



**PASCO COUNTY PUBLIC LIBRARY COOPERATIVE  
E-GOVERNMENT SERVICES IN PUBLIC LIBRARIES, 2010:**

**FINAL REPORT OF PROJECT ACTIVITIES**

**(February 15 – August 6, 2010)**

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The Information Use Management and Policy Institute (Information Institute)<sup>1</sup> at Florida State University has been involved in the assessment and development of E-government services in public libraries for a number of years. In 2006, the Information Institute published a paper describing the importance of public libraries in the delivery of E-government services based on national survey data collected as part of the *Public Library Funding and Technology Access Survey*<sup>2</sup> (funded by the Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation).<sup>3</sup> Other work, reported in *Library Journal* later in 2006 summarized the various challenges faced by public libraries in the delivery of E-government services.<sup>4</sup> In December 2006, the Information Institute and American Library Association (ALA) sponsored a national conference on the role of public libraries in E-government presenting a national plan for action as described in a 2007 report.<sup>5</sup>

Others researchers and librarians have studied E-government and made progress in E-government provision.<sup>6,7</sup> The ALA E-government Toolkit (<http://www.ala.org/ala/issuesadvocacy/egovtoolkit/index.cfm>) contains numerous sources for further reading on the legislative history of E-government and efforts of public libraries responding to the changes in delivery of government services. This report reviews work of the Information Institute and discusses activities related to this project, but it does not contain a formal literature review of E-government and libraries. For more background, please consult the many resources mentioned at the ALA E-government Toolkit or the other articles on this topic.

Recently, the Information Institute described strategies for libraries to provide more efficient, effective, and citizen-centered E-government services.<sup>8</sup> This work was based, in part,

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<sup>1</sup> <http://www.ii.fsu.edu>

<sup>2</sup> <http://www.ala.org/ala/aboutala/offices/ors/plftas/plfundingoverview.cfm>

<sup>3</sup> Bertot, J. C., Jaeger, P. T., Langa, L. A., & McClure, C. R. (2006). Public access computing and Internet access in public libraries: the role of public libraries in e-government and emergency situations. *First Monday*, 11(9), n.p. Retrieved April 21, 2009, from <http://www.uic.edu/htbin/cgiwrap/bin/ojs/index.php/fm/article/view/1392/1310>

<sup>4</sup> Bertot, J. C., Jaeger, P. T., Langa, L. A., & McClure, C. R. (2006). Drafted: I want you to deliver E-Government. *Library Journal*, 131(13), 34-37. Retrieved August 12, 2009, from <http://www.libraryjournal.com/article/CA6359866.html>

<sup>5</sup> McClure, C. R., McGilvray, J., Barton, K. M., & Bertot, J. C., (2007). *E-Government and public libraries: Current status, meeting report, findings, and next steps*. Tallahassee FL: Information Use Management & Policy Institute, College of Information, Florida State University. Retrieved August 12, 2009, from [http://www.ii.fsu.edu/announcements/e-gov2006/egov\\_report.pdf](http://www.ii.fsu.edu/announcements/e-gov2006/egov_report.pdf)

<sup>6</sup> Dawes, S. S. (2009). Governance in the digital age: A research and action framework for an uncertain future. *Government Information Quarterly*, 26, 257-264.

<sup>7</sup> Bertot, J. C., & Jaeger, P. T. (2008). The e-government paradox: Better customer service doesn't necessarily cost less. *Government Information Quarterly*, 25, 149-154.

<sup>8</sup> Bertot, J. C., Jaeger, P. T., & McClure, C. R. (2008). Citizen-centered E-Government services: Benefits, costs, and research needs. In S. A. Chun, M. Janssen, & J. R. Gil-Garcia (Eds.), *Proceedings of the 9th annual International Digital Government Research Conference* (pp. 137-141). Digital Government Society of North America. Retrieved June 15, 2009, from <http://www.ii.fsu.edu/~cmclure/publications/Citizencentered15March08.pdf>

on a 2008 study that summarized *Florida Public Libraries and E-Government: Services, Issues, and Recommendations*.<sup>9</sup> The 2008 report concluded (p. 15):

The connection between libraries, state and local agencies falls at the crux between open government, access to government services and resources, and the digital divide. Investing in library E-government training, library technology, and consortium building is vital to maintaining equal access to government services and information, particularly E-government services.

As governments and agencies reduce costs and staff associated with service provision through technology, it is essential to realize that residents still need and seek assistance from individuals and community-based organizations. The combination of public access technology and information professionals who know how to seek and find government information that the public library provides makes the public library an institution of first choice by residents.

Overall, the Information Institute has significant experience and expertise related to (1) public library program and project evaluations; (2) Florida and U.S. E-government services and resources; (3) high quality, user-based web portals and web-based training modules; and (4) the development of innovative and practical strategies for public libraries to promote E-government services and resources. The Information Institute continues to support a number of initiatives in this area.

The Information Institute contracted to conduct a number of tasks for the Pasco County Library Cooperative (PCLC)'s E-government initiative between February 15, 2010 and August 6, 2010. This final report provides a summary of all project activities (February 15, 2010 – August 6, 2010).

### **Project Goal and Objectives**

The goal of the Information Institute's E-government effort was to assist public librarians throughout Florida and to work collaboratively with PCLC's E-government initiative. The following objectives addressed this goal:

1. Determine possible content, organization, and design factors for a statewide public library E-government web portal, and provide a usability/functionality/accessibility assessment of the E-government web portal developed by the PCLC;
2. Develop a statewide evaluation strategy for all the various E-government awards the State Library & Archives of Florida (State Library) has made for 2009-2010 using LSTA funds; and
3. Specify the E-government service roles to operationalize those service roles for practical application in public libraries.

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<sup>9</sup> Gibson, A. N., Bertot, J. C., McClure, C. R., Mandel, L., & Snead, J. T. (2008). *Florida public libraries and E-Government: Services, issues, and recommendations*. Tallahassee FL: Information Use Management & Policy Institute, College of Information, Florida State University. Retrieved August 12, 2009, from [http://www.ii.fsu.edu/documents/reports/FL\\_Egov\\_2008Report.pdf](http://www.ii.fsu.edu/documents/reports/FL_Egov_2008Report.pdf)

In addition to these objectives, the Information Institute documented and assessed the overall project and individual program components and offered recommendations for how Florida public library E-government services and resources can continue to be improved.

