

Legislative Budget Analysis  
Proposed FY 2024 Operating and Capital Budgets  
Office of the County Auditor  
Baltimore County, Maryland  
**HEARING DATE: May 16, 2023**



**Department of Libraries**

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Questions to Department Sent	Monday, April 24
Responses Received	Wednesday, May 3
Analysis considers all agency responses.	

BALTIMORE COUNTY  
FISCAL YEAR 2024 RECOMMENDED BUDGET

**DEPARTMENT OF LIBRARIES (037)**

<b>BUDGET SUMMARY</b>
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\$ in Thousands

	GENERAL	SPECIAL	TOTAL	% Change Prior Year
<b>PROPOSED CHANGE</b>				
FY 2023 - 2024 Change	\$ 2,934.6	\$ 547.7	\$ 3,482.3	7.6%
<b>BUDGET TRENDS</b>				
FY 2022 Actual	\$ 36,708.2 <sup>(A)</sup>	\$ 5,078.0	\$ 41,786.2	
FY 2023 Approp.	38,032.4	8,067.0 <sup>(B)</sup>	46,099.4	10.3%
FY 2024 Request	40,967.0	8,614.7	49,581.7	7.6%
<b>FY 2024 Budget Analysis</b>	<b>40,967.0</b>	<b>8,614.7</b>	<b>49,581.7</b>	<b>7.6%</b>
<b>POTENTIAL REDUCTIONS</b>	<b>TBD</b>	<b>\$ -</b>	<b>TBD</b>	

<sup>(A)</sup> Reflects County General Funds provided to BCPL.

<sup>(B)</sup> Adjusted for 2 supplemental spending authorizations totaling \$1.0 million not reflected in the Executive's budget documents.

<b>PERSONNEL</b>
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ALL FUNDS  
FULL-TIME EQUIVALENT POSITIONS

<b>PROPOSED CHANGE</b>	
FY 2023 - 2024 Change	(7)
<b>BUDGET TRENDS</b>	
FY 2022 Actual	463
FY 2023 Approp.	462
FY 2024 Request	455
<b>FY 2024 Budget Analysis</b>	<b>455</b>
<b>POTENTIAL REDUCTIONS</b>	<b>TBD</b>
VACANCY DATA	12

Positions Vacant as of April 27, 2023\*

\* Provided by BCPL

## DEPARTMENT OF LIBRARIES (069)

**BUDGET SUMMARY:**

The proposed FY 2024 budget for the Department of Libraries totals \$49.6 million, an increase of \$3.5 million, or 7.6% over the FY 2023 budget, as follows.

	General Fund	Special Fund	Total
	(\$ in thousands)		
<b>2024 Request</b>	\$ 40,967	\$ 8,615	\$ 49,582
2023 Appropriation	38,032	8,067 <sup>(1)</sup>	46,099
\$ Increase	\$ 2,935	\$ 548	\$ 3,483
% Increase	7.7%	6.8%	7.6%

<sup>(1)</sup> Adjusted for 2 supplemental spending authorizations totaling \$1.0 million not reflected in the Executive's budget documents.

