

\$1.3 Million Awarded in Planning and Design Grants

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At its January Board Meeting, the Massachusetts Board of Library Commissioners (MBLC) awarded \$1.3 million in planning and design grants to thirteen libraries through the Massachusetts Public Library Construction Program (MPLCP), a state-funded program that works with local communities to build, renovate, and expand public libraries. These [Standard Grants](#) are for municipalities with populations over 2,500 and fall into tiers based on square footage submitted in the MPLCP application: small, medium, and large.

The MPLCP awards grants in two phases: Planning and Design Phase and Construction Phase. All the projects will move through the planning and design phase at the same time, regardless of status. At the culmination of this phase in late 2025 or early 2026, all projects will undergo an independent review of the MPLCP Level of Design. The immediately funded projects that pass the review will be recommended for a construction phase grant immediately. The waitlisted projects that pass the review will be recommended for a construction phase grant as funding becomes available. Funding to support the current grant round is [included in the recently passed Mass Leads Act](#).

MPLCP Grants - Small Tier

Municipality	Library	Maximum Award	Construction Status
Springfield	East Springfield Branch	\$100,000	Immediately Funded
Freetown	Freetown Public Libraries	\$100,000	Immediately Funded
Great Barrington	Ramsdell Library	\$100,000	Waitlisted
Falmouth	East Falmouth Branch	\$100,000	Waitlisted
Berkley	Berkley Public Library	\$100,000	Waitlisted

MPLCP Grants - Medium Tier

Municipality	Library	Maximum Award	Construction Status
Hanson	Hanson Public Library	\$100,000	Immediately Funded
Yarmouth	Yarmouth Town Libraries	\$100,000	Immediately Funded
Montague	Carnegie Library	\$100,000	Immediately Funded

Municipality	Library	Maximum Award	Construction Status
Clinton	Bigelow Free Library	\$100,000	Immediately Funded
Northbridge	Whitinsville Social Library	\$100,000	Waitlisted
Hudson	Hudson Public Library	\$100,000	Waitlisted
Uxbridge	Uxbridge Free Public Library	\$100,000	Waitlisted

MPLCP Grants - Large Tier

Municipality	Library	Maximum Award	Construction Status
Waltham	Waltham Public Library	\$100,000	Immediately Funded

"Libraries are busier than ever assisting people with job searches, teaching residents to use new technology or simply providing the only free space where everyone in a community can continue their education," said MBLC Director Maureen Amyot. "This important work would not be possible without the support of Healey-Driscoll Administration and the Legislature."

Planning and design phase grants for the Standard grant type are 50% of the eligible costs up to a maximum award of \$100,000 and may be used for schematic design, cost analysis of options, site investigation, and project management services.

Twenty-two libraries submitted applications in the 2023-2024 Grant Round, demonstrating the ongoing need to renovate and expand libraries that in many cases were built 100 years ago, before technology and COVID changed the way people live and use libraries. In October, the MBLC awarded [Small Population Grants](#) for municipalities with populations less than 2,500 to [Blandford and Otis](#).

The Massachusetts Public Library Construction Program was first funded by a state bond authorization in 1987. Since then, it has helped more than 250 communities plan, build, renovate and/or expand their public libraries. MPLCP projects are underway in the following communities: Amherst, Deerfield, Fitchburg, Gloucester, Melrose, Sharon, Shutesbury, Swansea, and Westford. Learn more about the program on the [MBLC website](#) and the [Building Literacy podcast](#).

About MBLC

The Board of Library Commissioners (mass.gov/mblc) is the agency of state government with the statutory authority and responsibility to organize, develop, coordinate and improve library services throughout the Commonwealth. The Board advises municipalities and library trustees on the operation and maintenance of public libraries, including construction and renovation. It administers state and federal grant programs for libraries and promotes cooperation among all types of libraries through regional library systems and automated resource sharing. It also works to ensure that all residents of the Commonwealth, regardless of their geographic location, social or economic status, age, level of physical or intellectual ability or cultural background, have access to essential new electronic information technologies and significant electronic databases.