The primary tasks the Information Institute completed in this process include:

- Task 1 (a) Conduct a brief needs assessment to determine possible content, organization, and design factors for a statewide public library E-government web portal, and (b) Provide a usability/functionality/accessibility assessment of the E-government web portal developed by the PCLC;
- Task 2 Develop a statewide evaluation strategy for all the various E-government awards the State Library has made for 2009-2010 using LSTA funds (Appendix A); and
- Task 3 Expand and better specify the E-government service roles in order to operationalize those service roles for practical application in public libraries.

This report describes activities that the Information Institute conducted for this project.

### **Background: The First Two Reporting Periods**

The two prior project reports detailed several activities that relate to the specific tasks and some activities that relate to the completion of the overall project. A brief summary of those activities follows in Table 1. For more information, see the first and second interim reports (<http://ii.fsu.edu/content/view/full/35680>).

**Table 1. Key Activities Conducted During the First Two Reporting Periods.**

<b>ACTIVITY</b>	<b>STATUS UPDATE</b>	<b>TIMELINE</b>
<i>TASK 1</i>		
1. Recruit a convenience sample of 10-15 librarians, who either have indicated an interest in the project and have been actively engaged in the E-government working group or have identified themselves as the E-government librarian for their library, to participate in phone interviews and complete the field review instrument.	Complete	<i>February 2010</i>
2. Conduct 14 interviews related to the brief needs assessment to determine possible content, organization, and design factors for a statewide public library E-government web portal and complete 14 field reviews of Pasco County Public Libraries' E-government Tools page ( <a href="http://pascolibraries.org/egovtools.shtml">http://pascolibraries.org/egovtools.shtml</a> ).	Complete	<i>March 2010</i>
3. Recruit a convenience sample of undergraduates to complete the focus group and field review instrument.	Complete	<i>April 2010</i>

**Table 1. Key Activities Conducted During the First Two Reporting Periods (continued).**

<b>ACTIVITY</b>	<b>STATUS UPDATE</b>	<b>TIMELINE</b>
<i>TASK 1</i>		
4. Conduct a focus group and field review testing to collect feedback on the possible design, content, and access modes for the web portal with undergraduates.	Complete	<i>April 2010</i>
5. Conduct internal website review.	Complete	<i>April 2010</i>
6. Review selected state and federal E-government resources and services for possible content and resources that may be of use to the statewide E-government portal.	Complete	<i>April 2010</i>
7. Analyze needs assessment data.	Complete	<i>April 2010</i>
<i>TASK 2</i>		
1. Identify the LSTA programs.	Complete	<i>March 2010</i>
2. Conduct a presentation at the Florida Library Association (FLA) 2010 Annual Conference and receive feedback from librarians.	Complete	<i>April 2010</i>
2. Produce a summary handout showcasing the Florida LSTA E-government programs and distribute 40 copies at the FLA Conference (Appendix A).	Complete	<i>April 2010</i>
3. Draft the component indicators to assess the programs individually and overall with assistance from the State Library and Archives.	Complete	<i>April – May 2010</i>
4. Meet with staff from the State Library and Archives to review draft component indicators.	Complete	<i>May 2010</i>
<i>TASK 3</i>		
1. Review E-government service roles at the basic and collaborative levels.	Complete	<i>May 2010</i>
2. Meet with staff from the State Library and Archives to review draft service roles.	Complete	<i>May 2010</i>
<i>OVERALL PROJECT</i>		
1. IRB revisions and IRB approval <sup>10</sup>	Complete	<i>February –</i>
2. Meet with PCLC to discuss needs assessment strategy on March 3, 2010.	Complete	<i>March 2010</i>
3. Meet with statewide working group on March 2 and May 4, 2010.	Complete	<i>March – May 2010</i>
4. Produce the first interim report.	Complete	<i>March 2010</i>
5. Produce the second interim report.	Complete	<i>May 2010</i>

**Activities Conducted in the Third Reporting Period**

In the past twelve weeks, the study team completed the activities in Table 2. These activities addressed the usability/functionality/accessibility testing of the statewide public library E-government web portal (Task 1). Other activities addressed determining the component indicators to assess the LSTA-funded E-government projects, individually and overall (Task 2). Activities related to service roles (Task 3) addressed operationalizing those service roles for practical application in public libraries.

<sup>10</sup> The Institutional Review Board (IRB) serves as an administrative unit at FSU that approves all research involving human subjects.

**Table 2: Key Activities Conducted During This Reporting Period.**

<b>ACTIVITY</b>	<b>STATUS UPDATE</b>	<b>TIMELINE</b>
<i>TASK 1</i>		
1. Conduct usability/functionality/accessibility testing of the web portal, as of its status on July 1, 2010 –		
• Develop website expert review instrument to provide feedback on the completed web portal; and	Complete	July 2010
• Analyze data from expert review of web portal.	Complete	July 2010
2. Meet with staff from the State Library to discuss findings.	Complete	July 2010
<i>TASK 2</i>		
1. Test draft statewide evaluation/data collection strategy –		
• Provide a draft statewide evaluation/data collection strategy and design methods to implement statewide evaluation/data collection strategy.	Complete	June 2010
2. Provide statewide evaluation/data collection of components of LSTA-funded E-government program –		
• Provide template for evaluation of various LSTA-funded E-government programs; and	Complete	June 2010
• Provide a summary evaluation of the overall E-government initiative.	Complete	June 2010
3. Obtained feedback and suggestions from PCLC, State Library, and members of the statewide E-government working group via discussion draft posted to wiki.	Complete	July 2010
<i>TASK 3</i>		
1. Design current best practices and detail the service roles –		
• Analyze feedback on service roles from statewide E-government working group and ALA E-government committee.	Complete	June 2010
2. Detail drafted E-government service roles for practical application in Florida public libraries.	Complete	June – July 2010
<i>OVERALL PROJECT</i>		
1. Obtain ongoing feedback and suggestions from PCLC, State Library, and other knowledgeable staff.	Complete	June – August, 2010
2. Produce final report.	Complete	August 2010

The following sections detail project findings for each of the three tasks. After those three sections, the report summarizes Overall Project Findings. The final section of this report, Summary and Implications, describes other activities that the Information Institute, State Library, and others might conduct related to the continued evaluation of the E-government web portal, further development and implementation of a statewide evaluation strategy for E-government services and resources in public libraries, and revision of E-government service roles.

