THE ROLE OF LIBRARIES IN ADVANCING COMMUNITY GOALS

AN ANALYSIS OF FACTORS INFLUENCING LOCAL OFFICIALS' RESPONSES IN THE ICMA/ASPEN INSTITUTE/PLA LIBRARIES SURVEY

John B. Horrigan, PhD

ICMA   THE ASPEN INSTITUTE   PublicLibrary ASSOCIATION

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This report is a written analysis of the survey data from the ICMA/Aspen Institute/PLA survey on libraries conducted in mid-2016. The analysis is based on the opinions and expertise of John B. Horrigan, PhD. The interpretations and analysis in this summary report are solely those of the report's author and should not be attributed to the International City/County Management Association, The Aspen Institute, Public Library Association or any other funding entity.

The complete data set from the survey is available online at the ICMA web site. To access it, click here **www.icma.org/2016librariessurveydataset**

The complete summary report of the ICMA survey, *Local Libraries Advancing Community Goals, 2016*, is available online at **www.icma.org/2016librariessurveyreport**

This summary by John B. Horrigan, PhD, can be downloaded online at **as.pn/icmasurvey**

To learn what communities are doing to transform their libraries, download the *Rising to the Challenge: Re-Envisioning Public Libraries* report or its companion, *Action Guide for Re-Envisioning Your Public Library*, or to share the work that you are doing around library and community transformation in your own community, please visit the Aspen Institute Dialogue on Public Libraries online at **LibraryVision.org**

For inquiries contact:

Amy Garmer
Director
The Aspen Institute Dialogue on Public Libraries
The Aspen Institute
Communications and Society Program
One Dupont Circle, NW
Suite 700
Washington, DC 20036
Telephone: 202-736-5818
Fax: 202-467-0790
Email: amy.garmer@aspeninst.org

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Analysis of *Local Libraries Advancing Community Goals, 2016*[1], the International City/County Management Association (ICMA) survey of local government officials' perspectives on libraries, reveals several factors that shape respondents' views:

- The population of the respondents' community
- Whether local governments have a governing relationship with libraries
- Whether the library receives a funding allocation from the general fund

Population: Respondents from communities with a population of 100,000 or greater consistently expressed more positive views on the role libraries play in the places they live. This comes across most clearly when examining how active the library should be in areas such as providing internet access for people, digital literacy training, online learning, and providing a forum for convening public discussions. In each case, a majority of respondents said that these are areas where the library should definitely play a role. Respondents from the larger population centers are also more likely to say the library plays a role in advancing community goals such as providing high-speed internet access and digital skills training.

Governing relationship: Half of respondents said their library has a governing relationship with the local government. The presence of this governing relationship means a greater frequency of local government officials are engaging with library leadership. This includes library representatives being kept informed about local government decision-making, being in contact with local government through open channels of communication, and being invited to present information to local government officials.

Allocation from the general fund: Some 60% of respondents said their local library receives financing from their community's general fund and among those who said there is a governing relationship with their library, that figure is 85%. This means there is a great deal of overlap in the impacts of libraries who receive dollars from a general fund and those with a governing relationship. That said, in many instances the "general fund" impact has its own statistically significant impact on responses. This shows up in particular in respondents' views on library priorities. Where libraries receive a general fund allocation, local government officials are more likely to say libraries should definitely provide digital skills training (both on hardware/

software and privacy/security) and help low-income families understand broadband service plans.

Other findings of interest:

Priorities for local officials and the public: Comparing responses from government officials in the ICMA survey and those of the public in 2015 and 2016, The Pew Research Center surveys (see page 15) reveals both alignment and divergence on libraries' priorities. When it comes to libraries coordinating with local schools and providing "makerspace" tools for learning and creativity, half or more of the public and local officials are in agreement that libraries should definitely be involved in these areas.

However, for training that relates to the digital world, there are some differences, with the public placing more importance on these things than local government officials. The majority of ICMA respondents and Americans surveyed by Pew see training on digital tools such as computers and smartphones as something libraries should definitely do. Yet, a notably stronger majority of the general public emphasizes this compared to local government officials. And there is significant divergence on whether libraries should definitely provide training on how people can protect their online privacy and security. Three-quarters of Americans say this, but less than half of government officials do.

Funding: Just under half of all respondents said more funding is needed to support the library's role in the community, but over half of libraries where a governing relationship exists, or that receive an allocation from the general fund, agree strongly or very strongly that more funding is needed. While just over half of all respondents said their library receives funding from non-governmental entities, three-quarters of those from places whose population exceeds 100,000 say this and two-thirds of those whose libraries have governing relationships say this.

