



 COLUMBUS METROPOLITAN LIBRARY

2023

Financial Summary





May 2023

**To the Citizens of the City of Columbus and Franklin County,
The Board of Trustees and Chief Executive Officer of Columbus Metropolitan Library**

As Fiscal Officer and Chief Financial Officer of Columbus Metropolitan Library (CML), I am pleased to present CML's 2023 Financial Summary, a summary of the 2023 Budget as approved by the Board of Trustees (Board). This report is intended to summarize CML's financial activities and highlight its programs, services and initiatives. This summary has been developed with the participation and cooperation of CML's administrative and executive leadership staff. This report is unaudited and presented on a non-GAAP (Generally Accepted Accounting Principles) basis. CML's current audited Comprehensive Annual Financial Report is located on CML's website, columbuslibrary.org.

In the wake of the pandemic, CML remains committed to serving the needs of the community and providing essential services. CML adapted by providing robust virtual programs, social service assistance, curbside services and COVID-19 test distribution. The disruption the pandemic caused to school and other learning environments negatively impacted children's literacy skills and development. Last summer, CML expanded out-of-school learning opportunities and piloted Summer School Reading Buddies in partnership with several school districts to help address academic losses caused by the pandemic. This report provides details on the Summer School Reading Buddies and all the programs and services CML offers.

CML's vision is "a thriving community where wisdom prevails," and the 2023 budget (January 1 – December 31) supports purposeful investments in CML's three external strategies: Young Minds, My Library and Life Skills. These strategies are acutely relevant for what is needed now in the communities CML serves. The 2023 budget will afford CML the capacity to continue to adapt its programmatic investments in these strategies and in CML's commitment to community recovery.

CML follows a strategy of fiscal sustainability. In 2020, CML implemented cost savings measures in response to the economic uncertainty caused by the pandemic. This fiscally prudent approach placed CML in a strong financial position and allows CML to continue to invest in our customers through mission-critical programs, services and facilities. CML will work diligently to generate the greatest impact and largest return from every dollar of public investment.

The CML Financial Planning and Analysis team has made every effort to provide the most relevant 2023 budget information in a clear and concise format. If you have any questions about this document, please contact Jamie Lang, Director of Financial Planning and Procurement, at (614) 849-1062 or send an email to jang@columbuslibrary.org.

Respectfully submitted,
Lauren Hagan
Chief Financial Officer/Fiscal Officer

OUR VISION

A thriving community where wisdom prevails.

OUR PURPOSE

To inspire reading, share resources and connect people.

Circulation 12.3 million	Computer & Wireless Sessions 1.9 million
User Visits 3.9 million	Web Visits 7.7 million
Cardholders 605,000	eContent Use 3.3 million
Kids Cards Issued 60,000	Social Media Followers 120,000

HELPING CHILDREN SUCCEED

SCHOOL HELP

62,000 visits from K-12 students who sought help with schoolwork and reading practice.

READY FOR KINDERGARTEN

We helped **90,000** children be better prepared for school through Storytimes, classes and camps.

SUMMER READING CHALLENGE

40,500 kids, teens and adults read over the summer to keep skills sharp.

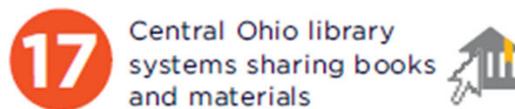
WINTER READING CHALLENGE

4,100 K-12 students read over the winter.

SUPPORTING OUR WORKFORCE

JOB HELP

10,900 connections made to resources and services, in partnership with local and national organizations, to help our customers become part of our local workforce.





ORGANIZATION AND STRUCTURE

CML is a county district library with boundaries including all of the land area within Franklin County, Ohio, except for the land area lying within the boundaries of six other public library districts in the County. CML was formed in 1872, and the Public Library and Reading Room opened on March 4, 1873 at the New City Hall. CML has since expanded to 22 branches and Main Library. CML celebrated its 150th birthday on March 4, 2023, and the library is celebrating this milestone anniversary with programs and events all year long.

