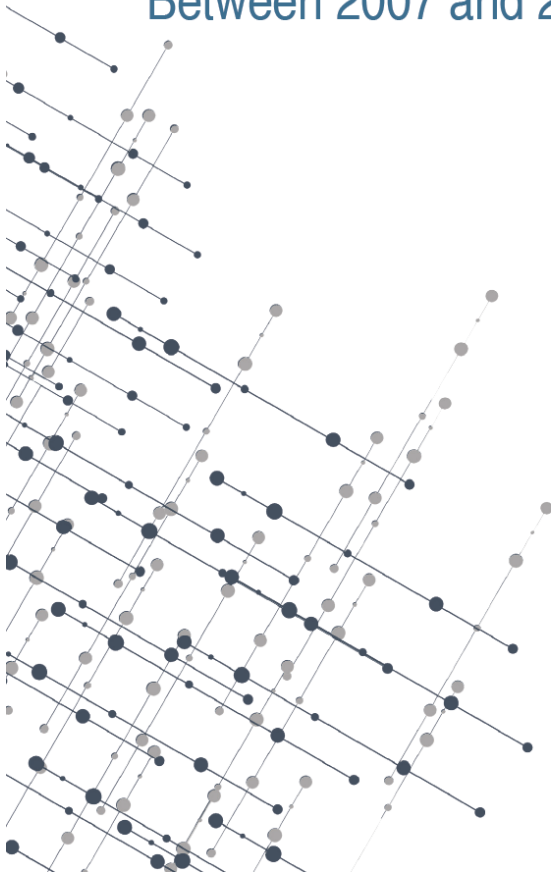


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# To Better Serve and Support Public Libraries

Depository Library Council Recommendation 2 - Spring 2015

GPO's Analysis and Findings on Public Libraries  
Leaving the Federal Depository Library Program  
Between 2007 and 2015



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January 2017, Final Version



FEDERAL DEPOSITORY LIBRARY PROGRAM

<http://www.fdlp.gov>

## Table of Contents

Executive Summary.....	3
DLC Recommendation #2: To Better Serve and Support Public Libraries .....	11
Introduction .....	12
Acronyms .....	12
Data and Methodology .....	13
The State of Public Libraries.....	16
A Focus on Service .....	18
The FDLP and Public Libraries, Recommendations and Actions.....	23
Recommendation Point 1: Identify the reasons why public library depositories relinquished status... 23	
Recommendation Point 2: Survey or poll current FDLP public library directors/depository staff on important challenges they face as depository libraries.....	28
Recommendation Point 3: Survey or poll the library directors and depository staff of remaining public library depositories to identify both the positive advantages they achieve by being depositories and what additional enhancements or benefits would help them to provide government information service to their patrons.....	29
Recommendation Point 4. Compile this data into a report.....	34
Recommendation Point 5. Based on the report, attempt to identify possible changes to current FDLP policies and procedures, as well as any potential enhancements or benefits, that would encourage existing public library depositories to remain in the Program, and that would provide an incentive for public libraries, not already in the FDLP, to apply for depository designation in Congressional districts that have vacancies.....	34
Conclusion.....	40
Resources Consulted.....	41
Appendix .....	43

## Executive Summary

One of the recommendations of the Depository Library Council (DLC) at the Spring 2015 meeting asked the U.S. Government Publishing Office's (GPO's) Library Services and Content Management (LSCM) unit to more closely identify the reasons 48 public libraries had relinquished their designation in the Federal Depository Library Program (FDLP) from 2007 - 2015. The DLC recognized that public libraries hold special significance to the FDLP because of the free, open and equal access to government information for all residents across the United States.

The DLC requested that GPO:

- Identify the reasons why libraries left the FDLP
- Determine the most important challenges to the remaining public libraries
- Identify the positive advantages of being a public library in the FDLP and what additional products and services could be provided by LSCM to enhance the program value
- Analyze and report on the collected information
- Based on the analysis, identify (1) possible changes in policies and procedures; and (2) potential enhancements or benefits

## DATA AND METHODOLOGY

LSCM's methodology included data from the following:

- Key industry trends and common characteristics from public library field experts
- Data collected from our 2009 and 2015 Biennial Survey and Needs Assessment
- Data available in the Federal Depository Library Directory LSCM official library files
- Official correspondence, including the official designation "drop" letters from the 48 public libraries exiting the program
- Anecdotal information gathered in one-on-one visits, presentations, webinars, association meetings

Within the FDLP in the fall of 2015, there were 1,146 libraries; 15% (172) of those were public libraries, not including the 48 drops.

During the 2007 – 2015 time period, 112 libraries relinquished Federal depository status. Public libraries represented 43% of the total Program drops, with 50 academic libraries leaving the program during the same time.

- The 48 drops were not geographically isolated, but were spread across a number of states.
- California led with 10 drops. Colorado, Florida, Michigan, New York, and Wisconsin all had three drops.
- Library drops occurred at the same time as banking failures; the subprime crisis; and Federal, state, and local government budget cuts in funding.
- LSCM research shows that funding cuts were a significant factor in library drops.

## THE STATE OF PUBLIC LIBRARIES

According to research by the American Library Association, public libraries faced the following challenges in providing public access to technology and resources.

- Sufficiency – 65.4% of libraries reported fewer available public access computers to meet the demand.
- Staff - 23.2% of public libraries reported a decrease in staff, with 71.9% reporting permanent staff reductions. These staffing issues result in challenges with providing eGovernment, employment support, and access to library technology staff.
- Reduced hours – 21.5% reported a reduction in hours, with urban libraries reporting an average reduction of 65.8 hours per year.
- Costs – Costs are a continuing challenge is maintaining, sustaining, and enhancing public access technology infrastructure.
- Budgets – The majority of libraries reported reduced budgets.

## A FOCUS ON SERVICE

In comparing research on what services are needed from public libraries, including those in the FDLP, LSCM looked at data from the Pew Research Center and the Digital Inclusion Survey conducted by the American Library Association. Top services included:

- Literacy programs
- Free public Wi-Fi access
- Technology training on a variety of devices including smart phones, apps, computers
- Online access to government programs and services
- Programs that support people in applying for jobs, job opportunity resources, and online business information resources
- Homework assistance, online language learning
- Services or programs for active military personnel and veterans

GPO's own 2015 Biennial Survey and Needs Assessment asked public libraries in the FDLP to identify their five services offered. These included:

1. Reference desk/help desk (physical) – quick answers
2. Managing physical library and print collections
3. Providing electronic access to documents
4. Virtual reference assistance
5. Providing training on searching and effective use of information

A key point in this data is that since the 2009 Biennial Survey, the importance of user access tools has increased from 40% to 56%, and webinars/webcasts have increased from 3% to 33%. Among

public libraries, website postings ranked highly as a tool or method for managing or delivering information (84%), followed by social networking tools (79%) and email alerts (61%). There was a 47% increased use of mobile devices.

Content usage, key subject categories of information sought by public library patrons, also noted in the 2015 Biennial Survey and Needs Assessment, included health and safety, education, people and culture, and computers and internet.

So given the ups and downs of funding for public libraries, service remains key for both public libraries and FDLP public libraries.

What follows is how LSCM addressed the specific DLC recommendations.

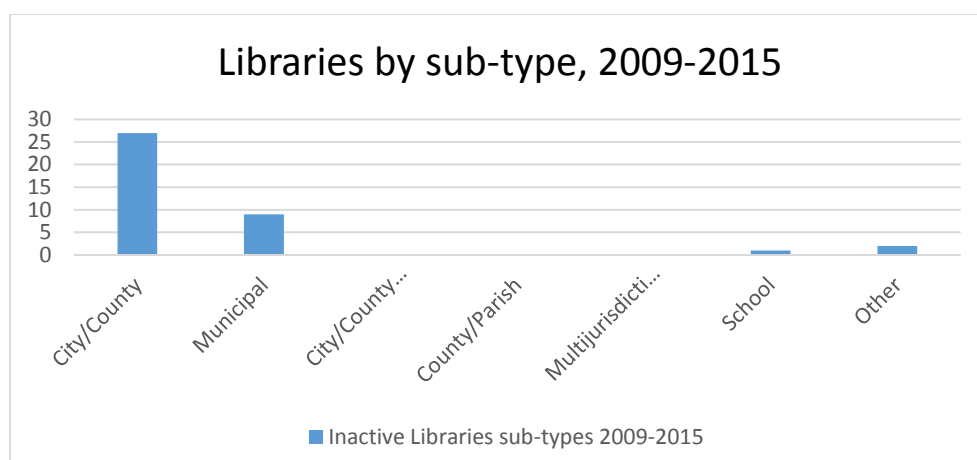
## **THE FDLP AND PUBLIC LIBRARIES**

### **Recommendation Point 1: Identify the reasons why public library depositories relinquished status**

After examination of all official drop letters from the 48 public libraries, the following were the top 10 reasons given for leaving the FDLP:

1. Online Access – 52% cited the availability of online resource access was the number one reason for leaving the Program.
2. Budget cuts/tight budgets – 46%
3. Staff shortage – 27% (This does not include staff cuts, but a reassignment/reallocation away from FDLP tasks.)
4. Nearby depositories – 27%
5. Low usage – 23%
6. Staff cuts/loss – 23% staff cuts, loss, retirements and vacant positions not filled
7. Space reallocation – 21%
8. Change in library direction/mission/role/priorities/services – 17%
9. Branch consolidation – 17%. Important note: Eight libraries dropped out of the FDLP where library system had multiple designations. Several systems have consolidated the depository collections into one location.
10. Space shortage – 10%

A further look at the 48 public libraries leaving the Program shows the sub-types as:



Note: Question not asked in the 2007 Biennial Survey

Of special note, during 2007-2015, 12 public libraries decided to stay in the Program after expressing an initial decision to leave. Reasons for staying included:

- Change in director
- Additional funding
- Switching to all digital
- Consultation with Outreach and Support Librarians on creating operating efficiencies, overcoming operational problems, and enhancing program applications

Since October 2015, four public libraries (not included in the 48 studied in this report) have relinquished status. Many of the same issues for relinquishing status were repeated in these four instances, despite significant work by LSCM to retain these libraries. Many of the issues remain at the local level, which are beyond the control of Program.

**Recommendation Point 2: Survey or poll current FDLP public library directors/depository staff on important challenges they face as depository libraries**

The 2009 and 2015 Biennial Survey & Needs Assessment asked FDLs to rank their “problems or challenges to providing information and services.” The top five noted were:

- Budget constraints: 67%
- Staff reduction/shortages: 71%
- Increased workload: 72%
- Marketing/promoting services-awareness: 69%
- Physical space and facilities issues: 64%

Problems and challenges that could be critical in determining programs/services/products for the public libraries include:

- Marketing/promoting services-awareness: 69%
- User training: 62%
- Lack of training on how to search and use resources: 60%

Across all library categories, services that allow users to serve themselves are considered most important. This includes access to depository materials, user access tools, free access to fee-based Government databases, FDLP.gov, webinars/webcasts, etc. As noted in the 2015 Biennial Survey, 69% of the FDLs are challenged to keep up with technology.

**Recommendation Point 3: Survey or poll the library directors and depository staff of remaining public library depositories to identify both the positive advantages they achieve by being depositories and what additional enhancements or benefits would help them to provide government information service to their patrons**

The 2015 Biennial Survey and Needs Assessment asked, “What are the most important services provided by the FDLP to your library?” Public libraries listed the following:

- Access to depository materials: 77%
- FDLP.gov: 65%
- User Access Tools: 47%, an increase of 40% from the 2009 Biennial Survey
- PURLs in catalog records: 42%
- Webinars/webcasts: 40%

Public libraries also noted these least important services in the 2015 Biennial Survey and Needs Assessment.