E-rate: Local government officials from places whose population exceeds 100,000 are far more likely than others to be aware that the E-rate program can support libraries, and are more than twice as likely as the norm (the average number of respondents from the ICMA survey) to say their libraries receive E-rate funding. Respondents from the north central part of the United States were less likely to be aware that E-rate dollars could be used for libraries and also less likely to say their libraries receive such support.

[1] *Local Libraries Advancing Community Goals, 2016*, ICMA, January 2017.
Available online at www.icma.org/2016librariessurveyreport

ANALYSIS OF ICMA SURVEY OF GOVERNMENT OFFICIALS ON LIBRARIES

Introduction

The International City/County Management Association (ICMA), in partnership with the Aspen Institute Dialogue on Public Libraries and the Public Library Association (PLA), conducted a nationwide survey[2] in the spring of 2016 focused on the evolving role of public libraries in advancing community goals. The survey was sent to 9,675 chief administrative offices of local governments; 1,927 surveys were returned for a response rate of 20%. This effort was undertaken to better understand how public libraries can be leveraged to advance community goals and how government agencies can partner with library leaders to better engage, inform, and empower residents. The survey was conducted in follow-up to ICMA's 2010 Public Library Initiative Survey.

What follows is an analysis of responses that focuses specifically on variables that might cause responses to differ significantly from the survey's overall results. The variables considered as potentially significant were:

- Population
- Geography
- Type of government – municipality versus county
- Governing relationship: whether the library has a governing relationship with local government, e.g. is a department of local government or otherwise reports to local government managers or leaders
- Funding source: whether the library receives a direct allocation from the general fund

Regression analysis was used to determine whether these variables had any significant impact on responses to selected questions in the survey. This multivariate technique recognizes that more than one of the variables listed above may significantly impact the response to a specific question. In a number of instances, that was the case[3]. For example, respondents from communities whose population is 100,000 or more was generally a significant variable, as well as whether the library has a governing relationship with the local government or receives an allocation from the general fund. The data is not weighted in the analysis that follows, nor does it seem necessary to apply any weight to the overall responses[4].

This report has three sections. First, is an overview of the findings from the statistical analysis on specific survey questions. The next section breaks out in tables the answers in the ICMA survey to selected questions by variables that exert statistically significant influences on responses. Finally, there is a discussion of a comparison of questions in the ICMA survey with identical (and, in one case, similar) questions posed to the general public by Pew Research Center.

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[2] *Local Libraries Advancing Community Goals, 2016*, ICMA, January 2017. Available online at www.icma.org/2016librariessurveyreport

[3] The ICMA survey gathered information on population of respondents' communities for population thresholds between 250,000 and 500,000, 500,000 and 1 million, and greater than 1 million. But the sample had only 66 responses in those cohorts. Therefore, those cohorts were aggregated with the 100,000 to 250,000 cohort for a "100,000+" population category that had enough cases for drawing statistical inference with sufficient confidence.

[4] Weighting responses by, say, population would simply create overall results that privilege the views of government officials from large population centers. Yet there is no analytic need to do this, especially when the multivariate approach helps disentangle the effect of population on responses. When population or other factors exert a statistically significant influence on responses, they are reported in the following tables.

OVERVIEW

The ICMA survey asked local officials a number of questions about their communities' relationship with libraries, including governing relationships, funding sources, and frequency of interactions between the library and local officials. Questions also touched on the federal E-rate program and the public's level of interest in libraries. Finally, there was a series of questions that asked about community priorities, the library's role in addressing them, and local officials' views on areas that should be priorities for libraries.

What follows is an overview of those findings and the factors (e.g., population or funding) that shape variations in the responses of local officials. The section after this provides detail on responses and how they vary by different variables. Generally, the community's population, the governing relationship, and funding source (i.e., whether the library receives an allocation from the general fund) are the most influential factors. Geography plays less of a role and is called out in the detailed tables only when a particular geographical category impacts findings.

Engagement questions: If the library has a governing relationship with local officials, library representatives are more likely to be invited to discussions about relevant local issues. Some 56% of libraries with a governing relationship are invited often or very often to discussions about local issues compared with 38% for all respondents. That is also true if the library receives a funding allocation from the general fund (51%) and in libraries in communities with populations of 100,000 people or more (52%).