CML is governed by a Board of Trustees appointed by the Judges of the Court of Common Pleas and the Franklin County Commissioners. The Board of Trustees is the policy-making body for the institution and is responsible for approving strategic direction, short/long term budgets and financial direction. CML is a political subdivision as defined by the Ohio Revised Code, and therefore financially and operationally independent from the City of Columbus and Franklin County.

VISION AND PURPOSE

CML’s vision is “a thriving community where wisdom prevails”, and the 2023 calendar year budget supports purposeful investments in CML’s three external strategies: Young Minds, My Library and Life Skills. Each year, CML sets goals and objectives to support these strategies. In addition to supporting the needs of our customers with a diverse and popular collection of library materials and access to resources such as computers, wireless internet and community spaces, this budget will afford CML the capacity to respond to areas of urgent need: children unprepared for kindergarten (Ready for Kindergarten, Play to Learn); third-grade reading proficiency (Reading Buddies, Summer Reading Challenge), high school graduation rates (School Help, HelpNow, YouMedia); college and career readiness and employment resources (JobNow, Reserve an Expert).

CML’s purpose is to “inspire reading, share resources and connect people”. Libraries are public spaces valued and used by individuals and organizations for access to information, print and digital reading materials, meeting space, technology and numerous other resources. CML has made significant commitments to replace or renovate aging, high-maintenance and inefficient buildings. CML is building libraries that will not only stand the test of time, but will evolve with the ever-changing world in which we live. CML’s long-term facilities plan, 2020 Vision Plan, is discussed in more detail on page 9.



Left: Students working in School Help Center at Northside Branch

Right: teens getting creative with music and digital art in the YouMedia center at Main Library



OPEN TO ALL

LIBRARY PROGRAMS AND SERVICES¹

CML's collection contains over 2.5 million items including books, eBooks, eAudiobooks, audiobooks, music CDs, DVDs, magazines, maps and sheet music. CML is a member of the Central Library Consortium (CLC), consisting of 17 library systems throughout central Ohio. As a member of CLC, CML shares an online catalog and select online resources with 16 other systems to offer customers a collection of over 5 million items with over 1 million unique titles.

Public computers at all library locations provide access to the internet, Microsoft Office products and a wealth of online databases. Digital library resources remain available 24/7 at CML's website, columbuslibrary.org. Resources include eContent listed above plus research (Consumer Reports, Morningstar), learning tools (Mango Languages, Creativebug) virtual services (NewsBank, HelpNow), and the catalog (Hoopla, Overdrive).

CML offers programs and services for customers of all ages with a focus on children and teens. The programs below illustrate CML's commitment to Young Minds, CML's number one strategy. The Kids & Teens page on CML's website offers valuable content.

Follow CML on social media ([Facebook](#), [Twitter](#), [TikTok](#)) and check columbuslibrary.org for updates and a list of current library services and programs.

WHAT YOU CAN DO AT CML

Check out books, eBooks, eAudiobooks, CDs, DVDs and stream music and movies

Reserve items online and pick up at any location

Use public computers

Access Wi-Fi

Reserve meeting rooms to gather

Access tools and resources to learn new skills or get information

Get help with technology and job skills

Explore genealogy and local history with our experts at Main Library

Attend programs and special events

WE HELP CHILDREN SUCCEED

Ready for Kindergarten Storytime²	Helping parents and caregivers be their child's first teacher
Ready for Kindergarten Classes²	Helping children and families get ready for kindergarten through hands-on practice
Kindergarten Success Camp	Helping 5-year-olds and their parents gain skills and experience before entering school
Play to Learn	Helping children be better prepared for school both academically and socially through hands-on activities and child led playtime

Reading Buddies²	Helping K-3 students with reading skills
School Help	Assisting K-12 students with school work
School Delivery	Providing students regular access to high-interest books at select elementary schools
YouMedia	Helping teens acquire and develop skills in animation, music composition and digital art

¹Programs and services are free with a library card.

²Program offered virtually and in-person.