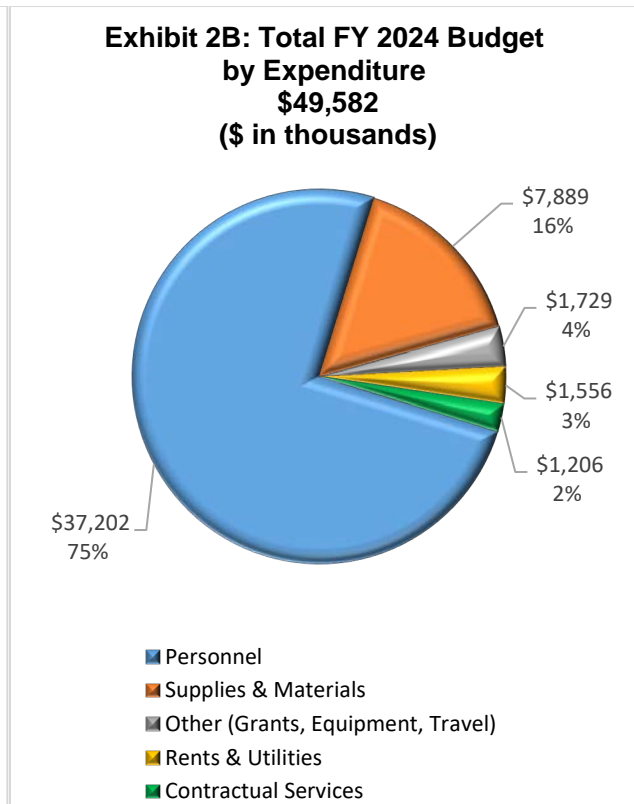
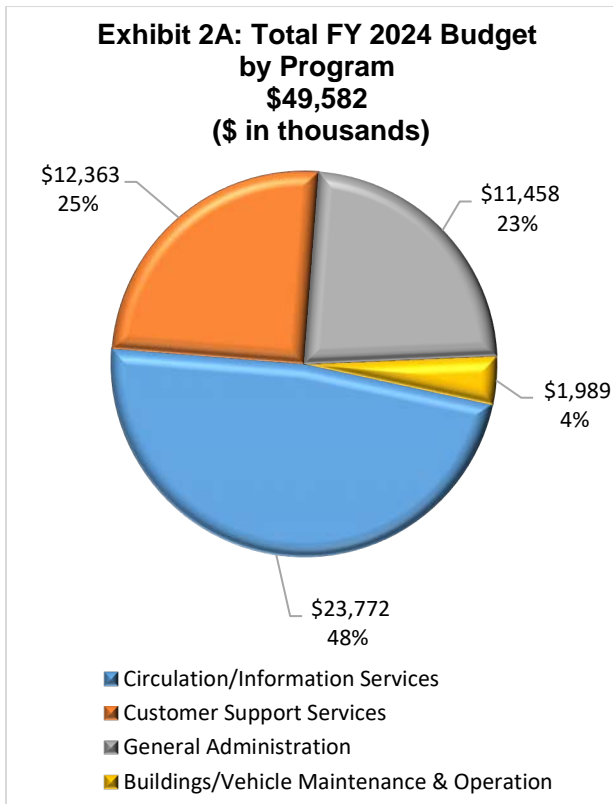
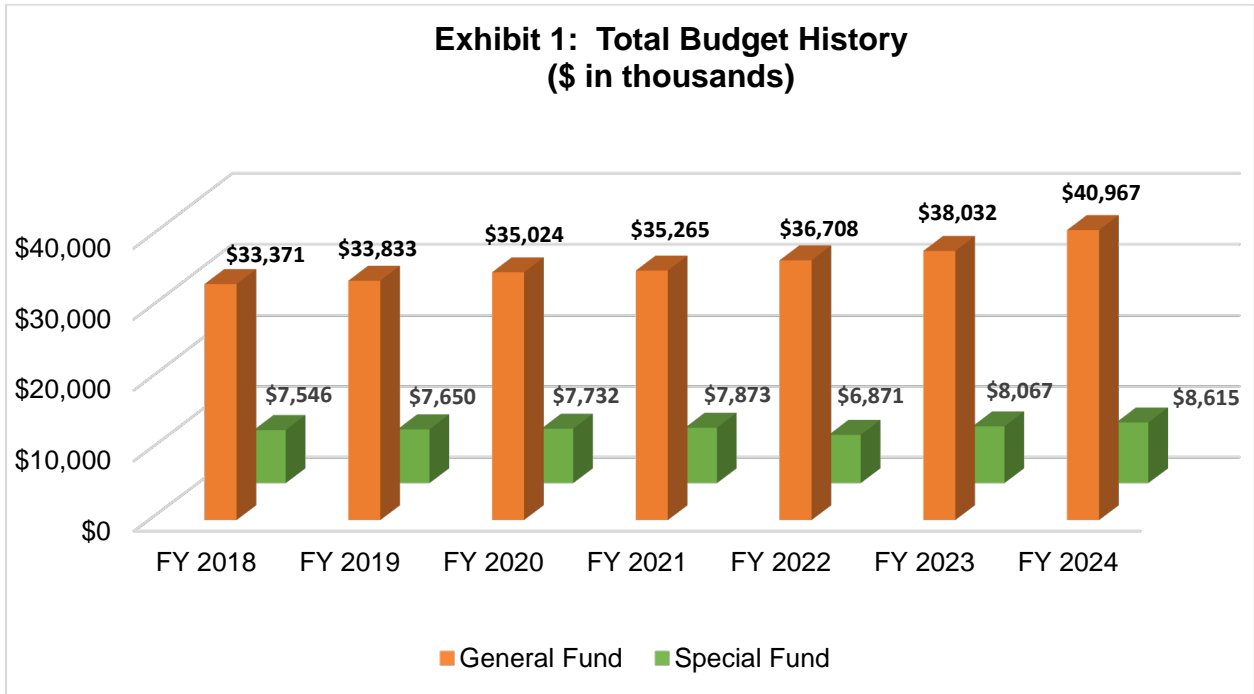
- **General Fund** – The budget increase is primarily due to personnel expenses (e.g., 13 net new positions, including 4 positions previously funded with BCPL’s surplus balance, the new salary scale, COLA, and fringe costs (primarily medical insurance and FICA)).
- **Special Fund** – The budget increase reflects the planned use of additional one-time funding, including \$397 thousand in County-awarded ARPA grant support to employ social workers at two branches and unspecified usage of an anticipated \$200 thousand estate gift.

