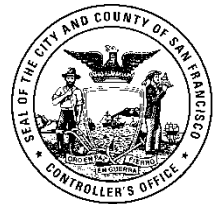


City and County of San Francisco

Office of the Controller – City Services Auditor

City Services Benchmarking Report: Public Libraries



June 27, 2013

CONTROLLER'S OFFICE

CITY SERVICES AUDITOR

The City Services Auditor was created within the Controller's Office through an amendment to the City Charter that was approved by voters in November 2003. Under Appendix F to the City Charter, the City Services Auditor has broad authority for:

- Reporting on the level and effectiveness of San Francisco's public services and benchmarking the city to other public agencies and cities.
- Conducting financial and performance audits of city departments, contractors, and functions to assess efficiency and effectiveness of processes and services.
- Operating a whistleblower hotline and website and investigating reports of waste, fraud, and abuse of city resources.
- Ensuring the financial integrity and improving the overall performance and efficiency of city government.

Project Team:

Peg Stevenson, Director
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City and County of San Francisco

Office of the Controller - City Services Auditor

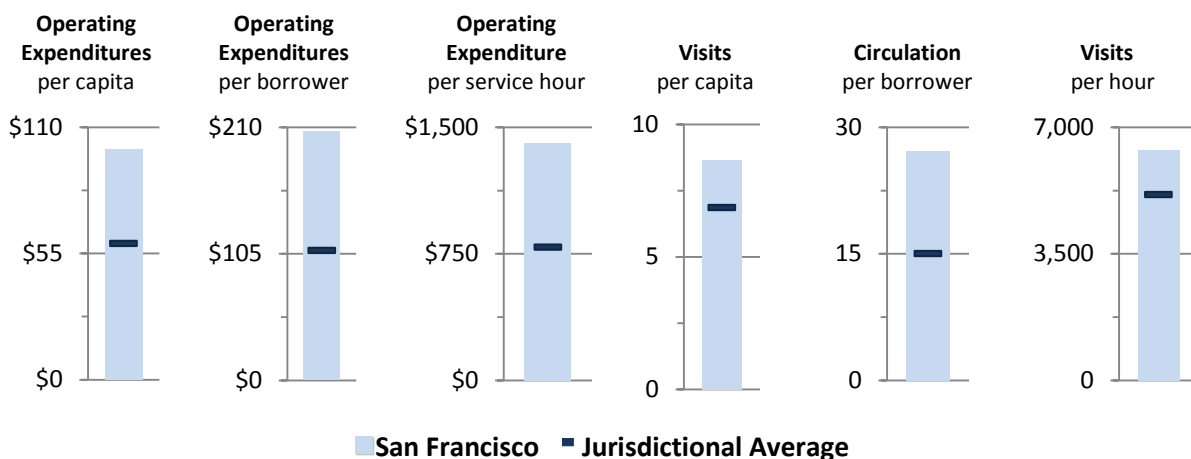
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Purpose

Appendix F, Section 101 of the City and County of San Francisco Charter requires that the City Services Auditor (CSA) monitor the level and effectiveness of services provided by the City and County of San Francisco. Specifically, CSA shall review performance and cost benchmarks and conduct comparisons of the cost and performance of San Francisco City government with other cities, counties and public agencies performing similar functions. This report, which includes data from 2011, provides a benchmarking analysis for public libraries. Eight cities were compared. These are San Francisco (City/County), Los Angeles, Oakland, San Jose, Boston, Washington D.C., Philadelphia, and Seattle.

Highlights



- San Francisco's expenditures for library services are typically higher than the average of the other jurisdictions reviewed. As illustrated above, San Francisco reports almost twice the average in operating expenditures per capita, borrower, and service hour compared to other jurisdictions.
- San Francisco reports higher than average library usage in visits per capita and per hour and circulation per borrower (see above).
- San Francisco reports the highest program attendance per capita while offering an above average number of programs per capita, but is below the average for program attendance per \$1,000 of expenditures (see page 18).
- San Francisco has the most branch libraries per square mile, one branch for every 1.8 square miles. San Francisco is at the average for branches per 100,000 in population, with .56 per square mile (see page 20).

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Photo courtesy of SFPL

Scope of the Report

This report is part of a broad effort by the Controller's Office to conduct benchmarking, performance management, and best practices comparisons of San Francisco's services. For more information, visit the Controller's website at www.sfcontroller.org/index.aspx?page=75.

The Public Libraries Benchmarking Report is the third in a series of reports to compare San Francisco's services, expenditures and performance levels relative to other jurisdictions. The report utilizes publically available data for fiscal year (FY) 2011 from the Public Library Data Service (PLDS).¹ The PLDS is an annual survey conducted by the Public Library Association. It captures self-reported data on staffing, finances, output measures, interlibrary loaning, and technology provisions, from public libraries throughout the United States and Canada.

This report provides comparative data in the following categories:

- | | |
|--|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Population and Registered Borrowers | <input type="checkbox"/> Financial and Staffing |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Library Usage | <input type="checkbox"/> Branch Libraries |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Library Holdings | |

The eight cities included in this report are: San Francisco (City/County), Los Angeles, Oakland, San Jose, Boston, Washington D.C., Philadelphia and Seattle. Cities were selected because, with the exception of Los Angeles, and Philadelphia, they are a similar population size and they all include a main or central library.

The **San Francisco Public Library**, located in the City and County of San Francisco, consists of a main library and 27 branch libraries across the city. In addition to the Library's collection of 3.4 million items in various formats and over 50 languages, it offers free access to computers, multiple technologies, and educational, literary, and recreational programming.

The **Los Angeles Public Library**, located in Los Angeles, California, serves residents of Los Angeles. The library has 72 branches and a central library. It is a department of the City of Los Angeles and is governed by the Board of Library Commissioners, which sets policies and is a strong library advocate with the public and elected officials. Los Angeles voters recently approved a ballot initiative that increases dedicated spending for the Los Angeles Public Library system by \$50 million over the next few years without raising taxes.

The **Oakland Public Library**, located in Oakland, California, is a part of the City of Oakland and includes a Main Library and 16 branch libraries, a Second Start Adult Literacy Program, the Tool Lending Library, and the African-American Museum and Library. The Oakland Public Library Board of Trustees is responsible for setting overall policy and overseeing library finances. The Board is composed of five trustees who are appointed by the Mayor for five year terms and two ex-officio members, the Superintendent of Schools and the Mayor.