2023 Budget

Revenue and Expenditures

The table below provides a summary of the revenue and expenditure budget for CML's General Fund. The annual budget serves as the foundation for financial planning, performance monitoring, decision making, and control of expenditures. For 2023, CML's General Fund expenditures (\$84M) are budgeted to exceed General Fund revenue (\$82M). For a government organization with a tax levy it is not unusual to see revenue exceed expenditures in the first half of the levy cycle allowing the general fund balance to grow. In the second half of the levy cycle, expenditures typically exceed revenue and the fund balance is drawn down. CML's general property tax revenue is provided from a 2.8 mill continuing property tax levy approved by Franklin County voters in 2010. Property tax revenue does not increase at the same rate as property valuation. In accordance with House Bill 920, as property valuations increase during countywide property reappraisals, the voted millage is reduced in order to generate the same amount of tax revenue as was received when the levy was approved by the voters. Therefore, CML's current effective mill rate is 2.18 mills.

Public Library Fund (PLF) revenue is received from the State of Ohio's Public Library Fund. The Public Library Fund is funded with 1.66% of the State's General Revenue Fund tax revenue and divided among Ohio's public libraries. The percentage of the State General Revenue Fund tax revenue was temporarily increased to 1.70% for fiscal years 2022 and 2023; the increase expires June 30, 2023.

General Fund

	2023 Budget
Revenue (in thousands)	
General Property Tax	\$ 56,580
Public Library Fund (PLF)	\$ 29,964
PLF Debt Service Transfer ¹	\$ (7,299)
Net PLF Total	\$ 22,666
Customer Fees	\$ 200
Charges for Services	\$ 959
Investment Revenue	\$ 975
Miscellaneous	\$ 276
Total	\$ 81,656

	2023 Budget
Expenditures (in thousands)	
Salaries & Benefits	\$ 52,841
Operational Services	\$ 14,390
Library Materials	\$ 8,671
Capital Outlay	\$ 3,614
Supplies	\$ 2,118
Other	\$ 1,930
Total	\$ 83,564

¹Approximately 25% of PLF is used to support the Debt Service Fund annually



Left: Teens enjoying a challenging game of chess at Parsons Branch

Right: Two young minds collaborating during Play to Learn at Barnett Branch

Five Year Forecast

Projected Revenue and Expenditures

CML maintains a Long Range Financial Plan (Plan) to help guide CML's operation, capital investments and strategic planning. The Plan is evaluated by the board and leadership to determine CML's financial stability to sufficiently provide library services long-term and capacity to make additional new investments in programming and capital. The Plan is a comprehensive financial tool that is used to analyze the long-term financial impact of levy planning and millage rates. It is updated with the most current information related to state funding, property tax receipts, staffing, operations, and planned facility maintenance and technology projects. The Plan allows CML to analyze operational needs in conjunction with capital improvement planning. As a component of the Plan, CML identifies and quantifies the operational costs associated with its capital projects and budgets resources accordingly. CML continuously updates the Plan with the most current revenue projections, budget, and expenditure data available to ensure business decisions are made with as complete information as possible. CML's finance committee, board and senior leadership will continue to make decisions to ensure CML is in the best possible financial position going forward.

In 2012, CML's Board of Trustees adopted a Fund Balance policy which established a twenty percent (20%) minimum fund balance for the General Fund, CML's main operating fund. The General Fund minimum fund balance is an indicator for our long range planning and is a significant factor to determination of levy timing. As CML approaches the stage of the levy cycle where there is a need to place an issue on the ballot, our current five-year forecast projects a rapidly declining balance with a projected negative cash balance by the end of 2026 and a fund balance that falls below the minimum fund balance in 2024.

Five Year Forecast

General Fund <i>(in thousands)</i>	2023	2024	2025	2026	2027
	Budget	Projected	Projected	Projected	Projected
Beginning Balance	\$ 23,274	\$ 17,830	\$ 12,496	\$ 1,674	\$ (11,415)
Revenue	\$ 81,656	\$ 81,214	\$ 79,727	\$ 81,158	\$ 82,283
Expenditures	\$ 87,100	\$ 86,548	\$ 90,549	\$ 94,246	\$ 98,182
Revenue less Expenditures	\$ (5,444)	\$ (5,334)	\$ (10,822)	\$ (13,089)	\$ (15,899)
Interfund Transfers Out	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -
Ending Balance	\$ 17,830	\$ 12,496	\$ 1,674	\$ (11,415)	\$ (27,314)
Fund Balance as % of Expenditures	20%	14%	2%	-12%	-28%

