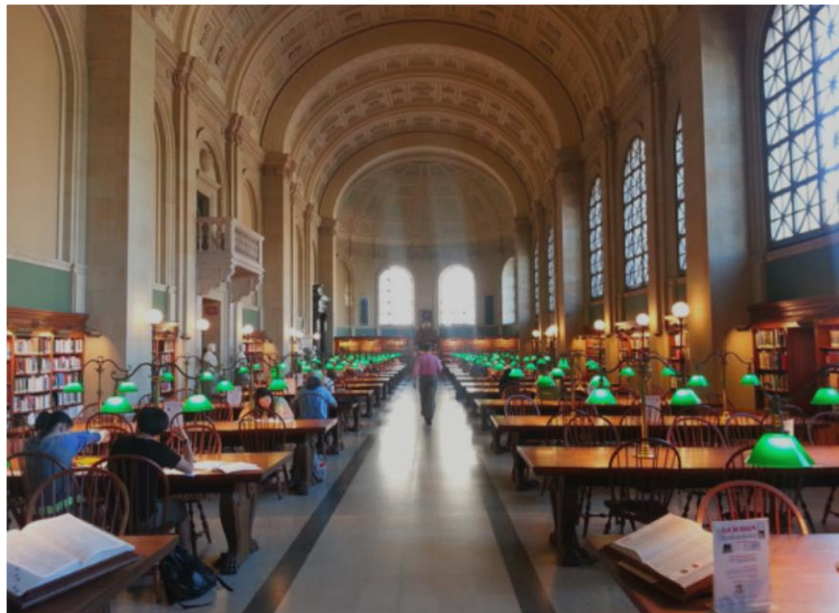




## Operational and Financial Assessment

May 1, 2015



**Boston Public Library: Operational and Financial Assessment**

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## Introduction


### Project Background

Chrysalis Management, LLC was engaged by the City of Boston to conduct an Operational and Financial Assessment of the Boston Public Library (BPL) for purposes of identifying strengths and weaknesses and specifying both short and long-term practical improvement opportunities. Work began on December 8, 2014 with a formal project kick-off on December 11, 2014. The project was scoped as a time-boxed initiative with a broad review of all functions and a deeper assessment focus for those areas where increased attention could most positively impact the potential performance of The Boston Public Library. This is in contrast with an approach where all functional areas receive equal attention, regardless of their potential impact on organizational effectiveness. Review of the branch network was limited to an assessment of how the branches interact with library administration and governing structures and did not include individual branch assessments.

The process began with senior team meetings and a review of key documents provided by the staff at the BPL. A wide variety of in-person interviews were conducted with staff from the BPL, City of Boston, and coordinating organizations (Leventhal Map Center, Digital Public Library of America, The Boston Public Library Foundation, President of the AFSCME and union, etc.). Based on findings in early document review, staff interviews, and benchmarking with similar library networks, additional information was gathered through data requests, detailed analysis, primary research, secondary research and further, targeted interviews. In total, 68 individuals were interviewed including 50 inside the BPL and 18 from entities that interact with the Library.

It should be noted that library staff was highly cooperative with the assessment effort and most seemed genuinely interested in what could be learned from the process. Senior level employees participated actively in information sharing and data gathering and more junior staff members viewed our interviews as a way to have a voice in change for a library about which they care deeply.

### About the Report

This report provides an overview of the organization's financial position and outlines its strengths, and opportunities by reviewing both functional progress and progress against key strategic initiatives as defined in the Compass Principles. While strengths and weaknesses are highlighted throughout the document, the ten **highest priority** improvement opportunities are discussed with the most depth (situation, substantiation, recommendation, benefits). These high priority opportunities are accompanied by the use of the Chrysalis symbol for transformation [  ] and are explored in the functional area to which they most relate. Detailed departmental reviews are included for both Library Services and Administration & Technology, as these functional groups contained significant organizational complexity.

Some review areas referenced in Chrysalis Management's original response to the RFP were amended by the City of Boston post submission. The completed review conforms to the finalized and mutually agreed upon structure. A few study areas are identified where further study is recommended. These areas generally represent a required level of analysis not possible under the scope of this assessment but where further review is recommended and opportunity for improvement likely exists.



## About the Boston Public Library

Founded in 1848, the Boston Public Library (BPL) was the first publicly supported municipal library in America to lend books and have a branch library. In addition to serving the people of Boston, The Boston Public Library is also the Library for the Commonwealth; all residents of the commonwealth of Massachusetts have borrowing and research privileges. The library system houses 23 million items, second only to the Library of Congress (with nearly 35 million items).<sup>1</sup> The library system is made up of one central library in Copley Square and 24 branch libraries located throughout the city. In FY 2014, the library system welcomed 3.7 million visitors, offered 10,000 programs, and circulated over 3.7 items.

Two recent and significant renovations have breathed new life into the BPL and have acted as catalysts in envisioning and bringing to life the library of the 21<sup>st</sup> century. The East Boston Branch opened in November 2013 and has received rave reviews. The first phase of the Johnson Building renovation was completed in February 2015. This newly created space takes full advantage of new technology in its new Teen and Children's areas.

In addition to managing traditional circulating library services including lending books and managing community programming, the BPL manages multifaceted research library services, an enormous trove of special collections, and a premier restaurant and events venue. Embedded in this broad combination of services are five unique business models each of which requires unique leadership knowledge and competencies.



<sup>1</sup> American Library Association

## Peer Library Comparisons

Because the BPL is so truly unique in its offerings, it can be said that direct comparisons are made difficult. However, by comparing to a broad set of libraries, there is learning to be done about how the BPL can continue to strive for best in class status in each key category of measurement. Peer libraries were chosen with staff input and by evaluating libraries who had historically compared themselves to the BPL or are similar in one or more key metrics (population served, number of borrowers, number of branches, square miles of service area, visitors, circulation, etc.). The BPL is truly unique in the size of its collections which make some comparisons difficult. Peer comparisons use source data from the Public Library of America's PLA database<sup>2</sup>.

Key summary information for selected peer libraries is as follows:

PLA REFERENCE NAME	LOC	Library Name	Population of legal service area	Square miles of legal service area	Number of branches	Registrations	Holdings*
MA - Boston Public Library	BOS	Boston Public Library	617,594	89	24	361,639	23,000,000
NY - Brooklyn Public Library	BRK	Brooklyn Public Library	2,504,700	71	59	1,062,584	3,530,657
NC - CHARLOTTE MECKLENBURG LIBRARY	CHA	Charlotte Mecklenburg Library	962,593	526	19	852,482	1,180,875
OH - CUYAHOGA COUNTY PUBLIC LIBRARY	CLE	Cuyahoga County Public Library	616,527	458	27	923,600	3,007,830
OR - MULTNOMAH COUNTY LIBRARY	POR	Multnomah County Library	748,445	465	18	441,505	1,907,504
CO - Denver Public Library	DEN	Denver Public Library	649,481	155	24	390,776	2,170,478
DC - District of Columbia Public Library	DC	District of Columbia Public Library	632,323	68	26	315,737	1,821,524
PA - Free Library Of Philadelphia	PHI	The Free Library Of Philadelphia	1,547,297	135	53	416,260	3,439,757
MN - HENNEPIN COUNTY LIBRARY	MIN	Hennepin County Library	1,180,138	611	40	843,674	
WI - MADISON PUBLIC LIBRARY	MAD	Madison Public Library	238,000	77	8	162,374	845,864
NY - NEW YORK PUBLIC LIBRARY	NYC	New York Public Library	3,239,253	128	87	2,200,914	6,292,799
NY - Queens Borough Public Library	QNS	Queens Borough Public Library	2,230,722	109	61	884,791	6,656,648
CA - San Francisco Public Library	SF	San Francisco Public Library	812,820	48	27	436,268	3,119,567
WA - Seattle Public Library	SEA	Seattle Public Library	614,000	84	26	451,411	2,377,231

\*Note: Hennepin County Library did not report total holdings size to PLA

<sup>2</sup> The Public Library of America's PLA data set available at the time of review was for a full year and was described as FY13. See appendix for further data set information.

## Summary of Findings

### Executive Summary

The Boston Public Library (BPL) has a clear vision of the change that is required to thrive as a leading 21<sup>st</sup> century library. Its executive team is involved in many industry-wide initiatives and is especially well-positioned to lead in the digital space with Amy Ryan's upcoming role on the Board of Directors of the Digital Public Library of America. The BPL has as strong and supportive Board of Trustees.

For the library to successfully implement the changes it envisions, it will need better developed prioritization and execution competencies, a stronger performance management culture that supports skill development and accountability at all levels of the organization and, importantly, significantly more cooperation, flexibility, and speed from the labor unions. The combined construct of the executive team is strong in strategy and design but needs improvement in implementation.

While its current financial position is solid and the City of Boston remains committed to the library's success, the BPL will need to redouble its efforts at generating a broader base of support from an array of external funding sources in order to sustain offerings at current levels, enhance its services and maintain and modernize its infrastructure. A particular focus should be: development of more successful and robust fundraising activities including expanded support from national sources, maximized use of existing endowment funds and increased contributions from enterprise activities.

The adoption of new technologies is having a significant impact on the way libraries interact with their patrons. BPL system-wide trends between FY13 and FY14 indicate stagnation or decline in most traditional "place-based" library services: visitors are down 3.7%, physical circulation is down 4%, and program attendance is relatively flat with a 1.3% increase. There is, simultaneously, a significant increase in online service demands: digital circulation is up 30.1% and in-library Wi-Fi use is up 34%. This, coupled with an aging branch infrastructure and recent success in branch combination, indicates the need for a branch network assessment to determine the right number and type of branch spaces for servicing unique neighborhood needs. Because each branch has a unique user profile (some are heavily used for computer access, others have high circulation use, etc.) community demand should be carefully assessed. At the same time, resources should be increasingly directed to the BPL's online presence bolstering its ability to deliver services, independent of physical location to residents of Boston, the Commonwealth of Massachusetts, and the Nation (through Digital Public Library of America).

In need of priority attention is discoverability of non-circulating items at the BPL. Just 19% of the BPL's total assets are available for online search through the library's primary cataloging system, leaving over 19 million items virtually invisible to the public<sup>3</sup>. These "invisible" collections are only discoverable with the aid of specialized librarians and many of the items in the collections are in storage, unavailable for viewing. The library incurs significant costs to store and manage these items year after year with very little possibility of public use. Additionally, because no consolidated inventory list exists for all BPL holdings, the quantity, type, value, and condition are based largely on dated estimates.

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<sup>3</sup> Note that circulating items are fully discoverable, cataloguing issues relate almost entirely to research and special collections (utilized by a comparatively small population).



## Financial Overview

The Boston Public Library is a major City of Boston Department and only five other City Departments, (Schools, Police, Fire, Public Works and Public Health), demand more annual operating support. BPL's operating revenue from all sources in fiscal year ending June 30, 2014 totaled \$42.1 million, consisting of \$33.1 million of budget support from the City of Boston (79% of total) and the balance from a variety of other non-City "external" sources. These external sources include the Commonwealth of Massachusetts, the Library's endowment, grants and donations made primarily from independent foundations and a variety of other funding sources, including revenues from private events and the Metro Boston Library Network.

The BPL's operating expenses can be placed into three distinct categories – personnel, building related (including utility costs) and library materials, which are primarily book purchases. BPL's largest expenditure is for salaries and wages for its 410 full-time and 60 part-time employees throughout the library system. In FY 2014, personnel costs amounted to \$24.5 million or 60% of BPL's total expenditures. Capital expenditures are funded almost exclusively from the City of Boston. From FY 2010 thru FY 2014, the City funded \$35.4 million of capital spending for the Library. Going forward, including authorizations from prior years, the City of Boston is projected to fund \$133.3 million of capital projects from FY 2015 thru FY 2019, or 7% of the City's planned capital spending during that period. Over half of this authorization (\$75.5 million) is targeted for the Library's Johnson Building renovation that is currently underway.

Given anticipated future demands on City and State budgets, generating adequate support required to sustain the Library's programs and maintain and modernize its infrastructure will be challenging. Accordingly, the BPL will need to further diversify its revenue support and attempt to generate a higher percentage of its operating and capital requirements from non-government sources to achieve its objectives. Actions required to enhance external funds should include steps to improve fundraising efforts, maximize support from its existing endowment and increase the contribution of its enterprise activities, including events, retail and other commercial activities.





## Staffing Overview

Comparing is useful but complicated if we don't understand peer libraries in context. Some libraries are similar because of the number of branches, others are similar because of the total population they serve, and others because of the number of registered borrowers or circulation levels. No library is truly comparable to the BPL with respect to overall collection size. BPL is an outlier in terms of Special Collections and Research and this makes direct comparisons difficult. Notable also, is that managing research and special collections are both very personnel / labor intensive activity areas, yet they benefit a very small percentage of the population.

When compared to peer libraries, Boston appears overstaffed on the basis of registered borrowers, circulation, and visits but also has a higher than average number of FTE/\$100,000 of expenditures. Notably, ten of the peer libraries have work weeks in excess of the BPL's 35 hour work week. While the data tells us that the BPL is overstaffed when compared to the peer set, our review did not reveal an underutilized employee base. Instead, what we found was that the broad charter, combined with many overlapping priorities, left many employees feeling that it would be unrealistic for them to complete the broad range of work with which they were tasked.

The very broad charter of the library makes clear prioritization, flexible job roles, and intelligent use of technology all an important part of the solution to maintaining reasonable and affordable staffing levels related to service quality and volume provided.

The table below is sorted on the basis of total FTE<sup>4</sup>, peer group averages<sup>5</sup> are at the bottom. Note that District of Columbia did not report visit numbers.

FTE Analysis									
Location	Library	Registrations	Circulation	Visits	Total FTE	FTE per 1,000 Registrations	FTE per 1,000 Circulation	FTE per 1,000 Visits	Total FTE per \$100k Exp.
QNS	Queens Borough Public Library	884,791	16,723,930	12,355,015	1,277	1.44	0.08	0.10	\$ 1.57
BRK	Brooklyn Public Library	1,062,584	17,461,499	10,066,773	935	0.88	0.05	0.09	\$ 1.23
NYC	New York Public Library, the Branch Librs.	2,200,914	25,864,673	14,185,099	904	0.41	0.03	0.06	\$ 0.89
SF	San Francisco Public Library	436,268	10,604,636	7,424,786	688	1.58	0.06	0.09	\$ 1.04
MIN	Hennepin County Library	843,674	15,742,225	5,240,918	600	0.71	0.04	0.11	\$ 1.51
CLE	Cuyahoga County Public Library	923,600	19,743,393	7,904,000	593	0.64	0.03	0.07	\$ 1.52
PHI	Philadelphia, the Free Library Of	416,260	6,847,492	6,116,762	566	1.36	0.08	0.09	\$ 1.03
DC	District of Columbia Public Library	315,737	3,295,485	*	537	1.70	0.16	-	\$ 1.76
DEN	Denver Public Library	390,776	9,811,501	4,371,420	496	1.27	0.05	0.11	\$ 1.67
POR	Multnomah County Library	441,505	21,984,923	4,557,241	452	1.02	0.02	0.10	\$ 1.25
SEA	Seattle Public Library, The	451,411	11,856,180	6,734,655	450	1.00	0.04	0.07	\$ 0.98
<b>BOS</b>	<b>Boston Public Library</b>	<b>361,639</b>	<b>3,722,104</b>	<b>3,623,724</b>	<b>427</b>	<b>1.18</b>	<b>0.11</b>	<b>0.12</b>	<b>\$ 1.46</b>
CHA	Charlotte Mecklenburg Library	852,482	5,743,699	3,044,024	313	0.37	0.05	0.10	\$ 1.54
MAD	Madison Public Library	162,374	4,085,341	2,053,449	160	0.98	0.04	0.08	\$ 1.65
<b>AVG:</b>					<b>633.65</b>	<b>1.04</b>	<b>0.06</b>	<b>0.09</b>	<b>\$ 1.34</b>

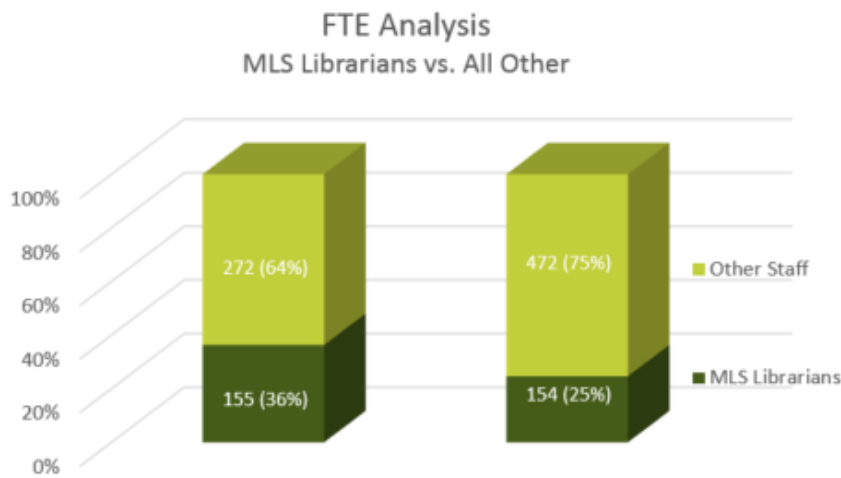
<sup>4</sup> FTE refers to full time equivalents, which means a half-time employee would be counted as 0.5 FTE.

<sup>5</sup> Registration numbers use active registered borrowers, consistent with the PLA data set.

FTE Analysis: FTE's per 1,000 visits			
Library	Total FTE	Visits	Total FTE / 1,000 Visits
Boston Public Library	427	3,623,724	0.12
Hennepin County Library	600	5,240,918	0.11
Denver Public Library	496	4,371,420	0.11
Queens Borough Public Library	1,277	12,355,015	0.10
Charolotte Mecklenburg Library	313	3,044,024	0.10
Multnomah County Library	452	4,557,241	0.10
Brooklyn Public Library	935	10,066,773	0.09
San Francisco Public Library	688	7,424,786	0.09
The Free Library Of Philadelphia	566	6,116,762	0.09
Madison Public Library	160	2,053,449	0.08
Cuyahoga County Public Library	593	7,904,000	0.07
Seattle Public Library	450	6,734,655	0.07
New York Public Library	904	14,185,099	0.06
District of Columbia Public Library	537	-	-

Note: DC (District of Columbia Public Library) did not report total visits

The BPL is the most heavily staffed of any reporting peer library when considering staffing related to number of visits.



MLS Librarians (Master of Library Science) accounted for 36% of FTEs at the Boston Public Library<sup>6</sup> but only 25% of total FTEs at peer libraries.

FTE Analysis: FTE's per \$100,000 Salary & Benefits Exposure			
Library	Total FTE	Total Sal/Benefits	Total FTE / \$100k Exp
District of Columbia Public Library	537	30,594,082	1.76
Denver Public Library	496	29,631,055	1.67
Madison Public Library	160	9,704,862	1.65
Queens Borough Public Library	1,277	81,221,709	1.57
Charolotte Mecklenburg Library	313	20,359,273	1.54
Cuyahoga County Public Library	593	38,920,320	1.52
Hennepin County Library	600	39,772,935	1.51
Boston Public Library	427	29,159,007	1.46
Multnomah County Library	452	36,303,987	1.25
Brooklyn Public Library	935	76,104,677	1.23
San Francisco Public Library	688	66,471,526	1.04
The Free Library Of Philadelphia	566	54,669,274	1.03
Seattle Public Library	450	45,927,725	0.98
New York Public Library	904	100,983,000	0.89

The BPL is getting more FTEs per \$100k of expenditure (1.46) than the average in the peer set (1.36). The data would indicate that DC has the most cost-effective per FTE staffing model while New York Public Library has the most expensive per FTE staffing model.

<sup>6</sup> Numbers provided by David Leonard, March 2015

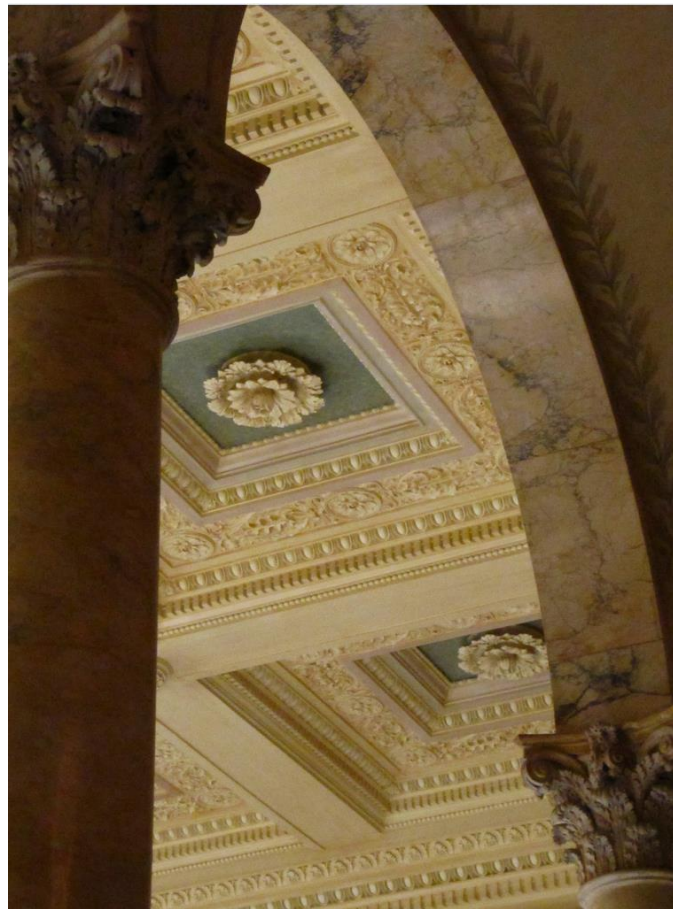
## Key Strengths

Overall, the library is strategically strong and has provided a clear vision for its employees. The BPL recognizes it is a pivotal time in the redefinition of what a library can provide to its diverse community and the Executive Team has a clear vision of how to meet changing library needs both today and in the future.

- **Clear and well-articulated strategic vision:** The “Compass Strategic Plan”, which was approved by the Trustees on November 15, 2011, serves as a living framework which outlines eight strategic principles and 100 specific outcomes the BPL strives to achieve. Plans articulated in the Compass Strategic Plan are well-integrated into expectations of the executive leadership team and are clearly communicated to staff at all levels of the organization.
- **Public Service reorganization:** A reorganization of the public service approach at the BPL is currently underway and is in alignment with trending changes. It is well-articulated, and seeks to leverage advancements in technology while simultaneously placing an appropriate focus on human interaction and staying true to the library’s mission as a community gathering place and user-centered institution. The reorganization plan articulates fourteen specific in-person opportunities for the staff and public to engage and, importantly, keeps the focus on the experience from the visitor point of view.
- **Breadth of services:** In addition to managing traditional circulating library services including lending books and managing community programming, the BPL manages multifaceted research library services, an enormous trove of special collections, and a premier restaurant and events venue. Embedded in this combination of services are five unique business models each of which requires unique leadership knowledge and competencies.
- **Industry vision and coordination:** The BPL’s leadership role in the Digital Public Library of America and Digital Commonwealth are fundamental differentiators and serve as a foundation for continued innovation and increasing contribution beyond Boston and outside the Commonwealth of Massachusetts. Amy Ryan’s leadership here will continue to provide opportunities for the BPL, in collaboration with other libraries, to lead the nation in defining which assets should be held physically in many libraries across the Nation and which items should be centralized in a digital repository providing immediate visual access to all. The potential for consolidation of digital efforts over time can make each and every effort at digitization exponentially more valuable over time.
- **Successfully executed major construction projects:** New construction projects are successfully executed with well-planned programming and design components. Working closely with City of Boston’s Project & Construction Management Department and others, BPL management takes the lead by integrating internal and community input to carefully think through the design of its newly created spaces and how they will support current and changing library needs by specific demographic groups. Newly designed buildings, at Copley as well as at the branches, are well-designed to deliver on a 21st century library vision.
- **Pride in Boston Public Library:** Employees at all levels have pride in the history and purpose of the Boston Public Library. They see themselves as a part of delivering meaningful services to the community and value the vast treasures stored at the BPL.




- **Extroverted organization:** Amy Ryan aptly describes the BPL as an “extroverted organization”. Employees across many functions at the BPL are involved in statewide, nationwide, and worldwide activities important to the ongoing development of libraries. This extroverted organizational personality positions the BPL for broad industry leadership in the years to come.
- **Desire to serve niche demographics:** The executive team is keenly focused on the branch network and its importance in supporting unique neighborhood demographics.
- **Social media outreach:** The BPL has done an admirable job in managing the balance between brand consistency and communication fluidity that is a hallmark of social media communications. This balance will continue to evolve over time but the BPL has struck a smart balance and is a leader among libraries in its social media engagement achieving more *Facebook likes per capita* than almost all libraries in the peer group studied.



## High Priority Opportunity Areas

Below is a list of the high priority improvement opportunities for the Boston Public Library. Throughout the report, many opportunities for improvement are identified; these *high priority* opportunities are

differentiated by the Chrysalis Management symbol for change and transformation [] and include a thorough analysis including situation, substantiation, recommendation, and benefits.

1. **Union Cooperation:** Achieve an accelerated pace of change by better managing Labor Union inputs and timelines. Improve job description flexibility, recognize and incorporate overall pace of technology change as a standard and necessary ongoing activity in all functions at all levels. Allow for consistent performance evaluation tools and measurement across the organization, encourage measurable goals. Reward top performers and hold underperformers accountable.
2. **Prioritization and Accountability:** Improve organizational focus by limiting number of high priority objectives; recognize that if everything is a top priority, nothing is a top priority. Link strategic planning and prioritization processes with budgeting and ensure target goals are specific, measurable, and realistic based on staffing constraints. Ensure accountability is in place for results.
3. **Employee Performance Management:** Commit to a performance management process which clearly identifies skills and capabilities required for each job function, manages ongoing training programs to close skill gaps, provides honest feedback, and supports career growth for motivated employees. Ensure that the progressive discipline process allows for appropriate removal of employees unwilling or unable to fulfill necessary duties required by current job functions.
4. **Fundraising:** Broaden geographic base of support, identify a path forward for improved fundraising yield, clearly articulate funding needs (prioritizing stewardship and access over acquisition), and broadly publicize successes that can yield a broader base of funding.
5. **Inventory Management:** Aggressively address deficiencies in inventory management, storage and security, visibility, and availability. Manage catch-up for collection cataloging, and ensure collections are made available to the public now and in the future.
6. **Implementation Mindset:** Adopt an implementation mindset to ensure that smart strategies not only get identified and reported but also implemented. Support junior staff in bringing an idea to fruition, be a strong finisher.
7. **Website Design and Implementation:** Reimagine the website as the primary entry-way to the expanded on-line presence of the BPL. Ensure information and services are organized in a patron-focused structure and minimize multiple log-in requirements across many service platforms.
8. **Technology Leverage:** Commit to better utilization of technology to support business processes across the organization; limit manual reporting wherever possible. Improve overall technology literacy and creativity throughout the BPL.
9. **Hiring:** Streamline the hiring process and revisit union staffing and job description limitations which may create barriers to flexibly serving diverse populations.



10. **Space Rationalization:** Take steps to free up space at Copley by consolidating staff locations and moving rarely-used items to remote storage. Consider opportunities for more public use of newly created spaces or create funding through intelligent co-location of non BPL entities.



## Summary of Improvement Initiatives

Below is a summary of selected high priority improvement opportunities with related benefits. While benefits described below represent *potential* and estimates will be imperfect, they are intended as a framework for conversation.

