

**THE CONDITION OF U.S. LIBRARIES:
PUBLIC LIBRARY TRENDS, 2002-2009**

[Prepared December, 2009 for ALA Senior Management and Unit Managers]

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About the Report

The full report – *The Condition of U.S. Libraries: Trends, 1999-2009* - highlights US economic trends (2009) and summarizes trends in public, school and academic libraries during the current decade for: Number of Libraries and Population Served, Expenditures, Staffing, and Services. The compilation was prepared in December 2009 for the staff and member leaders of the American Library Association to support its planning activities.

This report is excerpted from the full report and presents the economic landscape and detail about public libraries.

Data are compiled from multiple sources:

- Data about public libraries are derived from national surveys administered by two federal agencies: the National Center for Education Statistics (NCES) (<http://nces.ed.gov/surveys/libraries/>) and the Institute of Museum and Library Services (IMLS) (www.ims.gov hosted by <http://harvester.census.gov/ims/index.asp>). The public library survey is now conducted by IMLS and is annual. Responses to the public library survey are coordinated by each state library and reflect the universe of eligible public libraries (legally established, funded, staffed, with a collection, and open to the public).
- Public library funding data are augmented with more recent findings reported through the ALA *Public Library Funding & Technology Access Study* (www.ala.org/plinternetfunding).

In addition, a brief overview of the 2008-2009 economic downturn and its impact on state fiscal planning are provided.

America values its libraries

The American Library Association (ALA) conducts surveys of the public at various intervals to understand household use of public libraries and perceived value of public, school and academic libraries. Most recently, in a January 2009 telephone household survey, KRC Research¹ found that:

American households reported using their public libraries more often in 2009

- 25.4 million Americans reported using their public library more than 20 times in the last year, up from 20.3 million households in 2006.
- The average number of in-person public library visits rose to 12.7 in 2009 from 9.1 in 2006.
- Use of the public library by computer (from home, work or school) doubled from 2006 to 2009 (6 times per year, up from 2.9 times in 2006).
- 22% of Americans visited their public library by computer from home, office or school more often in the last 6 months. This percentage may seem low, but it is about 51 million Americans.

After borrowing library materials, Americans rank entertainment (35%) and educational purposes, such as for homework or taking a class (28%), as the top two reasons for using the library. That's more than 145.8 million Americans.

The value of libraries to American households is unquestioned. A survey conducted in 2009 by KRC Research for the ALA found that

- More than 217 million Americans agree or strongly agree that the public library improves the quality of life in their community. This is an increase from 209.8 million reported in 2006. (KRC 2009)
- More than 222 million Americans agree or strongly agree that because it provides free access to materials and resources, the public library plays an important role in giving everyone a chance to succeed. This is an increase from 216.6 million reported in 2006. (KRC 2009)

When asked about school libraries

- 97 percent of Americans agree (224.5 million) that school library programs are an essential part of the education experience because they provide resources to students and teachers.
- 96 percent of Americans agree (222 million) that school libraries are important because they give every child the opportunity to read and learn.

¹ <http://www.krcresearch.com/default.htm>

- 92 percent of Americans agree (213 million) that school library programs are a good value for the tax dollar.

When asked about academic libraries

- 95 percent of Americans (220 million) agree that college and research libraries are an essential part of the learning community.
- 97 percent of Americans (224.5 million) agree that college and research libraries connect users with a world of knowledge.

The economic downturn: an overview

The economic downturn that began in 2008 has had significant impact on public and private institutions, among them libraries. The full impact is difficult to articulate and the data challenging to assemble. What we do know is that flat funding has been an obstacle – perhaps even a chronic problem - for many libraries this entire decade. A 2006 ALA survey exposed the level funding trend, with public libraries reporting that level (flat) funding had been a challenge as early as 2003.² A 2009 survey conducted as part of the *Public Library Funding & Technology Access Study* revealed a worsening of library funding – about 20 percent reported flat funding continuing in FY2010 and a majority reported budget reductions, about 20 percent reported 5-to-10 percent reductions in FY2010 from FY2009.

As communities and academic campuses develop future fiscal plans it is clear that public, academic and school libraries are visibly hard hit. In fall 2009 report prepared by the Center on Budget and Policy Priorities, 34 states had reported cuts to higher education, which will impact academic libraries and 25 states had cut funding to K-12, which will impact school libraries. Many organizations and government agencies are grappling with the impact of the economic downturn and a few reports are of particular note.

A recent report from the Center on Budget and Policy Priorities, a non-partisan organization focusing on policy affecting low- and moderate-income families and individuals, issued a series of reports in October 2009 regarding state budget reductions and projected mid-year shortfalls in 2010. Two reports of note include:

- An Update on State Budget Cuts: At Least 41 States Have Imposed Cuts That Hurt Vulnerable Residents; Federal Economic Recovery Funds and State Tax Increases Are Reducing the Harm. Nicholas Johnson, Phil Oliff, and Jeremy Koulish (October 20, 2009) <http://www.cbpp.org/cms/index.cfm?fa=view&id=1214>
- Recession Continues to Batter State Budgets; State Responses Could Slow Recovery. Elizabeth McNichol and Nicholas Johnson (October 20, 2009) <http://www.cbpp.org/cms/?fa=view&id=711>

The following slides present the number of states reporting budget cuts by the group or sector impacted, including

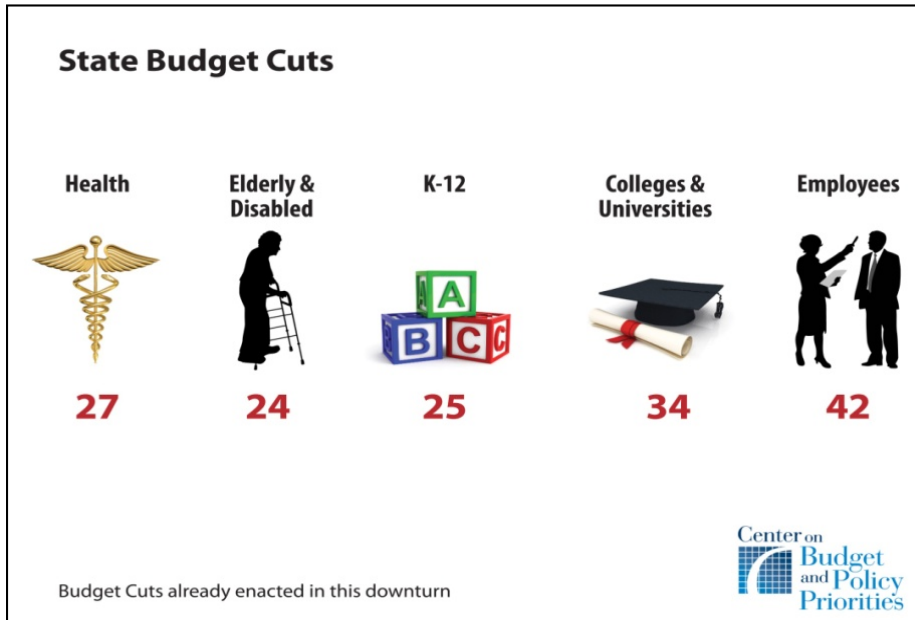
- health
- elderly & disabled
- K-12
- colleges & universities
- employees

and are excerpted from a presentation made by Phil Oliff and Mike Leachman of the Center on Budget and Policy Priorities and were distributed through a Committee for Education Funding (CEF) ALERT, “Center on Budget and Policy Priorities (FCM Notes)” (2 November 2009).³ All slides are the property of

