



NEWS RELEASE

For Immediate Release: August 14, 2023

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ICfL Announces +\$3.25 Million in Facilities Grants to Idaho Libraries

BOISE, Idaho --The Idaho Commission for Libraries (ICfL) announces the award of more than \$3.25 million to 15 public libraries in Idaho through its Facilities Improvement Grant. Funding was made available from the U.S. Department of the Treasury's Capital Projects Fund.

The projects range in budget, scope, and size. For example, a few libraries will use the grant funds to build expansions to their existing facilities, and two will build brand new facilities, including in the town of Inkom, which does not currently have any library services.

This level and type of federal funding for libraries is unprecedented. The primary source of federal funding to libraries is the Institute of Museum and Library Services (IMLS), which does not allow its funding to be utilized for library facilities projects.

The selection criteria for this highly competitive grant included the grant objectives and requirements set forth by the U.S. Department of the Treasury. Of particular importance for this funding source was the need for projects to be substantially completed by August 2026, to address a critical community need, and to jointly and directly enable work, education, and health monitoring. The review committee for the grant was comprised of ICfL staff and a director from an Idaho public library (not applying for the grant). Libraries were scored according to a rubric, and final selection of the projects was based on a number of factors, including the total score and how well all criteria were met. To distinguish between viable projects with similar scores and quality, additional consideration was given to geographic representation and distribution of projects throughout the state.

"I am so appreciative of this exceptional opportunity that will allow some of our public libraries to make significant improvements or additions to their facilities on a scale that has never been available before with federal funding," said State Librarian Stephanie Bailey-White. "Staff of these libraries will be able to serve their community members in greatly improved ways, such as through innovations and safer access to and use of their buildings."

The Facilities Improvement Grant recipients are:

Bear Lake County Library District (Montpelier) -- funding amount \$4,800

Funding will be used to create safe, usable parking spaces on the library lot to improve accessibility and safety of parking for winter/year-round access and to resolve roof drainage issues.

Benewah County Free Library District – Tri-Community Library (Fernwood) -- \$500,000

Funding will be used to build a new library to replace an existing structure that is no longer functional nor meets the needs of the community.

Burley Public Library -- \$500,000

Funding will be used for a 1,900-square-foot expansion of the library space and the remodeling of 600 square feet of existing space. The work will bring the library up to current building codes, create a new flexible-use community meeting space, and create two private study/telehealth rooms.

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The Facilities Improvement Grant recipients are:

Cascade Public Library -- \$500,000

Funding will be used to add 1,000 square feet of interior space and 1,500 square feet of usable exterior space. The library will add a dedicated media/telehealth room, kitchen space, and two ADA-accessible restrooms. There will also be a separate children's area.

Clearwater County Free Library District (Weippe) -- \$107,000

Funding will be used to improve accessibility and safety of parking for winter/year-round access; to install a generator to address frequent winter power outages; to upgrade the IT network infrastructure to expand Wi-Fi access; and to create outdoor seating with charging stations for 24-hour access to Wi-Fi.

Eagle Public Library -- \$15,000

Funding will be used to enhance ADA compliance of restrooms and for the purchase of additional library seating to allow for full usage of existing spaces.

Elk River Free Library District -- \$43,000

Funding will be used to address various access and safety issues, including creating ADA-accessible walkways, installing some outdoor roofing/covering to allow for outdoor programming, and addressing the flooding and drainage issues in the parking lot that make it difficult and hazardous to access the library during the winter/inclement weather.

Emmett Public Library -- \$53,000

Funding will be used to improve building access by installing ADA-compliant doors, adding a pergola cover to expand usable outdoor space and improve the usability of the 24-hour holds locker, and installing an awning over the meeting room entrance to improve safety and accessibility.

Garden City Public Library -- \$92,000

Funding will be used to remodel an existing space to create two ADA-compliant private study/telehealth meeting spaces.

Hailey Public Library -- \$50,000

Funding will be used to enclose the current computer lab to better facilitate use of the space and to purchase additional seating for part of the library that is underutilized.

Homedale Library District -- \$19,000

Funding will be used to upgrade an underutilized building to create a community center/program area, upgrade an electrical system, and to purchase additional shelving and a storage shed.

Prairie River Library District - Lapwai Branch -- \$200,000

Funding will be used to repair and rebuild a portion of the library building that has been deemed unsafe and is currently unusable. This will allow the library to reoccupy the full footprint of the building and provide for future expansion of the library.

South Bannock Library District - Inkom Branch -- \$500,000

Funding will be used to construct a new library branch in a community that does not currently have any library access.

St. Maries Public Library -- \$500,000

Funding will be used to enclose a 1,300-square foot open-air daylight basement that will be used as meeting space. It will include ADA-compliant restrooms and a kitchen.

Wilder Public Library District -- \$175,000

Funding will be used to remodel the library's existing meeting space, which will include systems and electrical upgrades; remodel restroom for ADA accessibility; replace the furnace; enclose the entryway for better accessibility; and create usable outdoor space for meetings and programming.

For more, visit <https://libraries.idaho.gov/facilities-capital-improvements/>.

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The Idaho Commission for Libraries (ICfL) builds the capacity of the more than 850 public, school, academic, and special libraries in Idaho to best serve their communities through: statewide programming and resources, like Read to Me and Libraries Linking Idaho (LiLI); consulting; continuing education; partnerships; and aid to underserved populations, such as the visually impaired through the Talking Book Service. For more information, visit: <https://libraries.idaho.gov>.