- Conferences: 49%
- Authentication of Government publications on GPO’s Federal Digital System (FDsys): 38%
- Legal Requirements & Program Requirements (LRPR): 25%
- Marketing/promotional materials: 23%
- Cataloging to National Standards: 15%

The 2015 Biennial Survey also asks about the unmet needs of FDLs. Public libraries would like to see:

- Digitized historical collections of Government publications: 53%
- Additional historical coverage of titles in FDsys: 38%
- Item selection flexibility based on subject: 37%

- Item selection flexibility based on geography: 37%
- Classify publications using the Dewey Decimal System: 34%
- Add pre-1976 cataloging records in OCLC: 33%
- Item selection flexibility based on recommendations for size of library: 32%

The 2015 Biennial Survey also asked FDLs about their level of satisfaction with the existing FDLP services and tools. Public libraries ranked the following “extremely/somewhat satisfied” FDLP current services and tools.

- FDLP.gov: 86%
- FDSys: 76%
- Catalog of U.S. Government Publications (CGP): 75%
- Web tools for collection development/maintenance: 71%
- Free access to Government fee-based databases: 70%
- Training/Webinars: 72%
- Communication (FDLP Connection, social media): 66%
- Tangible distribution: 65%
- Cataloging: 62%

**Recommendation Point 4. Compile this data into a report.**

GPO drafted a report, asked for comments from the Depository Library Council and the FDLP community at the Fall 2016 DLC Meeting and Fall Conference, incorporated comments and suggestions and published this final report in January 2017.

**Recommendation Point 5. Based on the report, attempt to identify possible changes to current FDLP policies and procedures, as well as any potential enhancements or benefits, that would encourage existing public library depositories to remain in the Program, and that would provide an incentive for public libraries, not already in the FDLP, to apply for depository designation in Congressional districts that have vacancies.**

Based on the research and findings presented in this report, LSCM has committed to investigating several key initiatives that will address the specific needs of public libraries with the primary intent of growing public library participation. This report confirms the importance of shifting the focus away from the traditional collection-centric approach to a more service and user-centric focus. The key elements of the service centric-approach, should include:

- Flexibility and agility; the ability to respond quickly to changing business needs
- Moving away from reactive status and operations that address issues on a ‘loudest first’ basis and towards a business-aware, proactive practice



- Products and services that are customized to address the needs of a specific customer group, and designing these products and services from the customer perspective
- Customer engagement

LSCM offers the following opportunities to help public libraries.

1. Conduct, analyze, and implement tools and services as a result of the FDLP Work Practice Study conducted by Ithaka S+R for LSCM. The study utilizes ethnographic methods to gather information on user tools directly from libraries on how they use current FDLP tools and services. The objective is to support development and implementation of a new national technology infrastructure with a more holistic system of cataloging and indexing services. This will serve as the basis for improvements to the Library Services Systems (LSS). This includes FDLP.gov, the CGP, and the Depository Selection Information Management System (DSIMS).
2. Implement a customer contact management and relationship management tool that will provide a platform that increases outreach, productivity, and responsiveness, while building common customer knowledgebases. This tool will also replace the outdated askGPO tool.
3. Target and solicit public library participation in the FDLP through a focused campaign based on Congressional vacancies and outreach.
4. Build stronger partnerships with hands-on, on-site operational support. In the past year, GPO and LSCM staff have visited 250 libraries; 34 were public libraries. As shown in this report, offering operational support helped to keep 12 public libraries in the Program by allowing the insights into operational needs and taking advantage of staff expertise. Some of the operational issues that LSCM has helped with in these visits include:
  - Helping libraries convert their selection profile to more digital or online resources;
  - providing shortcuts to streamline the creation of weeding lists;
  - helping libraries sync their reference operation (collection development) with their cataloging operation; and
  - educating library staff on the nature of digital depository collections and how this can be achieved in the library.
5. Engage with the Public Library community through national association meeting attendance and attendance at events that focus on public library needs, issues, and concerns.
6. Develop briefing and informational materials highlighting the values and benefits of the FDLP. These include:
  - Creating materials for library administration, directors, and senior managers on the benefits of the being a member of the FDLP
  - Developing Quick Guides – materials focused on FDLP services that are designed for library staff not working exclusively with Government

information, such as searching and using the Catalog of U.S. Government Publications, DSIMS, **govinfo**, and other resources.

- Continuing to grow and define digital or mostly electronic depository libraries
7. FDLP Academy training specifically for topics relevant to all libraries and ones that highlight the specialized needs of FDLP public libraries. The FDLP operational webinars cover a variety of relevant topics.
  8. Develop subject guides on general topics for use in public libraries on Government documents. Under this new program, a targeted category of libraries top 10 patron collection requests would be compiled and managed by an LSCM librarian.
  9. Metadata and Classification Assistance. LSCM is looking to assign Dewey Decimal classification numbers to publications and including them in bibliographic records in the CGP.
  10. Call to Action for input from Public Libraries. LSCM will continue outreach to public libraries and solicit input on what tools and services these libraries would like to see from LSCM.

## EXECUTIVE SUMMARY CONCLUSION

The public library is at a crossroads. With budget cuts, staffing reduction, and space reallocations, serving a diverse community on a local level is even more challenging in the environment of the last 10 years. Finding new and creative ways to engage this unique community and provide access to Government documents is a critical element of the FDLP.

LSCM is committed to working with both the Depository Library Council and the public library community to develop customer-centric services and tools that address the changing needs and demands of public libraries.

As LSCM and the DLC continue their discussions about services, opportunities, and initiatives within the public library community, it is especially critical that public libraries within the FDL community also participate in the discussion. Public libraries must become part of the discussion and bring to the attention of LSCM and DLC their specific needs and possible tools that will help in the management and dissemination of Government documents.

## DLC Recommendation #2: To Better Serve and Support Public Libraries

### SPRING 2015

*Free and unimpeded access to government information is the most important tenet of the Federal Depository Library Program (FDLP). Since America's public libraries are open to everyone and provide equal access to information for all residents of their communities, public library FDLP depositories are essential to the fulfillment of this most basic mandate of the FDLP.*

*Since 2007, 47 public library depositories have relinquished depository library status. This represents a 20.4% loss of public library depositories in a span of only eight years. Since 2007, public library depositories have relinquished depository status at four times the rate of academic library depositories and at twice the rate of all other depositories*

*Council recommends that GPO and Council work together to do the following:*

- If possible, attempt to identify the reasons why these 47 public library depositories relinquished status;*
- Survey or poll the library directors and depository staff of remaining public library depositories to identify what they perceive to be the most important challenges they face as depository libraries;*
- Survey or poll the library directors and depository staff of remaining public library depositories to identify both the positive advantages they achieve by being depositories and what additional enhancements or benefits would help them to provide government information service to their patrons;*
- Compile this data into a report; and*
- Based on the report, attempt to identify possible changes to current FDLP policies and procedures, as well as any potential enhancements or benefits, that would encourage existing public library depositories to remain in the Program, and that would provide an incentive for public libraries, not already in the FDLP, to apply for depository designation in Congressional districts that have vacancies.*

## Introduction

This document is a response to Recommendation #2 of the Depository Library Council (DLC) given to GPO's Superintendent of Documents at the 2015 Spring Conference.

The FDLP currently supports a network of 1,148 libraries specifically designated throughout the United States and its territories to provide free and open access to Government publications via electronic and tangible distribution. The Program is administered by the U.S. Government Publishing Office with the primary mission of *Keeping America Informed*.

The loss of any library from the FDLP is detrimental to both the FDLP and the library community, as well as impacting the mission of *Keeping America Informed*. With 48 public libraries leaving the Program during 2007-2015, this is an especially troubling trend and one that demands further investigation and analysis.

As echoed in the 2009 Biennial Survey and Needs Assessment key considerations, "public libraries often face challenges on a different scale from libraries serving a more targeted audience."<sup>1</sup> This report will attempt to more closely define those challenges in public libraries as they relate to the FDLP.

The Superintendent of Documents welcomes the opportunity to explore additional tools and changes specific to public libraries that can be implemented to support and meet their unique needs in today's library community.

## Acronyms

- ALA - American Library Association
- CGP - Catalog of U.S. Government Publications
- DLC - Depository Library Council
- FDL - Federal Depository Library
- FDLD - Federal Depository Library Directory
- FDLP - Federal Depository Library Program
- FDSys - GPO's Federal Digital System. Name changed to **govinfo** summer of 2016
- GPO - U.S. Government Publishing Office
- JCP - Joint Committee on Printing
- LSCM - Library Services & Content Management

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<sup>1</sup> 2009 Biennial Survey and Needs Assessment. Prepared for GPO by Outsell, Inc. June 2010. <http://www.fdlp.gov/file-repository/about-the-fdlp/gpo-projects/customer-relations-program/needs-assessmentbiennial-survey-oct-2009-feb/1378-federal-depository-library-needs-assessment-and-biennial-survey-2009-full-report>; p. 6.

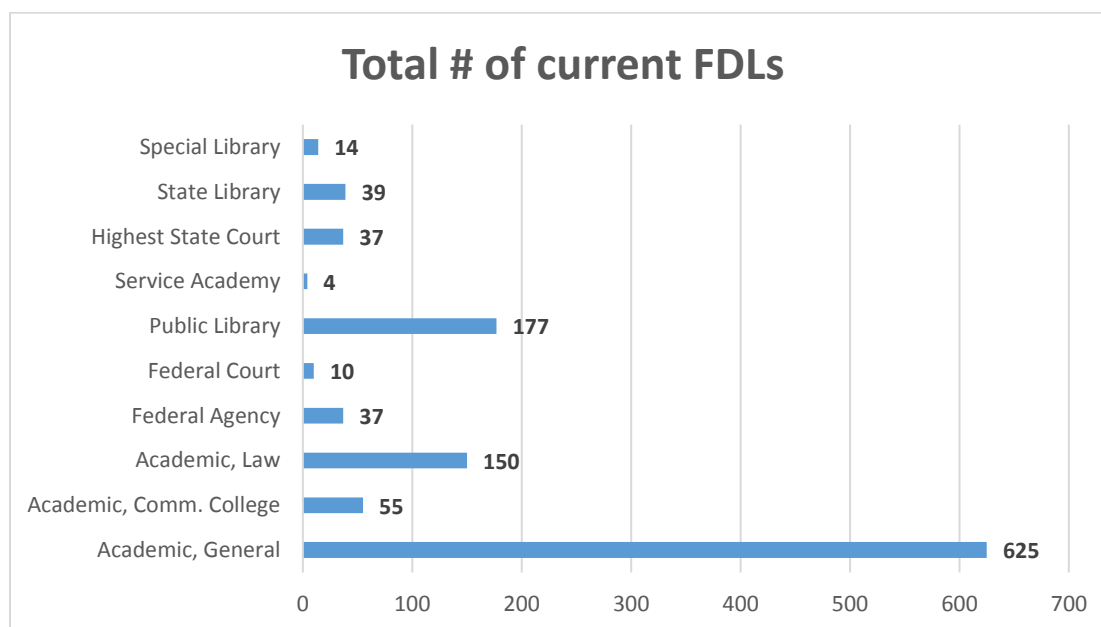
## Data and Methodology

In compiling this report, LSCM has examined multiple sources; these include key industry trends in public libraries as well as data from LSCM's research on characteristics specific to the 48 public libraries that left the Program and the public libraries that remained in the FDLP.

Research began with an analysis of the reasons given in the required drop letters submitted by the 48 public libraries requesting to leave the Program. Further analysis included the following:

- 2009 and 2015 Biennial Survey and Needs Assessments
- Data on depository characteristics from the Federal Depository Library Directory
- Documents and official correspondence from the FDLP official files maintained by LSCM and other related subject matter intelligence
- Articles and research papers from experts in the industry
- Anecdotal information gleaned from conversations and consultations with public library staff through library visits, presentations, webinars, and other in-person events. Much of the feedback of the many 2016 library visits and conference events, including GPO participation at the Public Library Association Annual Conference in Denver, is still being synthesized and analyzed.