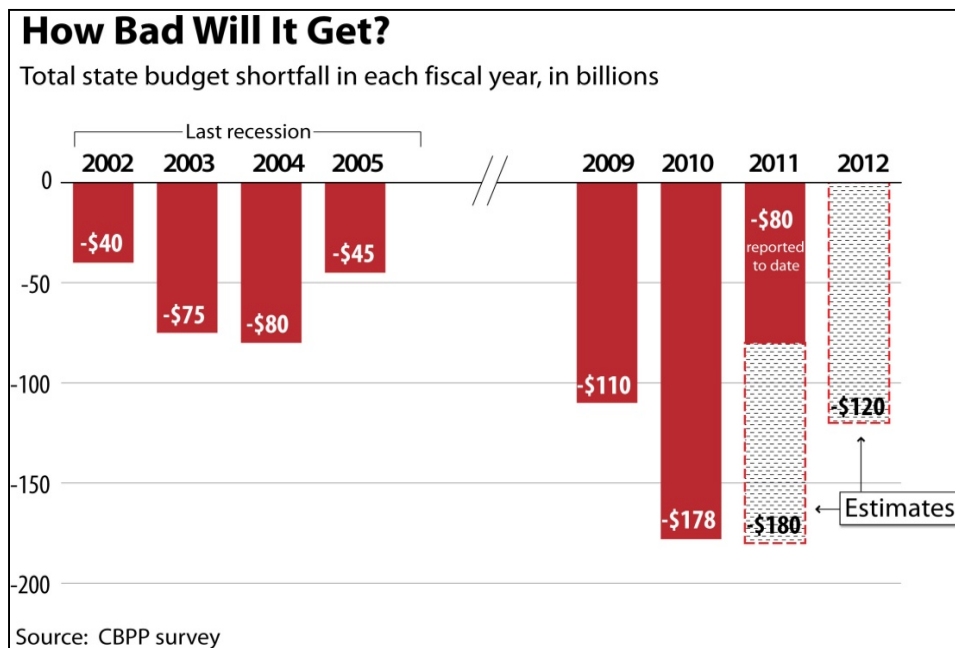
² (<http://www.ala.org/ala/research/librarystats/public/fundingissuesinuspls.pdf>).

³ The Committee for Education Funding (<http://www.cef.org/>) is a member organization working to improve federal funding for the US education system.

the Center on Budget and Policy Priorities (<http://www.cbpp.org/>) and links to individual slides are noted as available.



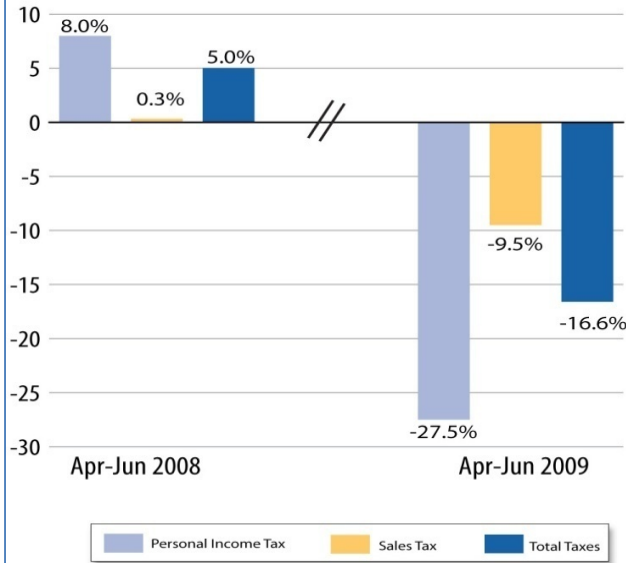
Source: (CBPP 2009) <http://www.cbpp.org/cms/index.cfm?fa=view&id=1214>



Source: (CBPP 2009) <http://www.cbpp.org/cms/?fa=view&id=711>

State Tax Revenues are Falling.

Percent change in April to June state revenue collections, 2007-2008 and 2008-2009.

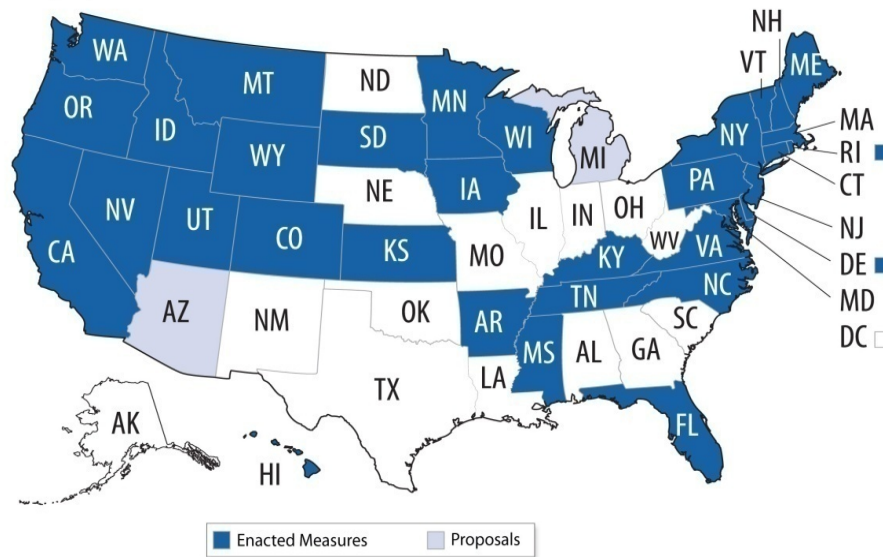


Source: The Census Bureau.



2009 State Tax Increases.

Lawmakers in 35 states have enacted or are considering proposals to increase taxes and fees.



Note: Status as of October 14, 2009.

Source: (CBPP 2009) <http://www.statefiscal.org/>

Summary of Library Trends

Understanding the condition of libraries is critical to interpreting the impact of the current economic downturn for communities, states and the nation. The charts and graphs that follow present the most currently available national trend information for public libraries. Figures are presented as whole numbers, percentages are up to two decimal points, and rounding may have occurred. Each section includes charts/graphs for:

(1) Numbers of Libraries and Populations Served - Basic metrics about the library environment are presented. This includes the number of library outlets serving the public.

(2) Expenditures - Basic metrics about library finance are presented. This includes total operating expenditures and expenditures by type for libraries serving the public.

(3) Staffing - Basic metrics about the library workforce are presented. This includes total full-time equivalent (FTE) staffing and detail by position requirement when available for libraries serving the public.

(4) Services - In this section basic metrics about the library services are presented. This includes circulation, service use (reference, computer, programs and training/instruction) and visits at libraries serving the public.

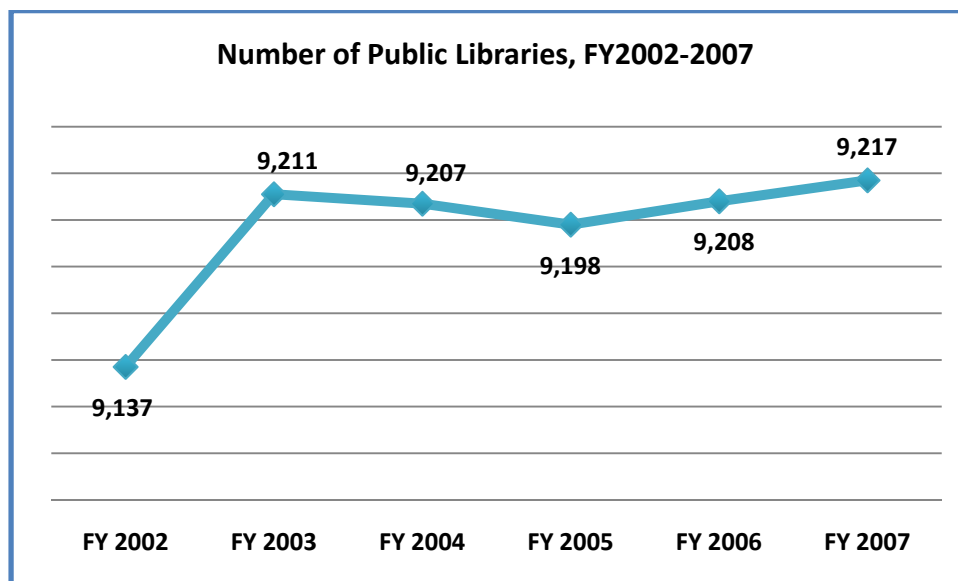
The data presented are compiled from reporting coordinated by two federal agencies:

- National Center for Education Statistics (NCES) – school and academic libraries
- Institute of Museum and Library Services (IMLS) - public library data

Public Libraries

Numbers of Public Libraries and Populations Served

The number of public libraries varies very little year-to-year. The most significant growth occurred between FY2002-2003, a time when the U.S. population saw its largest increase during this six-year period (1.6 percent).



