



**KING COUNTY
LIBRARY SYSTEM**

2026 PRELIMINARY BUDGET



Executive Director's Summary

Dear Community,

The King County Library System has always been guided by strong financial stewardship, transparency, and innovation. These values shape our 2026 Budget Book and every decision we make.

This year, we've reimaged library spaces, enhanced technology, and deepened community connections. Responding to your feedback, we expanded hours in Sammamish, Mercer Island, and Vashon without increasing costs. We're building more inclusive spaces—from vibrant children's areas to welcoming teen gathering spots—and growing our World Languages collection to reflect our diverse communities.



Our strong focus on literacy led to increased attendance at a wide range of programs, including our flagship Summer Reading, which drew 35,578 registrants and saw a 30% increase in the number of finishers over the prior year for ages newborn to 17.

Study Zone, which offers homework help, set new attendance records. Our libraries, which are community hubs, welcomed over five million visitors, and our Mobile Services served 89,000 people.

Patrons checked out 22.5 million items, and when it comes to digital circulation, KCLS ranks second among libraries in the U.S. and fourth in the world. We also know that we help you save money when you check out materials, versus buying them; the average book costs \$17.14, and a digital checkout costs \$14.06.



Yet we face unprecedented budget challenges. Rising costs and flattening revenues mean we cannot sustain current services without change. To secure our future, we are exploring whether to recommend that the KCLS Board authorize a levy lid lift in 2026. We postponed our planned 2020 levy lid lift during COVID-19's financial hardships. We were able to save funds while our physical locations were closed during the pandemic, but that one-time savings is not sustainable for the future. Since our last levy lid lift in 2010, we have been held to collecting taxes at a lower rate despite a significant rise in property taxes.

We remain committed to meeting the needs of King County residents and doing so responsibly. Our mission is unchanged—and we need renewed community investment to carry it forward.

Sincerely,

Heidi M. Daniel

Heidi Daniel, KCLS Executive Director





KCLS Strategic Priorities

In 2025, the KCLS leadership team developed four strategic priorities. These priorities serve as a North Star for the organization's work for 2025-2026. Read updates about what was accomplished in 2025 and the vision for the continued work in 2026.

Elevate customer experiences for our service area communities, centering those most negatively impacted by inequity to amplify the value of the Library.

In 2025, we expanded library hours, streamlined service delivery, and prepared for the replacement of our 20-year-old central sorter machine. The new sorter, arriving in 2026, will use 85% less energy and significantly reduce wait times for materials. In response to community requests, we expanded hours at the Mercer Island, Vashon Island and Sammamish libraries. We also upgraded patron and staff computers at many libraries.

In 2026, we will continue to prioritize improving patron services and experiences, shaped by community input. With broad staff input, we're developing a new customer service model strongly focused on working with communities, removing barriers to access, and ensuring that all patrons get the help they need and feel welcome in our libraries. We're also exploring an "innovation portal" that empowers staff to brainstorm and pilot new ideas, pursue grant funding, and help scale successful projects systemwide.

Enhance staff experience and engagement at KCLS, fostering communities of belonging and well-being by expanding our trauma-informed approach.

In 2025, KCLS made meaningful strides in supporting our staff and strengthening our trauma-informed approach to emergency responses. We standardized emergency support for staff responses and launched an alert system for emergency situations. We formalized procedures for crisis debriefing to ensure consistent support for staff when they face high-stress situations. We enhanced and promoted our employee accommodations process to provide clearer pathways for staff to request accommodation. Biannual regional librarian retreats became a cornerstone for building connections and shared learning. Our Operational Staffing Support (OSS) program brought responsive solutions to critical staffing challenges by allowing managers to fill shifts with substitutes across regions.

In 2026, we're building on this momentum. We're enhancing onboarding to foster deeper belonging and piloting innovative positions with on-the-job training and development. We're also expanding beyond traditional career ladders to explore diverse pathways and alternative routes to promotion. Through all our staffing strategies, we remain committed to one goal: empowering team members to thrive.

Unify internal processes for managing change, data, internal communication and policies, using an Equity Impact Tool to inform decision making.

In 2025, we made significant progress to better manage change, data, communication, and policies. Our HR's internal website has been updated, making it easier for staff to access key information and policies. On the communications front, we restructured our team to designate point people for each region, helping us to stay informed, connected and responsive.

Central and location staff have started to updating programming systems, setting the foundation for clearer communication that will continue to evolve in 2026. We have also taken major steps in consistent collection of data to track the success of our programs and projects by developing consistent dashboards.

Looking ahead to 2026, we'll continue to refine our systems with the Equity Impact Tool, ensuring decisions and policies are informed by equity at every level. These changes are laying the groundwork for a more unified, efficient, and equitable organization.



Reimagine physical and virtual library spaces with an emphasis on accessibility and empowering multilingual communities.

Upgraded spaces are designed to meet the expectations of modern users, with accessibility, flexibility and evolving community needs a primary focus. KCLS engaged an architecture firm that specializes in libraries to assist with the development of five design packages, which can be used over the next ten years to reimagine spaces with scalability can be applied to various-sized locations.

We have now entered the planning stage with key updates underway to develop high-impact, cost-effective design solutions for existing library buildings, establishing a standard for innovation, inclusion, and community impact. New paint and carpets are being replaced, walkways are being updated with accessible designs, technology is being upgraded, and renewed children's and teen areas are being enhanced to encourage more play-based learning.

The first refresh was completed at Valley View Library in October 2025, featuring a vibrant design by Stevie Shao, one of the artists who designed a new library card for KCLS. Auburn, Kent, Des Moines, and Southcenter Libraries have all been selected for projects in 2026.



2023-2027 Strategic Framework

The King County Library System's (KCLS) Strategic Framework reflects its commitment to public service that enhances lives, forges connections and strengthens communities.

Vision

A world in which knowledge allows diverse communities to prosper and grow.

Mission

To inspire the people of King County to succeed through ideas, interaction and information.

Values

- Knowledge • Intellectual Freedom • Diversity, Equity and Inclusion
• Professional Ethics • Stewardship • Service Mindset

Organizational Goals

- | | |
|--|---------------------------|
| Responsive, inspirational service | Organizational excellence |
| Communities of inclusion and belonging | Strategic communication |

DEI Pillars

- | | |
|---|--|
| Centering communities most impacted by systemic inequities. | |
| Systematically apply a DEI lens to internal processes and resources | Adopt a trauma-informed approach to staff well-being |
| Co-create and evaluate services with most impacted communities | Publicly communicate DEI accountability |

Service Focus

To create opportunities through meaningful connections.
KCLS will do this by connecting people with information, services and community-centered spaces; by providing equitable avenues to build the skills and knowledge needed for success; and by creating points of connection for building communities of inclusion and belonging.

