



# The MPLCP

**The Massachusetts Public Library Construction Program (MPLCP)** provides funding for major capital projects for public library buildings throughout the Commonwealth.

## Why it's Needed

Massachusetts Public Libraries are busy places. Over 35 million children, teens and adults visited a public library in the past year, more than attended Red Sox, Bruins, and Patriots games combined. Yet many public libraries were built before computers existed and for populations much smaller than the ones they serve today.

## MBLC Expertise

Since 1987, MBLC Library Building staff have guided communities through more than 200 projects. The MPLCP is nationally recognized and serves as a model program for other states.



PHOTO: Woburn Public Library

## Grants & Green Incentive

PHOTO CREDIT: Andrea Bunker

**Planning and design grants** assist libraries in preparing to apply for MPLCP construction grants. Grant funds help with the development of library building programs, project management services, architectural design and engineering services, schematic design, and preliminary cost estimates.

**Construction grants** assist libraries with major capital improvement projects, including new, renovated and expanded library buildings. Funds pay for a percentage of eligible project costs, including the purchase of real property, design and engineering services, project management services, construction, and fixed capital equipment. The average grant award is 45%-50% of the eligible costs. Projects funded by the MPLCP that attain LEED (Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design) certification may qualify for additional funds through the Green Library Incentive.

## Eligibility

To be eligible for an MPLCP grant, libraries must be certified by the MBLC as meeting minimum state standards for public library service and must have a strategic plan on file with the Board. Proposals must be based upon a library building program that has been written prior to retaining an architect. Applicants must have local approval to apply for, accept, and expend grant funds as well as approval for the proposed preliminary design.

## How Grants Work

- Grants are governed by regulations 605 CMR 6, available on the MBLC website at <https://mblc.state.ma.us/programs-and-support/construction/background.php>
- On average, the state grant is 45%-50% of the total eligible project costs. Communities typically raise the remainder of the funding through fundraising, bonding and municipal debt exclusion
- Once the MBLC awards a provisional grant award, the municipality has six months to secure local funding and sign a contract
- Grant funds are disbursed equally over five fiscal years and as designated milestones are reached

*continued*



PHOTO: Stoughton Public Library



PHOTO: Monterey Public Library

### **James Lonergan**

Director

617-725-1860, x222

(in Massachusetts)  
800-953-7403, x222

James.Lonergan@state.ma.us

### **Mary Rose Quinn**

Head of State Programs &  
Government Liaison

617-725-1860, x220

(in Massachusetts)  
800-953-7403, x220

Maryrose.Quinn@state.ma.us

	Waitlisted Libraries	Grant Award
1	East Bridgewater	\$7,710,780
2	Amherst	\$13,871,314
3	Melrose	\$7,993,290
4	Westborough	\$9,403,090
5	Deerfield	\$3,944,338
6	Gloucester	\$9,030,047
7	Seekonk	\$7,322,855
8	Westford	\$7,851,994
9	Grafton	\$7,435,041
10	Orange	\$5,218,803
11	Fitchburg	\$12,449,949
12	Lynnfield	\$8,193,792
13	Boston – Dudley Square Branch	\$5,597,374
14	Dighton	\$4,099,212
15	Cambridge – Valente Branch	\$3,879,407
16	Brewster Ladies' Library	\$4,655,737
17	Swansea	\$6,875,844

### **Raise the Annual Cap**

If the annual capital budget stays at \$20 million and remaining projects go forward into construction, the last project on the waiting list will be funded in 2028, completed in 2033.

**The MBLC is asking to raise the cap to \$25 million starting in FY21 to shorten the process by three years. For FY20, the cap remains at \$20 million.**

### **Funding for New Grant Round**

The current bond authorization will fund all waitlisted libraries, but it is not enough to run a new grant round. For a Planning and Design grant round and a Construction grant round, an additional \$100 million is needed. There are currently an estimated 42 libraries interested in a future grant round.

### **Program Changes**

MBLC staff are currently working on changes to the program that will shorten future waitlists, make the program more competitive, and address sustainability.

**For more information, please see: [mblc.state.ma.us/programs-and-support/construction/](https://mblc.state.ma.us/programs-and-support/construction/)**



**Massachusetts Libraries**

BOARD OF LIBRARY COMMISSIONERS  
Massachusetts Public Library Construction Program