Capital Projects Fund <i>(in thousands)</i>	2023	2024	2025	2026	2027
	Budget	Projected	Projected	Projected	Projected
Beginning Balance	\$ 102,615	\$ 57,189	\$ 12,850	\$ 1	\$ (489)
Revenue	\$ 2,429	\$ 1,729	\$ 1,551	\$ 1,000	\$ 1,000
Expenditures	\$ 47,855	\$ 46,068	\$ 14,400	\$ 1,490	\$ 1,168
Revenue less Expenditures	\$ (45,426)	\$ (44,339)	\$ (12,849)	\$ (490)	\$ (168)
Interfund Transfers In	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -
Ending Balance	\$ 57,189	\$ 12,850	\$ 1	\$ (489)	\$ (658)

Debt Service Fund

The Debt Service Fund provides for the retirement of the current year principal and interest on CML’s long-term debt obligations and payment of any trustee fees associated with administration of the debt.

Columbus Metropolitan Library’s Debt

CML had \$89 million in debt outstanding as of January 1, 2023, the majority of which is related to the 2019 and 2020 Public Library Fund (PLF) Notes. The PLF Notes are special obligations and secured by a pledge of CML’s allocation from the Public Library Fund and reach maturity in 2025, 2027, 2037 and 2043. CML’s outstanding debt is currently rated Aa2 by Moody’s Investors Service. CML’s rating is tied to the State of Ohio’s credit rating since the PLF notes are secured by PLF, which is a distribution of State revenue.

In 2012, CML issued \$92.3 million of PLF Notes to fund a portion of the 2020 Vision Plan* Phase I projects. CML issued \$33.3 million of Public Library Notes in 2019 to fund a portion of the 2020 Vision Plan Phase II projects. Refunding Notes represent debt issued to refinance previous debt at a lower interest rate. CML saves money by reducing payments over the term of the debt.

CML refinanced a portion of the Series 2012 PLF Notes in 2016 and 2017 and refinanced the remainder in 2020. By refinancing, CML achieved nearly \$13 million in net present value savings on the three series of refunded notes. PLF monies are received annually in the Debt Service Fund to cover debt repayment. The detailed debt service schedules are included in CML’s Comprehensive Annual Financial Report.



*The 2020 Vision Plan is discussed in more detail on page 9.



Customers can access free help with schoolwork in the School Help center, gain computer skills through a technology training class or interact with technology in the Children’s area.

2020 Vision Plan

CML's long-term facilities plan, the 2020 Vision Plan, is aligned with CML's strategic plan and a key focus of the strategic plan is My Library: Creating the Next Generation Library. The 2020 Vision Plan brings 21st century libraries to our communities, creating a library that works for the customer and the community. The 2020 Vision Plan is a multi-phased comprehensive blueprint that reinvents and revitalizes the entire 600,000 square feet maintained by CML. Projects are identified based on a number of criteria including, but not limited to, building age, building size, population served, growing needs of the community, and usage statistics. New or renovated facilities address space constraints, improved technology and the changing dynamics of the library service model.

Phase I of the 2020 Vision Plan included replacing or renovating nine branches and Main Library. Phase I concluded in 2019 when the final Phase I project, Dublin Branch, opened. Additional details on the Phase I projects and source of funding can be found on CML's website.

CML's Board of Trustees (Board) approved the continuation of the 2020 Vision Plan. Phase II includes replacing or renovating eight branches. Phase II will be funded through a combination of debt, operational savings, fundraising, and savings from refinancing debt at lower interest rates. Similar to Phase I, the Board approved long-term debt and CML issued \$33M Public Library Notes in 2019 to fund a portion of the Phase II projects.

CML capital projects are traditionally approved by the Board as individual project budgets. The budgets for the 2020 Vision Plan are established and approved as components for each Phase. Establishing budgets by component provides more cross-project flexibility and allows for better management of variances across projects.