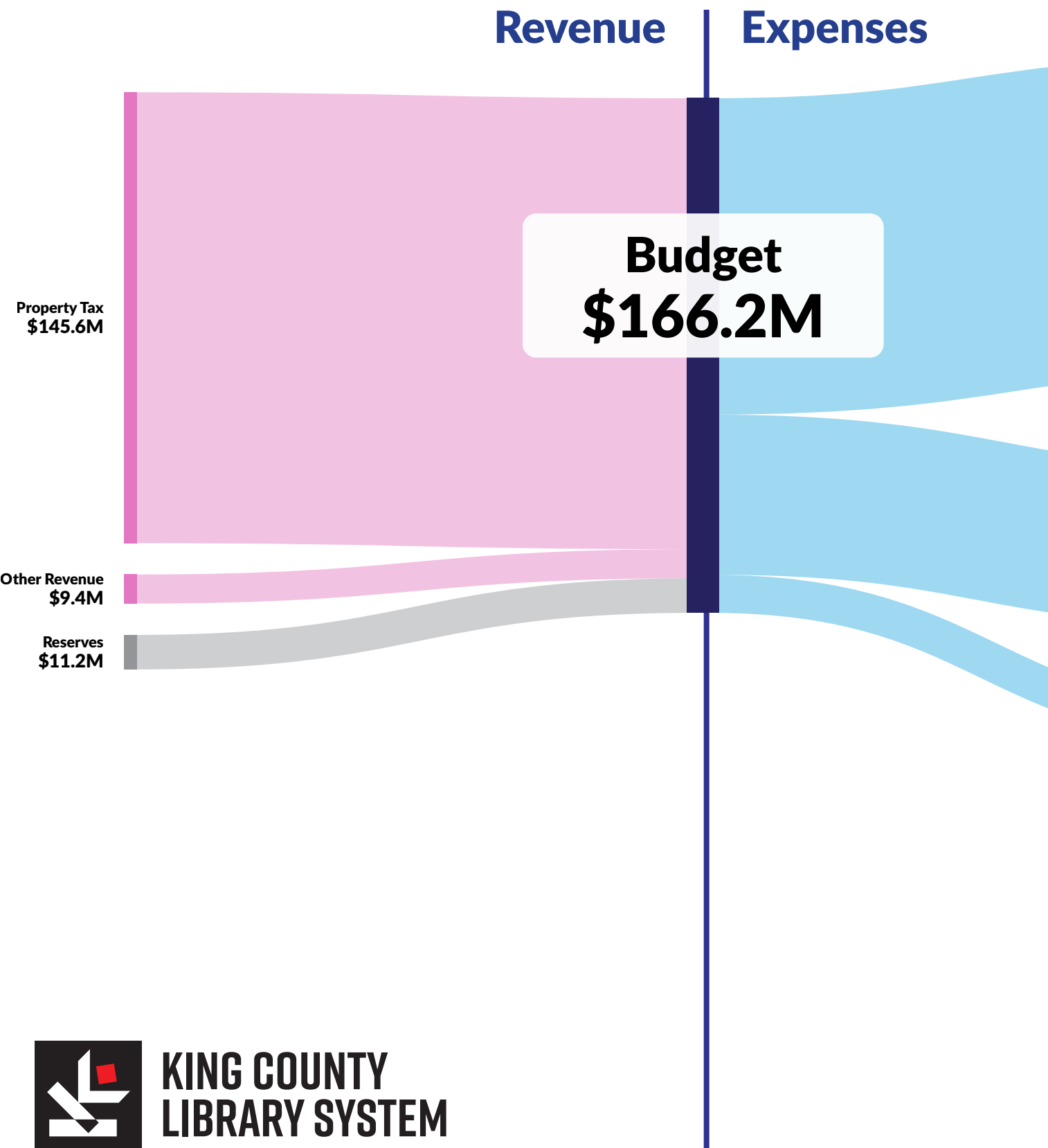
Continuing Commitment to Core Services

Customer service through helpful and expert staff; a robust and diverse collection of books and resources; responsive programs and services, and welcoming library spaces.

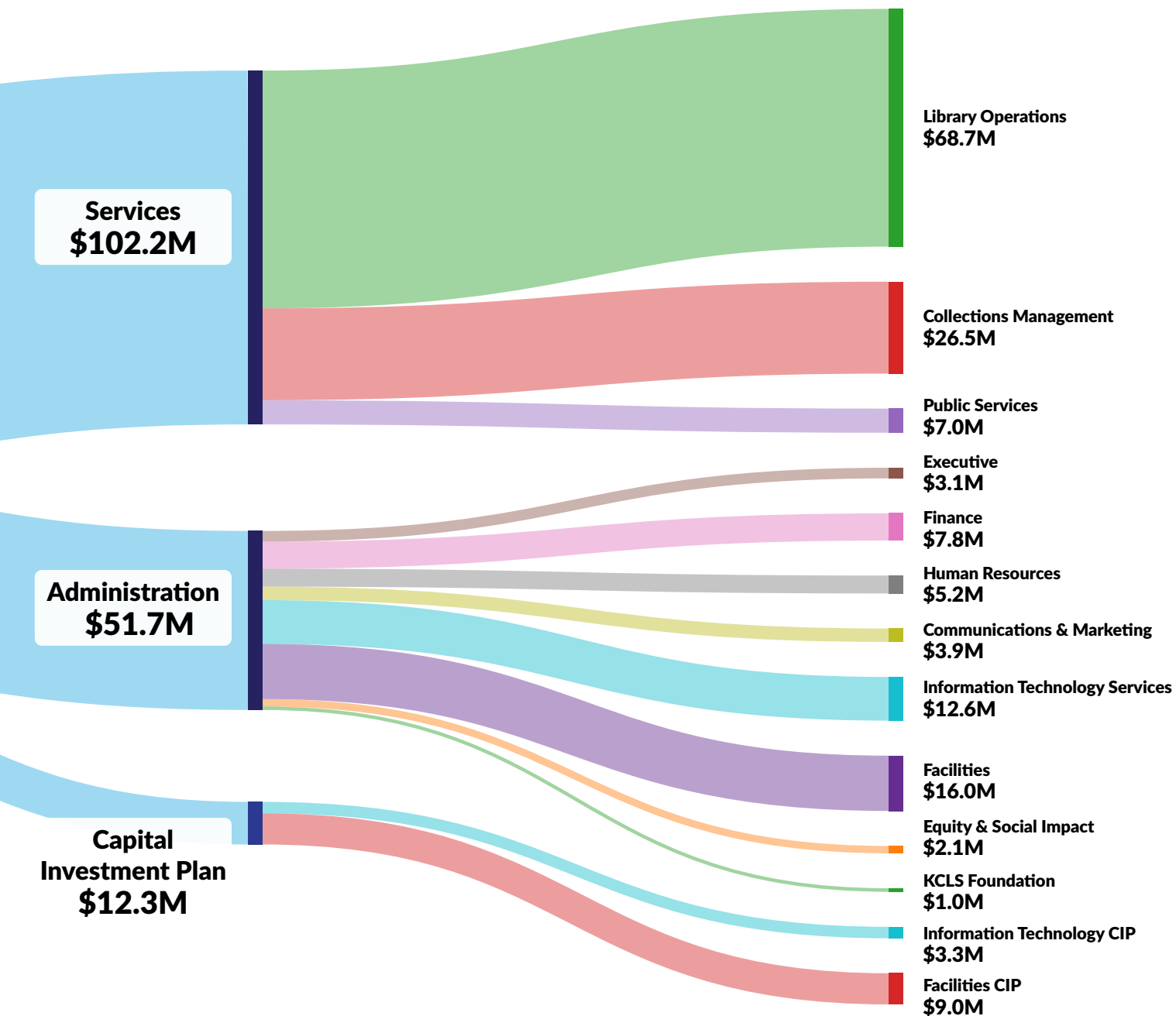
Shared Organizational Priorities for 2026

- | | |
|------------------------------|------------------------------|
| Unify internal processes | Reimagine library spaces |
| Elevate customer experiences | Enhance the staff experience |

2026 Proposed Budget



**KING COUNTY
LIBRARY SYSTEM**



General Fund Summary

Revenues

	Actual 2024	Budget 2025	Budget 2026	Variance \$	Variance %
Revenue					
Taxes					
Property Taxes	137,216,238	142,630,317	145,660,189	3,029,872	2.1%
Private Timber Tax	62,768	96,681	109,000	12,319	12.7%
Leasehold Excise Tax	363,821	363,899	364,000	101	< 0.1%
Grants					
Grant Revenues	1,515,240	1,641,854	1,999,857	358,003	21.8%
Intergovernmental Revenues					
State Shared Revenues	46,421				
Interlocal Pay & In-Lieu Taxes	12,192				
Intergovernmental Services Revenues	654,102	565,383	655,000	89,617	15.9%
Charges Goods and Services	373,558	679,473	713,500	34,027	5.0%
Fines	37,353				
Interest and other Earnings	6,574,631	3,600,000	4,500,000	900,000	25.0%
Lost Materials	57,930	57,453	60,000	2,547	4.4%
Other Financing Sources	318,657				
Other Miscellaneous Revenues	2,302,451	1,000,000	1,000,000	-	0.0%
Revenue Total	149,535,362	150,635,060	155,061,546	4,426,486	2.9%