**Task 1: Web Portal Needs Assessment and Usability/Functionality/Accessibility Testing**

Task 1 included a needs assessment to determine possible content, organization, and design factors for a statewide public library E-government web portal and usability/functionality/accessibility testing to provide an assessment of the E-government web portal developed by the PCLC, as of July 1, 2010. For the consent form and data collection instruments related to Task 1 see Appendices B through F. The second interim report detailed

the key findings of the needs assessment, including (1) an analysis of interviews and field review testing with librarians and a focus group and field review testing with undergraduates, (2) an internal Information Institute website review, and (3) a review of selected state and federal E-government resources and services for possible content and resources that may be of use to the statewide E-government web portal. The following sections review the key findings and recommendations from the needs assessment, conducted from February to April 2010, discuss the findings of the usability/functionality/accessibility testing, and synthesize all findings to provide recommendations to improve the E-government web portal.

### *Key Findings from the Needs Assessment*

The needs assessment included (1) interviews and field review testing with librarians and a focus group and field review testing with undergraduates, (2) an internal Information Institute website review, and (3) a review of selected state and federal E-government resources and services for possible content and resources that may be of use to the statewide E-government web portal. This section includes the key findings from the overall needs assessment. Key findings include:

- The web portal should be designed for those with basic needs and basic skills.
- The majority of interviewees and focus group participants thought the web portal would be organized best by the needs of users.
- Almost all librarians and undergraduates thought that the page should have a search feature.
- Many participants thought the flashy, moving vertical text, and interactive components are attractive visualizations, but that (1) they are not practical for navigation because some users with low levels of computer literacy or any visual impairment would have difficulty understanding these elements, (2) that future pages should not rely on Flash because at large font sizes, it is difficult to use and because as much content as possible should be available in text format, and (3) some areas with slow connectivity speeds may not have sufficient bandwidth or up-to-date browsers that could handle any type of “moving parts” or videos.
- Almost all librarians thought a demo of the web portal would be sufficient for training and most preferred a webinar method of delivering that training.
- The undergraduates found the current FAQ confusing and felt that some users may be confused that the page’s FAQ is a bank of frequently asked E-government questions and not FAQ about the web page.
- Many of the services and resources listed on the current page and those mentioned by librarians in the interviews should be included in the web portal.

The key findings from the needs assessment detailed feedback from librarians, undergraduates, and an expert review. The Information Institute made the following recommendations based on these key findings with the goal of influencing the development of the statewide E-government web portal.

### *Recommendations Based on the Needs Assessment*

A few recommendations resulted from the needs assessment. Based on comments from librarians and undergraduates, the overall content, organization, and design of the web portal should keep the users in mind and acknowledge their basic needs and skills. In addition, Flash or other attractive visualizations should be used in a limited manner because of users' possible low computer literacy levels and visual impairments and the software and connectivity limitations of several public libraries in the state. Other recommendations include:

- Organize the web portal by user needs.
- The web portal should have a search feature.
- Reduce white space on pages.
- A brief overview webinar to demo the portal is sufficient for training.
- Utilize FAQ in a traditional way.
- Continue to follow accessibility standards.
- Include many of the services and resources already on the Pasco website and those mentioned by librarian interviewees.

These recommendations were based upon key findings from the needs assessment. Although the Information Institute acknowledges that several considerations will be made in the creation of the statewide E-government web portal, these simple recommendations are provided to assist in refining the current E-government web page into something more usable for users and librarians. The usability/functionality/accessibility testing provided additional findings and recommendations for refining the current E-government web portal.

### *Usability/functionality/accessibility Testing*

The purpose of the usability/functionality/accessibility testing is to provide an assessment of the E-government web portal developed by the PCLC (<http://gethelpflorida.org/>). Testing of the web portal occurred as of its status on July 1, 2010. The testing followed the needs assessment performed on PCLC's E-government Tools page (<http://pascolibraries.org/egovtools.shtml>) discussed above and in the second interim report (<http://ii.fsu.edu/content/view/full/35680>). This section includes an overview of the testing, results for usability, functionality, and accessibility testing, recommendations for refining the current E-government web portal, and a summary.

#### Overview

The overview of usability, functionality, and accessibility assessments presented in this report provides a formative assessment of the *Pasco County Public Library Cooperative E-Government Services in Public Libraries, 2010* website (<http://gethelpflorida.org/>). Results for this report were obtained using an expert review where members of the study team assessed the website using three methods, as follows:

- Usability Inspection: assessed the effectiveness and efficiency of content access throughout the site, use of the site, and usefulness of site content;

- Functionality Testing: assessed the degree to which all aspects of the website are functional and operate properly; and
- Accessibility Testing: assessed the level at which the website can be used by individuals with disabilities.

The results presented in this report include recommendations that can inform the E-government website development team of steps that can be taken to improve the website. The study team's needs assessment found a number of items that could be addressed. The following leads to similar recommendations as those based on the needs assessment.

### Usability Inspection Results

A usability inspection provides an assessment of a website by individuals associated with the development of the site. Usability inspections are typically used during the development process and include systematic and extensive testing of all navigation toolbars, links, and features of a website, and a review of the usefulness of page content. The usability inspection for this report assessed the effectiveness and efficiency with which the E-government resources website presents and provides access for users to the site's content and usefulness of site content. Aspects of the usability inspection include:

- Website navigation features;
- Search feature;
- Navigation measures such as unique page views, steps to locate desired content, unproductive navigation choices, and navigation errors;
- Location and visibility of links in content areas;
- Location of support features such as *contact information*, *technical assistance*, and *help*; and
- Page-specific comments.

Areas included are based on general information seeking behaviors and needs of users. Assessments occurred through the Internet Explorer and Firefox interfaces. Usability-inspection data collection efforts were conducted July 9-10, 2010 and are based on the website development status on those dates.

#### *Website Navigation Features*

An assessment of website navigation focuses on users' ability to navigate to specific web pages, between site pages, and back through pages to the site's home page. Website design can incorporate a variety of navigation features to enhance users' use of websites. Navigation features include:

- Toolbars that consist of key site topics on tabs located at the top or either side of a page where all toolbar content is always visible on each website page;
- Page headers and descriptive metadata that identify each page as the targeted page;
- Links and anchor tags, located with care and clearly visible to users; and

- Breadcrumbs, which provide a progressive trail of links to layers of web pages users view during navigation of the site.

Website developers determine navigation feature use and inclusion based on user needs and site complexity, such as the depth users can drill into website content (i.e., unique pages/website layers a user must traverse to reach targeted information). The results of the website navigation-feature assessment are divided into the categories listed above: Navigation Toolbars, Page Headers and Descriptive Metadata, and Links and Anchor Tags, which includes breadcrumbs.