¹ Public Library Data Service (PLDS). (n.d.). *PLDS and Plametrics*. Retrieved June 13, 2013, from American Library Association: <http://www.ala.org/pla/publications/plds>

The **San José Public Library**, located in San José, California in the Bay Area, is the largest public library system between San Francisco and Los Angeles. In 2011, it received the National Medal for Museum and Library Service, the nation's highest honor for a library. The main library, King Library, is the only co-managed, city-academic library in the nation; jointly operated with one library card and one computer system. The library holds the world's largest archive on John Steinbeck and the largest collection of Ludwig van Beethoven materials outside of Europe.

The **Boston Public Library**, located in Boston, Massachusetts, was founded in 1848. It was the first publicly supported municipal library in America, the first public library to lend books, the first to have a branch library, and the first to have a children's room. The Boston Public Library has a Central Library, 25 branches, a literacy center, map center, business library, neighborhood-based services, and a website filled with digital content and services.

The **D.C. Public Library**, located in Washington D.C., was created by an act of Congress in 1896. The library has a central library and 25 branches. The library is an independent agency of the District of Columbia municipal government, managed by a Chief Librarian who is selected and reviewed by a Board of Library Trustees. The Board of Library Trustees is appointed by the Mayor, subject to review and approval by the Council of the District of Columbia.

The **Free Library of Philadelphia**, located in Philadelphia, Pennsylvania, is the tenth largest public library system in the United States. Besides the Parkway Central Library in downtown Philadelphia, the system also operates 53 neighborhood library locations in the city's many neighborhoods. The governance of the library is unique among public libraries across the nation, as it is neither a city agency nor nonprofit organization. The library is governed by both an independent city agency managed by its own board of directors. The Free Library features the Edwin A. Fleisher Collection of Orchestral Music, which is the world's largest lending library of orchestral performance sets.

The **Seattle Public Library**, located in Seattle Washington, was founded in 1890. It includes a Central Library, Mobile Services and 25 branches. In 2009, the Seattle Public Library completed ten years of building renewal and expansion, which renovated or replaced all 22 branches that were in the system as of 1998, added four new branch libraries, and built the Central Library. In 2012, the Seattle Public Library was awarded the top rating among large libraries for the third year in a row in the Library Journal Index of Public Library Service 2012.



Photo courtesy of SFPL

Jurisdictional Overview for Key Measures

| Jurisdiction | Legal Population* | Service Area (Miles²) | Operating Expenditures | Registered Borrowers | Holdings | Branches | Annual Circulation |
|---------------------|--------------------------|---|-------------------------------|-----------------------------|-----------------|-----------------|---------------------------|
| San Francisco, CA | 812,820 | 48 | \$81,423,656 | 394,453 | 2,675,622 | 27 | 10,707,477 |
| Los Angeles, CA | 3,792,621 | 470 | \$85,444,942 | 1,231,764 | 6,459,552 | 72 | 15,144,804 |
| Oakland, CA | 413,783 | 53 | \$22,652,676 | 229,145 | 1,417,416 | 17 | 2,282,657 |
| San Jose, CA | 958,789 | 180 | \$33,348,655 | 737,153 | 2,270,646 | 18 | 13,560,762 |
| Boston, MA | 617,594 | 89 | \$43,094,795 | 510,966 | 16,140,023 | 26 | 3,534,412 |
| Washington, D.C. | 617,996 | 68 | \$37,341,119 | 329,313 | 1,832,116 | 24 | 3,059,432 |
| Philadelphia, PA | 1,547,297 | 135 | \$79,624,419 | 584,775 | 5,043,943 | 52 | 7,189,582 |
| Seattle, WA | 614,000 | 84 | \$49,581,169 | 456,534 | 2,403,693 | 26 | 10,932,677 |

*The number of people who reside within the legal service area of the library. The legal service area of a library is the population within the boundaries of the geographic area the library was established to serve.²



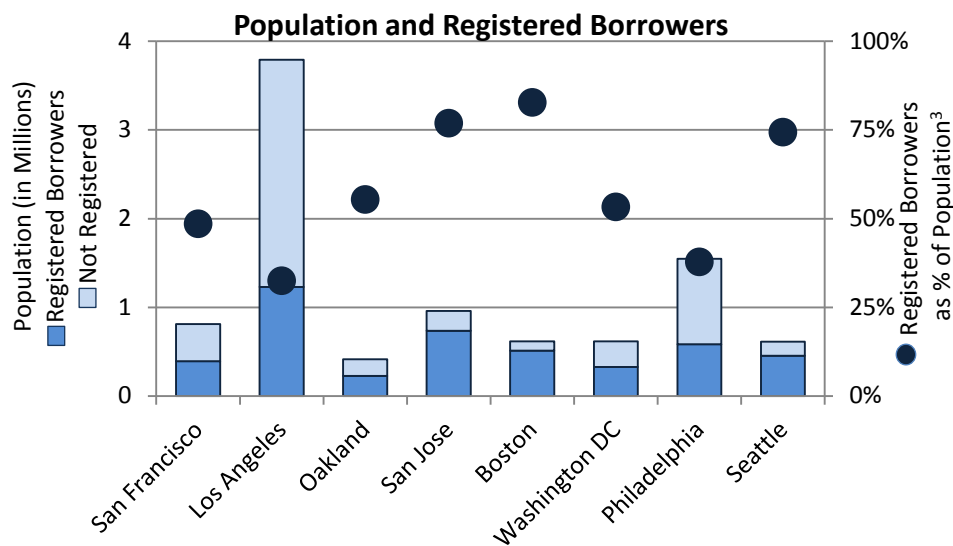
Photo courtesy of SFPL

² *The Library Research Service Definition of Terms*. (n.d.). Retrieved June 13, 2013, from The Library Research Service: <http://www.lrs.org/data-tools/public-libraries/definition-of-terms/>

Findings

A. Population and Registered Borrowers

Libraries register users to provide borrowing privileges for physical materials, digital resources, and other library benefits such as access to online research tools. Libraries work to register as many people as possible to provide the public with all the benefits the libraries have to offer. Please note: any resident of California is allowed to register as a borrower with the San Francisco Public Library, meaning that not all registered borrowers are residents of their jurisdiction. This is also the case with the other jurisdictions examined. Libraries will periodically purge registrations to remove non-active borrowers from the system. All jurisdictions included in this report purged their library registrations within the last three years to ensure more accurate counts of borrowers.



- For registered borrowers as a percentage of the population, San Francisco (49%) is lower than the jurisdictional average (58%).
- Boston (83%) has the highest amount of registered borrowers as a percentage of population.
- Los Angeles (32%) and Philadelphia (38%) have the fewest registered borrowers as a percentage of population; these two cities also have the largest populations of the observed jurisdictions.