Within the FDLP there are six primary categories of libraries: academic (72%), public (15%), state government (7%), Federal Government (4%), local government (1%), and special (1%). As of September 2016, there were 177 public libraries:

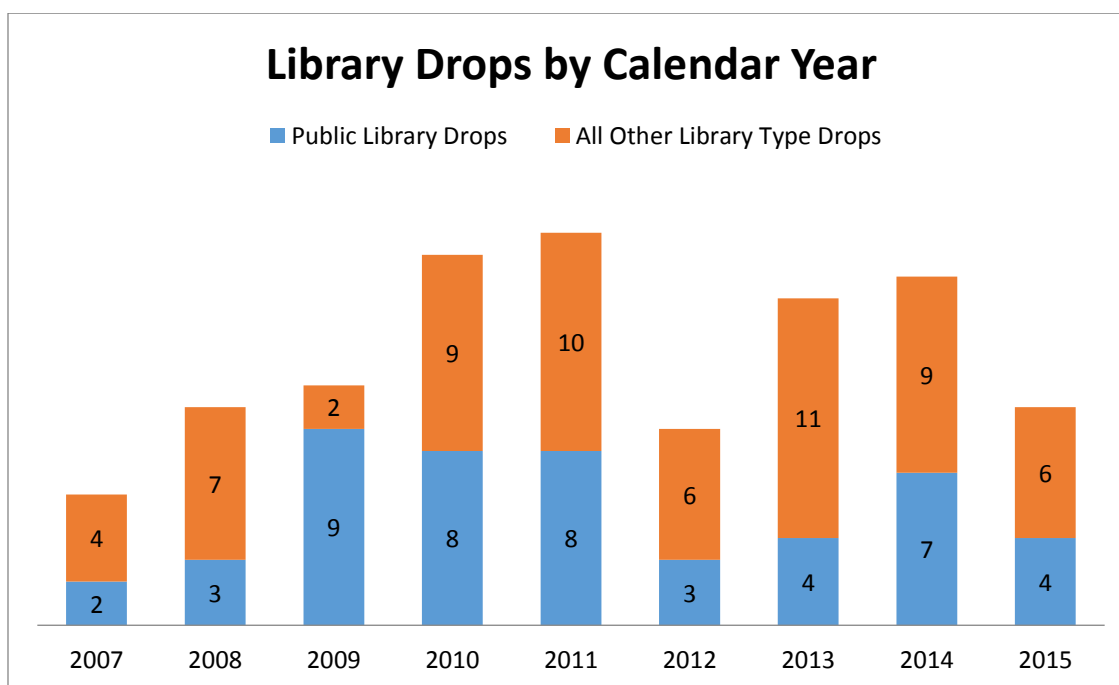


If added together, the three academic library categories—including libraries at college, university, community college, and law campuses—make up almost three-quarters of Federal depository libraries in the Program.

During the 2007-2015-time period:

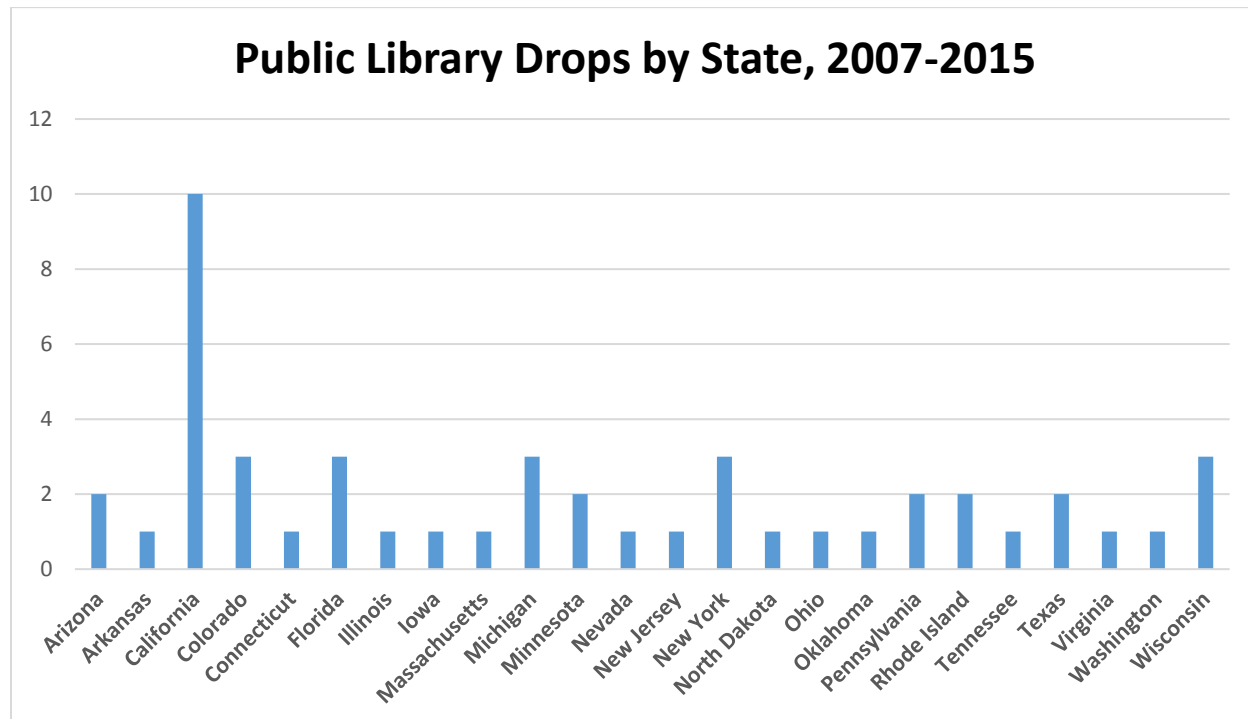
- 112 libraries relinquished Federal depository status
  - 48 were public libraries, or 43% of the total Program drops
  - 50 academic libraries dropped from the Program
    - Although greater in number of actual drops, the 50 academic libraries represent a smaller percentage of the overall number compared with the drops of public libraries
- In 2007-2008, 5 public libraries dropped out of the FDLP
- In 2009-2011, 25 public libraries dropped out of the FDLP
- In 2012-2013, 7 public libraries dropped out of the FDLP
- In 2014, 7 public libraries dropped out of the FDLP and
- In 2015, 4 public libraries dropped out.

The following chart illustrates all library drops of public libraries between 2007 and 2015 compared to other library types. The public library category is composed of city/county, municipal, city/county law, county/parish, multijurisdictional, and other libraries.



Additional data on the public library drops is also found in ‘Point 1: Identify the reasons why public library depositories relinquished status’ in the following pages.

Public library drops during the 2007-2015 time period were not isolated geographically, but were distributed across a number of states:



California led with 10 drops. Colorado, Florida, Michigan, New York, and Wisconsin all had three drops. The remaining states had either one or two library drops.

The library drops during this time period did not happen in a vacuum. Banking failures and the subprime mortgage crisis had broad national and international consequences. Sometimes called the Great Recession, this period has been characterized as second only to the Depression of the 1930s. It would be remiss to overlook those circumstances and the associated effect they may have had on Federal, state, and local funding for public libraries which, as shown by both data and research, was a significant factor in library drops.

It is difficult to posit a direct correlation without extensive analysis, which is beyond the scope of the current examination. This report did not conduct individual, state-based reviews of the impact of the economic downturn that began in 2007. . This high-level information is included in this analysis to set the broader context of the economic environment for this time period.

A number of data tables from the 2015 Biennial Survey and Needs Assessment are reproduced in this report. A copy of the complete 2015 Biennial Survey and Needs Assessment report and the corresponding methodology used, is available at <http://www.fdlp.gov/file-repository/about-the-fdlp/biennial-survey/2015-biennial-survey/2707-2015-biennial-survey-of-federal-depository-libraries-and-library-needs-assessment>.

Discovery during the process of responding to this recommendation shows the correct number of public libraries that relinquished status in the FDLP from 2007 through spring 2015 is 48, not 47. This report will use that number in its analysis and response.

## The State of Public Libraries

In order to understand the audience of public library users, it is necessary to look at funding, growth trends, characteristics of public libraries, and characteristics of patrons in both the public library system and the FDLP.

Public libraries across the United States face many challenges. In the “Libraries Connect Communities: Public Library Funding & Technology Access Study 2011-2012” report,<sup>2</sup> the following challenges were noted in providing public access technology services and resources at public libraries:<sup>3</sup>

- **Sufficiency** – 65.4% of libraries reported fewer public access computers to meet the growing demand.
- **Staff** – Public libraries reported challenges with providing e-government, employment support, and access to library technology staff.
  - 23.2% of public libraries reported a decrease in staff over the last three years
  - 71.9% reporting permanent staff reductions
- **Reduced hours** – 21.5% of the public libraries reported a reduction in hours over the last three years due to budget cuts.
  - Urban public libraries reported the largest reduction in hours over the last three years, with an average reduction of 65.8 hours per year.
- **Costs** – Cost factors were a continuing challenge in maintaining, sustaining, and enhancing public access technology infrastructure.
- **Budgets** – While 53.2% of the libraries surveyed have seen budget increases up to 2% over the budget decreases of the prior three years, 12.5% reported operating budgets stayed the same as previous years.
  - Factoring in inflation, a majority of libraries have had reduced budgets.

A summer 2012 digital supplement article cited an important point on public library closures:

“This year’s COSLA (Chief Officers of State Library Agencies) survey asked about the number of libraries that had closed as a result of funding cuts. Fewer states (12 compared to 17 last year) report being aware of public library closures in their states within the past 12 months. Most states report that fewer than five public library outlets have closed, although New Jersey reports closures of between 10 and 15 outlets, and Michigan reports more than 20 closed outlets. The majority of states (82 percent) report that public library

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<sup>2</sup> Libraries Connect Communities: Public Library Funding & Technology Access Study 2011-2012, American Library Association: [http://www.ala.org/research/plftas/2011\\_2012#survey%20findings](http://www.ala.org/research/plftas/2011_2012#survey%20findings)

<sup>3</sup> Libraries Connect Communities: Public Library Funding & Technology Access Study 2011-2012, American Library Association, Information Policy and Access Center, Executive Summary: [http://www.ala.org/research/sites/ala.org.research/files/content/initiatives/plftas/2011\\_2012/execsummary-ipac.pdf](http://www.ala.org/research/sites/ala.org.research/files/content/initiatives/plftas/2011_2012/execsummary-ipac.pdf)



hours have been cut in the past 12 months due to funding cuts, an increase of 4 percent from the previous year.”<sup>4</sup>

The spending priorities in public libraries are largely focused on technology. A February 2015 article in *Library Journal* highlights these important points about public libraries spending priorities.<sup>5</sup>

- When asked what their fastest-growing spending priorities were, library directors responded overwhelmingly in favor of technology and electronic materials. Small-town libraries in particular (37%) viewed technology as a crucial line item. Suburban libraries saw the greatest need for eBooks and, tied with urban libraries, electronic resources and digital collections. Fewer than 5% of the libraries surveyed mentioned outreach.
- When asked last year what they would do to improve service if they received extra funding, the top response was to add or restore staff.
- Hours of operation have increased as well. Over the past five years libraries’ average weekly hours have fluctuated, down from a high of 59.8 in prerecession 2008 but up from 2011’s 49, this year’s results show an overall increase in 3.4 weekly hours per system; the largest libraries increased hours for the second year in a row.

This same article asks, “Where the \$ comes from.” Sources of funding included:

- On a Federal level, the Library Services and Technology Act (LSTA) funding was \$180.9 million, generally steady over previous year’s funding;
- 13% of public libraries surveyed had public referenda primarily to fund operating budgets.
  - In California’s June 2014 elections, six library parcel tax measures passed for \$19.1 million in revenue.
- Appropriated money from town and county budgets increased overall by 2%, with smaller libraries serving populations of 10,000 to 24,000 showed 4.5% growth; large libraries showed 1.4% growth; libraries serving 500,000 to 999,000 showed a 4.2% growth.
- State funding brought a 3.6% increase.