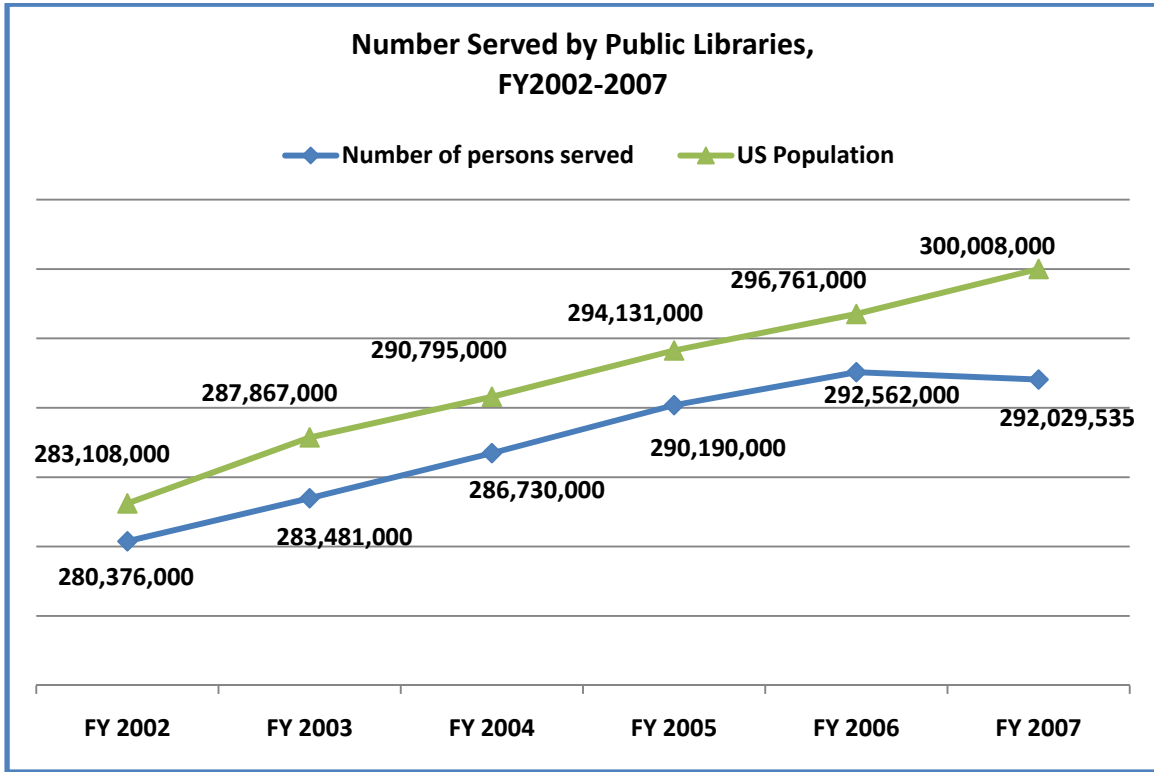
Source: *Public Libraries in the United States* (<http://harvester.census.gov/imls/index.asp>).

The greatest change appears in the number of outlets (central, branch or bookmobile) attributed to each library. With the exception of book mobiles, the net percentage change is less than one percent between FY2002 and FY2007. This detail is presented in the following table.

	FY2002	FY2007	Percent Change
Public libraries	9,137	9,214	0.8%
Total Outlets	16,486	16,604	0.007%
Central libraries	8,986	9,040	0.6%
Branch libraries	7,500	7,564	0.85%
Bookmobiles	873	808	-7.5%

The number served by public libraries and the state populations are determined by each state library. Depending upon the year, between about one and three percent of the total US population are outside a public library service area. However, an individual may pay to use a public library even though their community does not provide tax support for its own library or for one in another community. These individuals are often referred to as non-resident borrowers. Although they may not be reported in the legal service area of a public library, their use is reported in various usage data – visits, circulation, program attendance, etc. Therefore, it is difficult to understand fully the numbers of individuals without

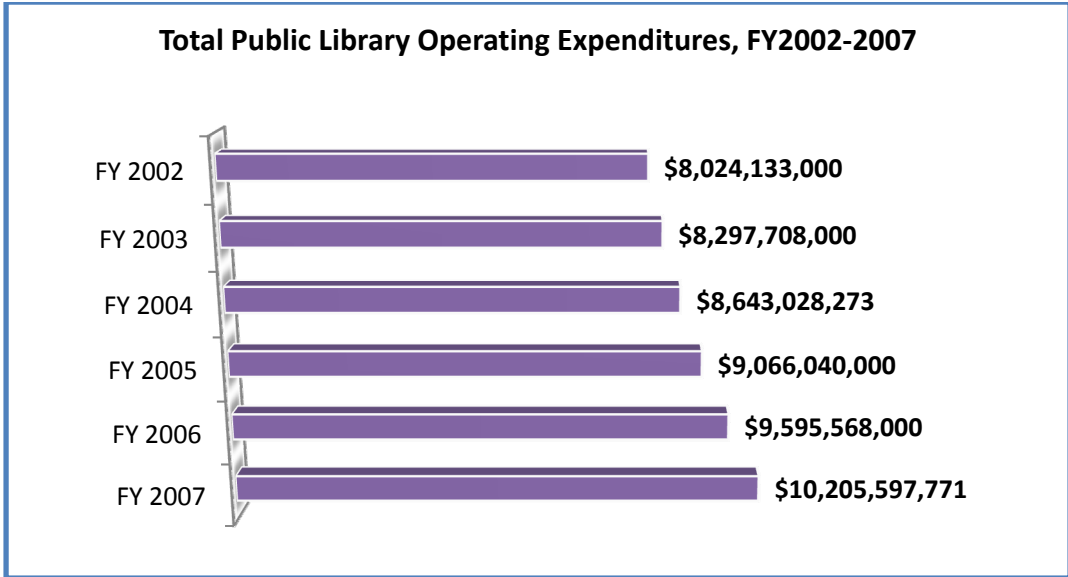
tax supported access to a public library. The following graphic plots the sum of all state populations and the sum of populations served by public libraries for FY2002-FY2007.



Source: Persons served and US population figures are compiled from IMLS/NCES *Public Libraries in the United States* (<http://harvester.census.gov/imls/index.asp>).

Public Library Expenditures

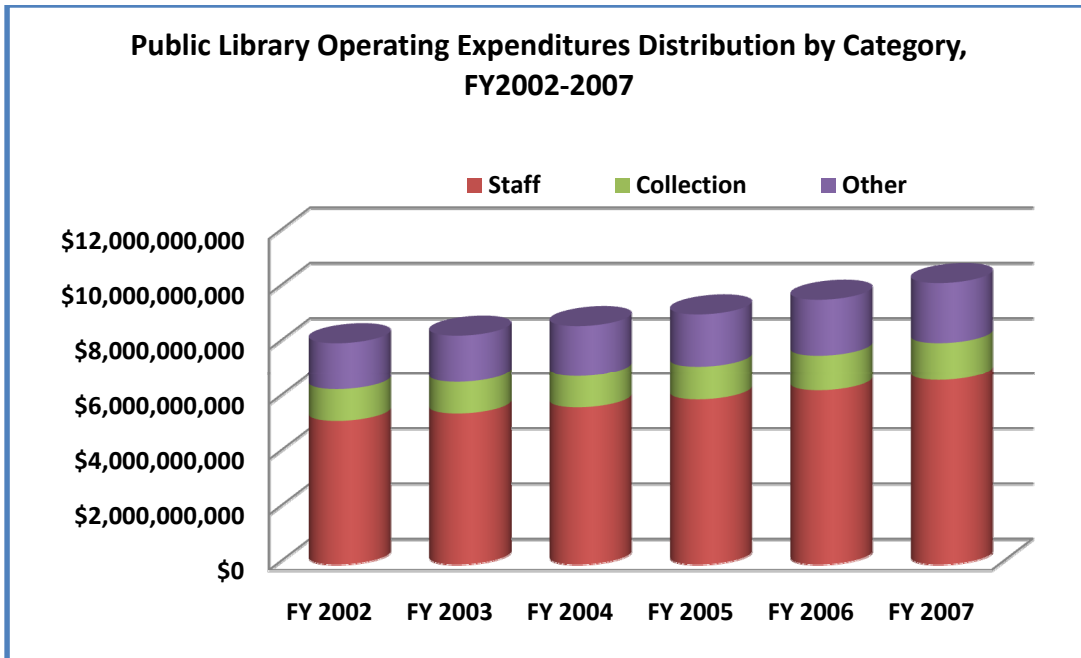
Public library operating budgets are comprised of three tax-supported revenue sources as well as multiple other sources (e.g., fees/fines, donations, local fund raising, and grants). Total operating expenditures FY2002 thru FY2007 are presented in the following bar chart.



