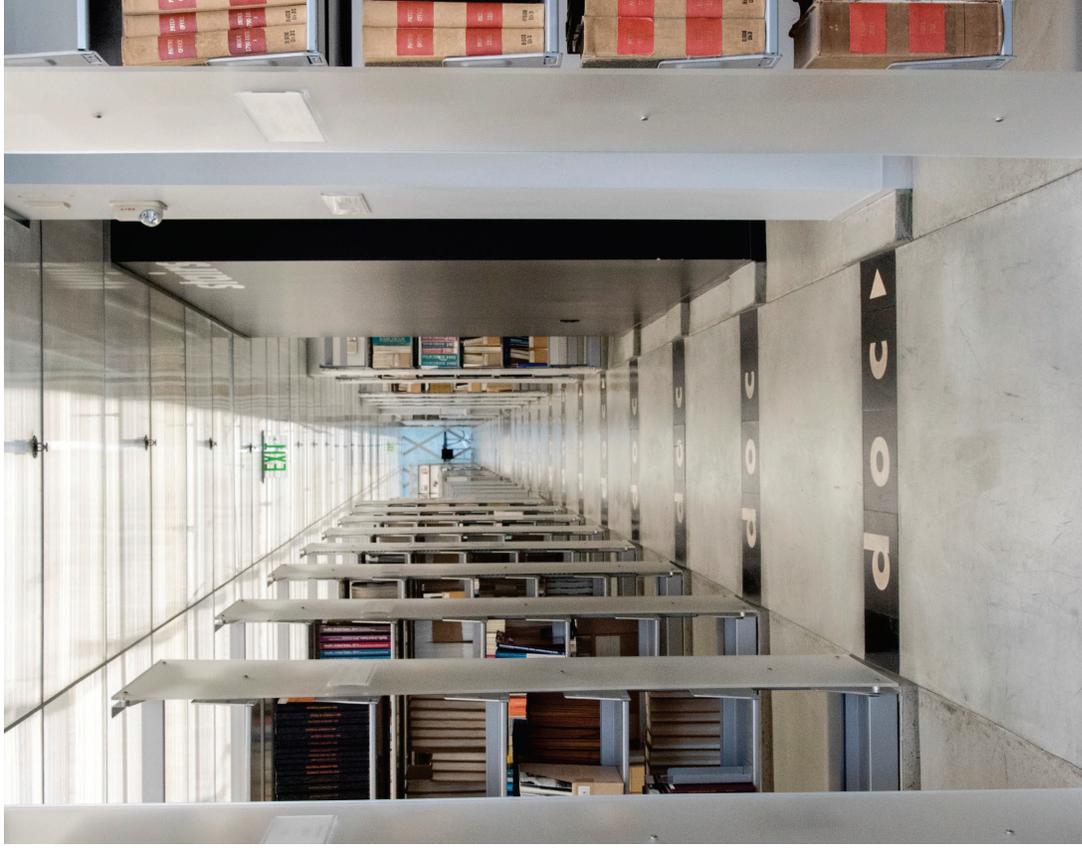
ADMINISTRATION & CENTRAL COSTS

Provides funding for levy administration

- One part-time levy analyst
- Two part-time financial analysts

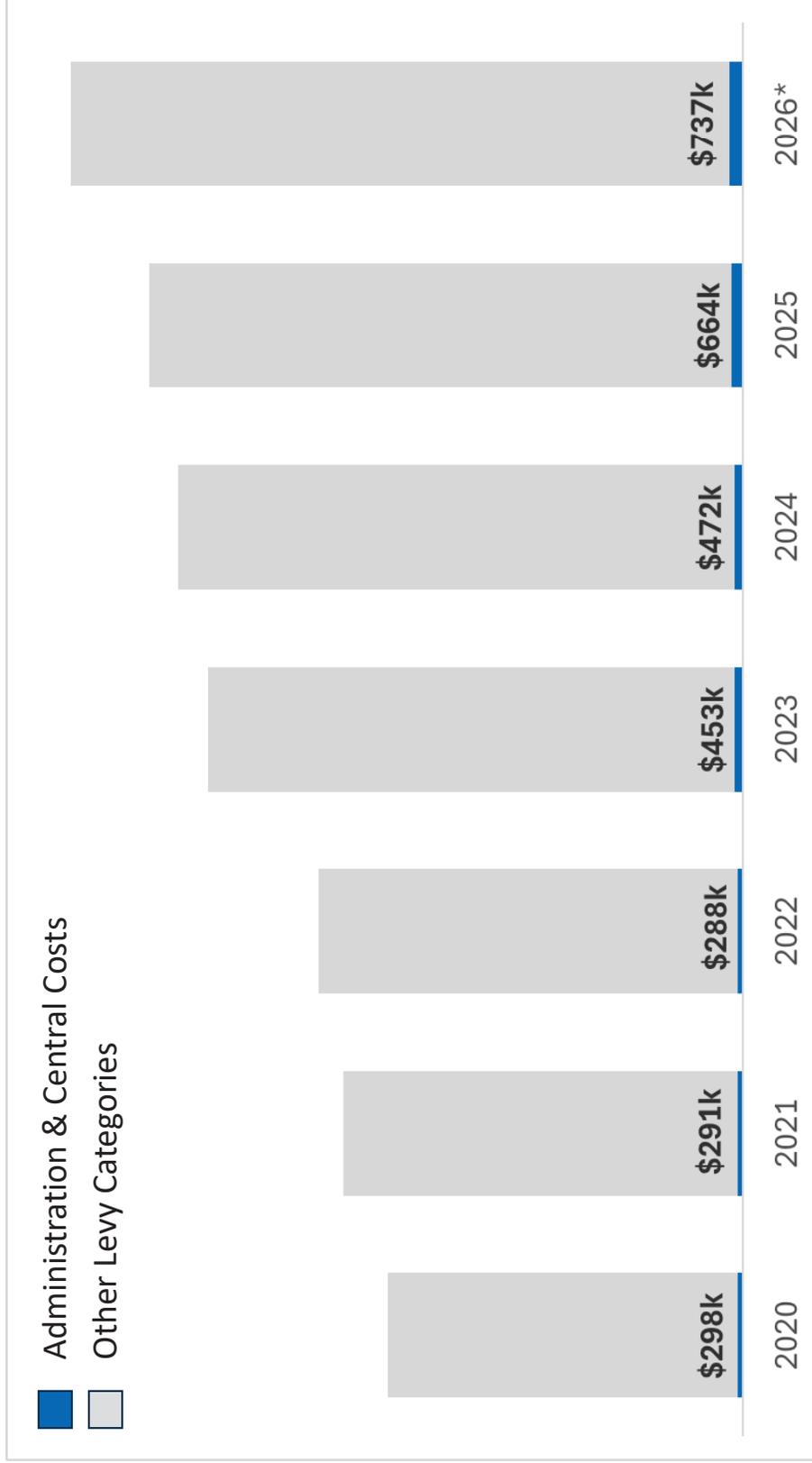
Provides funding for City of Seattle Central Costs

- Rate-base allocations for general services provided by and for City of Seattle departments:
 - Includes HR, IT and FAS
 - The Library relies on the City for limited services but has its own HR, IT, and Admin Services divisions
- Transferred from General Fund to the levy during budget development in 2023
 - \$263k in 2023
 - \$386k in 2024
 - \$401k in 2025





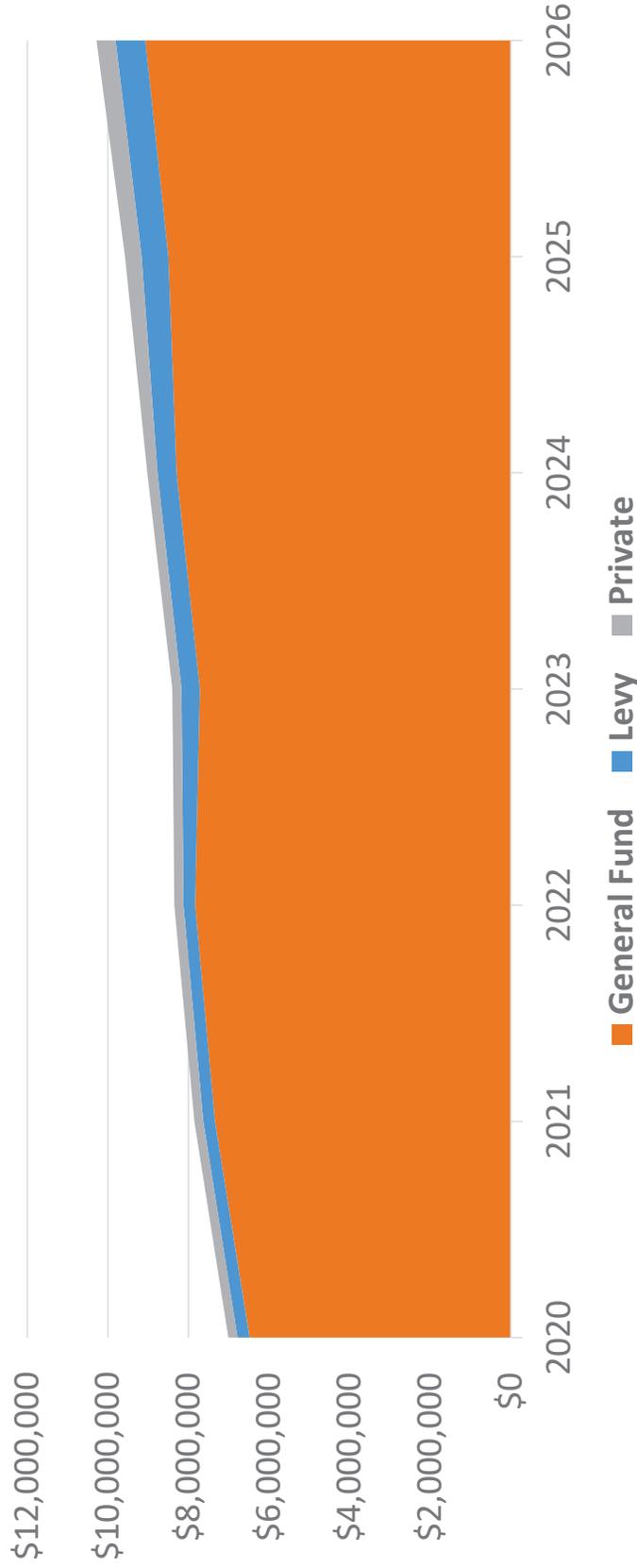
Annual Levy Funding: Administration & Central Costs





