

Let's first say - It would be cataclysmic to libraries if property taxes were eliminated. Without this vital source of revenue, public libraries in communities throughout Michigan would let go of their staff members, close their doors, and cease to exist. As locally controlled cultural institutions, most libraries in Michigan are funded primarily (75-95%) through property taxes. For our communities to be welcoming and vibrant places to live, work, visit, and learn we must recognize that this investment is critical and essential for every resident.

With over 7,700 employees working at the 397 library systems in Michigan, libraries are one of the last free and open public institutions in the heart of every single community in Michigan. Over 50% of Michiganders hold library cards and consistently and enthusiastically value their libraries by voting to support them through local millages (some in perpetuity.) Libraries are more than just books and are constantly evolving to provide the community with free and open access to information – offering access to high-speed internet, employment assistance, workspace, early literacy support, and more.

Not only would libraries be affected, but the entire fabric of our communities would be decimated as well...local government, police, fire, schools, jail, downtown development authorities, community colleges, parks and recreation, and the list goes on and on. The snowball effect and tremendous loss of jobs of this chaos would devastate our communities. Based on information from the Detroit Free Press article on February 19, an \$18 billion dollar hole would be created in state and local finances and there is no indication of how any of these critical and vital services would be funded.

MLA is actively engaged in conversations about the devastation this would harbor with others including the Michigan Municipal League. We will keep everyone informed as more information becomes available.