The same pattern holds true when it comes to library representatives being kept informed about local government decision-making processes. Forty-eight percent of respondents said that library representatives are kept informed about local government decision-making often or very often. This happens with greater frequency for those with governing relationships (73%) and those with allocations from the general fund (66%).

Population matters too. Respondents from places with populations over 100,000 and in places with population between 50,000 and 100,000 said libraries are more likely to be kept informed about decision-making often or very often, with 66% and 60% figures for this, respectively.

For other metrics on the extent to which local government officials engage with library leaders:

- *Being in contact with government officials through open communication channels*: Some 67% of all respondents said such contact happens often or very often, but 82% of those from places of 100,000 or more said this.

- *Being invited to make presentations to local government*: 43% said this occurs often or very often, but 52% of respondents where the library has a governing relationship with the community said this.

- *Local government representatives contacting library staff as resources for decision-making*: Just 24% said this happens often or very often, but that figure is 37% when there is a governing relationship and 36% in places with population over 100,000.

Contact with chief librarian/director: When asked how often they contact their library leader, respondents who said the library and the local government had a governing relationship were more likely to say contact was at least weekly; libraries who receive an allocation from a general fund had a higher incidence of this as well. Some 58% of all respondents said contact was either weekly or monthly, with 82% of those whose libraries have governing relationships saying this and 75% of respondents whose libraries receive an allocation from the general fund.

Funding: A narrow majority (53%) agree or strongly agree libraries are adequately funded, a figure that is higher in libraries with a governing relationship with local government (60%) and in places with populations exceeding 100,000 (58%).

Forty-five percent agree or strongly agree that libraries need more funding to support the library's role in their community.

A minority (27%) see the library budget as more vulnerable than other budgets, a figure that doesn't vary significantly. At the same time, 45% agree or strongly agree that libraries need more funding to support the library's role in their community, with libraries with governing relationships (53%) and allocations from the general fund (51%) more likely to say this.

With respect to funding from non-governmental entities, 54% of respondents say this is the case for libraries in their communities, but two-thirds (67%) of those with a governing relationship and three-quarters (75%) of libraries in communities with population over 100,000 say this.

E-rate: Just about one-third (32%) of government officials surveyed are aware that the federal E-rate program can support libraries, but half of libraries with governing relationships and more than half (56%) of respondents from communities with populations over 100,000 say this. Those in the north central part of the United States are less likely to be aware of E-rate as a possible funding source.

However, nearly two-thirds (63%) of respondents do not know whether their community's library has E-rate support while just 1 in 6 (17%) say their library receives E-rate funding. Libraries in communities with more than 100,000 residents are much more likely to say they receive E-rate funds (38% do) and those with governing relationships are more likely to say this (28% do).

Interest in libraries: Some 60% of all local government officials surveyed said that the public's interest in library services was high or very high. This figure was markedly higher for local officials from communities with populations over 100,000, where 71% reported high or very high interest in library services. Two-thirds (67%) of those in communities with between 50,000 and 100,000 people said this, with 26% reporting very high interest (compared with the 17% average).

Community priorities: When asked about current priorities, 75% of respondents said access to high-speed internet service is a high or very high priority, with places with a governing relationship with the library and which give libraries an allocation from the general fund more likely to say this. Primary and secondary school attainment was the next most prominent priority, with 68% saying it is a high or very high priority. Respondents from communities with populations over 100,000 were twice as likely as the norm (the average number of respondents from the ICMA survey) to say this is a very high priority (by a 34% to 17% margin). For early childhood education, 67% see this as a high or very high priority, while respondents from places whose populations exceed 100,000 are twice as likely as the average to see this as a very high priority.

Digital literacy was cited as a priority by 51% of respondents as a high or very high priority. Those from communities with populations over 100,000 were far more likely (67%) to cite this as a high or very high priority than the average. Some 61% from places with populations between 50,000 and 100,000 cited digital literacy as a high or very high priority. The same pattern repeats itself with civic engagement, where 53% cite this as a high or very high priority, as well as for neighborhood and community development (59%). The largest population centers see these issues as very high priorities, where the medium-sized 50,000 to 100,000 places see them as high priorities.

Libraries role in advancing community goals:
The survey asked government officials to consider the role of libraries in advancing community priorities and, generally, officials see the libraries role in advancing goals as they see community priorities. In other words, local governments see an alignment between the highest community priorities and the importance of the library's role in addressing these same priorities. Some 73% see libraries having an important or highly important role in addressing access to high-speed internet service, a figure that rises to 87% for places where the library has a governing relationship with local government and 83% for places where libraries receive an allocation from the general fund. For places with more than 100,000 in population, 83% see access to broadband as an important or highly important priority, with a notable 63% saying it is a highly important priority (versus the 47% figure for all respondents).