Spending by Funding Source

ADMINISTRATION & CENTRAL COSTS





Spending by Funding Source

ADMINISTRATION & CENTRAL COSTS

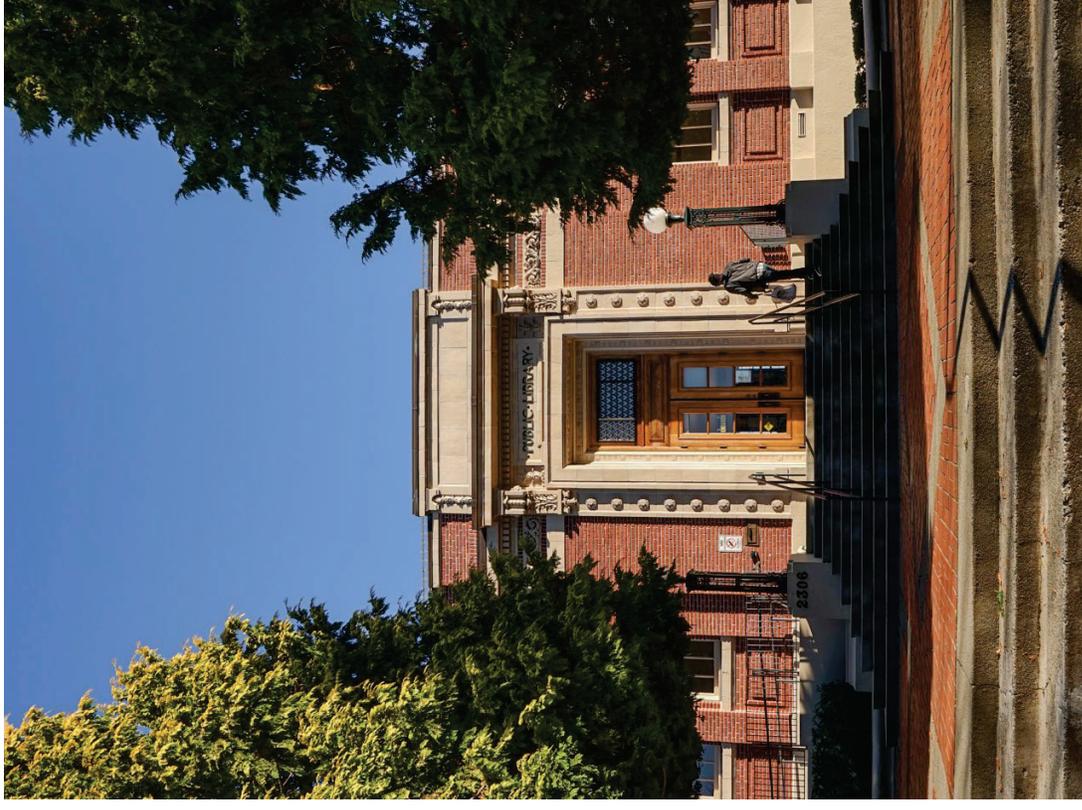
Funding Source	2020	2021	2022	2023	2024	2025	2026 <i>budgeted</i>
General Fund	\$6.48M	\$7.34M	\$7.83M	\$7.72M	\$8.29M	\$8.50M	\$9.07M
Library Levy	\$0.30M	\$0.29M	\$0.29M	\$0.45M	\$0.47M	\$0.66M	\$0.74M
Private Funds	\$0.23M	\$0.22M	\$0.23M	\$0.23M	\$0.25M	\$0.41M	\$0.47M



Opportunities

ADMINISTRATION & CENTRAL COSTS

- **Opportunities**
- Administrative funding provides support for transparent and regular reporting of progress and performance
- In-depth levy progress reports have been shared with the public through the life of the 2012 and 2019 levies
 - Started quarterly reporting for 2019 levy





Accomplishments

Open Hours & Access





Overview

HOURS & ACCESS

- Open Hours provides community access to:**
- 27 safe and welcoming public spaces
 - Cooling, warming and clean air centers
 - Over 1.8M physical books and other items
 - Information services staff
 - Answered over 37,000 patron questions through our Ask Us service in 2025 such as open hours, special collections inquiries, program information
 - Free public meeting rooms at 22 locations
 - Free private study rooms at 17 locations
 - Thousands of free programs each year
 - Free Wi-Fi, computers, device charging, assistive technology and more





Highlights

HOURS & ACCESS

Stabilized Open Hours

- Significantly impacted by unanticipated factors
 - 2020 pandemic closures and post-COVID hiring challenges, citywide hiring freeze,
 - Built hours back = 1,398 systemwide hours per week
 - Slightly higher than 2019 levels (~20 more hours per week)
 - More consistent schedules & fewer unexpected closures
- 14 locations open 7 days a week
 - Central, Ballard, Beacon Hill, Capitol Hill, Columbia, Douglass-Truth, Greenwood, High Point, Lake City, Montlake, Northeast, Northgate, Rainier Beach, South Park
- 12 locations open 6 days a week
 - Broadview, Delridge, Fremont, Green Lake, International District/Chinatown, Madrona-Sally Goldmark, Magnolia, NewHolly, Queen Anne, Southwest, Wallingford, West Seattle
- University Branch closed for construction

Increased Library Access

- Fine-free borrowing since 2020
- 24/7 pick-up lockers at 7 locations
- Automatic renewal of materials if not on hold for other patrons

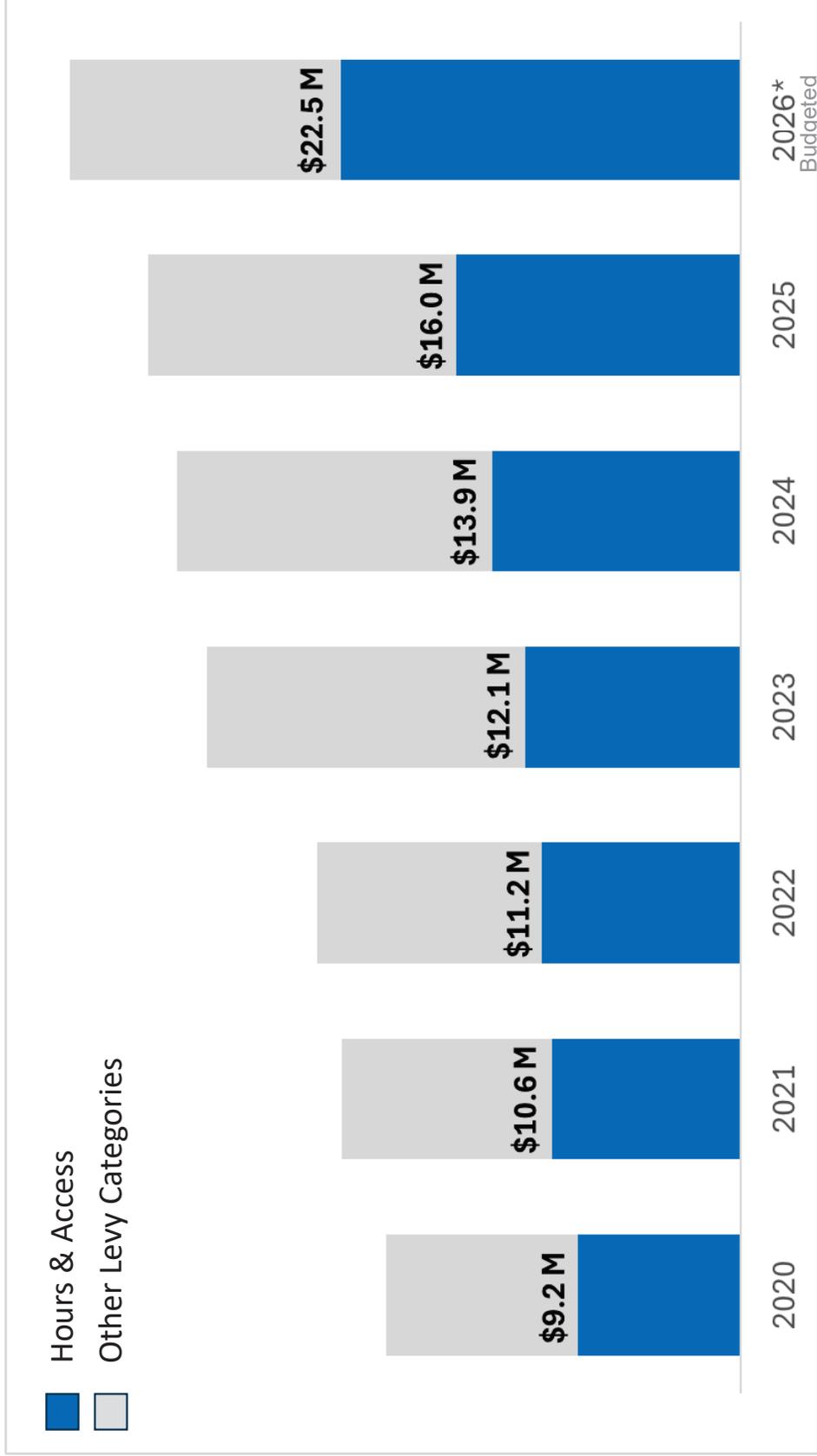


Increased Security

- Levy funds 9 security officers (24 staff total)
 - Essential personnel for public safety
 - Deployed from Central Library with special emphasis patrols at branches as needed
 - On duty early morning until late evening, seven days a week