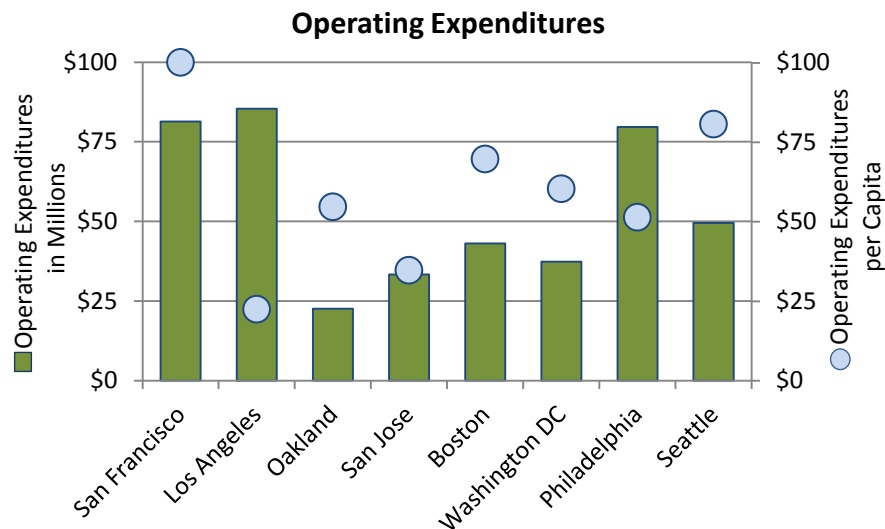
³ Registered borrowers as a percentage of the population is a calculation of the number registered borrowers divided by the total population of the jurisdiction (registered borrowers/population * 100%).

B. Financial and Staffing

Income and expenditure measures continue to provide operational insights for many libraries and are included in the PLDS report and library statistical reports. Operating finances are defined as follows: “the current and recurrent income for and cost necessary to the provision of library services, such as personnel, library materials, binding supplies, repair or replacement of existing furnishings and equipment, and costs incurred in the operation and maintenance of the physical facility.”⁴

The average income and expenditures for public libraries decreased in FY2011. According to the 2010–2011 Public Library Funding & Technology Access Study (PLFTAS), more public libraries reported fiscal decreases for the third consecutive year. The largest impact was experienced by urban libraries (55 percent of total); nearly 30 percent of urban libraries reported a decrease in service hours.⁵

In FY2010, California received \$30.4 million in state-level support for public library programs, which provided per capita allocations, support for interlibrary loans, and literacy instruction; this funding was reduced by 50 percent in FY2011. Additional state-level cuts to public libraries were introduced in Governor Brown’s first budget in FY2012, which eliminated all funding for public library programs and made a \$1.1 million cut to the State Library administration budget.⁴

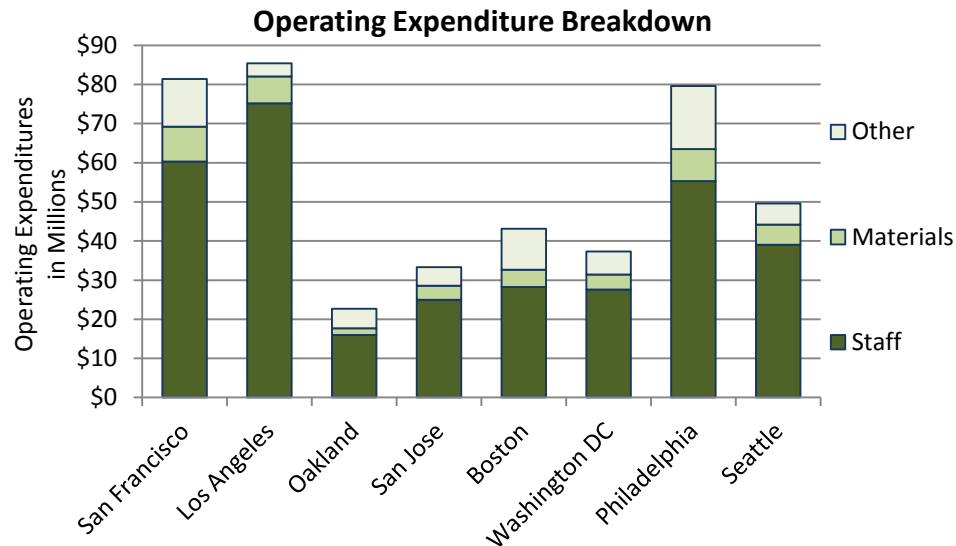


- San Francisco has the highest operating expenditures per capita at \$100.17, far higher than the average of the selected jurisdictions at \$59.33. Los Angeles has the lowest operating expenditures per capita at \$22.53.
- Only Los Angeles (\$85.4 million) has higher total operating expenditures than San Francisco (\$81.4 million). However, Los Angeles has a population that is more than four times larger than San Francisco.
- Oakland (\$22.7 million) has the lowest overall operating expenditures, but has higher per capita expenditures (\$54.75) than Los Angeles (\$22.53), San Jose (\$34.78), and Philadelphia (\$51.46).

⁴ Public Library Association. (2012). *PLDS Questionnaire Worksheet*. Retrieved June 19, 2013, from [pla.countingopinions.com: https://pla.countingopinions.com/docs/pla/2012SurveyWPDF.pdf](https://pla.countingopinions.com/docs/pla/2012SurveyWPDF.pdf)

⁵ *Public Library Funding and Technology Access Study, 2010-11*. (n.d.). Retrieved June 17, 2013, from American Library Association: http://www.ala.org/research/initiatives/plftas/2010_2011

Operational expenditures can be broken into three major categories: staff, material, and other expenditures. As a percentage of operating expenditures, staff expenditures make up the largest portion. If staff expenditures are extremely high, it may indicate that other aspects of library operations lack adequate funding, and, if extremely low, it may indicate a lack of professionally trained library staff.⁶ Staff expenditures are defined as the sum of all staff expenditures for salaries, wages, and benefits divided by the sum of all operating expenditures for staff, materials, and other purposes. Material expenditures include print material, CDs and DVDs, electronic and any other materials.⁷