Fully 65% say addressing digital literacy is an important or highly important priority. Where respondents come from places with more than 100,000 people, 84% say this, with more than half (53%) saying digital literacy is a highly important priority for the local library. Places with governing relationships or where libraries receive funding from the general fund also place greater priority on digital literacy.

The patterns are much the same for early childhood education and primary/secondary educational attainment, where 65% and 59%, respectively, see the library has having an important or highly important role. For respondents from larger (100,000+) communities, these issues are much more likely than the norm to be seen as highly important. For early childhood education, 55% of those from the largest population centers see it as highly important (with another 24% saying it is important). With respect to primary and secondary education attainment, 39% of those from 100,000+ places see it as highly important and another 34% see it as important.

Finally, neighborhood and community development, as well as civic engagement, were seen as lower level priorities

Strong majorities believe libraries should definitely offer free access to high-speed broadband and Wi-Fi and offer programs that teach people how to use digital tools.

than other issues. Some 45% of local government officials said civic engagement was an important or highly important priority for libraries, although libraries with a governing relationship (54%) or in places of 100,000+ (58%) placed greater emphasis on civic engagement. For neighborhood/community development, 39% said it is an important or highly important priority, though those whose libraries have a governing relationship were a bit more likely (46%) to emphasize this issue.

Libraries' priorities: The survey concluded by asking government officials what they think libraries *should do* to meet community needs in a number of areas:

• *Broadband access and digital inclusion*: Strong majorities believe libraries should definitely offer free access to high-speed broadband and Wi-Fi and offer programs that teach people how to use digital tools – by 84% and 63% majorities, respectively. Nine out of ten respondents from larger places and those with governing relationships and allocations from the general fund were more likely to express these views about free high-speed access. Roughly seven in 10 respondents from places where libraries have governing relationships or populations over 100,000 said this about digital skills. Other assistance efforts – such as teaching people about privacy and security or helping low-income families sort through broadband service plans – were seen as definite priorities at 45% and 50% of respondents, respectively.

Local governments see an alignment between the highest community priorities and the importance of the library's role in addressing these same priorities.

Those living in communities with more than 100,000 were more likely to see those items as definite priorities. One possible priority – loaning out tech tools for home broadband access – was seen as a definite priority for just 20% of all respondents and a "maybe" priority for 39%.

- *Public Service and Civic Engagement*: Some 39% of all respondents said libraries should definitely provide a forum for convening public discussions. For respondents living in places with 100,000 or more people, 60% said this. Fewer (24%) said libraries should support the provision of public health services, but 33% in large population areas (100,000+) said this.

- *Education*: Clear majorities said libraries should definitely coordinate with local schools to provide resources for kids and provide online learning experiences, with 73% and 57% saying this, respectively. For coordinating with local schools, 81% of respondents living in places with more than 100,000 people cited this as a definite priority and 85% of those living in places between 25,000 and 50,000 in population. For online learning, 70% from large population centers (100,000+) say this. Additionally, half (50%) said libraries should definitely provide "makerspace" tools for community members, with places with larger populations (100,000+) and those from the mid-Atlantic region more likely to say this (63% and 64%), respectively.

- *Workforce Development*: Respondents see workforce development as less of a definite priority than some other areas. Some 32% say libraries should definitely provide training, technology, and resources for job-related skills. And 31% say libraries should coordinate with local employers for matching residents to employers' needs. Respondents from larger communities (100,000+) were, by 15 and 13 point margins, more likely to cite those items as definite priorities.

- *Economic Development*: In the economic development realm, relatively few said libraries should definitely wade into this area. Some 22% said libraries should definitely provide information on how to start a business, though nearly twice of respondents (40%) who live in areas with more than 100,000 people said this. A similar number (23%) said libraries should definitely provide a workspace for mobile workers or entrepreneurs, though 32% of those in large (100,000+) areas said this.

Clear majorities said libraries should definitely coordinate with local schools to provide resources for kids and provide online learning experiences.

