



# STRONG LIBRARIES = A STRONGER MICHIGAN

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## MICHIGAN LIBRARY ADVOCACY DAY



TUESDAY, APRIL 16, 2024

MICHIGAN STATE CAPITOL BUILDING

## FACT SHEET - Capital Improvements

Libraries, like other governmental entities, face challenges in making capital improvements to serve the needs of the public. Investing in capital improvements is a critical component of a library's long-term financial health and operational capabilities.

America's aging library infrastructure faces challenges ranging from broadband capacity, skyrocketing energy consumption, mold, and accessibility barriers. Inadequate capital funding has made it difficult for libraries to address such concerns. At the federal level, Congress has not provided dedicated funding for library facilities since 1997. Here in Michigan, the only capital improvement program for all arts facilities is through the Michigan Arts and Culture Council and for the past 10 years, less than \$400,000 out of \$24.3M has been dedicated to library infrastructure. This is not because libraries don't need capital improvements, but because there is also a great need for capital improvements to museums, theatres, music spaces, art galleries, amphitheatres, etc. A one-time investment of \$25-50 Million by the state legislature dedicated to libraries would begin to reverse decades of underinvestment in library infrastructure.

Construction or renovations of library facilities can create more space, reduce energy consumption and preserve our cultural heritage and historical spaces while bringing library buildings up to latest technical standards. Improvements to library facilities could include enhancements to protect health and safety, upgrades to broadband equipment and technology hardware; updates or additional to makes spaces accessible for people with disabilities; abating hazards such as mold and lead; and increases to environmental sustainability, such as energy efficiency. The purpose of investments of this magnitude is to recognize and resolve deficiencies in existing library facilities and anticipate and meet future demand.

**ASK:** MLA is proposing that the Michigan legislature invest \$25-50 Million in a competitive infrastructure grant program to address the expressed need for capital improvements for public libraries in Michigan. The Capital Improvement grant program would provide funding assistance for planning and design, facility improvements and equipment needs.