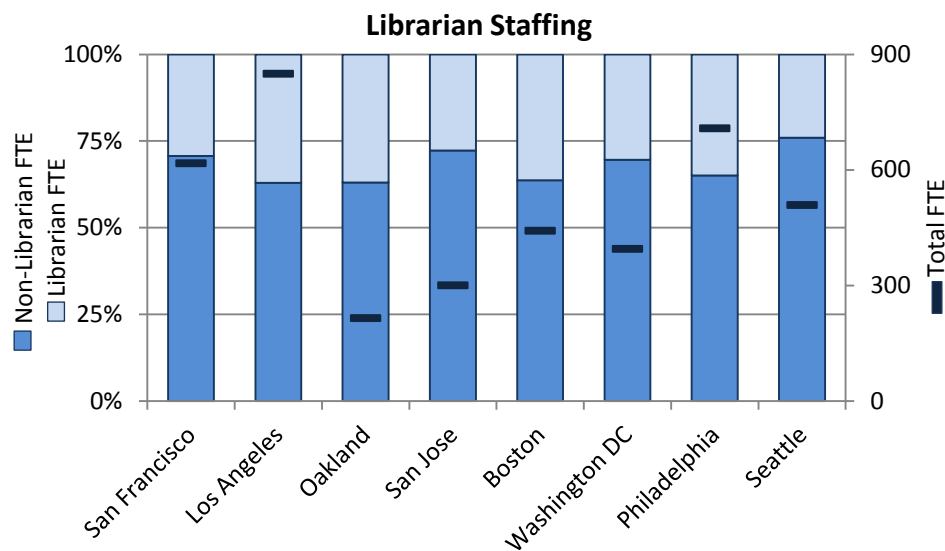
- Los Angeles utilizes the highest percentage (88%) of their operating expenditures for staff. Boston utilizes the lowest percentage (65%) of their operating expenditures for staff.
- For staff expenditures, San Francisco (74%) spends equal to the average of the jurisdictions.
- San Francisco (\$9 million) utilizes the highest amount for material expenditures; Philadelphia (\$8.2 million) utilizes the second highest amount for material expenditures.
- Philadelphia and San Francisco have the highest operating expenditures for non-staff, \$24.3 million and \$21.1 million respectively.

⁶ *The Library Research Service Definition of Terms*. (n.d.). Retrieved June 13, 2013, from The Library Research Service: <http://www.lrs.org/data-tools/public-libraries/definition-of-terms/>

⁷ Public Library Association. (2012). *PLDS Questionnaire Worksheet*. Retrieved June 19, 2013, from pla.countingopinions.com: <https://pla.countingopinions.com/docs/pla/2012SurveyWPDF.pdf>

Neither the American Library Association (ALA) nor the Public Library Association (PLA) sets standards for staffing public libraries. Instead, the ALA and PLA advocate an outcome-based assessment process based on community needs to determine library staffing levels. For example, a library serving a community with many young families may need a library with different facilities and services than a library serving a similar size population with a high percentage of empty-nesters and retirees.⁸

An official librarian title requires a master's degree through an ALA accredited program. Currently there are only 63 accredited programs in the United States and Canada.⁹ There are eight core competencies: Foundations of the Profession, Information Resources, Organization of Recorded Knowledge and Information, Technological Knowledge and Skills, Reference and User Services, Research, Continuing Education and Lifelong Learning, and Administration and Management.¹⁰



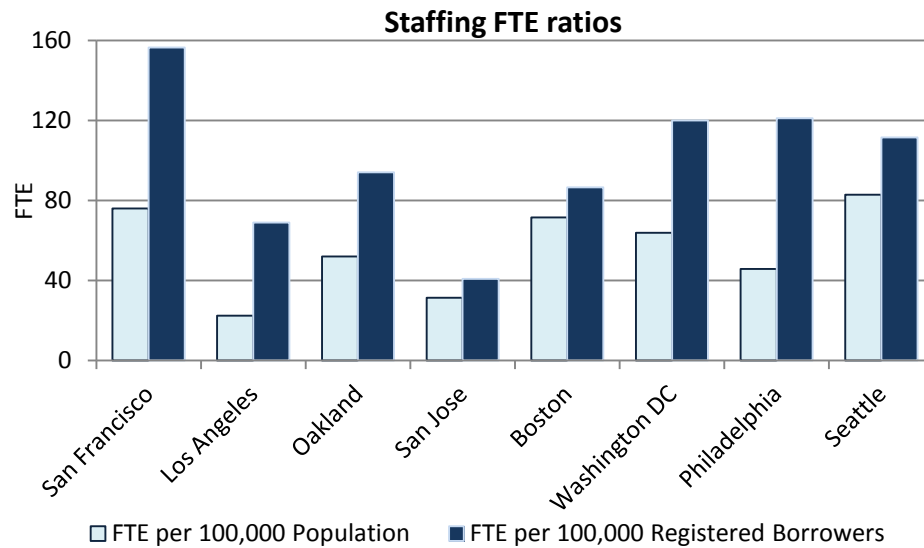
- San Francisco has 617 total FTEs, 29 percent (181 FTEs) with the librarian title, fewer total FTEs than only Los Angeles (849) and Philadelphia (708).
- Los Angeles (37%) and Oakland (37%) have the highest percentage of FTEs with the librarian title.
- Seattle (24%) has the lowest percentage of FTEs with the librarian title; San Francisco (29%) is the third lowest.

⁸ *Public Library Staffing Measures*. (n.d.). Retrieved June 17, 2013, from American Library Association (ALA): http://wikis.ala.org/professionaltips/index.php?title=Public_Library_Staffing_Measures

⁹ *ALA Accredited Programs*. (2013). Retrieved June 13, 2013, from www.ala.org/accreditedprograms/

¹⁰ ALA. (2009, January 27). *Core Competences of Librarianship*. Retrieved June 13, 2013, from [www.ala.org: http://www.ala.org/educationcareers/sites/ala.org.educationcareers/files/content/careers/corecomp/corecompetences/finalcorecompstat09.pdf](http://www.ala.org/educationcareers/sites/ala.org.educationcareers/files/content/careers/corecomp/corecompetences/finalcorecompstat09.pdf)

Since there are no standards related to the amount of staffing a library has, it is interesting to examine staffing ratios to gain insight to the number of staff compared with libraries' legal service area population and number of registered borrowers. It should be noted that the type of staff can vary between libraries, for example the San Francisco Public Library has over 60 job classes staffed, including, but not limited to, managers, information services staff, clerks, accountants, curators, carpenters, book repairers, truck drivers, custodial staff, etc.