DETAILED RESPONSES

2. Please rate the frequency of your engagement with local library leadership using the scale below.

	Never	Rarely	Sometimes	Often	Very Often
a. Library representatives are invited to discussions about relevant local issues (e.g., strategic planning meeting for the community).	14.7%	21.3%	25.9%	24.3%	13.8%
Governing relationship (yes)	4	12	27	34	22
Gets allocation from general fund	7	15	27	32	19
Municipality	12	21	26	26	16
Population greater than 100,000	5	14	29	27	25

	Never	Rarely	Sometimes	Often	Very Often
b. Library representatives are kept informed about local government decision-making processes and timing (e.g., a city council member contacts the library director to inform her/him about potential budget shortfalls).	17.1%	17.1%	17.6%	28.8%	19.3%
Governing relationship (yes)	4	7	17	41	32
Gets allocation from general fund	7	10	18	38	28
Population greater than 100,000	7	12	15	36	30
Population between 50K and100K	13	13	13	33	27

	Never	Rarely	Sometimes	Often	Very Often
c. Library representatives are in contact with representatives of the local government through open channels of communication (e.g., phone calls are returned).	7.8%	8.8%	16.1%	33.7%	33.6%
Governing relationship (yes)	1	3	11	37	47
Gets allocation from general fund	2	4	13	37	43
Population greater than 100,000	4	4	11	33	49
Population between 50K and 100K	4	4	17	38	37

	Never	Rarely	Sometimes	Often	Very Often
d. Library representatives are invited to present information to representatives of the local government (e.g., a trustee is invited to make a presentation to the city council about the library's technology needs).	14.0%	17.0%	26.3%	25.7%	17.0%
Governing relationship (yes)	2	8	27	36	26
Gets allocation from general fund	4	9	29	34	24
Population greater than 100,000	5	14	29	30	21
Population between 50K and100K	10	16	22	27	24

	Never	Rarely	Sometimes	Often	Very Often
e. Local government representatives go to library staff as a resource to inform their decision-making (e.g., city council members go to the library director to find out about computer usage/demand).	20.8%	30.1%	25.1%	15.7%	8.3%
Governing relationship (yes)	8	22	32	24	13
Gets allocation from general fund	10	26	30	21	12
Population greater than 100,000	9	26	30	23	13
Population between 50K and 100K	13	26	27	19	14

4. How often do you have contact with the chief librarian/library director?

	At least weekly	At least monthly	At least every six months	Very rarely or never	Other
	30.4%	27.4%	16.0%	22.4%	3.8%
Governing relationship (yes)	52	32	10	4	2
Gets allocation from general fund	45	30	12	9	3
Municipality	35	27	15	21	3
Population between 50K and 100K	26	36	19	29	1

5. Please indicate your level of agreement with the following statements using the scale provided.

	Strongly disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly agree
a. Libraries in my community are adequately funded.	4.0%	19.6%	23.8%	41.0%	11.7%
Governing relationship (yes)	4	21	15	46	14
Gets allocation from general fund	4	22	18	44	12
Population greater than 100,000	5	16	22	46	12
Population between 50K and 100K	4	17	18	45	18
Population between 25K and 50K	3	20	22	44	11

	Strongly disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly agree
b. The library budget is often more vulnerable to cuts than other budgets.	8.2%	28.7%	35.7%	22.8%	4.6%
Governing relationship (yes)	9	34	29	23	5
Gets allocation from general fund	7	32	29	26	5
Population greater than 100,000	7	29	37	23	5
Population between 50K and 100K	7	33	34	21	5

	Strongly disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly agree
c. More funding is needed to support the library's role in my community.	3.8%	12.1%	39.2%	34.0%	10.9%
Governing relationship (yes)	3	12	32	40	13
Gets allocation from general fund	4	11	34	38	13

7. Is the local public library system funded at least partially by financial support from non-governmental entities (i.e., foundations, non-profits, etc.)?

	Yes	No	Don't know
Local public library system funded at least partially by financial support from non-governmental entities	53.9%	17.8%	28.3%
Governing relationship (yes)	67	25	8
Gets allocation from general fund	65	22	13
Population greater than 100,000	75	11	14
Population between 50K and 100K	64	15	21
Population between 5K and 10K	48	20	32
East South Central	45	24	38
West South Central	58	23	20

8. Are you aware that the Federal E-rate funding program can be used to support libraries?

	Yes	No
Aware that the Federal E-rate funding program can be used to support libraries	31.5%	68.5%
Governing relationship (yes)	50	50
Gets allocation from general fund	44	56
Population greater than 100,000	56	43
Population between 50K and 100K	42	58
East North Central	18	82
West North Central	23	77

9. Are Federal E-rate funds currently being used to support libraries in your community?

	Yes	No	Don't know
Federal E-rate funds currently being used to support libraries in your community	17.2%	20.2%	62.6%
Governing relationship (yes)	28	32	40
Gets allocation from general fund	24	28	47
Population greater than 100,000	38	19	42
Population between 50K and 100K	23	20	57
East North Central	8	13	79
West North Central	13	23	64

11. How would you rate the level of public interest in library services in the community that you represent? (Indicators of public interest might include levels of utilization or public advocacy, among other factors.)