Source: *Public Libraries in the United States*, various years (<http://harvester.census.gov/imls/index.asp>).

Total public library operating expenditures change little year-to-year, and typically align with inflation rates (between 3-6 percent annually). Also, larger urban libraries and suburban library systems account for the majority of these increases, while libraries in smaller communities account for far less of public library spending overall and budgets show little change year-to-year. In fact, per capita operating expenditures, in constant 2007 dollars, increased little more than \$5 between FY1998 and FY2007.⁴ In FY2007, the range of per capita expenditures was from a high of \$75.12 (District of Columbia) to a low of \$14.75 (Mississippi). The following bar graph presents the distribution of expenditures by type: staff, collections and other expenditures.

⁴ Institute of Museum and Library Services. *Public Libraries Survey Fiscal Year 2007*. Figure 7. Per Capita Expenditures in US Public Libraries, FY1998-FY2007 (in Constant 2007 Dollars). (http://harvester.census.gov/imls/pubs/pls/pub_detail.asp?id=122#)



Source: *Public Libraries Survey Fiscal Year 2007* and *Public Libraries in the United States*, various years (<http://harvester.census.gov/imls/index.asp>).

Staff (salary and benefits) account for the largest portion of total public library expenditures, followed by other expenditures (programming, utilities, technology and infrastructure, etc.), then collections.

Financial Trends in US Public Libraries, FY2008-2009

The following section highlights finance trends reported by public libraries in the 2008-2009 Public Library Funding & Technology Access Study (PLFTAS), published as *Libraries Connect Communities 3* (www.ala.org/plinternetfunding) and preliminary findings from the 2009-2010 study.

As part of the PLFTAS study, public libraries are asked about the stability of the public library operating budget from year-to-year. Each year the predominant response was “no change.” However, there was a marked shift away from any operating budget increases from 2008-2009. The following tables present operating budget changes reported by libraries for Fiscal Years 2008 and 2009. The second of the tables presents the percentage change in libraries reporting increases/decreases by metropolitan status and poverty.

Evident in the following two charts are the

- Increases in flat funding reported by public libraries in FY2009 from FY2008
- Increased reporting of budget reductions in FY2009 from FY2008
- Decline in budget increases in FY2009 from FY2008

Although more than 40 percent of public libraries reported operating budget increases of up to 4 percent, it is important to acknowledge that those increases barely kept pace with inflation. In addition, 22.9 – 25.9 percent of libraries report no changes in operating budget for FY2008-FY2009. Put plainly,

69.2 percent of public libraries in FY2008 and 67.7 percent in FY2009 saw little or no meaningful increases in operating budgets.

Overall Public Library System Operating Budget Stability, Fiscal Years 2008 and 2009		
Operating Budget	Fiscal Year 2008	Fiscal Year 2009
Increased more than 6%	12.50%	9.40%
Increased 4.1-6%	8.70%	8.60%
Increased 2.1-4%	22.50%	20.10%
Increased up to 2%	23.80%	21.80%
Decreased up to 2%	3.60%	4.50%
Decreased 2.1-4%	2.20%	3.90%
Decreased 4.1-6%	1.40%	2.20%
Decreased more than 6%	2.40%	3.70%
Stayed the same	22.90%	25.90%

Source: Compiled from Figures C38-C39, *Libraries Connect Communities 3 (2009)*.
http://www.ala.org/ala/research/initiatives/plftas/2008_2009/index.cfm

“Ideally, one would expect to see inflationary increases in library operating budgets from year-to-year aligning with the Consumer Price Index. Unfortunately, the data reported by a majority of libraries in this study do not support this pattern. In fact, inflation averaged 2.8 percent in 2007 and 3.8 percent in 2008, and just under 44 percent of libraries report increases greater than 2 percent in FY2008. In FY2009, only 38 percent of libraries report increases at or above inflation. This picture is further complicated by the fact that salaries, health benefits and utility costs are increasing faster than inflation. For instance:

- Premiums for employer-based health insurance rose by 5 percent in 2008, and average premiums for family coverage have increased 119 percent since 1999.⁵
- Utilities prices for heating and cooling increased between 5 percent and 28 percent, with average heating oil costs doubling from 2003–04 (\$903) to 2007–08 (\$1,834).⁶
- Librarian salaries rose approximately 15 percent between 2003 and 2008.”⁷

⁵ The Henry J. Kaiser Family Foundation. Employee Health Benefits: 2008 Annual Survey. September 2008.
<http://ehbs.kff.org/images/abstract/7791.pdf>

⁶ Winter heating costs could rise an average 10.5%. Barbara Hagenbaugh, USA Today, http://www.usatoday.com/money/industries/energy/2007-09-24-heating-oil_N.htm. Data from National Energy Assistance Director’s Association study, <http://www.neada.org>

⁷ ALA Survey of Librarian Salaries series, years 2003–2008. For more information, see <http://www.ala.org/ala/aboutala/offices/ors/reports/reports.cfm>

“It is important to consider the cumulative impact of modest downward shifts in the proportion of libraries reporting increases combined with the modest upward shifts in the proportion of libraries reporting flat or declining operating budgets. Most noticeably, downward shifts occurred in libraries previously experiencing increases in the 2.1 percent-to-4 percent and 6-or-more percent ranges. When the data are viewed by poverty ranges, the rise in high poverty libraries reporting decreases in operating budgets in FY2009 is significant—twice as many libraries as in FY2008 in some cases. High poverty libraries reporting 6-plus percent increases in FY2008 (27.9 percent) dropped to just over 12 percent of libraries in FY2009. Suburban libraries reporting flat funding increased 4.5 percent, up to 23.3 percent in FY2009 from 18.8 percent in FY2008. Under current economic conditions, however, even small increases may be considered something of a victory for public libraries.” (Source: http://www.ala.org/ala/research/initiatives/plftas/2008_2009/sectionssystem.pdf)

Note in the following table that fewer libraries reported increases in almost every metropolitan status category and poverty level – the most notable was the 15.8% decline in budget increases of more than 6% reported by libraries. And, more libraries reported a rise in budget reductions – decreases were reported in each percentage range, the most notable the 7% rise in public libraries in high-poverty communities reporting decreases up to 2%. It is also important to note that increases under 4% are, for the most part, simple inflationary adjustments and do not reflect any meaningful increase in library operating budgets.