Improvement Area	Improvement Opportunity	Benefits	Page Ref
Union Cooperation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Limit union involvement to what is required under the existing collective bargaining agreements and reallocate management time</li> <li>Improve flexibility in job descriptions in accordance with public service and reference restructuring plans</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Speed implementation</li> <li>Eliminate position over-specialization</li> <li>Increase % of interactions where patrons resolve request with single staff interaction</li> </ul>	31
Prioritization and Accountability	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Achieve results in impactful work areas</li> <li>Remove Underperformers and reallocate staffing and training budgets to strong performers</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Salary and wage reallocation to highly productive employees</li> <li>Increased productivity</li> <li>Improved effectiveness</li> </ul>	28
Employee Performance Management	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Increase professional development for staff at all levels</li> <li>Ensure performance evaluations are completed thoroughly and regularly</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Maximize productivity of long-tenure employees</li> <li>Allow for removal of underperforming personnel</li> <li>Set clear goals, report on outcomes</li> </ul>	68
Fundraising	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Increase yield from Boston-based support</li> <li>Broaden geographic base of support</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>\$1.5M in additional annual funding</li> <li>Increase national grants related specifically to digitization efforts</li> </ul>	34
Inventory Management	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Complete full inventory of owned assets, deaccession non-core special collections, pause purchasing in rare books and prints, refocus special collections away from acquisition and towards discoverability</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>\$0.38M in annual cost avoidance (\$1.1M total cost avoidance in rare books and prints over three years)</li> <li>Close discoverability gap from current 19% of assets searchable; strive toward peer average of 92%.</li> </ul>	38
Implementation Mindset	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Focus heavily on implementation of plans already in progress rather than continued planning for new improvements at the expense of implementation and associated benefits realization</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Unlock a broad spectrum of identified but unrealized organizational improvements</li> </ul>	30
Website Design and Implementation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Launch patron-centered website highly focused to transact (research, download, learn, etc.)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Reduce staff burden</li> <li>Increase REACH</li> <li>Market cost effectively</li> </ul>	73
Technology Leverage	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Identify and implement process enabling technologies to minimize manual tracking and reporting tasks (reference request queue management and tracking FAQ databases, facilities work order system, special collections inventory management, etc.)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Significantly increased operating efficiency at lower costs</li> <li>Improve patron service</li> <li>Improve decision making</li> <li>Increase job satisfaction</li> <li>Reduce manual errors</li> </ul>	72
Hiring	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Streamline hiring process, eliminate duplicative or unnecessary approvals, approve compensation in ranges</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Improve organizational effectiveness</li> <li>Improve productivity</li> <li>Increase quality of staff hires</li> </ul>	67
Space Rationalization	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Copley - Consolidate staff space, move infrequently accessed storage items off-site, commercialize newly available space</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>\$0.5M - \$1.5M in annual revenue for newly commercialized space</li> </ul>	70

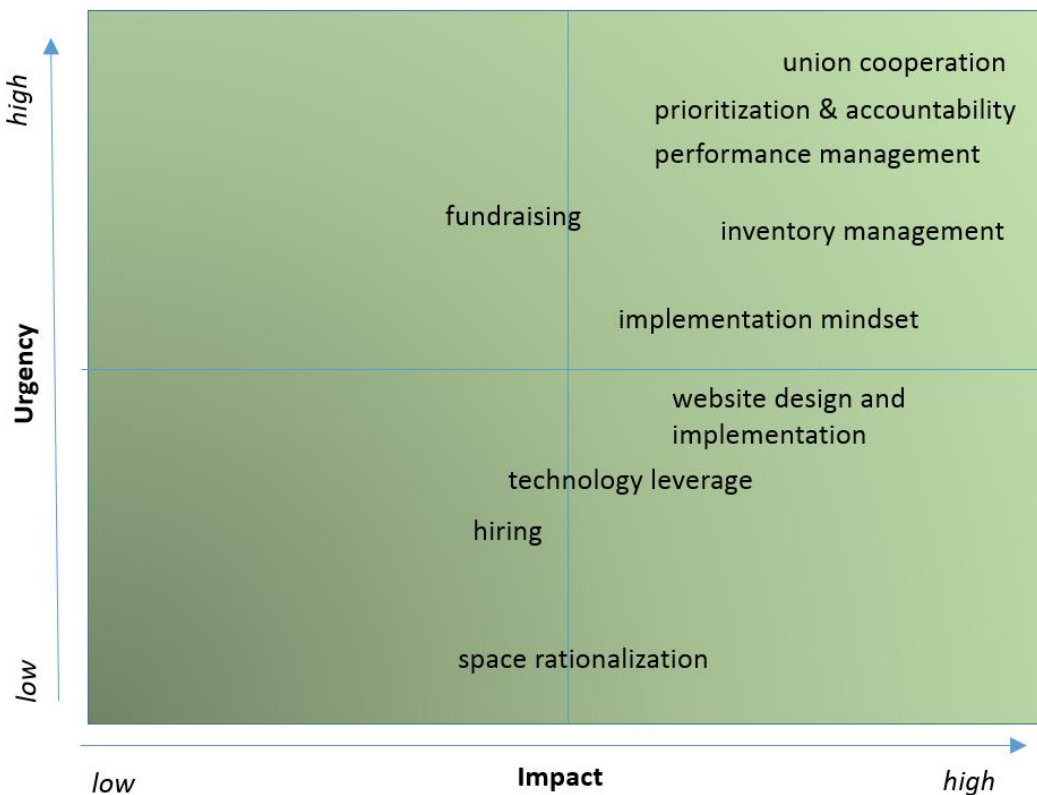


## Prioritization Framework

Below is a framework which maps prioritization of key improvement initiatives. For simplification and focus, we have mapped only the high priority improvement opportunities on this grid. It is highly recommended that the BPL executive leadership team come together with its full list of important improvement initiatives and plot them on a prioritization chart like the one below. The team should then specifically identify initiatives which, while important, will **not** receive attention during the coming year, thereby providing increased focus to high priority initiatives. Once solidified, the executive team should be willing to prioritize both resources and time accordingly and should work together to highlight for one another when time and resources are inappropriately being applied to items not deemed high priority.

For the BPL to increase traction, the executive team must become comfortable saying “no” to moving forward on items that are less important than others or removing an item from the list if budget availability does not support forward momentum on a necessary initiative. Difficult decisions will need to be made and initiatives being removed from the action list should be made explicit. Current lack of implementation traction at the BPL is not due to lack of hard work or strategic intelligence, it is due to lack of explicit prioritization among an extremely high volume of work areas.

## Prioritization Matrix





## Financial Assessment

### General Review of Operations

#### Existing Funding Sources

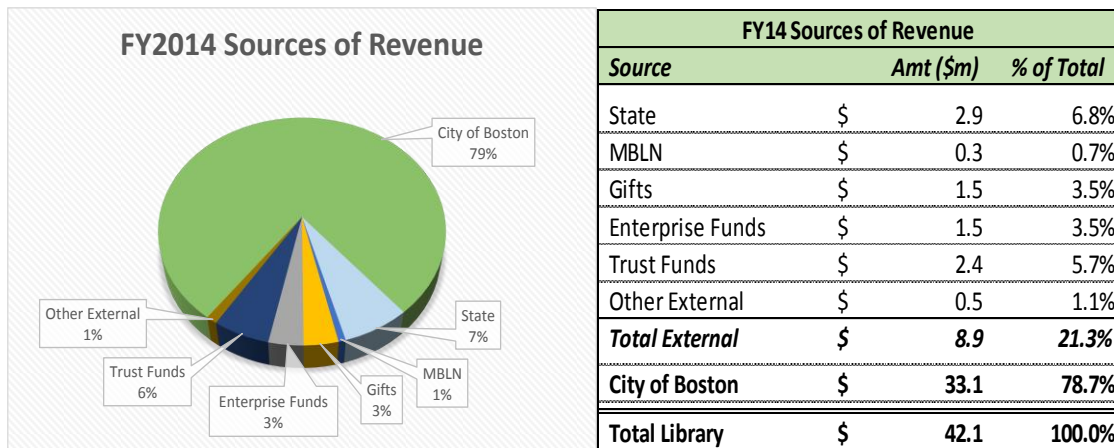
The Boston Public Library (“BPL”) is a major City of Boston Department and only five other City Departments, (Schools, Police, Fire, Public Works and Public Health), demand more annual operating support. Although the BPL will always be highly dependent on operational support and capital projects from the City of Boston, the Library does benefit from a diverse set of other “external” funding sources. These sources are being used to supplement and expand core library programs and services.

Total BPL operating support from all sources in fiscal year ending June 30, 2014 totaled \$42.1 million, consisting of \$33.1 million from the City of Boston (79% of total) and the balance from a variety of other non-City “external” sources, including support from:

- Commonwealth of Massachusetts
- Boston Public Library’s endowment
- Gifts, grants and donations
- Enterprise funds, including event-related revenue
- Other external sources

#### Sources of Revenue - Fiscal Year 2014 (millions)

Source: BPL: Accounting Dept.



A detailed review of each of the funding sources is included in sections below.

Capital expenditures are funded almost exclusively from the City of Boston, although occasionally BPL may fund minor capital equipment and building improvements from external funds. From FY 2010 thru FY 2014, the City has funded \$35.4 million of capital spending for the Library. The largest of the projects includes ongoing improvements to the Johnson building, a new East Boston branch, the Library’s new integrated library system Polaris and a number of new roofs on many of its branches. Including existing authorizations from prior years, City of Boston funding for the Library’s capital projects totals \$133.3



million, 7% of the City’s planned capital spending for FY 2015 through 2019. Over half of the authorization (\$75.5 million) is targeted for the Library’s Johnson Building renovation. A detailed listing of each of the Library’s authorized projects, scope of work and status is included in the appendix.

## Major Operating Expenditures

In general, BPLs operating expenses can be allocated into three distinct categories – personnel, building related (including utility costs) and library materials, which are primarily book purchases. Fiscal year 2014 expenditures are detailed in the following table.

### Operating Expenses – Fiscal Year 2014 (millions)

*Source: BPL: Accounting Dept.*

FY14 Operating Expenses			
Type	Amt (\$m)	% of Total	
Salaries & Wages	\$ 24.5	59.9%	
Utilities	\$ 4.0	9.9%	
Repairs & Maintenance	\$ 2.6	6.3%	
Library Materials	\$ 4.5	11.0%	
Programs	\$ 0.3	0.7%	
Other	\$ 5.0	12.2%	
<b>Total Expense</b>	<b>\$ 40.8</b>	<b>100.0%</b>	

Over the past five fiscal years, BPL’s operating expenses have remained quite stable overall, increasing only 3%<sup>7</sup> since FY 2010, with utilities, repairs and maintenance and library materials growing more than other categories. Despite recent year over year increases associated with collective bargaining agreements, overall personnel costs have remained flat over that time period due primarily to reductions in staffing necessitated by decreased State support beginning in 2009, as discussed later.

<sup>7</sup> This actually equates to a CAGR (cumulative average growth rate) of only 0.69% per annum. As a benchmark, US inflation totaled 8.6% between 2010 and 2014

Operating Expenses – FY 2010 to FY 2014 (millions)

*Source: BPL: Accounting Dept.*

Operating Expenses FY 2010 - FY 2014						
	FY 2010	FY 2011	FY 2012	FY 2013	FY 2014	5-Year Chg
Salary & Wages	24.5	23.7	22.3	23.2	24.5	-0.2%
Utilities	3.7	3.9	3.4	3.8	4.0	10.0%
Repairs & Maintenance	2.0	2.6	2.6	2.7	2.6	27.4%
Library Materials	3.9	4.0	3.6	4.8	4.5	13.5%
Programs	0.3	0.3	0.2	0.3	0.3	-7.6%
Other	5.2	4.0	4.8	3.6	5.0	-3.9%
<b>Total Expense</b>	<b>\$ 39.7</b>	<b>\$ 38.6</b>	<b>\$ 36.9</b>	<b>\$ 38.4</b>	<b>\$ 40.8</b>	<b>3.0%</b>

BPL's largest expenditure is for salaries and wages for 410 full-time and 60 part-time employees employed throughout the library system. In FY14, personnel costs amounted to \$24.5 million or 60% of BPL's total expenditures. Of note, operating support from the City of Boston covered 91% of salaries and wages in FY14 while the Library's external funds absorbed the balance.

An important observation here is that current health care costs and post-employment obligations for retirement benefits and health care are not included in BPL's operating expenses but are paid for and recorded by the City. City-wide costs for health care, Medicare and pension were valued to be 25.5% of total salaries and wages in FY 2014, which when applied to BPL's personnel costs would equate to \$6.2 million of 'off book' annual BPL obligations.

Facility-related expenditures associated with operating Copley's Central Library and their twenty-four neighborhood branches comprise the next largest category of expenditures. Utility costs for electricity, steam, water, sewer and natural gas totaled \$4.0 million and building repairs and maintenance an additional \$2.6 million in FY 2014. The facility category as a group represent 17% of BPL's annual operating costs.

As expected, library materials, which are primarily circulating and research books, represent the next largest category of annual costs at \$4.5 million in FY2014 or 11% of total annual expenditures. The balance of annual operating needs reflect a variety of miscellaneous expenditures, including those for information technology, transportation and miscellaneous supplies and materials.

Beyond these direct costs, the City of Boston also provides a variety of important services to the Library that are not recorded by the Library, including legal, budget, treasury and labor relations support. For the City as a whole, these services are estimated to be 4.2% of total City-supported expenditures, which would equate to \$1.4 million annually for the BPL.

In addition, debt service costs associated with capital expenditures for library facilities, i.e. principal, interest and related fees, are not reflected in the Library's expenses as well.



## Total Boston Public Library Operations<sup>8</sup>

A five year review of total operating revenues and costs shows the following annual surpluses and deficits.

### Operating Support and Expenditures FY 2010 thru FY 2014 (millions)

Operating Income FY 2010 - FY 2014					
	FY 2010	FY 2011	FY 2012	FY 2013	FY 2014
Operating Revenue	\$ 39.3	\$ 38.6	\$ 38.2	\$ 38.4	\$ 42.1
Operating Costs	\$ 39.7	\$ 38.6	\$ 36.9	\$ 38.4	\$ 40.8
<b>Surplus/(Deficit)</b>	<b>\$ (0.3)</b>	<b>\$ 0.1</b>	<b>\$ 1.3</b>	<b>\$ 0.1</b>	<b>\$ 1.2</b>

## Discussion of Existing Funding Sources

### City of Boston Support

City of Boston support for facilities, infrastructure and core services are critical to the ongoing success and viability of the BPL system. The Library is an important City Department and, as such, will continue to require ongoing annual support for its core services, programs and facilities. As noted, almost \$25 million is spent annually to compensate existing Library personnel, excluding pay for those employed by companies performing important outsourced services like security and mechanical systems repair and maintenance. Barring material changes in staffing and service levels, the cost of these obligations will increase annually as a result of anticipated salary increases, cost of living adjustments, collective bargaining agreements and step increases. Agreements with both of the Library's unions expire September 30, 2016. General increases of 3.0% were awarded in January 2015 and an additional 3.0% will be applied in January 2016. In addition, although Library management has already been successful in reducing power costs<sup>9</sup>, building related operating costs including maintenance and repair of aging infrastructure, will continue to increase. Despite efforts to achieve operating efficiencies, the City will still be facing increasing demands from the Library to fund basic public services.

The City of Boston's general operating support for the past five fiscal years and its FY 2015 budget for the BPL is detailed below.

### City of Boston Operating Funding<sup>10</sup>

City of Boston Funding	
Year	Amt (\$)
FY 2010	\$ 29.8
FY 2011	\$ 30.8
FY 2012	\$ 30.2
FY 2013	\$ 30.4
FY 2014	\$ 33.1
<b>FY 2015 Budget</b>	<b>\$ 34.5</b>

As previously noted, the BPL relies heavily on a host of City of Boston services and health care, Medicare and pension related costs are paid for by the City of Boston and not included in Library expenses. Including

<sup>8</sup> Source: BPL accounting department

<sup>9</sup> BPL's electricity consumption was reduced by 26% between FY08 and FY11

<sup>10</sup> Source: BPL accounting department

those items, the following table shows the true total cost of Library operations to the City of Boston in FY 2014, excluding debt related costs and depreciation.

City of Boston Support	
	<b>Amt (\$)</b>
City of Boston Operating Support	\$ 33.1
Pro-forma Benefits	\$ 6.2
Pro-forma City Services	\$ 1.4
Debt Related Costs	N/A
Depreciation	N/A
<b>Total City of Boston Support</b>	<b>\$ 40.7</b>

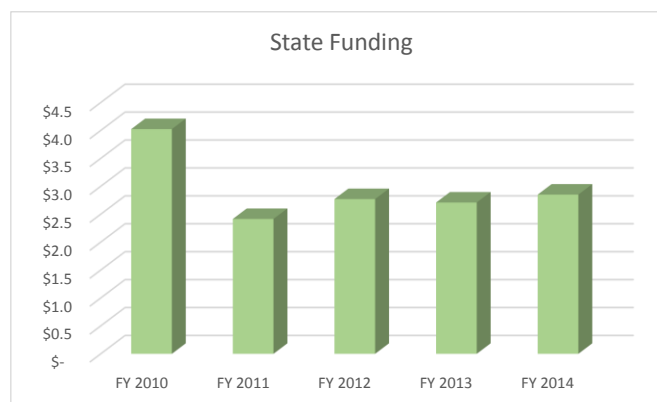
## Commonwealth of Massachusetts Support

The BPL is designated as the “Library for the Commonwealth” for the State of Massachusetts. Anyone who lives, works, attends school or owns property in the State can utilize BPL resources for reference and research and can have access to collections not available in their local libraries. As a result, BPL has historically received an important direct appropriation in the State’s annual budget. In addition, the Library also receives annual funding from the State through the Board of Library Commissioners. In FY 2014, BPL received \$2.9 million (7%) in total from State sources.

As a result of severe budget cuts brought on by the financial challenges in 2008/09, the current level of annual support received from the Commonwealth is significantly lower than it was in the past. From FY01 through FY09, State of Massachusetts support averaged \$8.4 million annually, nearly three times more than the FY 2014 level. FY 2016 support is not expected to be finalized until the State’s budget is set just before the end of the current fiscal year.

### Commonwealth of Massachusetts Support

*Source: BPL: Accounting Dept.*



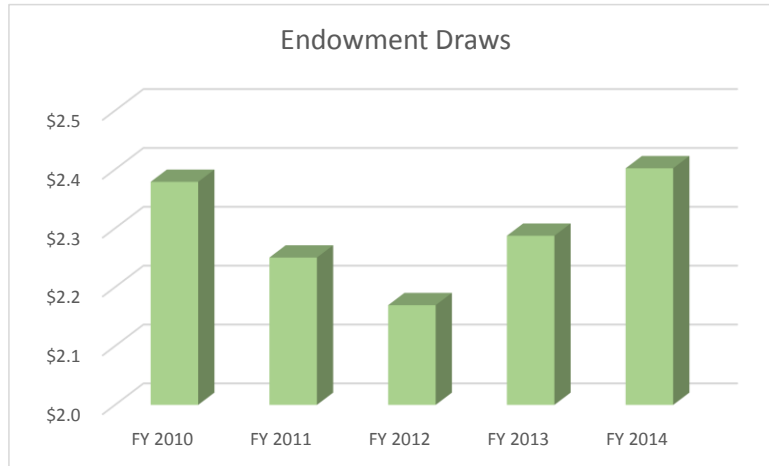
## Boston Public Library Endowment / Trust Funds

BPL’s endowment is another important source of annual financial support. At December 31, 2014 the market value of the endowment was \$59.3 million. The underlying investments are well diversified and are professionally managed by independent outside advisors. BPL management and the Library’s Board



of Trustees receives regular, periodic reports overseeing the performance of the endowment. Current Board of Trustee policy allows for a 5.0 % annual distribution from the most recent three-year average value of the endowment balance. In FY 2014, a \$2.4 million distribution was made to fund operations. A graph of endowment withdrawals from FY 2010 to FY 2014 is shown below:

Endowment Support<sup>11</sup>



There are 185 individual trusts that comprise BPL’s endowment, with some of the original gifts dating back to the mid-19<sup>th</sup> century. In excess of 75% are restricted for a particular purpose assigned by the donor, which presents significant challenges to management in being able to utilize the entire distribution effectively. As a result, nearly 25% or \$2.7 million of the endowment draws have not been spent over the last five years, with unspent funds remaining in the Library’s money market funds. BPL’s total money market fund balance was \$5.5 million as of December 31, 2014.

## Donations & Grants

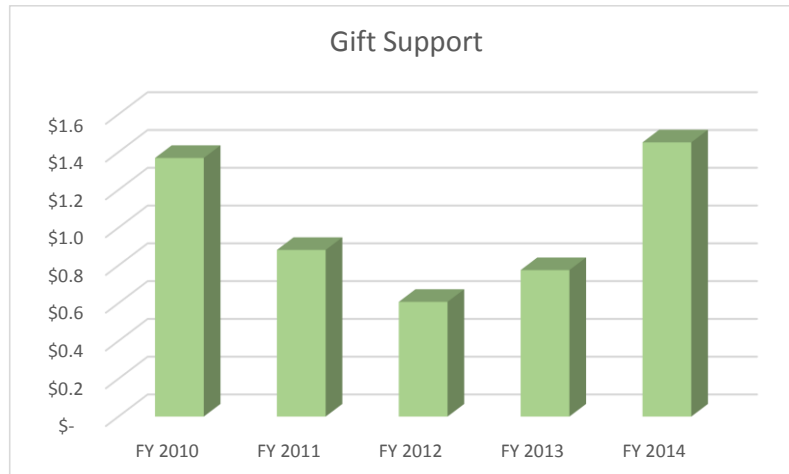
In addition to being a City of Boston Department, the BPL is also a Section 501(c) (3) not-for-profit organization and, as such, can receive gifts and donations directly from public sources that are tax deductible. In addition, there are several other independent not-for-profit fundraising organizations that operate exclusively to benefit the BPL, including the Boston Public Library Foundation, the Associates of the Boston Public Library and the Norman B. Leventhal Map Center. Each of these organizations is overseen by independent management and a separate governance structure. Many “friends” groups also support the Central Library and its branches. In FY 2014, \$1.5 million or 3.5% of the Library’s operations were supported by gifts from all of these sources. Although not all of the benefits are able to be recorded on the Library’s financial records, operating gifts from all fundraising sources can vary widely from year to year, as shown in the following table.

Gift Support – FY 10 to FY14 (millions)<sup>12</sup>

<sup>11</sup> Source: BPL accounting department

<sup>12</sup> Source: BPL accounting department





## Other Funding Sources

BPL's operations are also supported by a variety of other funding sources, including revenues from private events, the Metro Boston Library Network and other sources. Under the leadership of the BPL, the Metro Boston Library Network is a member-funded consortium of City of Boston public school libraries and regional city and college libraries collaborating to facilitate digital access to library services. Also, as discussed in the Functional Analysis section, the BPL rents space in its Central library to private and public entities and, through an outsourced caterer, provides guests with food and beverages. Revenues from room rentals in combination with a share of the food sales supports BPL's general operations.

### Support from Other Sources – FY10 through FY14 (millions)<sup>13</sup>

Other Funding Sources FY 2010 - FY 2014 (\$m)					
	FY 2010	FY 2011	FY 2012	FY 2013	FY 2014
Event Related (incl. café rent)	\$ 0.9	\$ 1.1	\$ 1.4	\$ 1.5	\$ 1.4
Metro Boston Library Network	\$ 0.3	\$ 0.3	\$ 0.3	\$ 0.3	\$ 0.3
Other Revenue	\$ 0.5	\$ 0.8	\$ 0.7	\$ 0.5	\$ 0.5
<b>Other Sources - Total</b>	<b>\$ 1.7</b>	<b>\$ 2.3</b>	<b>\$ 2.5</b>	<b>\$ 2.3</b>	<b>\$ 2.2</b>

<sup>13</sup> Source: BPL accounting department

## Financial Assessment

Combined, the City of Boston and the Commonwealth of Massachusetts support nearly 90% of the BPL's current operations and the City provides all of the capital support for the Library's Central Library and its branches. However, given future demands on City and State budgets, generating adequate support required to sustain and enhance the Library's programs and maintain and modernize its infrastructure will be challenging. In the preparation of the FY 2016 budget, working with BPL management, the City is already exploring ways to lower costs and achieve operating efficiencies. Accordingly, going forward the BPL will need to further diversify its revenue support and attempt to generate a higher percentage of its operating and capital requirements from non-government sources to achieve its objectives.

In addition to improvement opportunities outlined in this report, efforts should be devoted to (1) improving overall fundraising efforts, (2) maximizing support from its existing endowment and (3) increasing the contribution of its enterprise activities, including events, retail and other commercial activities. A summary of these recommendations are detailed below. Additional detail is presented in the other sections of this report.

## Potential Actions to Enhance External Funds

### Improve BPL's overall Fundraising Efforts

As noted, BPL's operations are supported by several independent not-for-profit organizations. As a City Department, BPL management is not permitted to solicit gifts directly<sup>14</sup>. Accordingly, these organizations are separate from the BPL and governed by their own independent Board of Trustees or Directors. Although independent, these organizations work very closely with Library management and its Board to understand and target institutional priorities and needs.

Many public libraries throughout the US have benefited greatly from independent fundraising activities as budget support from traditional government sources has been stretched. Non-government support has provided public libraries with the incremental resources required to materially enhance and expand programs and services. The Boston Public Library Foundation ("BPLF") is the largest independent not-for-profit and has operated for over 20 years to provide programming support and facility improvements throughout the BPL system. Although successful in raising in excess of \$1.3 million for children's and teen programs in the Johnson building in 2015, BPLF's contributions to Library programs is significantly lower than historical levels and well below the support of other library foundations.

Given the incremental funding requirements of the Library's strategic plan, improved fundraising performance and contribution would enhance the availability of external funds and be an important component of the Library's future success.

### Maximize Support from Existing Endowment

As mentioned, most of the endowment's trusts are restricted to particular purposes and, over the past five years, nearly 25% of the annual draws from the endowment have not been applied to BPL operations. . Earlier this year, efforts were initiated with the MA Attorney General's Office to address

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<sup>14</sup> Per recent guidance from the State Ethics Commission, Trustees are permitted to engage in certain limited fundraising activities for the BPL's trust accounts.



the impracticality of one of the largest restricted trusts and the Library is currently working to provide information for a complaint that will ultimately need to be filed in Probate Court. In addition, under existing rules, the Library may seek approval of the Attorney General's office to modify restrictions on trust funds that have been existence more than twenty years and have a total value of less than \$75,000. The Library is currently in the process of reviewing its trusts to determine which meet these standards. Although remedy efforts are time consuming, management should accelerate efforts to address endowment restrictions. In the interim, management and the Board of Trustees might reconsider its endowment spending policy to leave amounts in managed assets rather than accumulating in the Library's money market accounts.

Additional discussion of the endowment is included in the Finance Functional Analysis section.

## Increase the Contribution of Events and other Enterprise Activities

Event related revenues have been an important and growing source of support for Library activities. In FY 2014 \$1.4 million of operating revenue was generated from room rentals, food commissions and rent from the BPL Café and Tea Room. After costs, half of the revenue, \$.7 million, was available to be applied to support Library programs. In 2014, 152 private events were held at the Library, including 47 weddings

Understandably, it is important to management and to certain public that private events not interfere with open, public access to the Library's various rooms and facilities during hours of operations and strict rules and regulations govern when the outsourced caterer can market the facility. However, an opportunity may exist to increase event-related revenues if some of those restrictions were modified. For example, holding small evening events or meetings in Library areas not used frequently by the public. Working with the caterer, management should consider a review its existing restrictions to determine what changes, if any, should be made. Additional discussion of the potential for incremental events revenue is included in the Administrative and Technology Functional Analysis section.

As part of the next phase of the Johnson building renovation, it should be noted that management has already initiated an important process involving its Board of Trustees and various community groups to commercialize approximately 4,500 sq. ft. of potentially valuable retail space on Boylston Street. Although the outcome of this process is unknown at this time, revenues from this effort could materially supplement support for the Library's programs beginning FY 2017.

## Other Financial Matters

Throughout the project, we continually evaluated other key financial and accounting metrics and processes to evaluate the financial health of the Boston Public Library, including a review of risk areas, internal controls, management reporting and other general accounting indicators. A discussion of these matters is included in the Finance Functional Analysis section.

It is important to note that an independent, outside audit of the non-City financial statements is performed annually and a report is provided to and reviewed by management and the Library's Board of Trustees. The audit of FY 2014 activity concluded that the Library's financial statements were prepared properly and no material audit matters were raised. Process improvement opportunities detailed in the auditor's management letter were addressed.



## Functional Analysis: Executive Management

A review of all major functions within the BPL was conducted. The project was scoped as a time-boxed initiative with a broad review of all functions and a deeper assessment focus for those areas where increased attention could most positively impact the potential performance of The Boston Public Library. Findings that are not specific to just one function within the BPL are discussed under the Executive Management section of the functional analysis.

The Boston Public Library is organized into four key functional areas with an executive leadership team reporting directly to the President.

- President – Amy E. Ryan
- Director of Library Services – Michael Colford
- Director of Administration and Technology – David Leonard
- Director of Finance/ Chief Financial Officer – Ellen Donaghey
- Chief of Communications and Strategy – *vacant as of February 2015*

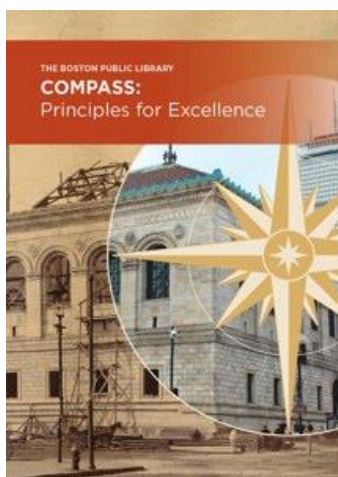
## Strengths

### Breadth of Services

The executive leadership team works collaboratively to identify and initiate a multitude of work streams in an environment with an incredibly broad charter. In addition to managing traditional circulating library services including lending books and managing community programming, the BPL manages multifaceted research library services, an enormous trove of special collections, and a premier restaurant and events venue. Embedded in this combination of services are five unique business models each of which requires unique leadership knowledge and competencies.

### Clear and Well-articulated Strategic Vision

The executive leadership team effectively correlates work activities to the strategic framework which ensures the broader organization sees the link between strategy and action and that employees know and understand their role in working towards the strategic plan. The link created by senior management between the “Compass Strategic Plan” and the actions of the organization is impressively strong and serves as a true best practice. The plan, approved by the Trustees on November 15, 2011,



outlines eight strategic principles and 100 specific outcomes the BPL strives to achieve. Plans articulated in the Compass Strategic Plan are referenced in the expectations of the executive leadership team and are clearly communicated to staff at all levels of the organization.