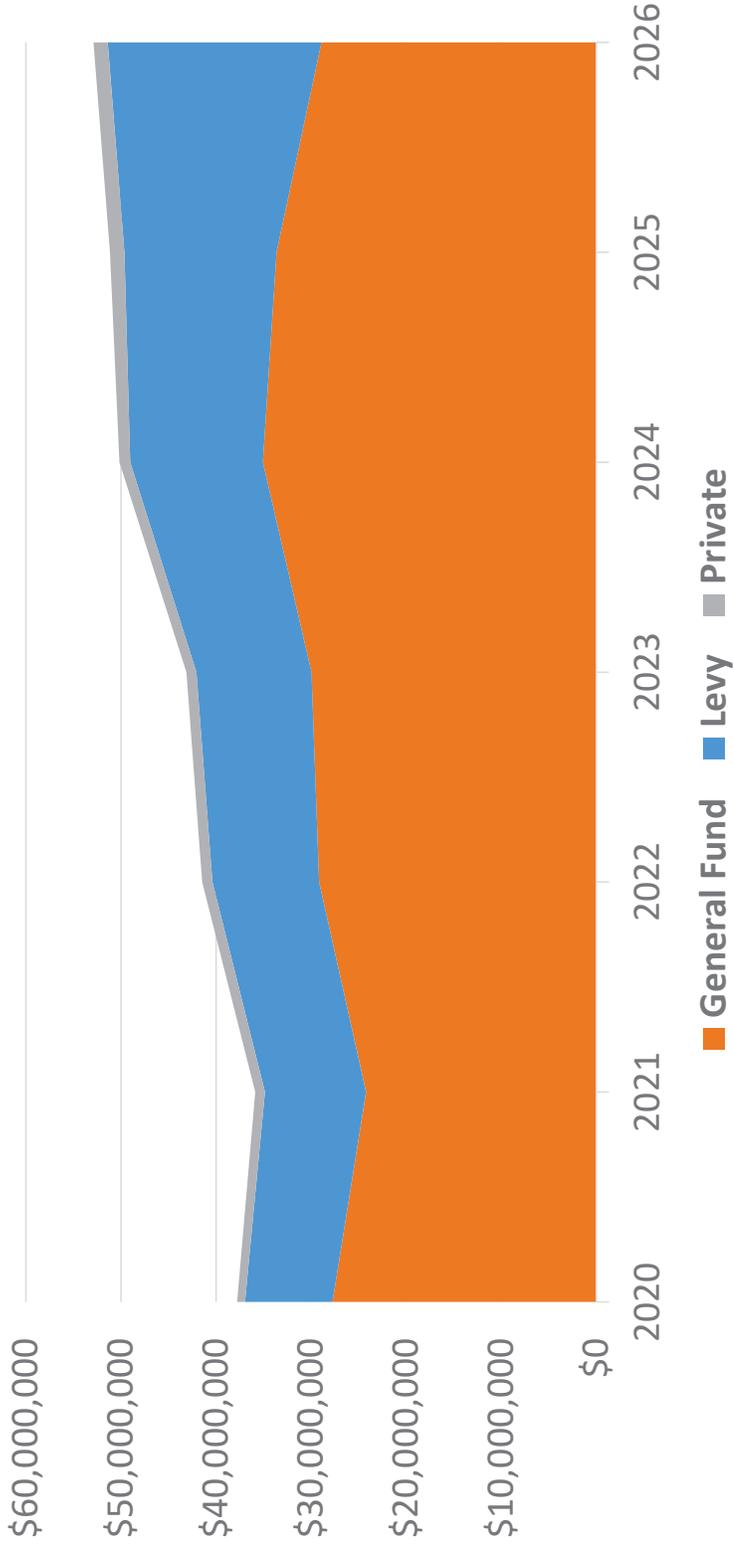
Annual Levy Funding: Hours & Access





Spending by Funding Source

HOURS & ACCESS





Spending by Funding Source

HOURS & ACCESS

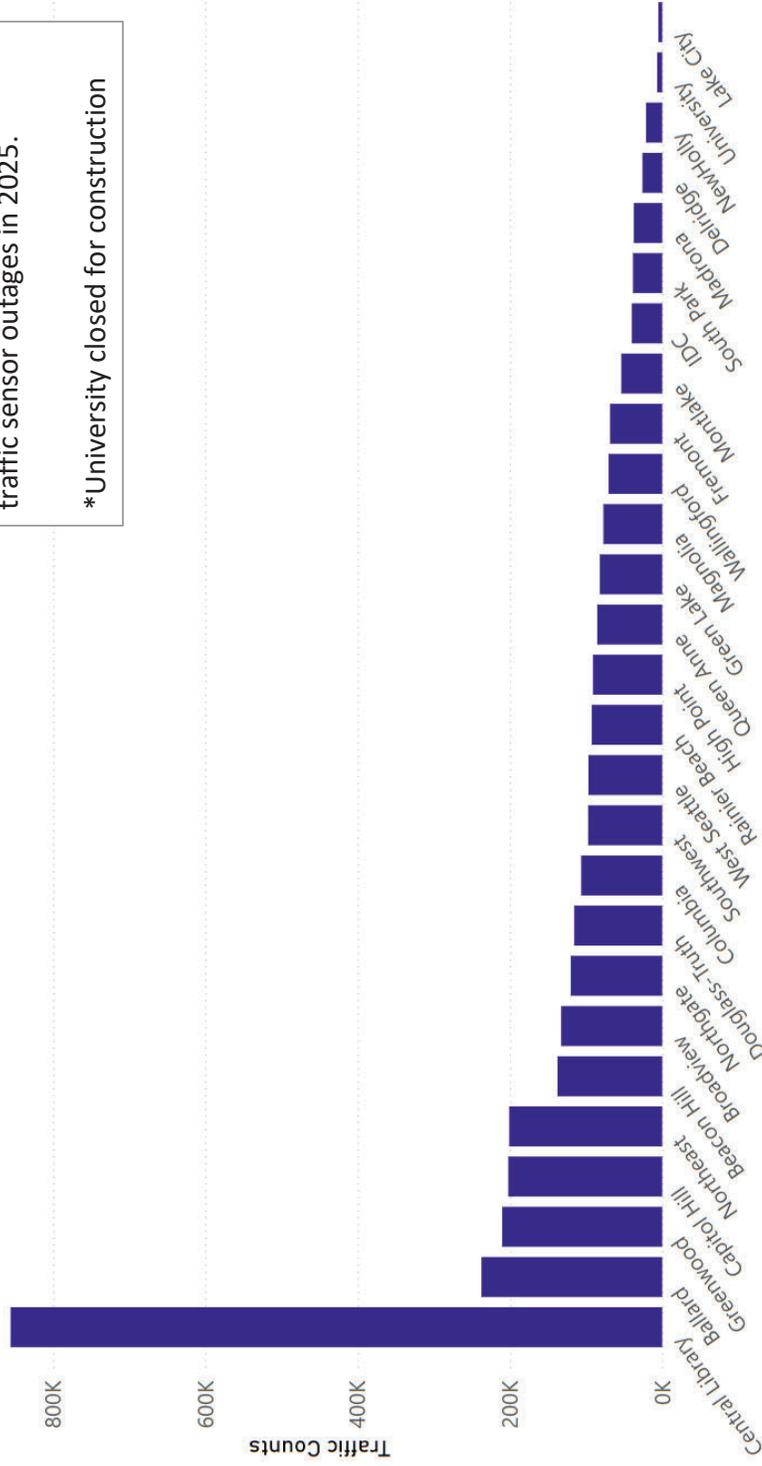
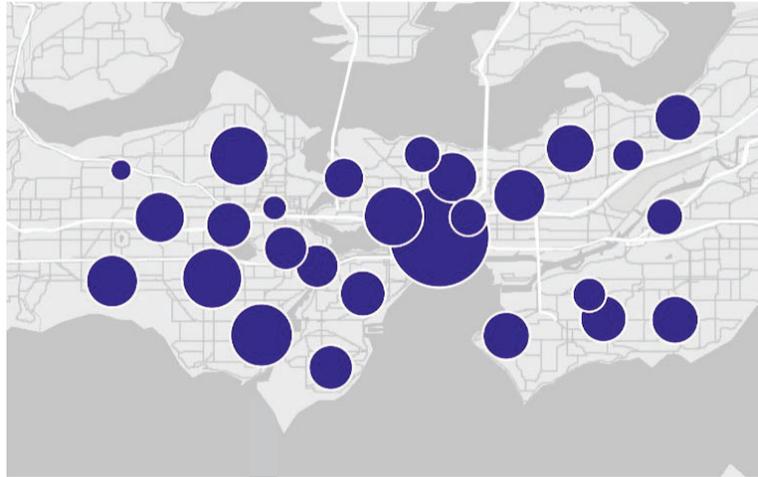
Funding Source	2020	2021	2022	2023	2024	2025	2026 <i>budgeted</i>
General Fund	\$27.76M	\$24.23M	\$29.16M	\$29.97M	\$35.08M	\$33.65M	\$28.91M
Library Levy	\$9.18M	\$10.63M	\$11.21M	\$12.11M	\$13.95M	\$15.99M	\$22.48M
Private Funds	\$0.85M	\$1.03M	\$1.08M	\$1.05M	\$1.13M	\$1.51M	\$1.50M



2025 Patron Traffic by Library Location

HOURS & ACCESS

*Lake City and NewHolly experienced traffic sensor outages in 2025.
 *University closed for construction



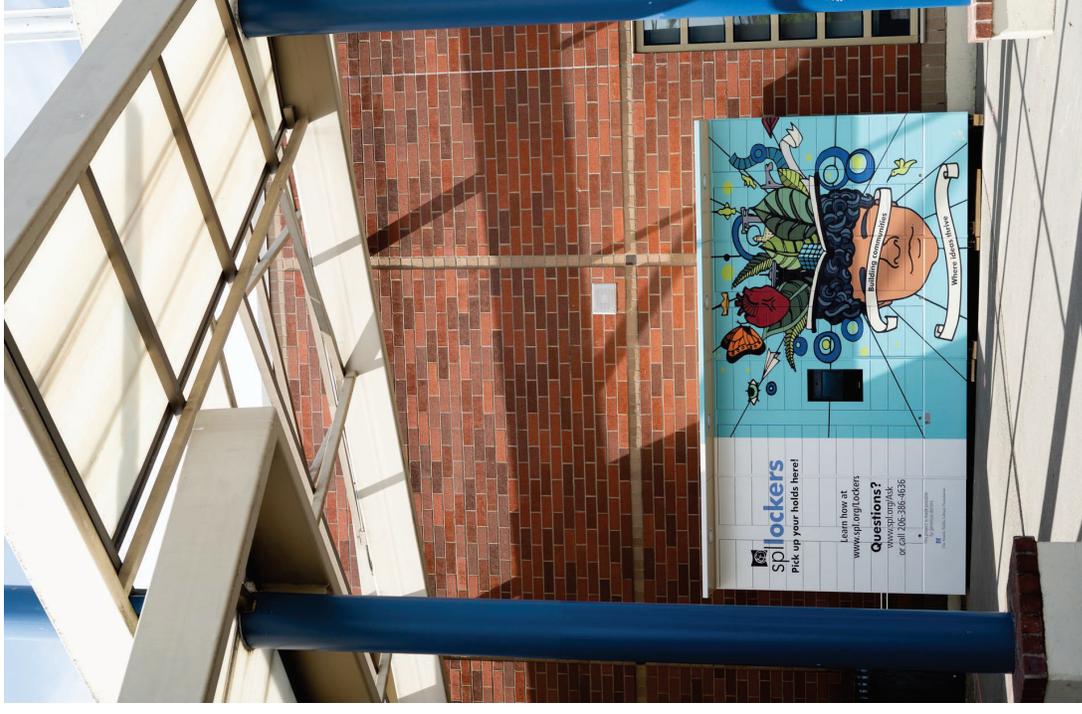


Pickup Lockers: 24/7 Access

HOURS & ACCESS

Pick up your holds any time of day!

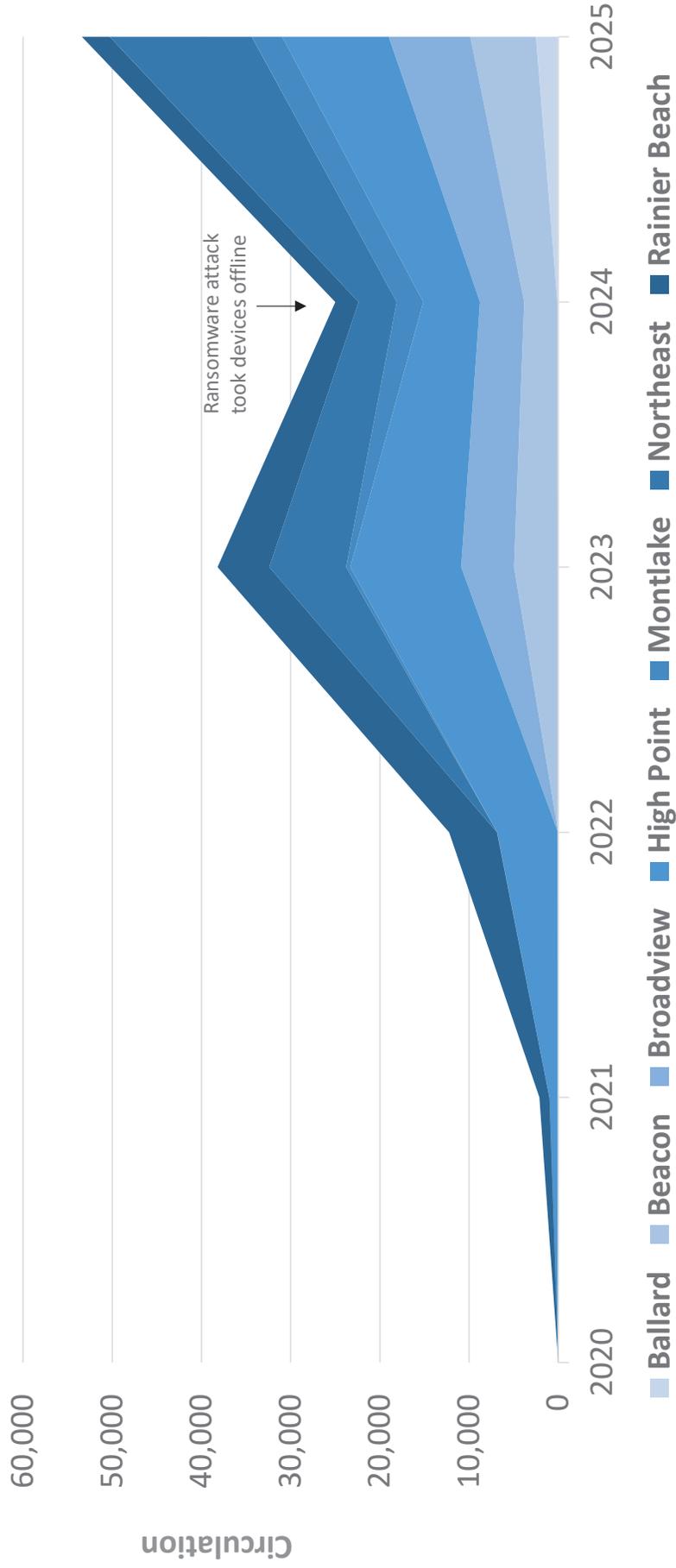
- Available at seven Library locations:
 - Ballard, Beacon Hill, Broadview, High Point, Montlake, Northeast, and Rainier Beach branches
- Instructions available in multiple languages
 - English, Chinese, Spanish, and Vietnamese
- Leveraged funding from multiple sources to provide this option for patrons:
 - Devices paid for with state grants and donations from The Seattle Public Library Foundation
 - Levy-funded CIP and IT teams install and maintain the devices





Locker Circulation Per Branch

HOURS & ACCESS





Pickup Lockers: Costs & Funding Sources

HOURS & ACCESS



Supported by a variety of funding sources since 2021:

- \$275,000:** Seattle Public Library Foundation
 - Devices at the Beacon, Broadview, High Point, Montlake, Northeast, and Rainier Beach branches
- \$91,000:** State funds
 - Device at the Ballard Branch
- \$86,000:** General Fund
 - System maintenance and service costs
- \$8,000 levy**
 - CIP/IT costs (construction, initial configuration)



Mobile Services: We Bring the Library to You!