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<sup>4</sup> Public Library Funding Landscape, American Library Association, Digital Supplement, Summer 2012, [http://www.ala.org/research/sites/ala.org.research/files/content/initiatives/plftas/2011\\_2012/plftas12\\_funding%20landscape.pdf](http://www.ala.org/research/sites/ala.org.research/files/content/initiatives/plftas/2011_2012/plftas12_funding%20landscape.pdf)

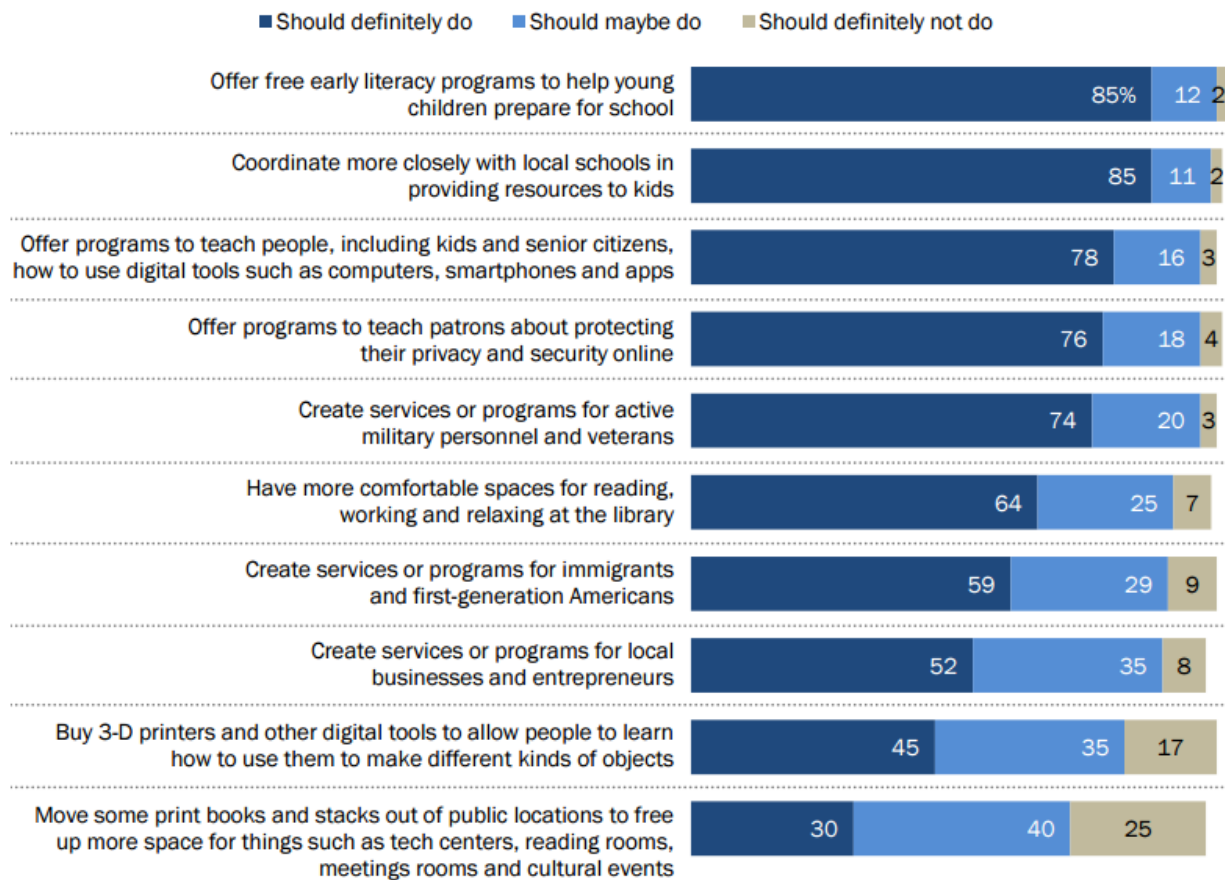
<sup>5</sup> Peet, Lisa. Paying for People, Budgets and Funding. *Library Journal*: February 4, 2015. Available online at <http://lj.libraryjournal.com/2015/02/budgets-funding/paying-for-people-budgets-funding/>

## A Focus on Service

In September 2015, the Pew Research Center issued a report focused on the state of public libraries.<sup>6</sup> The report conducted a survey that asked the community what services they wanted from their public library. The following table reports on their responses:

### Public Wants Libraries to Advance Education, Improve Digital Literacy and Serve Key Groups

*% of those ages 16+ who say that libraries should definitely, maybe or definitely not do these things*



Source: Pew Research Center survey March 17-April 12, 2015. N=2,004 Americans ages 16 and older

PEW RESEARCH CENTER

The themes of education, digital literacy, programs and services, and library space were prominent among the responses offered.

The 2014 Digital Inclusion Survey study conducted by the American Library Association and the University of Maryland's Information Policy & Access Center focused on the internet and public

<sup>6</sup> Horrigan, John. Libraries at the Crossroads: Pew Research Center, September 2015. Available at : [http://www.pewinternet.org/files/2015/09/2015-09-15\\_libraries\\_FINAL.pdf](http://www.pewinternet.org/files/2015/09/2015-09-15_libraries_FINAL.pdf)

libraries. Survey results showed consistent trends in the increase of public technology service offerings in U.S. public libraries.<sup>7</sup> Key findings include:

- Virtually all libraries (98%) offer free public Wi-Fi access as compared to only 21% offering public internet in 1994.
- Close to 90% of libraries offer basic digital literacy training and a significant majority support training related to new technology devices (62%), safe online practices (57%), and social media use (56%).
- 76% percent of libraries assist patrons in using online government programs and services.
- The vast majority of libraries provide programs that support people in applying for jobs (73%), accessing and using online job opportunity resources (68%), and using online business information resources (48%).
- More than 90% of public libraries offer eBooks, online homework assistance (95%), and online language learning (56%).

Results from GPO's 2015 Biennial Survey and Needs Assessment,<sup>8</sup> concurred that the same desired services cited above in the Pew Research on public libraries and the ALA Digital Inclusion Survey drive the needs and demands of the public libraries in the FDLP, as noted throughout this report.

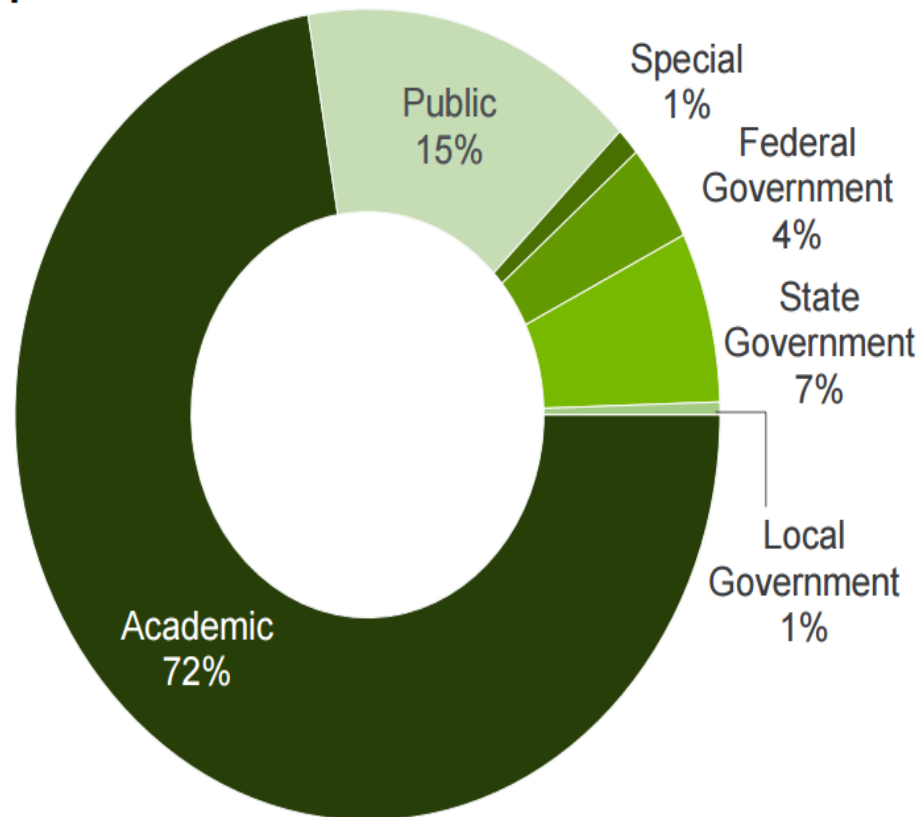
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<sup>7</sup>2014 Digital Inclusion Survey conducted by American Library Association and the University of Maryland's Information Policy & Access Center: <http://publiclibrariesonline.org/2016/01/2014-digital-inclusion-survey-report-public-libraries-as-basic-community-technology-infrastructure/>

<sup>8</sup> 2015 Biennial Survey and Needs Assessment. Prepared for GPO by Outsell, Inc. March 2016. Documentation available online at <http://www.fdlp.gov/file-repository/about-the-fdlp/biennial-survey/2015-biennial-survey/2707-2015-biennial-survey-of-federal-depository-libraries-and-library-needs-assessment>, p.25.

With a total of 1,139 libraries responding to the 2015 Biennial Survey, public libraries represented the second largest category, 15%, as shown in the chart below.

## Library Types



Source: Q1. Which of the following best describes your library type?

Base: 1,139

Note: Please use caution interpreting results for Special and Local Government libraries due to low base sizes.

Respondents to the 2015 Biennial Survey and Needs Assessment libraries were asked to identify what services and content management activities they provided. The top five services offered by Federal depository public libraries included:<sup>9</sup>

1. Reference desk/help desk (physical) - quick answers
2. Managing physical library and print collections
3. Providing electronic access to documents
4. Virtual reference assistance – comparable to usage in academic and local government libraries

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<sup>9</sup> 2015 Biennial Survey and Needs Assessment, pp. 53-54.

## 5. Providing training on searching and effective use of information

### Services and Content Management Activities – by Library Type

	Total	Academic	Federal Gov't	State Gov't	Local Gov't	Public	Special
<i>Base</i>	<i>1,139</i>	<i>823</i>	<i>44</i>	<i>78</i>	<i>6</i>	<i>175</i>	<i>13</i>
Reference desk/Help desk (physical) - quick answers	98%	98%	96%	97%	83%	99%	100%
Providing electronic access to documents	96%	98%	98%	94%	67%	91%	100%
Managing physical library and print collections	95%	96%	100%	94%	100%	93%	85%
Providing training on searching and effective use of info	89%	92%	86%	85%	67%	79%	69%
Document delivery/ordering services	80%	86%	89%	77%	17%	54%	39%
Virtual reference assistance	79%	82%	43%	58%	83%	81%	69%
Content evaluation and/or purchasing	79%	83%	84%	72%	67%	64%	54%
Managing digital collections	78%	81%	77%	67%	50%	67%	92%
Collaborative workspace, in the library	78%	85%	66%	51%	50%	59%	39%
Workshops conducted at the library	68%	71%	61%	50%	67%	67%	39%
Conducting secondary research	67%	69%	80%	71%	33%	58%	54%
Conducting primary research	61%	62%	71%	71%	33%	47%	77%

The 2015 Biennial Survey asked libraries to identify the tools, methods, or applications used in their library to deliver information. One of the key points in this question found that public libraries were more likely to use social networking and mobile devices as a primary tool for delivering information.

Furthermore, the 2015 Biennial Survey found that since the 2009 Biennial Survey, the importance of user access tools has increased from 40% to 56% and webinars/webcasts have increased from 3% to 33%.