***The eight key Compass Principles include:***

1. User-Centered Institution
2. Community Gathering
3. Special Collections
4. Center of Knowledge
5. Children and Teens
6. Access and Innovation
7. Sustainable Organization
8. Fun



## Industry Vision and Coordination

The BPL's leadership role in the Digital Public Library of America and Digital Commonwealth are fundamental differentiators and serve as a foundation for continued innovation and increasing contribution beyond Boston and outside the Commonwealth of Massachusetts. Amy Ryan's leadership here will continue to provide opportunities for the BPL, in collaboration with other libraries, to lead the nation in defining which assets should be held physically in many libraries across the Nation and which items should be centralized in a digital repository providing immediate visual access to all. The potential for consolidation of digital efforts over time can make each and every effort at digitization exponentially more valuable over time.

## Extroverted Organization

Amy Ryan aptly describes the BPL as an "extroverted organization". Employees across many functions as the BPL are involved in statewide, nationwide, and worldwide activities important to the ongoing development of libraries. This extroverted organizational personality positions the BPL for broad industry leadership in the years to come.



## Opportunities

High priority areas of opportunity are denoted with the Chrysalis Management symbol for transformation [▲▲], are addressed in detail and include exploration of situation, substantiation, recommendations, and benefits.

### ▲▲ Prioritization and Accountability

**Situation:** The Compass Plan is a broad and all-encompassing framework. The executive management team must provide clarity and strategic focus to the organization around *which* areas will get the most attention for forward progress in any given year. There is a tendency to define when work will *begin* as opposed to identifying clear deadlines for work to be *completed*. There are no visible consequences for employees at any level who do not begin or complete work in the planned timeframe.

#### **Substantiation:**

The compass plan identifies 100 specific action areas that are designed to move the BPL in the direction of its strategic plan. For 2014, there were 66 specific steps or “to dos” associated with the action areas. Of these, just 22 were completed for a 33% completion rate. *Note that while these numbers differ slightly from the BPL reported 37% completion (due primarily to definition of “unique” action items) the conclusion remains the same.* Most actions deemed important to the strategic plan at the beginning of the year, did not move forward.

Personnel interviews revealed a widely-held belief that the work being outlined did not realistically correlate with staffing levels and available tools and training. Employees across all functional areas commented that it is difficult or impossible to hold underperforming employees accountable for sub-par performance. Personnel interviews also revealed a broadly-held belief that the senior management team does not place a high priority on resolving personnel discipline issues, partly as a result of the time-consuming process associated with eliminating underperforming personnel.

#### **Recommendations (short term):**

- The number of key personnel annual performance objectives should be limited to a maximum of five, ensure each is defined as a S.M.A.R.T. goal (specific, measurable, attainable, realistic, time specific).
- Performance management and review process should specifically identify areas of success and failure in meeting each of the key objectives.
- A specific target should be set for annual action plan % completion in 2015 which should exceed 90%.
- Due dates should be published and respected with consequences when dates are missed.
- Progressive discipline process must be utilized by the leadership team and supported by the executive management team.

#### **Recommendations (medium term):**

- Create true alignment between the strategic planning, budgeting, and performance management processes by:
  - ensuring each key initiative has the necessary budget and staff support
  - mapping each initiative to a primary owner who is responsible for its successful and on-time completion as one of his/her top five performance metrics



- limiting each leader to five key success categories (note that forcing a limit ensures true prioritization in an environment with limited resources)
- Utilize the progressive discipline process to manage underperforming personnel and ensure it is possible to remove underperformers unwilling to adjust work practices, replace underperforming personnel with high performing personnel

**Benefits:**

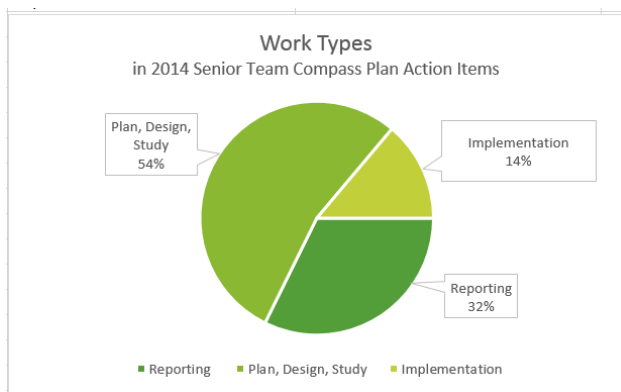
- **Improved effectiveness** - Achieve traction in most important areas of work.
- **Improved productivity and efficiency** - Avoid spending time on less impactful work areas.
- **Reduced staffing costs through reallocation of staffing dollars to high-performing personnel**— Eliminating underperformers allows hiring of high performers as replacement personnel which delivers higher value for the same staffing dollars.



## Implementation Mindset

**Situation:** The senior leadership team at the BPL is strategically sound but should seek to place an increased emphasis on implementing. It is not uncommon for senior leadership teams to spend the majority of their time defining the strategy while the less senior employees spend the majority of their time implementing a plan. However, organizations undergoing significant change need their senior leadership teams to be highly engaged in designing *and implementing* new ways of working. While the BPL is making great progress in the strategic definition of what it means to be a library in the 21<sup>st</sup> century, it is making far less progress in implementing the changes it envisions.

**Substantiation:** Of the 66 specific action steps originally identified for 2014 completion, only 14% of the work represented implementation related work. The vast majority of the work was associated with planning, designing, or studying (54%) and a full 32% of the identified work was related to reporting on work or progress that had been made.



Interviewed staff members applauded the senior management team’s willingness to allow motivated employees to press forward with new ideas but frequently commented that sufficient support did not exist to successfully achieve implementation. Some examples centered on barriers with no senior support to remove them and in other cases, employees didn’t feel they had the appropriate skills or resources to successfully implement.

The BPL would benefit from fully implementing good ideas before moving on to create the next set of good ideas. In June of 2013 a full Youth Services Report was prepared and published by Wondercabinet Interpretive Design, Inc. This 54 page report was well received by the staff and contains many strong implementation ideas with benchmarking substantiation. Now, twenty-one months later, “determining which recommendations to implement” is an action that has been pushed out from 2014 actions.

It should be noted that the Johnson renovation was a planned but significant undertaking which likely required more than the anticipated amount of time from library staff across many departments during this time period.

### Recommendations (short term):

- The BPL executive team should challenge itself to make 2015 a year of implementation. To facilitate this, the team should commit to *completion* of a finite set of projects by a specific end date. Projects should be scoped with the end date in mind so completion can be measured.
- The BPL team should resist the desire to invest in identifying more good ideas before implementing those already identified. The team should adopt the mentality of being, not only strong starters, but strong finishers.
- The BPL senior team should invest a portion of each month in following-up on implementation activities going on at lower levels of the organization and should ask, “What can I do to accelerate this effort?”



- Implementation activities should be prioritized in the Executive Team’s annual objectives and each activity should be described so that “completion” is clearly defined and has a specific due date, beyond which some consequence exists.

**Benefits:** Specific benefits obviously need to be defined for each key initiative undertaken but most assuredly, no benefit can be achieved while these ideas remain (for extended time periods) in the planning stages.

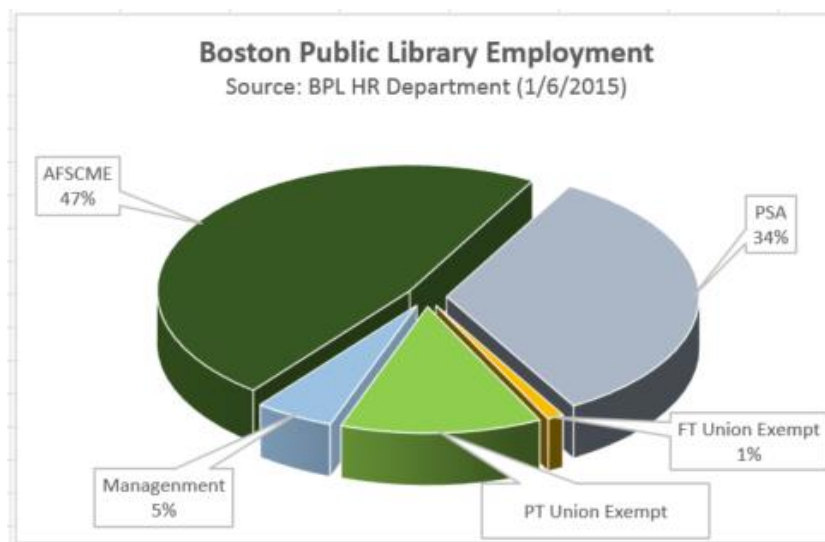
- **Cost reduction** – Implementation of streamlined processes and new technology generally drives efficiency and cost reduction over time.
- **Service enhancement** – Many studies already completed and recommendations currently being discussed will yield service enhancements for patrons; these benefits can only be achieved with implementation.

### Union Cooperation

**Situation:** The most significant challenge facing the Boston Public Library is to find ways to improve and better manage its labor relations. Existing processes are having a negative influence on management’s ability to effect positive change in a timely manner.

Although it is difficult to specifically quantify its impact, a material amount of staff time and resources is devoted to labor issues throughout the organization and, as a result, within the City’s Office of Labor Relations. Staff throughout the organization and within City management (union and management, long-term employees and recent hires, mid management and staff, BPL and City of Boston leadership) concur that this is a critical issue facing the Library going forward.

As of January 6, 2015, Boston Public Library employed 474 staff members, 413 full-time positions and 61 part-time positions. The distribution of BPL’s employment between management, union and union-exempt positions are shown below.



Like most departments within the City of Boston, employees at the BPL are primarily unionized. Management accounts for 5% of Boston Public Library employment. Combined, the American Federation of State, County and Municipal Employees - Local 526 (AFSCME) and the BPL Professional Staff Association (PSA) represent 81% of Library employees. AFSCME is the larger of the two bargaining units, representing union staff in Facilities, Information Technology, Finance and support staff throughout most departments. PSA's members are primarily library positions, including branch, children's, young adult and reference librarians as well as curators and generalists. Full-time union exempt positions are non-management positions primarily in Events, HR and administrative positions. Library Aids are employed part-time throughout the BPL system. A key date to note is that Collective bargaining agreements with both unions expire September 30, 2016.

**Substantiation:** Working with BPL HR staff and others, the City of Boston's Office of Labor Relations (OLR) is responsible for negotiating and administrating collective bargaining agreements with both AFSCME and PSA and, on an ongoing basis, advises the Library's managers and supervisors on labor matters and policy issues. Discussion and information provided by OLR concludes that the volume of labor matters generated from the Boston Public Library, e.g. contract negotiations, grievances, arbitration proceedings, various petitions, required meetings, etc., absorbs an extraordinary and disproportionate amount of time and resources.

- The City's OLR staff of six full-time attorneys supports departments throughout the City that have twenty bargaining units and 8,000 unionized employees. Due to the volume of BPL labor issues, one full-time OLR attorney is assigned to the Library even though the Library has less than 5% of the staff supported by OLR.
- In general, both AFSCME 1526 and PSA have significantly more impact bargaining meetings at BPL than other departments do. Even larger departments do not usually spend the amount of time the Library does on impact bargaining. For example, BPL's public service restructuring initiative has been extraordinarily time consuming. The bargaining started in August 2014 and even after forty-three meetings with the unions to date, there still remains several months of bargaining left before completion. Most of the meetings are between 2-4 hours long.
- OLR confirmed that it took between 3.5 and 4 years to negotiate the most recent AFSCME 1526 and PSA contracts, which was excessive compared to other City unions. Negotiations required 47 bargaining sessions, ten days of mediation and two days in hearings.

The following other impacts were noted in our review:

- The existence of two strong independent bargaining units within the Library makes communication, dialogue and change even more challenging. Discussions confirmed that many union petitions that are filed are territorial claims that the other union is doing the work of their members. These types of petitions are very time consuming.
- When management engages the unions in discussions about process change, no firm milestones or deadlines are set to ensure progress can be made in reasonable amounts of time. Excessive time between meetings and the excessive number of meetings combine to create protracted timelines for changes to be implemented.





- New additions to staff are surprised by the influence of labor relations within the Library and are frustrated by the amount of time it takes to make even simple process changes. These reactions may impact their interest in remaining at the Library.
- Union participation in the development of new and updated position descriptions is excessive and in many cases unwarranted.
- It is extraordinarily difficult and time-consuming to manage the removal of underperformers within the BPL. As a result, performance issues, and their negative impacts often remain unresolved.
- Turnover within the City's Office of Labor Relations has resulted in a lack of continuity of attorney support at BPL, impacting the time it takes for issues to be resolved.

#### Recommendations (short-term):

- Management has the current authority and should be more pro-active on a variety of operating matters, including the establishment of more aggressive timelines for project milestones and completion, the role of the unions in certain changes to job descriptions and union related leave time. The Library's collective bargaining agreements do not limit management's ability to perform "regular and customary" functions and management has rights to issue "reasonable rules and regulations" governing conduct.
- The Phase II opening of the Johnson Building and the re-staffing of BPL's HR Department combine to create an opportunity to make positive changes in management and labor relations, steps should begin immediately to ensure that the 2016 contract negotiations begin to address this issue.
- All libraries are currently in a period of transformation as they respond to significant changing needs of the population and its expectations around library services. The BPL and the City should convene immediately to begin discussion of necessary changes broadly and particularly as they relate to Public Services and Reference Restructuring. BPL specific labor/management issues must be a high priority in negotiations with both Library unions in 2016.

#### Benefits:

- **Improved effectiveness:** Completion of strategic initiatives in a timely manner. Eliminate staff frustration.
- **Improved efficiency:** Reallocate time currently devoted to unproductive labor issues to more value-added work.
- **Elimination of over-specialization:** Increase efficiency and customer satisfaction with greater job description flexibility.



## Fundraising

**Situation:** Many public libraries throughout the US have benefited greatly from independent fundraising activities as budget support from traditional government sources has been stretched. Non-government support has provided public libraries with the external resources required to materially enhance and expand capital and operations programs and services. Although recently successful in raising funds to support new children's and teen programs in the Johnson building, the contribution of the Boston Public Library Foundation, the largest of the independent fundraising entities, has been significantly lower than historical levels and well below the support of other library foundations.

The major fundraising organizations supporting BPL include:

- The Boston Public Library Foundation - formed in 1992 to support the restoration of the McKim Building. Since that time, BPLF has provided programming support and facility improvements throughout the system
- The Associates of the Boston Public Library – formed in 1972 and dedicated to conserving the Library's special collections of rare books and other items of significant historic interest. The Associates' fundraising efforts are primarily targeted to the conservation, cataloging and digitization of the rare book collection. In addition to fully supporting a writer in residency program, the Associates contributed \$115,000 to the Library in FY 2014.
- The Norman B. Leventhal Map Center – formed in 2014 to exhibit collections of maps and atlases to the public through exhibitions, programs and its website. Its resources are dedicated to its own purposes.

As mentioned, each of the above organizations is separate from the Boston Public Library, and governed by their own independent Board of Trustees or Directors. All of these organizations receive in-kind gifts from the Library for the space they occupy at Copley. In addition, many "Friends" groups support the Central Library and its branches, contributing in excess of \$25,000 annually over recent years.

**Substantiation:** The Boston Public Library Foundation has provided \$470,000 annually on average to support BPL programs from FY 2010 to FY 2014, a significant decline from the past. Over the prior fifteen fiscal years, annual support from the Foundation averaged \$1.4 million and was \$3.7 million annually in 1995 and 1997. Annual galas have been a source of support for many years but none have been conducted since 2013 due to construction activity and none are currently planned.

Like the Boston Public Library, many public libraries throughout the US have separate foundations to support their operations and many have benefited from foundation support to supplement core library services. The Boston Public Library Foundation's contributions and grants to the Library have lagged significantly compared to others in our benchmark group. The following table summarizes the total support over the three years ending FY 2013.



Foundation Support - Three Years Ending FY 2013 (millions)	
<u>Source: IRS Form 990</u>	
Seattle Public Library Foundation	\$ 15.1
Queens Library Foundation	\$ 9.8
Madison Public Library Foundation	\$ 8.2
Denver Public Library Friends Foundation	\$ 6.8
Friends & Foundation of the San Francisco Public Library	\$ 5.0
Library Foundation Inc Serving the People of Multnomah County	\$ 3.9
Friends of the Hennepin County Library	\$ 3.6
Charlotte Mecklenburg Library Foundation	\$ 2.8
<b>Boston Public Library Foundation</b>	<b>\$ 2.3</b>

**Recommendations (short term):**

- Staff and Board leadership of the Boston Public Library Foundation is in transition. A new Chairman of its Board of Directors was appointed in December 2014 and a process to name a new Executive Director is underway. Accelerating the completion of this transition could position the Foundation to contribute meaningfully to the Library’s future long-term needs.
- BPL management should also consider adding an internal grant writer. Working closely with Senior Leadership and other key staff, a grant writer could research potential funding sources, develop appropriate relationships, and prepare institutional grant proposals; efforts could expand potential sources beyond Massachusetts as a result of the BPL’s leadership role in the Digital Public Library for America. Modest success in this area could easily justify the incremental cost.

**Benefits:**

- **Significant increase in funding:** \$4.6M in additional funding at peer average over three years<sup>15</sup>, unspecified growth opportunity in national grants related specifically to digitization efforts
- **Broadened sources of funds:** Public libraries throughout the US have raised significant funds to support their local library operating and capital programs, multiple times greater than recent fundraising activity supporting BPL. External funds would be greatly enhanced with enhanced and successful fundraising activities.
- **Improved services to the public:** Materially enhance BPL’s programs and services, thereby reducing the pressure on traditional government sources. Fundraising efforts can be targeted to areas of the Library’s major strategic needs in cataloguing and digitization.

**Value Estimation: Additional 1.5M in annual funding at peer averages<sup>16</sup>, unspecified growth opportunity in national grants related specifically to digitization efforts**

<sup>15</sup> Reporting peers have an average 6.9M in foundation support over a three year period as compared to BPL’s 2.3M; Best in Class reportable foundation support is Seattle Public Library Foundation at 15.1M (FY11, FY12, FY13 combined)

<sup>16</sup> Referencing \$4.6M over three years, listing annual benefit

## Functional Analysis: Library Services

The Library Services function is organized to include most of the primary services offered by the Boston Public Library network to the public. Exceptions are web services (managed under Administration & Technology) and some social media customer service and customer engagement activity (managed under Communications & Strategy).

## Strengths

### Collections of Distinction

In FY 2014 the BPL launched its Collections of Distinction, which originally included eighteen unique collections representing the most special items within the broader 23 million items in its possession. Designating *truly* special collections which rise above the rest has helped the library to focus its resources and efforts when competing needs emerge in special collections acquisition, cataloging, circulating collection prioritization, exhibition and program planning. The BPL has done a good job marketing these Collections of Distinction and highlighting truly unique items, some dating back as early as the 10<sup>th</sup> century.

### Public Services Restructuring

Public Services restructuring efforts are currently underway and are well in alignment with industry trends. The newly envisioned model is well-articulated, and seeks to leverage advancements in technology while simultaneously placing an appropriate focus on human interaction and staying true to the library's mission as a community gathering place and user-centered institution. The reorganization plan articulates fourteen specific in-person opportunities for the staff and public to engage but keeps the focus on the experience from the visitor point of view. Clearly articulated in the plan are five core service values including:<sup>17</sup>

- **Anticipate** users' needs and be responsive to current trends in the community
- **Engage** with the community to better provide services, programs, and collections that they want
- **Develop** an informed citizenry by providing educational opportunities for all ages
- **Foster** a love of reading and creativity in all users and staff
- **Enliven** the library's collections and make them fully discoverable and accessible.

This reorganization will guide the BPL as it adapts from a "wait to be asked" model to a model in which staff proactively provide services that customers will find very useful. These services might be delivered online, over the phone, or in-person. A key component of the new model will include a telephone call-center model which allows for telephone and on-line reference questions to be answered off the main service floor thereby freeing up staff in the public spaces to interact and engage with customers seeking in-person guidance. One benefit of the reorganization is that it should (if fully implemented) increase the number of interactions proactively satisfying the visitor's need with just one contact.

While there is inherent desire within libraries to maintain knowledge specialization, care should be taken to balance efficiency and effectiveness. As is the case with other industries, cross-training is required to achieve fewer required hand-offs for most general purpose interactions and it is well-understood that

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<sup>17</sup> Draft Public Service Overview

highly specialized requests will likely require support from a specialist. The current strategy strikes this balance nicely. Note that cooperation from the labor unions will be essential to fully realize this vision as the current structure is over-specialized and requires too many hand-offs for patron requests to be satisfied efficiently.

## Entrepreneurial Spirit

### Innovative Technology Tools Supporting Business Process, Balance Structure and Flexibility

The Digital Services team is entrepreneurial, well-organized, leverages new technology to support business process, and uses a blended customer service model including both high-tech and high-touch approaches with in-person site visits a common feature of initiating new digitization programs. The group should be encouraged to share organizational best practices and should seek to educate the broader organization about leveraging process-enabling technologies. A case study could be shared in the area of project management supported by online tool, Trello.

### Bibliocycle:

The BPL's Bibliocycle (a pedal-powered bookmobile) is a joint project between the BPL and Boston Bikes. It brings many BPL services directly to the people at fairs, farmers' markets, and other community gathering spots. It serves as an example of where a great idea was brought to life by a creative individual who wanted to increase awareness of BPL services, bring books out to people in the community, and offer library card sign-up to new patrons. This is an example of innovation where the executive leadership team encouraged a junior staff member to pursue a truly unique idea. Kudos!



### Programming Grants:

Program Management interacts with branches particularly as it relates to block programming but has initiated some innovative ways to interact with the branches this year. One such example was a mini-grant program where branches were asked to submit for senior programming grants of \$1,000. 11 of 24 branches chose to submit applications where they described how they would use this money. The grant process ensures that branches highly motivated to develop and deliver high-quality programming have access to the funds required to deliver this programming.

## Opportunities

*High priority* areas of opportunity are denoted with the Chrysalis Management symbol for transformation [▲▲], are addressed in detail and include exploration of situation, substantiation, recommendations, and benefits.

### ▲▲ Inventory Management

**Significantly improve inventory management, storage, security, discoverability, and availability for research and special collections.**

**Situation:** While Circulating Collections are well-managed, Research and Special Collections are not. It is critical that the BPL have an inventory report that should list each item it owns, the item's acquisition date, its cost and/ or estimated value, its condition, where it is housed, and if there are any special security concerns or standards required for its viewing. This consolidated inventory list does not exist. Current estimates for holdings are (in most categories) guesses made many years ago that have been adjusted with newer guesses along the way. Storage is haphazard and not environmentally controlled (with the exception of one section of the Archival Center in West Roxbury) and, while security staff has taken steps to better control key access to high value areas, they agree that they are exposed to internal theft. Discoverability is limited and highly staff intensive. Only 13% of non-circulating items are available for the public to search online without the aid of a librarian. Even when aided by BPL librarians, a variety of information sources and formats must be consulted to both confirm existence of and discover an item's storage location. Searches may include sorting through card catalogs, many of which are housed at the remote Archival Center and (due to their method of storage) have been inaccessible for several years. Every aspect of managing special collections will need further review to ensure proper stewardship of these unique (and in some cases highly valuable) items.

**Substantiation:** The BPL proudly references its 23 million items it stewards. While the circulating items are well-catalogued and searchable in the online catalog, this is true of only a small percentage of items in Reference and Special Collections. If we remove circulating items and focus in on the remaining 22.3M items the library stewards, only 13% of these are searchable in an online catalog and, therefore, discoverable by the public without the aid of a librarian<sup>1819</sup>. Estimates by BPL staff indicate that full retrospective conversion of all items not currently catalogued would cost a minimum of \$63M if outsourced and heavily negotiated.

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<sup>18</sup> Data provided by C. Willis

<sup>19</sup> Note that some summary records are created in the Polaris database where one record may communicate the existence of many items in a collection. This requires improved tracking for refined visibility into percentages discoverable to the population



**Substantiation (cont.):**

The table (right) shows the percentage of items by category that are searchable online in the Polaris Catalog<sup>20</sup>. Overall, just 18.65% of all items are searchable through the Polaris catalogue. After omitting circulating items, just 13.29% of the BPLs items are discoverable by patrons without the aid of a librarian.

BPL Collection Categories	2014 Fact Sheet	Online Searchable (Polaris)	% Polaris Searchable
<b>Circulating Collections</b>	<b>1,242,600</b>	<b>1,426,823</b>	<b>114.83%</b>
Central Library (books, serials, DVDs, CDs, etc.)	266,600	362,265	135.88%
Branch Libraries (books, serials, DVDs, CDs, etc.)	901,000	1,039,798	115.40%
Digital downloadable items (ebooks, audiobooks, music, videos)	75,000	24,760	33.01%
<b>Research Collections of Printed Materials</b>	<b>10,897,000</b>	<b>2,737,772</b>	<b>25.12%</b>
Books & Serials	7,300,000	2,022,350	27.70%
Government Documents	2,000,000	563,350	28.17%
Music Scores	97,000	59,903	61.76%
Rare Books and Special Collections	500,000	80,344	16.07%
Manuscripts	1,000,000	11,825	1.18%
<b>Research Collections of Images</b>	<b>2,125,000</b>	<b>389</b>	<b>0.02%</b>
Prints, Drawings and Watercolors	150,000	389	0.26%
Architectural Drawings	700,000	0	0.00%
Photographs	1,200,000	0	0.00%
Ephemera (postcards, greeting cards, etc.)	75,000	0	0.00%
<b>Research Collections of Maps and Atlases</b>	<b>200,000</b>	<b>12,260</b>	<b>6.13%</b>
Maps and Atlases	200,000	12,260	6.13%
<b>Research Collections of Miscellaneous Materials</b>	<b>9,080,112</b>	<b>213,618</b>	<b>2.35%</b>
Microforms	7,080,000	72,256	1.02%
Sound Archives	2,000,000	0	0.00%
Purchased and Subscription Databases and other Electronic Resources	112	141,362	126216.07%
<b>Total Omitting Circulating Collections</b>	<b>22,302,112</b>	<b>2,964,039</b>	<b>13.29%</b>
<b>Total all Categories</b>	<b>23,544,712</b>	<b>4,390,862</b>	<b>18.65%</b>

Percentage of Holdings Searchable Online			
Location	Total Holdings	% Searchable	Total Searchable
CHA	1,180,875	100%	1,180,875
POR	1,907,504	100%	1,907,504
DC	1,821,524	100%	1,821,524
MAD	845,864	100%	845,864
SEA	2,377,231	99%	2,353,459
CLE	3,007,830	98%	2,947,673
DEN	2,170,478	98%	2,127,068
SF	3,119,567	91%	2,838,806
PHI	3,439,757	88%	3,026,986
NYC	6,292,799	87%	5,474,735
MIN		84%	-
QNS	6,656,648	63%	4,193,688
BRK	3,530,657		-
BOS	23,000,000	19%	4,289,500
Peer Average	3,029,228	92%	2,393,182

The BPL has a significant gap to close when contrasted with peer library collection discoverability<sup>21</sup> (left). While it is important to note that the BPL differs from peer libraries in the sheer vastness of its research and special collections, it must also be noted that if these collections are not searchable and discoverable by the public, their value to the public is then significantly diminished.

**Recommendations (short term):**

<sup>20</sup> Although there are other cataloging tools and finding aids available and in use at the BPL (alternative catalog, Archon, etc.), Polaris is the database supporting the primary patron-searchable tool.

<sup>21</sup> Libraries were directly contacted by Chrysalis Management to obtain this information. Gaps in peer data reflect data not provided by peer libraries.

- Create a plan and timeline for completing an inventory of all items owned/ stewarded by the BPL. While both research and special collections will benefit from completing this inventory, special collections should take highest priority due to the unique, valuable, and historically significant nature of some of its holdings. Specific annual goals must be identified and tracked to ensure continued and significant progress towards the goal.
- Consider deaccessioning items or collections which are not a fit with the BPLs core collections, cannot be made available to patrons in a timely fashion, or where the cost/ benefit of cataloging is not warranted and the collection would otherwise remain in storage and virtually valueless to the public.
- Eliminate or significantly limit any new purchases until proper inventorying, storage, cataloging and security can be arranged.
- Create digitization plan which specifies prioritization decision criteria for digitization of items in Special Collections (preservation/ limit handling, value, public interest, other), clarify # of items and by what date they will be digitized and made available for online viewing, track and report progress.

**Recommendations (medium term):**

- Identify any special collections items which cannot currently be made available for viewing, document reason (condition, storage method, storage location, etc.), document plan and timeline for availability of these items.
- Ensure high-value, vulnerable items are stored in environmentally appropriate locations.
- Identify the least number of possible “home” databases required to properly catalog all materials staying mindful of ongoing improvements in the core Polaris platform (consolidation should trump integration with additional systems wherever feasible). Core systems must allow for multiple overlapping content tags (topic, department, location, format, condition, value, etc.) so that reporting can be run on multiple dimensions without concern for data accuracy.
- Ensure integration exists between all necessary cataloging systems to allow for single point of initial browse and search (some may be summary records which direct to another database).
- Where only summary data can be included in Polaris, improved reporting must be implemented for full visibility into discoverability percentages.
- Significantly increase funding to technical services and the digitization group which can make significant progress in cataloging and discoverability of special collections items.