Expenses

	Actual 2024	Budget 2025	Budget 2026	Variance \$	Variance %
Library Operation					
Salaries	62,764,738	71,822,373	76,573,455	4,751,082	6.6%
Personnel Benefits	21,859,992	27,765,268	25,213,608	(2,551,660)	-9.2%
Supplies	3,317,458	2,881,645	2,846,479	(35,166)	-1.2%
Staff Development	748,578	1,307,650	1,034,000	(273,650)	-20.9%
Professional Services	5,029,163	5,448,484	5,836,452	387,968	7.1%
Communications	1,093,400	1,507,233	1,369,210	(138,023)	-9.2%
Travel	127,459	152,802	141,400	(11,402)	-7.5%
Advertising	322,247	656,625	797,425	140,800	21.4%
Operating Leases	3,114,537	3,406,598	2,975,692	(430,906)	-12.6%
Insurance	1,052,563	1,200,882	1,249,442	48,560	4.0%
Utilities	2,559,059	2,529,480	2,602,584	73,104	2.9%
Repair and Maintenance	15,468,518	15,709,539	15,467,026	(242,513)	-1.5%
Reserves		1,200,000	1,200,000		0.0%
Miscellaneous	634,521	413,010	574,210	161,200	39.0%
Intergovernmental Services	170,876	168,400	127,100	(41,300)	-24.5%
Library Materials	17,221,055	15,881,740	15,908,230	26,490	0.2%
Total Operations	135,484,164	152,051,729	153,916,313	1,864,584	1.2%
CIP					
Facilities CIP	10,143,659	7,957,000	9,005,000	1,048,000	13.2%
ITS CIP	3,780,445	4,576,801	3,304,500	(1,272,301)	-27.8%
Total CIP	13,924,104	12,533,801	12,309,500	(224,301)	-1.8%
Total Expenses	149,408,268	164,585,530	166,225,813	1,640,283	1.0%

KCLS Financial Overview

Economic Forecast

Thanks to strong financial management, KCLS is able to maintain 2025 service levels in our 2026 budget with relatively static revenue, despite inflation cost growth. About 96 percent of our funding comes from property taxes, which is very stable and means we are less impacted by federal spending cuts. However, the revenue from property taxes can only be increased by one percent each year. That means our largest source of income is being outpaced each year by rising costs impacted by inflation. In 2026, inflation is expected to be 2.44 percent.

Staffing expenses, which include employee salaries and benefits, make up about 61 percent of our projected expenses. This is by and large KCLS' largest expense area, making up more than half of our budget each year. Expenses overall are increasing because of inflation, increased costs of living in the area, and increased demand for downloadable books and materials, which are considerably more expensive than physical books to purchase. With those rising costs, expenses are expected to be more than what KCLS revenue and reserves can cover.

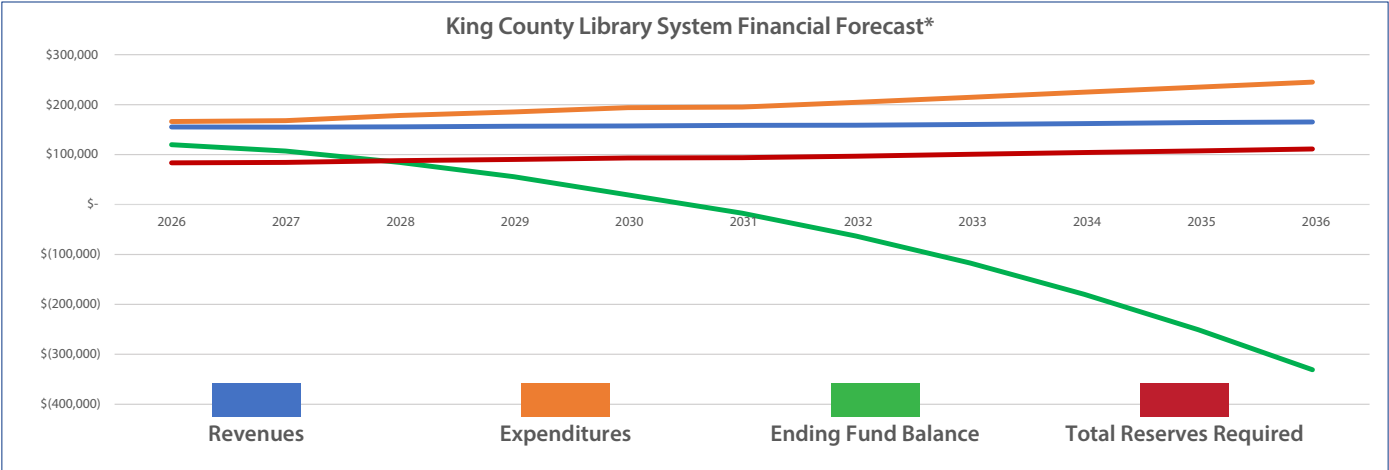
To ensure long-term stability, KCLS' leadership team is exploring whether to recommend that the Board move forward with a levy lid lift ballot measure in 2026.



General Fund Overview

The General Fund is the primary budget that keeps our libraries running and thriving. It supports the services our communities rely on every day: staff who provide expertise and welcoming spaces, collections of books and digital resources, engaging programs for all ages, well-maintained buildings, and up-to-date technology. Because KCLS is funded by the taxpayers of King County, we are committed to stewarding these dollars wisely, ensuring that every investment directly strengthens access, learning, and connection across our communities.

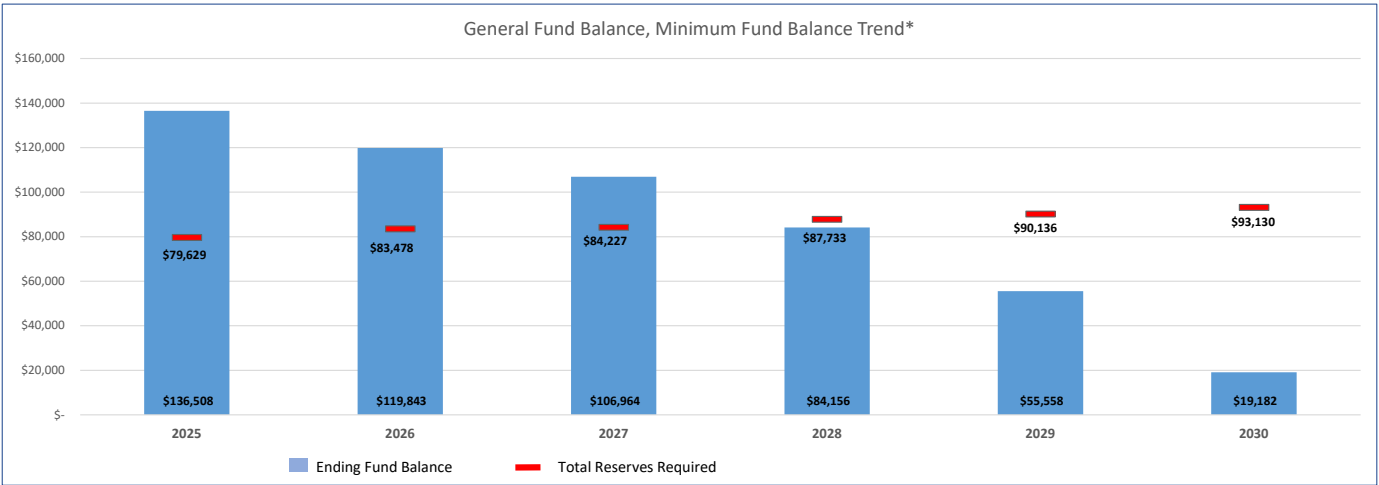
Projected Impact of Revenue and Expenditure Trends on Total Reserves



* In \$1,000's

The green lines show what KCLS' general fund might look like if property tax revenue doesn't go up. The red line represents the amount of savings KCLS would need to use to keep its operations running without any extra revenue. If there is no plan to increase revenue, KCLS could face a funding shortfall, which could put both its finances and services at risk in the future, as shown in the chart.