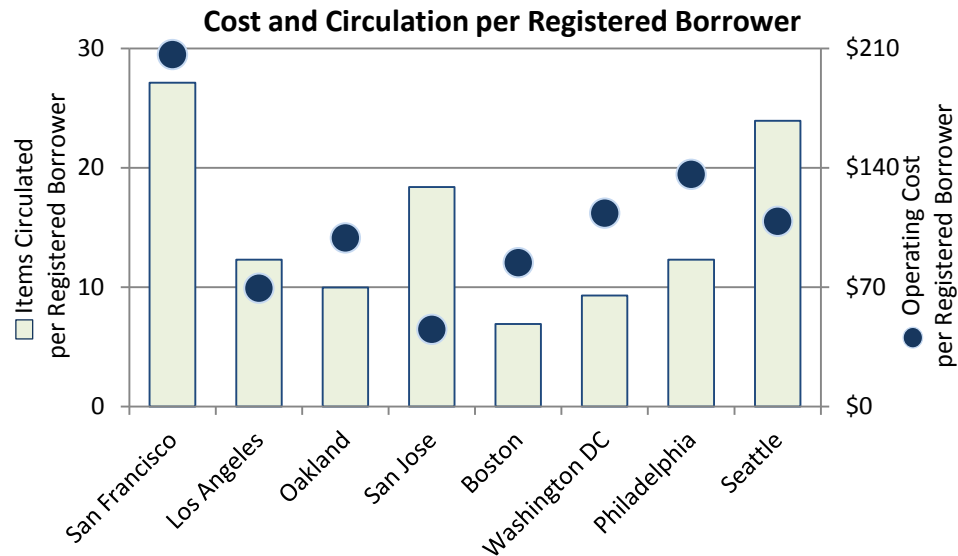


- San Francisco (157) has the highest number of FTEs per 100,000 registered borrowers.
- Seattle (83) has the highest number of FTEs per 100,000 in population; San Francisco has the second highest level with 76 FTEs per 100,000 in population.
- San Jose (41) has the fewest FTEs per 100,000 registered borrowers; San Jose also has one of the highest observed rates of registered borrowers with registrations equal to 77 percentage of the population.



Photo courtesy of SFPL

Registered borrowers are a core group of library users because they are the only users with borrowing privileges. All library circulation is attributed to registered borrowers. The below shows the items circulated per registered borrower compared with the operating costs per registered borrower, demonstrating a comparison of cost and usage for core services and users. Items circulated include print materials, CDs and DVDs, and other items.



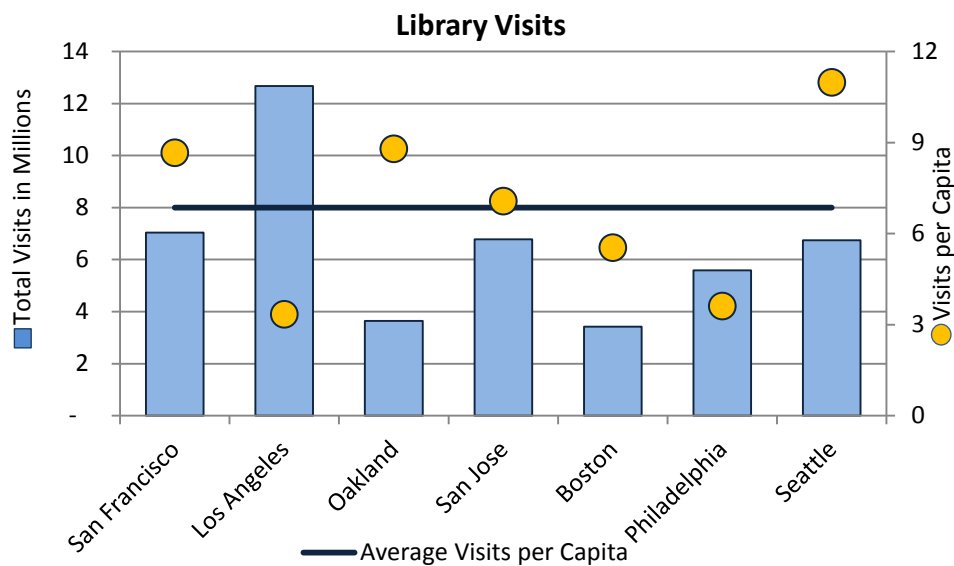
- San Francisco has the highest circulation per registered borrower (27.2), but also has the highest level of operating expense per registered borrower (\$206.00).
- San Jose (18.4) is above average for circulation per registered borrower with the lowest operating cost per registered borrower (\$45.24).
- Washington, D.C. (9.3) is below average for circulation per registered borrower, but above the average for cost per registered borrower (\$113.39).

C. Library Usage

The following measures provide an indication of library usage. Library visits per capita, circulation per capita, reference transactions, and program attendance per 1,000 can be used to develop an annual profile of library use.

Library visits per capita relates to the total number of persons entering the library for any purpose during the year.¹¹ It is attendance at the library during a typical week multiplied by 52 (weeks per year) divided by the library's legal service area population. A typical week is one during which the library is open during its regular hours (no holidays) and which is neither extraordinarily busy nor slow.¹²

Because library visits per capita indicates the average number of library visits per person served, it is a better measure of public awareness and use of the library than registration per capita.



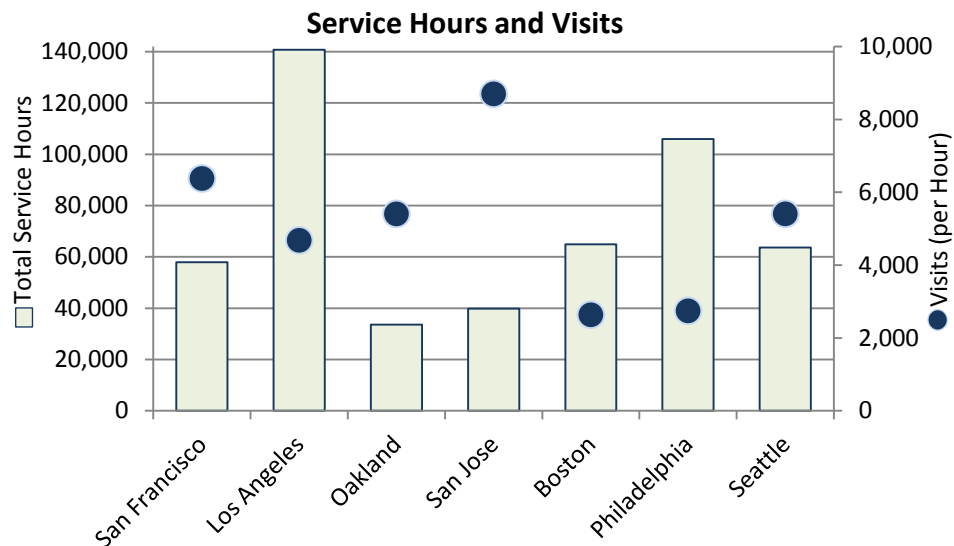
- Los Angeles with the largest population has the highest number of total visits (12.7 million), but the fewest visits per capita (3.3). Philadelphia has the second largest population has the second fewest visits per capita (3.6).
- San Francisco (8.7) has the third highest visits per capita trailing both Seattle (11) and Oakland (8.8).
- Boston (3.4 million) has the fewest total visits.
- Washington D.C. did not provide data for library visits.