**Recommendations (long term):**

- Fully inventory every item owned and stored by the BPL to complete a single inventory document (this is a multi-year process).
- Design and implement a security system which protects against potential employee theft

**Benefits:**



- **Cost avoidance** – In addition to \$377,116 in purchase cost avoidance<sup>22</sup>, pausing new purchases in Rare Books and Prints will also yield associated and ongoing cost avoidance in the following areas: ongoing storage and maintenance, refurbishing and repair, and security.
- **Improved asset management/ stewardship** – Achieve clarity of owned assets (quantity, value, condition, locations) for all items currently being protected for the current and future benefit of citizens.
- **Improved discoverability of existing assets** – Time not invested in researching, acquiring, and cataloguing newly acquired items can be devoted to inventorying, cataloguing, and improved storage of existing assets.

**Value Estimation: \$377,116 in annual purchase cost avoidance; eliminating purchases in Rare Books and Prints for the coming three years would yield a \$1.1M cost avoidance when compared to FY14<sup>23</sup>.**

## Key Performance Indicators

Through its recently adopted REACH calculation, the BPL has attempted to identify a success metric which allows it to view the *combined* ways in which patrons interact with the library with just one score. While this is a good start, the metric primarily addresses the Circulating Library Services and does little to address key performance indicators for Research Services, Special Collections, or Restaurant and Event related Services. Each distinct area of the library should have its own “REACH” metric that relates to a specific set of key performance indicators.

## Programming Leadership

Currently, programming leadership is spread throughout the organization with no single leader to set the strategy for system-wide programming. A formal head of all programming is recommended who is responsible for articulating the right mix of programming across the entire system and who has the ability to provide feedback into performance reviews of those who lead and execute programming (including the multiple departments at Copley as well as the branch librarians). The current organizational structure doesn’t allow for this single vision or consistent execution throughout the system. Putting in place a head of Programming would mirror how the organization handles the development and maintenance of its circulating collections and would yield a thoughtful programming balance and a better model under which program effectiveness could be evaluated and improved.

## Public Services Restructuring

A significant reorganization is underway in Library Services. The plan is strategically sound but will need significant support from the unions to fully implement in a reasonable amount of time. It is advised that a specific discussion and decision timeline be published which allows for full implementation of the reorganization plan at least three months prior to the opening of the new Johnson first floor. Milestones for union input should be managed aggressively to ensure this timeline can be met.

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<sup>22</sup> FY2014 spend on Rare Books was \$165,602, Prints spend was \$211,514.

<sup>23</sup> Calculating true savings is complex as a result of trust fund structure and spend ratios; even so, serious consideration should be given to pausing continued purchases until such items can be made far more available for public access.



## Departmental Review - Library Services

Because Library Services is such a vast functional area, a department-level review is included below.

### Collections Management

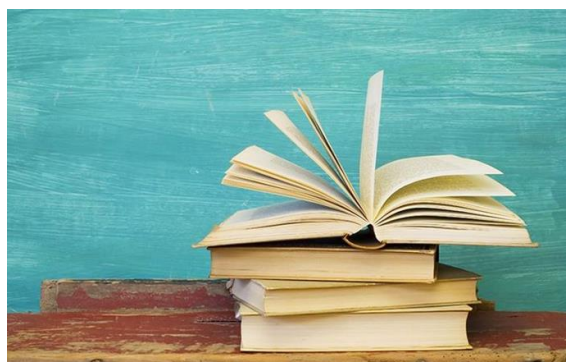
#### Management of Circulating and Non-Circulating Collections Differ Dramatically:

Organizationally, management of both circulating and special collections roll-up to the same leader, Chief of Collections Strategy. This role covers collection development for circulating materials and also manages Arts and Special Collections (Rare Books, Manuscripts, and Prints). Consideration should be given to managing these “museum-type services” under a leadership structure separate and distinct from Circulation Collections as the target customer, success metrics, and labor models for managing circulating and non-circulating collections differ dramatically.

#### Circulation Lags Peer Group

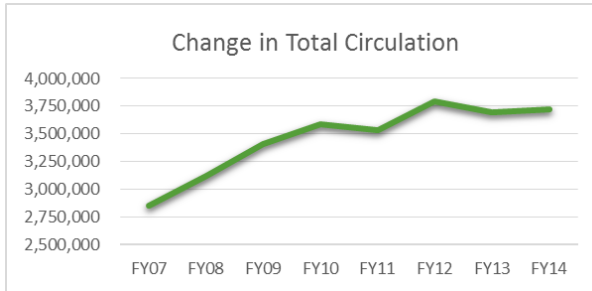
Measuring Circulation is one way to evaluate the health and vibrancy of a library’s circulating collections. Comparing BPL circulation rates in context of population (circulation per capita) and in terms of population density (circulation per square mile) both show the BPL at less than half of the peer averages.

PLA REFERENCE NAME	Library	Total Physical Circulation	Electronic Circulation	Total Annual Circulation	Circulation Per Capita	Circulation Per Square Mile
OH - CUYAHOGA COUNTY PUBLIC LIBRARY	CLE	18,677,966	1,065,427	19,743,393	32.0	43,108
OR - MULTNOMAH COUNTY LIBRARY	POR	21,397,201	587,722	21,984,923	29.4	47,279
WA - Seattle Public Library	SEA	10,587,833	1,268,347	11,856,180	19.3	141,145
WI - MADISON PUBLIC LIBRARY	MAD	3,940,234	145,107	4,085,341	17.2	53,056
CO - Denver Public Library	DEN	9,215,848	595,653	9,811,501	15.1	63,300
MN - HENNEPIN COUNTY LIBRARY	MIN	14,635,922	1,106,303	15,742,225	13.3	25,765
CA - San Francisco Public Library	SF	10,047,934	556,702	10,604,636	13.0	220,930
NY - NEW YORK PUBLIC LIBRARY	NYC	24,039,333	1,825,340	25,864,673	8.0	202,068
NY - Queens Borough Public Library	QNS	16,326,237	397,693	16,723,930	7.5	153,431
NY - Brooklyn Public Library	BRK	16,931,674	529,825	17,461,499	7.0	245,937
<b>MA - Boston Public Library</b>	<b>BOS</b>	<b>3,049,516</b>	<b>672,588</b>	<b>3,722,104</b>	<b>6.0</b>	<b>41,821</b>
NC - CHARLOTTE MECKLENBURG LIBRARY	CHA	5,533,357	210,342	5,743,699	6.0	10,920
DC - District of Columbia Public Library	DC	2,938,248	357,237	3,295,485	5.2	48,463
PA - Free Library Of Philadelphia	PHI	6,237,571	609,921	6,847,492	4.4	50,722
<b>Average (All Others)</b>	<b>PEERS</b>	<b>12,346,874</b>	<b>711,971</b>	<b>13,058,844</b>	<b>13.6</b>	<b>100,471</b>

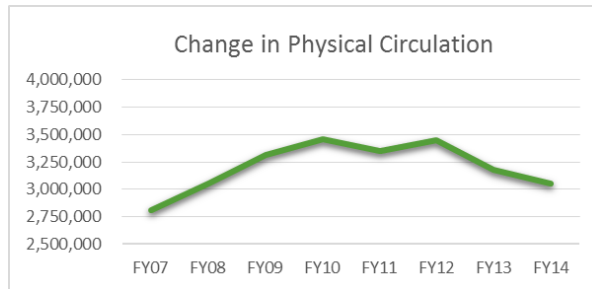


### Digital Drives Growth:

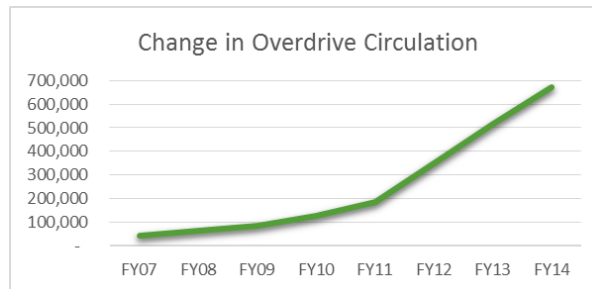
While circulation trends at the BPL appear to show gradually increasing circulation over time, careful parsing shows that all recent circulation growth is from digital circulation while the system overall experiences a meaningful decrease in physical circulation. Our review would indicate that this is likely demonstration of a growing user preference for digitally downloadable items and not a reflection of superior collection management in digitally downloadable items. As collection management and availability improves in the digital collection, the pace of growth will likely accelerate.



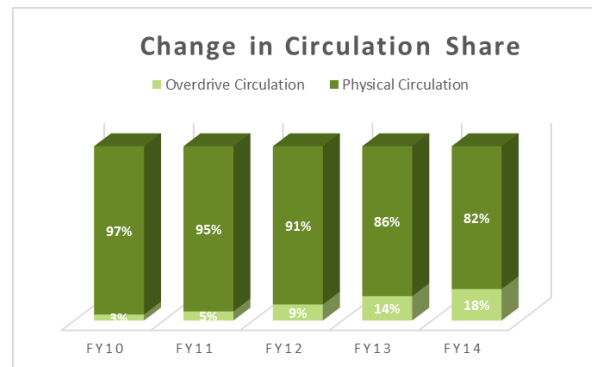
*While change in overall circulation has generally increased over time, it has been relatively flat since FY2012*



*Change in physical circulation decreased by 8% in FY2013 and again by 4% in FY2014.*



*Change in online circulation is experiencing consistent and dramatic growth. From FY07 to FY14 there has been a 1516% increase in online circulation with year over year growth rates averaging 50% increases during this time period.*



*Online circulation continues to grow as a percentage of total circulation. Although BPL FY14 downloadable items represented just 1.7% of total circulating items, they accounted for 18.1% of circulation volume. A recently published study indicates that in FY12, libraries increased expenditures on e-materials by 20.98% over three years<sup>24</sup>.*

<sup>24</sup> The 2013 Public Library Data Service Statistical Report, 1897 respondents

**Collection Turnover Lags Peers:**

Collection turnover measures the success in managing a circulating collection that is in tune with the demands of the community and also gives visibility to how well a library manages the ongoing maintenance and removal of items no longer in demand for circulation. Collection turnover measures the total number of circulations divided by the total collection size. Initial reviews of FY14 data would indicate lower than expected collection turnover (2.61) for the BPL as compared to the peer group average of 4.31 and a best in class 11.53. Consider, also, that for purposes of this calculation, *only circulating items* were included in the BPL turnover analysis while all holdings were included for peer libraries; this would have the effect of over-stating the BPL’s turnover in comparison to peer libraries. While further review should be conducted, it is clear that the BPL can continue to improve its collection turnover.

Average Circulation per Item in Collection			
Type	Collection Size	Circulation	Average
Digital/Downloadable items	24,760	672,588	27.16
Physical items	1,402,063	3,049,516	2.18
All items	1,426,823	3,722,104	2.61

**Process for Managing Physically Circulating Purchases is Efficient and Balanced:**

Management of physically circulating collections throughout the system is handled with reasonable efficiency and the process seems well-defined and systematic. Care is taken to balance individual branch input with overall collection development strategies. Wait-time for high demand items is monitored and purchases are made with a goal of maintaining reasonable wait times for patrons while also considering that fewer copies of books will ultimately be in demand after the peak interest period wanes. Recently, there was a successful system-wide effort to verify items on the shelves, identify missing items, and purge items no longer in demand.

**Process for Managing Digitally Circulating Purchases is Responsive to Patron Requests:**

Management of online circulating items is handled less strategically with the majority of the online titles being selected purely on the basis of individual patron requests. While this is a responsive method, it doesn’t address the needs of the majority of the population who may not take the step of requesting a title. As demand in online circulating items continues to grow, significantly more strategic attention must be paid to curation of online circulating items.

**Successful Effort Undertaken in 2014 to Reduce Stagnant Circulating Items:**

During 2014, a concerted effort was undertaken to verify circulating items at all branches, to identify what was missing, and to release what was no longer appropriate to keep. This project was referred to internally as the “weeding” project. Its goal was to ensure a vibrant circulating collection and to manage space constraints which have and will continue to emerge if appropriate branch-by-branch collection reduction is not done on a regular and continuous basis. The effort was significant and largely successful. As of February 2014, 25% of the system-wide circulating collections had not circulated in over three years. One year later, the percentage of items not circulating in greater than three years was down to just 5% system-wide.

Branches with greater than 5% stagnant collection count			
Branch	Collection Count at 1/2/15	Not Circulated > 3 years	% Stagnant
Charlestown	48,858	2,925	6%
Fields Corner	43,619	2,873	7%
Roslindale	42,340	3,272	8%
West Roxbury	79,939	11,698	15%
Dudley	52,182	9,480	18%

Charlestown, Fields Corner, Roslindale, West Roxbury, and Dudley still have > 5% of their circulating collections which has not circulated in > 3 years.

Branches with greater than 25% improvement of stagnant collection count			
Branch	Not Circulated > 3 years (Feb 2014)	Not Circulated > 3 years (Jan 2015)	Improvement %
Dudley	31,737	9,480	37%
Codman Square	17,467	517	32%
Lower Mills	16,194	1,954	31%
Fields Corner	16,095	2,873	27%

It is important to note, though, that while Fields Corner still needs improvement, they made significant progress by achieving a dramatic 27% reduction in stagnant items.

## Special Collections

### Success Metrics Must Be Identified for Special Collections:

Key Performance Indicators for Special Collections are completely unique and differ entirely from those used to evaluate circulating collection. The BPL does not have well-defined success metrics for managing the performance of Special Collections. The department exists to support lifelong learners, scholars and the intellectually curious, and for the preservation of cultural treasures. It is unclear, though, the objectives against which the department’s success will be measured. The current focus in Special Collections seems heavily skewed towards acquisition of new items and is surprisingly under-focused on stewarding items it already owns. Staff levels are not sufficient to properly care for aging items and storage is not suited to maintaining required environmental conditions. Security is insufficient to protect against internal theft. While it is understood that funding sources are complex and cannot easily be shifted from acquisition activities to cataloging and storage, careful consideration must be given to any new acquisitions until a significantly improved portion of existing items are broadly made available for



discovery and viewing and the majority of items can be stored and secured appropriate to search, protection, retrieval, and security.

**With Less than 0.20% of the Population Impacted, Efficiencies Must Be Gained:**

In calendar year 2014 the Rare Books department had 1,133 visitors who requested a total of 9,360 items for viewing. Prints had 805 visitors requesting 31,263 total items for viewing. While these departments are designed to serve a niche population, it is important to note that just 0.18% of the population served by the BPL physically viewed a rare books item in 2014. Similarly, just 0.11% of the serviceable population viewed items from the Prints department. The process of assisting curious patrons is incredibly labor intensive in all parts of the process: identifying items for viewing, making those items available for viewing, monitoring the viewing in progress, and returning items to storage. Careful consideration should be given to the ongoing cost of management in combination with the limited number of people impacted by these collections. Consideration should be given to any ways in which efficiencies can be gained and a higher percentage of the population can benefit. Consider: partnering with a museum whose core competency is in cataloging, storing, and displaying special collections, increasing exhibits and/ or rotating displays so that more people benefit with fewer individual “touches” of items now in storage, further focusing the size of the collections and deaccessioning non-core items.

**Cataloging and Digitization Could Dramatically Increase Community Impact:**

Proper cataloging and digitization can significantly reduce the long-term cost structure of managing this department and will simultaneously explode the number of people who can and will access these items. In the immediate term, a substantial investment must be made for a significant and important catch-up on foundational activities not well-managed for many decades.

A consultant-supported project is currently underway in the Prints department to prepare for cataloging and staff members are optimistic about progress in this department. It should be noted that the purchase in 2012 of The Museum System (TMS), described as a “museum-quality cataloging system” was intended to address the cataloging issues related to special collections assets. Two and a half years after the \$29,100 investment the system has yet to be customized and implemented yet the BPL continues to incur maintenance costs of \$4,250 annually. Because inventory information does not yet exist in any single spreadsheet and instead is housed today in multiple formats and locations, populating this system is not yet feasible. In the future, implementation due diligence should be concluded prior to all technology investments; a commitment should exist to properly staff and propel design and implementation activities as a condition of and predecessor to all technology investment.

## Borrower Services

**Vision for Proactive Borrower Services Model Requires Training and Union Support**

The future vision for Public Services/ Borrower Services is one which is markedly more proactively engaging with patrons than the model that is currently in place and there is an effort underway to orient staff to ensure a broader ability to assist patron’s first-level requests before referring them to a specialist. Achieving this vision will require cooperation from the union and substantial personnel training. Language skills and customer service skills should be carefully evaluated for all staff members who are in



roles where a significant portion of job success depends on both. As the department is currently in mid-transition, a review of the department is recommended to occur post-reorganization and renovation completion when workflow and job descriptions are no longer in transition.

### 68% of Total BPL “Visits” Occur Online

Historically, much of the engagement between the library and its patrons happened inside library buildings. Increasingly though, patrons are choosing to engage with libraries online. The tables below shows how the BPL stacks up against peer libraries in both web and in-person visits. On a per capita basis, the BPL is slightly below the peer average in physical library visits and is slightly above in website visits. The BPL has 68% of total visits coming from the web which exceeds the peer average of 59%.

LOC	Library Name	Web Visits	Library Visits	Total Visits
NYC	New York Public Library	32,843,804	14,185,099	47,028,903
CHA	Charolotte Mecklenburg Library	29,864,351	3,044,024	32,908,375
MIN	Hennepin County Library	19,345,747	5,240,918	24,586,665
QNS	Queens Borough Public Library	6,842,387	12,355,015	19,197,402
BRK	Brooklyn Public Library	7,091,942	10,066,773	17,158,715
SF	San Francisco Public Library	8,631,803	7,424,786	16,056,589
CLE	Cuyahoga County Public Library	8,000,984	7,904,000	15,904,984
DEN	Denver Public Library	10,813,807	4,371,420	15,185,227
SEA	Seattle Public Library	7,214,323	6,734,655	13,948,978
PHI	The Free Library Of Philadelphia	7,301,311	6,116,762	13,418,073
BOS	Boston Public Library	7,800,000	3,623,724	11,423,724
POR	Multnomah County Library	6,629,449	4,557,241	11,186,690
MAD	Madison Public Library	1,881,154	2,053,449	3,934,603
DC	District of Columbia Public Library	2,377,925	-	2,377,925

*\*District of Columbia Public Library (DC) did not report library visit data to PLA*

LOC	Library Name	Library Visits/ Capita
CLE	Cuyahoga County Public Library	12.8
SEA	Seattle Public Library	11.0
SF	San Francisco Public Library	9.1
MAD	Madison Public Library	8.6
DEN	Denver Public Library	6.7
POR	Multnomah County Library	6.1
BOS	Boston Public Library	5.9
QNS	Queens Borough Public Library	5.5
MIN	Hennepin County Library	4.4
NYC	New York Public Library	4.4
BRK	Brooklyn Public Library	4.0
PHI	The Free Library Of Philadelphia	4.0
CHA	Charolotte Mecklenburg Library	3.2
DC	District of Columbia Public Library	-
<i>Peer Average:</i>		6.7

LOC	Library Name	Web Visits/ Capita
CHA	Charolotte Mecklenburg Library	31.0
DEN	Denver Public Library	16.6
MIN	Hennepin County Library	16.4
CLE	Cuyahoga County Public Library	13.0
BOS	Boston Public Library	12.6
SEA	Seattle Public Library	11.7
SF	San Francisco Public Library	10.6
NYC	New York Public Library	10.1
POR	Multnomah County Library	8.9
MAD	Madison Public Library	7.9
PHI	The Free Library Of Philadelphia	4.7
DC	District of Columbia Public Library	3.8
QNS	Queens Borough Public Library	3.1
BRK	Brooklyn Public Library	2.8
<i>Peer Average:</i>		10.8

## Youth Services

Youth Services is an area where the library excels. At Copley and at the branches, children and teens are welcomed and programs are abundant to support their interests. By partnering with the Boston Youth Fund's afterschool and summer employment programs, the BPL hosted over 50 eligible youth who worked in neighborhood branches and at the Central Library. Partnerships with Head Start and Thrive in 5, support outreach by the BPL Youth Services Team. In addition to programming focus on youth services,



the BPL has capitalized on recent renovations to intentionally design spaces that are welcoming to children and teens and which incorporate technology relevant to today's youth.

The new Youth Services Manager position was recently filled and will give continued focus to this area of strength. While work remains to ensure proper training of internal staff to continually leverage new technologies, Youth Services remains an area of strength for the BPL.

Amy Ryan has been quoted as saying "If I feel comfortable in the space we designed for our teens, we did it wrong." This sentiment perfectly captures the approach the BPL has taken in designing new spaces. There has been a keen focus on the needs of the target patron, and it shows!







### Homework Help:

The library offers homework help with support of teen mentors for students in grades k-8 and also provides space for the Boston Teachers' Union where they provide homework assistance for students of all ages. Both programs are advertised on the BPL website but there is a lack of integration and feedback on the success of these programs. The service they offer is of high value to the community and instituting a consistent feedback mechanism would help continuously improve these programs.

## Reference and Instruction

### Reference Activities are Often Highly Labor Intensive, Data Tracking and Success Measurement Should Be Further Evaluated, Technology Should Be Applied to the Process

While it is understood that some libraries in the peer grouping have a strong focus on research services and others do not, reviewing the significant disparity in peer library reported reference transactions seems to follow an inconsistency in reporting seen throughout the BPL network. Peer library reference transactions are quantified between a low of 213,000 for Madison Public Library to a high of 8.8 million for New York Public Library. Boston Public Library reported roughly 340,000 transactions when omitting directional requests, assistance with equipment, and reproduction requests. Reliable inference cannot be drawn from existing data about transactions.

It is recommended that the capture categories and methods be reevaluated for streamlined and meaningful content and that capture be made inside an existing system wherever possible as a part of the research work stream. This could be made easier as the BPL implements the planned call-center model where many reference transactions will take place off the main service floor; technology should be implemented to improve queue management and response tracking and to capture information which could improve the efficiency of answering future similar requests.

While the library's system for checking out books could be used for tracking pick-ups for books used in-house, this information is instead collected manually. Not only is the metric viewed as inaccurate and unreliable but it obscures information about *which* books were used in house. Incorporating knowledge of books used in house along with external circulation numbers would be supportive of better collection management and collection refresh over time. Note that the BPL should implement mobile scanning in all branches as soon as possible to support a broad variety of collection management and reference activities.

### Reference Database Quality and Cost/ Use Should be Evaluated Annually



Total reported costs for research databases for FY14 was \$796,000<sup>25</sup>. Reporting on specific database use and cost is spotty and information is inconsistently provided by the networks from which the BPL purchases. Although renewals sometimes trigger a review of costs for individual databases, care should be taken to compile necessary data to complete a full annual assessment of all databases on both a cost/use basis and on the basis of content quality. Taken together the BPL can use this information to guide reference librarians as they recommend specific databases in new LibGuides which will serve to provide the best topical research sources, cost-effectively.

### **Planned Reorganization is Strategically Sound**

A reorganization is in discussion for Reference and Instruction. Consideration is being given to combining some specialties and to eliminate specialties by format (i.e. Microtext). The consolidation described makes logical sense and supports improved personnel growth opportunities (particularly for more junior staff members). Personnel in this department were very entrenched in the historic way of working and many were opposed to changes. This was especially true of long-tenured BPL employees.

The BPL's vision for change is in keeping with industry changes and is strategically sound. Efforts must be undertaken to give staff a broader perspective and to ensure that as the work structure progresses, new ways of working are designed from the patron inward, not from the library staff outward. Keen consideration should be given to customer/ patron expectations and needs.

### **Storage Consolidation and Intelligent Location Selection Will Improve Staff and Space Utilization Efficiency**

Microtext must be given attention to more logically locate items with high frequency of use and to consolidate rarely used items at off-site storage where reasonable. Microtext currently exists in at least 26 different locations. The overly complex storage planning and lack of cataloging combine to make this a difficult area for new staff members to manage without access to personnel who have historical reference. This makes the library overly reliant on a single individual. Efforts should be undertaken to better organize Microtext and to prioritize highly utilized items for better organization and cataloging.

### **Performance Metrics Should Be Patron-based, Acceptable Service Levels Identified and Tracked**

The current tracking of reference questions does not specify a service level target nor appropriate stratification and definition for reference question complexity. Key Performance Indicators should indicate target turn-around times for High, Medium, and Low complexity questions (with complexity levels clearly defined), tracking should be maintained to indicate actual turn-around time vs target times for reference questions by complexity. A system should be identified which can facilitate queuing and time tracking of reference questions. Mining could be done of this database to spin-off Frequently Asked Questions or to prompt Libguide creation where categories of topics recur. This, in turn, would allow for more patron self-directed research over time.

## **Programming & Exhibitions**

### **Current Organizational Structure is Decentralized and Lacks a Single Leader**

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<sup>25</sup> Source, Sean Monahan

While individual programming staff are strong and capable, the lack of a single leader of system-wide programming makes it difficult to design and achieve a consciously defined programming mix. Capturing and analyzing a consistent set of quality metrics related to programs delivered is complicated by the lack of a single lead. Programming effectiveness information currently being captured is manual and highly commentary-based; the lack of a numeric scale and a consistent programming rubric makes trends impossible to analyze. Universal agreement does not exist about where leadership should reside for exhibitions with some believing exhibitions should be led by special collections curators and others believing programming should lead with support from special collections. Staffing in both areas is limited.

### BPL Works Hard to Provide Programming, Effort is Required to Improve Attendance

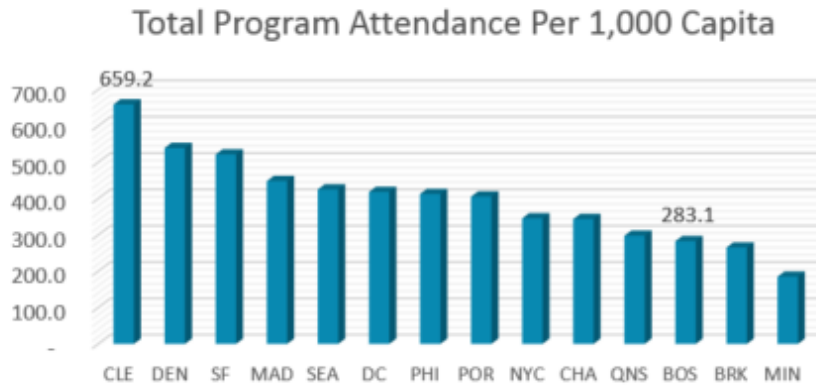
In FY2014 the BPL offered over 10,000 programs on a wide variety of topics including story times, movie nights, author talks, art programs, etc. Total program attendance as a percent of active registered borrowers went up from 48% to 51% which reflects an increase in programming engagement for the BPL across the system. When comparing key programming metrics across the peer group, the BPL lags in most. While the BPL makes available 16.4 programs for every 1,000 people in its service area, its attendance numbers fall near the bottom of the peer group comparison. Efforts should be undertaken to improve efficiency and effectiveness of programs. Only when programs are more heavily attended should work shift to increasing the number of programs offered. Programs with especially low attendance should be reviewed to determine if they should be eliminated or fewer sessions should be offered and an improved, score-based feedback mechanism should be implemented which allows tracking of individual programs from the perspective of patron feedback.

Number of programs		Programs attendance		Attendance per Program		Programs per 1,000 capita		Attendance per 1,000 capita	
NYC	59,030	NYC	1,120,064	SF	33.3	CLE	33.3	CLE	659.2
BRK	38,247	BRK	664,449	SEA	31.8	DEN	30.3	DEN	539.3
QNS	37,973	QNS	664,114	CHA	31.0	POR	28.4	SF	521.4
PHI	25,025	PHI	638,226	MAD	26.0	NYC	18.2	MAD	448.2
POR	21,257	SF	423,836	PHI	25.5	MAD	17.2	SEA	425.2
CLE	20,533	CLE	406,406	DC	25.1	QNS	17.0	DC	418.4
DEN	19,659	DEN	350,297	MIN	21.8	DC	16.6	PHI	412.5
SF	12,715	CHA	330,908	CLE	19.8	BOS	16.4	POR	405.5
CHA	10,658	POR	303,474	NYC	19.0	PHI	16.2	NYC	345.8
DC	10,520	DC	264,564	DEN	17.8	SF	15.6	CHA	343.8
BOS	10,107	SEA	261,044	QNS	17.5	BRK	15.3	QNS	297.7
MIN	10,042	MIN	218,534	BRK	17.4	SEA	13.4	BOS	283.1
SEA	8,221	BOS	174,821	BOS	17.3	CHA	11.1	BRK	265.3
MAD	4,104	MAD	106,683	POR	14.3	MIN	8.5	MIN	185.2

### Programming Penetration (normed for population) Lags Peers

Program attendance per 1,000 people in the service area helps us to understand penetration of the BPL's programming efforts by seeing what portion of the service area is taking advantage of Library programming. On this metric, only the performance of Brooklyn and Hennepin lag the BPL. Causes vary

and could include: program topic and content, method or style of program delivery, communication for program existence, and others.



