



SEATTLE CITY COUNCIL

Select Committee on the Library Levy

Agenda

Tuesday, March 31, 2026

9:30 AM

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

Maritza Rivera, Chair
Joy Hollingsworth, Vice-Chair
Dionne Foster, Member
Debora Juarez, Member
Robert Kettle, Member
Eddie Lin, Member
Alexis Mercedes Rinck, Member
Rob Saka, Member
Dan Strauss, Member

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

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March 31, 2026 - 9:30 AM

Meeting Location:

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

Committee Website:

<https://www.seattle.gov/council/select-committee-on-the-library-levy>

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. [CB 121181](#) **AN ORDINANCE relating to regular property taxes; providing for the submission to the qualified electors of the City at an election to be held on August 4, 2026, of a proposition authorizing the City to levy regular property taxes for up to seven years in excess of the limitation on levies in chapter 84.55 RCW for the purpose of sustaining investments in Library operating hours, collections, technology, programming, and maintenance while expanding access to opportunity through Library materials, technology, and undertaking a seismic retrofit of one Library facility; and ratifying and confirming certain prior acts.**

Supporting Documents:

[Summary and Fiscal Note](#)

[Summary Att 1 – 2026 Library Levy Projected Expenditures and Revenues](#)

[Summary Att 2 - Levy Rate and Annual Cost to Homeowner](#)

[Proposed Amendment Packet](#)

[Updated Proposed Amendments Packet \(added; 3/31/26\)](#)

Briefing, Discussion, and Possible Amendments

Presenter: Eric McConaghy, Council Central Staff

E. Adjournment



Legislation Text

File #: CB 121181, **Version:** 1

CITY OF SEATTLE

ORDINANCE _____

COUNCIL BILL _____

AN ORDINANCE relating to regular property taxes; providing for the submission to the qualified electors of the City at an election to be held on August 4, 2026, of a proposition authorizing the City to levy regular property taxes for up to seven years in excess of the limitation on levies in chapter 84.55 RCW for the purpose of sustaining investments in Library operating hours, collections, technology, programming, and maintenance while expanding access to opportunity through Library materials, technology, and undertaking a seismic retrofit of one Library facility; and ratifying and confirming certain prior acts.

WHEREAS, The Seattle Public Library (Library) was established in 1890 and, since that time, has served as a free and trusted source of information and a community gathering place for residents of Seattle and the region; and

WHEREAS, in 1998, Seattle voters overwhelmingly approved the Libraries for All bond measure, which made Library services more accessible by supporting the construction of four branch libraries in communities without library service, the replacement or renovation of 22 existing branches, and the development of a new downtown Central Library; and

WHEREAS, the Library provides residents, including children and seniors, with access to an array of free services and programming, including access to physical and digital books and other materials for all ages and viewpoints, computer and job search classes, adult tutoring, English language learning resources, tax preparation help, and readings by world-renowned authors; and

WHEREAS, the Library provides important educational support to Seattle's youth through literacy programs, including story times for children and families, homework help for students, summer learning activities, teen spaces and activities, partnerships with teachers and schools, and other important educational

resources and services; and

WHEREAS, the Library serves as a vital community resource that helps bridge the digital divide by providing free access to computers and the internet, affordable printing services, and knowledgeable staff who assist patrons in using new and emerging technologies; and

WHEREAS, the Library's Mobile Services bring books and other materials to children, seniors, and other residents who may lack the mobility to access their neighborhood library; and

WHEREAS, the Library's staff provides resource navigation to help connect patrons with external agencies for medical care, transportation services, mental health services, job resources, and more; and

WHEREAS, in November 2024, the Library Board of Trustees adopted a ten-year Strategic Plan to guide investments in Library services over the next decade to bring people, information, and ideas together to enrich lives and empower community through the values of care, connection, and learning; and

WHEREAS, the Library is guided by the principles of equity and intellectual freedom as it expands access and opportunities for everyone in Seattle; and

WHEREAS, the Library is committed to strengthening a sense of belonging for community members by providing safe and welcoming physical spaces, diverse collections and programs, and other services that support literacy, enrichment, and empowerment for all; and

WHEREAS, the Library acts as a good steward of public funding and strives to be a resilient and fiscally responsible organization; and

WHEREAS, the Library works diligently to maintain and improve buildings, technology, and sustainability practices for its 27 buildings, many of which were constructed or renovated through the 1998 Libraries for All bond measure; and

WHEREAS, in 2012, the Library, Seattle City Council, and Mayor of Seattle identified a property tax levy lift as the revenue source that could most feasibly be used in combination with the City's General Fund and Real Estate Excise Tax (REET) support; and

WHEREAS, in August 2012, 62 percent of Seattle voters approved a \$123 million, seven-year property tax levy to allocate direct funding to Library services and programs; and

WHEREAS, in August 2019, 76 percent of Seattle voters approved a \$219.1 million, seven-year property tax levy to fund Library services and programs; and

WHEREAS, the 2019 Library Levy provides approximately 33 percent of the Library's overall 2026 budget; and

WHEREAS, the Library's capital budget is primarily supported by the 2019 Library Levy, supplemented by REET revenues; and

WHEREAS, the 2019 Library Levy ends December 31, 2026, and the loss of this funding source would have a significantly detrimental impact on core Library services and programs, as well as the Library's ability to maintain capital investments made during the Libraries for All program; and

WHEREAS, the Library is committed to engaging key stakeholders and the community in the development of a levy renewal package; and

WHEREAS, in May and June 2025, the Library held service design workshops with community members and programming partners to hear directly about their needs for Library services; and

WHEREAS, in Spring 2025, the Library also gathered public input about the importance of Library programs, spaces, and services through onsite feedback opportunities at 14 Library locations and four outreach events, with multiple engagements in English and Spanish; and

WHEREAS, the Library used these findings to develop a public survey, available in English and translated into six other languages, to understand Seattle residents' current and future needs and interests for library services through the life of the 2024-2033 Strategic Plan; and

WHEREAS, in August 2025, the Library launched a public survey, learning that 98 percent of respondents believe the Library improves the overall quality of life in the city and 97 percent of respondents think it is worth the money invested in it, and used the results of the survey to inform the development of a

2026 levy package; and

WHEREAS, the Revised Code of Washington grants exclusive control of the finances of the Library to the Board of Trustees and authorizes the Library Board to oversee the Library's annual operating and capital budgets; and

WHEREAS, the Library Board recognizes the need for sustained revenue to support, maintain, and improve core Library services, understands the current constraints on the City's General Fund and REET revenues, and therefore supports replacing the expiring property tax levy lid lift to continue providing the Library with a revenue source that could be used in combination with General Fund and REET revenues; and

WHEREAS, library investment is a reflection of a community's values; and

WHEREAS, by replacing the expiring 2019 Library Levy, Seattle expands access to education and opportunity, promotes equity, lifts up the places where communities come together, and invests in libraries as treasured landmark and spaces for learning and discovery; and

WHEREAS, The City of Seattle intends to place a levy proposal on the August 4, 2026, primary election ballot to replace the expiring levy in order to continue to provide financial support to the programs and operations of the Library for the next seven years; NOW, THEREFORE,

BE IT ORDAINED BY THE CITY OF SEATTLE AS FOLLOWS:

Section 1. Definitions. As used in this ordinance:

A. "City" means The City of Seattle.

B. "Levy proceeds" means that portion of regular property taxes levied and collected as authorized by voter approval pursuant to this ordinance and all interest and other earnings thereon, and, if the City issues bonds, notes, interfund loans, or other evidences of indebtedness payable wholly or in part from the additional taxes authorized under this ordinance, as permitted by Section 4 of this ordinance, then "levy proceeds" also includes the proceeds of those bonds, notes, interfund loans, or other evidences of indebtedness.

C. "Library Board" means the board of trustees of the Library, a five-member body appointed by the Mayor and confirmed by the City Council, with exclusive control of the finances of the Library under RCW 27.12.210 and sole authority to expend the Library Fund under Article XII of the Seattle City Charter, consistent with the annual appropriation of funds by the City Council.

D. "Library levy funding amount" means not less than \$410,000,000 of the increased levy amount over seven years resulting from the proposition's passage.

E. "Library services" means the programs, services, capital improvements, and administration referred to in Section 6 of this ordinance, with such modifications as the City Council may from time to time authorize by ordinance.