Projected Ending Fund Balance versus Target Minimum Fund Balance



* In \$1,000's

Levy Overview

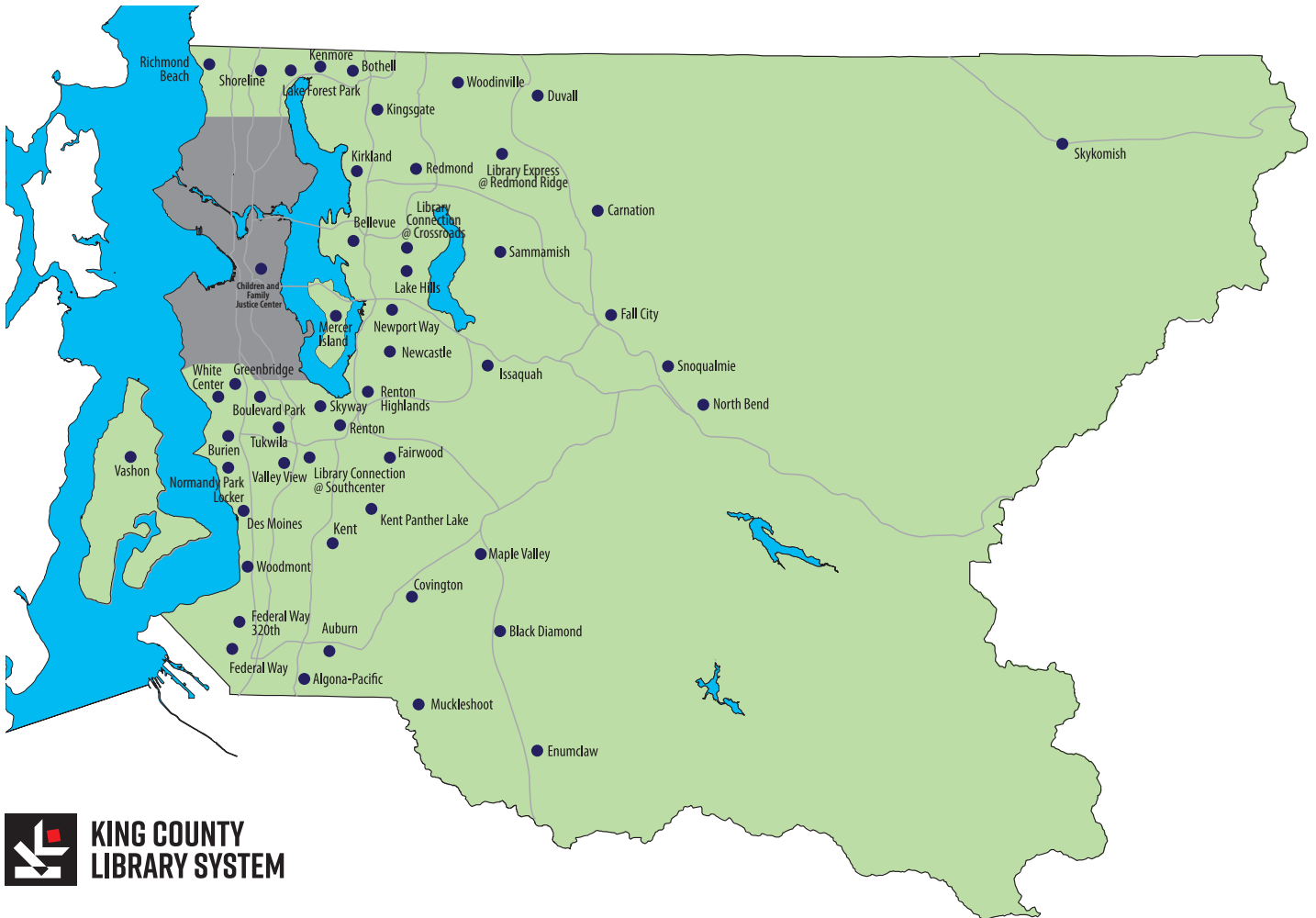
A levy is a voter-approved property tax that helps fund things like schools, libraries, or emergency services. Voters last adjusted the KCLS levy rate in 2010. Since then, property values have increased dramatically. However, when property values increase, the amount of tax charged per \$1,000 of value (called the levy rate) goes down. The total amount KCLS can collect from property taxes can only increase by 1 percent each year, no matter how much property values rise, which can often be more. KCLS has been collecting less money per property owner over time.

Rising costs have outpaced KCLS' revenue, even as service demands have grown across all libraries in the region. KCLS has had to rely on reserves from the COVID-19 pandemic to cover its expenses in 2026. Reserves built up during the pandemic have provided a temporary cushion, but those one-time funds cannot sustain operations indefinitely. Without additional funding, KCLS would need to reduce hours and services.

To continue addressing our operations, maintenance and patron needs at sustainable and responsible levels, staff is exploring whether to recommend that the Board increase the rate with a levy lid lift in 2026.



Service Area



969 full and part time employees

1,059 positions budgeted*

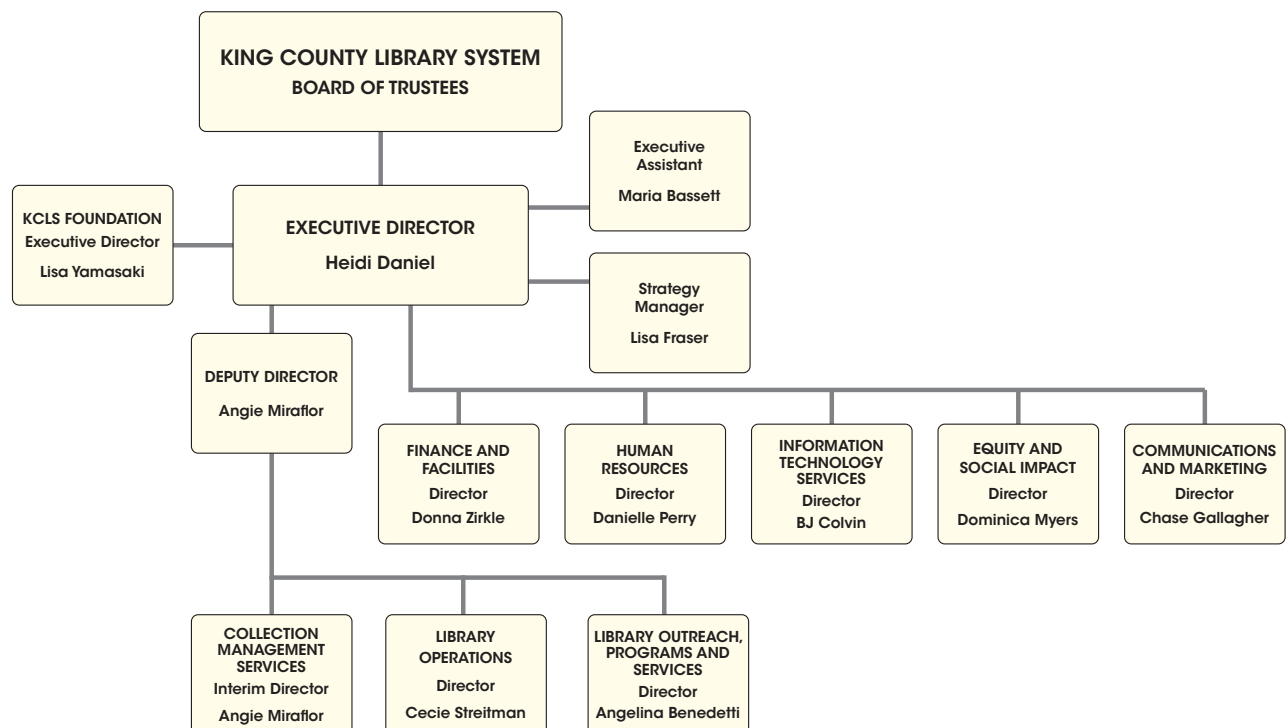
*Includes vacant positions in the budget that will be filled.