¹¹ Public Library Association. (2012). *PLDS Questionnaire Worksheet*. Retrieved June 19, 2013, from [pla.countingopinions.com: https://pla.countingopinions.com/docs/pla/2012SurveyWPDF.pdf](https://pla.countingopinions.com/docs/pla/2012SurveyWPDF.pdf)

¹² *The Library Research Service Definition of Terms*. (n.d.). Retrieved June 13, 2013, from The Library Research Service: <http://www.lrs.org/data-tools/public-libraries/definition-of-terms/>

The availability of open hours at libraries is important to meet the needs of library users. Library systems with more branches such as Los Angeles will likely have a higher number of service hours offered making it important to measure the amount of visits per service hour.

San Francisco service hours were low in Fiscal Year 2011 due to the closure of several branch libraries for renovations and other improvements. Additionally, San Francisco has recently worked on a major initiative to update service hours to better meet the needs of the public. This process included extensive surveying, library usage analysis, and public hearings. In Fiscal Year 2014, the San Francisco service hours, shown below, will increase to over 70,000 hours from the Fiscal Year 2011 amount of 58,000 hours as a result of the reopening of branches and addition of new service hours.

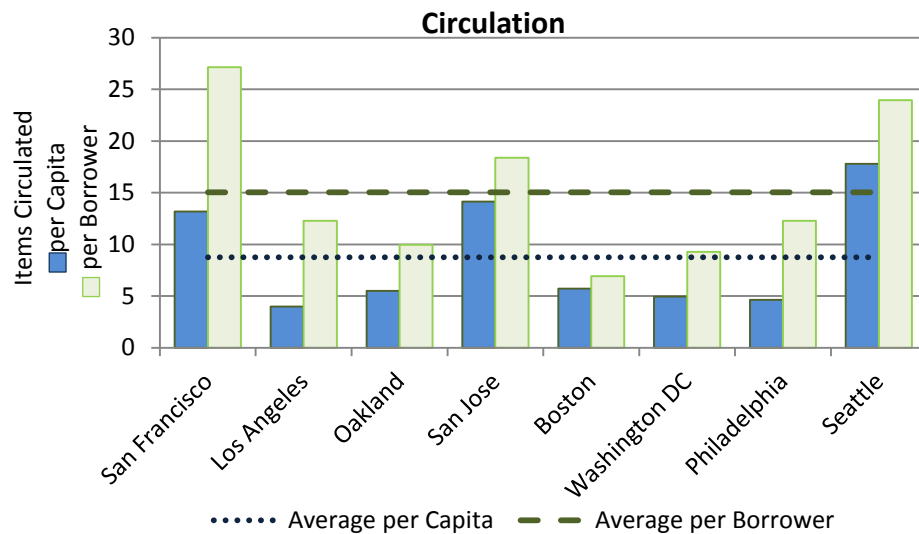


- San Jose (8,704) has the highest amount of visits per hour while offering the second fewest total service hours (39,882).
- San Francisco (57,884) is below the average (72,355) for total service hours, but is above average for visits per hour (6,380).
- The three libraries offering the most service hours, Los Angeles, Philadelphia, and Boston, have the fewest visits per hour.
- Washington D.C. did not provide data on service hours and visits.



Photo courtesy of SFPL

Circulation per capita relates to the number of library materials in all formats that are checked out for use outside the library. Interlibrary loan transactions include only those items that are borrowed for users.¹³ Circulation per capita represents the annual circulation divided by the library's legal service area population, and indicates the average number of loans made to each resident annually. Lower circulation per capita can be a result of lower materials expenditures and volumes held per capita. It is also likely to lead to more interlibrary loans per 1,000 circulation.¹⁴

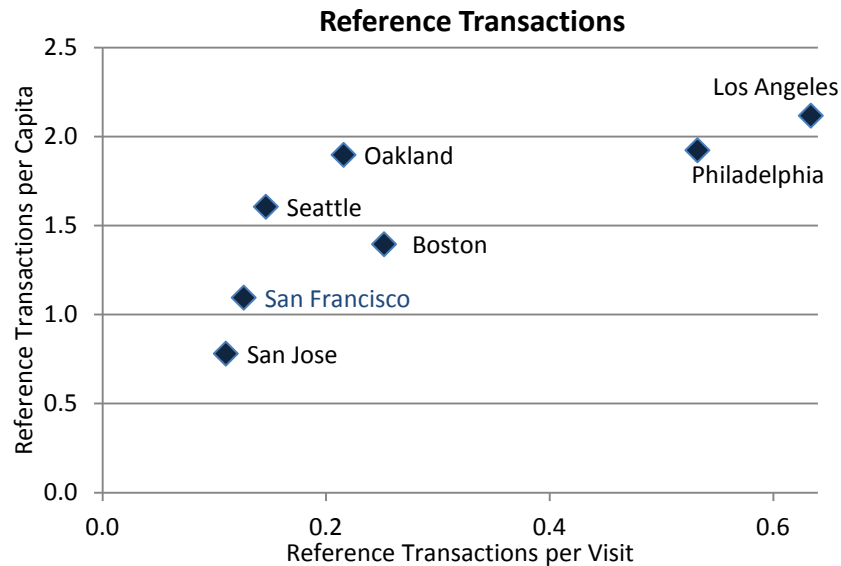


- San Francisco (27.2) has the highest amount of circulation per registered borrower. Boston (6.9) has the lowest per borrower circulation rate.
- Seattle (17.8) has the highest circulation per capita: San Jose (14.1) has the second highest.
- Los Angeles, Oakland, Boston, Washington D.C., and Philadelphia are all below the average for both circulation per capita (8.7) and per borrower (15).