Section 2. Levy of regular property taxes - Submittal. The City submits to the qualified electors of the City a proposition as authorized by RCW 84.55.050 to exceed the levy limitation on regular property taxes contained in RCW 84.55.010, for property taxes levied in 2026 through 2032 for collection in 2027 through 2033 respectively. This proposition shall be limited so that the City shall not levy more than \$58,571,429 in the first year and is expected to raise approximately \$410,000,000 in aggregate over seven years for Library services. The levy amount in the first year shall be used to determine subsequent years' allowable regular levy limit in accordance with chapter 84.55 RCW. Amounts collected in excess of the Library levy funding amount are available for other City purposes for which the City's regular levy may be applied. In accordance with RCW 84.36.381 and RCW 84.55.050, the City will exempt seniors, veterans with disabilities, or other persons with disabilities who qualify under 84.36.381 RCW from the increased levy amount resulting from the proposition's passage. Pursuant to RCW 84.55.050(4), the maximum regular property taxes that may be levied in 2033 for collection in 2034 and in later years shall be computed as if the levy lid in RCW 84.55.010 had not been lifted under this ordinance.

Section 3. Deposit of levy proceeds. Unless otherwise directed by ordinance, Library Levy funding shall be deposited in the Library Levy Fund to pay for Library services. Levy proceeds may be temporarily deposited

or invested in such a manner as may be lawful for the investment of City money, and interest and other earnings on Library Levy funding shall be deposited in the Library Levy Fund, used for the same purposes as the proceeds. The Fund shall receive earnings on its positive balances and pay interest on its negative balances. The Director of Finance is authorized to create other accounts within the Library Levy Fund as may be needed or appropriate to implement the purposes of this ordinance.

Section 4. Bond and notes. To the extent permitted by applicable law, the City may issue bonds, notes, or other evidences of indebtedness payable wholly or in part from the additional taxes authorized under this ordinance, and may pledge and may apply such taxes to the payment of principal of, interest on, and premium (if any) on such bonds, notes, or other evidences of indebtedness and to the payment of costs associated with them.

Section 5. Use of levy proceeds. The Library Levy funding amount shall be used solely for Library services in accordance with the provisions in Section 6 of this ordinance and in accordance with RCW 84.55.050. If levy collections exceed the Library levy funding amount, the excess funds are available for City purposes for which the City's regular levy may be applied.

Section 6. Library services. Levy investments will be made in five categories of Library services. Program elements in subsections 6.A through 6.E of this ordinance are illustrative examples. In accordance with the annual City budget process, each year the Library Board shall adopt an annual operations plan and capital budget. The Executive Director and Chief Librarian and the Library Board shall submit to the Mayor and the City Council an annual levy expenditure plan that will support, maintain, and improve the core Library services identified in this section. Levy Proceeds will be used, in combination with the annual budget appropriation of City General Fund, Real Estate Excise Tax (REET), and other City funds as available to the Library, for Library services.

A. Operating hours and access. Major program elements include: supporting Library operating hours in neighborhood branches and the Central Library; providing access to Library programs and services in the

community; supporting programming targeted towards children ages zero through 5; and outreach and engagement services throughout the city.

B. Collections. Major program elements include: increasing the variety, depth, and accessibility of collections with new titles and additional copies in various physical and digital formats; providing additional online resources as new platforms and services emerge; curating a local history collection and making those resources more widely available through digitization; providing fine-free access to the Library's collections; and continuing innovative approaches to collection distribution and to fulfilling patron material requests.

C. Technology. Major program elements include:

1. Replacing and upgrading the Library's technology infrastructure, including maintaining its Integrated Library System, the Library's main business platform for procuring, processing, and tracking Library materials;

2. Replacing and upgrading its enterprise network that provides high-speed internet and Wi-Fi access to the Central Library and all 26 branches;

3. Replacing and upgrading its technology equipment such as switches, routers, servers, cabling, computers, tablets, printers, copiers, scanners and widescreen monitors, and other audiovisual equipment for newly emerging technologies;

4. Maintaining and enhancing the SPL.org website and catalog, with a focus on language accessibility as well as device compatibility and compliance with the Americans with Disabilities Act; and

5. Supporting the Library's digital equity efforts, including digital literacy instruction and provision and support of internet access devices for use within Library buildings and for check-out.

D. Maintenance. Major program elements include: enhanced resources to provide routine, preventive, and major maintenance for the Library's heavily-used buildings as they age, to prolong their useful life.

Maintenance also includes funding to seismically retrofit one landmarked branch identified as high-vulnerability in the City's Unreinforced Masonry Building Study.

E. Administration. Major program elements include: supporting implementation and accountability measures for Levy programs and annual reporting to the City and public on Levy outcomes.

Section 7. Reporting. The Executive Director and Chief Librarian and the Library Board shall submit to the City Council and the Mayor an annual progress report from 2028 to 2034 on levy spending and program delivery of the Library services identified in Section 6 of this ordinance. The report shall be due to the City Council and the Mayor by no later than April 15 each year.

Section 8. Election - Ballot title. The City Council directs that the City Clerk file this ordinance with the Director of Elections of King County, Washington, as ex officio supervisor of elections, requesting that the Director of Elections call and conduct a special election in the City in conjunction with the primary election to be held on August 4, 2026, for the purpose of submitting to the qualified electors of the City the proposition set forth in this ordinance. The City Clerk is directed to certify to the King County Director of Elections the ballot title approved by the City Attorney in accordance with the City Attorney's responsibilities under RCW 29A.36.071. The following ballot title is submitted to the City Attorney for consideration:

THE CITY OF SEATTLE

PROPOSITION NO. 1

Property Tax Levy for The Seattle Public Library

The Seattle City Council adopted Ordinance No. XXXXXX concerning replacing an expiring levy to fund library services.

The City of Seattle's Proposition 1 would replace an expiring levy, funding investments in Library operating hours and access, collections, technology, maintenance and administration, as provided in Ordinance XXXXXX.

It authorizes a seven-year levy for collection beginning in 2027 of an additional \$0.20/\$1,000 of assessed value, for a maximum total levy rate of \$3.10/\$1,000. 2027's levy amount will be the base for subsequent levies through 2033. RCW 84.36.381's senior citizens and disabled persons exemption applies.

Should this levy be approved?

Yes

No

Section 9. Section titles. Section titles are for convenient reference only and do not modify or limit the text of a section.

Section 10. Severability. The provisions of this ordinance are declared to be separate and severable. The invalidity of any clause, sentence, paragraph, subdivision, section, or portion of this ordinance, or the invalidity of its application to any person or circumstance, does not affect the validity of the remainder of this ordinance or the validity of its application to other persons or circumstances, including the validity of authorizing additional taxes by levy.

Section 11. Any act consistent with the authority of this ordinance taken after its passage and prior to its effective date is ratified and confirmed.

Section 12. Those portions of this ordinance providing for the submission of a ballot proposition to the voters shall take effect and be in force 30 days after its approval by the Mayor, but if not approved and returned by the Mayor within ten days after presentation, it shall take effect as provided by Seattle Municipal Code Sections 1.04.020 and 1.04.070. Those portions of this ordinance that are dependent upon voter approval of said ballot proposition shall take effect in accordance with applicable law.

Passed by the City Council the _____ day of _____, 2026, and signed by me in open session in authentication of its passage this _____ day of _____, 2026.

President _____ of the City Council

Approved / returned unsigned / vetoed this ____ day of _____, 2026.

Katie B. Wilson, Mayor

Filed by me this _____ day of _____, 2026.

Scheereen Dedman, City Clerk

(Seal)

SUMMARY and FISCAL NOTE

Department:	Dept. Contact:	CBO Contact:
The Seattle Public Library	Rob Gannon	Lisa Gaccione

1. BILL SUMMARY

Legislation Title: AN ORDINANCE relating to regular property taxes; providing for the submission to the qualified electors of the City at an election to be held on August 4, 2026, of a proposition authorizing the City to levy regular property taxes for up to seven years in excess of the limitation on levies in chapter 84.55 RCW for the purpose of sustaining investments in Library operating hours, collections, technology, programming, and maintenance while expanding access to opportunity through Library materials, technology, and undertaking a seismic retrofit of one Library facility; and ratifying and confirming certain prior acts.

Summary and Background of the Legislation:

The proposed ordinance would submit a \$410,000,000, seven-year 2026 Library Levy to Seattle voters for approval in August 2026. The proposed levy would be raised under the provisions of 84.55.050 RCW, which allows a city to obtain voter approval to exceed the “lid” on regular property taxes for any purposes.

If the 2026 Library Levy is approved by the voters, the 2027 total regular tax limit in the first year would be \$0.19/\$1,000 in assessed value. Qualifying low-income seniors, veterans, and people with disabilities who own their principal residence within the City of Seattle would be exempt from the levied amount as authorized under 84.36.381 RCW. In King County, the exemption currently extends to homeowners above age 61 or with a disability rating of at least 80% with a qualifying household income. Revenue projections in this ordinance and fiscal note are inclusive of anticipated exemptions offered under 84.36.381 RCW.