### Navigation Toolbars

Navigation toolbars provide navigation assistance to users and as such should always remain visible on all pages of a website. *Get Help Florida* has a top of page tab toolbar with additional toolbar topics located in website page footers. The top of page toolbar tabs are not clearly visible to users of the website since tabs are not marked with images, lines, or highlighting. For sites such as this one that have multiple toolbar tabs, highlighting the tabs as users select them alerts the users of the tab selection and enhances navigation through the site by readily identifying the relationship between targeted web page content and the broader, information-based toolbar tabs. In addition, the toolbar is located directly under the banner image, impeding visibility.

The top navigation toolbar (i.e., tabs) remains visible for all *Get Help Florida* main pages, excluding external pages that open in a new window. For example, each county website resource page of the *Local Resources* map (<http://gethelpflorida.org/localresources.shtml>) opens in a new window, which helps to alert users that the original website is still open. Users can close the window and return to the *Local Resources* page. The navigation toolbar at the top of the page remains visible from each page of the website.

As to website page footers, website content navigation topics are typically not included in page footers. Page footers typically contain links to website development and maintenance information, such as privacy policy statements, disclaimer statements, administrator contact information, webmaster/developer contact information, and/or site brands. Web content information topics are not very effective as navigation tools when located in page footers, as users may not intuitively scroll to the bottom of web pages to locate website content links. In addition, some of the pages include a lot of white space between the page content and the page footer. The white space discourages users from viewing page footer topics, as users may not scroll down or have awareness of the existence of the page footer.

Based on this assessment, this report has several recommendations with regard to the navigation toolbars, as follows:

- Top toolbar:
  - Change current tabs so that user selection highlights a tab to improve users' abilities to navigate the website, and
  - Add images, lines, or other indicators so users may identify the toolbar as separate from the banner image more clearly; and

- Page footers:
  - Remove the topics from the page footer and create a specific navigation topic tab for links to plug-ins and technical assistance information that users can more readily locate,
  - Add a privacy statement and contact information for website developers/managers and the webmaster to each page footer, and
  - Reduce the amount of white space between page content and page footers.

These recommendations are provided as a guide to the website developers/managers to assist with improving the usability of the website.

### Page Headers and Descriptive Metadata

Users can more readily identify that they have reached targeted website content when web pages contain title headers and page content descriptive metadata. For example, the *Local Resources* page could open to a page with the header, *Florida Resources by County*. The header metadata could inform users “Florida local resources are available via the interactive map or by county name ([below](#)).” The brief description alerts users that the map is interactive and that links to each county are available below the map via the blue anchor tag ([below](#)).

Based on this assessment, this report has two recommendations with regard to the page headers, as follows:

- Add page headers to all pages and minimal descriptive metadata as needed;
- Remove technical assistance information from web page content;
- Add a *Technical Assistance* tab to the top toolbar or page banner, and link to the tab in the *Help* section (i.e. to be added) that directs individuals who need technical assistance to the needed information; and
- Insert links in page content, if needed, to technical assistance instead of including technical assistance information in the page content.

These recommendations are provided as a guide to the website developers/administrators to assist with improving the usability of the website.

### Links and Anchor Tags

Links and anchor tags provide navigation to pages/resources located in the website, page content below the visible window, and to other websites or resources not included in the host website. The website design incorporates links, lists of links, and some anchor tags. For example, the *State & Federal Resources* and *F.A.Q.s* home pages utilize lists of links to resources and frequently asked questions for each subject area, respectively. Listed links on these pages serve as page-specific navigation toolbars as they remain visible to users searching the topic areas for each page. Links located in the site’s web page footers, however, are difficult to locate as they are in an atypical location. Users would not expect content links in footers. The *Professional Resources* home page description indicates that the page includes the categories

*About Us* (clearly visible on the page) and *Core Values*, *Resources*, and *Timeline* (all located below the visible window); however, the page does not utilize anchor tags to help users locate the information below the visible web page window.

Breadcrumbs allow users to go back to prior web page levels (e.g., [State & Federal Resources](#) >> [Job Help](#) >> [Employment](#)). The website does not utilize breadcrumbs as links for individuals to navigate back through layers of web pages.

Based on this assessment, this report has the following recommendations with regard to links and anchor tags, as follows:

- Alphabetize lists on pages, particularly long lists of links to aide users in locating topics;
- Change the lists of links so each link highlights when selected;
- On the *Professional Resources* page, the terms *Core Values*, *Resources*, and *Timeline* should use anchor tags to make access to these other page areas easier for users;
- Remove topics (links) from the page footer and create a specific navigation topic/tab for links to plug-ins and technical assistance information that users can more readily locate; and
- Incorporate breadcrumb software in the website.

These recommendations are provided as a guide to the website developers/administrators to assist with improving the usability of the website.

### *Search Feature*

The visible *Search* feature is included in the site's top toolbar so the link to the search page is prominent at the top of each page. The search box is also available at the bottom of each page in the footer. The top toolbar search feature is easy to use and intuitive; however, the search feature only offers basic search functions. Search features are typically not located in page footers as this makes the feature difficult for users to locate. Also, the search results performed in the page footer do not display without scrolling to the bottom of the page after the search results are returned.

The website search feature utilizes *Google Custom Search*, which will provide a hit list that includes a mix of website hits and Internet resource hits; however, the *Google Custom Search* engine is not very accurate or reliable in returned results. For example, the site contains a list of resources under *State & Federal Resources* >> *Job Help* >> *Employment*. A *Google Custom Search* using the term *employment* only returns 14 hits, none of which are listed under the *Employment* resource header. Another *Google Custom Search* using the term *job help employment* only returns eight hits, none of which are listed under the *State & Federal Resources* >> *Job Help* >> *Employment* header. Additional searches have similar returns.

Based on this assessment, this report has the following recommendations with regard to the search feature, as follows:

- The website includes a large number of resources and needs website-specific search software with both basic and advanced search capabilities to enhance the users' ability to locate specific information contained in the website;
- The website needs search software that is customizable via document meta-tags to all site resources and web page headers;
- Consider adding a separate search link to Google and/or government-information search sites such as *USA.gov* or *MyFlorida.com* to aid users seeking additional Internet access federal or state resources;
- Due to the large number of resources available through the website and the Internet, the website needs an interactive subject search feature with a pre-loaded list of site-specific subject areas (either of which should link to the resource topic areas) to improve users' ability to search the website for resources; and
- Remove the search box from the footer.

These recommendations are provided as a guide to the website developers/administrators to assist with improving the usability of the website.