The next tables illustrate the tools commonly used among FDLP public libraries.<sup>10</sup>

<sup>10</sup> 2015 Biennial Survey and Needs Assessment, pp. 57-58.

## Tools, Methods, Applications – by Library Type

- Academic libraries are more likely to use collaboration tools. Public libraries are more likely to use social networking and mobile devices.
- Federal Government libraries are more likely to use website postings, web conferencing, and telepresence/video conferencing. State Government libraries are more likely to use scan on demand (paper).

	Total	Academic	Federal Gov't	State Gov't	Local Gov't	Public	Special
<i>Base</i>	<i>1,139</i>	<i>823</i>	<i>44</i>	<i>78</i>	<i>6</i>	<i>175</i>	<i>13</i>
Web site postings	79%	78%	86%	67%	83%	84%	54%
Social networking	68%	70%	25%	55%	33%	79%	39%
Scan on demand (paper)	62%	62%	66%	74%	50%	54%	54%
Email alerts	59%	59%	73%	54%	33%	61%	31%
Collaboration	54%	58%	52%	44%	-	42%	23%
Scan on demand (microfiche/microfilm)	51%	51%	61%	58%	33%	43%	77%
Mobile devices	45%	47%	30%	22%	50%	47%	15%
Fax	45%	41%	57%	54%	5%	54%	46%
Blogs	41%	43%	27%	37%	17%	40%	31%
RSS feeds	24%	25%	32%	18%	-	19%	23%
Web conferencing	23%	24%	43%	26%	-	15%	15%
Telepresence/Video conferencing	17%	17%	32%	19%	-	13%	8%
Wikis	17%	18%	18%	17%	-	12%	-
Communities of practice	15%	17%	23%	12%	-	7%	-
Social bookmarking/Tagging/Folksonomies	14%	14%	8%	12%	-	16%	15%
Videocasting	14%	17%	18%	10%	-	5%	-
Microfiche duplication	10%	10%	11%	15%	-	7%	-
Podcasts	8%	8%	5%	6%	-	9%	8%
Mash-ups	3%	3%	-	1%	-	2%	-
Vlogs	3%	3%	7%	3%	-	4%	-
Audio blogs	1%	1%	-	-	-	2%	-
Virtual worlds	1%	1%	-	-	-	1%	-
Other	8%	7%	9%	10%	17%	8%	15%
None of the above	3%	2%	2%	3%	-	2%	15%

In defining content usage in the 2015 Biennial Survey, academic and public libraries named health and safety, education, people and culture, and computers and internet as key subject categories.

Among public libraries, web site postings ranked highly as a tool or method for managing or delivering information (84%), followed by social networking tools (79%) and email alerts (61%).

Although scanning on demand and use of fax machines for managing or delivering information are still applications in FDL public libraries (54% for both), the increased use of mobile devices (47%) is of statistical significance, according to the analysis.

## The FDLP and Public Libraries, Recommendations and Actions

### Recommendation Point 1: Identify the reasons why public library depositories relinquished status

LSCM began with the identification of the 48 public libraries that relinquished depository status in the aforementioned time period. This was followed by an in-depth analysis of the drop letters submitted to the Superintendent of Documents. In these required letters, the following circumstances were cited by libraries as reasons to relinquish depository status:

- 52% cited the availability of online resource access as the number one reason for leaving the FDLP
- 46% attributed the decision to budget, including reduced budgets or a demand to reduce expenses
- 27% cited staff shortages, not through staff cuts or loss, but due to a reallocation of time to non-FDLP tasks
- 25% cited availability of nearby depositories
- 23% cited low use by patrons
- 23% cited staff cuts or loss
- 21% cited space reallocation
- 17% cited a change in library direction/mission/role/priorities/services
- 17% cited branch consolidation; eight libraries dropped out of the FDLP because their library systems consolidated depository operations from multiple branches.
  - The County of Los Angeles Public Library system saw a total of seven libraries relinquish their depository status between March 2009 and July 2010; eight branch libraries had a separate FDLP designation.
  - Mid-Manhattan Library consolidated three branches into two: the Astor Branch/Science, Industry and Business and Lenox Branch/Science, Industry and Business. Both are still members of the FDLP.
  - Brooklyn Public Library consolidated two depository designations into one during 2015-2016.
- 10% cited space shortage
- 6% cited that a staff specialist was lost and not replaced
- 4% cited a change in patron needs/preferences
- 4% cited recommendation of library board and/or board of trustees
- Other comments included:
  - CIPA filters hinder access to GPO content
  - Management of collection is “cumbersome and expensive”
  - “Cost effectiveness” cited several times in relation to the housing of the collection and the allocation of staff time

A complete listing of the libraries and reasons for leaving the FDLP are found in the Appendix.



As shown in the chart below, a total of 112 libraries relinquished their designation during the 2007 – 2015 time period. This chart illustrates the breakdown by library type:

	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015	Grand Total
Academic General (AG)	2	3	1	6	6	1	8	6	5	38
Academic, Community College (AC)		2	1	1	2		1			7
Academic, Law Library (AL)				1		2	1	1		5
Federal Agency Library (FA)		1			2	2	1			6
Federal Court Library (FC)						1			1	2
Highest State Court Library (SC)		1								1
Public Library (PU)	2	3	9	8	8	3	4	7	4	48
Special Library (SP)	1			1						2
State Library (SL)	1							2		3
<b>Grand Total</b>	<b>6</b>	<b>10</b>	<b>11</b>	<b>17</b>	<b>18</b>	<b>9</b>	<b>15</b>	<b>16</b>	<b>10</b>	<b>112</b>



The most common reasons public libraries and other libraries frequently cited for leaving the Federal Depository Library Program from 2007-2015 were staff cuts/losses, budget, and space shortage.

The following chart illustrates the reasons the 48 public libraries left the Program and number of libraries citing a specific reason. Libraries could state more than one reason:

Reasons cited for relinquishing depository status	# Libraries citing reason	% of 48 libraries
Online access	25	52%
Budget cuts/tight budget	22	46%
Staff shortage	13	27%
Nearby depositories	12	25%
Low use	11	23%
Staff cuts/loss	11	23%
Space reallocation	10	21%
Change in library direction/mission/role/priorities/services	8	17%
Branch consolidation	8	17%
Space shortage	5	10%
Staff specialist lost	3	6%
Change in patron needs / preferences	2	4%
Library board/board of trustees' recommendation	2	4%

In the fall of 2016, LSCM reached out to the 48 public libraries that had relinquished their FDL status between 2007-2015. We asked them the following questions:

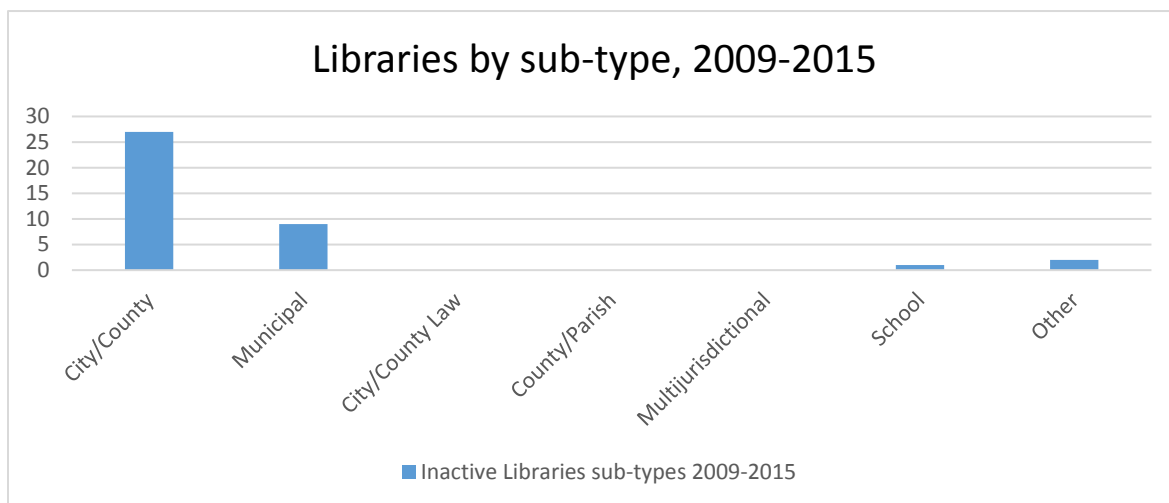
- How do you handle requests for government information now that you are not a member?
- How did leaving the FDLP affect your patron services?
- Has anything changed that would bring you back into the FDLP? Such as digital only options or other offerings since you have left?

We received responses from five of the 48 libraries. Those response included:

- Freeing up space and staff time was a primary reason to drop
- The government information used at their library is freely available online and/or using resources such as **govinfo**
- One library felt that government documents were more useful for academic libraries because their patrons don't come into the library for in-depth research

None of the five said there were plans to rejoin the FDLP

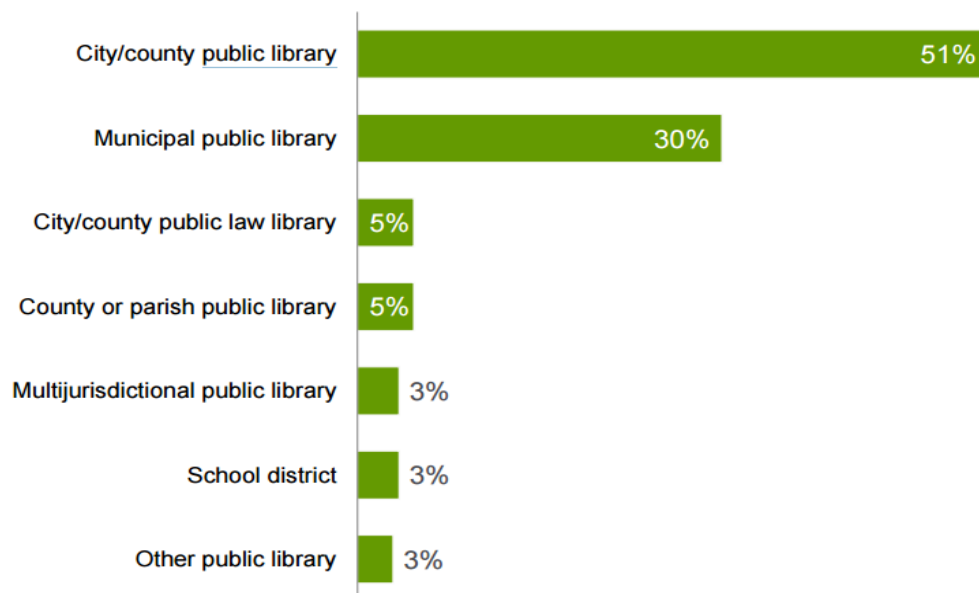
Of the public libraries leaving the program between 2007-2015, they were further categorized by sub-type.



Note: This question was not included in the 2007 Biennial Survey

Data from the 2015 Biennial Survey of Federal Depository Libraries & Library Needs Assessment reported that 15% of all FDLs were public libraries, a decrease from 17% in the 2009 Biennial Survey/Needs Assessment. Within the public library category there are subcategories, with city/county public libraries (51%) and municipal public libraries (30%) being the most common types:

# Public Library Sub-types



Source: Q1. Which of the following best describes your library type?  
Base: 175

During the time period, (2007–2015), 12 public libraries decided to stay in the program after their initial decision to leave the program. Several reasons for this reversal included a change in director, additional funding, switching to all digital, and consultation with Outreach and Support Librarians on creating operating efficiencies, overcoming operational problems, and enhancing program applications.