The Seattle Public Library is one of the city’s most intensively used and valued community resources. The 2025 Library Community Survey showed that 98 percent of respondents say the Library improves the overall quality of life in the city and 97 percent say the Library is worth the money invested in it. In 2025, there were more than 3.5 million in-person visits to Library facilities (with the University Branch closed for a seismic upgrade project for most of the year) and more than 12 million visits to the Library’s website and catalogue. From the Library’s collection of 2.9 million items (roughly two million physical items and one million digital items), patrons on average checked out 24 books every minute of every day for more than 12.8 million checkouts. Patrons used Library computers or Wi-Fi sessions more than 2.5 million times. Patrons made 750,000 requests for information assistance; and more than 300,000 people attended 10,000 classes, events and activities.

The Mayor’s 2026 Library Levy proposal will build on previous levy efforts to maintain an intensively used and valued community library system, while doing more to invest in expanded programmatic Library offerings and future capital building projects as described in Ordinance Section 6. This continuum of investments is comprised of five priority areas: Hours & Access, Collections, Technology & Online Services, Maintenance, and Administration.

- 1. Open Hours & Access:** The proposed 2026 Library Levy invests \$218.4 million to directly sustain Library operating hours, which provides direct access to technology housed in Library buildings, the circulating collections, enriching programming, support for early literacy ages 0-5, and the ability to interact with knowledgeable staff for information and referral. This category includes additional resources to support all-ages programming, increase security and emergency preparedness, and establish an office of inclusion and belonging.
- 2. Collections:** The proposed 2026 Library Levy invests \$58.5 million to sustain and expand funding for access to the physical and digital materials collection. Over 12.8 million items from the collection are checked out each year. This category includes expanded resources for the physical collection as well as more e-books and e-audio books.
- 3. Technology:** The proposed 2026 Library Levy invests \$38.2 million to support free access to digital devices (desktop computers, laptops and tablets) that can be used to search online resources, connect to the internet, or use popular software. This category also provides resources to upgrade IT infrastructure and strengthen IT systems and cybersecurity.
- 4. Maintenance:** The proposed 2026 Library Levy invests \$85.9 million to keep our facilities open, clean, functional, and welcoming to all. This includes priority and deferred maintenance, increased facility and custodial support, and a major capital project to do a seismic retrofit of the historic Columbia branch.
- 5. Administration:** The proposed 2026 Library levy includes \$9.0 million to maintain department administration and operations, in addition to supporting a portion of City Central Costs.

As the current 2019 Library Levy expires at the end of 2026, the City is preparing for the next phase of support for Library programs and services with an ongoing emphasis of providing stable open hours and access to Library buildings and resources contained therein, continued investment in the books and materials collection, providing patrons with access to technology and online services, supporting children with programming and literacy efforts, and ensuring SPL's buildings remain in good structural condition.

Background: Seattle voters have approved two levies dating back to 2012, all with consistent focus on open hours and access, collections, technology and online services, in addition to routine and major maintenance projects. The 2019 Library Levy added a new priority related to supporting children, which expanded early education programming, and that funding priority has been folded into the Hours and Access category for the 2026 levy. In 2019, voters overwhelmingly approved the City's levy to support the Library.

Prior City of Seattle library levies had the following amounts and duration:

- 2012: \$123.0 million (seven-year)
- 2019: \$219.1 million (seven-year)

The Library Board of Trustees maintains exclusive control of the finances of the Library under 27.12.210 RCW and sole authority to expend the Library Fund under Article XII of the Seattle City Charter. In connection with this fiduciary responsibility and the City's annual budget

process, the Library Board shall annually review the allocation of Levy funding to determine allocations that best support, maintain and improve Library services and meet Levy commitments.

2. CAPITAL IMPROVEMENT PROGRAM

Does this legislation create, fund, or amend a CIP Project? Yes No

3. SUMMARY OF FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

Does this legislation have financial impacts to the City? Yes No

If the levy is adopted, the passage of the levy will result in an increase in revenues and expenditure for the next seven years; these costs are summarized in the first attachment to this document, "Summary Attachment 1 – 2026 Library Levy Projected Expenditures and Revenues."

3.d. Other Impacts

Does the legislation have other financial impacts to The City of Seattle, including direct or indirect, one-time or ongoing costs, that are not included in Sections 3.a through 3.c? If so, please describe these financial impacts.

No.

If the legislation has costs, but they can be absorbed within existing operations, please describe how those costs can be absorbed. The description should clearly describe if the absorbed costs are achievable because the department had excess resources within their existing budget or if by absorbing these costs the department is deprioritizing other work that would have used these resources.

N/A

Please describe any financial costs or other impacts of *not* implementing the legislation.

If this legislation and ballot measure do not pass, the City will lose funding for 33% of the Library's total expenditures, including nearly all the funding for the Library's Capital Improvement Plan critical to maintaining its 27 locations.

Please describe how this legislation may affect any City departments other than the originating department.

No. Library Levy proceeds are administered by The Seattle Public Library and its Board of Trustees.

4. OTHER IMPLICATIONS

a. Is a public hearing required for this legislation?

The City Council scheduled a Public Hearing for April 2, 2026, as part of the Select Committee schedule.

b. Is publication of notice with The Daily Journal of Commerce and/or The Seattle Times required for this legislation?

No.

c. Does this legislation affect a piece of property?

No.

d. Please describe any perceived implication for the principles of the Race and Social Justice Initiative.

i. How does this legislation impact vulnerable or historically disadvantaged communities? How did you arrive at this conclusion? In your response please consider impacts within City government (employees, internal programs) as well as in the broader community.

Yes. Currently, the 2019 Library Levy provides around 33 percent of the Library's budget annually, and allows the Library to be open more hours when patrons want and need them; to purchase more books and materials, particularly materials in world languages and materials by and of interest to historically disadvantaged communities; to provide computers; as well as internet access with up-to-date technology and software, including support for Wi-Fi hotspots, which provide free internet access, particularly important for those who otherwise have no service or cannot afford service; and to keep Library facilities clean and welcoming despite increasingly intensive use.

Each of the program areas in the Levy has an impact on vulnerable and historically disadvantaged communities. The Library provides a critical "third place" in an increasingly dense and economically unequal city. Any patron is welcome to use resources and materials, take a class, attend a program, access the internet, learn a skill or simply pass the day without needing to pay. Also, as the city's population of individuals and families experiencing homelessness has grown, the Central Library and many of the 26 branch locations have become a refuge for individuals needing shelter from inclement weather, access to computers to stay in touch with friends and family or search for a job, or access to a free restroom.

The proposed Levy sustains investments in collections made in the 2019 Library Levy and adds an additional \$4.6 million over the life of the levy to allow the Library to maintain and expand the breadth and depth of its collection despite a shift by patrons to higher cost digital materials. The Library will continue to acquire world language materials and materials by and of interest to historically disadvantaged communities, as well as expanding the digital collection to meet patron demand and provide increased access to residents who may have mobility issues, which prevents them from accessing the physical collection at the Central Library or the 26 branch locations.

ii. Please attach any Racial Equity Toolkits or other racial equity analyses in the development and/or assessment of the legislation.

iii. What is the Language Access Plan for any communications to the Public?

In accordance with Executive Order 2017-10, the Library partners with the Office of Immigrant and Refugee Affairs (OIRA) to ensure equitable access to information regarding department activities and services. The Library provides support to patrons with Limited English Proficiency (LEP) by employing a significant number of public facing staff who speak languages beyond English—with an emphasis on neighborhoods with higher populations of LEP patrons; Library staff have access to a Language Line when servicing LEP patrons in person or over the phone; and the Library regularly offers programs and services in four of the seven Tier 1 languages identified by OIRA—Chinese, Somali, Spanish, and Vietnamese—these offerings are supported by staff who speak these languages natively, community members, or both—among other areas of communication support.

e. Climate Change Implications

i. Emissions: How is this legislation likely to increase or decrease carbon emissions in a material way? Please attach any studies or other materials that were used to inform this response.

N/A

ii. Resiliency: will the action(s) proposed by this legislation increase or decrease Seattle’s resiliency (or ability to adapt) to climate change in a material way? If so, explain. If it is likely to decrease resiliency in a material way, describe what will or could be done to mitigate the effects.

No.

f. If this legislation includes a new initiative or a major programmatic expansion: What are the specific long-term and measurable goal(s) of the program? How will this legislation help achieve the program’s desired goal(s).

N/A

g. Does this legislation create a non-utility CIP project that involves a shared financial commitment with a non-City partner agency or organization?

No.