HOURS & ACCESS

Four vehicles:

- **1 walk-on Bookmobile:** Book browsing for kids at preschools and childcare centers and for the public at community events
- **2 lobby stop trucks:** Material delivery to facilities for older adults and people with disabilities
- **1 delivery van:** Material delivery to facilities for older adults and people with disabilities

Books by Mail and Home Service:

- Delivers materials to your home (mail or delivery)
- For eligible patrons
 - Free service for those unable to travel to the Library



Mobile Services: We Bring the Library to You!

HOURS & ACCESS



Bookmobile & lobby stop vehicles serve:

- **Kids:** Preschools and childcare centers
 - Monthly visits
 - Eligibility requirements include:
 - Within Seattle city limits
 - At least 20 children enrolled
 - Not within easy walking distance to a library
 - Sites are free, low-cost, subsidized or serve primarily students with disabilities
- **Older adults:** Retirement homes, senior housing, and senior centers
 - For facilities that serve a significant number of residents or clients who are unable to visit a library due to age, or physical or intellectual disability
- **People with disabilities:** Living facilities, nursing homes, and group homes
 - For facilities primarily serving low-income people with disabilities



Mobile Services: We Bring the Library to You!

HOURS & ACCESS

Books by Mail and Home Service:

- Delivers materials to your home once a month
 - Mail or delivery
- Borrow any circulating library materials
 - Books, audiobooks, magazines, DVDs, and music CDs
- For eligible patrons
 - Free service for those unable to travel to the Library
 - For individuals who have an illness for six months or longer or are living with a disability



Mobile Services: Monthly Stops

HOURS & ACCESS

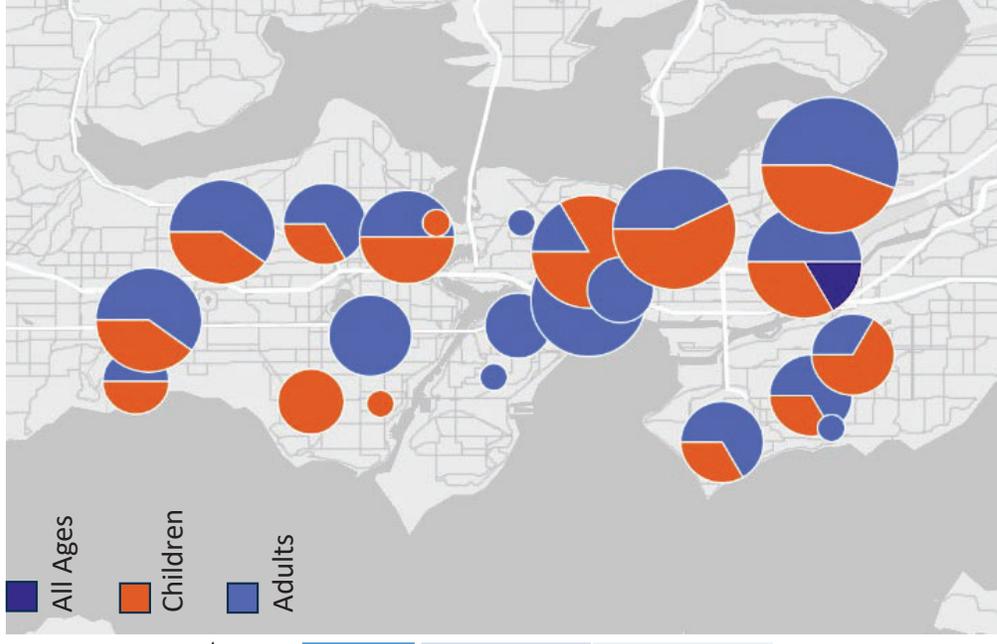
Audience	Facility type	# of stops
Children	Preschool / Child Care	32
Adult	Adult family home	11
	Assisted Living	9
	Tiny House Village (Georgetown Village)	1
	Hospital (UW Center for Behavioral Health and Learning)	1
	King County Correctional Facility	1
	Low-income Housing	24
All Ages	Nursing Home	11
	Retirement Home	17
	Senior Center	3
	Tiny House Village (Camp Second Chance)	1





Mobile Services HOURS & ACCESS

Mobile Services Stop Locations By Zip Code



	2020	2021	2022	2023	2024	2025
# patrons* served	1,081	949	1,024	1,050	1,015	1,042
Circulation	38,608	62,074	59,727	62,066	45,753	52,741

*The number of patrons who check out materials using their individual library cards through lobby stops, Books by Mail and home delivery service.

Patrons who check out materials using institutional cards – such as students at preschools and people at adult family homes, assisted living facilities, encampments, etc. – are not included in this number due to the complexity of accounting for individuals. **Estimate for total number of patrons served in 2025 is 2,750.**

Library Equal Access Program (LEAP)

HOURS & ACCESS

LEAP Drop-in Assistive Technology Lab

- Located on Level 1 of the Central Library
- Mondays from 2 p.m. to 6 p.m.
- Wednesdays and Fridays from noon to 6 p.m.
- Refreshable braille displays, CCTV magnifiers, height-adjustable computer desks

All locations offer:

- Screen reader software
- Screen magnification software
- An accessibility toolkit with magnifiers and writing guides

ADA accommodations

- Contact leap@spl.org or 206-615-1380 V/TTY





Literacy, Enrichment & Empowerment

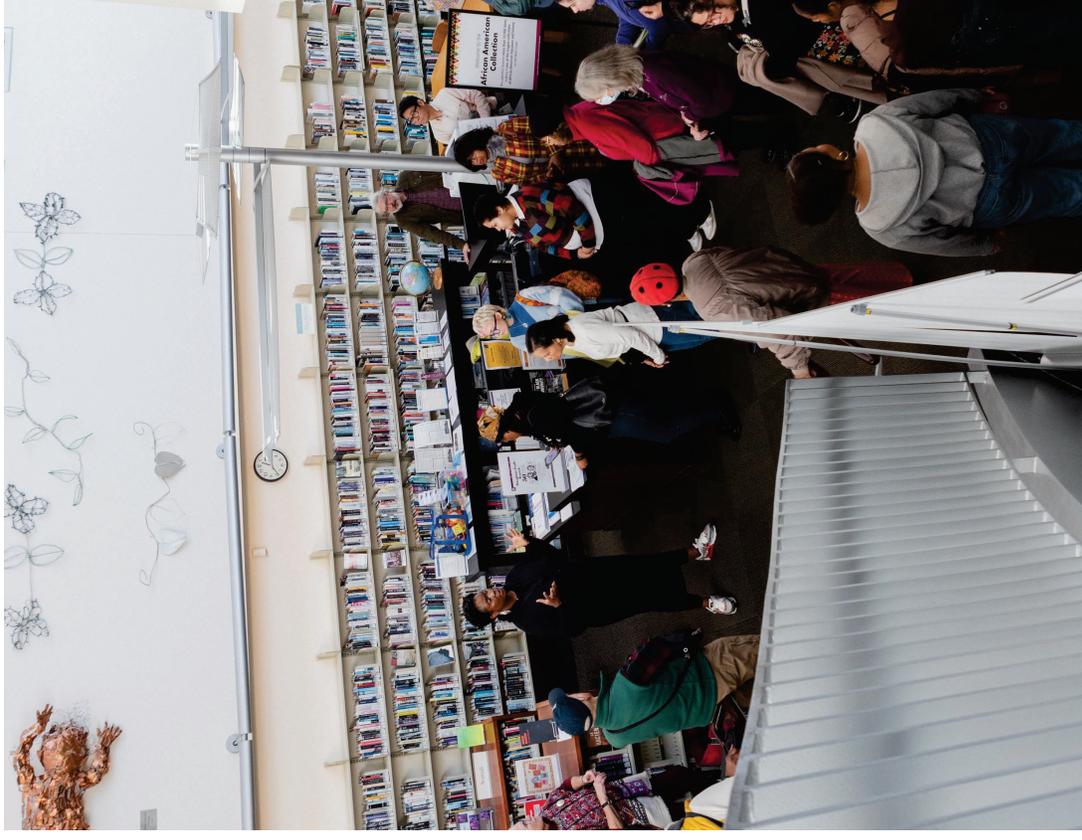
HOURS & ACCESS

Activating Our Spaces

The Library leverages open hours, private funds, and community partnerships to offer programs for all ages, needs, and interests.

Thousands of programs and activities across all locations in 2025:

- Story times & play groups
- Teen drop-ins
- Older adult activities
- Author events
- Classes & workshops
- Arts, crafts & gallery exhibits
- Community celebrations
- Outreach activities





Literacy, Enrichment & Empowerment

HOURS & ACCESS

Program Category	Funding source	Programs
Early Learning	Levy	Story Time, World Language Story Time, Raising a Reader, Play and Learn
School K-5	Seattle Public Library Foundation and General Fund	Summer of Learning, Global Reading Challenge, Team Read, School Age Programming, Homework Help
Teen and Young Adult	General Fund	Future Pathways, Teen Workforce Development, Teen and YA programs, Homework Help
Digital Media & Learning	Seattle Public Library Foundation	Virtual Reality for Wellbeing, Nourishing Minds, KidsTeam, eSports, Kids Digital Art
Workforce Development & Adult Basic Ed	General Fund	Life Skills, In-language computer classes, English for Speakers of Other Languages (ESOL), Adult education tutoring, Workforce Development
Entrepreneur and non-profit support	Seattle Public Library Foundation	Library 2 Business, Intellectual Property/Corporate Legal Consults, Business Credit Consults, 1-on-1 support
Outreach/Engagement	Seattle Public Library Foundation and General Fund	Community Engagement, Artist in Residence, Civic Engagement, QTBIPOC Artist Engagement
Literature & Humanities	Seattle Public Library Foundation	Seattle Reads, Author programs, Bullitt Lectures, Guest Curator
Older Adult Services	Seattle Public Library Foundation	Aging-In-Place and retirement, Healthy Aging, Creative Aging, Employment and Entrepreneur for older adults, Dementia-Friendly programs, Digital Literacy

Literacy Programs

HOURS & ACCESS

Early learning

- Story times & play groups
- Raising a Reader
 - Outreach program and parent engagement initiative

Student support

- LibraryLink with Seattle Public Schools
 - Instant access to online resources for SPS students & teachers; no Library card required
- Homework Help
 - Coordinated by Library staff, tutoring provided by volunteers
 - Drop-ins at Broadview, Columbia, Douglass-Truth, High Point, Lake City, NewHolly, Northgate, Rainier Beach, and South Park branches
 - 10,000 in-person sessions since 2020
 - 76% of participants report better understanding of homework assignments