**BCPL’s proposed FY 2024 budget comprises 1.1% of the County’s total Operating Budget.**

**See Appendices A and B for program-level expenditure/appropriation and authorized staffing levels, respectively, for FY 2022 (actual), FY 2023 (appropriated), and FY 2024 (proposed).**

**See Exhibit 1 for a budget history, and Exhibits 2A and 2B for the distribution of expenses across programs and expenditures, respectively.**

## DEPARTMENT OF LIBRARIES (069)



## DEPARTMENT OF LIBRARIES (069)

### POTENTIAL BUDGET REDUCTIONS:

Proposed new spending totals \$1.2 million and includes the following:

- \$482 thousand for 4 positions (3 Regional Customer Experience Managers (\$395 thousand) and one Employee Labor Relations Officer (\$87 thousand)), which were previously funded with BCPL's surplus balance.
- \$742 thousand for 12 new positions: (7 Library Supervisors (\$417 thousand), 2 Adult & Community Engagement Specialists (\$146 thousand), 1 New Americans Outreach Specialist (\$65 thousand), 1 Project Manager (\$60 thousand), and 1 Accountant (\$54 thousand).

As of April 27, 2023, BCPL advised that of the 462 authorized positions, there were 12 vacancies compared to 9 vacancies in May 2022; the proposed budget's turnover assumption reflects increased savings of \$68 thousand (remains at 3.0%). Current estimated turnover for FY 2023 is less than 1%.

**To the extent that the Council deems less County funds than proposed to be necessary for BCPL's positions, budget reductions would be viable.**

### OPERATING BUDGET HIGHLIGHTS:

1. **Personnel Expenses account for \$2.7 million, or 77.5%, of BCPL's total budget increase for FY 2024, as follows:**

- **COLAs and Salary enhancements** (\$2.3 million increase)
  - Two 2% COLAs effective July 1, 2023 and January 1, 2024 (\$844 thousand)
  - New salary scale (\$765 thousand) (see #3 for details)
    - Includes the impact of the 3% employee COLA (or equivalent wage adjustment) approved in May 2022, which was effective in late December 2022; thus, the FY 2023 budget absorbed roughly half the annual cost of this salary enhancement; the rest of the annual cost is realized in FY 2024.
  - Fringe (primarily Medical Insurance (\$381 thousand) and FICA (\$317

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thousand)) (\$714 thousand)