2025-2026 KCLS Board of Trustees



Left to right: Verna Seal, Srini Raghavan, Lalita Uppala, Harish Kulkarni, Laura Valenziano, (President), Crystal Goodwin, Jeff Guddat, (Secretary)

Organization Chart



Department Overviews

EXECUTIVE

Executive Director, Heidi Daniel

The Executive Director oversees KCLS' annual operating budgets and keeps the KCLS Board of Trustees informed of the Library System's financial and operational status. The Executive Director leads KCLS' overall strategic direction, resources and materials that meet the needs of the diverse communities it serves. The Executive budget includes the Deputy Director Angie Miraflor, and Strategy Manager Lisa Fraser.



COLLECTION MANAGEMENT SERVICES

Interim Director, Angie Miraflor

The Collection Management Services (CMS) Department builds and maintains a strong library collection that meets the changing needs of KCLS communities. CMS handles the selection, ordering, cataloging, processing, and distribution of both digital and physical materials. The team removes barriers to ensure all patrons have equal access to library resources. CMS supports KCLS' values of inclusion and belonging by creating a diverse collection that represents the many cultures, identities, and communities it serves.



COMMUNICATIONS AND MARKETING

Director, Chase Gallagher

The Communications and Marketing (CM) Department supports KCLS' mission by creating clear and consistent messages that shape how the public and staff view the organization. CM works across the entire system to ensure all communication reflects KCLS' values. The department manages a wide range of efforts, including media relations, storytelling, brand management, digital and print content, government relations, and promotional materials. These efforts help build strong connections between KCLS and the diverse communities it serves.



EQUITY AND SOCIAL IMPACT

Director, Dominica Myers

The Equity and Social Impact (ESI) Department is responsible for developing and strengthening holistic diversity, equity and inclusion strategies that embody KCLS' Mission, Vision and Values. The department removes barriers to opportunity, and cultivates a sense of belonging by implementing equity-based and trauma-informed services to communities most impacted by systemic inequities.



FINANCE AND FACILITIES

Director, Donna Zirkle

The Finance and Facilities Department leads the strategic financial planning that supports the fiscal sustainability of the King County Library System. The department supports leadership in organizational financial planning and provides independent financial analysis for various initiatives and projects. It oversees the development of the annual operating and capital budgets and develops long-term financial plans and forecasts. In addition to financial oversight, the department manages facilities operations for all 50 libraries and two administrative buildings. This includes repairs and preventive maintenance, capital leases (buildings and vehicles), space remodeling and renovation, and fleet vehicle management.



HUMAN RESOURCES

Director, Danielle Perry

The Human Resources (HR) Department develops and delivers programs and services that support the KCLS employee experience, while providing regulatory and strategic guidance to the Library System. Departmental teams are responsible for recruitment, selection, and onboarding; classification and compensation; employee benefits and recognition; workplace safety; payroll and leave administration; labor and employee relations; public records administration; and learning and professional development. HR also oversees the Library System's four Collective Bargaining Agreements (CBAs) with the Washington State Council of County and City Employees, AFSCME Council 2 AFL-CIO.



INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY SERVICES

Director, BJ Colvin

Information Technology Services (ITS) oversees the implementation, management and maintenance of KCLS' technology infrastructure. This includes data networks; telephone and email systems; hardware and software; cybersecurity; website development; audio and visual equipment; systems analysis, and application development. The ITS Department ensures that KCLS' technology infrastructure and assets are comprehensive, responsive to both public and staff needs, and optimized for user experience.





LIBRARY OPERATIONS

Director, Cecie Streitman

The Library Operations Department makes sure all 50 KCLS libraries run smoothly each day. The department works with regional management teams to provide quality customer service, manage library hours, staffing, and workflows. They also partner with departments like Facilities to keep buildings safe and in good shape, and with Human Resources to support staffing needs. The team includes staff from library branches, the Service Center (SVC), regional managers, and librarians, all reporting to the Director of Operations.



LIBRARY OUTREACH, PROGRAMS AND SERVICES

Director, Angelina Benedetti

The Library Outreach, Programs and Services (LOPS) Department helps KCLS serve the community by supporting library patrons, building community partnerships, and working with volunteer groups. LOPS includes three main areas: Adult and Community Services; Youth and Family Services, and Mobile Services. Adult and Community Services support adult patrons and oversees Ask KCLS, a service that answers questions by phone, email, or chat. Youth and Family Services provide programs for children, teens and families. Mobile Services delivers library materials and support to people who can't visit a library and community outreach events



KING COUNTY LIBRARY SYSTEM FOUNDATION

Executive Director, Lisa Yamasaki

The King County Library System Foundation's mission is to provide support beyond public funding for initiatives and resources that enhance KCLS' ability to serve its communities through advocacy, fundraising and grant-making.



Funding Priorities:

- Accessibility and Inclusion
- Community Services and Outreach
- Library Innovation
- Literacy and Learning



2026 Budget by Department

Executive

	ACTUALS	2025 BUDGET	2026 BUDGET		
	FY2024	FY2025	FY2026	Variance 2026-2025	Percent
Personnel Expenses					
Salaries/Benefits					
Benefits	\$230,139	\$328,341	\$291,297	-\$37,044	-11.3%
Salaries	\$944,184	\$1,163,790	\$1,306,447	\$142,657	12.3%
SALARIES/BENEFITS TOTAL	\$1,174,323	\$1,492,130	\$1,597,744	\$105,614	7.1%
PERSONNEL EXPENSES TOTAL	\$1,174,323	\$1,492,130	\$1,597,744	\$105,614	7.1%
Non-Personnel Expenses					
Miscellaneous	\$34,628	\$27,310	\$47,010	\$19,700	72.1%
Reserve	–	\$1,200,000	\$1,200,000	\$0	0.0%
Professional Services	\$27,297	\$200,000	\$135,000	-\$65,000	-32.5%
Supplies	\$11,348	\$13,680	\$16,640	\$2,960	21.6%
Staff Development	\$12,791	\$68,550	\$68,550	\$0	0.0%
Travel	\$2,817	\$6,000	\$5,000	-\$1,000	-16.7%
NON-PERSONNEL EXPENSES TOTAL	\$88,881	\$1,515,540	\$1,472,200	-\$43,340	-2.9%
Total Expenses	\$1,263,204	\$3,007,670	\$3,069,944	\$62,274	2.1%



Collection Management Services

	ACTUALS	2025 BUDGET	2026 BUDGET		
	FY2024	FY2025	FY2026	Variance 2026-2025	Percent
Personnel Expenses					
Salaries/Benefits					
Benefits	\$1,920,736	\$2,317,835	\$2,109,158	-\$208,677	-9.0%
Salaries	\$5,292,134	\$5,816,742	\$6,186,854	\$370,112	6.4%
SALARIES/BENEFITS TOTAL	\$7,212,870	\$8,134,577	\$8,296,012	\$161,435	2.0%
PERSONNEL EXPENSES TOTAL	\$7,212,870	\$8,134,577	\$8,296,012	\$161,435	2.0%
Non-Personnel Expenses					
Miscellaneous	\$4,199	\$5,000	\$1,000	-\$4,000	-80.0%
Communications	\$108,264	\$99,413	\$105,000	\$5,587	5.6%
Operating Lease	–	–	\$184,740	\$184,740	–
Library Material - Non Cap.	\$8,182,217	\$7,063,540	\$7,304,040	\$240,500	3.4%
Library Material - Cap.	\$9,037,860	\$8,818,200	\$8,577,700	-\$240,500	-2.7%
Professional Services	\$979,358	\$1,086,070	\$1,027,529	-\$58,541	-5.4%
Repairs and Maintenance	\$517,358	\$759,237	\$824,900	\$65,663	8.6%
Supplies	\$175,715	\$176,400	\$178,925	\$2,525	1.4%
Staff Development	\$6,992	\$8,400	\$8,400	\$0	0.0%
Travel	\$1,244	\$3,675	\$4,000	\$325	8.8%
NON-PERSONNEL EXPENSES TOTAL	\$19,013,208	\$18,019,935	\$18,216,234	\$196,299	1.1%
Total Expenses	\$26,226,078	\$26,154,512	\$26,512,246	\$357,734	1.4%