Reading challenges for youth & adults

- Summer of Learning, Summer Book Bingo, Global Reading Challenge

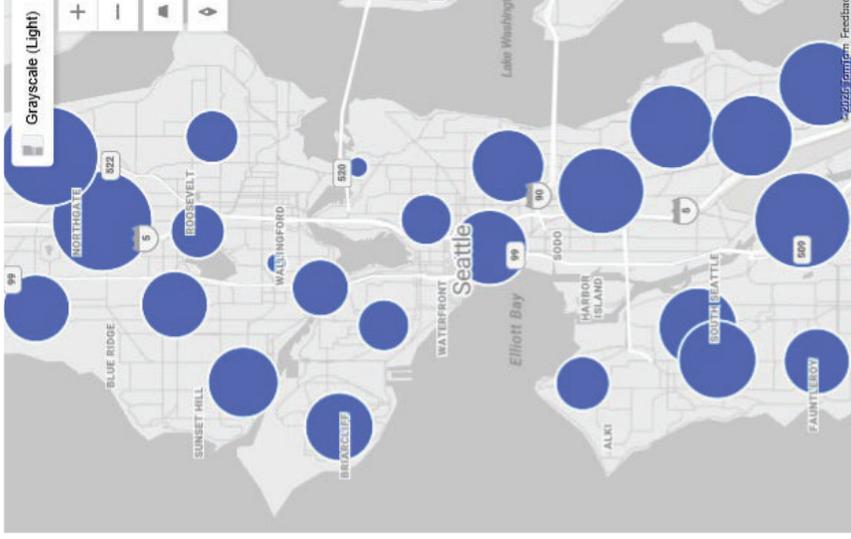
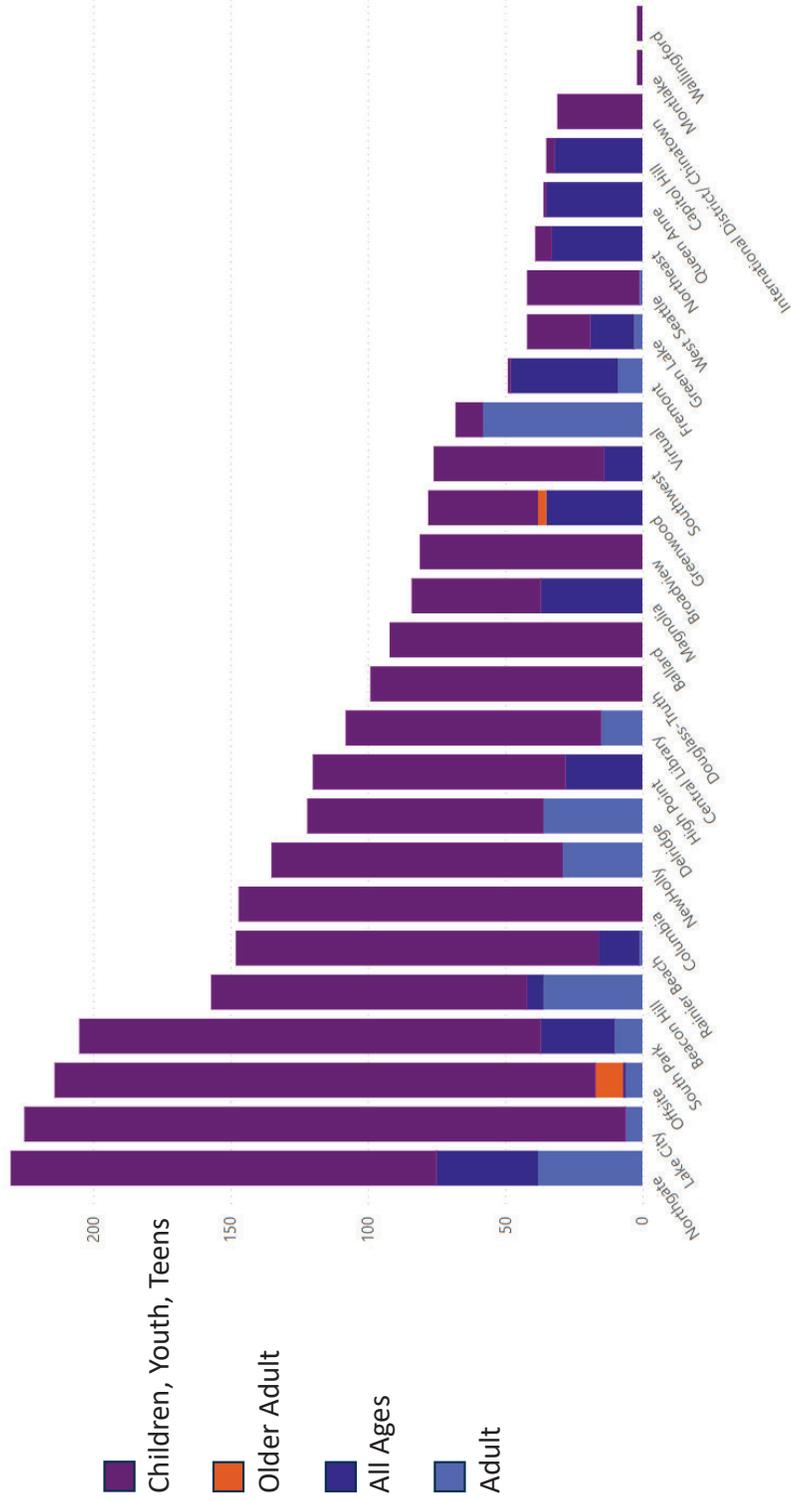
Digital literacy

- Basic skills, 3D printing, AI, cloud computing



2025 Literacy Program Sessions

HOURS & ACCESS



Enrichment Programs

HOURS & ACCESS

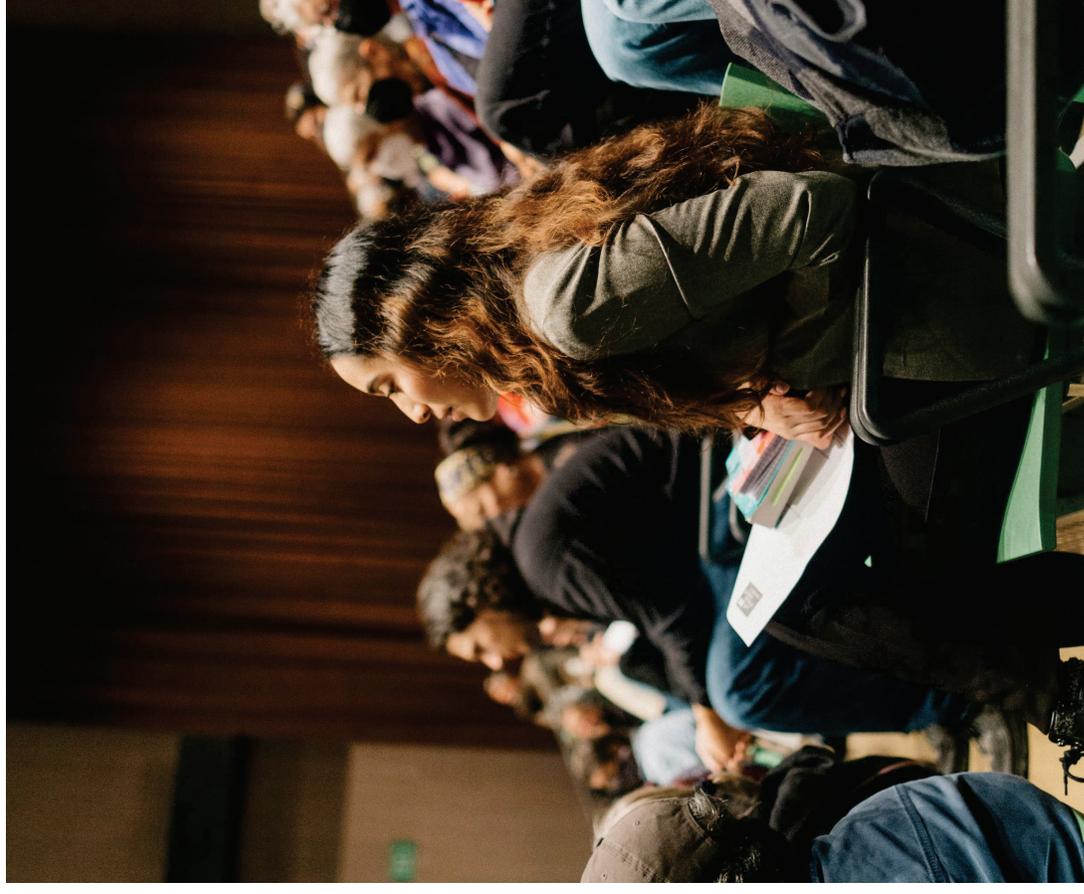


Events, celebrations, and enriching activities

- Author readings, storytelling, open mics, musical performances, movie showings
- End of summer parties, Lunar New Year, Dia de los Muertos, branch anniversary parties
- Writing workshops, gardening classes, arts and craft drop-ins
- Free to attend and open to all. No Library card required. Popular events may require registration.

Museum Pass

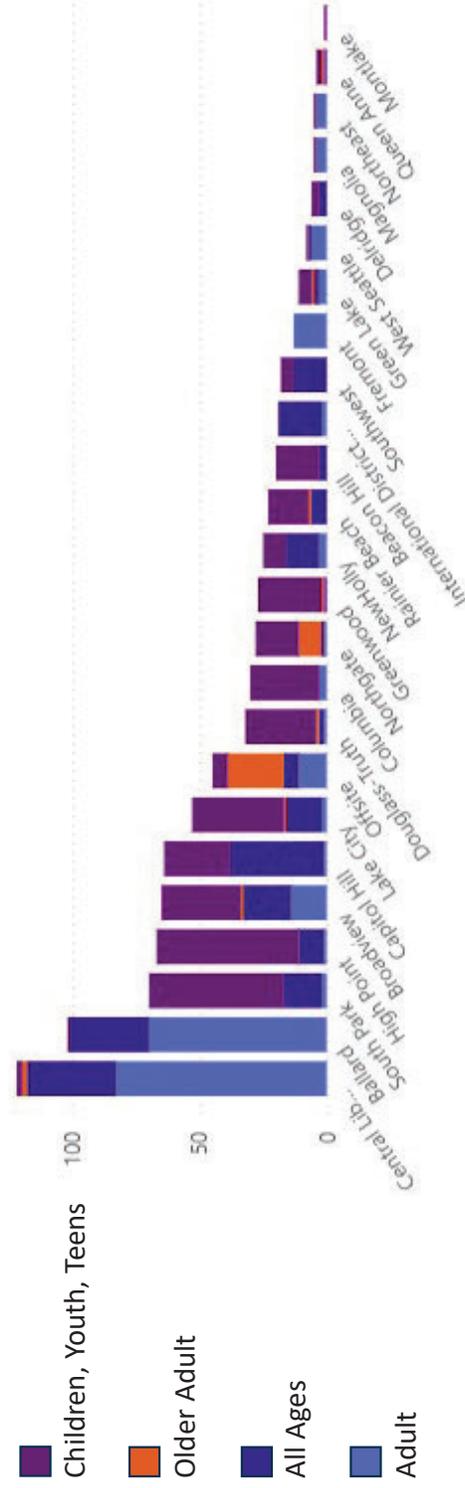
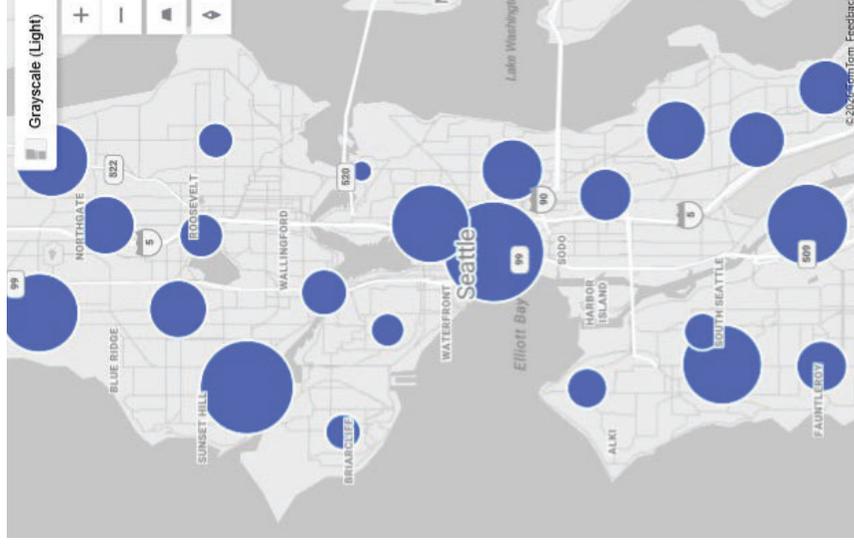
- Free access to Seattle Art Museum, Seattle Aquarium, Woodland Park Zoo, and many others via library card