Average Percentage Change Fiscal Year 2008-2009 Public Library System Operating Budget Stability by Metropolitan Status and Poverty.							
Operating Budget	Metropolitan Status			Poverty Level			Overall
	Urban	Suburban	Rural	Low	Medium	High	
Increased up to 2%	-1.50%	-1.40%	-2.30%	-2.00%	-1.50%	-4.30%	-2.00%
Increased 2.1-4%	-4.00%	-4.10%	-1.40%	-2.30%	-4.40%	4.20%	-2.40%
Increased 4.1-6%	0.60%	-1.30%	0.30%	-0.50%	2.60%	0.40%	-0.10%
Increased more than 6%	-7.70%	-3.50%	-2.50%	-3.00%	-4.10%	-15.80%	-3.10%
Decreased up to 2%	1.70%	0.60%	0.80%	0.50%	3.20%	7.00%	0.90%
Decreased 2.1-4%	1.80%	3.10%	0.90%	1.80%	1.30%		1.70%
Decreased 4.1-6%	2.20%	1.00%	0.70%	0.80%	1.10%	3.60%	0.80%
Decreased more than 6%	2.30%	1.00%	1.30%	1.00%	3.00%		1.30%
Stayed the same	4.50%	4.50%	2.10%	3.50%	-1.00%	0.70%	3.00%

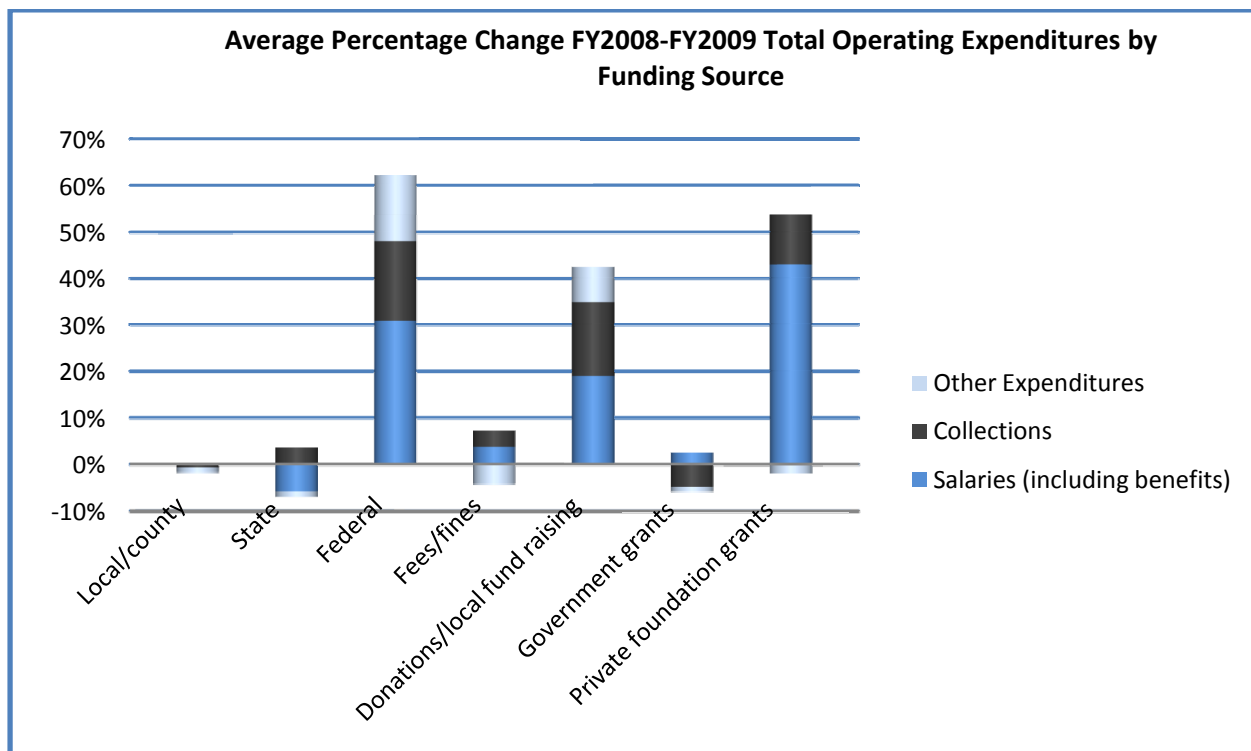
Source: Compiled from Figures C38-C39, *Libraries Connect Communities 3* (2009).

http://www.ala.org/ala/research/initiatives/plftas/2008_2009/index.cfm

When considering the revenue sources from which libraries operate, the following graphic presents the distribution of public library expenditures for staffing, collections and other (e.g., public programming, technology, infrastructure, facilities, utilities, etc.). Non-tax revenue sources include fines/fees, donations/fundraising, government grants, and private foundation grants.

The average percentage change in FY2008-2009 operating expenditures by type (salaries, collections and “other”) and source of funding reported by public libraries are presented in the following bar graph. Reductions in expenditures by source are displayed below the axis line (zero).

Note that no measurable changes were reported in FY2008-2009 expenditures from local funding sources for salaries or collections, however reductions did occur in the use of local funds for other expenditures – these include programs, hardware/software, telecommunications, online catalog maintenance fees, building management and utilities and, sometimes, database subscription costs. Reductions also were reported in the use of state funds for salaries and other expenditures. Increases in use of federal funding sources for all expenditures were reported, the most notable the use of federal funds for staff salaries. This is explained in more detail later in this section.



Library Connect Communities 3, Figure C42 (p. 60) http://www.ala.org/ala/research/initiatives/plftas/2008_2009/index.cfm

Non-tax revenue sources – fees/fines, donations/local fund raising, and grants – are the most unstable of the public library revenue sources and year-to-year fluctuations can be difficult to interpret. However, when viewed over time expenditure patterns emerge that can present a clearer picture of expenditure trends.

The most significant variations from FY2008 to FY2009 were in donations/local fund raising and private foundation grants. Please keep in mind that the total operating expenditure amounts from

donations/local fund raising are modest compared with tax-derived revenue, and those dollars are likely compensating for the loss in local and state revenue. Private foundation grants are typically restricted to specific uses and are of limited duration. However, libraries may be reporting Friends of Library or local private foundation grants in this category as well as awards from national private foundations (such as MacArthur, Gates, etc.). The 40%+Increases in use of private foundation grants for staff salaries/benefits reported by public libraries is troublesome and should be monitored, especially given the modest decline in state support for staffing.

The following figures (C40-C41) from the 2008-2009 PLFTAS report provide detail about operating expenditures at the close of FY2008 and FY2009. Public libraries report spending more than twice the anticipated amount of federal funding in FY2008 than was anticipated last year, up from an average of \$15,532 in 2007-2008 to an average of \$37,750 in 2008-2009. Libraries anticipated further increased use of federal funds in FY2009, estimating an average of \$47,156 or nearly 20 percent more than anticipated in last year's survey. Increases in other funding sources occurred in all categories compared with last year, except in the area of fees/fines used for collection expenditures.⁸

Figure C40: FY2008 Public Library Systems Average Total Operating Expenditures, by Type and Funding Source			
Sources of Funding	FY2008		
	Salaries (including benefits)	Collections	Other Expenditures
Local/county	\$1,019,810 (n=6,791)	\$206,036 (n=5,623)	\$387,445 (n=5,226)
State (including state aid to public libraries, or state-supported tax programs)	\$139,391 (n=1,397)	\$56,476 (n=2,343)	\$60,297 (n=1,688)
Federal	\$10,318 (n=244)	\$6,746 (n=400)	\$20,686 (n=758)
Fees/fines	\$28,028 (n=554)	\$19,598 (1,502)	\$39,573 (n=1,295)
Donations/local fundraising	\$165,614 (n=680)	\$28,397 (n=2,252)	\$67,111 (n=1,876)
Government grants (local, state or national level)	\$65,760 (n=440)	\$13,464 (n=955)	\$28,692 (n=1,142)
Private foundation grants (e.g., Carnegie, Ford, Gates, etc.)	\$253,864 (n=366)	\$38,497 (n=765)	\$36,211 (n=1,720)
Reported average total	\$1,682,785	\$369,214	\$640,015
Reported average percent	62.5%	13.7%	23.8%

Source: http://www.ala.org/ala/research/initiatives/plftas/2008_2009/section/system.pdf