- **13 net new FT positions** (\$1.1 million net increase)
  - 12 new positions (\$742 thousand)
    - 7 Library Supervisors (\$417 thousand)
    - 2 Adult & Community Engagement Specialists (\$146 thousand)
    - 1 New Americans Outreach Specialist (\$65 thousand) (see #5 for details)
    - 1 Project Manager (\$60 thousand)
    - 1 Accountant (\$54 thousand)
  - 4 positions previously covered by BCPL's surplus balance (\$482 thousand) (see # 3 for details)
    - 3 Regional Customer Experience Managers (\$395 thousand)
    - 1 Employee Labor Relations Officer (\$87 thousand)
  - 3 deleted Library Services Assistant positions (\$145 thousand decrease)
- **Increased part-time position hours** to implement Sunday hours at 7 BCPL branches (\$450 thousand increase) (see #4 for details)
- **19.8 net Deleted FTE for PT positions** (\$267 thousand decrease)
- **Offsetting savings from increased turnover** – remains at 3.0% (\$68 thousand decrease) – BCPL advised that this dollar increase in the budgeted savings reflects the impact of FY 2024 salary increases
- **Other salary adjustments**
  - One-time union contract costs funded in FY 2023 (\$585 thousand decrease) (see #3 for details)
  - Other salary changes (\$231 thousand decrease) primarily for position conversions to better align the position title with the functions and responsibilities of each position.

***BCPL should be prepared to discuss its proposed funding for personnel expenses.***

2. **Other Operating Expenses account for \$800 thousand, or 22.5%, of BCPL's total budget increase for FY 2024.**

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***BCPL should be prepared to discuss proposed funding for operating expenses, including what expenses are planned in the County's General Fund "Grants" spend category, and the reason(s) and branch(es) where security guard coverage is being reduced.***

### ADDITIONAL TOPICS FOR DISCUSSION:

#### 3. Staffing Initiatives and Challenges

##### ***New Salary Scale***

On January 1, 2023, BCPL implemented a new salary scale (approximately 3% increase in salaries across-the-board), including increments and the reclassification of various positions, as recommended by the FY 2023 Benefit and Compensation Study. In this regard, BCPL advised that titles for several positions were changed to better align with each position's functions and responsibilities (e.g., from Assistant Director to Chief Operations Officer).

##### ***Vacancies, Recruitment, and Retention***

As of April 27, 2023, BCPL advised that of the 462 authorized positions, there were 12 vacancies compared to 9 vacancies in May 2022; the proposed budget's turnover assumption reflects increased savings of \$68 thousand (remains at 3.0%), reflective of the impact of the FY 2024 budgeted salary enhancements. BCPL advised that recruitment and retention have been challenging in FY 2023 because more candidates are seeking remote work opportunities and higher salaries. BCPL expects the new salary scale and position reclassifications to support recruitment efforts.

##### ***Surplus Balance Positions Transferred to General Fund***

In FY 2023, BCPL used \$442 thousand from its surplus balance to fund 3 Regional Customer Experience Managers and 1 Employee Labor Relations Officer (see below). The proposed FY 2024 budget includes \$482 thousand to continue to provide salaries for these positions. In this regard, BCPL advised that these positions are critical to BCPL's operations and are not temporary

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in nature, and that the proposed additions have been offset with position conversions and a reduction in part-time hours across BCPL.

### ***Unionization***

On May 9, 2022, BCPL, BCPL's Board of Trustees, and the International Association of Machinists and Aerospace Workers ratified a union agreement covering approximately 427 full- and part-time employees from BCPL's administrative office and 19 branches. On September 6, 2022, the Council approved \$644 thousand in funds from BCPL's surplus balance for the new salary scale (\$375 thousand), additional leave and leave accrual for part-time staff (\$220 thousand), and union leave and arbitration (\$49 thousand).