2025 Enrichment Program Sessions

HOURS & ACCESS





Empowerment Programs

HOURS & ACCESS

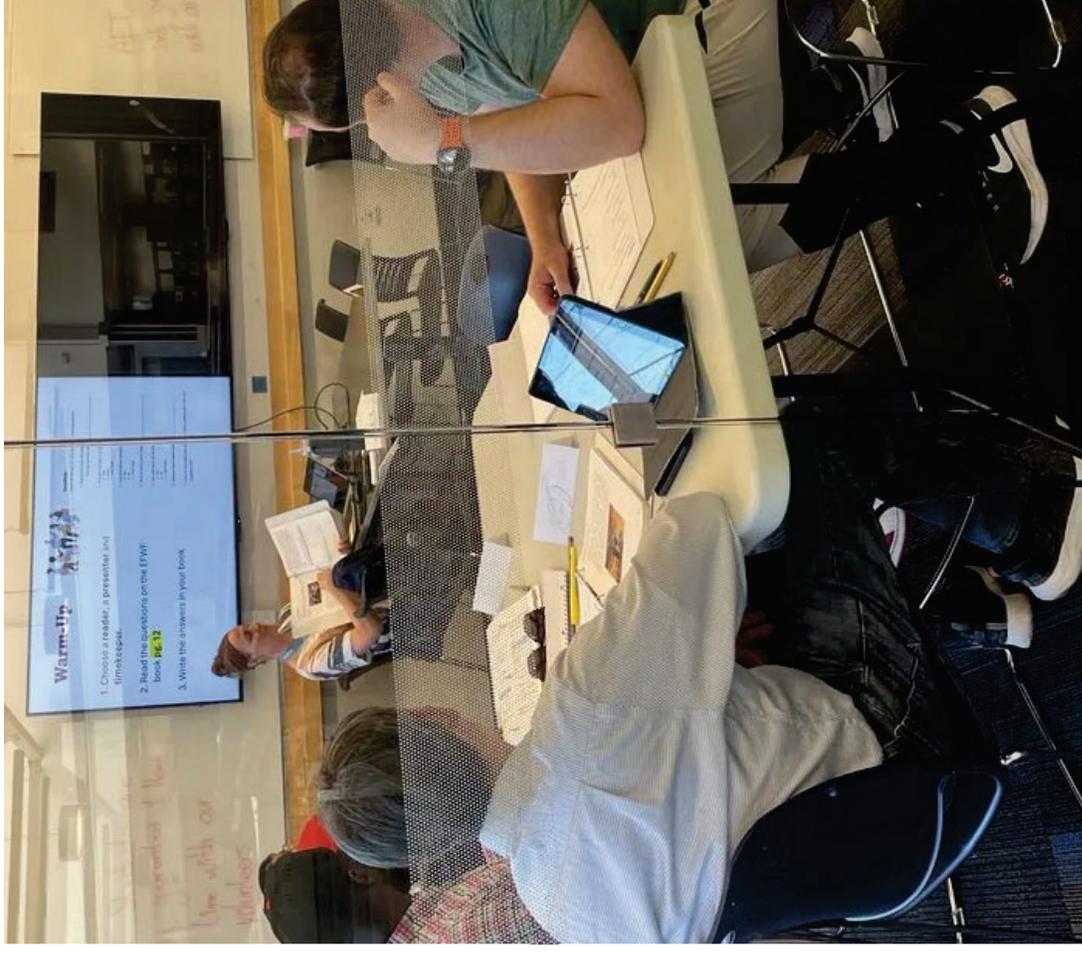
- ### Empowering classes & workshops
- Resume essentials, job seeking & skill building
 - Partnership with Evergreen Goodwill
 - Citizenship & English learning
 - Partnerships with Asian Counseling and Referral Service and Literacy Source
 - Adult tutoring
 - Older adult programming (estate planning, Medicare)

1:1 appointments

- Tax Help (Partnership with United Way, AARP)
- Library to Business: Research, legal consults, networking
- Genealogy & Seattle Room history research

Resource fairs

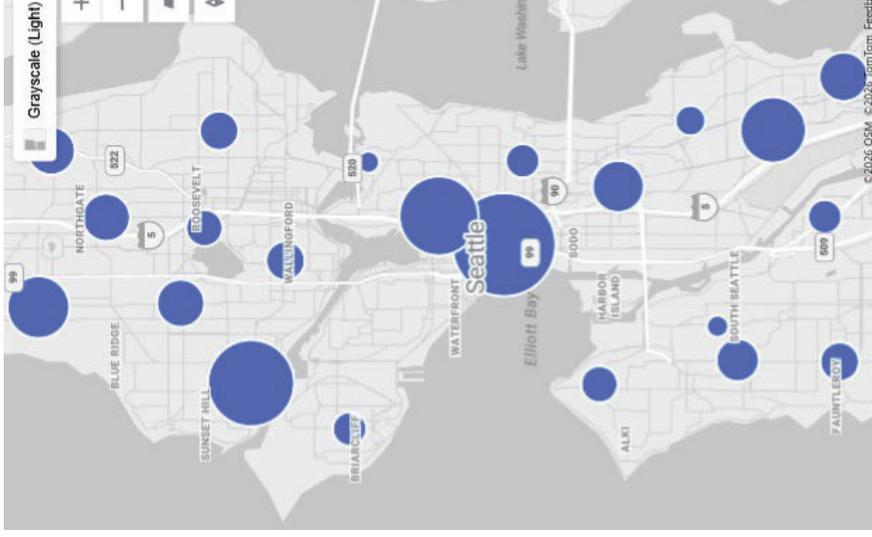
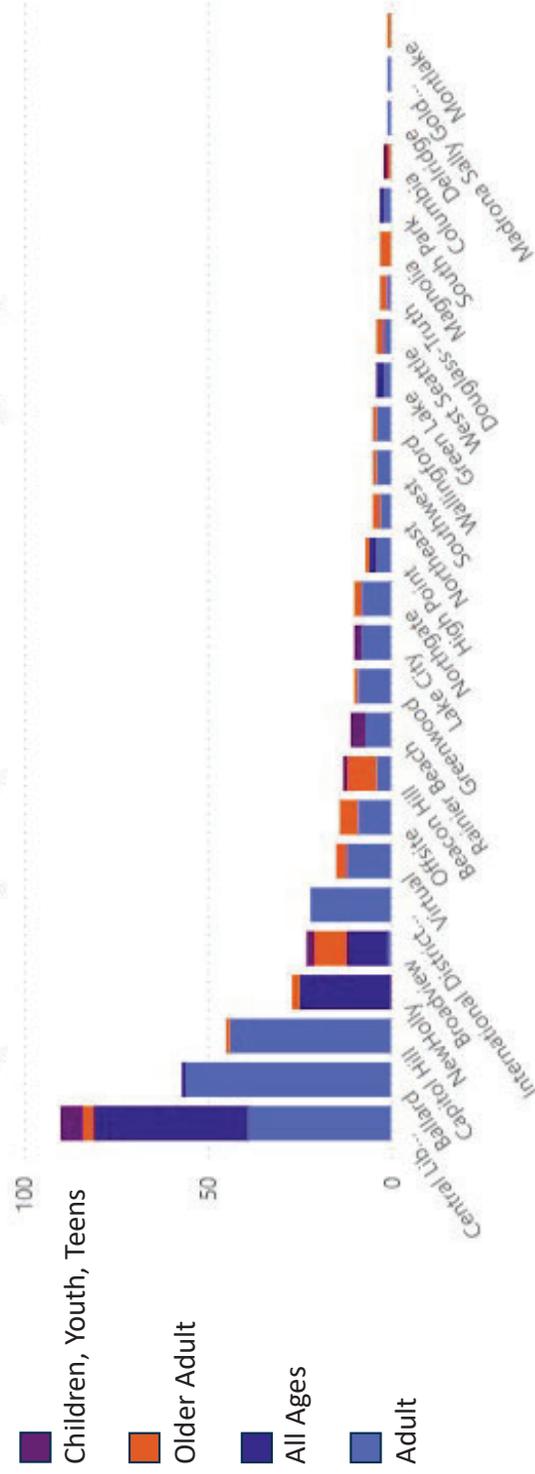
- Free access to haircuts, clothing, bus tickets, social service referrals, snacks and more
 - 2025 = Downtown, Ballard, Lake City, South Park; many partners

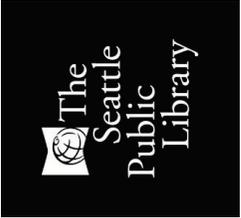




2025 Empowerment Program Sessions

HOURS & ACCESS





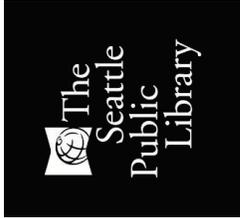
Literacy, Enrichment & Empowerment

HOURS & ACCESS

Program managers and librarians responsible for developing and delivering this work

- 13 program managers help develop systemwide programs and programming framework
- ~6% of librarian time involves program work
- Programming staff (librarians & PMs):
 - 57.5 FTE funded by General Fund
 - 38 FTE funded by levy
 - 9 FTE funded by private dollars





Literacy, Enrichment & Empowerment: Private Funding

HOURS & ACCESS



General Fund & Library Levy: No direct funding provided for this work, but supported through librarian staffing hours

Private funds: Provides direct support for actual program expenses and contributes funding for 12 programming staff positions.

Funding Source	2020	2021	2022	2023	2024	2025	2026 budgeted
Private Funds	\$2.0M	\$2.0M	\$2.0M	\$2.1M	\$2.3M	\$2.8M	\$2.7M



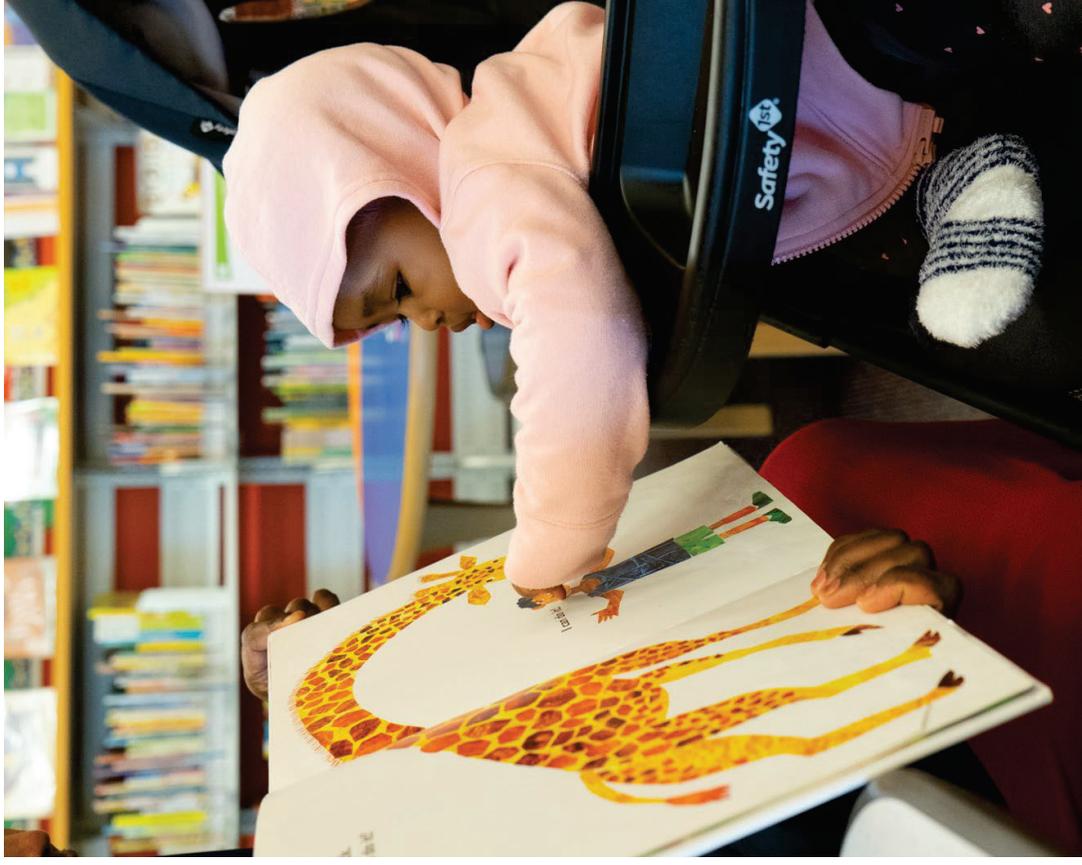
Impact on Library Patrons

HOURS & ACCESS

“It has been **immensely enriching**, even just knowing the resources are available. It’s easy to take for granted but **there is no substitute.**”