### *Navigation Measures*

Navigation measures include unique page views, steps to locate desired content, unproductive navigation choices, and navigation errors/successful error recoveries. The number of unique pages viewed and steps to locate desired content (e.g., via the navigation toolbar and links in content areas) averaged fewer than three unique page views per site search and fewer than three steps per navigation attempt. This falls well within the generally accepted 3-5 steps (or fewer) usability range for searches and navigation to content. No unproductive navigation choices or navigation errors occurred while navigating internal links, embedded links, anchor tabs, and links to external documents/web pages of the site. The low number of unique page views, few steps to locate desired content, no unproductive navigation choices, and no navigation errors indicate that navigation time and number of search steps through the website to desired content areas via the navigation toolbar and links is effective and efficient.

### *Support Features*

Support features include areas such as *Contact Us*, *Help*, and *Technical Assistance*. The website includes a *Contact Us* section and provides some technical assistance/guidance as content for selected web pages throughout the site; however, this website does not have a dedicated toolbar link for *Help* or *Technical Assistance*.

The navigation toolbar contains a *Contact Us* feature (tab). The site singularly depends on a web form for individuals to provide comments, ask questions, or for any other contact need. The contact form is the only means located for individuals to contact the website development/management team or site webmaster (i.e., there is no contact information anywhere in the site other than the contact form for users to contact the development team or webmaster). This limits the amount of useful feedback available from users of the site.

Some of the website pages include technical assistance information on how to increase or decrease the type size of text on the page. These instructions for increasing type size are only for Windows users (i.e., CTRL and + keys) and do not address Mac user needs (i.e., use the Command AKA Open Apple key and + key).

The *Contact Us* page includes the disclaimer that “**this page requires javascript to be enabled to use the mail function.**” There is no link on this page, however, to technical assistance on how to disable or enable Javascript. This may keep some users from providing useful comments as they may not know where to find help or will not take the time to locate the needed help. Some users may not have technical skills to disable or enable Javascript even with the straightforward instructions so they could not use the feature and would have no means of communicating with the website development/management team as there are no other forms of contact available through the site.

Based on this assessment, this report has the following recommendations with regard to support features, as follows:

- Contact Us:
  - The mail function form is a viable means of contact for many users of the site; however, additional contact information should be included on this page, such as a mailing/email address for the development team and/or webmaster,
  - Add multiple means of contact from the Contact Us area and in the footers of every page. This will increase potential user feedback to improve the content areas of the website from user suggestions/comments, improve maintenance of the website through user-identified broken links, etc., and provide opportunities for potential funding partners and other projects because interested parties have a way to contact the development/management team for similar types of projects, and
  - Identify whom the user is contacting from this page since users may not know if they are contacting their local library, the State Library, a government agency, the Pasco library, or anyone else;
- Help: Add a prominent *Help* feature both in the top toolbar and in the footer, which could include topics such as information technology, accessibility, webmaster contact information, and perhaps links to external information technology help websites; and
- Technical Assistance: Add instructions for Mac users to increase or decrease type sizes of text on the screen (i.e., use the Command AKA Open Apple key and + key).

These recommendations are provided as a guide to the website developers/administrators to assist with improving the usability of the website.

### *General Web Page and Page-Content Comments*

This section first discusses general issues regarding the web portal, with emphasis on Branding and Social Networking. Then, page-specific issues are discussed for the *Home, State & Federal Resources, Local Resources, Income Eligibility, F.A.Q.s, Contact Us and Search,* and *Professional Resources* pages.

### Branding and Social Networking

The website is not branded as a public library E-government services website as the website header, footer, and none of the page headers includes the term E-government Resources. In addition, the term E-government is not mentioned in the *Home*, *State & Federal Resources*, *Income Eligibility*, *F.A.Q.s*, or *Search* sections' home pages. The website also does not contain any easily located branding features for other entities, such as LSTA and the State Library so users can identify the funders/supporters of the website. The site does have two "e-gov Florida Libraries" icons located in the footer. Issues include:

- The site is not identified (branded) as an E-government public library service and resource website;
- Current website icons are not easily located as they are in the footer; and
- Current website icons are labeled the same yet they link to two different sections of the *Professional Resources* section (i.e., *About Us* and *Core Values* for the left and right icon, respectively).

In addition to branding issues, there are at present no interactive (i.e., Web 2.0) features associated with the website, such as blogs, threaded discussion lists, or social networking links, such as Facebook or MySpace. Interactive features such as blogs and threaded discussion lists allow users to interact with the website development/management team and each other. Developing social networks, such as Facebook and MySpace can help promote interest in the site, which may be a future site development effort prior to the promotion and dissemination phase of the project.

Based on this assessment, this report has the following recommendations with regard to website branding and social networking, as follows:

- Brand the site in the page header so users can readily identify the site as an E-government resources site related to public library services;
- Add brands for project funders/supporters in a dedicated, clearly labeled site area;
- Remove the two "e-gov Florida Libraries" icons located in the footer; and
- Consider adding interactive components to the website and creating Facebook and MySpace (or others) pages to promote the site, if not already planned.

These recommendations are provided as a guide to the website developers/administrators to assist with improving the usability of the website.

### Home

The *Home* page includes a welcome statement followed by a statement that informs users they can locate resources on the home page, which is incorrect. The statement should say "through the links below." The *Home* page also includes the top toolbar, a list of the toolbar links in the page content, and another list of the toolbar links in the footer. There is no introductory content or link to information about the site, such as an explanation/definition of E-

government, importance of providing a dedicated website of public library E-government services and resources, or need and use of the site. These areas would inform users of the importance of E-government information access and the need for a public library E-government website. Essentially, there is no content that describes the site as a public library E-government services website and no explanation of how libraries play a role in the delivery of E-government services to the communities they serve. In addition, there is no date of when the site was last updated on the page.

Based on this assessment, this report has the following recommendations with regard to the *Home* page, as follows:

- Remove the descriptive toolbar related information from the *Home* page content area and relocate it to the home page of each toolbar link as users may navigate to different pages from elsewhere in the site and never read the information currently on the *Home* page (i.e., information about each area should be located on the home page for each area);
- Remove the links from the footer (already mentioned in the Links and Anchor Tags area above);
- Add a short description of the project, information about E-government resources, and the usefulness of the E-government website for public libraries:
  - This information can be brief and contain links to pages with additional information for each topic, such as pages that open in new windows for additional information about E-government, E-government resources, and other E-government related information,
  - The additional information can be accessed through a button that opens/closes the content and is labeled Additional Information, and
  - The links can be to specific areas of the *About Us* section, such as to topic specific sub headers that describe the project, the project team, and the role(s) of funding/support agencies in the development of this site (e.g., LSTA funded through the State Library); and
- Add a statement in the footer that tells when the website was last updated.

These recommendations are provided as a guide to the website developers/administrators to assist with improving the usability of the website.