5. ATTACHMENTS

Summary Attachments:

Summary Attachment 1 – 2026 Library Levy Projected Expenditures and Revenues

Summary Attachment 2 – Levy Rate and Annual Cost to Homeowner

Summary Attachment 1 - 2026 Library Levy Projected Expenditures and Revenues

Projected Expenditures (in \$ millions)

Investment	2027	2028	2029	2030	2031	2032	2033	Total
Hours & Access	\$26.8	\$28.4	\$30.1	\$31.4	\$32.6	\$33.9	\$35.3	\$218.4
Collections	\$7.5	\$7.8	\$8.0	\$8.4	\$8.6	\$8.9	\$9.2	\$58.5
Technology	\$4.3	\$5.0	\$6.2	\$5.3	\$5.7	\$5.7	\$6.0	\$38.2
Maintenance	\$19.0	\$12.5	\$9.9	\$10.5	\$10.8	\$11.4	\$11.8	\$85.9
Administration	\$1.1	\$1.2	\$1.2	\$1.3	\$1.3	\$1.4	\$1.4	\$9.0
Grand Total	\$58.7	\$54.9	\$55.5	\$56.7	\$59.1	\$61.3	\$63.8	\$410.0

Projected Revenues (in \$ millions)

Revenue Source	2027	2028	2029	2030	2031	2032	2033	Total
Levy Legal Allocation (per Ordinance)	\$58.6	\$58.6	\$58.6	\$58.6	\$58.6	\$58.6	\$58.6	\$410.0
Estimated Property Taxes*	\$58.3	\$58.3	\$58.3	\$58.3	\$58.3	\$58.3	\$58.3	\$408.4
Estimated 2019 Library Levy Underspend	\$0.7	\$0.0	\$0.0	\$0.0	\$0.0	\$0.0	\$0.0	\$0.7
Estimated Investment Earnings**	\$0.0	\$0.1	\$0.2	\$0.3	\$0.2	\$0.2	\$0.0	\$1.0
Total Estimated Revenues	\$59.0	\$58.4	\$58.5	\$58.6	\$58.6	\$58.5	\$58.3	\$410.0

* Assumes anticipated cash receipts for 2027 to 2032 -- projections built off of 99.6% collection rate

** Annual Investment earnings projected at 3%

Note: Totals show in tables may not exactly reflect sum of line items due to rounding

Summary Attachment 2 - Levy Rate and Annual Cost to Homeowner

Tax Year	Assessed Value Estimate (Billions)	% Growth from prior year	Annual Levy Amount (millions)	Millage Rate per \$1,000 of Assessed Value	Annual Cost to Owner of Median Assessed Residential Value	Median Assessed Residential Value
2027	\$313.2	2.17%	\$58.6	\$0.19	\$163	\$872,022
2028	\$320.5	2.32%	\$58.6	\$0.18	\$167	\$912,871
2029	\$336.5	5.00%	\$58.6	\$0.17	\$166	\$955,635
2030	\$356.7	6.00%	\$58.6	\$0.16	\$164	\$1,000,401
2031	\$378.1	6.00%	\$58.6	\$0.15	\$162	\$1,047,265
2032	\$400.8	6.00%	\$58.6	\$0.15	\$160	\$1,096,323
2033	\$424.9	6.00%	\$58.6	\$0.14	\$158	\$1,147,680
AVG				\$0.16	\$163	\$1,004,600

Note: The numbers in this table represent projected values, while the ordinance reflects a maximum millage rate. The maximum millage rate provides administrative flexibility in the event that the actual assessed values differ from what is projected.

**CB 121181 – Seattle Public Library 2026 Levy Ordinance
Proposed Amendments Packet**

Select Committee on the Library Levy
Tuesday, March 31, 2026

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2	Multilingual play and learn and ESOL programs	Foster Juarez (Co-sponsor)	3
3	Community Resource Specialists and badge access	Foster	5
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Amendment 1 Version 1 to CB 121181 - MO Seattle Public Libraries 2026 Levy ORD

Sponsor: Councilmember Foster

Central Library renovation / Increase the amount of the proposed levy by \$10 million with the intent for allocation for major renovation of the Central Library

Effect: This amendment would communicate Council’s intention that a portion of the Library levy funding amount, as transmitted by the Mayor and increased by \$10,000,000 by the Council, should be authorized for investments to support maintenance by completing major renovation at the Central Library. Examples include improvements to the Children’s Area or the Seattle Room to meet current patron needs and use.

The Mayor’s proposed Library levy funding amount would provide \$85.9 million for maintenance including \$28.9 million more than ongoing levy support: \$10 million for priority and deferred maintenance, \$13 million for the seismic retrofit of the historic Columbia Branch, and \$5.9 million for increased facility and custodial support.

This amendment would add a recital and would increase the maximum annual levy and expected aggregate levy amount in Section 2 .

Add recital language in the location indicated and change the language in Section 2 as shown below:

WHEREAS, by replacing the expiring 2019 Library Levy, Seattle expands access to education and opportunity, promotes equity, lifts up the places where communities come together, and invests in libraries as treasured landmark and spaces for learning and discovery; and

WHEREAS, the Council intends that a portion of the Library levy funding amount, as transmitted by the Mayor and increased by \$10,000,000 by the Council, should be authorized for investments to support maintenance by completing major renovation at the Central Library; and

WHEREAS, The City of Seattle intends to place a levy proposal on the August 4, 2026, primary

election ballot to replace the expiring levy in order to continue to provide financial support to the programs and operations of the Library for the next seven years; NOW, THEREFORE,

BE IT ORDAINED BY THE CITY OF SEATTLE AS FOLLOWS:

Section 2. Levy of regular property taxes – Submittal. The City submits to the qualified electors of the City a proposition as authorized by RCW 84.55.050 to exceed the levy limitation on regular property taxes contained in RCW 84.55.010, for property taxes levied in 2026 through 2032 for collection in 2027 through 2033 respectively. This proposition shall be limited so that the City shall not levy more than ~~\$58,571,429~~ 60,000,000 in the first year and is expected to raise approximately ~~\$410,000,000~~ \$420,000,000 in aggregate over seven years for Library services. The levy amount in the first year shall be used to determine subsequent years' allowable regular levy limit in accordance with chapter 84.55 RCW. Amounts collected in excess of the Library levy funding amount are available for other City purposes for which the City's regular levy may be applied. In accordance with RCW 84.36.381 and RCW 84.55.050, the City will exempt seniors, veterans with disabilities, or other persons with disabilities who qualify under 84.36.381 RCW from the increased levy amount resulting from the proposition's passage. Pursuant to RCW 84.55.050(4), the maximum regular property taxes that may be levied in 2033 for collection in 2034 and in later years shall be computed as if the levy lid in RCW 84.55.010 had not been lifted under this ordinance.

Amendment 2 Version 1 to CB 121181 - MO Seattle Public Libraries 2026 Levy ORD

Sponsor: Councilmember Foster **Co-sponsor:** Councilmember Juarez

Multilingual play and learn and ESOL programs/ Increase the amount of the proposed levy by \$2.5 million for multilingual play and learn programs and \$2 million for English for Speakers of Other Languages (ESOL) programs

Effect: This amendment would communicate Council’s intention that a portion of the Library levy funding amount, as transmitted by the Mayor and increased by \$4,500,000 by the Council, should be authorized for investments to support operating hours and access by expanding multilingual play and learn programs (\$2.5 million) and English for Speakers of Other Languages programs (2.0 million) to additional Library branches.

The Mayor’s proposed Library levy funding amount would provide \$218.4 million for operating hours and access including \$22.6 million more than ongoing levy support: \$12.6 million for all-ages programs, \$7.7 million for security and emergency preparedness, and \$2.4 million for a new Office of Inclusion and Belonging.

This amendment would add a recital and would increase the maximum annual levy and expected aggregate levy amount in Section 2.

Add recital language in the location indicated and change the language in Section 2 as shown below:

WHEREAS, by replacing the expiring 2019 Library Levy, Seattle expands access to education and opportunity, promotes equity, lifts up the places where communities come together, and invests in libraries as treasured landmark and spaces for learning and discovery; and

WHEREAS, the Council intends that a portion of the Library levy funding amount, as transmitted by the Mayor and increased by \$4,500,000 by the Council, should be authorized for investments to support operating hours and access by expanding multilingual play and learn programs and English for Speakers of Other Languages programs to additional Library branches; and

WHEREAS, The City of Seattle intends to place a levy proposal on the August 4, 2026, primary election ballot to replace the expiring levy in order to continue to provide financial support to the programs and operations of the Library for the next seven years; NOW, THEREFORE,

BE IT ORDAINED BY THE CITY OF SEATTLE AS FOLLOWS:

Section 2. Levy of regular property taxes – Submittal. The City submits to the qualified electors of the City a proposition as authorized by RCW 84.55.050 to exceed the levy limitation on regular property taxes contained in RCW 84.55.010, for property taxes levied in 2026 through 2032 for collection in 2027 through 2033 respectively. This proposition shall be limited so that the City shall not levy more than ~~\$58,571,429~~ \$59,214,286 in the first year and is expected to raise approximately ~~\$410,000,000~~ \$414,500,000 in aggregate over seven years for Library services. The levy amount in the first year shall be used to determine subsequent years' allowable regular levy limit in accordance with chapter 84.55 RCW. Amounts collected in excess of the Library levy funding amount are available for other City purposes for which the City's regular levy may be applied. In accordance with RCW 84.36.381 and RCW 84.55.050, the City will exempt seniors, veterans with disabilities, or other persons with disabilities who qualify under 84.36.381 RCW from the increased levy amount resulting from the proposition's passage. Pursuant to RCW 84.55.050(4), the maximum regular property taxes that may be levied in 2033 for collection in 2034 and in later years shall be computed as if the levy lid in RCW 84.55.010 had not been lifted under this ordinance.