“Sometimes emergencies, holidays, sickness just get in the way, so it is nice to know **we do not owe money on top of what is becoming a very expensive life.**”

“Before this course, **I was afraid of using a computer**—worried I might break something. ... Through this experience, I have learned that with practice, patience, and confidence, **I can overcome those fears and succeed.**”

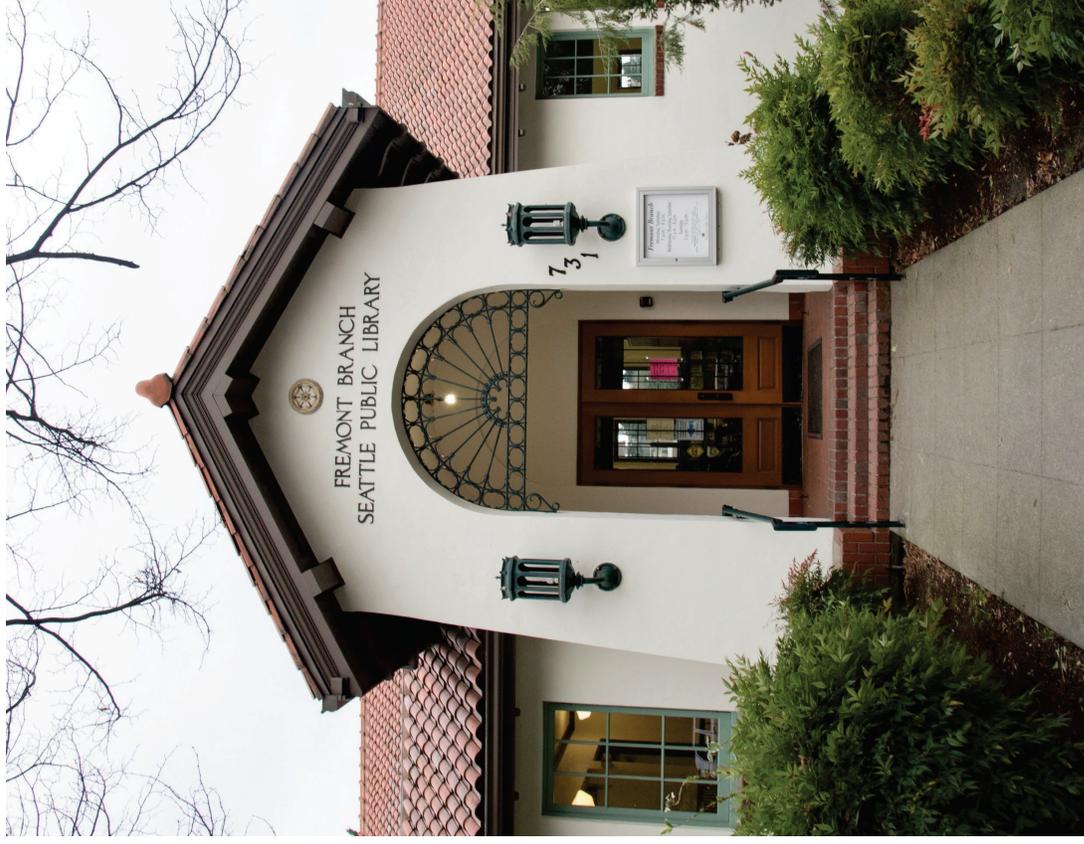




Opportunities HOURS & ACCESS

Opportunities

- Levy investments provide the opportunity to scale programs citywide
- Changing patron needs and interests provide opportunity to rethink public spaces and uses
- Growing interest from patrons in offering more programs for learning, skill-building, and connecting with others



Accomplishments

Helping Children



Overview

HELPING CHILDREN



Kaleidoscope Play and Learn

- The only program fully funded by the levy
- For children ages 0-5 and their parents and caregivers
 - In partnership with community-based organizations
 - Weekly, 90-minute guided play sessions
 - Held at 7 Library locations
 - Supports school readiness, language development, and social skills
 - Offered in English, Amharic, Chinese (Mandarin), Somali, and Spanish
 - Bilingual delivery at select locations





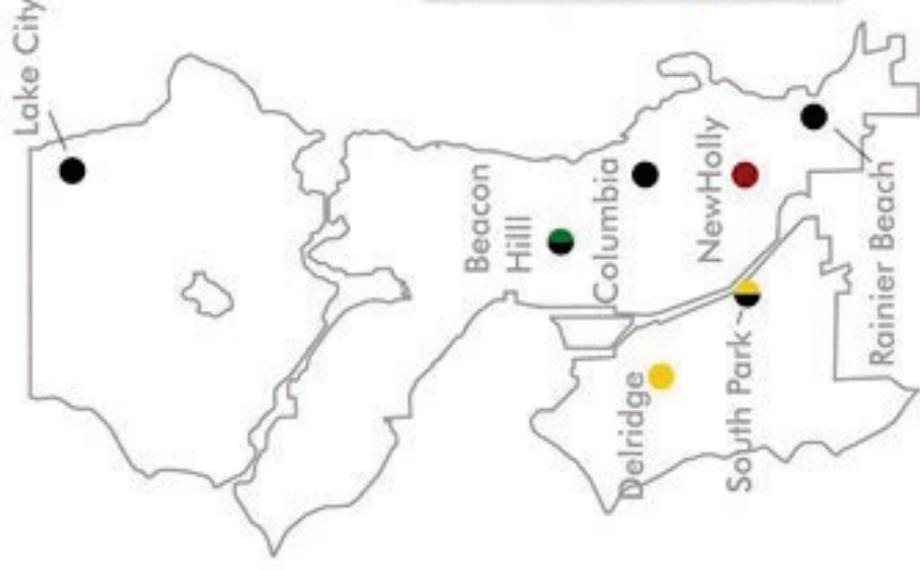
Highlights

HELPING CHILDREN

Kaleidoscope Play and Learn

- Nearly 300 sessions annually across seven branches
- Approximately 7,000 participants per year
- Post-participation surveys show participant satisfaction
 - 83% of parent and caregiver participants report increased understanding of activities that help children develop school-readiness skills

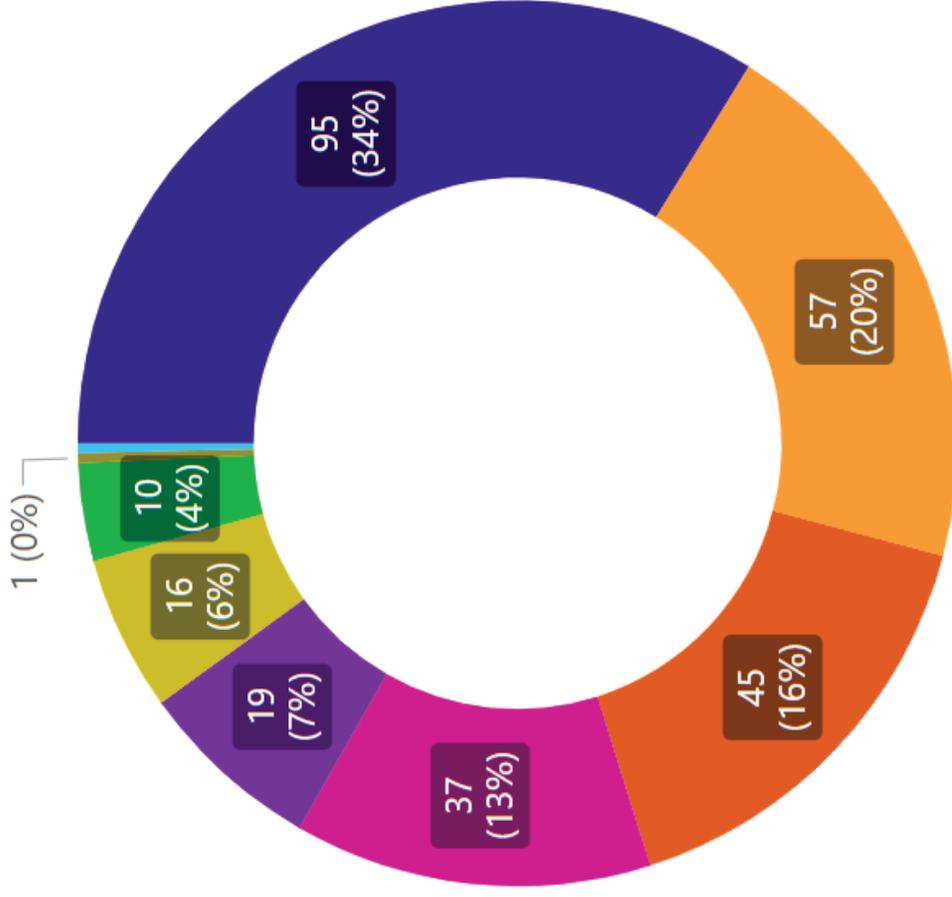
Program Locations and Languages





Play & Learns: Multilingual Offerings

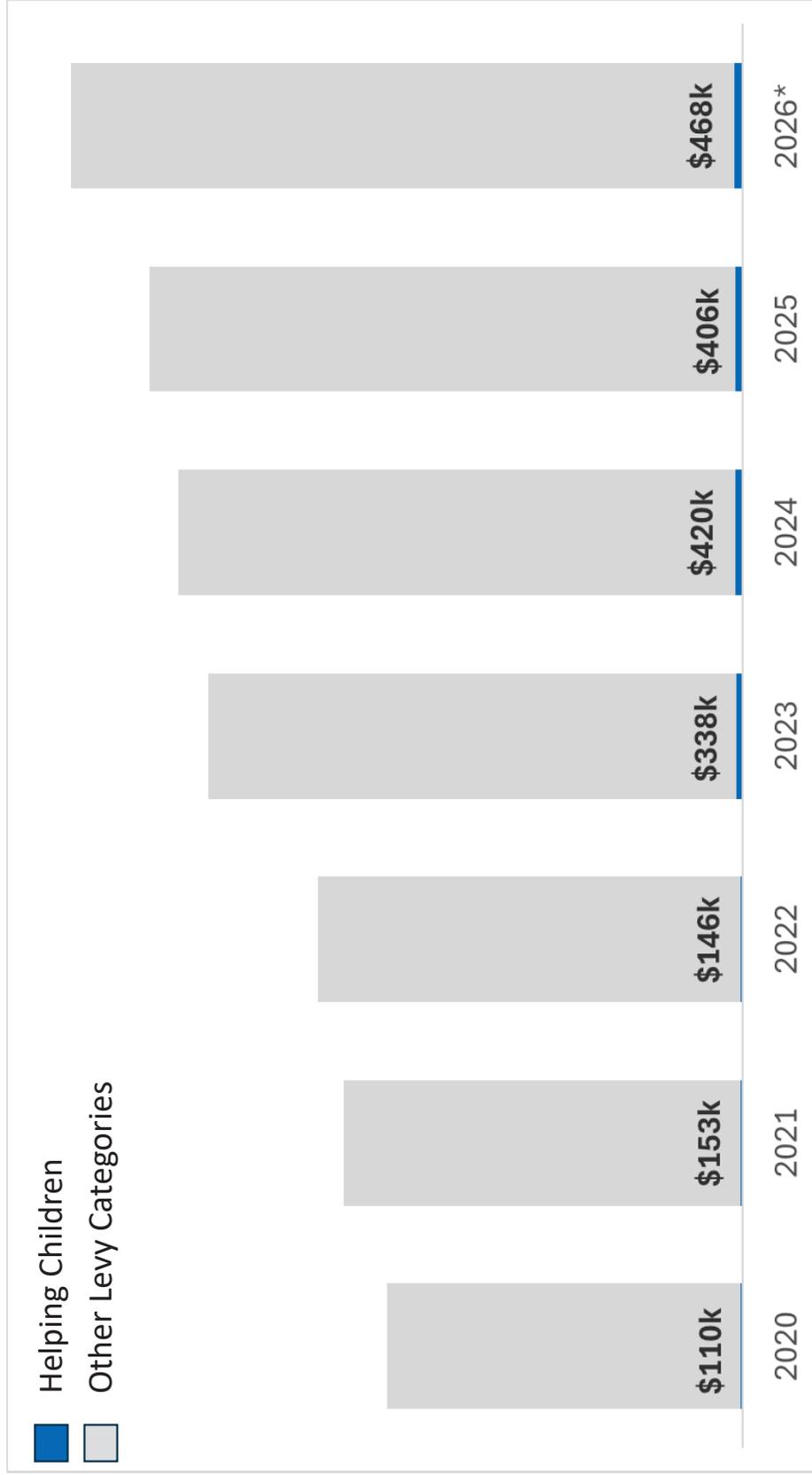
HELPING CHILDREN



- Spanish
- English
- Mandarin
- Cantonese, Mandarin, Spanish
- Somali
- Cantonese, Spanish
- Mandarin, Spanish
- Cantonese
- Cantonese, Mandarin