### State & Federal Resources

The *State & Federal Resources* home page contains information specific to how to use the page; however, there is no content that says the page provides access to state and federal resources. As mentioned before in this report, the subject list of resources and listed resources should be alphabetized. There are many resources available through this section of the website; however, the resources do not include a separate federal agency section or Florida agency section so users could go directly to the agency websites instead of searching through the site's resource lists.

Based on this assessment, this report has the following recommendations with regard to *State & Federal Resources*, as follows:

- Add a description of state and federal resources to the page;
- Alphabetize the subject list and the resource lists;
- Add specific sections with links to applicable federal agency websites and another section for applicable Florida agency websites so users can go directly to an agency website;
- Consider adding a section for *Other E-government Websites*, such as state E-government websites (e.g., Wyoming), federal E-government portals (USA.gov or Google Uncle Sam), and other public library (or other library type) E-government websites;
- Consider adding a section for *Additional Resources* to provide access to public library papers, guides, reports, and other documents/information related to the provision of E-government service access through public libraries; and
- Although not part of this assessment, consider conducting a review of other state, federal, and public library E-government websites to locate relevant and useful sites to link from this site.

These recommendations are provided as a guide to the website developers/administrators to assist with improving the usability of the website.

### Local Resources

The map on the *Local Resources* home page is an excellent visual representation for users and the website includes a list of counties under the map for users who prefer a textual representation. The map does not include labels for each county in the image; labels are available on mouseover, but a user who is unfamiliar with the geography of Florida might struggle to locate his county without names on the image. Also, if the user does not read the text block that explains about the page, the user might not know that the county list (by county name) is below the map.

The county map is for the 211 service of most counties; however, the page does not include a list of counties that do not provide the 211 service. The page should keep the statement that 211 services include more than just E-government services so users will not expect an E-government specific county website.

Based on this assessment, this report has the following recommendations with regard to local resources, as follows:

- Label the *Local Resources* home page *Florida Resources by County*;
- Remove the existing instructions and add metadata that informs users “Florida local resources are available via the interactive map or by county name ([below](#))” in order to alert users that the map is interactive and that links to each county are available below the map via the blue in-text link ([below](#));
- Add a *Help* link at the end of the description that opens to a page that contains the original interactive map instructions;
- Consider replacing the list of counties with a drop down list of counties to the left of the map;

- Label counties on the map to improve the intuitive usability of the *Local Resources* page, particularly for users with lower technology skill levels or experience in using interactive maps without the need for a lot of descriptive/directions metadata;
- Provide a list of counties that do not provide the 211 service; and
- Although not a part of this assessment, consider an assessment of the 211 services offered by counties to determine the usefulness of these sites for user access to E-government services at the county level.

These recommendations are provided as a guide to the website developers/administrators to assist with improving the usability of the website.

### Income Eligibility

There is a lot of text in the text block explaining the income eligibility table. However, the text says this is the table for Florida and “most other states” but there is no indication of the states to which this table does not apply (e.g., Alaska and Hawaii). Consider adding a link to the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services website of frequently asked questions related to poverty guidelines and poverty (<http://aspe.hhs.gov/poverty/faq.shtml>). The site provides answers to how poverty guides are established, how often, links to older guideline versions, and questions that address explanations, such as the difference between poverty guidelines and poverty thresholds.

### F.A.Q.s

The content of this page provides directions on how to use the *F.A.Q.s* section with no information about where the questions originated or mention that subjects are selected and do not represent all possible E-government questions. The subject areas include long lists of questions that are time-consuming to read through as presented and these lists of questions include a multitude of topics per subject area.

Based on this assessment, this report has the following recommendations with regard to the F.A.Q.s feature, as follows:

- Remove the directions on use and replace with a link to directions on how to use the F.A.Q.s;
- Add descriptive content that includes a statement that the site includes selected subject areas with a few selected questions per subject topic due to the broad subjects covered in the F.A.Q.s section; this should include a disclaimer in the content area that the site only includes a representative sample of subjects and subject topic questions, that it is not possible to include all potential E-government questions, and that the site will continue to add more questions and topic areas as identified and as E-government policy evolves;
- Create sub headings for each list of questions and provide a list of the sub headings as anchor tabs at the top of each list page; and
- Consider expanding the questions by sub heading as needed to adequately address frequently asked questions for each sub heading.

These recommendations are provided as a guide to the website developers/administrators to assist with improving the usability of the website.

### Contact Us and Search

For *Contact Us* comments, see the discussion of *Support Features* (p. 13). For *Search* comments, see the discussion (p. 12) of *Search Features*.

### Professional Resources

At the top of the *Professional Resources* page, the text reads “**This page is organized into four principle categories: About Us, Core Values, Resources, and Timeline.**” This should say principal, not principle, and this is one of several grammatical mistakes on the website. As with any written document, this website could benefit from a thorough proofread, including spelling and grammar check. In addition, the categories of *About Us*, *Core Values*, *Resources*, and *Timeline* should be hyperlinked to anchor tags down the page so users do not have to scroll for each category (this was done on other pages, such as State/Federal Resources >> Job Help). Another issue with this page is that the content is basically all “About Us” content (i.e., about the project and the project team), so the page and navigation tab should be renamed to About Us.

Based on the title of the page and description of this page on the Home Page, it seems that Professional Resources would be lists of trainings, E-government resources for other institutions/organizations, etc., none of which is on this page. What is included is a mix of information about the project, justification for the project and website design, information about resource topics, another description of the toolbar topics, a list of core values, a bit on resources, and a long, timeline overview.

Based on this assessment, this report has the following recommendations with regard to the *Professional Resources* feature, as follows:

- Change the name to About Us, or something similar as the Professional Resources tag in an E-government resources website suggest a list of actual E-government resources;
- Remove justification for the project, website design, and lengthy timeline overview of the project; and
- Include additional subject area content that includes resources and trainings for public librarians on providing E-government services, such as ALA’s E-government Toolkit (<http://www.ala.org/ala/issuesadvocacy/egovtoolkit/index.cfm>).

These recommendations are provided as a guide to the website developers/administrators to assist with improving the usability of the website.

### **Functionality Testing Results**

Functionality is the degree to which all aspects of a website are functional and operate properly. Functionality testing helps assure that a system performs as expected. The testing insures that the website provides access to the intended services and resources needed by the

targeted population of users. Functionality testing helps provide a product with a minimal amount of problems. Functionality testing for this assessment includes:

- Metadata links;
- Links from headers, navigation bars, and task bars to areas in the website;
- URL links in reference and resource lists; and
- Other links to sources or resources listed in pages of the website, internal and external.

