

# Sharon Celebrates New Library Construction with Groundbreaking

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On September 22, Sharon residents were joined by state and local officials at 1 School Street to celebrate the groundbreaking of the new Sharon Public Library's construction project. The newly constructed library will be located about a quarter mile from the current library, and more than double the square footage from 10,600 sq. feet to 25,668 sq. ft to support Sharon's projected population growth and a variety of community needs.

"We're here today celebrating this occasion, breaking ground for this building. Think of what [will be] inside these four walls: four walls with the whole world, the entire universe inside. Four walls with creativity, inside. Four walls with freedom, inside. Four walls with community, inside. I cannot think of a better way for the town of Sharon to invest in its future, and its community than by embracing this library," said Senator Paul R. Feeney.

The project is partially funded with a \$7.5 million grant through the [Massachusetts Public Library Construction Program \(MPLCP\)](#) from the Massachusetts Board of Library Commissioners (MBLC). The grant will improve the library's security and building access with full ADA compliance, improved telecommunications, and HVAC systems.

The new location at 1 School Street will also provide onsite parking, something the old library location did not have. In addition to modern infrastructure, Sharon's new public library will include expanded space for patrons, staff and programming, a new teen room, media lab, quiet study spaces and a larger community room.

The new Sharon Public Library construction project may also qualify for a Green Library Incentive Grant following completion of construction if official LEED certification from the US Green Building Council is attained. The Green Library Incentive encourages recipients of MPLCP grants to incorporate green or sustainable building design by awarding an additional 2% to 3.5% of the MPLCP construction grant, depending on the level of LEED certification the project receives.

“Libraries are a beacon for liberty, liberty of expression, liberty of creativity and the liberty of ideas. The library as a gathering place where citizens can come together and learn from each other is a precious and timely gift. Indeed, today you strengthen our very democracy,” said MBLC Commissioner George Comeau.

The MPLCP was first funded by a state bond authorization in 1987. Since then, it has helped more than 250 communities plan, build, renovate and/or expand their public libraries. The MPLCP is currently seeking a new \$150 million bond authorization to support upcoming grant rounds. MPLCP projects are underway in the following communities: Amherst, Deerfield, Fitchburg, Gloucester, Marlborough, Melrose, Sharon, Shutesbury, Swansea, and Westford. Projects in Greenfield and Sherborn were recently completed. Learn more about the program on the [MBLC website](#) and the [Building Literacy podcast](#).

## About MBLC

The Board of Library Commissioners ([mass.gov/mblc](http://mass.gov/mblc)) is the agency of state government with the statutory authority and responsibility to organize, develop, coordinate and improve library services throughout the Commonwealth. The Board advises municipalities and library trustees on the operation and maintenance of public libraries, including construction and renovation. It administers state and federal grant programs for libraries and promotes cooperation among all types of libraries through regional library systems and automated resource sharing. It also works to ensure that all residents of the Commonwealth, regardless of their geographic location, social or economic status, age, level of physical or intellectual ability or cultural background, have access to

essential new electronic information technologies and significant electronic databases.