### Per Program Attendance Lags Peers

Attendance per program is an efficiency metric. While each program has a finite amount of human capital investment required for planning and delivery, the number of patrons who can benefit is variable, bound mainly by space constraints. While it is true that some types of programs can be more effective in smaller groups, care should be taken to maximize the value of preparation and delivery by increasing the attendance per program. The BPL currently has 17.3 patrons attend each program on average while best in class in the peer group (San Francisco) has 33.3 average patrons attending each program. Only Portland (Multnomah) has fewer patrons attending per program with 14.3.

### Attendance Per Program

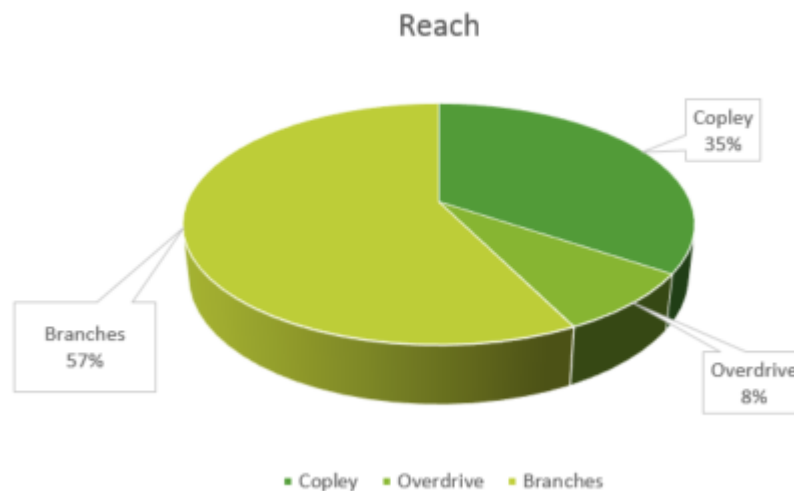


## Branch Services

### 57% of Patron Touch-points Occur at a Branch Location

The data below shows that 57% of the measured touch-points<sup>26</sup> are related to activities occurring at a branch location. The central library (Copley) accounts for 35% of measured touches and, it is interesting to note that (although it includes only circulation) online overdrive circulation accounts for 8% of total touches with patrons. Branches continue to be a foundational part of how patrons receive BPL services.

The BPL recently adopted its combined metric 'REACH' as a way to more broadly evaluate patron engagement. This metric currently counts visitors, programs offered, circulation, and computer use. It has been augmented in the analysis below to substitute program attendance with programs offered which measures patron engagement. Additionally, future consideration should be given to including Wifi sessions (for an unconstrained view of computer use). Consideration should also be given to capturing key metrics related to special collections viewing and reference services.



### Ongoing Management of Branch Responsiveness and Matrix Reporting Could Strengthened Central/Branch Integration

The Boston Public Library has 24 branches in addition to its main Copley site. The executive team expresses the importance of the branch system in meeting the diverse needs of demographically unique neighborhoods, yet the branches are disconnected from the central library in many important ways. Leadership of the branches rolls up to three assistant managers of branch libraries, who then report to a Director of Library Services – Branches, who then reports up to the Director of Library Services. The number of steps removed from the executive leadership team is appropriate to manage the scope of the library system but can exacerbate the perception at the branches of being far removed from central and having little voice in how the library network progresses. Limited budgets exist for ongoing branch-level improvements and maintenance. Care should be taken to ensure responsiveness to branch needs

<sup>26</sup> As defined by amended REACH metric including: visitors, program *attendance*, circulation, computer use.

particularly as they relate to a lack of responsiveness from Facilities and concerns over safety. Improved communication should be managed carefully in these two areas. Note that recent changes to periodic communications meetings have taken branch staff feedback into account and could improve the sense of integration.

Serious consideration should be given to strengthening matrix reporting or (at the minimum) performance management feedback inclusion for lead branch librarians from Collections Management and Programming. Similarly, branch librarians should have matrix reporting or input to reviews for custodians and maintenance crews working within the branches.

### **Demographically Aligned Branch Staffing Would Aid in Delivery of Services**

While the BPL maintains a diverse workforce, it can be difficult to prioritize specific language skills in branch staffing where particular languages would promote greater neighborhood connections, programming support and overall patron support. Bumping and other facets of collective bargaining agreements create barriers to prioritizing language skills at branches which could benefit from having a language speaker well-aligned to neighborhood demographics.

### **Branch “Balanced Scorecard” Should be Implemented to Track Community Impact**

Branch Leadership should devise a score-card which specifies measurable goals for the coming year and report annually on scores in each category. The score card should include measurement in categories such as: adherence to specified programming mix (no specified mix currently exists but should be targeted annually), completed specified number of programs, reached specified number of attendees, achieved specified branch circulation targets, delivered specified number of computer sessions, Wi-Fi sessions, etc. If consequences exist for meeting or missing annual goals, this creates positive conflict in the organization which encourages creative ideas and spurs individuals to actively resolve barriers in a timely manner, even if conflict is required to achieve the stated goals.

### **Collection Management Strikes the Right Balance between Control and Flexibility**

Collection Management strikes the right balance between control and flexibility with the branches in terms of circulating item selection and management. Although some in the branches would prefer to have greater control, the need to balance efficiency of the entire system with budget limitations in mind, indicate that Collection Management has struck the right balance. Efforts to increase the number of floating collections have been met with some resistance but should progress with careful management of periodic collection rebalancing as circulating items migrate from branch to branch. Recent efforts at collection management (internally referred to as “weeding”) initially met with varying levels of cooperation from branches but ultimately has been highly successful. A more formalized matrix reporting or review structure between Collection Management and the branches could have eliminated some of the resistance in implementation.



### **Centralizing Programming Leadership Could Increase Programming Efficiency and Ensure Desired Mix**

Consideration should be given to improving programming coordination and leadership from Central to ensure a consistent set of offerings and to communicate a desired system-wide programming mix. While a planned percentage of programming offerings, should be targeted to specific branch demographics, consolidating program design and material preparation for a larger set of core programs would reduce costs and efforts when compared with a more decentralized approach. Branch librarians could then select from a broader set of core offerings for delivery while investing targeted planning and preparation time focused on programming specifically targeted to neighborhood demographics. Given the low staffing levels at branches (in comparison with Copley) it is understandable that competencies vary to a large degree from branch to branch with head librarians bringing different strengths and weaknesses. Not every branch has staff with a particularly strong programming competency but the library has addressed this intelligently by working with clusters of neighborhood branches for information and resource sharing.

### **A Detailed Study Should Be Conducted to Determine the Right Number, Location, and Layout of Branches Required to Meet the Changing Needs of Boston's Citizens**

Branches were evaluated for this project only in aggregate as a means to assess the manner in which central library administrators and interacts with the branch network and the extent to which the entire network meets the needs of the BPL's patrons. Individual branch assessments were not within scope of this engagement. Given the significant costs associated with maintaining branches in concert with the increased use of digital library services, consideration should be given to a full analysis of branch usage with the goal of identifying the right number, location, and layout of branches required to meet the changing needs of Boston's citizens.

The BPL had previously completed a branch assessment which should be revisited and expanded with the goal of making a recommendation which squares with available resources for building development and ongoing maintenance. Using the recent East Boston (pictured below) construction project as an important example of one redevelopment model shows us that, when done well, replacing two outdated branches with one new modern branch can serve the community well and allow for even greater community impact from one branch than was previously achieved out of two branches.



### Boston Public Library Appears “Over-Branded” in Comparison to Peer Group<sup>27</sup>

The number of registered borrowers per branch is a full 50% below the peer average, borrowers per square mile of service area is 28% below the peer average, and circulation per registered borrower 28% below the peer average.

LOC	Library Name	Circulation/ Registered Borrower
POR	Multnomah County Library	49.8
SEA	Seattle Public Library	26.3
MAD	Madison Public Library	25.2
DEN	Denver Public Library	25.1
SF	San Francisco Public Library	24.3
CLE	Cuyahoga County Public Library	21.4
QNS	Queens Borough Public Library	18.9
MIN	Hennepin County Library	18.7
PHI	The Free Library Of Philadelphia	16.5
BRK	Brooklyn Public Library	16.4
NYC	New York Public Library	11.8
DC	District of Columbia Public Library	10.4
BOS	Boston Public Library	10.3
CHA	Charolotte Mecklenburg Library	6.7
<i>Peer Average</i>		20.9

LOC	Library Name	Borrowers/ Square Mile of Svc Area
NYC	New York Public Library	17,195
BRK	Brooklyn Public Library	14,966
SF	San Francisco Public Library	9,089
QNS	Queens Borough Public Library	8,117
SEA	Seattle Public Library	5,374
DC	District of Columbia Public Library	4,643
BOS	Boston Public Library	4,063
PHI	The Free Library Of Philadelphia	3,083
DEN	Denver Public Library	2,521
MAD	Madison Public Library	2,109
CLE	Cuyahoga County Public Library	2,017
CHA	Charolotte Mecklenburg Library	1,621
MIN	Hennepin County Library	1,381
POR	Multnomah County Library	949
<i>Peer Average</i>		5,620

LOC	Library Name	Registered Borrowers/ Branch
CHA	Charolotte Mecklenburg Library	44,867
CLE	Cuyahoga County Public Library	34,207
NYC	New York Public Library	25,298
POR	Multnomah County Library	24,528
MIN	Hennepin County Library	21,092
MAD	Madison Public Library	20,297
BRK	Brooklyn Public Library	18,010
SEA	Seattle Public Library	17,362
DEN	Denver Public Library	16,282
SF	San Francisco Public Library	16,158
BOS	Boston Public Library	15,068
QNS	Queens Borough Public Library	14,505
DC	District of Columbia Public Library	12,144
PHI	The Free Library Of Philadelphia	7,854
<i>Peer Average</i>		20,970

<sup>27</sup> Consistent with PLA data, active registered borrowers are used for this analysis. BPL data is FY14.



## Technical & Digital Services

The Technical & Digital Services group handles all the Technical Services tasks (acquisition, cataloging, and physical processing) for all the Library's items making them available for public use. This group also includes the digital lab where items from the BPL and throughout the Commonwealth are digitized and made available for online viewing and reading. Additionally, this group includes the Archival Center in West Roxbury which acts as remote storage for the BPL.

### Archival Center:

#### **Much Progress Has Been Made, Much Work has Yet to Be Completed**

The Archival Center in West Roxbury is a remote storage facility which was put into use approximately five years ago. The climate controlled section of the facility is well-organized for high-density storage but the non-climate controlled storage area has significant work remaining to complete the organization, storage, and cataloging of items, some of which are high-value special collections items which have remained boxed and/or shrink-wrapped for many years making them unavailable to the general public and specialized researchers. It is highly unlikely that measurable progress can be achieved on the hundreds of thousands of items destined for offsite storage without continued use of outside resources to complete the initial storage and cataloging effort. Consideration should also be given to expanding the space in this facility and more aggressively moving rarely used items from Copley to the Archival Center, requiring further funding of outside resources for initial organization and cataloging, while simultaneously freeing up valuable space at Copley.

The Archival Center is used as remote storage for rarely requested items most of which were transferred from two other remote facilities (Charlestown, Norwood). Transfers from Charlestown were completed around 2012. While the Norwood transfer began in April of 2012, it was only recently completed in January of 2015. This effort was significantly aided by William B. Meyer, Inc. (an outside contractor) and while their project is nearing its defined completion, much work remains. The transfer process included pest and mold evaluation and decontamination, complex packaging based on the specific items being transferred, elimination of many duplicate items, cleaning, and cataloging into a Locator System.

#### **Timeline for Work Completion and Data Transfer Should Be Actively Managed to Aid in Discoverability of Remotely Stored Items**

It is likely that additional outside resources will be required to complete the organization and cataloging of remaining items at the Archival Center. It is important that the remaining items be catalogued and properly stored and that the staff at this facility can be allowed to shift away from the initial storage and cataloging tasks and move to servicing and retrieval for the larger library system. Its ability to fully serve the system has been severely limited over the past five years due to the protracted time-line around storage transfer. Although transfer of 1.17 million records from the locator system to the Polaris system was scheduled to occur in March, 2015, an unexpected glitch has pushed back this data transfer which is now expected to occur in May 2015. Until this data transfer is resolved, items in the Archival Center are not fully discoverable.



The climate-controlled portion of the Archival Center for which Meyers led the organizing, transport, and cataloging, is well organized and clean.



**Significant Portions of the Collection Are Boxed, Uncatalogued, and Generally Unavailable for Viewing**

Much work remains that is outside the scope of the original Meyers contract. Items in the boxes (below) are generally not catalogued, nor are they being made available to the general public. They are essentially “invisible collections”. Additionally, Boston Parks and Recreation has been using approximately 1,860sf of space at the Archival Center to store tombstones for a Parks and Recreation project.



### **Staffing Plan and Timeline Should Be Finalized if Reading Room is To Be Opened To Public**

The City Archives Center is also in this building and shares a Reading Room with the BPL Archival Center. Although the stated vision is to open this reading room to the public for browsing collections by appointment, it currently is not open and a formal staffing plan has not been clarified to address what types of research staff are necessary and prudent to staff at this location based upon competing considerations of potentially low usage but also very specified, niche research requests.

### **Technical Services**

#### **Newly Acquired Items Efficiently Processed**

The Technical Services group, is responsible for ordering, receiving, cataloging, and physically processing items so that they will be discoverable and available for use. The process in place for properly cataloging newly acquired items appears robust and efficient. It reportedly takes between one and three days for a newly acquired book to be made available for use by a borrower or researcher. Significant improvement in the workflow has been made in the past decade by broadening staff positions which had previously been highly specialized. This required many years of negotiation with the unions but has resulted in a much more streamlined process.

#### **Current Budgets and Staffing Do Not Support Retrospective Conversion (Cataloging Catch-up)**

No specific goals are in place for retrospective conversion catch-up and budgets don't currently support significant improvement in this important area. Technical Services personnel roughly estimate that full retrospective conversion of all uncatalogued items would cost in excess of 60 million dollars<sup>28</sup>. This number represents decades of catch-up for items previously not fully inventoried. It also highlights the significant volume of items held at the BPL which currently are not fully discoverable by patrons without the support of a librarian. Progress for this process is slow. Technical Services staff indicate there are no records kept to track progress made by internal staff to close the gap on % of assets catalogued and discoverable. Although outside resources have historically supported the retrospective conversion effort, here too, progress is slow. In the last two years, just 11,910 Machine Readable Cataloging (MARC) records were produced and only 2,934 of these have been loaded into Polaris due to vendor hand-offs in the process. This number represents just 0.01% of the total collection.

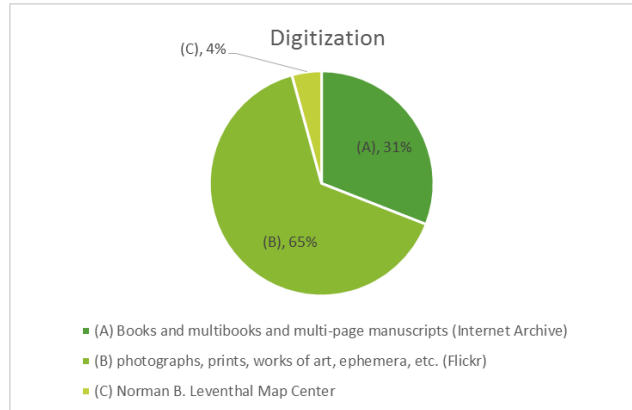
The topic of inventory management is further addressed in the Functional Analysis for Library Services, Opportunities section.

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<sup>28</sup> Estimate provided by C. Willis, Digital and Technical Services

## Digital Services

The Digital Services group digitizes collections to make them searchable and available for viewing online. Much of the digital content is “warehoused” on Flickr and digitalcommonwealth.org. Most of the items being digitized will not have previously been available for search on BPL.org or in the Polaris Catalog so this happens in conjunctions with digitization. Digitization makes these collections instantly viewable by a worldwide population, immediately democratizing these special items and making them FREE TO ALL, in keeping with the Library’s mission. To date, just 1.34% of the BPL’s total holdings are estimated to have been digitized.



### Prioritization is Fluid but Well-Understood, Digitization Completion Targets are Not Specified

In FY14, 17,210 items were digitized by this group. Work prioritization within the Digital Services group takes into account many considerations including:

- a) alignment with BPL collections
- b) responsiveness to researchers’ sense of value
- c) production efficiency and
- d) Digital Public Library of America Service Hub teaching/ consulting.

### Increased Funding to Digital Services Could Assist in Closing Discoverability Gap

In addition to increasing support for cataloging, funding should be allocated to support digitization efforts with a goal of aggressively working to solve the discoverability gap that prominently limits patron’s accessibility to special collections.



Posted online August 4, 2008, this map from the Boston Public Library print department has been viewed *online* over 59,000 times. That’s 9,833 times per year. In contrast, the entire Print Department at Copley logged just 683 total visitors in one year (2014). This single example makes it easy to see how digitization of special collections can dramatically impact the public’s ability to benefit from these collections.



## Functional Analysis: Communications and Strategy

This function is charged with supporting internal communications and leading external communications. Additionally, the function has historically led in maintaining strategic alignment between senior management actions and compass principles. Note that currently, the function manages online interaction with customers through social media but does not oversee the BPL.org website. The small team is effective and efficient working within the budget confines and does a particularly admirable job in leveraging social media for increased patron awareness. *The senior Communications & Strategy lead resigned during the assessment in February 2015.*

## Strengths

The Communications & Strategy group publishes a communications calendar, plans ahead, and seeks balance in topics of communication across a variety of communication outlets. The group strikes an intelligent balance between standards and flexibility in social media. This is particularly useful when balancing the need to communicate consistency with the brand while simultaneously meeting the needs of diverse population served by branches. Flexibility is notably important during the steep part of the adoption curve which is where many patrons find themselves today when considering Facebook, Twitter, Flickr and other information sources as alternative or additive to BPL.org.

LOC	Library Name	Likes / 100 People
NYC	New York Public Library	6.6
SEA	Seattle Public Library	4.9
POR	Multnomah County Library	4.0
BOS	Boston Public Library	3.8
CLE	Cuyahoga County Public Library	3.8
MAD	Madison Public Library	2.1
SF	San Francisco Public Library	1.9
DEN	Denver Public Library	1.9
BRK	Brooklyn Public Library	1.5
PHI	The Free Library Of Philadelphia	1.3
CHA	Charolotte Mecklenburg Library	1.1
MIN	Hennepin County Library	1.0
DC	District of Columbia Public Library	0.8
QNS	Queens Borough Public Library	0.0

*The BPL excels at social media communication. Its Facebook communication is particularly well-developed with 3.8 likes/100 people in the service area.*



*The BPL's posts are frequent, informative and well-curated and the associated images are beautifully engaging.*



## Opportunities

### Leverage PR for Improved Funding

The BPL could better target funding by strategically managing news about the BPL, highlighting topics where continued funding efforts should be robust. For example, the Communications department could produce an editorial calendar which focuses on getting the message out about the BPL's leadership in the Digital Public Library of America, supported by information about how the branch network provides computers and wifi for free, thus working to narrow the digital divide. These stories could be parlayed into funding discussions around the need to dramatically close the gap between assets the BPL stewards and those that are discoverable to the public without aid of a librarian. Communication webs should be strategically managed to further efforts where funding is critical for continued progress.

Periodic and systematic evaluation of BPL's Facebook communication should be evaluated for cost/benefit. A systematic review will ensure that each BPL associated page (departmental or branch) be evaluated for its ability to engage patrons. In cases with particularly low engagement, an experimentation phase should ensue for a defined period with efforts to increase engagement, if engagement is not successfully increased, the departmental or branch page should be categorized as "low use" or "dormant". Low use pages should require significantly less posting and ongoing monitoring to determine if and when an increased effort is warranted and dormant pages should be revisited annually for potential re-launch consideration in cases where the population needs change.



## Functional Analysis: Finance

The Finance Division is primarily responsible for managing, controlling and reporting all financial-related activities of the Library. This division works closely with Library management and the City Office of Budget Management to develop and oversee annual operating and capital budgets approved by the City. The Finance Division is the primary interface with the Board of Trustees on financial matters, working closely with the Board's Audit and Finance Committee. Currently, there are 9 people in the Finance Division.

Reporting to the Director of Finance/Chief Financial Officer are the managers of the two departments – Budget & Procurement (Business Office) and Accounting. The Budget and Procurement Office is responsible for the preparation and submission of the Library's annual operating budget to the City and to the Board of Trustees and for the monitoring of actual activity relative to that plan. In addition, this department is responsible for the purchasing of all materials, supplies and services, with the exception of books, required by the Library's various departments. Purchases are made in accordance with City and State laws and regulations governing procurement by government agencies, including applicable CORI standards. Book purchases are the responsibility of staff in Library Services. The Accounting Department is responsible for the review and approval of all vendor invoices, payment for supplies, materials and services supported by the Library's external funds, the preparation of accurate and complete financial statements, bank reconciliations and cash management oversight throughout the Library's system. Processes, controls and audits performed in these areas were reviewed and appear appropriate.

## Strengths

- The Finance Division is thorough in keeping the Library's Board of Trustees informed about the Library's finances, contract and business matters and the status of its endowment. The Library's Audit and Finance Committee and its volunteer Board of Trustees meet five to seven times annually and are kept well-informed and engaged throughout the year reviewing major operations, financial and strategic matters.
- The Library's endowment is professionally managed with assistance from an independent investment advisory firm. Portfolio performance and asset allocations are reviewed regularly and changes are made when warranted. The market value of BPL's endowment has grown from \$48.0 million on 12/31/11 to \$59.3 million at 12/31/14.
- The oversight and follow-thru of an independent, outside financial audit that is conducted annually of BPL's Section 501 (c) (3) organization. Management has taken timely action responding to financial reporting and control issues raised by auditors. Required Form 990's required by the Internal Revenue Service are prepared by management and its auditor, reviewed with Trustees and submitted, as required.
- A review of procedures with responsible staff indicated that BPL is adhering to required purchasing procedures, in accordance with State laws governing the procurement and disposition of supplies, services and real property by a government agency.



## Opportunities

### **Seek Better Usage of Restrictive Trust Funds**

As discussed in the Financial Review section, the restrictive nature of many of the endowment's trust funds is severely handicapping the Library's ability to maximize the value of this important asset. The plan management has recently launched to deal with these restrictions needs to be accelerated.

BPL's current, Board approved policy allows for a 5.0% annual distribution from the most recent three-year average value of the endowment balance. In FY 2014, a \$2.4 million distribution was made from the endowment to fund operations. There are 185 individual trusts that comprise BPL's endowment and in excess of 75% are restricted for a particular purpose. Over half of the trusts were established before 1960 and nearly 15% were gifted before 1900. A listing of the Library's trust funds is included in the appendix.

Many of the trust restrictions present annual challenges for management to utilize the entire distribution effectively and since most of the trusts were established many years ago, the restrictions prioritize book acquisition over current strategic efforts to catalogue, store, digitize and secure. Over the past five years, nearly 25%, or \$2.7 million, of the endowment draws were unable to be spent and are held in the Library's money market accounts. In FY 2014, \$650,000 of the endowment draw was unspent.

Earlier this year, efforts were initiated with the MA Attorney General's Office to address the impracticality of one of the largest trusts and the Library is currently working to provide information for a complaint that will ultimately need to be filed in Probate Court. In addition, under existing rules, the Library may seek approval of the Attorney General's office to modify restrictions on trust funds that have been existence more than twenty years and have a total value of less than \$75,000. Management stated that they were in the process of reviewing its trusts to determine which meet these standards.

Although remedy efforts are complex and time consuming, management's plan to address endowment restrictions should be formalized and implemented as soon as possible. In addition, interviews concluded that there is a lack of understanding about these trusts throughout the organization and improved staff communication and information access may facilitate maximizing use even within the restrictions. Finally, before project completion, management and the Board of Trustees might reconsider its endowment spending policy to leave amounts in managed assets rather than accumulating in the Library's money market accounts.

### **Improve Budget Visibility and Tracking, and More Heavily Involve Key Managers in Budgeting Process**

Despite the fact that the Library's costs are highly labor and facilities driven, there is little integration between BPL's strategic plan and the preparation of its annual operating budget. Annual operating budgets are prepared primarily by Finance staff without the input and engagement of key department managers in the process. Many key management employees have no idea what resources they have available from one year to the next and those that require visibility into their budget areas have questions about actual expenditures recorded. Operating budgets are prepared by Finance based





primarily on prior spending trends and any information they might require from senior leadership and selective others, without the benefit of interaction or involvement with many of the operating managers responsible for the area. As a result, no clear, ongoing reports are provided to managers with budget responsibility.

#### **Improve Customized and Integrated Management Reporting**

Overall management reporting and analysis of financial information, including operating budgets, is insufficient. A key responsibility of any Finance Function is to provide timely and accurate analysis of budgets, financial reports and operating trends in order to assist the President, the Board and senior executives in performing their responsibilities. There is an absence of customized reports comparing actual costs to budgets, prior years, etc. The lack of a system interface between PeopleSoft, the City's financial platform, and Polaris, limits cohesive management information. As noted, BPL maintains two separate business units – one for City funds and one for the Library's external funds. As a result of these reporting challenges and weaknesses, management seldom integrates these two business units to monitor individual, like expenditures. Efforts should be devoted to improve management reporting and analysis. Additional staffing may be required.

#### **Document Departmental Responsibilities**

There are few documented procedures and/or manuals detailing departmental responsibilities in the Finance group. Combined with a major dependency on several key staffing positions, significant exposure exists if certain staff members were to cease employment with the Library. Efforts should be taken to document all day-to-day accounting activities.

#### **Clarify Sources and Uses of Funds for the City of Boston, Forecast Future Needs**

Key City of Boston financial management employees would greatly benefit from a better understanding of the Library's external funds and how these external library funds might impact the level of funding the City of Boston must annually provide to the BPL.

#### **Streamline Purchase Order Process**

Although management is in the early stages of addressing the problem, interviews concluded that there is an inordinate amount of time and resources spent throughout the organization on purchase requisitions and purchase orders. Significant operating efficiencies could be achieved Library-wide if improvements were made. Further study is required here.



## Functional Analysis: Administration and Technology

This function is responsible for a wide variety of important operating and administrative departments, including (1) Human Resources, (2) Facilities, (3) Events, (4), Information Technology, (5) Major Projects and (6) Online & Web Services. The Library's Training Coordinator reports directly to the Director of this Division. Currently, there are 92 people in the Administration and Technology Division.

## Strengths

Areas of strength within Administration and Technology are identified in the Departmental Review section to which they relate (further in this section) but some areas of note include: recent and ongoing efforts to oversee new construction projects, the launch of a mobile tools, and the beta launch of a new statewide digital repository and portal for The Library for the Commonwealth.

## Major Construction Projects

New construction projects are successfully executed with well-planned programming and design components. Working closely with City of Boston's Project & Construction Management Department and others, BPL management takes the lead by integrating internal and community input to carefully design its newly created spaces ensuring they will support current and changing library needs by specific demographic groups. Newly designed buildings, at Copley as well as at the branches, are well-designed to deliver on a 21st century library vision.

The successful on-time completion of phase 1 of the Johnson building renovation is a testament to the Library's property and construction project management skills. The master planning process for this project began in 2012. Following nearly a year of master planning, construction began in the fall of 2013 and the Johnson building 2<sup>nd</sup> floor was opened to the public on February 21, 2015. The primary focus for this new space was the creation of zones for Teens and Children. Additionally, there is a new information center prominently located in the heart of the renovated space. The newly created space is magnificent and takes full advantage of the latest technology and includes ample program space for books and media, early literacy and story time areas. The new Teen area has dedicated space for books, a digital lab, media lounge and study areas.

Management's abilities in design and construction management are applied throughout the branch network as well. The new East Boston branch was opened in November 2013 and has received positive reviews by all constituencies. The renovation of the Jamaica Plain branch is currently in its programming and design phase. Some of the construction work is funded and more interaction with the City Departments is planned. As with the Johnson renovation and new East Boston branch, the City's Project and Construction Management Office will be responsible for the actual construction. Library management will have oversight and responsibility for design approval, special equipment, IT equipment and moving costs.

City Property Management officials confirmed that the Library management team was good at articulating vision, thorough and one of the more skilled departments within the City. These qualifications and recent experiences with successful projects should serve the public and the City well as future projects are undertaken.



## Opportunities

High priority areas of opportunity are denoted with the Chrysalis Management symbol for transformation [▲▲], are addressed in detail and include exploration of situation, substantiation, recommendations, and benefits.

### ▲▲ Hiring

**Situation:** The hiring process for filling new and replacement positions at the Boston Public Library consumes an excessive amount of time and resources and the practice negatively impacts BPL's ability to deliver quality services and programs to its patrons. Together, the Boston Public Library and the City of Boston should take steps to streamline and improve the process.

Following BPL review, a request to post a replacement or new position is sent to the City of Boston's Personnel Review Committee (PRC) for approval. Following PRC approval, the position is posted internally for periods required by collective bargaining agreements and then externally on selected websites. Interested and qualified candidates are then identified, screened and interviewed by the hiring manager and a preferred candidate is selected.

The candidate's information must then sent back to the PRC for final review and approval before a final, fully approved offer can be made. If for whatever reason the candidate cannot accept the position, a new posting request is required from the PRC and the process begins again.