	Very low	Low	Moderate	High	Very high
Level of public interest in library services in the community	0.7%	4.3%	34.9%	43.2%	16.9%
Governing relationship (yes)	*	4	30	46	19
Population greater than 100,000	0	2	27	47	24
Population between 50K and 100K	1	2	29	41	26
Population between 25K and 50K	2	3	33	41	21

13. Please rate the extent to which each of the following areas represents a current priority of your community.

	Not a current priority	Low priority	Medium priority	High priority	Very high priority
a. Access to high-speed Internet service	2.1%	3.5%	18.0%	51.3%	25.1%
Governing relationship (yes)	1	3	16	54	27
Gets allocation from general fund	1	3	15	54	26

	Not a current priority	Low priority	Medium priority	High priority	Very high priority
b. Digital literacy	3.5%	8.4%	36.2%	41.7%	10.3%
Governing relationship (yes)	2	7	37	44	10
Population greater than 100,000	1	5	27	43	24
Population between 50K and 100K	2	5	32	52	9
Population between 10K and 25K	3	8	37	44	8

	Not a current priority	Low priority	Medium priority	High priority	Very high priority
c. Neighborhood/community development	1.6%	10.0%	29.7%	43.5%	15.2%
Population greater than 100,000	0	5	23	43	28
Population between 50K and 100K	1	11	19	54	15

	Not a current priority	Low priority	Medium priority	High priority	Very high priority
d. Civic engagement	1.3%	9.6%	36.5%	41.5%	11.2%
Population greater than 100,000	0	4	29	44	22
Population between 50K and 100K	0	7	25	56	11

	Not a current priority	Low priority	Medium priority	High priority	Very high priority
e. Early childhood education	1.7%	4.8%	26.4%	47.2%	19.9%
Governing relationship (yes)	1	5	24	48	22
Gets allocation from general fund	1	5	24	48	21
Municipality	2	5	26	48	20
Population greater than 100,000	1	3	19	40	38

	Not a current priority	Low priority	Medium priority	High priority	Very high priority
f. Primary/secondary educational attainment	2.1%	4.2%	25.9%	51.0%	16.9%
Population greater than 100,000	1	3	17	45	34

14. Please describe the role that your local library currently plays in advancing community goals in each of the following areas.

	None	Minimal	Moderate	Important	Highly important	Don't know
a. Access to high-speed Internet service	1.2%	4.9%	10.5%	26.7%	46.7%	10.1%
Governing relationship (yes)	1	4	8	28	59	1
Gets allocation from general fund	1	3	9	28	55	4
Population over 100,000	0	6	7	20	63	5
Population between 50,000 and 100,000	1	9	9	24	51	7

14. Please describe the role that your local library currently plays in advancing community goals in each of the following areas.

	None	Minimal	Moderate	Important	Highly important	Don't know
b. Digital literacy	0.8%	4.2%	15.9%	31.2%	34.2%	13.7%
Governing relationship (yes)	0	3	15	36	42	3
Gets allocation from general fund	0	4	15	35	40	5
Population over 100,000	0	1	9	31	53	5
Population between 50,000 and 100,000	0	5	112	30	43	10

14. Please describe the role that your local library currently plays in advancing community goals in each of the following areas.

	None	Minimal	Moderate	Important	Highly important	Don't know
c. Neighborhood/community development	3.4%	19.1%	26.1%	23.2%	15.5%	12.7%
Governing relationship (yes)	3	18	31	28	18	3
Gets allocation from general fund	2	19	30	26	17	5
Population between 25,000 and 50,000	3	19	28	21	15	14
Population between 10,000 and 25,000	3	23	27	19	14	14

14. Please describe the role that your local library currently plays in advancing community goals in each of the following areas.

	None	Minimal	Moderate	Important	Highly important	Don't know
d. Civic engagement	2.0%	12.9%	27.5%	28.1%	17.3%	12.3%
Governing relationship (yes)	1	11	31	34	20	3
Gets allocation from general fund	1	13	31	31	19	5
Population over 100,000	1	9	24	33	26	7

14. Please describe the role that your local library currently plays in advancing community goals in each of the following areas.