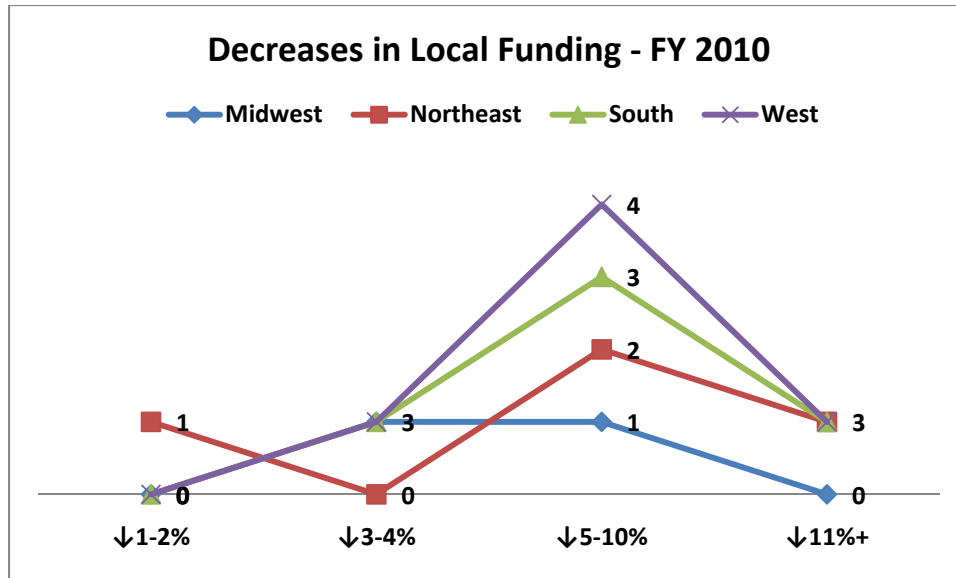
⁸ Libraries Connect Communities 3. Excerpted in part, p.60.
http://www.ala.org/ala/research/initiatives/plftas/2008_2009/section/system.pdf

Figure C41: FY2009 Public Library Systems Average Total Operating Expenditures, by Type and Funding Source			
	FY2009		
Sources of Funding	Salaries (including benefits)	Collections	Other Expenditures
Local/county	\$1,017,687 (n=6,342)	\$205,012 (n=5,260)	\$383,614 (n=4,953)
State (including state aid to public libraries, or state-supported tax programs)	\$131,707 (n=1,316)	\$58,551 (n=2,161)	\$59,674 (n=1,572)
Federal	\$14,926 (n=192)	\$8,142 (n=322)	\$24,088 (n=679)
Fees/fines	\$29,059 (n=514)	\$20,277 (n=1,385)	\$37,922 (n=1,211)
Donations/local fundraising	\$196,880 (n=596)	\$32,923 (n=2,035)	\$72,264 (n=1,734)
Government grants (local, state or national level)	\$67,370 (n=412)	\$12,810 (n=836)	\$28,425 (n=998)
Private foundation grants (e.g., Carnegie, Ford, Gates, etc.)	\$363,068 (n=317)	\$42,610 (n=648)	\$35,582 (n=1,613)
Reported average total	\$1,805,771	\$380,325	\$641,569
Reported average percent	63.9%	13.5%	22.7%

Source: http://www.ala.org/ala/research/initiatives/plftas/2008_2009/section1system.pdf

In a November 2009 survey of Chief Officers of State Library Agencies (COSLA) conducted by the ALA, the public library funding landscape continued to look bleak. When considering current local funding to public libraries, a majority of state libraries reported decreases in the 5-to-10 percent range. Seventeen states (36 percent) reported they believed a majority of libraries in their states had received cuts in funding in FY2010, compared with FY2009. Another 36 percent reported they did not know or there was no majority of libraries reporting a change in budgets. Twenty-one percent (10 states) reported there had been no change between the two fiscal years. Two states reported that a majority of libraries in the state had received funding increases.

The following figure presents decreases in FY2010 local funding by US Census region.



Further, state libraries reported that state funding, usually in the form of state aid packages, has also declined. More than half of respondents (52 percent or 24 states) reported cuts in state funding for public libraries between FY2009 and FY2010. Nearly half of those states reporting cuts indicated the cuts were greater than 11 percent, almost three times the number that reported this was the case in the previous fiscal year. Seventeen percent (seven states and the District of Columbia) do not provide state funding; 23.9 percent (11 states) reported there had been no change between FY2009 and FY2010; and six percent (3 states) reported an increase in funding. One state had not yet begun FY2010.

The following figure presents the number of states reporting percentage changes – increases and decreases - in FY2010 from FY2009 by US Census region (e.g., Midwest, Northeast, South, West).

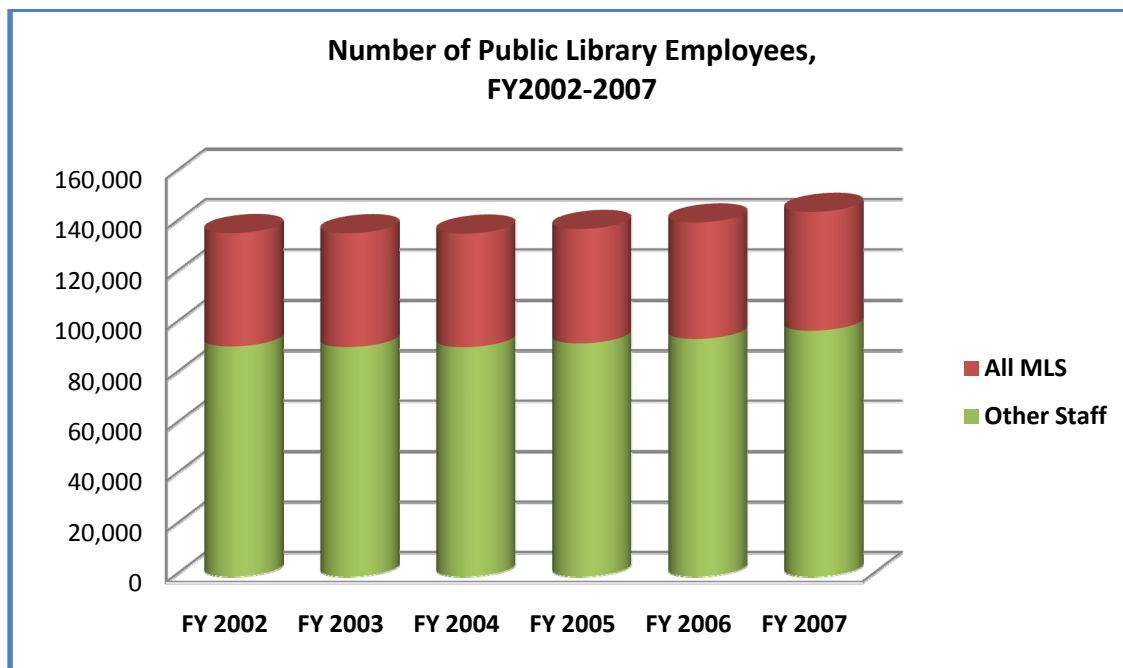
Changes in State Funding to State Libraries - FY 2010											
	<i>Decreases= 24</i>				<i>Increases = 3</i>						<i>Total</i>
	↓1-2%	↓3-4%	↓5-10%	↓11%+	No State Aid	No Change	↑1-2%	↑3-4%	↑5-10%	↑11%+	
Midwest	1	1	0	4	1	2	0	0	1	0	10
Northeast	0	0	2	2	2	2	0	0	0	0	8
South	0	1	6	2	1	3	0	0	1	0	16
West	0	1	0	3	4	4	0	0	0	1	13
Total	1	3	9	11	8	11	0	0	2	1	46
Change from FY 2009	↓1	↓1	↑7	↑7	1	↓6	↓2	↓5	↑2	↓5	

With nearly three-quarters of state library agencies reporting their budgets had been reduced, it is hardly surprising that their ability to support public libraries in their states, including lost staff to provide consultation, continuing education, statewide purchases and more also decreases. This is consistent with a separate survey conducted by the Chief Officers of State Library Agencies in fall 2009, which found that 77 percent (31 of 40 respondents) of state library agencies experienced a budget cut in the current fiscal year.

Public Library Staffing

Since the periodicity of the national surveys varies, data for each type of library reflects the year(s) in which data were reported (fiscal year or school year) and may not intersect chronologically. In some cases positions were not reported in a particular fiscal year and are so reflected, such as with school library state certified staff in the 1999-2000 school year.

