California State Library to award $172 million in additional facilities improvement grants for local libraries

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[Sacramento, Calif.] – More than $172 million in Building Forward library facilities improvement grants will be awarded to 34 local libraries to address critical maintenance needs, improve energy efficiency and sustainability, and expand digital and physical access in 29 cities across 18 counties, the California State Library announced today.

Seven new libraries will be constructed, 27 libraries will make energy efficiency upgrades, seven libraries will expand or redesign spaces for public programming, and 12 libraries will repair critical roof, foundation, or exterior building deficiencies.

“It’s great the State Library can provide this opportunity for California libraries to address critical maintenance and accessibility needs. The return on investing in local libraries is always big,” said California State Librarian Greg Lucas. “We look forward to receiving more funding to help make more California libraries be what their communities want and need them to be.”

The $172 million is part of $489 million earmarked by the governor and the Legislature to improve libraries in the state’s highest poverty areas. Of the 34 awards in this round, 85 percent improve facilities in communities experiencing poverty rates ranging from 20 percent to 52.3 percent.

Last year, $312 million of the $489 million was awarded by the State Library for 246 projects in 182 cities across 34 of California’s 58 counties. Combined, these Building Forward grants are supporting projects in 278 local libraries in 40 California counties.

An additional $100 million in Building Forward funds has been promised by the governor and the Legislature over the next three years. The State Library will use those funds, as they appear, to support more projects from the applications already received.

Projects the State Library intends to support in this round of Building Forward grants include:

- $10 million to replace the Altha Merrifield Memorial Library in Riverside County.
- $7.7 million for critical maintenance repairs and an expansion of the Oroville Library in Butte County.
- $4.2 million for critical maintenance at the Fresno Central Library.
- $3.9 million for upgrades and repairs to the 107-year-old Melrose Branch Library in Oakland.
- $611,050 for new windows and HVAC system to make the Brawley Public Library building safer and more comfortable for patrons.

A complete list of projects can be found at: 

For more information, please visit the State Library website at
https://www.library.ca.gov/grants/buildingforward

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About the State Library: Established in 1850, the California State Library is the central reference and research library for state government and the legislature. The library collection includes more than 4 million titles, 6,000 maps and 250,000 photographs, and includes an extensive collection of documents from and about the state’s rich history.

In addition to acting as a steward of California’s history, the State Library supports programs and initiatives in California’s local libraries through partnerships and services. The Library has partnered with California State Parks to offer free Parks Passes in public libraries for checkout and with the Dolly Parton Imagination Library to bring every California child under the age of 5 books. The Library supports a variety of workforce development and upskilling resources for all Californians through CAreer pathways in their local public libraries, and building a statewide eBook library with diverse titles in 20+ languages.