The project components are defined as:

- Program Budget: costs associated with pre-construction design services and construction management fees.
- Land Budget: costs associated with purchasing property, if applicable, site preparation fees and related legal fees.
- Construction Budget: costs associated with design and construction of a facility, including legal, permit and utility connection fees.
- Furniture, Fixtures and Equipment Budget: costs associated with contents of a building, including security system, technology and public art.

2020VP PROJECTS – PHASE I

CML completed Phase I of the aspirational building program with the opening of the final project, Dublin Branch, in 2019. Additional details on Phase I can be found on CML's website [here](#)

2020VP PROJECTS – PHASE II

- **Karl Road Branch:** the new building opened 2021
- **Hilltop Branch:** the renovated building opened 2021
- **Gahanna Branch:** the new building opened March 2023
- **Reynoldsburg Branch*:** the new building is expected to open early 2024
- **Marion Franklin Branch*:** the new building is expected to open in 2025
- **Linden Branch*:** the renovated building is expected to open in 2025
- **Barnett Branch*:** the renovated building is expected to open in 2025
- **Canal Winchester*:** the new building is expected to be open in 2025

**Estimated, subject to change.*



Above: New Gahanna Branch. The new two-level branch offers a reimagined Children's area, larger School Help Center, a large teen area, study rooms, meeting rooms and a special Gahanna history area to view materials and archival documents.

Operating Projects

PROJECTS COMPLETED IN 2022

In 2022, \$2.7 million was committed to facility improvements and technology projects. The following projects were completed:

- Transformed the outdoor gathering space at Main Library into Kaufman Plaza, a more fun and engaging space for all ages. The versatile space will allow for a variety of programming including library programs and community events. The redesigned space includes shade structures and comfortable seating for customers.
- Completed repairs to the Main Library parking garage which included replacing the entrance and exit doors with faster and more efficient doors, new garage signage, and concrete maintenance.
- Completed parking lot repairs and maintenance at five branches and added curbs at two branches.
- Upgraded the Local History and Genealogy book scanner used to digitize materials.
- Replaced aging public computers at multiple branches.
- Deployed new children's tablets in the children's areas at Hilltop, Main, and Whitehall. Each tablet has programs designed for children between 2-6 years old.
- Deployed next generation security radios improving security officers, branch staff, and transportation drivers direct communication with the Security Operations Center. The two-way radios will improve safety and security for staff and customers.
- Repaired 115 year old walls and barrel ceiling as well as preserved the historic staircase handrail of the Main Library Carnegie building. The wall repairs required a vendor that specializes in historic preservation and restoration of plaster.
- Replaced end of life concrete in the loading dock at Main Library. The loading dock is a vital access point for all deliveries to Main Library, including library materials.
- Upgraded outdoor lighting fixtures at Driving Park Branch to enhance the safety and security of the parking lot and entrance. Fixtures were upgraded to an energy efficient LED technology.

PROJECTS PLANNED FOR 2023

The funds appropriated for general fund and operational projects includes a contingency for unplanned projects. The following projects are scheduled for 2023:

- Install solar panels on the roofs of select branches which will reduce utility costs. Additional community benefits include the reduction of greenhouse gases and other pollution emissions. The cost of the project is estimated to be \$1.8M.
- Maintenance and routine repairs to Whitehall as part of the facilities maintenance plan. The cost of the project is estimated to be \$200K.
- Enhance children and teen spaces at select locations by adding interactive elements that inspire reading, learning, and having fun. The cost of the enhancements is estimated to be \$200K.
- Maintenance and routine repairs to Driving Park as part of the facilities maintenance plan. The cost of the project is estimated to be \$135K.
- Replace an end-of-life Senior Services Lobby Stop vehicle. The cost is estimated to be \$60K.



Above: tablet dispenser in the children's area at Main Library. Children's tablets are preloaded with lots of fun and engaging applications.

2022 Major Initiatives & Accomplishments

CML is focused on customers and the future of the community. Our purpose is to inspire reading, share resources, and connect people. Initiatives and accomplishments are aligned with and support the Strategic Plan. The Strategic Plan focuses on three external strategies: Young Minds, My Library and Life Skills; and three internal strategies: Our People, Our Partners and Our Work. More detailed information on CML's Strategic Plan is available at columbuslibrary.org.