Communications and Marketing

	ACTUALS	2025 BUDGET	2026 BUDGET		
	FY2024	FY2025	FY2026	Variance 2026-2025	Percent
Personnel Expenses					
Salaries/Benefits					
Benefits	\$449,529	\$685,346	\$607,181	-\$78,165	-11.4%
Salaries	\$1,379,652	\$1,874,175	\$2,084,097	\$209,922	11.2%
SALARIES/BENEFITS TOTAL	\$1,829,182	\$2,559,521	\$2,691,278	\$131,757	5.2%
PERSONNEL EXPENSES TOTAL	\$1,829,182	\$2,559,521	\$2,691,278	\$131,757	5.2%
Non-Personnel Expenses					
Capital Outlay	\$5,136	–	–	\$0	–
Miscellaneous	\$1,175	\$3,800	\$1,500	-\$2,300	-60.5%
Professional Services	\$169,425	\$150,000	\$275,300	\$125,300	83.5%
Supplies	\$167,476	\$189,054	\$139,599	-\$49,455	-26.2%
Staff Development	\$6,211	\$25,400	\$25,000	-\$400	-1.6%
Travel	\$4,634	\$4,500	\$5,000	\$500	11.1%
Advertising	\$286,621	\$600,000	\$750,000	\$150,000	25.0%
NON-PERSONNEL EXPENSES TOTAL	\$640,677	\$972,754	\$1,196,399	\$223,645	23.0%
Total Expenses	\$2,469,859	\$3,532,275	\$3,887,677	\$355,402	10.1%

Equity and Social Impact

	ACTUALS	2025 BUDGET	2026 BUDGET		
	FY2024	FY2025	FY2026	Variance 2026-2025	Percent
Personnel Expenses					
Salaries/Benefits					
Benefits	\$272,020	\$328,014	\$322,636	-\$5,378	-1.6%
Salaries	\$804,866	\$951,263	\$983,035	\$31,772	3.3%
SALARIES/BENEFITS TOTAL	\$1,076,886	\$1,279,277	\$1,305,671	\$26,394	2.1%
PERSONNEL EXPENSES TOTAL	\$1,076,886	\$1,279,277	\$1,305,671	\$26,394	2.1%
Non-Personnel Expenses					
Professional Services	\$93,659	\$126,280	\$114,200	-\$12,080	-9.6%
Supplies	\$4,462	\$7,140	\$5,180	-\$1,960	-27.5%
Staff Development	\$6,767	\$11,000	\$13,500	\$2,500	22.7%
Travel	\$1,038	\$5,000	\$3,000	-\$2,000	-40.0%
NON-PERSONNEL EXPENSES TOTAL	\$105,926	\$149,420	\$135,880	-\$13,540	-9.1%
Total Expenses	\$1,182,812	\$1,428,697	\$1,441,551	\$12,854	0.9%

Finance and Facilities

	ACTUALS	2025 BUDGET	2026 BUDGET		
	FY2024	FY2025	FY2026	Variance 2026-2025	Percent
Personnel Expenses					
Salaries/Benefits					
Benefits	\$1,037,217	\$1,237,680	\$1,067,011	-\$170,669	-13.8%
Salaries	\$2,915,422	\$3,414,213	\$3,547,534	\$133,321	3.9%
SALARIES/BENEFITS TOTAL	\$3,952,639	\$4,651,893	\$4,614,545	-\$37,348	-0.8%
PERSONNEL EXPENSES TOTAL	\$3,952,639	\$4,651,893	\$4,614,545	-\$37,348	-0.8%
Non-Personnel Expenses					
Intergovernmental	\$170,876	\$168,400	\$127,100	-\$41,300	-24.5%
Miscellaneous	\$553,735	\$365,400	\$485,000	\$119,600	32.7%
Insurance	\$1,052,563	\$1,200,881	\$1,249,442	\$48,561	4.0%
Operating Lease	\$2,654,789	\$2,964,843	\$2,284,197	-\$680,646	-23.0%
Utilities	\$2,558,779	\$2,529,482	\$2,602,584	\$73,102	2.9%
Professional Services	\$305,315	\$501,309	\$633,618	\$132,309	26.4%
Repairs and Maintenance	\$11,706,776	\$10,788,227	\$11,002,716	\$214,489	2.0%
Supplies	\$1,056,056	\$687,253	\$680,606	-\$6,647	-1.0%
Staff Development	\$65,412	\$100,100	\$100,100	\$0	0.0%
Travel	\$4,673	\$7,500	\$7,500	\$0	0.0%
Advertising	\$3,025	\$6,500	\$30,800	\$24,300	373.9%
NON-PERSONNEL EXPENSES TOTAL	\$20,132,001	\$19,319,895	\$19,203,663	-\$116,232	-0.6%
Total Expenses	\$24,084,640	\$23,971,788	\$23,818,208	-\$153,580	-0.6%



Human Resources

	ACTUALS	2025 BUDGET	2026 BUDGET		
	FY2024	FY2025	FY2026	Variance 2026-2025	Percent
Personnel Expenses					
Salaries/Benefits					
Benefits	\$638,151	\$809,425	\$780,855	-\$28,570	-3.5%
Salaries	\$1,992,732	\$2,485,037	\$2,773,562	\$288,525	11.6%
SALARIES/BENEFITS TOTAL	\$2,630,883	\$3,294,462	\$3,554,417	\$259,955	7.9%
PERSONNEL EXPENSES TOTAL	\$2,630,883	\$3,294,462	\$3,554,417	\$259,955	7.9%
Non-Personnel Expenses					
Miscellaneous	\$3,218	\$5,000	\$4,000	-\$1,000	-20.0%
Professional Services	\$537,751	\$484,800	\$686,900	\$202,100	41.7%
Supplies	\$192,930	\$278,420	\$253,137	-\$25,283	-9.1%
Staff Development	\$529,953	\$910,500	\$639,300	-\$271,200	-29.8%
Travel	\$56,953	\$26,400	\$27,650	\$1,250	4.7%
Advertising	\$32,601	\$37,000	\$16,000	-\$21,000	-56.8%
NON-PERSONNEL EXPENSES TOTAL	\$1,353,406	\$1,742,120	\$1,626,987	-\$115,133	-6.6%
Total Expenses	\$3,984,288	\$5,036,582	\$5,181,404	\$144,822	2.9%

Information Technology Services

	ACTUALS	2025 BUDGET	2026 BUDGET		
	FY2024	FY2025	FY2026	Variance 2026-2025	Percent
Personnel Expenses					
Salaries/Benefits					
Benefits	\$1,271,768	\$1,447,038	\$1,348,985	-\$98,053	-6.8%
Salaries	\$3,928,608	\$4,145,446	\$4,393,660	\$248,214	6.0%
SALARIES/BENEFITS TOTAL	\$5,200,376	\$5,592,483	\$5,742,645	\$150,162	2.7%
PERSONNEL EXPENSES TOTAL	\$5,200,376	\$5,592,483	\$5,742,645	\$150,162	2.7%
Non-Personnel Expenses					
Communications	\$985,136	\$1,258,100	\$1,264,210	\$6,110	0.5%
Operating Lease	\$459,748	\$441,755	\$506,755	\$65,000	14.7%
Professional Services	\$994,036	\$778,000	\$740,000	-\$38,000	-4.9%
Repairs and Maintenance	\$3,234,450	\$4,162,075	\$3,609,410	-\$552,665	-13.3%
Supplies	\$612,365	\$472,626	\$343,356	-\$129,270	-27.4%
Staff Development	\$91,627	\$143,200	\$137,150	-\$6,050	-4.2%
Travel	\$2,928	\$6,500	\$6,250	-\$250	-3.9%
NON-PERSONNEL EXPENSES TOTAL	\$6,380,290	\$7,262,256	\$6,607,131	-\$655,125	-9.0%
Total Expenses	\$11,580,666	\$12,854,739	\$12,349,776	-\$504,963	-3.9%