Beyond the data for 2007-2015: since October 2015, two libraries joined the FDLP while 12 relinquished status. Of those that left, four are public libraries:

- Columbus Metropolitan Library, Main library.
  - Reason: Customer usage, collecting scope, public accessibility, staff efficiency.
  - Relinquished status February 2016
- Brooklyn Public Library, Central Library.
  - Reason: Building being sold, branch consolidation
  - Relinquished status May 2016
- Henderson District Public Libraries, Green Valley Library.
  - Reason: Space and staff.
  - Relinquished status May 2016
- Natrona Public, Casper, Wyoming.
  - Reason: Collection rarely used, need the space, removing shelving where documents are housed.
  - Relinquished status July 2016

## Recommendation Point 2: Survey or poll current FDLP public library directors/depository staff on important challenges they face as depository libraries

The 2015 Biennial Survey of Federal Depository Libraries & Library Needs Assessment, Question 4, asked ‘In general, to what extent do you consider the following factors to be problems or challenges to providing information and services?’ Of the 175 public libraries that responded to this question, responses were as follows:<sup>11</sup>

### Problems and Challenges – by Library Type

% Major/Minor Problem	Total	Academic	Federal Gov't	State Gov't	Local Gov't	Public	Special
<i>Base</i>	<i>1,139</i>	<i>823</i>	<i>44</i>	<i>78</i>	<i>6</i>	<i>175</i>	<i>13</i>
Budget constraints	72%	72%	86%	78%	67%	67%	77%
Staff reduction/shortage	71%	71%	73%	67%	83%	71%	62%
Increased workload	66%	64%	71%	62%	83%	72%	77%
Marketing/promoting services-awareness	60%	58%	46%	67%	83%	69%	54%
Physical space and facilities issues	59%	59%	59%	55%	83%	64%	54%
Permanent public access to and stability of digital content	52%	51%	61%	62%	67%	50%	69%
Keeping up with technology	50%	44%	68%	56%	33%	69%	69%
Cost containment	48%	48%	73%	51%	67%	40%	46%
User training	48%	45%	46%	46%	67%	62%	62%
Time management	46%	44%	52%	41%	50%	54%	54%
Transition of print to electronic format	40%	36%	64%	44%	50%	55%	23%
Lack of training on how to search and use resources	39%	35%	32%	41%	50%	60%	39%
Lack of visualization or analytic tools	28%	27%	32%	32%	17%	29%	46%
Management/administration support	28%	27%	36%	24%	67%	29%	31%
Global access/serving more users	24%	22%	27%	32%	50%	27%	31%

The 2015 Biennial Survey and Needs Assessment remarks that “Public libraries were significantly more likely to cite marketing, user training, and lack of training on how to use and search resources as major or minor problems.”<sup>12</sup>

Increased workload (72%), staff reduction/shortage (71%), keeping up with technology and marketing/promotion (both 69%), and budget constraints (67%) also figured prominently in the

<sup>11</sup> 2015 Biennial Survey and Needs Assessment, conducted by Outsell for GPOs Library Services and Content Management <http://www.fdlp.gov/file-repository/about-the-fdlp/biennial-survey/2015-biennial-survey/2707-2015-biennial-survey-of-federal-depository-libraries-and-library-needs-assessment>, p. 48.

<sup>12</sup> 2015 Biennial Survey and Needs Assessment, p. 49.

responses. As noted in the 2015 Biennial Survey, 69% of the FDLs are challenged to keep up with technology.

### Recommendation Point 3: Survey or poll the library directors and depository staff of remaining public library depositories to identify both the positive advantages they achieve by being depositories and what additional enhancements or benefits would help them to provide government information service to their patrons

The 2015 Biennial Survey asked “What are the most important services provided by the FDLP to your library?” The 175 public libraries responded as follows:<sup>13</sup>

## Most Important Services – by Library Type

	Total	Academic	Federal Gov't	State Gov't	Local Gov't	Public	Special
<i>Base</i>	<i>1,139</i>	<i>823</i>	<i>44</i>	<i>78</i>	<i>6</i>	<i>175</i>	<i>13</i>
Access to depository materials	78%	78%	75%	74%	83%	77%	92%
Persistent identifier (PURLs) capability in cataloging records to full text	57%	62%	41%	54%	-	42%	23%
User access tools	56%	58%	59%	58%	67%	47%	31%
FDLP.gov	54%	52%	34%	63%	17%	65%	69%
Cataloging to national standards	35%	39%	39%	26%	67%	20%	23%
Free access to Government fee-based databases	35%	36%	36%	27%	17%	35%	31%
Webinars/webcasts	33%	32%	23%	31%	33%	40%	39%
Collection development and management tools	31%	32%	25%	30%	17%	29%	15%
Authentication publications on GPO's FDsys	18%	18%	23%	28%	-	10%	8%
askGPO	16%	15%	5%	26%	17%	19%	15%
Training	15%	14%	9%	17%	-	21%	23%
Conferences	11%	12%	9%	5%	-	9%	8%
Legal Requirements & Program Regulations (LRPR)	10%	10%	9%	6%	-	10%	8%
Marketing/promotional materials	10%	9%	7%	10%	-	17%	23%
Other	1%	1%	2%	1%	33%	1%	-

Public libraries named access to depository materials (77%), FDLP.gov (65%), user access tools (47%), PURLs in catalog records (42%), and webinars/webcasts (40%) as some of the most important services provided by the FDLP.

<sup>13</sup> 2015 Biennial Survey and Needs Assessment, p. 67.

The 2015 Biennial Survey noted in the “Key Findings”<sup>14</sup> that all FDLs surveyed responded that “services that allow users to serve themselves are considered most important. This includes access to depository materials, user access tools, free access to fee-based Government databases, the fdlp.gov site, webinars/webcasts, etc.” The two most important services cited by public libraries in the 2015 Biennial Survey and Needs Assessment included:

- Access to depository materials as the most important service, 77%
- User access tools, 47%, an increase from 40% in the 2009 Biennial Survey

Administration and staff at public libraries have shared their perspectives on being in the FDLP. In a special report on public libraries presented at the DLC 2016 Spring Virtual Conference, the following quote described the importance of the Federal Depository Library Program for Benton Harbor Public Library. Frederick J. Kirby, former Director, Benton Harbor Public Library, noted that “participation in the depository library system connects our institution to the world outside our community. Both our staff and our users benefit from this connection to the ideas that come to us from statewide and national sources.”<sup>15</sup>

The importance of government documents to FDLs and their patrons was noted by Erin Guss, formerly at the St. Louis Public Library. She shared the libraries usage statistics at the DLC 2016 Spring Virtual Conference.<sup>16</sup>

- “In 2015, averaged 23 requests/month for holds on SuDoc items”
- “Approximately 70% of reference questions in Business, Government, Law Department relate in some way to government information”

Guss goes on to point out “the dichotomy: government documents are one unique aspect of the research and collections of SLPL and government documents infiltrate all departments.”<sup>17</sup>

In contrast, the following services were noted as the least important.<sup>18</sup>

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<sup>14</sup> 2015 Biennial Survey and Needs Assessment, p. 17

<sup>15</sup> 2016 DLC Spring Virtual Conference “At the Crossroads: Continuing the discussion of public depository libraries”; <http://www.fdlp.gov/file-repository/outreach/events/depository-library-council-dlc-meetings/2016-meeting-proceedings/2016-dlc-spring-virtual-meeting/2719-public-libraries-slides>, slide 4.

<sup>16</sup> 2016 DLC Spring Virtual Conference “At the Crossroads: Continuing the discussion of public depository libraries”, slide 7.

<sup>17</sup> 2016 DLC Spring Virtual Conference “At the Crossroads: Continuing the discussion of public depository libraries”, slide 8.

<sup>18</sup> 2015 Biennial Survey and Needs Assessment, p. 71

## Least Important Services – by Library Type

	Total	Academic	Federal Gov't	State Gov't	Local Gov't	Public	Special
<i>Base</i>	<i>1,139</i>	<i>823</i>	<i>44</i>	<i>78</i>	<i>6</i>	<i>175</i>	<i>13</i>
Marketing/promotional materials	39%	42%	50%	39%	17%	23%	23%
Conferences	38%	35%	25%	45%	50%	49%	46%
Authentication publications on GPO's FDSys	27%	25%	14%	22%	33%	38%	62%
Legal Requirements & Program Regulations (LRPR)	21%	19%	21%	22%	33%	25%	31%
askGPO	18%	19%	23%	17%	-	13%	39%
Collection development and management tools	11%	10%	18%	13%	17%	12%	15%
Webinars/webcasts	11%	11%	11%	5%	-	11%	15%
Cataloging to national standards	10%	8%	11%	14%	-	15%	31%
Free access to Government fee-based databases	10%	10%	7%	9%	-	12%	8%
Training	9%	10%	5%	4%	17%	5%	23%
Persistent identifier (PURLs) capability in cataloging records to full text	5%	4%	9%	6%	50%	5%	8%
FDLP.gov	2%	2%	9%	3%	17%	-	8%
User access tools	2%	2%	-	1%	-	3%	23%
Access to depository materials	1%	2%	-	-	-	1%	-
Other	8%	9%	7%	8%	-	5%	-

For public libraries, 49% of respondents found conferences to be a service of lesser importance. Authentication of government publications on FDSys was considered less important with 38% of respondents.

Following those were the Legal Requirements and Program Regulations material (25%) and marketing/promotional materials (23%).

Meeting the unmet needs of public libraries may be a first step in assisting them in providing government information services. Public libraries, like other FDLs, would like to see more digitized historical collections of Government publications (53%), including historical coverage of titles in FDSys (38%) and item selection flexibility based on subject (37%).<sup>19</sup>

<sup>19</sup> 2015 Biennial Survey and Needs Assessment, pp. 74-75



## Unmet Needs – by Library Type

- Academic and State Government libraries are more likely to lack pre-1976 cataloging records to OCLC as well as cataloging of and access to fugitive documents.
- Public libraries are more likely to need item selection flexibility based on geography and on recommendations for size of library. Academic libraries are more likely to need maps and data sets on FDsys and linked data.

	Total	Academic	Federal Gov't	State Gov't	Local Gov't	Public	Special
<i>Base</i>	<i>1,139</i>	<i>823</i>	<i>44</i>	<i>78</i>	<i>6</i>	<i>175</i>	<i>13</i>
Digitized historical collection of Government publications	66%	69%	64%	64%	50%	53%	85%
Additional historical coverage of titles in FDsys	52%	54%	59%	56%	33%	38%	54%
Add pre-1976 cataloging records to OCLC	45%	48%	34%	51%	67%	33%	23%
Item selection flexibility based on subject	37%	38%	32%	27%	17%	37%	39%
Cataloging of and access to fugitive documents	34%	37%	30%	37%	17%	19%	8%
Digitization	31%	30%	43%	32%	67%	27%	46%
Item selection flexibility based on collection	29%	29%	21%	23%	17%	32%	23%
Maps and data sets on FDsys	29%	33%	21%	18%	-	23%	23%
Item selection flexibility based on geography	27%	26%	7%	28%	33%	37%	31%
Classify publications using the LC Classification System	24%	27%	30%	24%	17%	7%	23%
Item selection flexibility based on recommendations for size of library	23%	23%	16%	12%	17%	32%	23%
Linked data	20%	23%	18%	12%	-	15%	8%
Print on demand	17%	17%	30%	14%	-	20%	15%
Preservation training	16%	14%	18%	24%	17%	18%	23%
Deposit of digital files	15%	16%	18%	8%	17%	14%	23%
Classify publications using the Dewey Decimal System	9%	4%	-	9%	17%	34%	23%
None	8%	7%	9%	6%	17%	13%	-
Other	7%	7%	-	1%	-	10%	-

Public libraries also expressed a need for item selection flexibility based on geography (37%) and on recommendations for size of library (32%).

Not surprisingly, 34% of the public libraries would like to see Government publications classified using the Dewey Decimal System.