- Piloted Summer School Reading Buddies in response to academic losses due to the pandemic. During summer 2022, 60 Summer Reading Assistants offered Reading Buddies to K-3 students inside classrooms at 11 schools across four school districts. The program was tailored to individual reading levels by focusing on one of three skills: letter recognition, decoding, and comprehension.
- Hosted the Summer Opportunities Fair where community organizations shared information on their programs and services for kids and hosted the Columbus City Schools' Summer Pathways which provided information to students and families on the summer community-based learning experiences available.
- Held the 35th annual Duckling Day at the Whetstone Branch. Over 1,600 attendees of all ages were treated to a parade, activities, a puppet show, observation of live ducklings and music from Columbus Folk Music Society.
- Co-sponsored an event at Hilliard Branch with local partner Hilliard Helps – Festa. The event brought together social service providers and key community stakeholders to network and speak about resources available for families in need.
- Introduced Excel Adult High School, a service that provides self-paced, online high school courses for adults without a diploma or equivalent credential. Once completed, individuals earn an accredited high school diploma.
- Partnered with CoverMyMeds to present a Job and Resource Fair at Main Library. Over 45 local employers and social services providers shared career opportunities, workforce development support, and other wraparound services.
- Provided healthy grab and go lunches and snacks to children ages 1-18:
 - Partnered with Children's Hunger Alliance (CHA) for the eighth year to provide Grab & Go snacks and offered Summer Lunch for the 21st year
- Supported customers in becoming a part of the local workforce by making 10,900 connections to resources and services, in partnership with local and national organizations.
- Main Library was included on Fodor's Travel's list of "11 most beautiful libraries in the United States".
- Hosted 8 Speak Up/Speak Out: Conversations About Race, which brought Ohioans and community leaders together to reflect upon racial and systemic inequities.
- The Local History and Genealogy team hosted a series of virtual and in-person programs such as *A Murder in Amish Ohio*, *African American Genealogy: The Benefaction of You*, and *Fire in the Big House: America's Deadliest Prison Disaster*.
- Partnered with select central Ohio cultural institutions to offer cardholders 24,000 free admission entries in 2022 through the Culture Pass program. This onetime pass, which must be checked out in person, grants customers limited free access to institutions such as the Columbus Clippers, Columbus Zoo and Aquarium, Franklin Park Conservatory, National Veterans Memorial and Museum and more.
- CML is focused on helping children and students succeed. In 2022 CML:
 - Offered a six-week virtual Ready for K class series to 210 students, 17 teachers and 12 daycare centers. Classes focused on skills and academic knowledge needed to succeed in kindergarten.
 - Hosted Kindergarten Success Camps for incoming kindergartners. Students prepared for school and practiced school readiness skills with a key focus on letter recognition, writing and listening comprehension.
 - Helped 90,000 children be better prepared for school through Storytimes, classes, and camps
 - Recorded 63,000 School Help visits from students in kindergarten through grade 12 seeking help with schoolwork
 - Registered 40,500 kids, teens, and adults for the 2022 Summer Reading Challenge
 - Delivered 52,900 books to 400 classrooms through the School Delivery program

Challenges and Opportunities for 2023 and Beyond

- Providing programs and services to address learning loss and decline in student reading skills due to the pandemic
- Promoting the wide variety of library programs and services available to customers
- Adapting service demands to meet changing customer and community needs
- Committing to diversity, equity and inclusion in order to foster a workplace and community where everyone belongs and thrives
- Partnering with library leaders to impact the evolving roles of libraries within communities
- Pursuing partnerships, advocacy, and community relationships to supplement the budget and enhance services
- Leveraging data to enhance services and anticipate future trends
- Investing in staff to meet evolving community demands
- Adapting our collection to provide access to a broad and balanced view of society – its culture, history, and diversity of beliefs
- Identifying cost-effective and innovative ways to improve operations
- Continuing to enhance safety and security



CML's spaces are designed to be inviting, showcase the collection and spur curiosity for customers of all ages.