Amendment 3 Version 1 to CB 121181 - MO Seattle Public Libraries 2026 Levy ORD

Sponsor: Councilmember Foster

Community Resource Specialists and badge access/ Increase the amount of the proposed levy by \$4.06 million for additional Community Resource Specialists and upgraded badge access

Effect: This amendment would communicate Council’s intention that a portion of the Library levy funding amount, as transmitted by the Mayor and increased \$4.06 million by the Council, should be authorized for investments to support operating hours and access by expanding resource navigation with 4.0 full-time equivalent (FTE) Community Resource Specialists (\$4 million) and upgrading security badge access (\$60,000) at the Central Library.

Community Resource Specialists answer questions about and connects Library patrons to social services in the area, such as access to shelter, healthcare, transportation, food, and clothing. The additional positions are intended to extend coverage to match open hours and provide additional staffing at high-need areas. The badge access improvement would be a necessary component of a pilot to co-locate a Community Assisted Response and Engagement (CARE) team at the Central Library.

The Mayor’s proposed Library levy funding amount would provide \$218.4 million for operating hours and access including \$22.6 million more than ongoing levy support: \$12.6 million for all-ages programs, \$7.7 million for security and emergency preparedness, and \$2.4 million for a new Office of Inclusion and Belonging. The proposal includes \$1.2 million ongoing for 1 FTE Community Resource Specialist.

The amendment would add a recital and would increase the maximum annual levy and expected aggregate levy amount in Section 2.

Add recital language in the location indicated and change the language in Section 2 as shown below:

WHEREAS, by replacing the expiring 2019 Library Levy, Seattle expands access to education and opportunity, promotes equity, lifts up the places where communities come together, and invests in libraries as treasured landmark and spaces for learning and discovery; and

WHEREAS, the Council intends that a portion of the Library levy funding amount, as

transmitted by the Mayor and increased by \$4,060,000 by the Council, should be authorized for investments to support operating hours and access by expanding resource navigation with four additional full-time equivalent Community Resource Specialists and upgrading security badge access at the Central Branch; and

WHEREAS, The City of Seattle intends to place a levy proposal on the August 4, 2026, primary election ballot to replace the expiring levy in order to continue to provide financial support to the programs and operations of the Library for the next seven years; NOW, THEREFORE,

BE IT ORDAINED BY THE CITY OF SEATTLE AS FOLLOWS:

Section 2. Levy of regular property taxes – Submittal. The City submits to the qualified electors of the City a proposition as authorized by RCW 84.55.050 to exceed the levy limitation on regular property taxes contained in RCW 84.55.010, for property taxes levied in 2026 through 2032 for collection in 2027 through 2033 respectively. This proposition shall be limited so that the City shall not levy more than ~~\$58,571,429~~ 59,151,429 in the first year and is expected to raise approximately ~~\$410,000,000~~ \$414,060,000 in aggregate over seven years for Library services. The levy amount in the first year shall be used to determine subsequent years' allowable regular levy limit in accordance with chapter 84.55 RCW. Amounts collected in excess of the Library levy funding amount are available for other City purposes for which the City's regular levy may be applied. In accordance with RCW 84.36.381 and RCW 84.55.050, the City will exempt seniors, veterans with disabilities, or other persons with disabilities who qualify under 84.36.381 RCW from the increased levy amount resulting from the proposition's passage. Pursuant to RCW 84.55.050(4), the maximum regular property taxes that may be levied in 2033

Amendment 4 Version 1 to CB 121181 - MO Seattle Public Libraries 2026 Levy ORD

Sponsor: Councilmember Lin

Cooling and deferred maintenance/ Increase the amount of the proposed levy by \$15 million for cooling systems and deferred maintenance

Effect: This amendment would communicate Council’s intention that a portion of the Library levy funding amount, as transmitted by the Mayor and increased by \$15 million by the Council, should be authorized for investments to support maintenance by (1) completing the repair, replacement, or upgrades of cooling systems for all Library branches and (2) addressing deferred maintenance.

Climate research shows that extreme heat events have become more severe in the Pacific Northwest in recent decades, including excessive heat in Seattle. The twenty-seven branches of the Seattle Public Library (SPL) provide a quiet, safe refuge for many, including from heat. SPL has worked hard to improve cooling systems across most branches in recent years and has five sites remaining. This amendment is intended to reduce uncertainty about funding for cooling and for other maintenance needs.

The Mayor’s proposed Library levy funding amount would provide \$85.9 million for maintenance including \$28.9 million more than ongoing levy support: \$10 million for priority and deferred maintenance, \$13 million for the seismic retrofit of the historic Columbia Branch, and \$5.9 million for increased facility and custodial support.

This amendment would add a recital and would increase the maximum annual levy and expected aggregate levy amount in Section 2.

Add recital language in the location indicated and change the language in Section 2 shown below:

WHEREAS, by replacing the expiring 2019 Library Levy, Seattle expands access to education and opportunity, promotes equity, lifts up the places where communities come together, and invests in libraries as treasured landmark and spaces for learning and discovery; and

WHEREAS, the Council intends that a portion of the Library levy funding amount, as transmitted by the Mayor and increased by \$15,000,000 by the Council, should be authorized for investments to support maintenance by (1) completing the repair, replacement, or upgrades of cooling systems for all Library branches and (2) addressing deferred maintenance; and

WHEREAS, The City of Seattle intends to place a levy proposal on the August 4, 2026, primary election ballot to replace the expiring levy in order to continue to provide financial support to the programs and operations of the Library for the next seven years; NOW, THEREFORE,

BE IT ORDAINED BY THE CITY OF SEATTLE AS FOLLOWS:

Section 2. Levy of regular property taxes – Submittal. The City submits to the qualified electors of the City a proposition as authorized by RCW 84.55.050 to exceed the levy limitation on regular property taxes contained in RCW 84.55.010, for property taxes levied in 2026 through 2032 for collection in 2027 through 2033 respectively. This proposition shall be limited so that the City shall not levy more than ~~\$58,571,429~~ 60,714,286 in the first year and is expected to raise approximately ~~\$410,000,000~~ \$425,000,000 in aggregate over seven years for Library services. The levy amount in the first year shall be used to determine subsequent years' allowable regular levy limit in accordance with chapter 84.55 RCW. Amounts collected in excess of the Library levy funding amount are available for other City purposes for which the City's regular levy may be applied. In accordance with RCW 84.36.381 and RCW 84.55.050, the City will exempt seniors, veterans with disabilities, or other persons with disabilities who qualify under 84.36.381 RCW from the increased levy amount resulting from the proposition's passage. Pursuant to RCW 84.55.050(4), the maximum regular property taxes that may be levied in 2033 for collection in 2034 and in later years shall be computed as if the levy lid in RCW 84.55.010 had not been lifted under this ordinance.

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March 31, 2026
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for collection in 2034 and in later years shall be computed as if the levy lid in RCW 84.55.010 had not been lifted under this ordinance.

Amendment 5 Version 1 to CB 121181 - MO Seattle Public Libraries 2026 Levy ORD

Sponsor: Councilmember Rinck

Seismic retrofit of historic branch library/ Increase the amount of the proposed levy by \$15 million for a seismic retrofit of an historic branch library

Effect: This amendment would communicate Council’s intention that a portion of the Library levy funding amount, as transmitted by the Mayor and increased by \$15 million by the Council, should be authorized for investments to support maintenance by renovating a historic Library branch to improve seismic safety, reduce the use of fossil fuels, and upgrade publicly available space.

The Mayor’s proposed Library levy funding amount would provide \$85.9 million for maintenance including \$28.9 million more than ongoing levy support: \$10 million for priority and deferred maintenance, \$13 million for the seismic retrofit of the historic Columbia Branch, and \$5.9 million for increased facility and custodial support.

This amendment is intended to support another seismic retrofit. Seattle Public Library (SPL) has publicly stated that with additional funding SPL would prioritize the West Seattle Branch Library as the next seismic retrofit project.

The amendment would also increase the maximum annual levy and expected aggregate levy amounts in Section 2.