	None	Minimal	Moderate	Important	Highly important	Don't know
e. Early childhood education	1.2%	4.4%	17.4%	29.9%	34.8%	12.4%
Governing relationship (yes)	1	3	18	31	44	3
Gets allocation from general fund	1	4	17	32	41	6
Population over 100,000	1	4	10	24	55	7

14. Please describe the role that your local library currently plays in advancing community goals in each of the following areas.

	None	Minimal	Moderate	Important	Highly important	Don't know
f. Primary/secondary educational attainment	1.2%	6.4%	20.5%	33.9%	25.4%	12.6%
Governing relationship (yes)	1	6	22	39	29	3
Gets allocation from general fund	1	6	22	37	28	6
Population over 100,000	1	4	17	34	39	7
Population less than 2 ,500	2	8	19	35	18	18

15. Please indicate whether each of the following is something you think your community's public libraries should DEFINITELY do, should MAYBE do, or should definitely NOT do.

17a. Broadband Internet Access and Digital Inclusion	Should definitely do	Should maybe do	Should definitely not do	No opinion either way	Don't know
a. Provide free access to high-speed broadband and Wi-Fi	84.2%	9.1%	0.7%	2.4%	3.5%
Governing relationship (yes)	90	7	1	1	1
Gets allocation from general fund	88	8	1	2	1
Population over 100,000	91	6	0	1	1
Population between 50,000 and 100,000	90	5	0	3	1

15a. Broadband Internet Access and Digital Inclusion	Should definitely do	Should maybe do	Should definitely not do	No opinion either way	Don't know
b. Offer programs to teach people how to use digital tools such as computers, tablets, smartphones, and apps	63.0%	29.4%	1.0%	2.8%	3.9%
Gets allocation from general fund	70	26	1	1	2
Population over 100,000	73	21	1	2	2
Population between 50,000 and 100,000	71	24	0	3	2
Population between 25,000 and 50,000	67	29	1	1	3

15a. Broadband Internet Access and Digital Inclusion	Should definitely do	Should maybe do	Should definitely not do	No opinion either way	Don't know
c. Offer programs to teach people about protecting their privacy and security online	45.4%	42.8%	1.7%	5.7%	4.4%
Gets allocation from general fund	47	40	2	6	5
Population over 100,000	49	41	1	6	2

15a. Broadband Internet Access and Digital Inclusion	Should definitely do	Should maybe do	Should definitely not do	No opinion either way	Don't know
d. Help low-income families to understand options for accessing broadband services	50.1%	35.6%	1.7%	7.3%	5.0%
Gets allocation from general fund	53	33	1	6	8
Municipality	52	36	1	7	4
Population over 100,000	57	31	1	8	2

15a. Broadband Internet Access and Digital Inclusion	Should definitely do	Should maybe do	Should definitely not do	No opinion either way	Don't know
e. Loan technology tools that allow home use of broadband services (mobile hot spots, laptops, tablets, etc.)	19.6%	39.0%	19.7%	13.3%	8.5%
No significant differences					

15b. Public Services and Civic Engagement	Should definitely do	Should maybe do	Should definitely not do	No opinion either way	Don't know
b. Support provision of public health services	23.7%	43.1%	13.4%	12.4%	7.5%
Population over 100,000	33	37	16	8	6
Population between 5,000 and 10,000	17	44	15	15	8

15b. Public Services and Civic Engagement	Should definitely do	Should maybe do	Should definitely not do	No opinion either way	Don't know
f. Provide a forum for convening public discussions	38.8%	37.3%	5.8%	11.9%	6.1%
Governing relationship (yes)	45	37	6	10	1
Population over 100,000	60	26	4	7	3
Population between 50,000 and 100,000	50	39	3	5	3
Population between 25,000 and 50,000	42	38	6	11	3
East North Central	35	35	4	17	8
West North Central	36	39	5	11	9
East South Central	33	35	9	13	10
South Atlantic	35	42	8	10	4
Mountain	44	32	4	14	6
Pacific Coast	45	36	5	13	2

15c. Education	Should definitely do	Should maybe do	Should definitely not do	No opinion either way	Don't know
b. Coordinate more closely with local schools to provide resources to kids	72.6%	20.0%	0.8%	2.3%	4.3%
Governing relationship (yes)	78	19	1	2	1
Gets allocation from general fund	76	20	1	2	1
Population over 100,000	81	13	1	2	3
Population between 25,000 and 50,000	85	13	1	0	0

