

# LIBRARY CONSTRUCTION AID

## REQUEST: \$175M

### What is Library Construction Aid?

Funds that are allocated annually in the State Budget for the use of public libraries and systems for construction, renovation, rehabilitation, or acquisition of new space. Other eligible or unique projects include broadband installation, emergency generators, and security systems.

### Why is it Important?

- The capital provided by Library Construction Aid enables individual libraries to effectively leverage local funds to fulfil critical infrastructure needs. In this way, the program facilitates the completion of projects that would often not be possible without the additional support that dedicated state dollars provide.
- Left unaddressed, construction needs compound and can ultimately threaten community access to library facilities. Whether a library requires funds for a new roof, an ADA compliant ramp, or broadband infrastructure the purpose of its project is to ensure the continued provision of high-quality services and materials to its patrons.

### Where Are We Now?

- New York State's public library buildings are rapidly aging, with over half of our library facilities over 60 years old. The most recent available data provided by the New York State Education Department documents an existing \$1.75B in capital needs statewide between 2023 and 2027.
- The FY2025 enacted budget allocated only \$44 million for the State Aid for Library Construction Program, approximately 2.5% of current need. Funding has remained stagnant at the current level since FY2019, with a temporary dip to \$14 million in 2020.

### Where Should We Be?

- The New York Library Association is requesting an allocation of \$175 million for Library Construction Aid in FY 2026. This represents 50% of one year of New York's statewide need, the leverage for libraries' local matches.
- Increased investment would allow public libraries to maintain and develop their physical infrastructure to ensure they are safe, accessible, and sustainable for everyone.
- Expanded budgets mean expanded spaces and possibilities that promote literacy, creativity, civic engagement and thriving communities.