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[Home](#) > SENATOR KENNEDY, LIBRARY OFFICIALS ANNOUNCE STATE GRANTS FOR BUFFALO & ERIE COUNTY LIBRARIES

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## SENATOR KENNEDY, LIBRARY OFFICIALS ANNOUNCE STATE GRANTS FOR BUFFALO & ERIE COUNTY LIBRARIES

BUFFALO, N.Y. – Senator Timothy M. Kennedy, a member of the Senate Committee on Libraries, announced a significant state investment in local libraries Thursday at the Downtown Central Library. Joined by library officials and fellow state lawmakers, Senator Kennedy announced the state has directed \$617,970 in construction and improvement grants to the Downtown Central Library, as part of the overall award of \$740,000 to a total of four libraries in the Buffalo & Erie County Public Library System.

The State Legislature approved \$14 million in library construction grants to be awarded statewide through the Office of the New York State Library within the State Education Department. Of the \$14 million awarded, the Downtown Central Library received the third largest grant award of any individual library in the entire state.

Buffalo's Central Library, located in Lafayette Square, will use the grant funding for energy-saving improvements, asbestos abatement and space reconfiguration. The funds will also go toward security enhancements, as well as increasing the effectiveness of library services and more efficiently utilizing the building for collaborative partnerships.

West Seneca Public Library, Eden Library and Aurora Town Library also received State Library Construction grants.

"We are so pleased to be in the top tier of funding for this year's statewide Construction Grant awards," said Mary Jean Jakubowski, director of the Buffalo & Erie County Public Library System. "Last year alone, there were more than 475,000 visits to Central Library and more than 3.6 million system wide. Everyone is always welcome here. This Library is truly the hub of downtown Buffalo so the community is the real benefactor. Cost savings, energy-efficient improvements and exciting plans for flexible reuse of nearly 26,000 square feet of library space means additional opportunities for the library to provide enhanced services and programming to patrons."

"Public libraries are an important part of every community, especially during times of economic hardship when we rely on our libraries for services to help us get back on our feet," said Senator Kennedy. "In recent years, more and more people have started using their local libraries to connect with resources to rebuild their careers and their community. This State Construction Grant will not only help the Library System reduce their energy costs, improve efficiency and maintain long-term viability, it will also encourage Western New Yorkers to participate in education, research and innovation – which is exactly what we need to grow our economy."

As a member of the Libraries Committee, Senator Kennedy has been a vocal advocate for local libraries, citing their impact on our community and economy. The Senate Select Committee on Libraries focuses its work on state initiatives and legislation to promote and address the needs of libraries.

"This funding will be a huge shot in the arm for the Central Library and all library users," said Assemblyman Sean Ryan. "This state investment of over \$600,000 will allow the Buffalo Library to modernize, improve infrastructure, and implement cost-saving energy efficiency improvements that will help the library to save on energy costs over the long term."

The state awarded the Aurora Town Library \$108,200 to replace its flat roof and restore its peaked roof. The project will include code-compliant tapered insulation for proper drainage and energy efficiency – which will lead to lower energy costs and increase resource conservation.

West Seneca Public Library will receive \$8,332 in state funds for sidewalk rehabilitation. A total of 2,100 square feet of sidewalk will be replaced to ensure all who use the library can safely enter and exit the facilities. A special focus will be placed on improving handicapped accessibility.

The Eden Library will receive \$4,847 from the state for a project similar to work planned for West Seneca. Cracked, uneven sidewalks will be replaced at the north, south and main entries. This project also includes parking lot safety improvements, specifically the replacement of crumbling curbs.

To learn more about the Library System visit, [www.BuffaloLib.org](http://www.BuffaloLib.org)

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Buffalo & Erie County Public Library \* 1 Lafayette Square \* Buffalo, NY 14203 \* (716) 858-8900 \* Fax: (716) 858-6211  
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