BCPL advised that as a result of unionization, there has been an increased amount of labor hours by multiple members of BCPL's management team and executive staff who have devoted hundreds of hours to contract negotiations, arbitrations, grievances, and the revision of various policies and procedures. BCPL advised that this time detracts from the governance and regular operations of BCPL by these members of leadership. In this regard, BCPL advised that this additional workload created the need for the Employee and Labor Relations Officer position to have a dedicated, expert point of contact to work with the union, while also providing training and guidance to BCPL's management team on all union-related matters.

***BCPL should be prepared to discuss its staffing initiatives and challenges.***

#### **4. Sunday Service**

The proposed FY 2024 budget includes \$450 thousand in part-time salaries to re-establish Sunday service (1:00 p.m. to 5:00 p.m.), from September 2023 to May 2023, in the following 7 branches where it has historically been popular prior to the pandemic: Arbutus, Cockeysville, North Point, Owings Mills, Perry Hall, Pikesville, and Towson. BCPL advised that it considered many factors in identifying these branches including geographic coverage, pre-pandemic Sunday usage data, branch size, parking, public computer availability, and community need.



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BCPL also advised that there is a possibility that additional branches could be open on Sundays after FY 2024, but that any decision would be based on a careful analysis of Sunday usage data to determine need as well as the other aforementioned factors.

***BCPL should be prepared to discuss how it will market the re-introduction of Sunday hours to the impacted communities.***

### 5. **New Americans Outreach Specialist**

The proposed FY 2024 budget includes \$65 thousand in salary for a New Americans Outreach Specialist. BCPL advised that this position will spearhead new programs and services geared towards the County's growing immigrant community by identifying appropriate marketing and outreach techniques in reaching New Americans, advising on collection development in world languages, and informing recruitment strategies. This position is expected to join BCPL's English as a Second Language (ESOL) Conversation group initiative in FY 2024 as well as other opportunities identified.

The proposed FY 2024 Capital Budget also supports this outreach with \$190 thousand to implement interactive multilingual kiosks, which will provide BCPL customers where English is not their first language, an opportunity to enjoy the services BCPL offers (see #7 for details).

***BCPL should be prepared to discuss the benchmarks it will use to determine the success of this outreach initiative and any involvement in the County's New Americans Health Care Access Task Force when established.***

### 6. **Continuing Initiatives/Mobile Services**

BCPL advised that it plans to continue the following significant initiatives from prior years with minimal impact to the proposed FY 2024 budget:

- **Fine Free for All** - In July 2021, BCPL discontinued extended loan (overdue) fees, eliminating a significant barrier to service.

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- **Mobile Library Law Center** – In August 2021, the Mobile Library Law Center was launched in partnership with Maryland Legal Aid and brings free assistance for civil legal issues into the community.
- **Social Worker** – In FY 2023, BCPL added a second Social Worker position to supplement its existing Social Worker (responsible for the east-side of the County) to support direct client services to customers, provide ongoing voluntary case management, clinical assistance, information, referrals, outreach and public programs, and services to customers on the west-side of the County. In this regard, BCPL advised that funding for FY 2024 will be provided through a combination of base budget funding and grants. Specifically, the Office of Budget and Finance anticipates \$397 thousand in previously appropriated (County) ARPA funding will be used for the following in FY 2024: \$263 thousand for a dedicated Social Worker for the Essex branch (for 2 years), furniture and marketing; and \$134 thousand for one Social Worker for the Towson branch to cover the central region of the County for one year.

### **Mobile Services**

#### ***Mobile Outreach Vehicles***

BCPL advised that for FY 2024, it is focused on ensuring its fleet of mobile outreach vehicles are ready to serve the community as a series of unanticipated repairs have caused the vehicles to be sidelined for unusually lengthy periods, thus impacting their ability to serve the community. BCPL further advised that it is working with the County to replace aging Bookmobiles and to supplement with sprinter vans that will not only be able to serve as reliable backups for sidelined Bookmobiles but also to expand BCPL's outreach into the community.