¹³ Public Library Association. (2012). *PLDS Questionnaire Worksheet*. Retrieved June 19, 2013, from [pla.countingopinions.com: https://pla.countingopinions.com/docs/pla/2012SurveyWPDF.pdf](https://pla.countingopinions.com/docs/pla/2012SurveyWPDF.pdf)

¹⁴ *The Library Research Service Definition of Terms*. (n.d.). Retrieved June 13, 2013, from The Library Research Service: <http://www.lrs.org/data-tools/public-libraries/definition-of-terms/>

A **reference transaction** “is an information contact that involves the knowledge, use, recommendations, interpretation, or instruction in the use of one or more information sources by a member of the library staff. It includes information and referral services. Information sources include print and non-print materials or records and, through communication or referral, other libraries or institutions, and people inside or outside of the library.”¹⁵



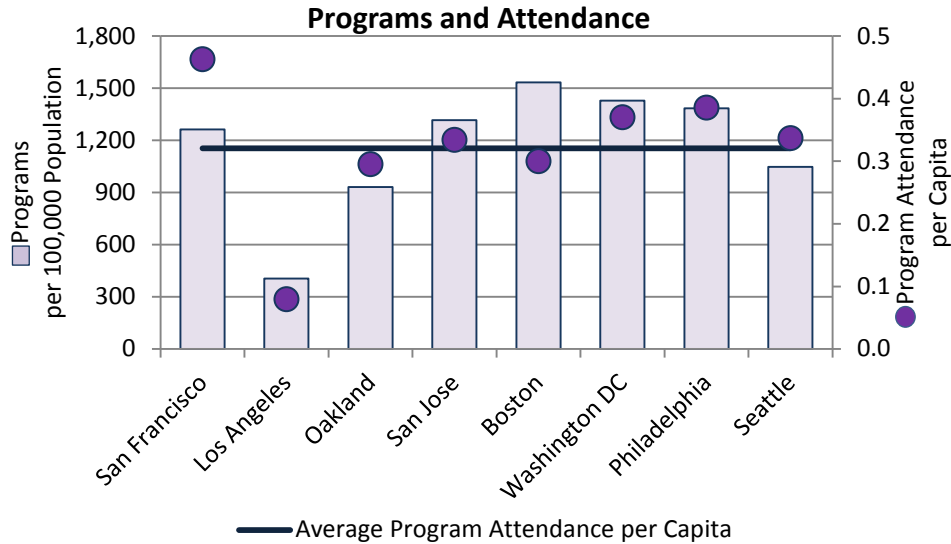
- Los Angeles has both the highest amount of reference transactions per capita and per visit, 2.1 and 0.63, respectively. Philadelphia has the second highest amounts. Los Angeles and Philadelphia have the largest populations and also the highest amounts of total reference transactions.
- San Jose and San Francisco have both the fewest number of reference transactions per capita and per visit.



Photo courtesy of SFPL

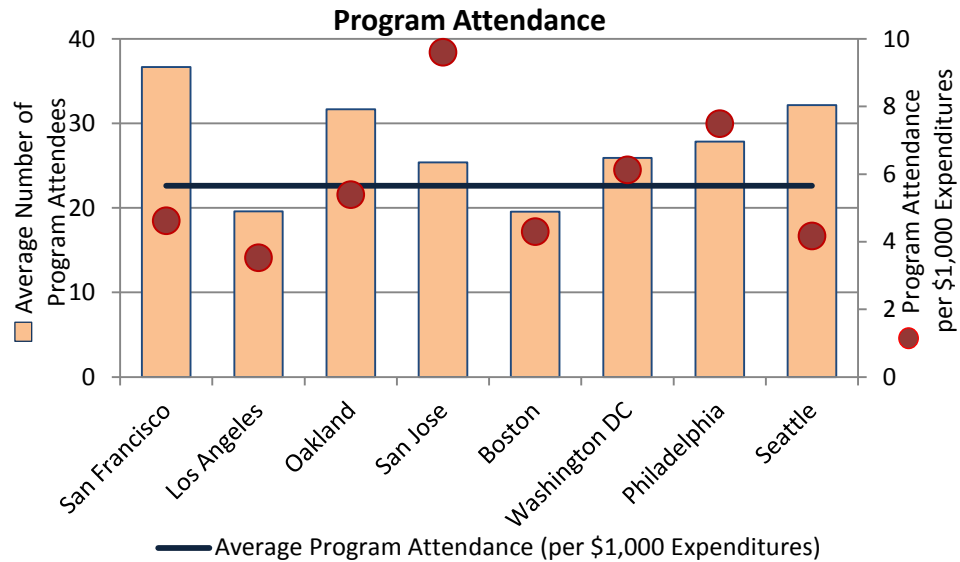
¹⁵ Public Library Association. (2012). *PLDS Questionnaire Worksheet*. Retrieved June 19, 2013, from [pla.countingopinions.com: https://pla.countingopinions.com/docs/pla/2012SurveyWPDF.pdf](https://pla.countingopinions.com/docs/pla/2012SurveyWPDF.pdf)

Program attendance per 100,000 relates to the number of attendees per 100,000 of the library's legal service population who attended a library program during the year.¹⁶ It is program attendance divided by the library's legal service area population in one-hundred thousands.



- San Francisco (0.46) has the highest program attendance per capita while offering slightly more programs per 100,000 in population than the average (0.32).
- Los Angeles has both the fewest programs per 100,000 in population (406) and program attendance per capita (0.08).
- Boston (1,534) offers the most programs per 100,000 in population, but is below the average (0.32) with a level of 0.30 program attendance per capita.

¹⁶ *The Library Research Service Definition of Terms*. (n.d.). Retrieved June 13, 2013, from The Library Research Service: <http://www.lrs.org/data-tools/public-libraries/definition-of-terms/>