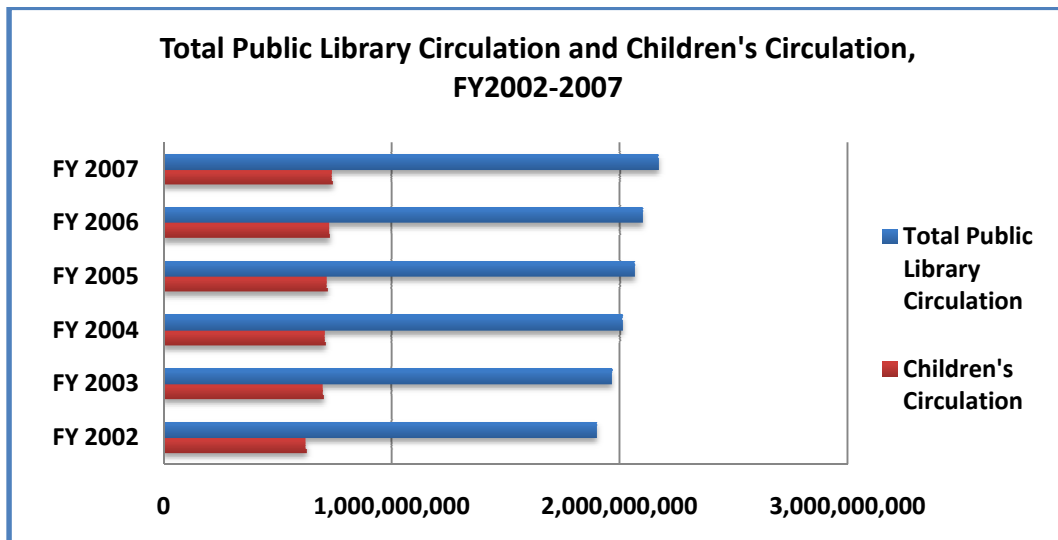
The following bar graphs present library workforce figures. For the most part, library staffing has remained stable during the period 1999-2008.



Source: *Public Libraries Survey Fiscal Year 2007* and *Public Libraries in the United States*, various years (<http://harvester.census.gov/imls/index.asp>).

Public Library Services

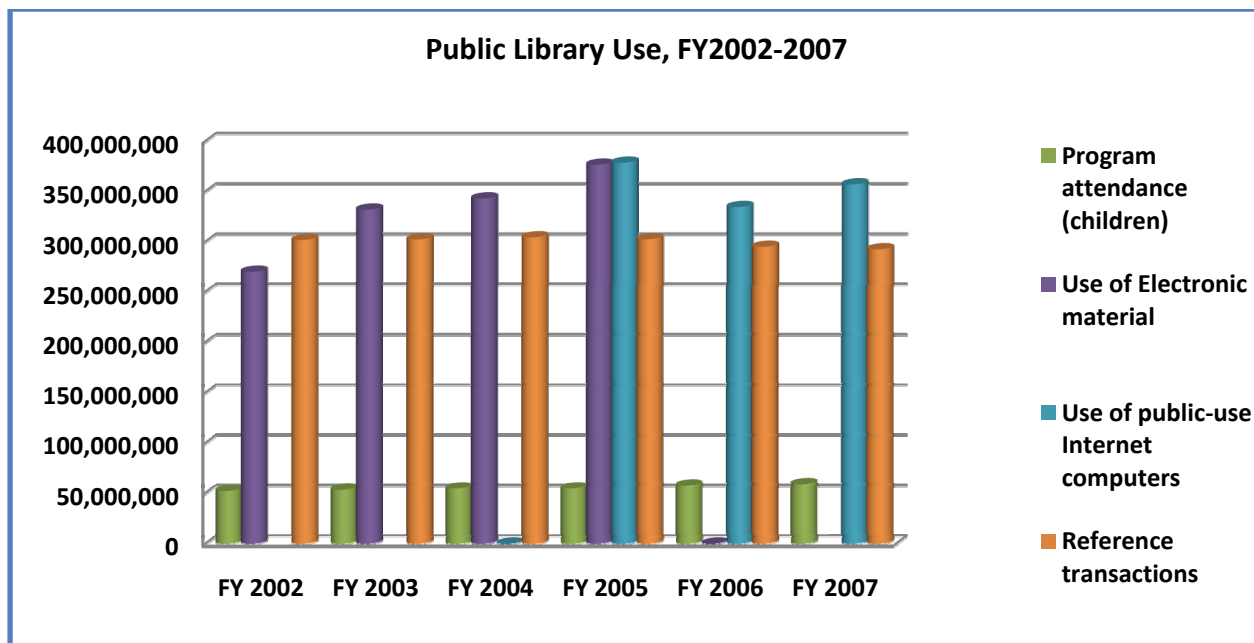
Total public library circulation and circulation of children's materials are presented in the following bar graph. Circulation of children's materials has accounted for between 32.9 to 35 percent of total circulation between FY2002 and FY2007. In FY2007 children's circulation was slightly more than 34 percent. Total circulation of public library materials has grown each year and per capita circulation in FY2007 was about 7.4 items, up from about 6.8 items in FY2002.⁹



Source: *Public Libraries Survey Fiscal Year 2007* and *Public Libraries in the United States*, various years (<http://harvester.census.gov/imls/index.asp>).

Use of public libraries continues to increase year-to-year. The following bar graph presents four service use measures – reference transactions, use of public-use Internet computers, use of electronic materials (e.g., databases), and children's program attendance. If FY2005 both computer and electronic materials use were measured, but in FY2006 electronic materials use was no longer reported.

⁹ Institute of Museum and Library Services. *Public Libraries Survey Fiscal Year 2007*. Figure 1. Per Capita Circulation in Public Libraries in the US, FY1998-FY2007. (http://harvester.census.gov/imls/pubs/pls/pub_detail.asp?id=122#)



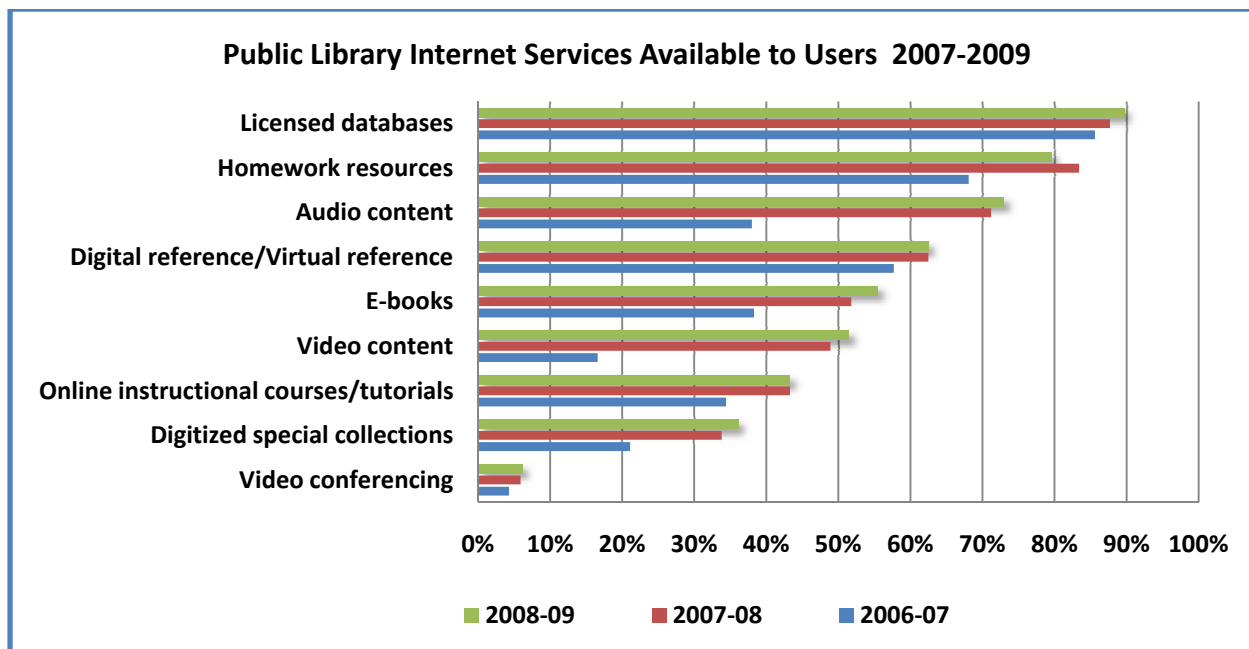
Source: *Public Libraries Survey Fiscal Year 2007* and *Public Libraries in the United States*, various years (<http://harvester.census.gov/imls/index.asp>).