#### ***STREAM Vehicle***

On August 1, 2022, the Council approved Resolution 31-22, authorizing \$399 thousand in non-local funds towards the purchase of a new vehicle to bring Science, Technology, Reading, Engineering, Arts, and Math (STREAM) and school support-based services to underserved communities in the County. BCPL advised that the vehicle will assist in breaking down access

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barriers and provide the most up-to-date technology available in a welcoming, safe environment to assist with enhancing literacy skills, aiding in school success, and improving quality of life. At the time, OBF advised that the vehicle was estimated to cost \$699 thousand, with the \$300 balance being funded by the County's Equipment Financing Program. Additionally, OBF advised that the vehicle would be operational 22 months after purchase with estimated ongoing annual operating costs of \$8 thousand (in addition to fuel costs).

***BCPL should be prepared to discuss these continued initiatives, including plans for providing social worker services when ARPA funds are no longer available, the status of its mobile outreach and new STREAM vehicles, and the number of County residents to be served through its mobile vehicles.***

### CAPITAL BUDGET HIGHLIGHTS:

#### 7. Capital-Related Projects

The proposed FY 2024 Capital Budget includes \$32.9 million for various BCPL maintenance and renovation projects, including the following:

- **Lansdowne Library – Replacement** (\$12.0 million) - A feasibility and design study for a replacement library will get underway early in FY 2024 and should be completed by the end of FY 2024. BCPL anticipates construction in FY 2025 or FY 2026 depending on final costs and additional funding.
- **Woodlawn Library Construction** (\$9.0 million)\* – Design for renovation and expansion is currently underway, and BCPL expects 100% design and final costs by February 2024, while construction is expected to take place August 2024 through November 2025. Also see Use of Surplus Balance below.
- **Essex Library - Replacement** (\$6.0 million)\* - A feasibility and design study for a replacement library is just getting underway and should be completed by the end of June 2024. BCPL anticipates construction in late FY 2025 or FY 2026 depending on final costs and additional funding.

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- **Randallstown Library Renovations** (\$3.0 million) - A feasibility study for possible renovation, expansion, or new construction will begin sometime in FY 2024. BCPL advised that there is no timeline for design, construction, or completion as of yet.
- **Cockeysville Library Reseal Front Windows** (\$1.1 million)
- **BCPL – Comprise Replacement Implementation** (\$500 thousand) – Implement the solution selected to replace the existing Comprise hardware and software. Comprise is the current system used for public PC management as it pertains to taking customer payments, reserving PCs, and releasing customer print jobs.
- **Pikesville Library Modernization** (\$400 thousand) – Design and final costs for the public and staff restrooms modernization and renovation, which will be completed in May 2023. BCPL advised that construction is scheduled to begin in November 2023 and to be completed by April 2024. Also see Use of Surplus Balance below.
- **Pikesville SC/Library – Replace Two Aeon Roof Top Units (RTUs)** (\$350 thousand)
- **BCPL – Study Room AV Equipment** (\$290 thousand) – Update BCPL study rooms with state-of-the-art AV equipment so customers can facilitate meetings, conduct client meetings, and interviews.
- **BCPL – Multilingual Kiosks** (\$190 thousand) – Implement interactive multilingual kiosks to provide BCPL customers where English is not their first language an opportunity to enjoy BCPL services.
- **Towson Health/Library Upgrade Fire Alarm** (\$50 thousand)

\* Denotes projects with prior authorized funds totaling \$14.7 million.

### ***Use of Surplus Balance***

BCPL advised that it will utilize \$3.3 million of its surplus balance towards various capital improvement projects to fulfill its goal of achieving 21<sup>st</sup> century library facilities. In this regard, BCPL advised that the projects vary in size and scope and that funding will supplement State and County funding, with examples including:

- **Catonsville Branch interior renovation** (\$1.7 million)
- **Pikesville Branch public and staff restrooms renovation** (\$600 thousand)

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- **White Marsh Branch meeting room and restrooms renovation** (\$500 thousand)
- **Woodlawn Branch renovation and expansion** (\$500 thousand)

The Office of Budget and Finance advised that this project funding was previously authorized as FY 2021 Fund Balance assignments. OBF further advised that this funding “will probably flow through the County’s Capital Budget, but will be paid out of BCPL’s Fund Balance probably via a reimbursement from BCPL to the County.”