As part of the 2015 Biennial Survey, libraries were asked about their level of satisfaction with existing FDLP services and tools.<sup>20</sup>

<sup>20</sup> 2015 Biennial Survey and Needs Assessment, pp. 80-81



The tables below measure satisfaction level of FDLP services and tools

## Satisfaction with FDLP Services & Tools – by Library Type

Top 2 Box Score (% Extremely/Somewhat Satisfied)	Total	Academic	Federal Gov't	State Gov't	Local Gov't	Public	Special
<i>Base (varies)</i>	<i>1,139</i>	<i>823</i>	<i>44</i>	<i>78</i>	<i>6</i>	<i>175</i>	<i>13</i>
FDLP.gov	86%	85%	79%	93%	83%	86%	73%
FDsys	82%	83%	81%	87%	67%	76%	80%
Training/Webinars	75%	77%	70%	72%	83%	72%	55%
Catalog of U.S. Government Publications (CGP)	74%	74%	69%	76%	67%	75%	64%
Tangible distribution	71%	73%	59%	75%	67%	65%	46%
Cataloging	71%	72%	62%	74%	67%	62%	73%
Communication (FDLP Connection, social media)	68%	68%	70%	70%	40%	66%	46%
Federal Depository Library Directory (FDLD)	66%	65%	65%	78%	83%	62%	64%
Web Tools for Collection Development/Maintenance	66%	66%	53%	60%	67%	71%	44%
Free access to Government fee-based databases	65%	65%	49%	60%	50%	70%	67%
Acquisition of materials from agencies for FDLP distribution/dissemination	64%	65%	42%	71%	50%	66%	64%
askGPO	62%	62%	54%	71%	67%	61%	67%
Claims	61%	62%	40%	64%	67%	58%	40%
Classification	60%	62%	50%	65%	50%	50%	60%
Ben's Guide	60%	57%	52%	64%	80%	68%	78%
Marketing Promotion Support	57%	56%	33%	69%	33%	60%	55%
New Electronic Titles (NET)	57%	57%	58%	55%	50%	55%	50%
Conferences	56%	60%	58%	55%	-	40%	44%
Operational Guidance (LRPR)	49%	50%	41%	54%	33%	47%	22%
Cataloging Record Distribution Program (CRDP)	46%	49%	35%	50%	50%	36%	33%
National Needs & Offers	43%	42%	19%	52%	67%	47%	50%
Public Access Assessments	39%	39%	15%	49%	20%	42%	33%
Digitalregistry.gov	37%	38%	39%	38%	40%	31%	50%
MetaLib	34%	36%	26%	37%	20%	25%	33%
Other	41%	40%	50%	60%	-	25%	-

A number of web-based resources ranked high in satisfaction among public libraries: FDLP.gov (86%), FDsys (76%), CGP (75%), training and webinars (72%), web tools for collection development and maintenance (71%), and free access to Government fee-based databases (70%).

#### **Recommendation Point 4. Compile this data into a report;**

This report addresses the research and compilation of data requested in Point 4.

#### **Recommendation Point 5. Based on the report, attempt to identify possible changes to current FDLP policies and procedures, as well as any potential enhancements or benefits, that would encourage existing public library depositories to remain in the Program, and that would provide an incentive for public libraries, not already in the FDLP, to apply for depository designation in Congressional districts that have vacancies.**

Based on the research and findings presented in this report, LSCM has committed to investigating several key initiatives discussed below. These initiatives should serve the dual purpose of not only growing public library participation but also addressing the specific needs and common issues within the public library community.

An over-arching theme in developing these initiatives has been a focus at LSCM for some time and has been echoed in the FDLP community. The concept of a user-centric and service oriented approach was the impetus for the FDLP Work Practice Study. Contracted through Ithaka S+R, the study utilizes ethnographic methods to gather information on how libraries use FDLP tools. The objective is to support development and implementation of a new national technology infrastructure with a more holistic system of cataloging and indexing services. The goal is, as with many projects within the FDLP, to increase public access to information by improving and supporting work processes of depository librarians.

At the heart of these initiatives is a shift from the traditional collection-centric operation to a more service and user-centric focus. Key elements of a service-centric approach are:

- Flexibility and agility; the ability to respond quickly to changing business needs.
- Moving away from reactive status and operations that address issues on a 'loudest first' basis and towards a business-aware, proactive practice.
- Products and services that are customized to address the needs of a specific customer group, and designing these products and services from the customer perspective.
- Customer engagement.

These elements represent the qualities that GPO and LSCM hope to integrate into the process of designing tools and services.

A critical element in this service-centric approach is looking at services and tools from the customer perspective, or outside in. Engaging the libraries as the front line users of the services and products presents a key opportunity to get feedback from the library community on specific services LSCM could provide to assist libraries as they turn to more user-centric strategies. This reverses the existing trend of developing products and then introducing to the libraries.

Using this approach, LSCM began to focus not only on new services and tools we could offer to public libraries, but also review the current services and tools offered. The top five problems/challenges cited in the 2009 and 2015 Biennial Survey and Needs Assessment were:

2009 Problems/Challenges	2015 Problems/Challenges
• Budget constraints	• Increased workload
• Staffing reduction/shortage	• Staff reduction/shortage
• Increased workload	• Marketing/promoting services awareness
• Cost Containment	• Budget constraints
• Physical Space	• Keeping up with technology

The challenge in Point 5 of the DLC recommendation is to develop services and user-centric strategies that incorporate the unique issues facing public libraries.

Over the next fiscal year, LSCM will conduct an analysis on several of the existing services and tools now provided to libraries. The purpose of the analysis—applying the user-centric model—will be to determine the value of the services and tools in terms of operations at all libraries, including public libraries and what, if any, changes need to be made to make the programs more automated. The goal is to address the workload issues through streamlining FDLP processes while providing more electronic access and assist libraries in delivering U.S. Government information resources.

#### **LSCM Activities planned or in stages of implementation:**

- 1. Improvements to the Library Services Systems (LSS)** - Analyze the current technical systems and determine the feasibility of creating a single aggregate data source for several LSCM information tools being used by the FDLs in managing Government documents. This includes the FDLP.gov site, the CGP, and the Depository Selection Information Management System (DSIMS). The analysis will utilize a work-practice approach and result in the development of qualitative requirements for a new system.
- 2. Customer Relationship Management tool** - Analyze and research replacement models for LSCM's current customer relationship management (CRM) tool, askGPO. Objectives include developing a platform that increases outreach, productivity, and responsiveness, while building customer information bases, or knowledge bases, that can more easily assist in the

operational activities of the FDLs. Currently, the majority of information about our libraries in the FDLP is in tangible format, which is only available at main GPO. Ultimately, the new CRM will increase the interaction between LSCM and FDLs and provide quicker response time.

3. **Target and solicit new public libraries into FDLP** - Develop a program for expanding the number of public libraries in the FDLP. In late 2015, LSCM's Outreach and Support unit undertook the task of updating the list of vacancies by congressional districts in the FDLP. After comparing them to existing designated libraries, it was determined that a total of 314 congressional vacancies and 39 senatorial vacancies currently exist.

LSCM Outreach and Support unit staff are formulating a plan to reach out to potential libraries to gauge interest in joining the FDLP, with an eye toward recruiting libraries in key states and regions lacking public depository libraries. Procedures have been developed for bringing more libraries into the FDLP and these will be tested during trips to public libraries in districts with vacancies. A planned upcoming trip to Texas libraries in late 2016 was used as a pilot for library recruitment.

4. **Build stronger partnerships and enhance support with all libraries within the FDLP** - After several years of budget cuts which impacted travel, LSCM is again visiting libraries in the FDLP as part of our commitment to better support and engage with libraries and strengthen partnerships. The visits allow LSCM staff to meet with key library staff, provide FDLP consultation services, answer questions, and offer advice and support on topics related to the administration and management of the specific depository. Since the 'GPO on the Go' initiative began, LSCM staff have visited approximately 250 libraries. Of these visits, 34 were to public libraries:

1. Oakland Public Library (CA)
2. Denver Public Library (CO)
3. Phoenix Public Library, Burton Barr Central Library (AZ)
4. Public Library of Stockton and San Joaquin County (CA)
5. Sacramento Public Library, Central Library (CA)
6. San Francisco Public Library (CA)
7. Sonoma County Library, Central Library (CA)
8. District of Columbia Public Library (DC)
9. Daytona Beach Regional Library (FL)
10. Jacksonville Public Library, Main Library (FL)
11. Louisville Free Public Library (KY)
12. Boston Public Library (MA)
13. New Bedford Free Public Library (MA)
14. Worcester Public Library (MA)
15. Portland Public Library (ME)
16. Detroit Public Library (MI)
17. St. Louis Public Library (MO)
18. Brooklyn Public Library, Central Library (NY)
19. New York Public Library, Lenox Branch/Science, Industry and Business (NY)

20. Queens Borough Public Library (NY)
21. Cleveland Public Library (OH)
22. Cleveland Public Library, Public Administration Library (OH)
23. Westlake Porter Public Library (OH)
24. Multnomah County Library (OR)
25. Free Library of Philadelphia (PA)
26. Newport Public Library (RI)
27. Florence County Library (SC)
28. Memphis Public Library & Information Center (TN)
29. El Paso Public Library (TX)
30. Fort Vancouver Regional Library (WA)
31. King County Library System, Bellevue Regional Library (WA)
32. Milwaukee Public Library (WI)
33. Waukesha Public Library (WI)
34. Campbell County Public Library (WY)

This dedicated outreach has provided LSCM staff with insights into the current operational needs of FDLs as well as presented the opportunity for LSCM staff to assist with unique needs that can enhance the library's depository program. Some of the operational issues that LSCM has demonstrated include

- helping libraries convert their selection profile to more digital or online resources;
- providing shortcuts to streamline the creation of weeding lists;
- helping libraries sync their reference operation (collection development) with their cataloging operation; and
- educating library staff on the nature of digital depository collections and how this can be achieved in the library.

5. **Engage with the Public Library Community** - A number of staff attended the Public Library Association Annual Conference in April 2016 in Denver. Staff met and spoke with attendees in the convention hall at the GPO booth and attended a wide range of sessions on current topics in public libraries, such as the changing nature of collections and the evolving role that public libraries play as a central space in the community. This was an excellent opportunity for staff to meet public librarians, engage with attendees during conference sessions and at the GPO booth, and learn about the latest trends on issues relevant to the public library community. As shown in library visits, these personal interactions generate valuable insights that are then shared with colleagues in LSCM.
6. **Briefing and informational materials highlighting the values and benefits of the FDLP** – This initiative would include the development of briefing materials, handouts, informational guides, and similar products to assist librarians in key areas.

- a. Highlighting the benefits of participation in the Federal Depository Library Program, which could be used to discuss reasons for being an FDLP to library administration and directors.
  - b. Quick Guides – materials focusing on FDLP services that are designed for library staff wearing multiple hats that may not work exclusively with Government information, such as quick guides to searching and using the Catalog of U.S. Government Publications, DSIMS, **govinfo**, and other resources. These would be especially useful to staff in public libraries, small academic libraries, and others that may have staff or resource issues.
  - c. Digital or mostly electronic depository libraries – materials designed to highlight the benefits of being an ‘all electronic’ or mostly electronic library, as well as assistance in delivering services for Government information in electronic format.
7. **FDLP Academy training specifically for libraries in cataloging and managing collections** - The 2015 Biennial Survey and Needs Assessment noted that the use of webinars/webcasts increased from 3% in 2009 to 33% in 2015. The FDLP operational webinars cover a variety of relevant topics including:
- Your Public Library: First Stop for Government Information
  - Four Starting Points for Finding Government Information
  - Government Documents for the Masses: Collection Development for Public Libraries
  - Promoting the Depository Collection While Supporting Research
  - Creating Online Federal Depository Collections: Case Studies
  - Planning your Federal Depository Celebration

Considering the increasing use of webinars and webcasts, LSCM will continue ongoing efforts to pursue webinars and training on topics of relevance for public libraries and host webinars by public library staff.