**Substantiation:** Our review of the January 2015 vacancy report showed that largely as a result of the above noted process there were in excess of sixty unfilled positions throughout the Library, or the equivalent of 13% of BPL's total staffing needs. HR staff confirmed that a high level of open positions was not unusual. Many new and replacement positions had remained unfilled for months and employees expressed frustration over losing good candidates to competitive positions as a direct result of the protracted process.

Given the length of the PRC final approval process, it is necessary for BPL management to continually communicate with their final candidates to insure they remain interested in the position and, on occasion, qualified candidates are lost because the process simply takes too long.

**Recommendations (short term):** Although the PRC process is a cost control mechanism, steps should be taken to reduce the complexity and timeframes involved in the process. Consideration should be given to the following:

- Eliminate multiple PRC approvals: Following initial PRC approval, allow the Library to make revisions to job titles and certain job properties without requesting a second PRC approval. Currently, the PRC requires that their approval process begin again when this happens.
- Allow salary offer approvals within ranges so reasonable negotiation can take place without retracing the process.
- Streamline the process of posting openings on the City's web-site: Four approvals are currently required to have an approved position posted on the City's web-site. This process can sometimes take several days.
- Allow managers and supervisors access to PeopleSoft HCM recruitment module to review their own applicant pools directly.



**Recommendations (medium term):**

- Take steps to streamline the electronic process for approvals.

**Benefits:**

- **Improved organizational effectiveness** – Reducing the constant high number of open positions will have a positive long-term impact on the Library’s ability to deliver quality services to the public.
- **Improved productivity** – open positions reflect lost productivity, unnecessary or repetitive approvals represent wasted staff time which could be productively spent elsewhere.
- **Higher quality staff hires** – expediting the process will help to insure that preferred candidates are hired.

## Employee Performance Management

**Situation:** The current BPL performance management system lacks evaluation and rating consistency, does not provide for clear skills assessment and training, and is not regularly applied. Although access was not granted to individual performance reviews, it is apparent from the interviews conducted that that the performance appraisal process within BPL can be improved. As a general matter, performance reviews should provide a way to measure and improve employee contribution and increase employees’ future potential and value. It is the framework within which most organizations provide feedback, understand training needs and clarify roles and responsibilities for employees. The performance review process at the BPL is falling short of achieving these objectives. In addition, employee training and professional development programs are insufficient to insure that new skills are developed and staff are able to learn about best practices in their areas.

**Substantiation:** Although interviews concluded that frequency of performance reviews has improved in the past few years, most staff agreed that the process is inconsistent, often not done on a timely basis, and that its usefulness could be improved. Data supports that performance reviews were not completed on time for over one-half of BPL staff in the last year and 40% were not completed at all. Currently, BPL uses four different forms for performance appraisals, one each for members of the two unions, one for exempt staff and one for management. The forms for the unions were last updated in July 2000. Interviews concluded that there is a general lack of accountability throughout all levels of the organization and that it was difficult to discipline staff (even for clear offenses) and time consuming to terminate employees for poor performance.

Additionally, training and professional development budgets, existing programs and management support are insufficient for them to have a meaningful, positive impact on the Library’s long-term performance. The City’s Office of Labor Relations regularly conducts a Management Certification Program. BPL’s new managers and others are recommended to attend the program, which runs once weekly for five weeks. From 2011 through 2014, forty-five managers and supervisors from the BPL attended the program. Interviews conducted supported that employees found it difficult to get scheduling availability to attend this program. In addition, in FY 2014, expenses for professional conferences, meetings and associated travel totaled \$74,000 and approximately \$20,000 was budgeted for internal programs overseen by the Library’s Training Coordinator. These training and professional development efforts total \$94,000 in FY



2014 or under \$200 per employee. Recent publications on training and development report that U.S. companies spend, on average, \$1,200 per employee annually.<sup>29</sup> Identifying resources to reduce this gap would help to improve staff skills.

Note that professional development investment for long-tenure employees is an especially good investment. 29% of BPL employees will serve the BPL for 25 years or more. These high tenure employees each represent a BPL investment of just under \$2M over their lifetime of service<sup>30</sup>. Investing in ongoing professional development ensures these employees can contribute at the highest possible level for the benefit of BPL patrons. The unusually long tenure of BPL employees means that very little investment in professional development is wasted with employee attrition.

Technology skills across the organization appear generally weak. Many lack basic technology skills and are unaware of technologies which are in broad use and could support their ability to better serve patrons. Increased professional development opportunities could help to address this weakness and minimum knowledge standards should be specified and managed.

As discussed, a material amount of staff time in all departments throughout the organization is devoted to the resolution of supervisor/subordinate and labor relations matters. An incremental investment in basic supervisory skills, e.g. communication, leadership, mentoring and coaching, team building, ongoing support and feedback, etc. would reduce the time devoted to these matters and potentially decrease the number of management/union problems.

#### Recommendations (short term):

- Employee performance management, training and professional development needs to be a priority for the BPL. Executive leadership must commit to defining a reasonable number of measurable objectives, set high standards for performance throughout the organization and hold employees accountable to the achievement of mutually-agreed upon objectives.
- Review and modify the current performance appraisal process and make the process mandatory for all employees.
- Additional funds should be identified and prioritized to support new professional development and training efforts, particularly programs to improve general management and technology skills.

#### Benefits:

- **Improved organizational effectiveness** – insure that new staff skills are developed and best practices are learned and applied within BPL.
- **Reduction in time spent on non-value added activities** - improved supervisory skills would reduce the unproductive time currently devoted to labor/management issues.
- **Removal of underperformers** - an improved performance appraisal process will ensure accountability throughout the organization and ensure staff performs at or above standards.
- **Retention of high performers** - professional development opportunities improve employee retention.

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<sup>29</sup> American Society of Training and Development: <http://www.trainingmag.com/2013-training-industry-report>; Bersin by Deloitte: [The Corporate Learning Factbook 2014](#)

<sup>30</sup> \$68,000 average FTE salary and benefits \* 25 years = \$1.7M

## Space Rationalization

**Situation:** There is a potentially significant long-term opportunity to rationalize existing, non-public space throughout the main library at Copley, but particularly in the Johnson Building's upper floors. Open space created in Copley by a well thought out, long-term plan could be repurposed into additional public space for the Library's programs, new community gathering centers, space for other City of Boston Departments and/or a potentially attractive commercial real estate opportunity. Further architectural and engineering review will be required and an investment will be needed.

**Substantiation:** Combined, the McKim and Johnson buildings in Copley Square contain 930,000 square feet of space. Although quality public space is currently available for reading, computer use, reference activities, special collections viewing, and programs, significant interior (non-public) space is devoted to the storage of books, documents and periodicals as well as space for staff offices, work areas, staff facilities, meeting rooms, computer and mechanical equipment and other back office needs. Currently, approximately 150,000 square feet of space in Johnson alone is dedicated to the storage of old books (some of which have already been digitized), old periodicals, old government documents and other items that are rarely requested or used by the public. With some minor exceptions, including critical mechanical equipment, virtually all the space on floors four through seven in the Johnson Building contain stacks upon stacks of books and other items. Although further study is required, it is not unreasonable to assume that half (or more) of the material on Johnson's upper floors could be stored more cost-effectively at an off-site location.

In general, throughout McKim and Johnson, staff offices that are considerably larger than required. Many BPL staff offices are private and are twice the size of what is considered standard staff space by most US companies. In addition, many of the open work spaces have more than ample capacity and considerable unused square footage. Although many of these office areas and open spaces were designed and built this way many years ago, over time it would be prudent for management to review office and work space requirements for current staff and, if economical, change configurations to free up additional space.

Finally, several departments and functions occupy space that could possibly be moved to other less valuable space within the building or be moved offsite. For example, the Technical Services group is currently allocated approximately 12,000 sq. ft. on the 3<sup>rd</sup> floor of the Johnson Building on Boylston Street. Some functions performed, while critical to the Library's operations, may not need to occupy prime space in any library. Another example is Information Technology's Computer room, which houses the Library's servers, electronic, telecommunications and related IT equipment. Significant open space currently exists and could increase even more as the Library's business continuity plan is implemented.

### **Recommendation (medium term):**

- Although BPL's FY 2016 capital plan contains \$100,000 to address needed climate and electrical needs, management should prioritize this project in order to optimize the existing space at the Archival Center in West Roxbury. There is currently 58,000 sf of space currently available to the BPL at this facility. Two-thirds (40,000 sf) is already well-organized for high-density storage and is climate controlled. The remaining space (18,000 sf) requires investment and commitment in order to upgrade, organize, store, and catalogue items. Also, nearly 2,000 sf of that space is presently being used by another City department. Despite repeated requests by the Technical Services group over two years,



removal of these items have not been addressed. With additional funding for organization and cataloging, aggressively pursuing this project and moving rarely used items from Copley to the Archival Center will start the process of freeing up valuable space at Copley.

**Recommendation (long term):**

- BPL should consider developing a long-term plan to free up valuable space at Copley by (1) relocating infrequently used books and other items currently stored at Copley to less expensive off-site locations – even beyond the space currently available in West Roxbury, (2) reducing the size of existing staff office spaces and common/work areas in both the McKim and Johnson Buildings and (3) relocating functions where co-location is not necessary to more suitable areas within the main library and/or potentially offsite.

**Benefits:**

**More effective utilization of valuable space:** BPL's interior, non-public space throughout Copley is not being used effectively at a time when neighboring Back Bay market values and property assessments are at an all-time high. Steps should be taken, over time, to utilize both storage and staff space more effectively for either expanded public space (new Library programs, new community gathering centers, space for other City of Boston Departments) and/or a commercial real estate opportunity which would yield a recurring revenue stream.

**Value estimation: \$0.5M - \$1.5M in new and recurring revenues following one-time construction and space consolidation costs.**

Current costs for rental office space in Boston's Back Bay range from \$45.00 to \$50.00 per square foot, while rents for alternative storage space in non-downtown locations or neighboring areas range anywhere from \$10.00 to \$15.00 per square foot. With this differential, even substantial one-time moving costs for planning, tenant allowances, required moves and build-out of the new space are easily paid back in a few years, leaving a \$25.00 to \$35.00 per square foot perpetual revenue opportunity. Hypothetically, assuming 25,000 sq. ft. were freed up by BPL (just one-sixth of the current space used to store books), well in excess of \$.5 million annually of new net revenue could be generated following the pay-back of the one-time costs. If one half of the current book storage space were to be freed up, \$1.5M in revenue could be generated.



## Technology Leverage

**Situation:** BPL's IT Department is a back-office function and is not being used strategically. The department's primary focus is operating, maintaining and upgrading existing hardware and supporting the computing needs of new areas and existing locations. IT is not proactively working with individual user departments to search for ways to apply technology in ways that will improve operations. Because technology skills across the employee base at the BPL are generally significantly lagging, there is a notable competency gap for understanding the space where process and technology come together. This, coupled with a weakness in implementation competencies across the organization, results in an organization which is not particularly technology-enabled.

**Substantiation:** At the Boston Public Library, user departments are taking the lead identifying new applications and IT assists primarily in implementation. The library's new collection management software (TMS) installation is an example of an application that was department led and failed to achieve desired objectives. Other than standard software upgrades for Microsoft windows and Office applications, IT is not supporting or assisting user departments to identify new or updated applications that will improve operations. One example of this failure is Maximo, the software used by the institution to record and monitor the status of all work requests. This resource has not been updated in over a decade.

### **Recommendation (medium term):**

- BPL's IT group should develop a strategic capability of working closely with major departments to better understand their business processes and needs. IT should help to identify value-added technology solutions and support user departments through installation.
- Leaders across the organization should be encouraged to improve their knowledge of emerging technologies within and outside the industry
- Efforts should be undertaken to reduce the amount of manual tracking and reporting by implementing better process-enabling technologies and then running system-generated reports to capture key data points. Potential areas for improved technology support are: reference request queue management and tracking (phone, email, mail, in person), Frequently Asked Questions (FAQ) databases, facilities work order system, and special collections inventory management.

### **Benefits:**

- **Significantly increased operating efficiency at lower costs:** Effective IT solutions can increase productivity by allowing employees to process more work in a shorter period of time, eliminate the need to additional staff and/or reduce current staffing levels.
- **Better service:** Value-added information technology systems can improve the on-line and in-person patron experience.
- **Improved decision making:** Information technology systems can make data analysis and storage easier allowing for improved management information and resulting decisions.
- **Higher job satisfaction:** The removal of repetitive and mundane tasks can significantly improve job satisfaction and employee retention levels.
- **Reduction in errors:** Reducing manual spreadsheet data entry and combination will reduce the likelihood of human error in data capture and manipulation.





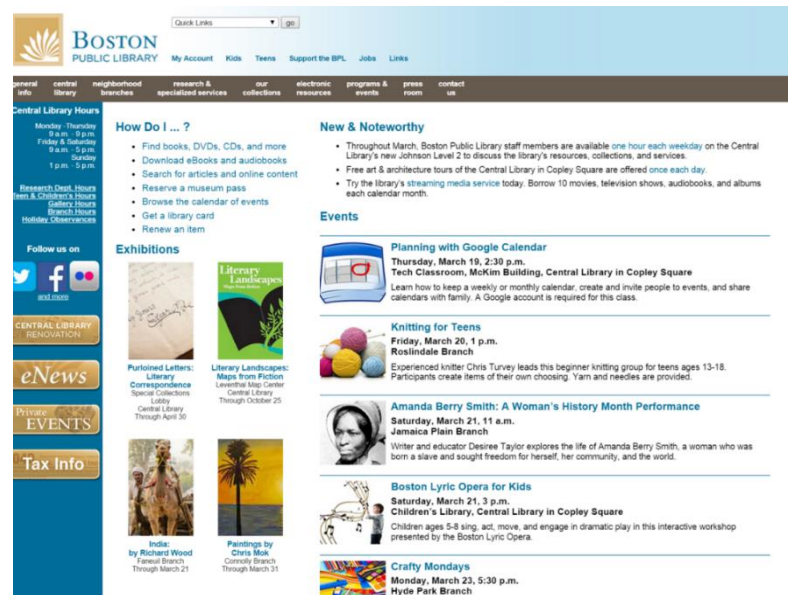
## Website Design and Implementation

**Situation:** The current BPL website has an unsophisticated and visually outdated design, and a navigation schema built around the library's organizational structure. This is in stark contrast to designing the site around the user and the action he or she wishes to transact on the site.

### Substantiation:

The BPL website lacks the professionalism and polish of other library sites, is too text-heavy, and is organized around BPL departments which may not lead to an intuitive navigation structure for users. When you go a level or two from the home page, the content looks unfinished and haphazardly positioned on the page with limited user context.

In contrast, peer library sites follow more current web design standards including more imagery and action-based navigation schema that focuses on who a visitor is and what he or she wants to DO on the site.



### Recommendation (medium term):

- Reposition ownership of the website from Administration & Technology to Communications in order to migrate the focus away from infrastructure and towards user engagement.
- Give authority for ongoing structure and design of active content squarely to the Communications team so that the design and navigation structure remains streamlined over time and focus remains on usability, branding, navigability, services, and communication.
- Focus for the technology team should pertain mainly to supporting security, reliability, and technical integration of online tools.
- Design and build a new site where the user is at the center of the design and usability.



**Benefits:**

- **Reduce staff burden** – As online resources are made more evident, some percentage of patrons will elect self-service models over one-on-one librarian support; librarians who work with patrons to understand resources available line may be more holistically able to meet patron needs while simultaneously reducing future staff-directed support.
- **Increase REACH** – Key metrics show that demand for online service is growing, the more intuitive and functional the website is, the more patrons can be reached and served online. Online service delivery is a key component of the library’s offering.
- **Market cost effectively** – BPL.org is the primary information hub for what is happening at the BPL, it serves as a cost effective marketing tool.



## Departmental Review - Administration and Technology

### Human Resources

When fully staffed<sup>31</sup> the HR group contains five employees. In addition to the Director, the group includes an Assistant HR Manager, an HR administrative position and two Time and Labor clerks that have responsibility for time management and various payroll functions. Although efficiency opportunities exist in time collection and data entry, as discussed below, the current processes and procedures were reviewed and considered adequate.

#### **Although Understaffed, General Practices Comply With Requirements**

Understandably, the Library's HR group relies heavily on a number of City Departments for advice and support on employee benefit matters, compliance, attendance management and labor relations. As noted, the HR Department was not fully staffed during our work. However, the Assistant HR Manager worked extraordinarily hard to fulfill not only her own job responsibilities but many of the Director's. Although the City's HR Office is responsible for overseeing all elements of employee benefits, the BPL Human Resources group is adequately handling first level staff questions re: benefits, including the coordination of open enrollment meetings. Multiple interviews were conducted with the Assistant HR Manager and the HR Office provided an abundance of requested personnel data regarding compensation, vacation, sick time and other employee benefits. Policies and procedures in these areas, including required CORI checks for staff, were discussed and are appropriate. Hiring practices were also assessed and deemed in keeping with the BPL's support of maintaining a diverse work force.

#### **Residency Requirement Limits Potential Candidate Pool**

All Boston Public Library employees, and others employed by the City, must be residents of the City of Boston. Certain unionized members are exempt from the requirement. Annually on February 1, all employees must file a certificate of residency and sufficient documentation with their respective department heads. Working with department managers, BPL's HR Department responsibly oversees this requirement. BPL is in compliance with this policy. It should be noted that this requirement limits the potential pool of qualified candidates, especially for many of the organization's highly specialized positions and given the high cost of real estate in the city of Boston may make recruitment of young professionals difficult.

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<sup>31</sup> The Human Resources Department had a leadership gap while this study was underway as the former Director resigned in November 2014 and the new HR director was scheduled to start in April 2015.

**Training and Development is Disproportionately Important in Organizations with Low Turnover/ High Tenure as Outside Learning is Less Frequently Injected through Hiring**

Tenure of BPL Staff	
Years of Tenure	% of Staff
30 Plus	14%
25 to 30	15%
20 to 25	6%
15 to 20	14%
10 to 15	15%
Under 10	37%

Almost 30% of Staff Have Tenure in Excess of 25 Years (right)

Categories	Age	Public Sector	BPL Staff	Difference
Millennials	(18-33)	17%	19%	2%
Generation X	(34-45)	27%	21%	-6%
Young Boomers	(46-55)	30%	25%	-5%
Older Boomers	(56-64)	20%	27%	7%
Silent Generation	(65+)	6%	9%	3%

The BPL employs fewer than typical employees between the age of 34-55 and greater than typical employees over the age of 56 when compared to the typical public sector profile.<sup>32</sup>

**Opportunities**

**Increase Activity in Traditional HR Employee Performance Management Functions**

Interviews concluded that an estimated 75% of the HR Director’s time, when on staff, is devoted to employee and labor relations matters. This burden leaves little time for recruiting, applicant screening, initial interviewing, onboarding, training and development support, performance monitoring and other more traditional, value-added HR responsibilities. BPL executive leadership should consider adding resources to the HR Department for these important needs. This issue is addressed more fully in Executive Leadership section of this report.

**Simplify the Payroll Process**

An opportunity exists within BPL to simplify the payroll process. Although the complication is mostly a consequence of collective bargaining agreements, both management and unions should strive to find ways to streamline the overall process to make it more efficient. A new, electronic process for time management is planned to be implemented by the City in FY 2016. This change will have a positive impact on the BPL. Currently, BPL’s HR Department has two staff members who spend approximately 50% of their time on timecard collection, review and data entry, and sorting paper pay stubs for distribution to

<sup>32</sup> International Public Management Association: [http://ipma-hr.org/files/surveys/SneakPeak\\_infographic\\_140708.pdf](http://ipma-hr.org/files/surveys/SneakPeak_infographic_140708.pdf)



over 90% of BPL staff. Implementation of this system, including the elimination of paper pay stubs, will significantly reduce this work. Finally, the BPL should move to bi-weekly payroll (instead of weekly) for all employees as soon as feasible to improve operating efficiency.

### **Support Improvements in Director Competencies with Targeted Professional Development**

A review of senior management performance objectives underlined the limited prioritization in goal setting, lack of timeline management, and limited measurable accountability. While it would be typical to see as many as five high priority measurable and time specific objectives for each senior member of an organization, the objectives at the BPL were very broad and far-reaching and were approached almost as job descriptions rather than focused and measurable annual objectives. The director competencies<sup>33</sup> which will require further development in the executive leadership team are managerial courage and strategic resource management. These two competencies tie in strongly with prioritization and accountability.

### **Update Position Descriptions, Limit Union Involvement Where Not Required**

Although only a small number of position descriptions were requested and reviewed, Human Resources staff estimated that since 2008 approximately 75% of position descriptions have been or are in the process of being reviewed. However, our interviews concluded that this was an ongoing and time consuming process which should be streamlined for increased efficiency and effectiveness. The Library's bargaining units are intimately involved in position review and efforts should be undertaken to streamline this process.

### **Identify Suitable Roles for Volunteers, Expand and Improve Volunteer Program**

In addition, consideration should be given to improving volunteer programs within the library in ways that can be supported by the unions. A robust volunteer program exists in support of the art and architecture tours, other areas within the library could benefit from similar volunteer support.

## **Facilities**

The Facilities Department is managed by the Superintendent of Library Buildings. Although a narrower organization is appropriately being considered, the Superintendent currently has eight direct reports including: a Maintenance Services Manager, a Security Services Manager, a Shipping and Receiving Supervisor, an administrative staff person as well as individual supervisors of Library Laborers, Carpenters and Painters. The Superintendent also oversees employees of an out-sourced company responsible for the mechanical systems, electrical equipment and plumbing, i.e. MEP, support. Given the nature and scope of the Department's responsibilities, some portion of facilities personnel is on sight at the Copley Library at all times.

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<sup>33</sup> Director Competencies, as defined in the BPL's June 2009 Director Competency Framework include: Customer Focus, Integrity and Trust, Vision and Purpose, People and Relationship Management, Managerial Courage, and Strategic Resource Management.

### Strengths:

- BPL greatly benefits from the knowledge, skills and experiences of its long-term Facilities managers, who understand the Library's building systems and their requirements. Staff and outsourced support have many required licenses.
- BPL's management is committed to energy conservation as evidenced by the successful implementation of a series of improvement projects throughout the system. Building management systems have been installed in many locations to monitor, control and manage energy usage. Electricity consumption was reportedly reduced by 26% between FY08 and FY11.
- BPL staff was successful at opening Copley and all of its branches on scheduled times in February 2015 despite adverse weather conditions. The Facilities group maximized existing staff and some new equipment to open all buildings on time, as scheduled.
- Although a convincing need for additional operating resources exists, management has demonstrated an ability to manage operational costs within existing budget levels.
- A renewed commitment to security is demonstrated with the recent hire of a qualified Manager of Security Services.

### Opportunities:

#### **Upgrade Work Order Management System, Processes, and Communication**

The current work order management system and associated processes were installed nearly a decade ago; neither serves the institution well and both cause frustrations amongst staff throughout the Library. Review of the current system and follow-on discussion concluded that there were approximately 1,400 cumulative, uncompleted work requests. Although management stated that nearly all had in fact been addressed, work orders were not closed in the system. As originally planned, the system was intended to track, record and schedule routine equipment maintenance. These functions are not being used at all. Although submitted work requests are reviewed daily and facility management assigns priority and follow-up, the requesting staff member is not informed of the scheduling or progress. Even before a new system is implemented, improved follow-up communication with the department is required.

A need for a more organized and systematic approach to address system-wide maintenance, repair and cleaning should be a high priority for the Library. Although additional budget support and an institutional commitment will be necessary, facilities management needs to transition to a new work management system and follow-up with necessary commitment, staff support and training.

#### **Review and Potentially Increase Custodial Staffing, Evaluate Benefits and Disadvantages of Outsourcing**

Custodial resources dedicated to the Library's branches should be reviewed and potentially increased. With 18 custodians responsible for the 24 branches, current staffing levels prevent many branches from being cleaned well on a daily basis. Although roving custodians exist, a number of branches open on Monday morning without the benefit of any custodial support following busy weekend operational hours. Branch custodial support is further compromised when assigned personnel are absent due to vacation, personal leave and sick time. Security services and mechanical, electrical and plumbing support are outsourced by the Library and have provided a number of operating advantages. However, custodial



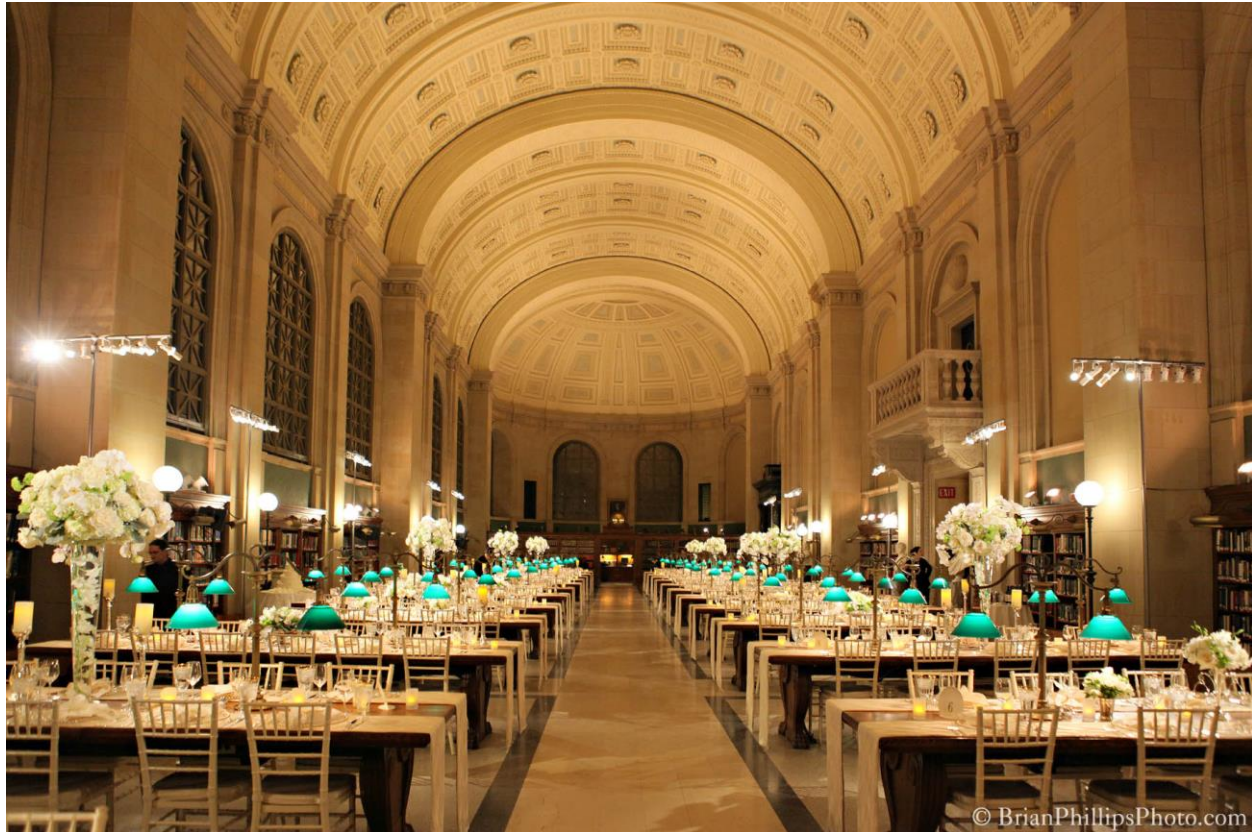
functions are currently performed by Library employees. Management should analyze the operational and financial advantages/disadvantages of outsourcing this function at the branch level in particular.

Consideration should be given to allowing branch librarians to provide direction to custodians with a potential matrix reporting structure. Current reporting structures limit branch leadership's ability to prioritize custodial activities or address underperformance and availability issues. This matrix reporting structure tends to be especially important for personnel working remotely from the primary reporting structure.

### **Evaluate Potential for Improved Security**

Management agrees that security oversight could be improved throughout the Library, with particular attention to special collections and rare books. Although recent improvements have been implemented, exposures to public and staff theft still exist. Management should consider a security monitoring system with live camera feeds as BPL's current system records videos at multiple locations and is only reviewed after an issue occurs. Although the Manager of Security Services is a Library employee, all on-site security staff are employees of an outsourced company. The contract for this service expires June 30, 2015.





## Events

The main Library in Copley Square is a unique and popular event venue in the City of Boston. Although not all rooms or areas of the facility are currently available during the renovation of the Johnson Building, when fully functioning the Boston Public Library can offer up to 46,000 square feet of potential event space. The McKim building can be rented as a whole and has a number of venues, including Bates Hall, The Abbey Room, The Courtyard, De Chavannes Gallery and the Boylston Room, that can be rented individually or in combination with one another. Up to 1,200 guests could be accommodated at one time if the McKim Building was rented in its entirety.

Library programs and Library-related events take precedence over external event bookings so nearly all major events are held when the Library is closed, which for the McKim and Johnson buildings is 9:00 PM Monday through Thursday and 5:00 PM on Fridays, Saturdays and Sundays. The Library also has a number of conference rooms in Copley and at the branches that are made available to private organizations, community groups and others for lectures and meetings.