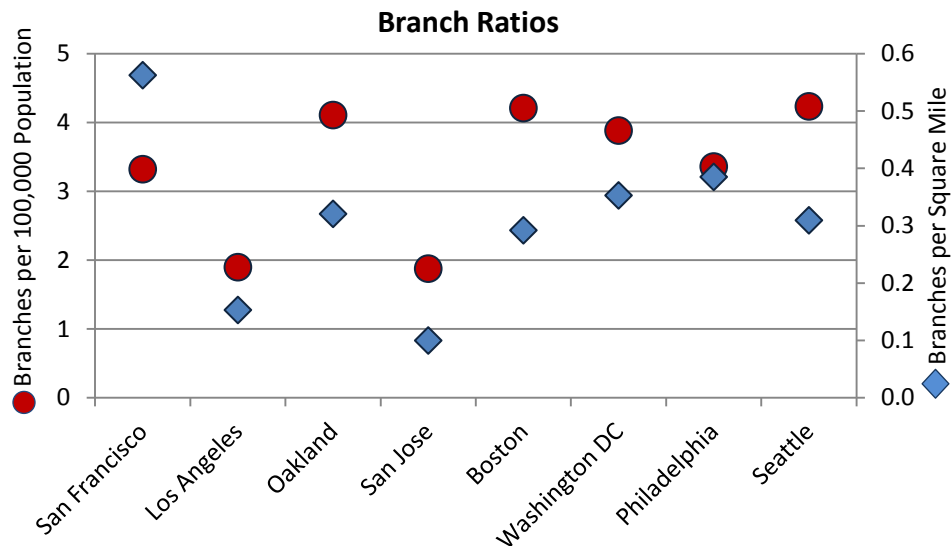
- San Francisco (36.7) has the highest average number of program attendees, but is below average (5.7) for program attendance related to expenditures with 4.6 attendees for every \$1,000 in expenditures.
- San Jose has the highest program attendance per \$1,000 in expenditures; 9.61 attendees for every \$1,000 spent.
- Boston (19.6) and Los Angeles (19.6) have the fewest average number of program attendees. Los Angeles also has the lowest attendance for \$1,000 in expenditures at 3.5 attendees.



Photo courtesy of SFPL

D. Branch Libraries

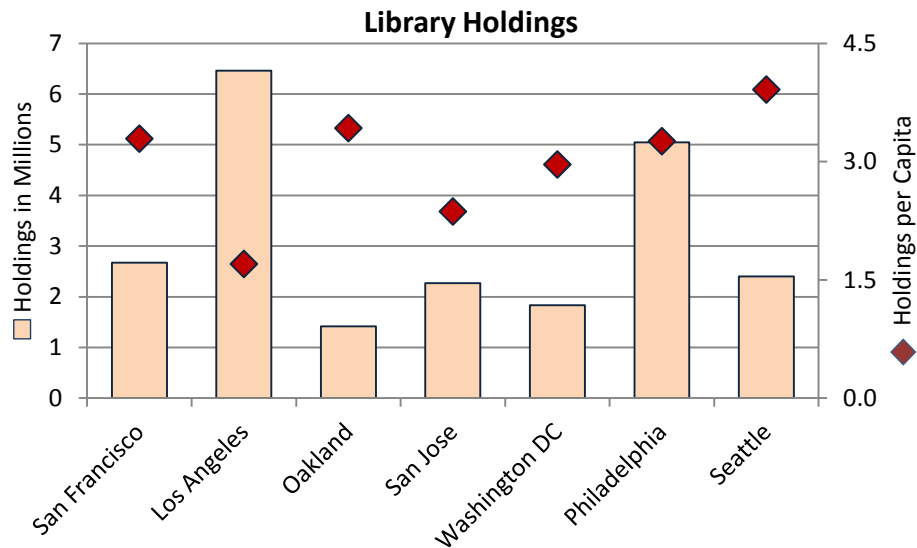
Branch libraries provide many benefits to communities, the most obvious being improved proximity to library services. The impacts of proximity to services reach far beyond simply convenience. For example, San Francisco has a transit first policy that discourages increases in automobile traffic with the proximity of libraries supporting this policy. Branch libraries can also improve quality of services by tailoring their offerings to specific neighborhoods or populations. Please note: the data reported below does not include main or central libraries, only branch libraries.



- San Francisco has the most branch libraries per square mile; one branch for every 1.8 square miles. San Francisco has the fewest number of square miles (48) in its service area compared to the other jurisdictions.
- Seattle (4.2) and Boston (4.2) have the highest number of branch libraries per 100,000 in population.
- San Jose has the fewest number of branch libraries per square mile (0.1) and also per 100,000 in population (1.9).

E. Library Holdings

The amount of library holdings is defined as “the number of catalogued items (number of items, not number of titles), including print materials (including periodicals), electronic books, audio materials, and video materials acquired as part of the collection and catalogued, whether purchased, leased, licensed, or donated as gifts.”¹⁷



- Boston has the highest amount of library holdings (16.1 million) and also the highest library holdings per capita (26.1), but was not included in the above chart due to scaling issues. The Boston Public Library has the second largest number of holdings in the United States behind only the Library of Congress.¹⁸
- Seattle (3.9) has the second highest holdings per capita, of the selected jurisdictions, behind Boston.
- San Francisco (2.7 million) is below average for total holdings, but above the average for holdings per capita (3.3). Boston was excluded from the averages since it was an outlier.
- Oakland (3.4) is behind only Seattle and Boston for holdings per capita: Oakland (1.4 million) has the fewest total holdings.

¹⁷ Public Library Association. (2012). *PLDS Questionnaire Worksheet*. Retrieved June 19, 2013, from [pla.countingopinions.com: https://pla.countingopinions.com/docs/pla/2012SurveyWPDF.pdf](https://pla.countingopinions.com/docs/pla/2012SurveyWPDF.pdf)

¹⁸ ALA. (2012, October). *The Nation's Largest Libraries*. Retrieved June 19, 2013, from [www.ala.org: http://www.ala.org/tools/libfactsheets/alalibraryfactsheet22](http://www.ala.org/tools/libfactsheets/alalibraryfactsheet22)

Areas for Future Research

The measures included in this report are indicators of the quality, quantity and cost of library services and present a starting point for comparison; the data represents a high level snapshot of city library services.

Future benchmarking work could be used to develop a deeper understanding of library services and usage. Some of the following measures were not included in this report because the data were not available at this time; however, they are likely to be subjects of future research by the Controller's Office:

- Comparative analysis of the use of technology in libraries. More Americans are going to libraries for access to essential technology services not found elsewhere in the community; including free computer and Internet access, technology training, and assistance with job-seeking and e-government services. It will be important to keep monitoring the use of technology; this data can assist library directors and library IT staff advocate for technology resources.¹⁹
- Comparative analysis of youth engagement in library programs; youth engagement is important to community vitality and an opportunity to increase the number of lifelong library partners and users. It also serves as an indicator of the interactions between libraries and schools.
- Analysis of how well library services are serving diverse populations and underserved populations. This analysis would explore equity of access to library services and how libraries are responding to community needs, for example, to immigrant populations with limited English language capabilities.
- Continue to monitor the impact of increased service hours compared to other cities, especially given that, in FY2013 and FY2014, San Francisco added 1,370 additional services hour per week.
- Comparative analysis to determine how well libraries are meeting the unique needs of their legal service area's library user population.

¹⁹ ALA. (n.d.). *Public Library Funding and Technology Access Study, 2011-12*. Retrieved June 25, 2013, from ALA: http://www.ala.org/research/plftas/2011_2012