



MINNESOTA LIBRARY
ASSOCIATION

February 17, 2025

Senator Sandra Pappas
Chair, Senate Capital Investment Committee
95 University Avenue W.
Minnesota State Bldg., Room 2113
St. Paul, MN 55155

RE: Support for Library Construction Grants

Chair Pappas and members of the Senate Capital Investment Committee,

On behalf of the Minnesota Library Association (MLA) and the Council of Regional Public Library System Administrators (CRPLSA), thank you for your strong support and advocacy for public libraries. In particular, thank you for your support of the Library Construction Grant program. As you are aware, public library buildings are a vital part of a community's social infrastructure. Currently, a need of over \$187M in renovation and construction projects has been identified across the state. In 2025, MLA is requesting \$10M in capital investment funding for the program with a cap of \$2M per grant to assist with these projects. Your support of bonding dollars for the construction and remodeling of public library buildings through the State's authorized matching program is essential in ensuring that all Minnesotans have access to safe, accessible, and welcoming spaces for education and enrichment.

Since 1995, over 150 library projects have benefited from the Library Construction Grant program. Grants ranging from \$3,000 to \$1M allowed for the renovation of current spaces, provided ADA accessibility, and completed new construction projects. Recently:

- By expanding a large meeting room and adding an outdoor space for performances, the Dakota County Library was able to boost the social and educational infrastructure of the Hastings community, made possible by a \$300,000 library construction grant for the Pleasant Hill Library in 2019.
- In 2021, a library construction grant of \$729,102 was awarded to the City of Howard Lake enabling the construction of a new, 7,000-square-foot library facility. Opening in August 2024, the new building replaced the previous two-story facility located a few blocks away, which had been in use since 1979, lacking handicap accessibility and dealing with continued issues with water intrusion. The new building is a net-zero facility generating energy on-site using clean renewable resources in a quantity equal to or greater than the total amount of energy consumed.



MINNESOTA LIBRARY ASSOCIATION

- The Mahnomen Public Library saw an increase in overall use following a \$28,750 construction grant awarded to the City of Mahnomen in 2022. The funding provided repairs to the roof and gutter system, replacement of stained ceiling tiles and 50 year-old windows, and the installation of energy efficient lighting. The repairs brought the charming 1937 WPA building back to life and offers community members a greater opportunity for enrichment, entertainment and community gathering.

Because the need is so great, and because investing in library infrastructure results in investment in Minnesota's communities, MLA strongly urges the Senate Capital Investment Committee to provide funding at the highest level of support.

Sincerely,

Sara Swenson

MLA President
Media Specialist
Edina High School

Sarah Hawkins

MLA Legislative Chair
Assistant Director
Anoka County Library

Krista Ross

Chair, CRPLSA
Executive Director
Southeastern Libraries Cooperating

Public Library Capital Needs Identified by the Council of Regional Public Library Systems (CRPLSA) for 2025