15c. Education	Should definitely do	Should maybe do	Should definitely not do	No opinion either way	Don't know
d. Provide online learning experiences	56.8%	32.5%	0.9%	5.2%	4.5%
Governing relationship (yes)	61	30	1	5	1
Population over 100,000	70	23	1	4	2
Population between 50,000 and 100,000	68	27	1	3	1

15c. Education	Should definitely do	Should maybe do	Should definitely not do	No opinion either way	Don't know
e Provide creative space and materials for community members to create, learn, and share (makerspace)	49.8%	34.5%	2.2%	8.1%	5.4%
Governing relationship (yes)	55	34	2	8	2
Gets allocation from general fund	54	34	2	8	2
Population over 100,000	63	26	2	5	4
Population between 50,000 and 100,000	58	31	2	7	1
Mid Atlantic	64	26	1	5	5

15d. Workforce Development	Should definitely do	Should maybe do	Should definitely not do	No opinion either way	Don't know
b. Provide training, technology, and resources to develop job-related skills	31.9%	41.9%	8.6%	11.1%	6.5%
Population over 100,000	47	36	4	7	6
Population between 50,000 and 100,000	36	47	9	7	2

15d. Workforce Development	Should definitely do	Should maybe do	Should definitely not do	No opinion either way	Don't know
c. Coordinate with local employers to connect community residents to training and career development resources that local employers need	31.3%	41.5%	7.9%	12.3%	7.0%
Governing relationship (yes)	34	45	8	11	3
Population over 100,000	44	37	4	9	5

15e. Economic Development	Should definitely do	Should maybe do	Should definitely not do	No opinion either way	Don't know
a. Provide information and training on how to start a business	22.2%	48.9%	10.8%	12.1%	6.0%
Governing relationship (yes)	25	51	11	10	3
Population over 100,000	40	40	7	9	4

15e. Economic Development	Should definitely do	Should maybe do	Should definitely not do	No opinion either way	Don't know
d. Provide workspace for mobile workers and entrepreneurs	23.4%	40.9%	14.4%	13.9%	7.4%
Governing relationship (yes)	27	41	14	12	4
Population over 100,000	32	43	10	10	5
Population between 50,000 and 100,000	26	40	16	14	5

COMPARING ICMA WITH PEW RESEARCH CENTER LIBRARIES QUESTIONS

The ICMA survey contained four questions that the Pew Research Center has also asked in its surveys of Americans age 16 and over. One survey (ICMA) asks local government officials what they think libraries in their communities should be doing, while the other (Pew) asks people what they think their libraries should be doing. The table below shows the results.

With respect to coordinating with local schools and providing resources for makerspaces, local officials and members of the public are basically aligned. Very strong majorities of both groups think libraries should definitely coordinate with schools to provide resources for kids. The makerspace issue is not a perfect comparison since ICMA and Pew explored the issue in somewhat different ways. ICMA frames things in terms of providing space

and materials for creative activities, while Pew framed the question in terms of buying specific technology for making objects. Nonetheless, about half of local officials and members of the general public think libraries should definitely be involved in these areas.

A disconnect emerges for training for the digital world. Just under half of elected officials say libraries should definitely provide programs to help people protect their privacy and security online. But three-quarters of Americans age 16 and older think libraries should definitely offer such programs. The pattern is similar, if less pronounced for digital skills training. A vast majority of Americans say libraries should definitely offer such programs, while government officials typically agree, but to a notably lesser extent.

Library priorities	Should definitely do	Should maybe do
Coordinate more closely with local schools to provide resources to kids		
ICMA survey of government officials	73%	20%
Pew Research survey of Americans (2015)	85%	11%
Provide creative space and materials for community members to create, learn, and share (makerspace)		
ICMA survey of government officials	50%	35%
Pew Research survey of Americans (2016)*	50%	37%
Offer programs to teach people about protecting their privacy and security online		
ICMA survey of government officials	45%	43%
Pew Research survey of Americans (2015)	76%	18%
Offer programs to teach people how to use digital tools such as computers, tablets, smartphones, and apps		
ICMA survey of government officials	63%	29%
Pew Research survey of Americans (2016)	80%	16%
The Pew question touching on makerspaces was: "Buy 3-D printers and other digital tools to allow people to learn how to use them to make different kinds of objects."		