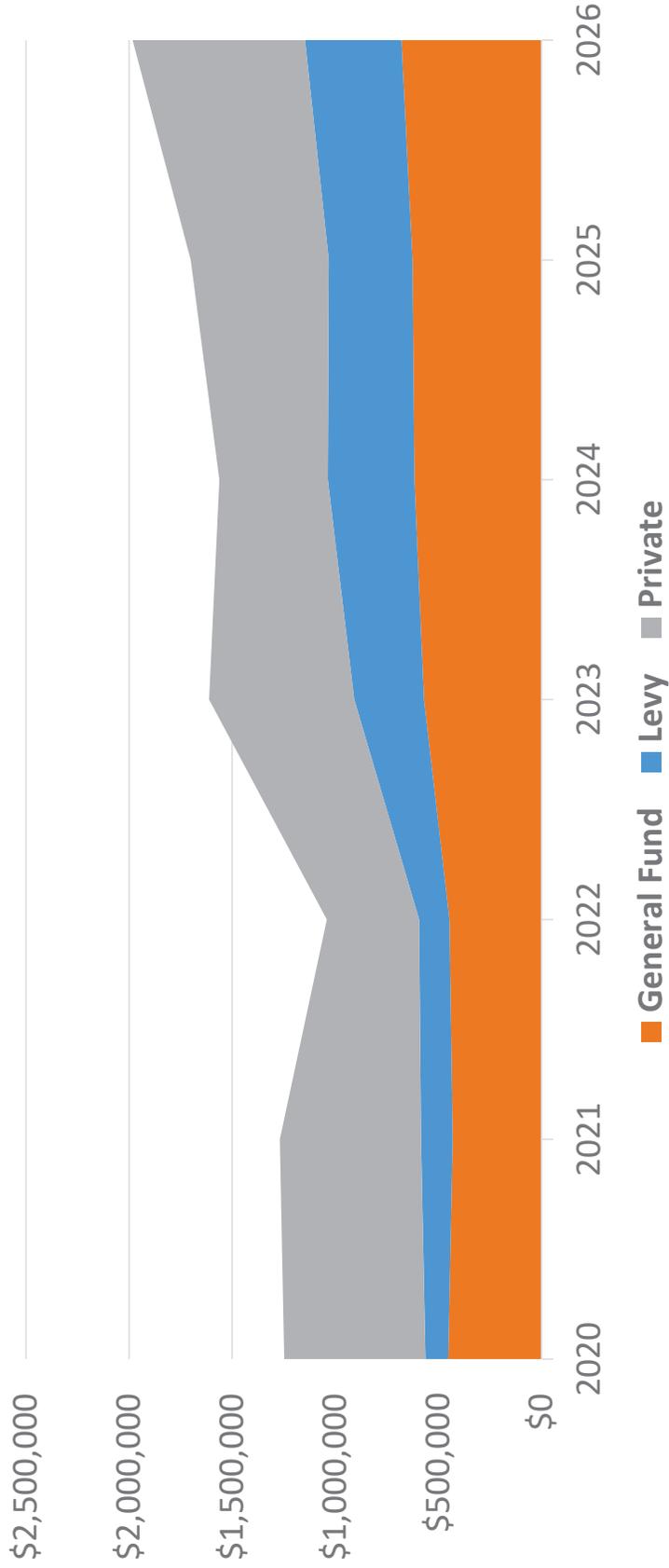
Annual Levy Funding: Helping Children





Spending by Funding Source

HELPING CHILDREN





Spending by Funding Source

HELPING CHILDREN

Funding Source	2020	2021	2022	2023	2024	2025	2026 <i>budgeted</i>
General Fund	\$450k	\$431k	\$447k	\$569k	\$616k	\$626k	\$679k
Library Levy	\$110k	\$153k	\$146k	\$338k	\$420k	\$406k	\$468k
Private Funds	\$680k	\$685k	\$448k	\$704k	\$526k	\$669k	\$836k

Early Literacy Programs

HELPING CHILDREN

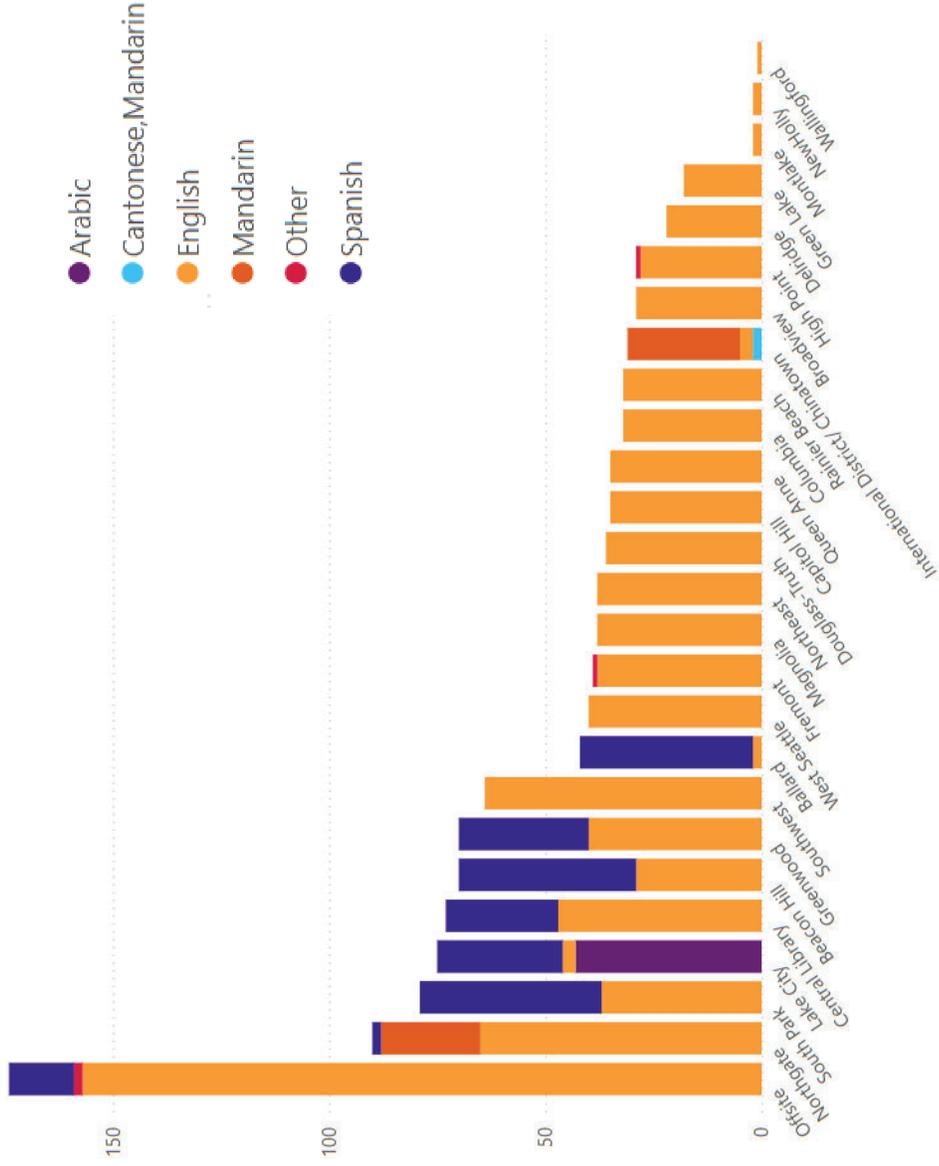
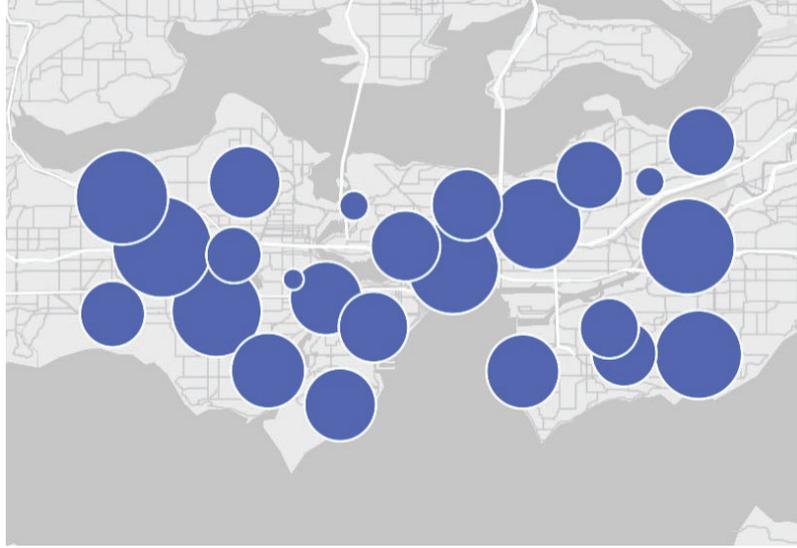
Levy dollars help support Library staffing needs, which helps support other children's programs, too:

- 1,100 story times in 2025
 - Family story time, firefighter story time, and more
 - Four languages citywide
- Raising a Reader
 - Outreach program and parent engagement initiative
 - Cultivates a love of reading, strengthens parent-child interactions
 - Held in a range of settings, including home visits, childcare programs, Head Start centers, and Seattle Preschool Program locations
 - Over 1,400 young children participate, ranging from 10 mos. to 9 yrs.
- Story Squad
 - Classroom set of books for grades 2-4
 - Title 1 schools
 - Pilot initiative: Bailey Gatzert Elementary



2025 Story Times: Languages & Locations

HELPING CHILDREN



2025 Story Times: Offsite

HELPING CHILDREN



Offsite Story Time	Sessions
Beacon Food Forest	1
Cooperative Children's Center	1
Delridge P-Patch	2
El Centro De La Raza - Cedar Crossing	9
Head Start (Emerson, James Baldwin, John Muir, Kimball, Olympic Hills, South Shore, Wing Luke)	104
High Point Neighborhood House	5
Kid's Company	2
Library Tour and Story Time	1
Lovable Nest Childcare	1
Nature Explorer Story Time Series	12
Neighborhood House - New Holly	2
Northwest Center Kids: Early Learning Center	7
Preschool (4 Amigos, Science North Acres Park, CISC, ReWA, South Shore, Delridge Launch, Artist Playground, Pinehurst Community Center)	33
Prime Time with Family Works	15
ReWa (Beacon Hill, Lake City, MLK)	19



Impact on Library Patrons

HELPING CHILDREN

“It is a wonderful structure and play time close to the community, and **we can make connections with other grandparents, families, and children.**”

“The activities [my son] did at the program, such as learning how to share toys with other kids, follow directions and use scissor safely, are important. **All these things will help my son prepare for school.** Play & Learn provides a safe place for him to have social interaction with other children.”

“I feel supported without being judged.”



Opportunities

HELPING CHILDREN

Opportunities

- Levy investment provides opportunity to offer more early literacy programs citywide
- Story times, play groups and other early learning activities are popular
- More opportunity to support other types early literacy programs and languages



Questions?

www.spl.org/Levy



Thank you!

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