

Over \$50 million in Awarded in Library Construction Grants

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At its July 7 board meeting, the Massachusetts Board of Library Commissioners (MBLC) awarded seven communities Provisional Construction Grants through the state-funded Massachusetts Public Library Construction Program (MPLCP). The grants provide crucial funding to local libraries enabling them to meet the growing demand for services and are part of the Baker-Polito Administration's commitment to ensuring that all the residents of the Commonwealth have equal access to information, technology, resources, and programming.

"Libraries even the playing field. Building libraries transforms communities and transforms lives," said MBLC Chair Debby Conrad. "We are grateful to the Governor and Lt. Governor for their continued support of the Commonwealth's libraries. The ongoing construction projects happening across the state and the recent increase to the library construction spending cap will strengthen libraries for decades to come."

The MBLC recently received an [increase in construction bond cap](#) funding, making it possible for the Commissioners to award provisional grants and cut the [waitlist for funding](#) in half. The average grant award is 45-50% of the estimated eligible costs with the remaining cost incurred by the municipality. During the next six months, grant recipients will work with their communities to secure the local match funding necessary to accept their grants.

Communities receiving grants are as follows:

Municipality	Library	Grant Award
Westborough	Westborough Public Library	\$ 9,403,090
Deerfield	Tilton Library	\$ 3,944,338
Gloucester	Sawyer Free Library	\$ 9,030,047
Seekonk	Seekonk Public Library	\$ 7,322,855
Westford	J.V. Fletcher Memorial Library	\$ 7,851,994

Grafton	Grafton Public Library	\$ 7,435,041
Orange	Wheeler Memorial Library	\$ 5,218,804
TOTAL		\$ 50,206,168

The MBLC also offers Green Library Incentives which offset the cost of incorporating environmentally friendly and energy-efficient systems in library building projects. Projects that attain the U.S. Green Building Council’s LEED (Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design) certification will receive 2-3.5% of the grant award in additional state funds administered by the MBLC. Commissioners authorized Library Green Incentives totaling \$1,153,288, to the following five libraries upon their receipt of LEED certification: Tilton Library (Deerfield), Sawyer Free Library (Gloucester), Seekonk Public Library, Grafton Public Library, and Wheeler Memorial Library (Orange).

Seven libraries remain on the waitlist. The timeline for funding them depends on whether the increased cap is maintained and whether all provisional grant awardees are able to move forward with projects.

The MPLCP was first funded by a state bond authorization in 1987. Since then, it has helped more than 250 communities plan, build, renovate and expand their public libraries. MPLCP projects are currently underway in the following communities: Amherst, Greenfield, Marlborough, Melrose, Sharon, and Sherborn. Projects in Erving, Grafton, Hadley, Littleton, Medford, Norwell, and Roxbury were recently completed. 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.