Add recital language in the location indicated below and change the language in Section 2 as shown below:

WHEREAS, by replacing the expiring 2019 Library Levy, Seattle expands access to education and opportunity, promotes equity, lifts up the places where communities come together, and invests in libraries as treasured landmark and spaces for learning and discovery; and

WHEREAS, the Council intends that a portion of the Library levy funding amount, as transmitted by the Mayor and increased by \$15,000,000 by the Council, should be authorized for investments to support maintenance by renovating a historic Library branch to improve seismic safety, reduce the use of fossil fuels, and upgrade publicly available space; and

WHEREAS, The City of Seattle intends to place a levy proposal on the August 4, 2026, primary election ballot to replace the expiring levy in order to continue to provide financial support to the programs and operations of the Library for the next seven years; NOW, THEREFORE,

BE IT ORDAINED BY THE CITY OF SEATTLE AS FOLLOWS:

Section 2. Levy of regular property taxes – Submittal. The City submits to the qualified electors of the City a proposition as authorized by RCW 84.55.050 to exceed the levy limitation on regular property taxes contained in RCW 84.55.010, for property taxes levied in 2026 through 2032 for collection in 2027 through 2033 respectively. This proposition shall be limited so that the City shall not levy more than ~~\$58,571,429~~ \$60,714,286 in the first year and is expected to raise approximately ~~\$410,000,000~~ \$425,000,000 in aggregate over seven years for Library services. The levy amount in the first year shall be used to determine subsequent years' allowable regular levy limit in accordance with chapter 84.55 RCW. Amounts collected in excess of the Library levy funding amount are available for other City purposes for which the City's regular levy may be applied. In accordance with RCW 84.36.381 and RCW 84.55.050, the City will exempt seniors, veterans with disabilities, or other persons with disabilities who qualify under 84.36.381 RCW from the increased levy amount resulting from the proposition's passage. Pursuant to RCW 84.55.050(4), the maximum regular property taxes that may be levied in 2033 for collection in 2034 and in later years shall be computed as if the levy lid in RCW 84.55.010 had not been lifted under this ordinance.

Amendment 6 Version 1 to CB 121181 - MO Seattle Public Libraries 2026 Levy ORD

Sponsor: Councilmember Rinck

Electronic materials and collections staffing/ Increase the amount of the proposed levy by \$6.4 for expanding the digital materials collection and supporting collections staffing

Effect: This amendment would communicate Council’s that a portion of the Library levy funding amount, as transmitted by the Mayor and increased by \$6.4 million by the Council, should be authorized for investments to support collections by expanding the electronic materials collection (\$5 million) and increasing collections staffing (\$1.4 million).

The Mayor’s proposed Library levy funding amount would provide \$58.5 million for collections including \$35.43 for physical and electronic materials. This would be an increase of 15 percent from the ongoing funding (\$30.83 million) for physical and electronic materials. The \$4.6 million of new funding would be invested in \$2.2 million for physical books and in \$2.4 million for electronic books and electronic audiobooks.

The amendment would also increase the maximum annual levy and expected aggregate levy amount in Section 2.

Add recital language in the location indicated below and change the language in Section 2 as shown below:

WHEREAS, by replacing the expiring 2019 Library Levy, Seattle expands access to education and opportunity, promotes equity, lifts up the places where communities come together, and invests in libraries as treasured landmark and spaces for learning and discovery; and

WHEREAS, the Council intends that a portion of the Library levy funding amount, as transmitted by the Mayor and increased by \$6,400,000 by the Council, should be authorized for investments to support collections by expanding the electronic materials (e-books and e-audiobooks) collection and increasing collections staffing; and

WHEREAS, The City of Seattle intends to place a levy proposal on the August 4, 2026, primary

election ballot to replace the expiring levy in order to continue to provide financial support to the programs and operations of the Library for the next seven years; NOW, THEREFORE,

BE IT ORDAINED BY THE CITY OF SEATTLE AS FOLLOWS:

Section 2. Levy of regular property taxes – Submittal. The City submits to the qualified electors of the City a proposition as authorized by RCW 84.55.050 to exceed the levy limitation on regular property taxes contained in RCW 84.55.010, for property taxes levied in 2026 through 2032 for collection in 2027 through 2033 respectively. This proposition shall be limited so that the City shall not levy more than ~~\$58,571,429~~ \$59,485,714 in the first year and is expected to raise approximately ~~\$410,000,000~~ \$416,400,000 in aggregate over seven years for Library services. The levy amount in the first year shall be used to determine subsequent years' allowable regular levy limit in accordance with chapter 84.55 RCW. Amounts collected in excess of the Library levy funding amount are available for other City purposes for which the City's regular levy may be applied. In accordance with RCW 84.36.381 and RCW 84.55.050, the City will exempt seniors, veterans with disabilities, or other persons with disabilities who qualify under 84.36.381 RCW from the increased levy amount resulting from the proposition's passage. Pursuant to RCW 84.55.050(4), the maximum regular property taxes that may be levied in 2033 for collection in 2034 and in later years shall be computed as if the levy lid in RCW 84.55.010 had not been lifted under this ordinance.

Amendment 7 Version 1 to CB 121181 - MO Seattle Public Libraries 2026 Levy ORD

Sponsor: Councilmember Rinck

E-book Peak Picks/ Increase the amount of the proposed levy by \$2.5 million for e-book copies of Peak Pick titles

Effect: This amendment would communicate Council’s intention that a portion of the Library levy funding amount, as transmitted by the Mayor and increased by \$2,500,000 by the Council, should be authorized for investments to support collections by expanding the Peak Pick titles in Library’s e-book collection.

Through the Peak Picks program, Seattle Public Library (SPL) provides patrons with access to new and popular books with no holds and no waiting. Patrons borrow Peak Pick titles on a first come, first served basis for a 14-day lending period.

The Mayor’s proposed Library levy funding amount would provide \$58.5 million for collections including \$4.6 million more than ongoing levy support: \$2.2 million for physical books and \$2.4 million for electronic books and electronic audiobooks.

This amendment would add a recital and also increase the maximum annual levy and expected aggregate levy amounts in Section 2.

Add recital language in the location indicated below and change the language in Section 2 as shown below:

WHEREAS, by replacing the expiring 2019 Library Levy, Seattle expands access to education and opportunity, promotes equity, lifts up the places where communities come together, and invests in libraries as treasured landmark and spaces for learning and discovery; and

WHEREAS, the Council intends that a portion of the Library levy funding amount, as transmitted by the Mayor and increased by \$2,500,000 by the Council, should be authorized for investments to support collections by expanding the Peak Pick titles in Library’s e-book collection; and

WHEREAS, The City of Seattle intends to place a levy proposal on the August 4, 2026, primary

election ballot to replace the expiring levy in order to continue to provide financial support to the programs and operations of the Library for the next seven years; NOW, THEREFORE,

BE IT ORDAINED BY THE CITY OF SEATTLE AS FOLLOWS:

Section 2. Levy of regular property taxes – Submittal. The City submits to the qualified electors of the City a proposition as authorized by RCW 84.55.050 to exceed the levy limitation on regular property taxes contained in RCW 84.55.010, for property taxes levied in 2026 through 2032 for collection in 2027 through 2033 respectively. This proposition shall be limited so that the City shall not levy more than ~~\$58,571,429~~ \$58,928,571 in the first year and is expected to raise approximately ~~\$410,000,000~~ \$412,500,000 in aggregate over seven years for Library services. The levy amount in the first year shall be used to determine subsequent years' allowable regular levy limit in accordance with chapter 84.55 RCW. Amounts collected in excess of the Library levy funding amount are available for other City purposes for which the City's regular levy may be applied. In accordance with RCW 84.36.381 and RCW 84.55.050, the City will exempt seniors, veterans with disabilities, or other persons with disabilities who qualify under 84.36.381 RCW from the increased levy amount resulting from the proposition's passage. Pursuant to RCW 84.55.050(4), the maximum regular property taxes that may be levied in 2033 for collection in 2034 and in later years shall be computed as if the levy lid in RCW 84.55.010 had not been lifted under this ordinance.

Amendment 8 Version 1 to CB 121181 - MO Seattle Public Libraries 2026 Levy ORD

Sponsor: Councilmember Strauss

Seattle Public Library programming on the Seattle Channel/ Increase the amount of the proposed levy by \$PLACEHOLDER for expanded Seattle Public Library programming on the Seattle Channel

Effect: This amendment would communicate Council’s intention that a portion of the Library levy funding amount, as transmitted by the Mayor and increased by \$PLACEHOLDER by the Council, should be authorized for investments to support operating hours and access by expanding Library programming made available live and recorded via the Seattle Channel.

The intention would be to extend the impact and audience for Seattle Public Library programs, such as readings, speakers, and special events, by providing them live and available to stream on the Seattle Channel.

The Mayor’s proposed Library levy funding amount would provide \$218.4 million for operating hours and access including \$22.6 million more than ongoing levy support: \$12.6 million for all-ages programs, \$7.7 million for security and emergency preparedness, and \$2.4 million for a new Office of Inclusion and Belonging.

The amendment would add a recital and would increase the maximum annual levy and expected aggregate levy amount in Section 2.