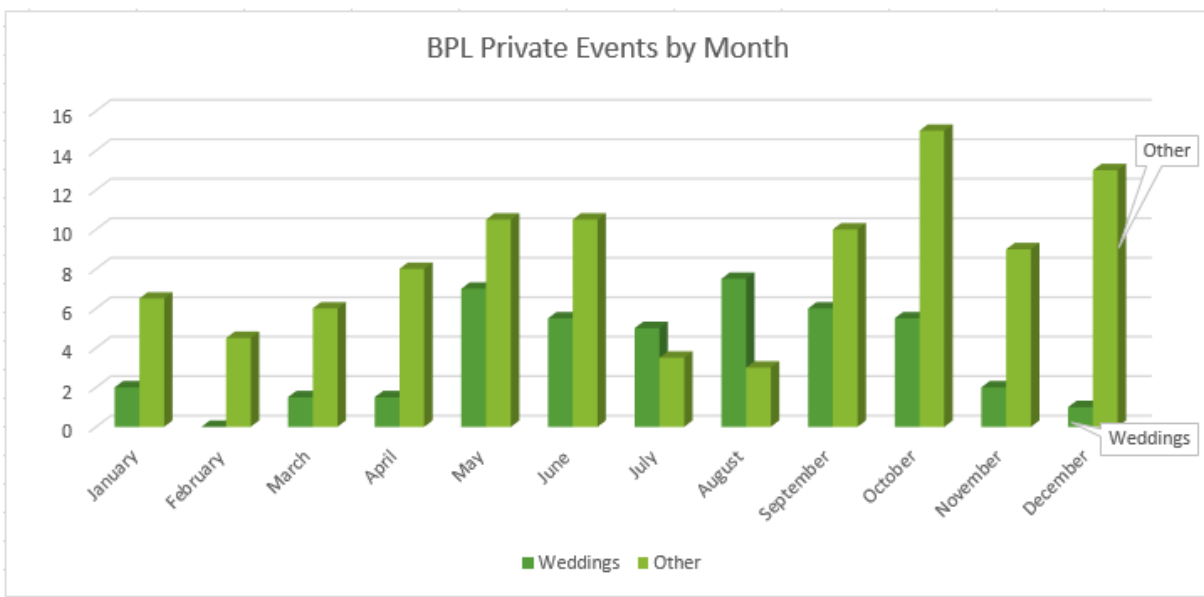
For events that require food and/or beverages at the Copley branch, the Library works with an in-house, independent caterer, currently The Catered Affair, which will contract with clients for the space, help to design a program, menu, bar service and equipment rental and, in coordination with Library Facility staff, will execute the event. The caterer also rents space from the Library to provide food and beverages in the Café and Tea Room. For external events, the Catered Affair is responsible for client billing, retains all revenue and then pays the Library directly for the room rental fee and a commission on the food portion of the event, a common model for these arrangements.





Although the Library incurs substantial direct costs for Events staff, security and facilities support, most of this is billed to the caterer and the client, revenues associated with events and room rentals have grown considerably over the past several years. Since FY 2010, the combination of room rentals, including the Café and Tea Room, and commissions has increase by 60% to \$1.4 million, despite the disruption caused by the start of the Johnson Building renovation. After costs, BPL’s net revenue has grown similarly, from \$0.6 million in FY 2011 to \$0.8 million in FY 2014.

Over the past several years, on average 150 private external events have been held at the Boston Public Library. The distribution of events by month is shown in the bar graph below.



BPL’s Events Department currently consists of three employees whose primary responsibilities include working with The Catered Affair to market the Library’s private event venues and to interface with potential clients. Department staff also coordinates the Library events calendar and organizes the availability of rooms and library areas for all internal meetings, lectures, workshops, programs, author talks and the like. In excess of 2,000 area and room reservations are made annually, including nearly 400 per year that are made available to not-for-profit organizations.



### Strengths:

- Success in marketing the Boston Public Library as an upscale, desirable location for corporate and social events, including weddings. Research has concluded that the BPL is well respected throughout events and catering associations in the City of Boston.
- Increasing the operating revenue associated with private events, particularly for food commissions. In January 2012, the contract with the caterer was amended to exclude beverages from the calculation of BPL's commission from events. As a result of successful marketing and venue positioning, BPL's revenues from food commissions have increase three-fold since FY 2010.

### Opportunities:

#### **Accelerate Contract Review to Ensure Continued Motivation for Events Booked Beyond Current Expiration Date**

It is important for BPL management to accelerate the completion of the contract review currently underway to stem future revenue losses and maximize the benefit of the events operation. The current agreement with the Catered Affair expired in mid-2014 and has been extended twice for one year periods running currently through June 2016. Understandably, the current caterer is reluctant to invest in the marketing of future events in light of the possibility the will not prevail in the contract review process and many private events, including weddings, are planned a year or more in advance. The uncertainty has also prevented the caterer from actively marketing newly created event space in the Johnson Building. The contract review process should be accelerated and completed as soon as possible and consideration should be given to create an appropriate "tail" in the contract which ensures the chosen caterer will be fully motivated to secure customers for even space through the duration of the contract.

#### **Consider Increasing Space Made Available for Revenue Generating Events Booking**

Working with the in-house caterer, BPL management should review the current restrictions placed on event bookings to potentially increase event-related revenue. Understandably, it is important to management and certain public that private events do not prevent access to Library rooms and facilities during operating hours. As a result, strict rules govern when the outsourced caterer can market the facility. However, an opportunity may exist to increase event-related revenues if some of those restrictions were modified without material impact on public access, e. g. holding small evening events or meetings in Library areas not used frequently by the public. BPL management should analyze its recent capacity availability for meeting/ event spaces to ensure it is not over-withholding space for free use at the expense of bringing in incremental events revenue that could then support further expansion of programs and services to the public.

In FY 2014, the average profit margin per event held at the Library was \$5,200, after payment of all incremental costs for event-related payroll, custodian, HVAC and security charges. Ample conference room and venue capacity exists well beyond the 150 events held annually and interviews concluded that the existing outside caterer has the willingness and capability to hold move events. Additional external funds of \$100,000 to support program enhancement could be generated with a modest (13%) increase in outside private events that could potentially result from modifications to current restrictions.



## Information Technology

BPL's Information Technology (IT) Department's primary responsibility is to ensure a functioning, stable and optimal infrastructure, application platform and end-user computing experience for staff, the public and online users across the whole of the Boston Public Library's system. The department provides technical support for all of BPL's major applications and oversees all of BPL's computing infrastructure, e.g. servers, network, laptops, personal computers, telecommunications equipment, copiers and printers. The IT Department maintains an internal network of 500 public desktops, 250 lendable laptops, over 400 staff computers and telephones, 135 tablets, 60 copiers, 300 individual copiers and networking equipment, operating systems and servers that tie them together.

Direct reports to the IT Director include heads of the following groups: Network, Server, Applications, Help Desk and Tech Central. The Help Desk group supports the computing needs of all BPL employees in Copley and throughout its branches. The Tech Group provides computer and technology training workshops to patrons at many BPL locations. The primary role of the Applications group is to support and maintain Polaris, its integrated library system. The IT department is also responsible for regularly upgrading all of BPL's software. The IT group recently added a software maintenance plan to insure that Microsoft Windows and Office are on the latest versions.

### Strengths:

- The Department responsibly supports the basic computing needs of the Boston Public Library. Although improvements can be made, user departments are generally satisfied with the services and support received from the group.
- The IT Department was responsible for the recent successful Implementation of Pay for Print, a new system that provides print and scan demand services to patrons.
- The IT Department played an important role in the successful completion and opening of the Johnson building in February. Working with other departments, IT was responsible for specifying all computer equipment, audio visual, digital signage, wire access points and software.
- Effectively utilizing available budgeted resources, it appears that IT regularly upgrades and replaces computing equipment and software used throughout the Library. Although a complete, updated inventory list was unavailable and should be addressed, BPL's stated policy is to upgrade all staff and public computing equipment every three to five years.

### Opportunities:

#### Complete a Disaster Recovery Assessment and Plan

Although a full back-up and emergency planning assessment was not intended for this project, interviews indicate that the BPL would benefit from such an evaluation. Working with the City of Boston, BPL is in the early stages of a two-phase, multi-year effort to mirror key components, including Polaris, website and email. Consideration should be given to putting this project on an accelerated track. Currently, if Polaris went offline, the BPL would be unable to do online check out anywhere and would be required to switch to offline or paper check outs. This occurred one time in the past five years due to a major power outage and it took 1.5 days for the system to be restored. All data systems are reportedly backed up, the BPL uses the city's secondary data center but they do not have the ability for instantaneous switch-over.

#### Improve Help Desk Management of User Requests



BPL's Help Desk group consists of five staff members, including its manager. Currently, users needing support either call the Help Desk extension or go to Help Desk Software to create a ticket. BPL's current system needs to be upgraded or replaced. Our interviews concluded that management of user requests is challenging, reporting is lacking and response times are poor. Immediate efforts to address this weakness are needed.

### **Identify and Implement Process-enabling Technologies**

Efforts should be undertaken to identify places where technology implementation can improve efficiency of processes and/or reduce manual capture and manipulation of information. Two very obvious examples are the use of remote scanners and an upgrade to the visitor count system. Immediate implementation of remote scanners at all locations would dramatically improve collection development and maintenance efforts, reduce manual movement of materials, and promote system-integrated capture of specific books used in-house. Upgrading the current visitor count software and/or hardware would likely eliminate the need for manual downloading of data along with the manual manipulation of data which, as indicated in staff interviews, makes this data inaccurate.

## **Major Projects**

The Project Management Office was formed two years ago, primarily in anticipation of the major construction planned for the Johnson Building. The office is currently staffed with a Major Projects Program Manager and one additional direct report. A non-permanent technical coordinator was also added to support recent efforts. The Library's Major Projects group, including executive leadership, works closely with the City's Project and Construction Management Department and is primarily responsible for representing the Library's interests in all major construction work, coordinating required moves with all Library Departments and overseeing specific portions, e.g. moving costs, furniture, IT and other equipment, of a project's overall capital budget. The department also works closely with Facilities and the Business Office addressing critical capital needs throughout the branch system.

### **Strengths:**

- As outlined earlier, recent Boston Public Library construction projects have been successfully executed with well-planned programming and design components. Although this appears to be a Library-wide, as well as a City of Boston strength, the Major Projects Group has the qualifications and experiences to execute well and has already successfully completed several significant projects.
- Management annually updates a 5-year capital plan detailing desired new and renovation projects and all other capital expenditures. A Branch Facilities review was recently completed in order to determine if the existing branches were aligned properly with the Compass principles. A follow-on effort to quantify the estimated infrastructure improvements and deferred maintenance is planned.



## Opportunities:

### **Improved Prioritization Should Be Incorporated into the Capital Plan**

BPL's current 5-year capital project plan details projects, estimated costs and phasing. The plan is updated annually during the budget planning process. The recent plan provides an update on projects that have been in the Library's capital plan in prior years, as well as a listing of new capital project requests. The plan is an alphabetical listing of all projects, both current and new, and does not prioritize any of the new projects. Although project funding will be determined in large part by other City priorities and workload, the documented plan would benefit from a grouping of high priority to low priority needs. Details of BPL's currently authorized capital projects are included in the appendix.

Of particular note, new projects for FY 2016 (improvements to Pallet Room and other spaces at West Roxbury's Archives Building) and FY 2018 (planning to quantify future BPL space needs beyond the existing footprint) should be given higher priority in light of the opportunity to rationalize space in Copley Square, as discussed in the Facilities Function Review of this report.

### **A Long-Term Capital Plan Should Be Drafted**

Although 5-year capital plans are currently requested by the City, consideration should be given to creating a longer-term, perhaps 10-year, system reinvestment plan that would take into account all of the building renovation, including deferred maintenance, which will likely need to be addressed at some point during that time frame. During our interviews, Library staff and City officials discussed the benefit of longer-term capital planning. A longer-term plan could be updated annually with new information, allowing BPL management and the City to make better near-term decisions about project priority and the best use of available City funds. It is generally agreed that there is significant reinvestment required to sustain library's services throughout the City, e.g. remaining floors at Johnson, many branches that are not currently scheduled for reinvestment and the McKim building itself. A master plan to address capital upgrades and improvements in the McKim building was completed over a decade ago and has not been updated. Long term capital planning would improve near-term decisions about funding.

The Library budgets about \$300,000 for critical repairs annually to address small but important capital projects throughout its system, like boiler replacement, new windows, branch roof repairs, etc. In many cases, there are specific uses for these funds but others are reserved for unexpected serious needs. Given the age of many of the Library's facilities, amounts in excess of current budgeted levels could easily be applied to improve service levels.



## Online & Web Services:

The Online and Web Services Department is primarily responsible for design, development of the program code and operation of the library's existing website. With a staff of five people, including its manager, the department is accountable for all of the library's online content, services and technology platforms as well as programs offered by the Metro Boston Library Network and the Library for the Commonwealth. The department is also responsible for overseeing the library's intranet services for its employees. The department works closely with senior leadership and managers in the Library Services Division to ensure that all services and collections offered online and/or in digital form are able to be accessed by the public. The department coordinates with the Communications office to ensure the library's online presence, brand and messaging, across all platforms, are managed and developed in a timely, consistent and professional manner. *Note that additional detail on suggested enhancements are included in the Functional Review, Opportunities section for Communications.*

### Strengths:

- The group is maintaining a highly content intensive website, with multiple integration points to other systems.
- The group responds to content changes upon request in some areas while others are available for distributed editing.

### Opportunities:

- The current website is significantly outdated with respect to design, navigation, and capabilities (user generated content, reviews, dynamic search, multi-language<sup>34</sup>, etc.).
- Strategic leadership / ownership is unclear with respect to content organization, introduction of new tools and services online, and integration and navigation decisions with existing content.
- The current website is organized from the inside out. This means that content is organized based more on organizational ownership than on logical patron search categories and vernacular.
- Lack of clarity exists around who approves new content and where it goes.
- Many broken links exist, content exists with no navigation search placement, meaning that unless you knew the full and complex web address of the site page, it would be invisible to site visitor and not searchable based on the navigation schema.
- Lack of clarity exists around use and integration of mobile applications.

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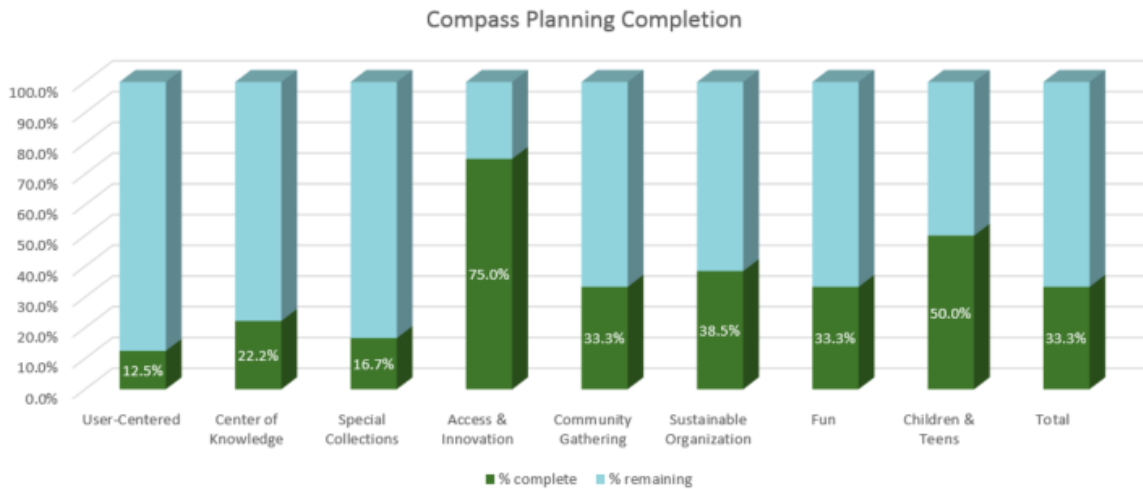
<sup>34</sup> 11 of the peer libraries have multi-language website content

## Strategic Progress Assessment

The Strategic Progress Assessment relates primarily to whether actions specified for completion by the executive leadership team were or were not completed as planned in FY2014.

Activities related to the completion of the current Compass Strategic Plan began in 2009. The BPL heavily engaged the public in the process with a broad variety of communication methods including but not limited to: work sessions, focus meetings, online chat and surveys. The full strategic plan was approved by the BPL Trustees on November 15, 2011. Work has been underway for more than three years to progress in all areas of the Compass Plan. There is no defined timeline in place for meeting the actions specified in the Compass Plan. As such, this assessment seeks to evaluate progress made against Compass Plan activities specifically identified by the executive team for completion in FY2014. While an overview is provided for each Compass Principle, high priority topics are detailed in the Functional Analysis section of this report with greater specificity.

For calendar year 2014, 66 actions were specified for activity and each was aligned with one the eight principles in the compass plan. Only 33% of the planned actions were completed in 2014. This low completion rate is a result of ineffectual prioritization among competing activities and a lack of explicit resource management. While the compass plan serves as an excellent framework, additional work should be done to clarify prioritization within the framework with full consideration of budget and staffing constraints and to then hold employees accountable for achieving a realistic set of objectives within a specified time frame.



## 1. User-Centered Institution

**Stated Principle:** “The BPL is a user-centered institution with services that anticipate and respond to neighborhood interests and the changing demographics of the City and Commonwealth.”

**Strengths:** There is a strong commitment at the BPL to understand diverse needs of users across the city and to support and celebrate this diversity. The branch system is seen as a critical way to ensure the library can continue to service unique demographic needs of the system. Introduction of the REACH metric is acknowledgement that patrons may choose to engage with the library in different ways (visits, circulation, programming, computer use). The BPL has excelled at seeking and publishing user feedback and frequently uses usage data for decision-making and collection management. Diversity is reflected in library staff with employees speaking many languages including: Spanish, Vietnamese, Chinese, French, and Haitian Creole. The library has made a significant contribution to teaching English language through the New Bostonian program and English as a Second Language conversation circles at nine library locations.

**Weaknesses:** Improvements could be made in developing and managing a more integrated programming strategy which would likely be easier to implement with a consolidated organizational structure for programming and one single individual responsible for system-wide programming strategy, planning, execution, and evaluation. Although a few programs are being given in languages other than English, there is not a coordinated and organized effort related to multi-lingual programming and although members of the AFSCME union receive a stipend if they speak another language, there is no systematic leverage of these skillsets. Thought should be given to multi-language interaction both online and in branches. Eleven of thirteen libraries in the peer comparison group do have content in languages other than English on the website. Although the BPL sees the branch system as important to serving unique demographic needs throughout the system, branch staff reported barriers to staffing personnel whose language skills are in alignment with neighborhood demographics; these included layoff and bumping rules in collective bargaining agreements. Unless addressed, these provisions will continue to limit demographically-guided customization of services.

**Progress against planned action:** There were eight User-Centered Institution actions specified for 2014 action, just one was completed – conducting a user survey. Other, unspecified high-value activities have progressed including the opening of the Johnson second floor which is a living embodiment of a user-centered institution. The lack of action on the planned eight items has more to do with underdeveloped prioritization competencies and lack of implementation focus than lack of progress towards the stated principal.

**Action for Consideration:** Two particularly important activities that did not progress were: determining which recommendations from the Youth Services program report to implement and completing a revamp of the training committee and professional development review team.





## 2. Community Gathering

**Stated Principle:** “The BPL exists to serve and sustain communities that foster discovery, reading, thinking, conversing, teaching, and learning, in accessible, sustainable, and welcoming facilities throughout the City, as well as with an engaging online presence.”

**Strengths:** Progress has been made in providing library spaces that are inviting and stimulating. This is particularly true of the central library’s newly renovated Johnson building and the East Boston branch. The new space recently opened on the second floor of the Johnson building brings forth many of the principles described throughout the Compass Plan and reflected a significant and sustained effort of library personnel. The opening of the East Boston branch should be considered a model to further study. In this case, two branches were closed and one combined new branch opened which is now well-designed, vibrant and far more active than the previous two branches combined.

**Weaknesses:** The BPL website requires a significant redesign to achieve better connection with users and to provide a platform for patron to patron communication and idea-sharing. Careful study should be given to the right number of branches required to serve the population so that a proper balance can be achieved where it might better serve the city’s population to consider fewer branches, but to make considerable capital investment in the new, smaller network. Programming attendance is lagging significantly in the peer group comparison with the BPL ranking 12<sup>th</sup> of 14 total systems evaluated on the basis of total program attendance per capita with only Brooklyn and Hennepin ranking lower than the BPL.

**Progress against planned action:** There were fifteen Community Gathering actions specified for 2014 action, five were completed. None of these involved implementation activities. Note that the successful opening of the Johnson building was a significant and successful effort requiring a substantial and sustained time commitment from many at the BPL.

**Action for Consideration:** The most significant area of inaction is designing and launching of a new website.



### 3. Special Collections

**Stated Principle:** “The BPL is committed to the ongoing development and preservation of its distinctive special collections, which provide citizens from all walks of life with access to their common cultural heritage.”

**Strengths:** The BPL has an immense amount of holdings in its special collections and has access to trust funds that allow for continued acquisitions. The Collections of Distinction designation has created an increased focus for the organization so that further collection development can be prioritized towards creating depth in cohesive and meaningful collections.

**Weaknesses:** Eighty-one percent of the BPLs holdings are essentially “invisible” collections. They are invisible because there is no consolidated inventory and valuation and there is no consolidated and searchable cataloging of all items and their locations. The vast majority of holdings would only be discoverable with support from a librarian. Preservation work is required to return some items to a condition where public viewing is possible. A significant and sustained cataloging catch-up effort is required for future discoverability of Special Collections. The significant value of some items makes increased security a high priority, particularly as it relates to protection against internal theft.

**Progress against planned action:** There were six work areas specified for 2014 action; just one was noted as complete, and it is actually just partially complete.

**Action for Consideration:** Completion of the discoverability plan with measurable and time-specific discoverability targets should take high priority and future purchases should be significantly curtailed or eliminated until the desired discoverability of existing resources is achieved. An assessment should be conducted to determine a budget and timeline for further Archival Center consolidation recognizing this may need to take a lower priority due to the limited frequency of requests for items stored in the remote facility.



## 4. Center of Knowledge

**Stated Principle:** “The BPL is a center of knowledge that serves researchers, lifelong learners, and the intellectually curious through its incomparable collections, digital resources, and access to other scholarly networks.”

**Strengths:** The BPL has done a good job managing circulating collections and has taken a step forward by transitioning some items which were historically reference items for in-library use only and making them available for circulation where appropriate. The increased use of floating collections also pushes up against traditional library norms and seeks to make collections more broadly available throughout the system.

**Weaknesses:** While the further development of public training programs hasn’t progressed significantly, it makes sense that this will likely get a giant step forward with the opening of the second phase of the Copley renovation. The vision for the Kirstein Business Library contains many elements which propel forward the goals stated under this principle. One aspect of this principle that is discussed in the Compass Plan is the desire to “highlight and leverage the knowledge and expertise of staff”. Union requirements/limitations exist today making it difficult to realize this vision. Under current rules, many job descriptions are outdated, difficult and time-consuming to change, and roles are inflexible. Bumping rules mean that seniority takes precedence over skill set, competency or past performance. All of this makes it difficult to nimbly react to patron needs and capitalize on employees’ unique skill sets when staffing positions and changing job roles.

**Progress against planned action:** Of the nine work areas specified for 2014 action, two were completed. These were integrating floating collections and deploying Hoopla streaming services.

**Action for consideration:** Increased efforts and funding should go towards more conscious development and growth of downloadable circulating collections recognizing that while these digital collections represent just 2% of total items available for circulation, they account for 18% of total circulation activity. Budgets should be continually migrate to digital resources in alignment with the measurable increase in patron demand for resources in this format.



## 5. Children & Teens

**Stated Principle:** “The BPL fosters the love of reading and skills in critical and creative thinking among children and teens – from early literacy through mature readership – by offering a slate of services that provide academic support and intellectual growth.”

**Strengths:** The BPL excels in delivering youth services and is progressive in creating environments in which children want to learn and grow. Nowhere is this more evident than at Copley’s renovated 2<sup>nd</sup> floor of the Johnson building where great care was taken to design a space where children and teens feel at home. Homework help programs exist through the use of teen members to support younger students and with the support of the Boston Teachers’ Union for students through 12<sup>th</sup> grade. New technology has been introduced at Copley and is generally a significant and important consideration in any capital improvement, renovation, or rebuilding initiatives. The BPL performs outreach to the eight schools for incarcerated youth being served through the Department of Youth Services. Each month, two teen librarians bring in 10 books per school, engage in book discussions, and communicate to the teens about library services and programs.

**Weaknesses:** There is a lack of coordination between the two homework help groups and feedback on the success or failure of programming is inconsistent and text-heavy in its capture making it difficult to monitor progress, set goals, or assess success. Although a Youth Services Report was completed by an outside consultant in June 2013, it has not been fully assessed for decision-making on changes referenced in the document<sup>35</sup>.

**Progress against planned action:** Four of eight specified actions were completed from the 2014 plan. A delay in the ability to onboard a Youth Services Coordinator likely slowed down progress on other items during 2014 but steady progress is being made in this area and it is an area in which the library generally excels.

**Action for consideration:** The BPL excels in this area and has some great staff resources to continue its efforts. Continued forward progress is expected in this area.

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<sup>35</sup> Although determining which Youth Services recommendations to implement was listed as a 2014 “to do”, it (along with many others) was pushed out to 2015.

## 6. Access and Innovation

**Stated Principle:** “The BPL provides access to and training in innovative technology, electronic resources, and digital information through its own holdings and its strategic position within the wider world of knowledge.”

**Strengths:** The BPL demonstrates active state-wide leadership with Digital Commonwealth and national leadership with its role in the Digital Public Library of America. This leadership position can and should be leveraged for the development of a broader funding base and for positive press/ public awareness. The BPL’s computer spaces within all locations are widely used and the replacement plan is adequate to keep it on pace with changing technology.

**Weaknesses:** Levels of technology competency among most staff members is not sufficient for the BPL to lead in access and innovation; training budgets are limited. The current integration model with online resources (Overdrive, Hoopla, etc.) leads users to leave the bpl.org site to transact and requires multiple login credentials as visitors pass from one online service to another. Some of these limitations may be unavoidable but the BPL should continue to push for a more integrated and streamlined user experience with respect to digital partners.

**Progress against planned action:** Three of four actions planned for 2014 were completed. All completed items were Reporting progress on previous activities. The one item not completed is the implementation of Libguides which, when successfully implemented, will improve self-guided research.

**Action for consideration:** Cost reduction opportunities exist if redundant or little used research databases can be eliminated. Staff technology competency must be broadly elevated to keep up with rapidly changing technologies used in day-to-day activities. A more streamlined online user experience should be a high priority as a new BPL website is designed and built.



## 7. Sustainable Organization

**Stated Principle:** “The BPL depends on sustainability of resources through a judicious stewardship of finances; active employee participation and professional development in an environment of dignity and respect; and partnerships that enrich services, expand outreach, and leverage public investment through private support.”

**Strengths:** Progress has been made in the continued contribution to the future of librarianship and consideration has been given to better collaboration with other agencies. Progress specific to FY2014 goals in this area has been very limited and relate primarily to reporting activities. A core competency exists with Amy Ryan’s ability to connect strategically within the industry. Continued national visibility could support increased funding from sources outside Massachusetts.

**Weaknesses:** Many tasks in this area are reporting tasks “publish reports on project status” or to “establish schedules for initiation”, many action areas have not been initiated at all nor have individuals or departments been assigned responsibility. As a general rule, focus needs to shift from defining work start dates to defining work completion dates. Outside of Major Projects and Digital Services, there was very little evidence of project planning expertise, milestone management, efficiency management, and technology leverage for purposes of gaining efficiency.

**Progress against planned action:** Five of thirteen work areas planned for FY2014 were completed.

**Action for Consideration:** A major outcome of the Sustainable Organization goal is to “support staff that is diverse and enriched through professional development and training.” BPL is currently investing approximately \$200 annually staff enrichment programs, considerably below the \$1,200 investment most organizations make in the U.S. Although budgeting and funds availability will be challenging, priority needs to be given to this effort. In addition, the budgeting process should be more inclusive, key managers should be intimately involved in budget preparation and the reporting of actual results to budgets should be improved. Finally, improving the Library’s fundraising efforts could have a substantial and positive impact on budgets and services.

## 8. Fun

**Stated Principle:** “The BPL leads the way for people of all ages with recreational reading and media, invigorating programs, user-created content, and opportunities for discovery in settings that are stimulating and engaging.”

**Strengths:** Although not noted specifically as an action area in the Compass Plan, the successful February 2015 completion and opening of the Johnson Building Phase 1 project and the November 2013 opening of the new East Boston branch are demonstrations of the Library’s progress towards achievement of this goal. Both locations offer vibrant, welcoming and stimulating reading areas and workspaces for adults, teens and children. In addition, phase II of the Johnson renovation will deliver additional space that can be used for exhibitions, meetings and performances, advancing the Library as a cultural and entertainment hub in the City of Boston. The “Concerts in the Courtyard” series was a success. The library hosted fifteen concerts where over 3,000 patrons enjoyed music from community organizations including Berklee College of Music and the Boston Lyric Opera. A report on



system wide in-person book groups was completed in support of efforts to develop online and in-person author attended discussion groups. Internal events reports listed a number of author talks conducted throughout the year, with 38 in 2013 and 22 in 2014. And, as noted elsewhere in the report, the use of social media is strong, well-executed, thought provoking and entertaining.