Functionality testing includes a systematic assessment of every page of the project's website.

The study team utilized the expert testing approach for the functionality assessment, where the expert testers (i.e., study team members) designed and executed standard evaluation and testing approaches based on existing best practices. The study team designed the test based on an organized set of concise patterns created to assure that testers did not miss anything important. Functionality testing occurred July 11-12, 2010.

Results of the functionality assessment found that all links from the navigation toolbar, links in content areas of the site, and other navigation features are functional and operate properly. The links take the user to content described by the link metadata. In addition, at the time of testing, all resource links were operational and linked to the appropriate websites.

### Accessibility Testing Results

Accessibility is the level at which a technology can be used by individuals with disabilities. This can include having built-in accessibility features and working with adaptive technologies individuals with disabilities may use. Accessibility testing is particularly important in Florida as many seniors have disabilities including visual, hearing, and mobility impairments that affect the ability to use web-based materials. Accessibility testing occurred July 11-12, 2010.

The accessibility of websites is commonly measured using two sets of standards—the World Wide Web Consortium guidelines for accessibility (<http://www.w3c.org>) and the Federal legal standards of accessibility established by Section 508 §1194.22<sup>11</sup> of the Rehabilitation Act (<http://www.section508.gov>). Members of the study team evaluated selected criteria as developed from section 508 accessibility standards, using eight questions to frame the testing. Results of the accessibility testing are presented by question followed by a description of the findings related to the questions.

#### *1. Provides Equivalent Alternatives to Auditory and Visual Content?*

The Zoom feature (i.e., Ctrl and + or Ctrl and -) readily enlarges most website text without distortion, except for the *Timeline* under Professional Resources, which is very difficult to read when the zoom feature is used. The Microsoft Office narrator feature provides limited

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<sup>11</sup> Section 508 §1194.22 of the Rehabilitation Act Amendments of 1998 requires that Federal agencies ensure the accessibility of their web-based intranet and Internet information and applications.

and sporadic audio (i.e., voice-over) for some HTML interface features and keystrokes; however, the narrator does not provide audio for any content of the site. Individuals with visual disabilities would need to use a screen reader with higher functionality for daily narrator assistance.

*2. Does Not Rely on Color Alone?*

The site does rely on color alone and the colors used are limited in meeting accessibility standards. The text in the frames (including the main toolbar) and the links are a mix of blue and violet (i.e., links begin as blue then turn violet once selected) and remain as dark colors. When viewed using high contrast black, many of the navigation links remain a dark blue against the black background, which makes viewing the links difficult. This is important as individuals with visual disabilities commonly use high contrast black. High contrast black produces light colored text highlighted against a dark background. A solution for this would be to select text colors that change to a lighter color with high contrast black.

*3. Uses Markup and Style Sheets and Does So Properly?*

The HTML code and style sheets used for the website readily accommodate text size modification. This makes the site accessible to users who change settings when using screen enlargement or different contrast settings.

*4. Creates Tables That Transform Gracefully?*

The income eligibility table and text boxes transform and maintain the integrity of the table and text box boundaries during text enlargement.

*5. Ensures Direct Accessibility of Embedded User Interfaces?*

The *Timeline* becomes distorted and loses clarity for both high black and high white contrast while in *Zoom* mode.

*6. Provides Context and Orientation Information?*

The website navigation toolbar provides the primary key context and orientation information on all pages. The *State & Federal Resources* and *F.A.Q.s* pages provide additional internal context and orientation information as the home pages for these topics include lists of sub-topics that remain visible while users access information in these areas.

7.

*Provides Clear Navigation Mechanisms?*

The site uses a top navigation toolbar and includes a limited search feature (i.e., no advanced search with delimiters or subject search capabilities). The site does not use side navigation toolbars for all pages or breadcrumbs. The site does have a Home link from the top navigation toolbar. Navigation mechanisms effectively enlarge to provide clear navigation mechanisms.

8. *Ensures That Documents Are Clear and Simple?*

The website pages are consistent, clear, and simple in design. Documents and websites that open in new windows readily enlarge using the *Zoom* feature.

**Summary**

The usability/functionality/accessibility testing of the web portal finds that the site is not branded or labeled as a project that explores E-government services in public libraries, as the grant title implies. The terms “E-government” and “public libraries” are not in the header or footer on any of the website pages. The terms “E-government” and “public libraries” also are not mentioned in the *Home, State & Federal Resources, Income Eligibility, F.A.Q.s, or Search* sections home pages. Essentially, no content describes the site as a public library E-government services website or describes the relationship between public libraries, E-government services, and access to E-government resources. There is no explanation of how libraries play key, at times crucial, roles in the delivery of E-government services, resources, or assistance to the communities they serve. In the *About Us* section, the developers state that LSTA funds were awarded “to create a statewide E-government web portal for Florida” with no mention of public library E-government roles. The recommendations are to brand the website as a public library E-government resources web portal, to add information related to public library roles in the provision of E-government services to the communities they serve and access to E-government resources, and to indicate clearly which funding was used to create the web portal.

In terms of usability of the website, navigation through the website via the navigation toolbar is operational through both Internet Explorer and the Firefox browsers as the site is straightforward in design. The site includes additional navigation features in the *Home* page and website footers. The recommendation is to remove the additional toolbar-related features from the *Home* page and the website footer.

Navigation via the search tool is not very useful in locating website content as the site uses Google Custom Search software, which lacks advanced search functionality, and precision and accuracy of searches. The recommendation is to incorporate search software with advanced search options and to insert meta tags in each resource so the search feature can locate web-based resources. Another recommendation is to consider adding a Google search link, and perhaps federal search links (e.g., USA.gov and/or Google Uncle Sam) and a Florida search link (e.g., MyFlorida.com) to enhance users’ access to state and federal E-government services and resources.

Navigation measures indicate that the site is generally effective and efficient for users navigating through the site to desired content, in terms of number of steps and unique page views per navigation (search). Navigation between web pages and back to the *Home* page is also generally effective and efficient due to the lack of complex web pages and the *Home* link on the navigation toolbar. The addition of breadcrumbs software, however, is recommended to improve navigation throughout the site. Links are easy to locate; however, navigation through the *Contact Us* section is limited as several of the key areas presented in this section are not visible in the active window (i.e., users must scroll down to even know the information is available as there are no anchor links to the sections). Recommendations include adding anchor tabs to the *Contact Us* section.

Many of the website home pages include technical assistance guidance. It is recommended that this guidance be replaced with a link to assistance located in a dedicated *Technical Assistance* section of the website. There is also no *Help* feature on the site. A dedicated *Help* feature could include links to website specific technical assistance/guidance, contact information for the web developers/managers and web master, and external website technical assistance websites and software download websites, for both PC and Mac operating systems.

