Joint Budget Oversight Committee Reallocation Request Dated January 27, 2025
Alternate Project Summaries

Library of the Chathams, Morris County – Bridging Space to Place

Total Project Cost: $4,900,000
Anticipated Grant Award: $2,450,000

Library of the Chathams, a widely used community center in Morris County serving Chatham Borough and Township, is seeking a $2,450,000 State Bond grant for long overdue rehabilitation. The library, modified incrementally over time, has not had a significant comprehensive upgrade in 17 years. Accessibility and space efficiency improvements are necessary to address programming demands and identified community needs. A ventilation redesign is required to alleviate damaging, persistent humidity. This project provides accessibility and safety upgrades; and establishes flexible-use meeting spaces for the community, including a Business Center supporting remote workers and worker training, a STEAM Room supporting engineering/tech education, and an archival History Room for conservation of historical materials. Support for 50% of this project has been committed from the municipalities and local fundraising.

Metuchen Public Library, Middlesex County – Rehabilitation, Restoration and Expansion of the Metuchen Public Library

Total Project Cost: $3,248,980
Anticipated Grant Award: $1,622,990

The Metuchen Public Library Board of Trustees is requesting $1,622,990 to support the rehabilitation, restoration, and expansion of the Metuchen Public Library. Built in 1936, the library has not been significantly renovated in over 50 years. Despite being a highly utilized public facility, limited and rapidly deteriorating functional space, accessibility challenges, and safety concerns due to the existing layout have significantly impeded the library's ability to meet the demands of a vibrant, rapidly growing community, even though the library has continued to serve a growing number of residents annually. The proposed project will remediate existing issues, creating a larger, more modern functional space which includes the addition of a pavilion in the adjoining green-space that can serve the community long into the future.

Rahway Public Library, Union County – Rahway Public Library Improvement Project

Total Project Cost: $2,092,000
Anticipated Grant Award: $1,046,000

The mission of the Rahway Public Library is to foster, enrich, and sustain life-long learning and literacy by providing and upholding the public's free access to vital information, services, and resources in a variety of formats and technologies. In order to fully realize its potential, however, the building is in serious need of improvements, including replacing its HVAC system and lighting, adding more security cameras, and installing a building-wide generator. By addressing these needs, this project will enable the Library to better serve the community by providing a safer, more comfortable, and more resilient setting. Furthermore, the money saved on frequent repairs and temporary solutions will be able to be invested in the Library's dedicated staff and valuable programming (i.e. GED classes, etc.).