In the November 2009 COSLA survey, thirteen states (28 percent) reported they were aware of public library closures in the past 12 months. Twelve states reported closures of five or fewer libraries; and one state (Indiana) reported more than five closures in the past year.

The 2009 national survey of public libraries (*Public Library Funding & Technology Access Study*)¹⁰ also found a significant increase in the number of libraries reporting a decrease in the hours they are available to serve their communities. Nearly one-quarter of urban libraries and 14.5 percent of all libraries (up from 4.5 percent last year) reported their operating hours had decreased since the previous fiscal year. Nationally, this translates to lost hours at more than 2,400 public library branches.

Although reference transactions declined slightly during between FY2002 and FY2009, there was considerable growth in the use of public Internet computers by library visitors. We have some information about what public-use Internet computer resources are available from data collected as part of the ALA *Public Library Funding & Technology Access Study (PLFTAS)*.

¹⁰ *Libraries Connect Communities 3*. As presented Figure A2. Public Library Internet Services Available to Users 2007-2009; Figure A1. Public Wireless Availability, 2004-2009. http://www.ala.org/ala/research/initiatives/plftas/2008_2009/section1system.pdf

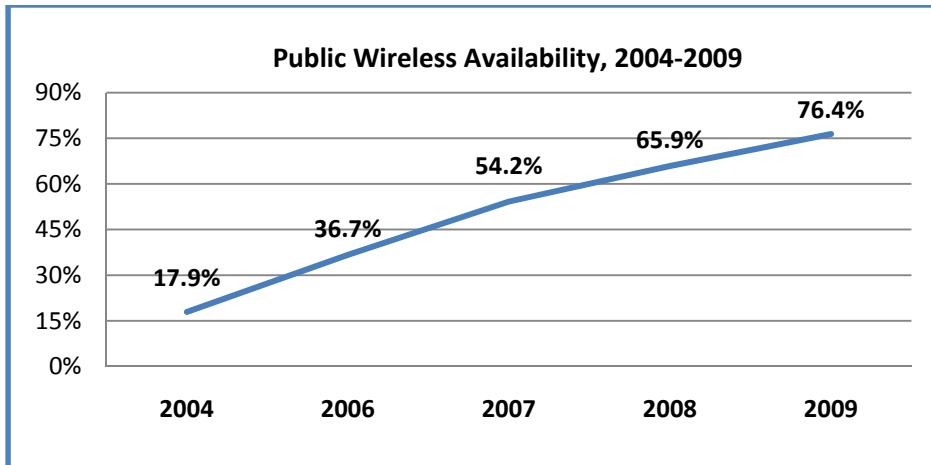


Library Connect Communities 3, Figure A2 (p.5) http://www.ala.org/ala/research/initiatives/plftas/2008_2009/index.cfm

Continuing a trend reported beginning with the 2006-2007 PLFTAS survey, public libraries report an increased range of e-government services for patrons. There was a 23 percent jump in libraries reporting they provide assistance to patrons applying for or accessing e-government services. About 79 percent of libraries report offering this service, compared with 54 percent last year. Two-thirds of public libraries provide assistance to patrons completing government forms. One in five public libraries are partnering with other agencies to provide e-government services, up from 13.4 percent one year ago.

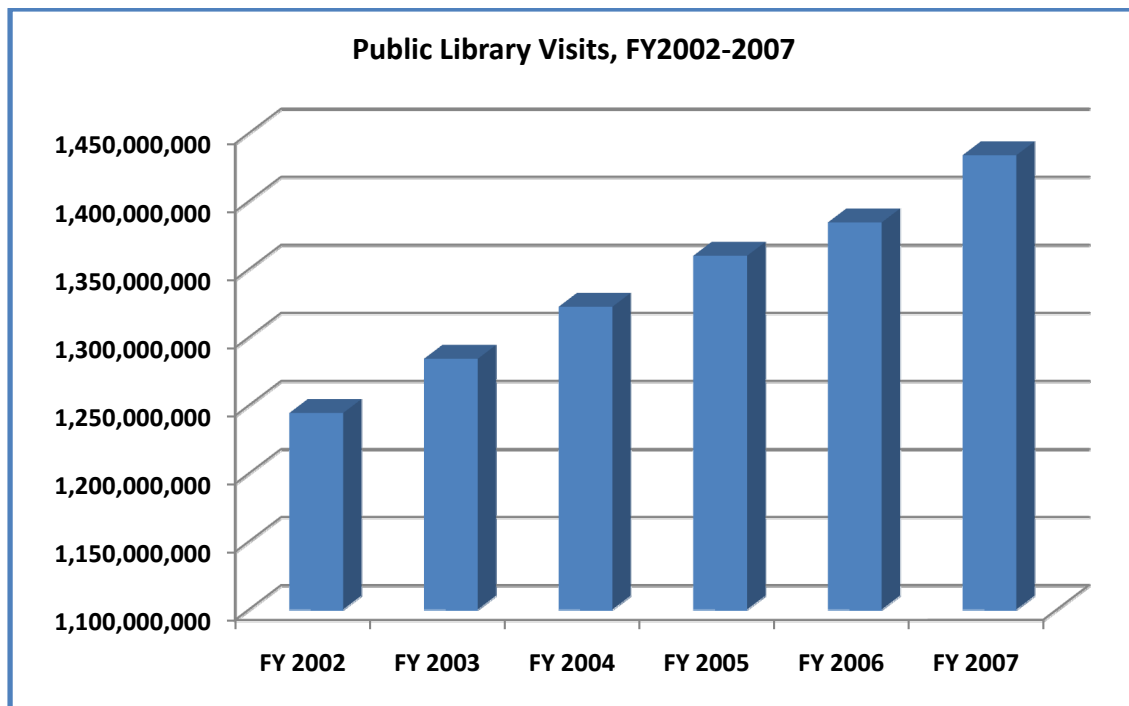
Decreased funding reported for FY2009 and FY2010 also is impacting staffing levels at many public libraries at a time when patron demand is vastly increasing. The number one challenge affecting libraries' ability to help job seekers is a lack of adequate staff to effectively help patrons with their job-seeking needs. Almost 60 percent of libraries strongly agreed or agreed with the statement that the library does not have enough staff to help patrons. About 52 percent agreed or strongly agreed that library staff does not have the necessary skills to meet patron demand; and about 36 percent agreed or strongly agreed the library has too few public computers to meet demand.

From the PLFTAS research we also know from public libraries that wireless Internet access has increased in public libraries. The following bar graph presents that change between 2004 and 2009. Therefore, access to the Internet services is enhanced beyond the public access computers made available to library visitors.



Library Connect Communities 3, Figure A1 (p.4) http://www.ala.org/ala/research/initiatives/plftas/2008_2009/index.cfm

Despite what the media may present about everything being on the Internet and the need for public libraries diminishing, data reported by libraries regarding visits paints a very different picture. The following bar chart presents sums of visits between FY2002 and FY2007. Library visits increased about 3.2 percent in FY2003 from FY2002, and about 3.6 percent in FY2007 from FY2006.



Source: *Public Libraries Survey Fiscal Year 2007* and *Public Libraries in the United States*, various years (<http://harvester.census.gov/imls/index.asp>).

Anecdotally, we know that library visits have increased in the past two years, so we expect even greater number of visits reported for FY2008 forward.

(<http://www.ala.org/ala/issuesadvocacy/advocacy/advocacyuniversity/toolkit/index.cfm>).

Public library visits per capita were about 4.9 in FY2007, up from about 4.5 in FY2002.¹¹

¹¹ Institute of Museum and Library Services. *Public Libraries Survey Fiscal Year 2007*. Figure 2. Per Capita Visits to Public Libraries in the US, FY1998-FY2007. (http://harvester.census.gov/imls/pubs/pls/pub_detail.asp?id=122#)