Library Operations

	ACTUALS	2025 BUDGET	2026 BUDGET		
	FY2024	FY2025	FY2026	Variance 2026-2025	Percent
Personnel Expenses					
Salaries/Benefits					
Benefits	\$14,794,414	\$18,946,680	\$17,098,521	-\$1,848,159	-9.8%
Salaries	\$41,852,318	\$47,243,898	\$50,014,106	\$2,770,208	5.9%
Substitute Salaries	–	\$455,000	\$455,000	\$0	0.0%
SALARIES/BENEFITS TOTAL	\$56,646,732	\$66,645,578	\$67,567,627	\$922,049	1.4%
PERSONNEL EXPENSES TOTAL	\$56,646,732	\$66,645,578	\$67,567,627	\$922,049	1.4%
Non-Personnel Expenses					
Miscellaneous	\$154	\$500	\$0	-\$500	-100.0%
Communications	–	\$200	\$0	-\$200	-100.0%
Professional Services	\$551,897	\$645,000	\$640,000	-\$5,000	-0.8%
Supplies	\$208,984	\$363,148	\$376,802	\$13,654	3.8%
Staff Development	\$8,296	\$25,000	\$25,000	\$0	0.0%
Travel	\$48,823	\$78,000	\$75,000	-\$3,000	-3.9%
NON-PERSONNEL EXPENSES TOTAL	\$818,154	\$1,111,848	\$1,116,802	\$4,954	0.5%
Total Expenses	\$57,464,886	\$67,757,426	\$68,684,429	\$927,003	1.4%

Library Outreach, Programs and Services

	ACTUALS	2025 BUDGET	2026 BUDGET		
	FY2024	FY2025	FY2026	Variance 2026-2025	Percent
Personnel Expenses					
Salaries/Benefits					
Benefits	\$1,107,654	\$1,470,671	\$1,306,676	-\$163,995	-11.2%
Salaries	\$3,113,555	\$3,656,870	\$3,791,123	\$134,253	3.7%
Substitute Salaries	–	\$9,000	\$10,000	\$1,000	11.1%
SALARIES/BENEFITS TOTAL	\$4,221,209	\$5,136,541	\$5,107,799	-\$28,742	-0.6%
PERSONNEL EXPENSES TOTAL	\$4,221,209	\$5,136,541	\$5,107,799	-\$28,742	-0.6%
Non-Personnel Expenses					
Miscellaneous	\$8,731	\$6,000	\$9,000	\$3,000	50.0%
Professional Services	\$657,927	\$737,000	\$710,000	-\$27,000	-3.7%
Supplies	\$81,795	\$93,075	\$100,835	\$7,760	8.3%
Staff Development	\$18,528	\$15,500	\$17,000	\$1,500	9.7%
Travel	\$2,024	\$4,000	\$3,000	-\$1,000	-25.0%
NON-PERSONNEL EXPENSES TOTAL	\$769,005	\$855,575	\$839,835	-\$15,740	-1.8%
Total Expenses	\$4,990,214	\$5,992,116	\$5,947,634	-\$44,482	-0.7%

KCLS Foundation

	ACTUALS	2025 BUDGET	2026 BUDGET		
	FY2024	FY2025	FY2026	Variance 2026-2025	Percent
Personnel Expenses					
Salaries/Benefits					
Benefits	\$132,429	\$194,239	\$210,670	\$16,431	8.5%
Salaries	\$529,216	\$606,939	\$810,417	\$203,478	33.5%
SALARIES/BENEFITS TOTAL	\$661,645	\$801,178	\$1,021,087	\$219,909	27.5%
PERSONNEL EXPENSES TOTAL	\$661,645	\$801,178	\$1,021,087	\$219,909	27.5%
Non-Personnel Expenses					
Library Material - Non Cap.	\$267	-	\$0	\$0	-
Library Material - Cap.	\$710	-	\$0	\$0	-
Professional Services	\$26,591	\$0	\$0	\$0	-
Supplies	\$415	\$2,041	\$1,000	-\$1,041	-51.0%
Travel	\$789	\$2,227	\$1,500	-\$727	-32.7%
NON-PERSONNEL EXPENSES TOTAL	\$28,773	\$4,269	\$2,500	-\$1,768	-41.4%
Total Expenses	\$690,417	\$805,447	\$1,023,587	\$218,140	27.1%





2026 KCLS Foundation Grants

Adult English Language Learning Instruction – \$70,000

KCLS enhances and expands English language learning programs for adults by providing 700 in-person class sessions across a geographically diverse selection of library branches. Classes focus on basic to intermediate instruction, including reading and writing.

Author Voices Series – \$68,500

The Author Voices series features in-person and online author programs representing historically marginalized and underserved communities. The series features both locally and nationally renowned authors and may include a combination of discussions, workshops and readings.

Books Beyond Barriers – \$10,000

This program fosters early literacy and a love of reading for families who are affected by incarceration, addiction and foster care. Families are invited to attend inclusive, culturally relevant events, including opportunities to take home books that reflect their varied and complex life experiences.

Connecting Older Adults through Digital Literacy and the Arts – \$32,800

Older adult programming takes a holistic approach, offering both in-person and online learning opportunities that enhance digital literacy, as well as arts and humanities activities that nurture emotional well-being.

Deepening Impact of Heritage and Awareness Observances – \$30,000

KCLS recognizes more than 50 cultural and awareness observances annually, many of which are recognized at the state or local level, or which are led by national advocacy groups. This funding will provide giveaway books to support library programs and outreach that are aligned with these observances.

Emerging Patron Technologies Administrator – \$272,239

This project will fund a dedicated emerging patron technologies administrator for a three-year pilot program focused on the development and deployment of innovative technologies that respond to changing patron needs. This is year one of a three-year grant.

FAFSA Programs – \$20,225

This three-year grant offers targeted support to students and families with limited English proficiency as they navigate the FAFSA and WAFSA application processes. Prospective college students must complete one or both forms to be eligible to receive financial aid.

Fall and Winter Adult Reading Challenge — \$55,000

This reading challenge for adults provides opportunities for participants to explore inclusive, staff-curated book lists that highlight diverse voices, engaging narratives and impactful stories—ideal for the fall and winter seasons. With opportunities to connect through workshops and events, adult readers will share insights and connect over a lifelong appreciation for the written word.

Friends Day — \$6,000

Forty KCLS-affiliated Friends groups, Guilds and Library Associations support their local libraries through advocacy and fundraising. This grant supports an annual in-person event designed to provide members of these groups with opportunities for sharing best practices, learning about relevant topics and building community. This is year one of a two-year grant.

Mellon Foundation Memory Lab Grant — \$159,889

The King County Library System Foundation was awarded a five-year \$800,000 grant from the Mellon Foundation. This grant has enabled KCLS to create the Memory Lab, a community oral history project. Working out of the Bellevue and Federal Way Makerspaces, branch meeting rooms systemwide, and at events with community partners, the Memory Lab uses audio equipment to record and preserve the unique stories of King County. These recordings will be archived and made accessible to the public in the future. This grant award spans multiple years. While the full award amount is included here, the salary and benefits for the person hired to support this grant are reported under the Operations budget.

OTTER and Sasquatch Book Awards School Partnership Program — \$97,500

Through this popular ongoing program, KCLS librarians and elementary teachers partner to provide books and activities that encourage a love of reading for all students, culminating in a chance to vote on their favorite books. The Otter Awards focus on readers in grades 1-3, while the Sasquatch Awards serve readers in grades 4-6.