Region	Library Name	City	Estimated Cost	Potential State Share	Description
ALS	Coleraine Public Library	Coleraine	\$350,000	\$175,000	Accessibility
ALS	Duluth Public Library	Duluth	\$72,000,000	\$1,000,000	Construction
GRRL	Paynesville Public Library	Paynesville	\$1,500,000	\$750,000	Renovation/Construction
GRRL	Cold Spring Public Library	Cold Spring	\$600,000	\$300,000	Renovation
GRRL	Sinclair Lewis Library	Sauk Centre	\$82,000	\$41,000	Update windows
KRLS	Brainerd Public Library	Brainerd	\$200,000	\$100,000	expansion to the south
KRLS	Blackduck Public Library	Blackduck	\$1,400,000	\$700,000	Renovation/Accessibility
LARL	Crookston Public Library	Crookston	\$500,000	\$250,000	Renovation/Construction
MELSA	Anoka County Library, St. Francis	St. Francis	\$500,000	\$250,000	Renovation
MELSA	Anoka County Library, Crooked Lake	Coon Rapids	\$500,000	\$250,000	Renovation/Accessibility
MELSA	Washington County Library, R.H Stafford	Woodbury	\$16,000,000	\$1,000,000	Renovation
MELSA	Ramsey County Library, Mounds View	Mounds View	\$4,500,000	\$1,000,000	Renovation
MELSA	Ramsey County Library, Roseville	Roseville	\$15,000,000	\$1,000,000	Renovation
MELSA	Washington County Library, Park Grove	Cottage Grove	\$12,000,000	\$1,000,000	Construction
MELSA	Scott County Library, Belle Plaine	Belle Plaine	\$1,000,000	\$500,000	Renovation
MELSA	Saint Paul Public Library, Hayden Heights	Saint Paul	\$6,200,000	\$1,000,000	Renovation
MELSA	Saint Paul Public Library, Riverview	Saint Paul	\$7,700,000	\$1,000,000	Renovation
MELSA	Saint Paul Public Library, Hamline-Midway	Saint Paul	\$8,100,000	\$1,000,000	Construction
MELSA	Dakota County Library - Wentworth	West St. Paul	\$7,400,000	\$1,000,000	Renovation
PCLS	Tyler Public Library	Tyler	\$2,500,000	\$1,000,000	Construction
PCLS	Nobles County Public Library	Worthington	\$1,000,000	\$1,000,000	Renovation/Construction
SELCO	Albert Lea Public Library	Albert Lea	\$2,500,000	\$1,000,000	Renovation
SELCO	Hokah Public Library	Hokah	\$80,000	\$40,000	Renovation
SELCO	Lake City Public Library	Lake City	\$66,500	\$33,250	Renovation
SELCO	Owatonna Public Library	Owatonna	\$350,000	\$175,000	Renovation
SELCO	Preston Public Library	Preston	\$60,000	\$30,000	Renovation - new windows
SELCO	Stewartville Public Library	Stewartville	\$2,550,000	\$1,000,000	Renovation/Construction
TdS	Blue Earth Community Library	Blue Earth	\$10,000	\$5,000	Accessible entrance
TdS	Janesville Public Library	Janesville	\$5,000,000	\$1,000,000	Renovation/Construction
TdS	New Ulm Public Library	New Ulm	\$40,000	\$20,000	Doors & accessible entrance
TdS	Watsonwan County Library-Buterfield branch	Butterfield	\$16,000	\$8,000	Accessibility
TdS	Blue Earth County Library-Mankato branch	Mankato	\$300,000	\$150,000	Renovation
TdS	Winthrop Public Library	Winthrop	\$270,000	\$135,000	Expansion/Renovation
VLS	Douglas County Library	Alexandria	\$17,000,000	\$1,000,000	Construction
Total			\$187,274,500	\$18,912,250	

Additional Projects:

ALS	Eveleth Public Library: New windows and roof.			
ALS	Gilbert Public Library: Repair to accessibility ramp and new stairs into the building.			
ALS	Hibbing Public Library: Restrooms in need of remodeling.			
PCLS	Lamberton Public Library			
SELCO	Van Horn (Pine Island) Public Library : new building or major remodel/addition			
SELCO	Buckham (Faribault) Memorial Library: renovation due to addition of space from current community center (currently on hold, will revisit in 2026)			
SELCO	La Crescent Public Library: new library building			
SELCO	Rochester Public Library: major renovation/addition, new building, or additional building (discovery stage 2024-25)			
SELCO	LeRoy Public Library: renovation - replacement flooring, wall covering painting, electrical			
TdS	Le Center Public Library: renovation in 2026			
TdS	Springfield Public Library: replace carpet in 2028			
VLS	New York Mills Public Library: New roof, windows, doors, insulation, and siding. Possible expansion.			
VLS	Pelican Rapids Public Library: Small addition and entry remodel			