**Weaknesses:** A review of management’s progress against the specific action items included in the plan concludes that there is more to accomplish as this goal is pursued. Many action items have yet to be scheduled or assigned. For example, no progress appears to have been made to rededicate efforts to support interactive collections and programming, to encourage collective staff activities or to develop specific programs to insure newly hired and existing staff are fun, energetic and joyous. Particular focus should be placed on employee-related matters, including taking positive steps to improve management and labor relations and encouragement of collective staff activities.

**Progress against planned action:** One of three planned actions were completed for FY2014. Some really positive actions have taken place as referenced above but the work the BPL set out to do for 2014 was largely unfinished and only three actions were planned to specifically progress in this area.

**Action for consideration:** The BPL would benefit from focusing in on employee engagement and morale by improving cross-departmental communications and being careful to fully integrate branch staff into ongoing communications. The BPL would benefit from a greater focus on organizational culture and professional development.



## Appendix:

### Appendix A - Points of clarification:

- A significant services restructuring is underway in concert with the library renovation. Service Center locations and quantity will change and organizational structure and job descriptions are shifting in Youth Services, Borrower Services, and Reference & Instruction. While capabilities and outcomes have been evaluated in this assessment, efficiency studies should be conducted soon after construction completion and reorganization. Efficiency studies conducted now would reflect neither past performance (many personnel are operating from temporary locations due to the renovation) nor future performance (as a significant restructuring is underway). The recommended time to pursue any efficiency studies would be soon after implementation of the new facility and organizational structure.
- Although individual branch assessments were not in scope for this project, it is noted that such an assessment should be completed for full understanding of individual branch strengths and weaknesses, and that this should be completed prior to decisions about any branch consolidation which may be prudent in the long run.
- A review of individual performance reviews and the associated qualitative assessment was not conducted as access to these materials was not granted.
- Because benchmarking data for peer libraries was not yet available for FY 2014 at time of analysis and reporting, reported peer data is reported as FY 2013 data.
- Although PLA conducted data capture by fiscal year, libraries may not all have the same fiscal year meaning that data from library to library may contain different months. While not perfect, this data does reflect a twelve month period and serves as a useful comparison. Most peer benchmark data comes from the Public Library Association (PLA), a division of the American Library Association.
- Performance review for the BPL operational assessment focused on the most recent full-year data available (FY14). This BPL full-year data set is also what was utilized in peer comparisons. Trends leading up to FY14 were also assessed to identify changes in performance across the library network.
- The term executive leadership team is used to describe the President and her four primary direct functional leaders of Library Services, Finance, Administration & Technology, and Communications. The term senior leadership team is used to describe the next level of leadership most of whom would be included in what the library terms its admin council.
- The terms Copley and Central are used interchangeably and refer to the central hub location for the Boston Public Library.
- The following anomalies occurred within the branch network and should be taken into consideration when reviewing branch data
  - Orient Heights branch closed permanently in September 2013
  - The East Boston branch on Meridian Street closed permanently in October 2013 and the new East Boston branch opened in November of 2013 leaving a month of no library services in East Boston
  - Uphams Corner opened in October 2013 after being closed for repairs for 6 months
  - The Johnson Building entrance closed on November 17th, 2014 and services were temporarily relocated to the McKim building for children's, teen, borrower services, fiction and nonfiction





## Appendix B - List of functions included in interviews

Function	Department	Initials	Count
<b>Non-Library Input</b>			
City of Boston	Project Leadership, Arts & Culture	MM, JN, JB	3
City of Boston	Budget Office	JW, MP, EP, JH	4
City of Boston	Labor Relations	PC	1
City of Boston	Human Resources	VL, MF	2
City of Boston	Auditing	SG	1
City of Boston	Construction & Project Mgt.	TL	1
Trustee		JR	1
Boston Public Library Foundation		CM, HC	2
Leventhal Maps Center		JS	1
Digital Public Library of America		DC	1
The Catered Affair		PP	1
<b>Library Input</b>			
Executive Leadership Team	Executive Leadership Team	AER, DL, MC, ED, GP	5
Library Services	Youth Services	JS, LK	2
Library Services:	Public Service	JI	1
Library Services	Reference & Instruction, Research, Microtext	GG, DP, HS, MW, JK	5
Library Services	Collection Development	LI, MA, KT, EG	4
Library Services	Special Collections	SG	1
Library Services	Technical and Digital Service	CW, TB	2
Library Services	Collaborative Services	AFF	1
Library Services	Programming	BP	1
Library Services	Borrower Services	JL, KV, MC	3
Library Services	Kirstein Business Center	BL	1
Library Services	Archival Center	KD, MB	2
Library Services	Branches	CS, MG, GT, MK	4
Communications & Strategy	Communications	AW	1
Administrative & Technology	Data & Analytics	JD	1
Administrative & Technology	Events	ET	1
Administrative & Technology	Facilities	JM, RH, PL	3
Administrative & Technology	Major Projects	ES	1
Administrative & Technology	Information Technology	VY	1
Administrative & Technology	Human Resources	EL	1
Administrative & Technology	Training Coordinator	EC	1
Finance	Budget & Procurement	EM, CL, AS	3
Finance	Accounting	SM, DH, EA	3
Administrative		DK, LD	2
<b>Total</b>			<b>68</b>



## Appendix C – RFP Cross-reference Table

Reference sections indicated below can serve as a finding aid for review areas noted in the Request for Proposal (RFP). However, topics below are handled throughout the Assessment and it would, therefore, be impractical to complete a thorough and detailed cross-reference for every place where a topic area is covered within the assessment. If viewing this table in digital format, clicking on the page number will link you to the page where the referenced section *begins*.

RFP ref	Topic	Key Section	Page
4.1.1	Scope Overview broadly defined	Throughout	
4.1.2	Progress towards implementing previous recommendations	Financial Assessment Strategic Progress Assessment	17 87
4.1.3	Specified by letters below		
A	HR personnel policies and procedures	Employee Performance Management Human Resources	68 75
B	Union contracts	Union Cooperation Human Resources	31 75
C	Staffing and recruitment	Staffing Overview HR Departmental Review Hiring	9 66 67
D	Finance and accounting systems	Finance Functional Review	63
E	Time keeping policy and procedures	HR Functional Review	75
F	Purchasing and contract management	Finance Functional Review	63
G	Acquisition and removal of materials	Collections Management Inventory Management Special Collections	42 38 45
H	Outreach efforts/ programming	Youth Services Programming and Exhibitions Library Services Functional Review Entrepreneurial Spirit	48 50 36 37
I	Marketing and PR	Communications Functional Review Website Design and Implementation	61 73
J	Scholastic support and engaging atmosphere	Youth Services Strategic Assessment: Children & Teens	48 92
K	Building maintenance	Admin & Tech Functional Review, Facilities	77
L	Technology systems staffing and procedures	Admin & Tech Functional Review, Technology Technology Leverage	83 72
M	Licenses and certification	Admin & Tech Functional Review HR Departmental Review Facilities Departmental Review	66 75 77
N	User diversity	Library Services Functional Review Branch Services Strategic Assessment: User Centered Institution	36 53 88
O	CORI and SORI checks	Admin & Tech Functional Review HR Departmental Review Facilities Departmental Review	66 75 77
P	Security	Facilities Departmental Review	77
Q	Performance Management	Executive Functional Review Library Services Functional Review Admin & Tech Functional Review	26 36 66

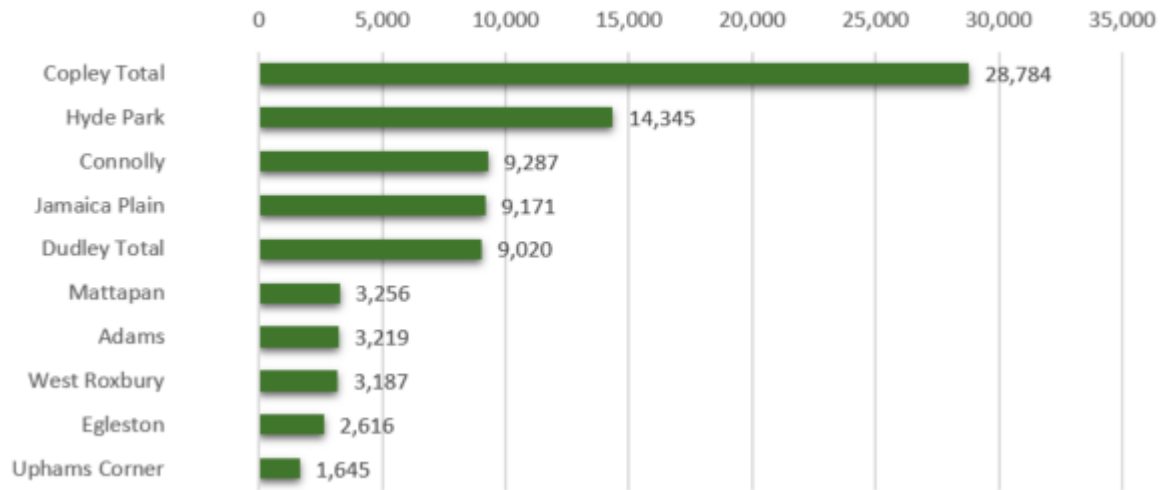
R	Trustees costs and financial reporting	Finance Functional Review	63
S	Facilities	Admin & Tech Functional Review Major Projects	66 66
T	External funds	Financial Assessment Fundraising	17 34
U	Governing structure for branches and library administration	Library Services Functional Review Branch Services	36 53
V	Collecting funds	Financial Functional Review	63
W	Trust funds, enterprise, special funds	Finance Functional Review Financial Assessment	63 24



## Appendix D - Branch Data

The content in Appendix D is intended for use by branch management. Evaluating this data requires careful consideration for branch nuances and can be included in a future branch level assessment.

Top/Bottom 5 Branches: Total FY14 Program Attendance



Patron engagement varies branch by branch. Some branches are a draw for the community mostly on the basis of computer use, others for access to books (circulation) and other for program attendance.

Top/Bottom 5: Total Reach	
Branch	Reach
East Boston	342,667
West End	283,724
Jamaica Plain	281,394
West Roxbury	270,692
Mattapan	244,850
Honan-Allston	156,094
Lower Mills	151,680
Egleston	112,151
Parker Hill	102,926
Uphams Corner	67,185
*Excluding Copley	

Top/Bottom 5: Total Visitors	
Branch	Visitors
East Boston	163,551
Mattapan	133,341
West End	124,088
Dudley	118,523
West Roxbury	108,457
Adams Street	62,713
Honan-Allston	55,820
Parker Hill	49,849
Egleston	47,977
Uphams Corner	40,859
*Excluding Copley	



**Once patrons come through the door, the next question is how well does BPL engage them?**

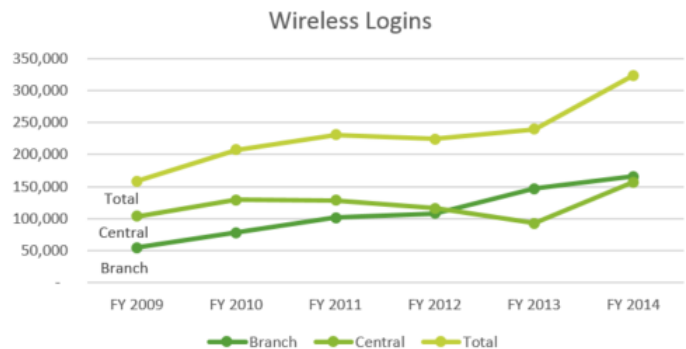
The tables below show, not which branches have the *most* activity, but which branches are heavily engaging users once they walk through the door. Significant complexity exists in interpreting this information because there may be limitations on the offering side that prohibit engagement growth. For example, Jamaica Plain has a very low rated computer use but only has 22 public computers to offer vs Codman Square’s 37. Copley has the lowest program attendance / visitor but draws a larger population of tourists many of whom come to see the artwork and tour the building itself. This information will be useful to the staff at the BPL as they work to ensure circulating items and program offerings are of interest to unique populations, and computers are available in the correct numbers to serve the visitor base at a given branch. Additionally, these ratings prompt consideration of how well we are advertising and communicating offerings to the neighborhoods in which the branches reside.

Top/Bottom 5:	Program Attendance /Visitor
Branch	Attendance
Connolly	0.14
Hyde Park	0.13
Roslindale	0.10
Jamaica Plain	0.10
Honan-Allston	0.10
Fields Corner	0.04
East Boston	0.04
West Roxbury	0.03
Mattapan	0.02
Copley	0.02

Top/Bottom 5:	Circulation /Visitor
Branch	Circulation
Jamaica Plain	1.77
Brighton	1.64
Adams Street	1.61
Honan-Allston	1.51
Connolly	1.40
Grove Hall	0.70
Copley	0.55
Mattapan	0.52
Dudley	0.49
Uphams Corner	0.48

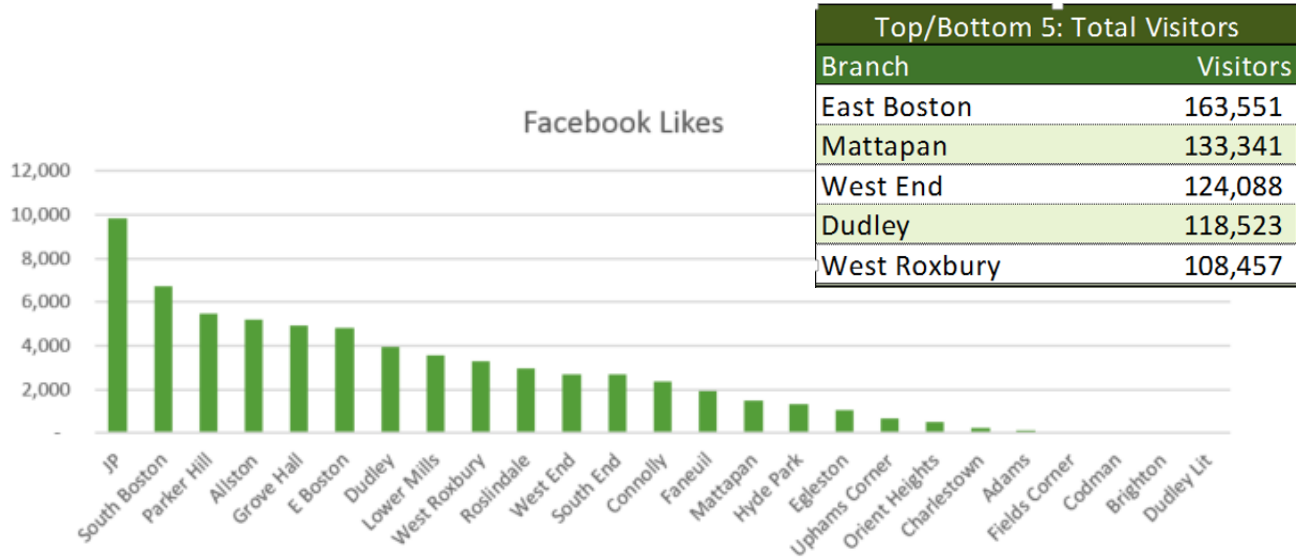
Top/Bottom 5:	Computer Sessions /Visitor
Branch	Computer Use
Codman Square	0.36
Grove Hall	0.33
Mattapan	0.29
Egleston	0.25
Fields Corner	0.23
Jamaica Plain	0.13
North End	0.12
Charlestown	0.12
West Roxbury	0.11
Faneuil	0.09

Evaluating computer use is tricky because it is constrained by the number of computers available and evaluating wireless sessions is similarly imperfect as its use is constrained by patrons who own or have access to devices. But viewing the growth over time in wireless logins shows us that there is a consistent and growing demand for the ability to access information digitally. In keeping the mission of “FREE TO ALL” the library can play an important role in narrowing the digital divide.



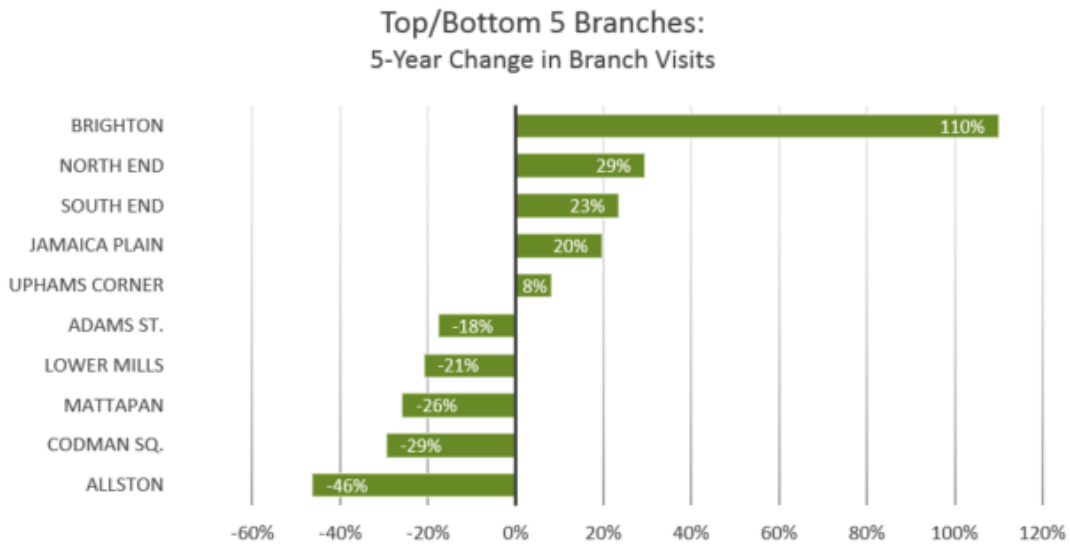
**Social Media Engagement by Branches**

Note that the branches that have the most engaged Facebook users do not directly correlate with the branches that have the most visitors, furthering the idea that patrons interact with the BPL in an increasingly complex combination of online and offline venues.



**Changes and Trends: visits**

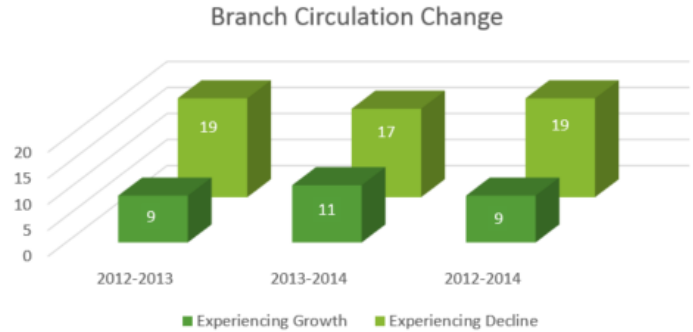
Brighton had the most significant 5 year increase and Allston the most significant decline.



**Changes and Trends: circulation**

<i>Worst Decline in Circulation in 3 year period</i>		
AGENCY	FY14 Total YTD Circ	'12 - '14 % CHG
South Boston	92,589	-10%
Hyde Park	91,593	-11%
West Roxbury	147,246	-13%
Mattapan	69,687	-13%
Honan-Allston	84,548	-22%
Copley	905,941	-24%
Uphams Corner	19,498	-51%

Trends in circulation by branch indicate that between FY12 and FY14 most branches experienced a decline in circulation of physical items.



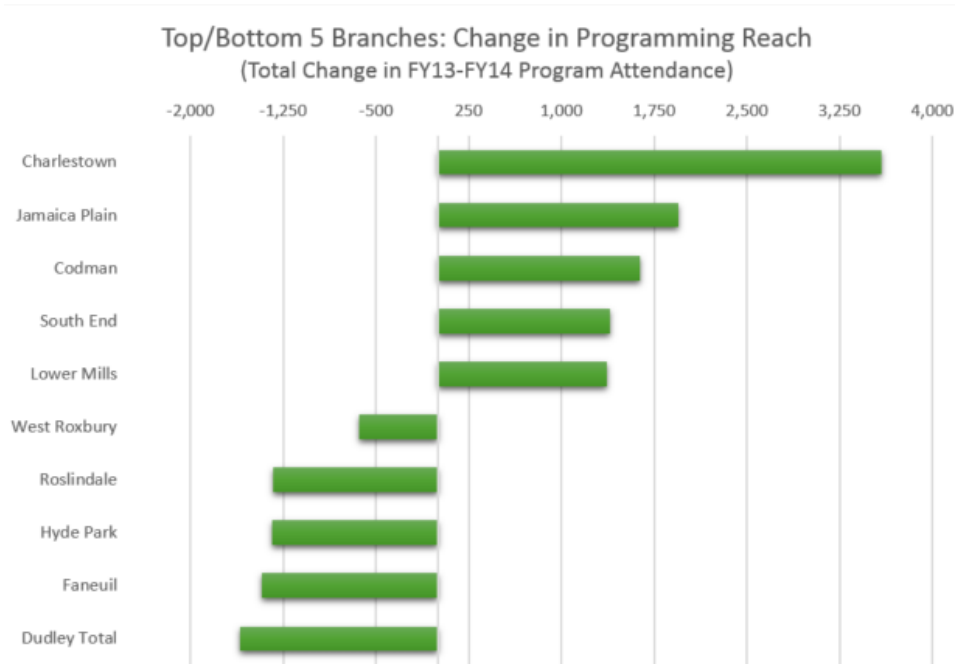
AGENCY	FY14 Total YTD Circ	'12 - '14 % CHG
East Boston	143,443	65%
Egleston Square	49,711	21%
Lower Mills	64,008	14%
Connolly	94,608	9%

There were a few bright spots where circulation growth was significant.

**Changes and Trends: program attendance**



Note the changes in total program attendance by branch in the table to below.<sup>36</sup> Looking at the data this way, it appears that Charlestown was the superstar of the bunch by increasing its programming reach by 3,592 attendance incidences.



Consider carefully that while improving attendance numbers is a positive outcome, we also need to evaluate the efficiency with which we achieved this increased programming reach. The table below reviews the correlating increase in number of programs required to achieve this change in attendance. Viewing the data this way changes our perception of which branches excel.

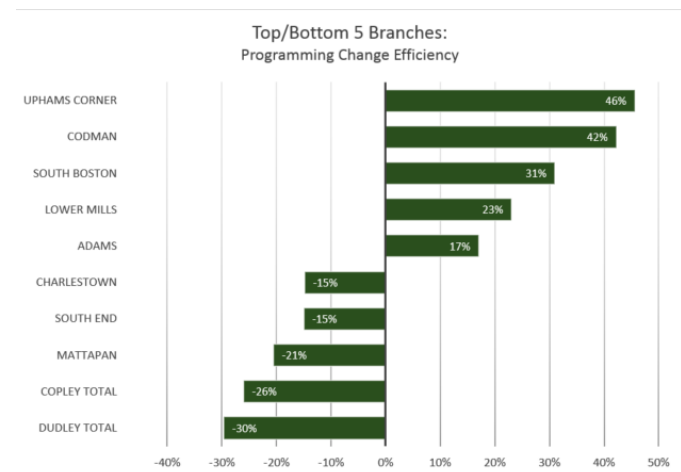
<sup>36</sup> Note that Dudley and Dudley Literature Center totals were combined because of inconsistent reporting methods which otherwise made analysis impossible.





By concurrently evaluating the number of additional programs which were added to achieve the resulting attendance numbers, we can assess programming efficiency. Reviewing the data this way shows us that while Charlestown did achieve a 104% increase in program attendance, they achieved this by increasing the number of programs by 119%. Codman was able to increase its attendance by 53% while only increasing the number of programs by 11% - a far more efficient way to increase reach. And interestingly, Uphams corner had an 11% decrease in attendance simultaneous with a 56% decrease in programs, telling us that more patrons participated in each program on average. In reviewing Copley's numbers, we can see that the number of programs increased by 30% but attendance increased by just 3%; the increase in programs correlates with a significant increase in workload without a correlating impact on patrons. Continued review should be given to the efficiency of our programs. To achieve this, we should decrease duplication of effort in the planning stages, ensure programs offered are desired by patrons, and that patrons are aware of available programs through multi-faceted (and possibly multi-lingual) communication methods. Combined, these activities will *efficiently* increase the resulting impact experienced from each program offered.

Change in Programming Efficiency (FY13-FY14)			
Branch	Chng in Attendance	Chng in Programs	Change Efficiency
Uphams Corner	-11%	-56%	46%
Codman	53%	11%	42%
South Boston	0%	-31%	31%
Lower Mills	34%	11%	23%
Adams	-2%	-19%	17%
Brighton	-6%	-19%	13%
Jamaica Plain	27%	15%	12%
West End	18%	8%	10%
Grove Hall	-4%	-14%	10%
Connolly	12%	3%	9%
North End	18%	9%	9%
Allston	-4%	-10%	6%
East Boston	27%	25%	2%
Faneuil	-21%	-23%	2%
Parker Hill	4%	4%	0%
Egleston	24%	25%	-1%
West Roxbury	-17%	-15%	-2%
Roslindale	-13%	-3%	-10%
Hyde Park	-9%	3%	-11%
Fields Corner	7%	20%	-13%
Charlestown	104%	119%	-15%
South End	21%	36%	-15%
Mattapan	-4%	17%	-21%
Copley Total	3%	30%	-26%
Dudley Total	-15%	15%	-30%



## Appendix E – Capital Projects

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CAPITAL PLANNING

Project	Scope of Work	Status	Neighborhood	Total Project Budget	Operating Impact
<b>Library Department</b>					
Adams Street Branch Library	Assess interior space requirements of the children and adult sections. Replace front doors, roof, and flooring. Repair or replace windows. Improve handicap access and lighting.	To Be Scheduled	Dorchester	1,450,000	No
Critical Facility Repairs	A critical repair fund to be used for emergency repairs to library facilities including roofs, windows, masonry, and electrical and HVAC systems.	Annual Program	Citywide	2,010,945	Yes
Dudley Branch Library Renovation	A comprehensive building renovation will enrich library services and visitor experience through improved spatial definition, a fully accessible facility, improved signage and greater energy efficiency.	New Project	Roxbury	14,718,000	No
Egleston Square Branch Library	Improve driveway, parking, and garden path areas. Replace fence and install window treatment at south wall. Add lighting to rear of lecture hall and install a handicap ramp. Perform partial window glazing at garden window wall and upgrade HVAC system.	To Be Scheduled	Roxbury	916,267	No
Facilities Audit	Assess the existing physical conditions of the branches according to how ably the branches can accomplish the Compass Principles with the goal of informing future capital project planning.	Study Underway	Citywide	440,500	No
Faneuil Branch Library	Upgrade HVAC system, install new fire alarm system, repaint stairs, refurbish interior finishes, and improve interior lighting. Provide exterior signage and improve access.	To Be Scheduled	Allston/Brighton	1,118,650	No
Faneuil Branch Library Study	Assess the existing interior and exterior physical conditions according to how ably the branch can accomplish the Compass Principles, review the facility's HVAC and alarm systems, and develop a recommended remodeling plan.	In Design	Allston/Brighton	75,000	No
Jamaica Plain Branch Library	Renovate existing branch and build an addition to improve access and programming. Service improvements will include circulation and collection areas, shelving, electrical system updates, and other items.	In Design	Jamaica Plain	10,000,000	No
Johnson Building Energy Improvements	Implementation of comprehensive energy study recommendations for the library at Copley Square.	In Construction	Back Bay	5,772,134	Yes
Johnson Building Piping Infrastructure	Replace and update piping infrastructure including small diameter hot water piping, chilled water, steam and condensate return piping and related valves in the Johnson and McKim buildings.	To Be Scheduled	Back Bay	1,950,000	No
Johnson Building Renovation	Improvements to enrich library services and visitor experience, including new and expanded areas for teens and children, an enhanced entry and street presence, and other improvements.	In Construction	Back Bay	75,500,000	No
McKim Library Phase II C Signage	Update directional and room signage in conjunction with the ongoing restoration project.	In Construction	Back Bay	500,000	No
McKim Library Waterproofing	Remediate water infiltration in the basement of the McKim Building and reconstruct the pedestrian plaza on Dartmouth Street.	In Design	Back Bay	480,000	No
North End Branch Library	Upgrade HVAC system, upgrade lighting, install new circulation desk, repair or replace windows, replace roof, install new exterior signage, and other interior repairs.	To Be Scheduled	North End	1,475,000	No
Parker Hill Library	Replace windows and repaint masonry walls.	To Be Scheduled	Mission Hill	2,400,000	No
Pay-for-Print Infrastructure System	Replace public service pay-for-print infrastructure system.	Implementation Underway	Citywide	850,000	No
Roslindale Branch Library	Conduct a facility assessment of the existing physical conditions according to how ably the branch can accomplish the Compass Principles (study will be a pilot for system-wide assessment), develop a remodeling plan and implement the first phase.	Implementation Underway	Roslindale	125,000	No
Security Audit Recommendations Implementation	Implement security upgrades at Central & all branch library locations.	Implementation Underway	Citywide	500,000	No
Uphams Comer Library (New)	Site acquisition, design, construction, and furnishings for the development of a new branch library.	To Be Scheduled	Dorchester	12,980,000	No