Add recital language in the location indicated and change the language in Section 2 as shown below:

WHEREAS, by replacing the expiring 2019 Library Levy, Seattle expands access to education and opportunity, promotes equity, lifts up the places where communities come together, and invests in libraries as treasured landmark and spaces for learning and discovery; and

WHEREAS, the Council intends that a portion of the Library levy funding amount, as transmitted by the Mayor and increased by \$PLACEHOLDER by the Council, should be authorized for investments to support operating hours and access by expanding Library programming made available live and recorded via the Seattle Channel; and

WHEREAS, The City of Seattle intends to place a levy proposal on the August 4, 2026, primary

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election ballot to replace the expiring levy in order to continue to provide financial support to the programs and operations of the Library for the next seven years; NOW, THEREFORE,

BE IT ORDAINED BY THE CITY OF SEATTLE AS FOLLOWS:

Section 2. Levy of regular property taxes – Submittal. The City submits to the qualified electors of the City a proposition as authorized by RCW 84.55.050 to exceed the levy limitation on regular property taxes contained in RCW 84.55.010, for property taxes levied in 2026 through 2032 for collection in 2027 through 2033 respectively. This proposition shall be limited so that the City shall not levy more than ~~\$58,571,429~~ \$PLACEHOLDER in the first year and is expected to raise approximately ~~\$410,000,000~~ \$PLACEHOLDER in aggregate over seven years for Library services. The levy amount in the first year shall be used to determine subsequent years' allowable regular levy limit in accordance with chapter 84.55 RCW. Amounts collected in excess of the Library levy funding amount are available for other City purposes for which the City's regular levy may be applied. In accordance with RCW 84.36.381 and RCW 84.55.050, the City will exempt seniors, veterans with disabilities, or other persons with disabilities who qualify under 84.36.381 RCW from the increased levy amount resulting from the proposition's passage. Pursuant to RCW 84.55.050(4), the maximum regular property taxes that may be levied in 2033 for collection in 2034 and in later years shall be computed as if the levy lid in RCW 84.55.010 had not been lifted under this ordinance.

Amendment 9 Version 1 to CB 121181 - MO Seattle Public Libraries 2026 Levy ORD

Sponsor: Councilmember Strauss

Improve physical accessibility (ADA) and elevators / Increase the amount of the proposed levy by \$PLACEHOLDER for improvements to physical accessibility (ADA) and for elevators and escalators

Effect: This amendment would communicate Council’s intention that a portion of the Library levy funding amount, as transmitted by the Mayor and increased by \$PLACEHOLDER by the Council, should be authorized for investments to support maintenance by improving physical accessibility under the Americans with Disabilities Act and by repairing or replacing elevators and escalators.

The intention would be to address deferred maintenance and to make long-lasting improvements rather than short-term fixes.

The Mayor’s proposed Library levy funding amount would provide \$85.9 million for maintenance including \$28.9 million more than ongoing levy support: \$10 million for priority and deferred maintenance, \$13 million for the seismic retrofit of the historic Columbia Branch, and \$5.9 million for increased facility and custodial support.

The amendment would add a recital and would increase the maximum annual levy and expected aggregate levy amount in Section 2.

Add recital language in the location indicated and change the language in Section 2 as shown below:

WHEREAS, by replacing the expiring 2019 Library Levy, Seattle expands access to education and opportunity, promotes equity, lifts up the places where communities come together, and invests in libraries as treasured landmark and spaces for learning and discovery; and

WHEREAS, the Council intends that a portion of the Library levy funding amount, as transmitted by the Mayor and increased by \$PLACEHOLDER by the Council, should be authorized for investments to support maintenance by improving physical accessibility under the Americans with Disabilities Act and by repairing or replacing elevators and escalators; and

WHEREAS, The City of Seattle intends to place a levy proposal on the August 4, 2026, primary election ballot to replace the expiring levy in order to continue to provide financial support to the programs and operations of the Library for the next seven years; NOW, THEREFORE,

BE IT ORDAINED BY THE CITY OF SEATTLE AS FOLLOWS:

Section 2. Levy of regular property taxes – Submittal. The City submits to the qualified electors of the City a proposition as authorized by RCW 84.55.050 to exceed the levy limitation on regular property taxes contained in RCW 84.55.010, for property taxes levied in 2026 through 2032 for collection in 2027 through 2033 respectively. This proposition shall be limited so that the City shall not levy more than ~~\$58,571,429~~ \$PLACEHOLDER in the first year and is expected to raise approximately ~~\$410,000,000~~ \$PLACEHOLDER in aggregate over seven years for Library services. The levy amount in the first year shall be used to determine subsequent years' allowable regular levy limit in accordance with chapter 84.55 RCW. Amounts collected in excess of the Library levy funding amount are available for other City purposes for which the City's regular levy may be applied. In accordance with RCW 84.36.381 and RCW 84.55.050, the City will exempt seniors, veterans with disabilities, or other persons with disabilities who qualify under 84.36.381 RCW from the increased levy amount resulting from the proposition's passage. Pursuant to RCW 84.55.050(4), the maximum regular property taxes that may be levied in 2033 for collection in 2034 and in later years shall be computed as if the levy lid in RCW 84.55.010 had not been lifted under this ordinance.

Amendment 10 Version 1 to CB 121181 - MO Seattle Public Libraries 2026 Levy ORD

Sponsor: Councilmember Strauss

Physical and digital materials/ Increase the amount of the proposed levy by \$PLACEHOLDER for enhancements to physical and digital materials

Effect: This amendment would communicate Council’s intention that a portion of the Library levy funding amount, as transmitted by the Mayor and increased by \$PLACEHOLDER by the Council, should be authorized for investments to support collections by increasing acquisition of new titles and additional copies in various physical and digital formats.

The Mayor’s proposed Library levy funding amount would provide \$58.5 million for collections including \$4.6 million more than ongoing levy support: \$2.2 million for physical books and \$2.4 million for electronic books and electronic audiobooks.

The amendment would add a recital and would increase the maximum annual levy and expected aggregate levy amount in Section 2.

Add recital language in the location indicated and change the language in Section 2 as shown below:

WHEREAS, by replacing the expiring 2019 Library Levy, Seattle expands access to education and opportunity, promotes equity, lifts up the places where communities come together, and invests in libraries as treasured landmark and spaces for learning and discovery; and

WHEREAS, the Council intends that a portion of the Library levy funding amount, as transmitted by the Mayor and increased by \$PLACEHOLDER by the Council, should be authorized for investments to support collections by increasing acquisition of new titles and additional copies in various physical and digital formats; and

WHEREAS, The City of Seattle intends to place a levy proposal on the August 4, 2026, primary

election ballot to replace the expiring levy in order to continue to provide financial support to the programs and operations of the Library for the next seven years; NOW, THEREFORE,

BE IT ORDAINED BY THE CITY OF SEATTLE AS FOLLOWS:

Section 2. Levy of regular property taxes – Submittal. The City submits to the qualified electors of the City a proposition as authorized by RCW 84.55.050 to exceed the levy limitation on regular property taxes contained in RCW 84.55.010, for property taxes levied in 2026 through 2032 for collection in 2027 through 2033 respectively. This proposition shall be limited so that the City shall not levy more than ~~\$58,571,429~~ \$PLACEHOLDER in the first year and is expected to raise approximately ~~\$410,000,000~~ \$PLACEHOLDER in aggregate over seven years for Library services. The levy amount in the first year shall be used to determine subsequent years' allowable regular levy limit in accordance with chapter 84.55 RCW. Amounts collected in excess of the Library levy funding amount are available for other City purposes for which the City's regular levy may be applied. In accordance with RCW 84.36.381 and RCW 84.55.050, the City will exempt seniors, veterans with disabilities, or other persons with disabilities who qualify under 84.36.381 RCW from the increased levy amount resulting from the proposition's passage. Pursuant to RCW 84.55.050(4), the maximum regular property taxes that may be levied in 2033 for collection in 2034 and in later years shall be computed as if the levy lid in RCW 84.55.010 had not been lifted under this ordinance.

Amendment 11 Version 1 to CB 121181 - MO Seattle Public Libraries 2026 Levy ORD

Sponsor: Councilmember Strauss

Safety ambassadors or contracted outreach / Increase the amount of the proposed levy by \$PLACEHOLDER for safety ambassadors or contracted outreach

Effect: This amendment would communicate Council’s intention that a portion of the Library levy funding amount, as transmitted by the Mayor and increased by \$PLACEHOLDER by the Council, should be authorized for investments to support operating hours and access by contracting for safety ambassadors or outreach workers to serve on Seattle Public Library property.

The intention would be to contract for services following the model of current neighborhood impact framework programs in Ballard, Downtown, Chinatown-International District, and University District.

The Mayor’s proposed Library levy funding amount would provide \$218.4 million for operating hours and access including \$22.6 million more than ongoing levy support: \$12.6 million for all-ages programs, \$7.7 million for security and emergency preparedness, and \$2.4 million for a new Office of Inclusion and Belonging. The proposal includes \$1.2 million ongoing for 1 FTE community resource specialist.

