



EASTHAMPTON
PUBLIC LIBRARY

Easthampton Public Library

Impact of Funding Cuts in FY27



How Easthampton Library Funding Works

- The Library has a different funding model than City departments, combining City support with endowment support, fundraising, and grants to provide public library service.
- **City Appropriation** - Core public funding for library service
- **Supplemental City Appropriation FY24** - a one time \$510,000 disbursement of Cannabis funds intended to support operations while the baseline appropriation was gradually raised, currently invested and on track to provide over \$600,000 of operational budget support over the next few years
- **Library-Raised Revenue** - Endowment support, individual giving, fundraising, and grants
- **Stretching City Funding** - City funding currently covers less than half of the Library's operating budget, with the remainder coming from the endowment, individual fundraising, and foundation grants, but it is the foundation that allows the Library to provide free public services to Easthampton residents. This yearly City appropriation was previously on track for a gradual planned increase intended to bring Easthampton closer to parity with other MA municipal libraries with similar funding structures.

The City currently provides less than half of the Library operating budget, **No other department in the City brings in the percentage of outside revenue that the Library does, with the City spending only about \$17/capita on library services in the yearly appropriation.**

Financial Planning and Library Future

- Over the last few years, the Library and City leaders have been working toward a more sustainable funding path for public library service in Easthampton.
- **A more sustainable operating model** – Reducing the need to spend down the Library’s endowment to cover annual costs
- **A library building that better serves Easthampton** - Planning for a more accessible, cost-effective, and flexible facility
- **A multi-year plan now at risk** - This year’s budget crisis interrupts that long-term effort

Two Budget Scenarios

In either scenario, the Library faces a reduction from the funding level needed to maintain services and continue long-term planning.

If the override does not pass:

- Library funded at the **bare legal minimum** needed to retain certification
- Maintains eligibility for state aid, averaging \$40,000–\$50,000
- Preserves access to shared services such as interlibrary loan, Libby, and other statewide resources
- Reflects longstanding underfunding, because the minimum is based on past appropriations

If the override does pass:

- Library receives **5% above the legal minimum** to retain certification
- Still below the previously planned funding path
- **Still below the FY26 appropriation**

What Our City Stands to Lose

Staffing

- Fewer staff on duty at any given time
- Longer waits for service; less access to on-the-spot tech help, reference, archives, and notary services
- Slower turnaround on administrative tasks

Programs & Events

- Cuts to 900+ free concerts, storytimes, author visits, watercolor classes, craft programs, and Summer Reading for our community
- Fewer community programs overall due to less planning and staffing capacity

Outreach & Partnerships

- No library representatives at community events
- Reduced school collaborations and class visits
- Threatened GoDigital initiative
- Possible end to home delivery service

Digital Resources

- Loss of Ancestry Library and similar databases

Physical Materials

- Fewer new books and DVDs purchased
- Minimal craft supply restocking

The Annex & Meeting Rooms

- Limited availability for the 400+ public and private events hosted annually, including shared space for public groups

Building & Facilities

- Repairs and painting projects on hold; deferred maintenance and possible deterioration of facilities
No furniture upgrades
- Accessibility improvements at both locations postponed—neither is fully accessible to people with mobility limitations

The Library's Momentum—and its Future

- Planning for the new building is at risk without full city funding
- Private and public capital funders require municipal buy-in to commit
- Fundraising will shift toward keeping current services afloat, stalling long-term growth

Next Steps and Cuts

In either budget scenario, the Library faces a significant decrease in planned City funding.

However, if the override does not pass, we will see cuts not only in this fiscal year, but a bleak municipal future going forward, as well as **a significant increase in need for our services, as other departments cut needed supports, an effective unfunded mandate that we will be unable to fully meet.**

Supporting Easthamptoners Impacted by Rising Costs

If the override passes, and even if it does not, we are aware that Easthampton residents will face significant cost increases on multiple fronts, from fuel to entertainment to food.

The Library is committed to using all the resources available to us and all of the collaborations we can organize with City, non-profit, and business entities to ensure that Easthamptoners have a safe, well-cared-for, third space in which to read, research, pursue their passions, handle daily life tasks, and enjoy rich programming that enhances their lives.

Our vision is best served when we provide these services in a fully resourced City environment, but we recognize the hard decisions that many are making, and plan to provide respite, support, and delight.