BCPL advised that its total Fund Balance as of June 30, 2023 is anticipated to be \$12.8 million.

### ***American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA) Program Funding***

The Office of Budget and Finance anticipates \$12 thousand in County ARPA program funding to be used for new or replacement BCPL technology not covered by OIT’s Tech Fund.

***BCPL should be prepared to discuss plans and timelines for commencing and completing these capital projects. The Office of Budget and Finance should be prepared to discuss whether any of the budgeted County funding towards BCPL capital projects is duplicative, in light of the planned BCPL fund balance contributions.***

BALTIMORE COUNTY  
FISCAL YEAR 2024 RECOMMENDED BUDGET

**DEPARTMENT OF LIBRARIES (037)**

APPROPRIATION DETAIL

	FY 2022 ACTUAL	FY 2023 APPROP	FY 2024 REQUEST	NET CHANGE	
				AMOUNT	%
<b>General Fund</b>					
General Administration					
General Fund	\$ 7,994,601	\$ 8,487,154	\$ 10,196,801	\$ 1,709,647	20.1%
Special Fund	1,391,549	2,039,489	2,166,333	126,844	6.2%
Total	<u>9,386,150</u>	<u>10,526,643</u>	<u>12,363,134</u>	<u>1,836,491</u>	<u>17.4%</u>
Circulation/Information Services					
General Fund	17,965,792	18,801,346	19,682,169	880,823	4.7%
Special Fund	1,875,983	3,835,667	4,090,026	254,359	6.6%
Total	<u>19,841,775</u>	<u>22,637,013</u>	<u>23,772,195</u>	<u>1,135,182</u>	<u>5.0%</u>
Customer Support Services					
General Fund	9,377,004	9,318,939	9,449,138	130,199	1.4%
Special Fund	1,430,357	1,919,484	2,008,384	88,900	4.6%
Total	<u>10,807,361</u>	<u>11,238,423</u>	<u>11,457,522</u>	<u>219,099</u>	<u>1.9%</u>
Buildings/Vehicle Maintenance & Operation					
General Fund	1,370,776	1,425,004	1,638,867	213,863	15.0%
Special Fund	380,142	272,342	349,976	77,634	28.5%
Total	<u>1,750,918</u>	<u>1,697,346</u>	<u>1,988,843</u>	<u>291,497</u>	<u>17.2%</u>
Grand Total	<u>\$ 41,786,204</u>	<u>\$ 46,099,425</u>	<u>\$ 49,581,694</u>	<u>\$ 3,482,269</u>	<u>7.6%</u>
<b>Funds Recap:</b>					
Total General Fund	\$ 36,708,173 <sup>(A)</sup>	\$ 38,032,443	\$ 40,966,975	\$ 2,934,532	7.7%
Total Special Fund	<u>5,078,031</u>	<u>8,066,982</u> <sup>(B)</sup>	<u>8,614,719</u>	<u>547,737</u>	<u>6.8%</u>
All Funds Total	<u>\$ 41,786,204</u>	<u>\$ 46,099,425</u>	<u>\$ 49,581,694</u>	<u>\$ 3,482,269</u>	<u>7.6%</u>

<sup>(A)</sup> Reflects County General Funds provided to BCPL.

<sup>(B)</sup> Adjusted for 2 supplemental spending authorizations totaling \$1.0 million not reflected in the Executive's budget documents.

BALTIMORE COUNTY  
FISCAL YEAR 2024 RECOMMENDED BUDGET

**DEPARTMENT OF LIBRARIES (037)**

PERSONNEL DETAIL - FULL-TIME EQUIVALENT POSITIONS
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	FY 2022 ACTUAL	FY 2023 APPROP	FY 2024 REQUEST	NET CHANGE
General Administration	16	19	23	4
Circulation/Information Services	383	379	367	(12)
Customer Support Services	57	57	58	1
Buildings/Vehicle Maintenance & Operation	7	7	7	0
All Funds Total	463	462	455	(7)