8. **Develop subject guides on general topics for use in public libraries on Government documents** - LSCM is investigating the possibility of starting a new program based on specific service-centric collection requirements. Working with a targeted category of libraries, a list of top 10 patron collection requests would be compiled and managed by an LSCM librarian. Resources would be organized by subject or topic, such as immigration, education, etc., and populated with information on electronic and tangible resources discovered by LSCM staff through daily interaction with processing new resources. Once compiled, the resource would then be available electronically as a quick resource.
9. **Metadata and Classification Assistance** - Many public libraries, as well as other libraries in the FDLP, use the Dewey Decimal classification system to catalog and organize their collections. LSCM assigns Library of Congress (LC) classification numbers to congressional hearings and is also investigating the feasibility of assigning Dewey numbers to Government information resources. As a first step, when using copy cataloging where a Dewey number has already been assigned, LSCM staff will assess the Dewey number and include it in

bibliographic records in the CGP. LSCM is also investigating training for staff in Dewey and LC classification to expand our ability to assign these numbers to materials in the FDLP and Cataloging & Indexing Program.

10. **Further Analysis** – LSCM will continue to further analyze both internal and external data sources as well as incorporate feedback from the DLC and FDLP community. Additionally, LSCM intends to continue to monitor trends in the public library community and work closely with those that are in the FDLP.



## Conclusion

The local public library continues to transform its service model, including its services to Federal resources. Compared with other Federal depository libraries, public libraries serve arguably the broadest range of members of the local community. The programming typically found in public libraries is evidence of this: after-school programs, literacy tutoring for ESL communities, book club and summer reading programs, multicultural events, and other services to individuals of diverse backgrounds.

Unlike the more specific (but still public-serving) research needs of law, academic, Federal agency, and other depository libraries, it is the public library that is most often engaged in serving peoples of all ages, races, cultures, economic groups, and educational backgrounds in the community.

The diversity of the public library community plays a role in engaging neighbors on a local level and brings a richness to the greater city, county, and region. The physical library as a central public space is well known, from serving as a community meeting space for local and regional discussions, to serving as a safe, welcoming, and open space in changing times. The public library funding that comes from the community, state, and other sources can also serve as an indicator of the economic climate.

In keeping with both GPO's strategic goals and the challenge to become more service and user-centric, LSCM has begun to explore opportunities to develop services and tools that will address the changing needs of the public libraries within the FDLP. As mentioned in this paper, the discussion on public libraries and the FDLP has been an ongoing topic. There have been many suggested action items, tools, and materials for LSCM to develop and implement for public libraries. The end result of enhanced tools, services, activity, and engagement will not only benefit public libraries, but also enrich the user experience for all Federal depository libraries.

LSCM will continue to engage in this ongoing discussion and keep public library concerns in the forefront. This includes keeping the DLC and greater FDLP community apprised of the progress of our plans, actions and future initiatives that result from this analysis and report.



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## Appendix

The following 48 public libraries relinquished depository status between 2007 and-2015.

Inactive date	Parent Institution of Library	Library Name and Type (if available)	Reason for Drop	Regional
Dec-07	Ramsey County Public Library	Roseville Library Roseville, MN	No longer can carry out requirements of program.	0295 University of Minnesota
Dec-07		Elko County Library Elko, NV	No longer carry out the requirements of the program. Insufficient staff for processing.	No Regional
Jul-08	New York Public Library	Mid-Manhattan Library New York, NY	Reason unknown; data unavailable.	0387 NY State Library Albany
Oct-08	Hennepin County Library System	Southdale-Hennepin Library Minneapolis, MN	Staffing and space issues; HCL has merged with the Minneapolis Public.	0295 University of Minnesota
Jan-09		Trenton Public Library Trenton, NJ City/County Public Library	Library is facing severe budget cuts and branch closures.	0376 Newark Public Library
Feb-09	Macomb County Library	Macomb County Library Clinton Township, MI	Library closed.	0295 University of Minnesota
Mar-09	County of Los Angeles Public Library	Culver City Julian Dixon Library Culver City, CA	Staff limitations, costs, and lack of space. Consolidating resources, other libraries in system are depository.	0040 California State Library
Mar-09	County of Los Angeles Public Library	Carson Regional Library Carson, CA	Staff limitations, costs, and lack of space. Consolidating resources, other libraries in system are depository.	0040 California State Library
Mar-09	County of Los Angeles Public Library	West Covina Regional Library West Covina, CA	Staff limitations, costs, and lack of space. Consolidating resources, other libraries in system are depository.	0040 California State Library
Mar-09	County of Los Angeles Public Library	Valencia Library Valencia, CA	Staff limitations, costs, and lack of space. Consolidating resources, other libraries in system are depository.	0040 California State Library
Mar-09	County of Los Angeles Public Library	Angelo M. Iacoboni Public Library Lakewood, CA	Staff limitations, costs, and lack of space. Consolidating resources, other libraries in system are depository.	0040 California State Library

Inactive date	Parent Institution of Library	Library Name and Type (if available)	Reason for Drop	Regional
May-09	County of Los Angeles Public Library	Montebello Regional Library Montebello, CA	Staff limitations, costs, and lack of space. Consolidating resources, other libraries in system are depository.	0040 California State Library
Dec-09		Aurora Public Library Aurora, CO City/County Public Library	Bond measure didn't pass, staff layoffs.	0069 University of Colorado, Boulder
Jan-10		Fort Worth Library Fort Worth, TX  City/County Public Library	Staffing, space, electronic access.	0591 Texas State Library & Archives 0614 Texas Tech University
Mar-10	Jefferson County Public Library	Lakewood Library Lakewood, CO City/county Public Library	Budget constraints, cannot fulfill depository responsibilities.	0069 University of Colorado, Boulder
Apr-10	Brevard County Library System	Central Brevard Library Cocoa, FL City/County Public Library	Staff loss, budget cutbacks.	0103 University of Florida
Apr-10	Chesapeake Public Library	Central Library Chesapeake, VA Municipal Public Library	Changing needs of patrons. Evolving mission has changed the services they provide.	0640 University of Virginia
Jul-10	County of Los Angeles Public Library	Lancaster Public Library Lancaster, CA	Staff limitations, costs, and lack of space. Consolidating resources, other libraries in system are depository.	0040 California State Library
Oct-10		Providence Public Library Providence, RI Other (state funding)	Space crunch, staffing cuts.	0075 Connecticut State Library
Oct-10	Marathon County Public Library	Marathon County Public Library Wausau, WI City/County Public Library	Staffing cuts, service cuts, access to electronic resources.	0664 University of Wisconsin Madison 0670 Milwaukee Public Library
Jan-11		Hartford Public Library Hartford, CT Municipal Public Library	Library renovation, space constraints, lack of staff for technical processing, low usage of the collection.	0075 Connecticut State Library
Mar-11	City of Madison, Wisconsin	Madison Public Library Madison, WI	Library undergoing major renovation and library cannot afford storage of	0664 University of Wisconsin Madison

Inactive date	Parent Institution of Library	Library Name and Type (if available)	Reason for Drop	Regional
		City/County Public Library	material during renovation and will not have space for collection when renovation complete.	0670 Milwaukee Public Library
Apr-11		Richmond Public Library Richmond, CA City/County Public Library	Reason unknown; data unavailable.	0040 California State Library
May-11	Mesa Public Library	Mesa Public Library Mesa, AZ Municipal Public Library	Staff issues.	0022 Arizona State Library
Aug-11		Oak Park Public Library Oak Park, IL Other public library	Staff retired.	0140 Illinois State Library
Aug-11	North Olympic Library System	Port Angeles Library Port Angeles, WA City/County Public Library	Online access, staff reduction, local needs greater than needs for federal information.	0642 Washington State Library
Oct-11		Lakeland Public Library Lakeland, FL City/County Public Library	Tangibles take too much staff time and are not used much (in closed stacks without catalog records).	0103 University of Florida
Nov-11	Pueblo City-County Library District	Robert Hoag Rawlings Public Library Pueblo, CO City/County Public Library	Print is no longer needed and intend on collaborating with CSU-Pueblo Library for gov info in the region.	0069 University of Colorado Boulder
Nov-11		Bismarck Veterans Memorial Public Library Bismarck, ND City/County Public Library	Patrons want electronic access, remote access, usage extremely low.	0455 North Dakota State University 0456 University of North Dakota
Jan-12		Ontario City Library Ontario, CA City/County Public Library	Small collection, low circulation, customers able to get info off websites, no funding.	0040 California State Library
Apr-12		Warwick Public Library Warwick, RI Municipal Public Library	Reducing collections-depository, reference, others.	0075 Connecticut State Library
Jul-12		Altoona Area Public Library Altoona, PA City/County Public Library	Not cost effective, budget cuts, staff costs.	0508 State Library of Pennsylvania

Inactive date	Parent Institution of Library	Library Name and Type (if available)	Reason for Drop	Regional
Jul-13	Torrance Public Library	Katy Geissert Civic Center Library Torrance, CA Municipal Public Library	Space, staffing, use.	0040 California State Library
Jul-13		Royal Oak Public Library Royal Oak, MI Municipal Public Library	Depository too costly; shrinking staffing levels; role of library has changed and no longer a match for the FDLP, use online resources to access U.S. Government information.	0295 University of Minnesota
Aug-13	Central Arkansas Library System	Main Library Little Rock, AR City/County Public Library	Coordinator retired.	0036B University of Arkansas
Dec-13	Pima County Public Library	Joel D. Valdez Main Library Tucson, AZ City/County Public Library	Space, staffing.	0022 Arizona State Library
Jan-14	San Antonio Public Libraries	San Antonio Central Library San Antonio, TX	Reason unknown; data unavailable.	0591 Texas State Library & Archives 0614 Texas Tech University
Feb-14		Lawton Public Library Lawton, OK City/County Public Library	Reduced staffing and space needed for higher priority projects.	0488 Oklahoma State Library <i>0487 Oklahoma Dept of Libraries (no longer Regional as of 2015)</i>
Apr-14		Chattanooga Public Library Chattanooga, TN City/County Public Library	Low usage, PAA issues.	0590A University of Memphis
Apr-14		Racine Public Library Racine, WI City/County Public Library	Low usage, no longer has the staff time to devote to collection.	0664 University of Wisconsin Madison 0670 Milwaukee Public Library

Inactive date	Parent Institution of Library	Library Name and Type (if available)	Reason for Drop	Regional
Dec-14	Livonia Public Library	Civic Center Branch Livonia, MI Municipal Public Library	Low usage, staff loss, budget cuts, filtering issues.	0295 University of Minnesota
Dec-14	Suffolk Cooperative Library System	East Islip Public Library East Islip, LI School District Public Library	Coordinator retiring, nearby FDLs, moving away from basic reference.	0387 New York State Library
Dec-14	Onondaga County Public Library	Robert P. Kinchen Central Library Syracuse, NY City/County Public Library	Reason unknown; data unavailable.	0387 New York State Library
Jan-15	Bucks County Free Library	Bucks County Library Center Doylestown, PA City/County Public Library	Reason unknown; data unavailable.	0508 State Library of Pennsylvania
Mar-15		Clearwater Public Library Clearwater, FL City/County Public Library	Reason unknown; data unavailable.	0103 University of Florida
Apr-15		Public Library of Brookline Brookline, MA Municipal Public Library	Documented low patron demand for U.S. Government information, lack of staff and library space.	0268A Boston Public Library
Jun-15		Des Moines Public Library Des Moines, IA City/County Public Library	Reduced budget, reduced hours, reduced staffing, service priorities changed.	0189A University of Iowa
Jun-15		Clark County Public Library Springfield, OH City/County Public Library	Materials patrons require are all online.	0460 State Library of Ohio

\*As noted, discovery during the process of responding to this recommendation shows the actual number of public libraries that relinquished FDL status from fall 2007 through summer 2015 is 48.