The amendment would add a recital and would increase the maximum annual levy and expected aggregate levy amount in Section 2.

Add recital language in the location indicated and change the language in Section 2 as shown below:

WHEREAS, by replacing the expiring 2019 Library Levy, Seattle expands access to education and opportunity, promotes equity, lifts up the places where communities come together, and invests in libraries as treasured landmark and spaces for learning and discovery; and

WHEREAS, the Council intends that a portion of the Library levy funding amount, as transmitted by the Mayor and increased by \$PLACEHOLDER by the Council, should be authorized for investments to support operating hours and access by contracting for safety ambassadors or outreach workers to serve on Seattle Public Library property; and

WHEREAS, The City of Seattle intends to place a levy proposal on the August 4, 2026, primary election ballot to replace the expiring levy in order to continue to provide financial support to the programs and operations of the Library for the next seven years; NOW, THEREFORE,

BE IT ORDAINED BY THE CITY OF SEATTLE AS FOLLOWS:

Section 2. Levy of regular property taxes – Submittal. The City submits to the qualified electors of the City a proposition as authorized by RCW 84.55.050 to exceed the levy limitation on regular property taxes contained in RCW 84.55.010, for property taxes levied in 2026 through 2032 for collection in 2027 through 2033 respectively. This proposition shall be limited so that the City shall not levy more than ~~\$58,571,429~~ \$PLACEHOLDER in the first year and is expected to raise approximately ~~\$410,000,000~~ \$PLACEHOLDER in aggregate over seven years for Library services. The levy amount in the first year shall be used to determine subsequent years' allowable regular levy limit in accordance with chapter 84.55 RCW. Amounts collected in excess of the Library levy funding amount are available for other City purposes for which the City's regular levy may be applied. In accordance with RCW 84.36.381 and RCW 84.55.050, the City will exempt seniors, veterans with disabilities, or other persons with disabilities who qualify under 84.36.381 RCW from the increased levy amount resulting from the proposition's passage. Pursuant to RCW 84.55.050(4), the maximum regular property taxes that may be levied in 2033 for collection in 2034 and in later years shall be computed as if the levy lid in RCW 84.55.010 had not been lifted under this ordinance.

UPDATED:

CB 121181 – Seattle Public Library 2026 Levy Ordinance

Proposed Amendments Packet

Select Committee on the Library Levy

Tuesday, March 31, 2026

No.	Short title	Sponsor	Page
1	Central Library renovation	Foster	1
2	Multilingual play and learn and ESOL programs	Foster Juarez (Co-sponsor)	3
3	Community Resource Specialists and badge access	Foster	5
4	Cooling and deferred maintenance	Lin	7
5	Seismic retrofit of historic branch library	Rinck	10
6	Electronic materials and collections staffing	Rinck	12
7	E-book Peak Picks	Rinck	14
8	Seattle Public Library programming on the Seattle Channel	Strauss	16
9	Improve physical accessibility (ADA) and elevators	Strauss	18
10	Physical and digital materials	Strauss	20
11	Safety ambassadors or contracted outreach	Strauss	22
<u>12</u>	<u>Digital skilling programs for teens</u>	<u>Saka</u>	<u>n/a</u>
<u>13</u>	<u>Contracting with the Washington State Black Legacy Institute</u>	<u>Saka</u>	<u>n/a</u>
<u>14</u>	<u>West Seattle Branch Library restoration</u>	<u>Saka</u>	<u>n/a</u>

Amendment 12 Version 1 to CB 121181 - MO Seattle Public Libraries 2026 Levy ORD

Sponsor: Councilmember Saka

Digital skilling for teens/ Invest in digital skilling programs for teens at South Park and High Point Branches

Effect: This amendment would communicate Council’s intention that a portion of the Library levy funding amount, as transmitted by the Mayor, should be authorized for investments to support technology services by providing digital skilling programs for teens offered at the South Park and High Point Branch Libraries.

The Mayor’s proposed Library levy funding amount would provide \$38.2 million for technology services including \$12.4 million more than ongoing levy support: \$5 million for upgrading IT infrastructure and 7.4 million for strengthening IT systems and cybersecurity.

This amendment would add a recital.

Add recital language in the location indicated below:

WHEREAS, by replacing the expiring 2019 Library Levy, Seattle expands access to education and opportunity, promotes equity, lifts up the places where communities come together, and invests in libraries as treasured landmark and spaces for learning and discovery; and

WHEREAS, the Council intends that a portion of the Library levy funding amount, as transmitted by the Mayor, should be authorized for investments to support technology services by providing digital skilling programs for teens offered at the South Park and High Point Branch Libraries; and

WHEREAS, The City of Seattle intends to place a levy proposal on the August 4, 2026, primary election ballot to replace the expiring levy in order to continue to provide financial support to the programs and operations of the Library for the next seven years; NOW, THEREFORE,

BE IT ORDAINED BY THE CITY OF SEATTLE AS FOLLOWS:

Eric McConaghy
Select Committee on the Library Levy
April 8, 2026
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Amendment 13 Version 1 to CB 121181 - MO Seattle Public Libraries 2026 Levy ORD

Sponsor: Councilmember Saka

Washington State Black Legacy Institute/ Support contracting with the Washington State Black Legacy Institute for programming and local history curation

Effect: This amendment would communicate Council’s intention that a portion of the Library levy funding amount, as transmitted by the Mayor, should be authorized for investments to support hours and access and collections by contracting with the Washington State Black Legacy Institute for programming and local history curation that celebrates and preserves the rich history of Washington state’s Black communities and offers a powerful tribute to Black resilience, leadership, and cultural contributions.

The Mayor’s proposed Library levy funding amount would provide \$218.4 million for operating hours and access including \$22.6 million more than ongoing levy support: \$12.6 million for all-ages programs, \$7.7 million for security and emergency preparedness, and \$2.4 million for a new Office of Inclusion and Belonging.

The Mayor’s proposed Library levy funding amount would provide \$58.5 million for collections including \$4.6 million more than ongoing levy support: \$2.2 million for physical books and \$2.4 million for electronic books and electronic audiobooks.

The amendment would add a recital.

Add recital language in the location indicated below:

WHEREAS, by replacing the expiring 2019 Library Levy, Seattle expands access to education and opportunity, promotes equity, lifts up the places where communities come together, and invests in libraries as treasured landmark and spaces for learning and discovery; and

WHEREAS, the Council intends that a portion of the Library levy funding amount, as transmitted by the Mayor, should be authorized for investments to support hours and access and collections by contracting with the Washington State Black Legacy Institute for programming that celebrates and preserves the rich history of Washington’s Black

Eric McConaghy
Select Committee on the Library Levy
April 8, 2026
D1

communities and offers a powerful tribute to Black resilience, leadership, and cultural contributions; and

WHEREAS, The City of Seattle intends to place a levy proposal on the August 4, 2026, primary election ballot to replace the expiring levy in order to continue to provide financial support to the programs and operations of the Library for the next seven years; NOW, THEREFORE,

BE IT ORDAINED BY THE CITY OF SEATTLE AS FOLLOWS:

Amendment 14 Version 3 to CB 121181 - MO Seattle Public Libraries 2026 Levy ORD

Sponsor: Councilmember Saka

West Seattle Branch Restoration/ Approve the proposed levy amount with the intent of allocation for restoring the historic West Seattle Branch Library

Effect: This amendment would communicate Council’s intention that by approving the levy amount as transmitted by the Mayor funding should be allocated to support maintenance by renovating the historic West Seattle Library Branch for seismic safety, fossil fuel reduction, and upgrades to publicly available space.

The Mayor’s levy proposal includes \$13 million for the renovation of the Columbia Branch as highest priority among SPL’s historic branches. SPL’s renovation plans rank the West Seattle Branch Library as next after the Columbia Branch.

Add recital language in the location indicated below:

WHEREAS, by replacing the expiring 2019 Library Levy, Seattle expands access to education and opportunity, promotes equity, lifts up the places where communities come together, and invests in libraries as treasured landmark and spaces for learning and discovery; and

WHEREAS, the Council intends that a portion of the Library levy funding amount, as transmitted by the Mayor, should be authorized for investments to support maintenance for renovating the historic West Seattle Library Branch for seismic safety, fossil fuel reduction, upgrades to publicly available space, and accelerating the improvements to physical accessibility under the Americans with Disabilities Act; and

WHEREAS, The City of Seattle intends to place a levy proposal on the August 4, 2026, primary election ballot to replace the expiring levy in order to continue to provide financial support to the programs and operations of the Library for the next seven years; NOW, THEREFORE,

Eric McConaghy
Select Committee on the Library Levy
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BE IT ORDAINED BY THE CITY OF SEATTLE AS FOLLOWS:
