

(\$ in thousands)

Project Title	Priority Ranking	Funding Source	Project Requests for State Funds		
			2024	2026	2028
Library Construction Grants	1	GO	\$ 3,800	\$ 3,800	\$ 3,800
		GF	\$ 200	\$ 200	\$ 200
Total Project Requests			\$ 4,000	\$ 4,000	\$ 4,000
General Obligation Bonds (GO) Total			\$ 3,800	\$ 3,800	\$ 3,800
General Fund Cash (GF) Total			\$ 200	\$ 200	\$ 200

(\$ in thousands)

Library Construction Grants

AT A GLANCE**2024 Request Amount:** \$4,000**Priority Ranking:** 1

Project Summary: The Minnesota Department of Education-State Library Services is requesting \$3.8 million in state general obligation bonds for the library construction grants and \$200 thousand in general fund cash for program administration to be spent over four years. Library construction grants will be distributed statewide through a competitive process and provide funding for library infrastructure to repair, modernize, and construct library facilities.

Project Description

Library Construction grants require a one-to-one non-state match and are awarded in amounts up to \$450,000 for library accessibility projects and up to \$1 million for new construction, repair work or remodeling.

Library Construction Grants leverage state bond funds with local dollars for renovation, construction and improvement projects that extend the useful life of library buildings while resulting in more accessible public library buildings. In addition to ensuring that public library buildings meet Americans with Disabilities Act guidelines, library construction grants result in more sustainable and energy efficient public library facilities and improve library services. Grants are awarded in consultation with the Minnesota State Council on Disabilities. Projects may:

- Remove architectural barriers from a library building or site
- Remediate conditions hazardous to health or safety
- Renovate or expand an existing building for use as a library
- Construct a new library

Depending on grant size, five to fourteen projects receive funding. Since 1994, 170 projects in 67 counties have been supported. Through 2021, the local dollar to state dollar ratio is \$6.27 local to \$1.00 state.

Eligible applicants are regional public library systems, regional library districts, cities and counties operating public libraries that meet the statutory definition of a public library in Minnesota Statutes 134.001.

Project Rationale

Library Construction grants ensure that the public library buildings are updated to reflect energy efficient building standards and Americans with Disabilities Act accessibility requirements. Public

libraries have limited resources for building and construction projects, and the state's contribution through the grant program assures all residents have equitable access to public library services. The state's support is often the impetus that local and/or private funders need to spur involvement.

Demand for Library Construction Grants is persistent. With \$3.951 million available between 2018 and 2021, State Library Services received grant requests totaling \$5.94 million. Informal conversations with cities, counties and libraries across the state have identified approximately 20 library improvement projects with a total cost of well over \$60 million that could benefit from Library Construction Grants.

According to data collected by the Council of Regional Public Library Systems Administrators (CRPSLA), there is currently (2023) \$89,212,500 in public library capital needs throughout the state.

Project Timeline

- *August 2025 Competitive grant round opens
- *January 2026 Grantees notified of application status; MDE executes grant agreements
- *All projects completed within five years

Other Considerations

In many communities across the state, older library buildings are nearing the end of their lifespan and in need of improvements that address energy efficiency and sustainability in addition to accessibility. Public libraries are highly valued community assets, and the Library Construction grant program signals the state's support for up-to-date, energy efficient, safe and accessible buildings that are open to all.

Impact on Agency Operating Budgets

This request has an impact on the Department of Education's operating budget. The project is supported by .10 FTE of an existing staff member who administers the grant application, award and reporting processes. The Minnesota Department of Education requests an appropriation of \$200,000 to be spent over four years from the general fund for grant program administration costs. (This reflects 5% of the grant amount requested.)

Description of Previous Appropriations

2023 \$4.0 million

2020 \$2.951 million

2018 \$1.0 million

2017 \$2.0 million

2014 \$2.0 million (\$877,000 earmarked for specific projects; \$1,123,000 available for competitive grants)

2012 \$1.0 million

2008 \$1.5 million

2006 \$1.0 million

2005 \$1.0 million

2003 \$1.0 million

2000 \$1.0 million

Project Contact Person

Tamara Lee

Director of State Library Service and Expanded Learning Opportunities

651-582-8311

Tamara.lee@state.mn.us