Peers in Libraries – \$471,000

The Peers in Libraries service connects trauma-informed peer navigators with patrons who may face barriers to having their basic needs met. This includes, but is not limited to, patrons who are experiencing housing insecurity, are affected by addiction, have mental health concerns or who are living with HIV/AIDS. Peers connect patrons with library and community resources.

Raising a Reader – \$15,000

Raising a Reader is an evidence-based, national early literacy program that supports families in building literacy-rich home environments, fostering a love of reading and improving literacy skills for children from birth through age 5, with a focus on underserved communities.

Summer Book Bingo Adult Reading Challenge – \$10,500

Summer Book Bingo is a partnership with The Seattle Public Library and Seattle Arts and Lectures that offers incentives and opportunities to engage our adult readers – cultivating the existing passion for reading within the community, motivating adults to explore diverse genres and authors, and connecting them with fellow book lovers. This is year one of a two-year grant.

Summer Reading Program – \$422,000

The Summer Reading Program cultivates literacy and learning and provides opportunities for patrons ages newborn-17 to develop skills and a love of reading. Activities include age-aligned reading challenges and programming, which encourage patrons to set personalized goals and to earn badges and prizes. In 2025, over 30,000 participants signed up for Summer Reading.

Supportive Services to Unhoused and Under-Resourced Families – \$74,000

KCLS provides resources and programming to unhoused patrons at tent cities, shelters, day centers, treatment clinics, food banks, subsidized housing and library resource fairs. Services include book and magazine distribution, hotspot and laptop lending, themed activity kits and early literacy programs. This program serves approximately 15,000 people a year.

Teen Advisory Board (TAB) Support – \$40,000

Teen Advisory Boards provide opportunities for teens to build skills while volunteering at their local KCLS library. This grant supports teens in undertaking civic engagement projects with the support of teen services librarians. This is year one of a two-year grant.

Vinyl Record Pilot Project – \$24,000

Retro is in! KCLS is piloting a limited vinyl record collection and listening station at the Federal Way Library. Focused on Pacific Northwest artists and culturally significant albums, the project creates an active music hub, bringing the community together through music exploration, learning and engagement.

The Welcoming Center – \$92,800

The Welcoming Center is a comprehensive program designed to support immigrants, refugees and new arrivals through one-on-one resource navigation services. Welcoming Ambassadors connect patrons to wraparound services that help patrons navigate living in the U.S., overcoming barriers and finding a sense of belonging in their new communities.

The Welcoming Center at Bellevue Library— \$17,464

Additional funding was secured through the City of Bellevue to support this Welcoming Center.

World Languages Online Access and Discoverability – \$10,940

KCLS serves a linguistically diverse community by actively collecting materials in 25 languages, yet access to this collection in the online catalog is limited by the interface's display options. This project will add and support six additional languages, increasing visibility and improving access for patrons seeking these languages. This is year one of a three-year grant.

Total: \$1,999,857



Five-Year Capital Investment Plan (CIP)

2026–2030

The five-year Capital Investment Plan (CIP) is the long-range plan for acquiring new physical assets, replacing major systems, and remodeling or reinventing current locations to protect and maintain the longevity of major assets to support the ongoing goals of KCLS. The plan sets forth each project or other contemplated expenditures, and specifies the full resources estimated to be available to finance the project. KCLS' Board of Trustees appropriates the projects scheduled for year one of the five-year plan at the same time as the operating budget.

The projects scheduled in the next four years of the CIP are included for planning purposes. The information in the prior and future years is intended only to show the complete cost of a project that may be partially undertaken in a year not included in the five-year plan.

Defining CIP Expenditures

For purposes of the CIP a project is generally defined to possess all, some, or one of the following characteristics:

- Exceeds a cost of \$ 100,000.
- Involves:
 - Totally new physical construction.
 - Development of a major technology system (technology system is defined as “an integrated set of hardware, software and processes working cohesively to perform a business function”).
 - Reconstruction designed to gradually and systematically replace an existing facility or system on a piecemeal basis.
 - Replacement of a major component of an existing facility or technology system.
 - Acquisition of land or structures.
- Involves KCLS funding in whole or in part, or involves no KCLS funds but is KCLS' responsibility for implementing, such as a 100% grant-funded project.
- Eligible costs include:
 - Studies/plans that determine the feasibility and/or support the preliminary design of future CIP projects.
 - Pre-design, design, development, right-of-way, construction, inspection, and/or testing.
 - Staff and consultants to deliver the capital project.

CAPITAL INVESTMENT PLAN	FY2026	FY2027	FY2028	FY2029	FY2030
ITS-CIP	3,304,500	2,908,500	2,986,909	3,040,275	3,176,775
FMS-CIP	9,005,000	11,420,500	12,912,500	11,725,000	11,550,000
TOTAL CAPITAL INVESTMENT PLAN	\$12,309,500	\$14,329,000	\$15,899,409	\$14,765,275	\$14,726,775

KCLS Capital Investment Plan

Information Technology Services

2026–2030

The information Technology Services CIP budget for 2026 covers computer replacements, network improvements and other technology systems, equipment upgrades and technology, equipment innovation across the System.

CAPITAL INVESTMENT PLAN	FY2026	FY2027	FY2028	FY2029	FY2030
ITS-CIP					
Network Improvement	857,000	850,000	788,000	672,000	775,000
Branch Security	740,000	300,000	310,000	370,000	388,500
Patron Technology Refreshment	560,000	637,000	738,409	660,000	685,000
Staff Technology Refreshment (incl. Laptops)	550,000	497,500	560,000	622,500	670,000
Patron Programming	222,500	165,000	175,000	187,500	207,500
Reimagining Spaces	200,000	210,000	220,500	231,525	241,525
Disaster and Recovery	175,000	74,000	110,000	113,000	120,000
JDE Tool Upgrade	-	175,000	85,000	183,750	89,250
TOTAL ITS-CIP	\$3,304,500	\$2,908,500	\$2,986,909	\$3,040,275	\$3,176,775



KCLS Capital Investment Plan

Finance and Facilities

2026–2030

In 2026, Finance and Facilities will focus on three major areas: Completion of the replacement of the central automated material sorter located in Preston; reimagining physical library spaces, including innovation and improved accessibility to library locations; and energy consumption. Furniture and carpet will be replaced, and accessibility will be addressed through automated door systems and emergency egress path upgrades. Energy consumption will be decreased through upgrades to wireless utility metering, advanced led lighting and controls, and GEO loop improvements.

CAPITAL INVESTMENT PLAN	FY2026	FY2027	FY2028	FY2029	FY2030
FMS-CIP					
Interior Updates	5,000,000	5,000,000	3,500,000	5,000,000	5,900,000
AMH Replacement	1,600,000	2,107,500	2,107,500	-	-
Foundation Repair	725,000	-	-	-	-
HVAC Upgrade	580,000	600,000	1,350,000	1,100,000	1,750,000
Roof Replacement	550,000	-	1,100,000	1,000,000	1,950,000
Water Capture Improvement	250,000	-	-	-	-
Vehicles Replacement	150,000	250,000	250,000	250,000	400,000
Egress Improvements	150,000	-	150,000	175,000	200,000
Carpet Replacement	-	983,000	480,000	-	600,000
Restroom Remodel	-	955,000	1,350,000	-	-
Replace Rooftop Units	-	450,000	550,000	-	-
Fire Alarm System Updates	-	450,000	125,000	-	-
Remodel Meeting Rooms	-	300,000	-	-	-
Parking Lot Reseal	-	125,000	-	-	-
Children's Seating	-	100,000	-	-	-
Roof Overlay	-	100,000	-	-	-
Elevator Modernizations	-	-	900,000	650,000	-
Lighting Upgrades	-	-	550,000	-	-
Radiant Heating Improvements	-	-	500,000	1,000,000	-
Building Efficiencies Improvements	-	-	-	1,900,000	-
Landscaping	-	-	-	650,000	750,000
TOTAL FMS-CIP	\$9,005,000	\$11,420,500	\$12,912,500	\$11,725,000	\$11,550,000