The website contains a *Contact Us* section with a contact form; however, some users may not have the technology skills needed to use the form. The website also does not have any developer/manager/web master contact information. It is recommended that additional developer/manager and web master contact information be added to the website footers and the *Contact Us* section so users can provide feedback capable of improving site content, identifying functionality issues (e.g., broken links and non-working URLs), and for general contact with the site development and management team.

The assessment includes page-specific comments. In general, each page should include headers and sub headers as needed, a brief description of the topic area, and links to additional information related to the topic as needed. All lists (i.e., topic and resource) should be alphabetized, and the subject resource lists could use additional sub headers with anchor tabs to improve users' access to the resources. Recommendations also include creating additional E-government resource subjects to provide direct links to E-government federal agency home pages, state agency home pages, and other E-government resource websites (e.g., other state and library developed E-government specific websites).

In addition, recommendations include considering a subject section for public library papers, guides, reports, and other documents/information related to the provision of E-government service access through public libraries. For the *F.A.Q.s* section, create sub headings and utilize anchor tabs to help users locate desired questions by sub topic. In addition, rename the *Professional Resources* page, as it can be misleading to users, to *About Us*. *Professional Resources* suggest lists of E-government resources for professionals and can be confused with the *State & Federal Resources* section.

In terms of functionality, all links throughout the website were tested and worked properly. The functionality of the website is good. The website also meets minimum

accessibility standards. Text, links, tables and text boxes, HTML code, and style sheets all accommodate screen enlargement. The website also provides adequate context and orientation information (e.g., navigation features such as navigation links and the *Home* link). All website pages, with the exception of the timeline feature, accommodate screen enlargement.

While it is understood that the website is still under development and will continue to evolve, there are a number of areas (described above) where changes and improvements can be made. A range of additional content is possible for inclusion in the website, such as background and current literature regarding the provision of E-government services in public libraries, direct links to other useful sources such as the ALA E-government Toolkit,<sup>12</sup> and links to other selected, high quality E-government websites such as [www.usa.gov](http://www.usa.gov) and Google UncleSam (<http://www.google.com/unclesam>), etc. The developers may wish to develop a strategic plan to determine what additional content should be added to the website and how to best organize and navigate that content.

The Information Institute study team did not have access to the website analytics and various use logs. The study team recommends that a follow-up usability, functionality, and accessibility study be done that incorporates data from the website analytics in six months. In addition, this next review of the website should include a systematic assessment that collects usability data from *real* users of the website as well as from state and local government officials. Finally, the next assessment should consider the appropriateness of the content and/or need for additional content and the extent to which the website incorporates social networking applications.

The study team hopes these suggestions are useful to the website developers as the need for and importance of a Florida-based public library E-government website is significant. There is no need for individual public libraries to have separate tools and materials that they have developed on their own regarding E-government when one site, such as this one, can leverage the available resources for the benefit of everyone. The continual evolution and improvement of the website will benefit all public librarians and all residents in the state of Florida. The findings from this study's needs assessment and usability/functionality/accessibility testing indicate more refining may improve the overall usability of the web portal.

### **Task 2: Evaluation of LSTA-funded E-government Programs and Statewide E-government Reporting**

The purpose of this task is to (1) draft a statewide E-government services evaluation/data collection strategy and (2) provide a template for evaluation of various LSTA-funded E-government programs. This section includes a review of Task 2 activities throughout the entire project, a draft of the statewide E-government services evaluation/data collection strategy, and templates with component indicators for evaluation of the eight LSTA-funded E-government programs.

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<sup>12</sup> <http://www.ala.org/ala/issuesadvocacy/egovtoolkit/index.cfm>

### *Review of Activities Throughout the Project*

Project activities to date included collecting descriptions of the LSTA-funded E-government projects, creating a handout of the projects, presenting these projects at the Florida Library Association (FLA) Conference, determining component indicators, choosing statewide E-government reporting questions, and reviewing findings with staff from the State Library, PCLC, and other knowledgeable staff.

On April 7, 2010, the study team disseminated a handout to 40 attendees at a presentation at the FLA Conference. Karen Brown from the State Library, all project leaders, and Information Institute staff developed and designed the handout for dissemination at the presentation (see Appendix A). Creating the handout afforded an example of the challenges and opportunities related to collecting data in an effort to evaluate these projects.

After meeting with staff of the State Library and receiving feedback from the statewide E-government working group, the study team determined three possible approaches to conducting a statewide E-government reporting mechanism:

- Add a quantitative question to the annual statistical survey;
- Mine data on Florida from the *Public Library Funding and Technology Access Study 2008-2009 (PLFTAS)*<sup>13</sup>; and
- Consider the development and deployment of qualitative questions, for a separate data collection instrument from the annual statistical survey.

In this final report, the study team presents a draft statewide evaluation strategy and provides examples of these three possible approaches incorporating the feedback from E-government working group members and State Library staff on a discussion draft of these possible approaches (see below).<sup>14</sup> The State Library may incorporate any one or a combination of these approaches to implement a statewide evaluation strategy for E-government evaluation.

The study team also determined component indicators and chose statewide E-government reporting questions. The study team discussed these draft items with State Library staff. For the component indicators, the Information Institute acknowledges that several component indicators would be unique to one or a few projects; however, all projects could produce an E-government interaction count. The E-government interaction count would assess all interactions between residents of Florida and libraries' services and resources related to E-government, for example E-government reference transactions, hits to an E-government web page, attendees at an E-government training, checkouts of E-government dedicated laptops, etc. The study team decided to produce unique component indicators for each individual project because of the variety of component indicators related to the different projects (see below).

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<sup>13</sup> <http://0-www.ala.org.sapl.sat.lib.tx.us/ala/newspresscenter/mediapresscenter/presskits/plftas09/plftas09.cfm>

<sup>14</sup> [http://floridae-govworkgroup.pbworks.com/f/Draft\\_E-Gov\\_Evaluation\\_Strategies\\_May31.pdf](http://floridae-govworkgroup.pbworks.com/f/Draft_E-Gov_Evaluation_Strategies_May31.pdf)

*Draft Statewide Evaluation/Data Collection Strategy*

The following section includes three draft statewide evaluation strategies and examples of possible data collection approaches. Although any statewide evaluation strategy must consider the burden on library staff caused by additional data collection, data that measures public librarians' efforts to provide the State with E-government services could be invaluable as (1) agency budgets are reduced and the need for E-government assistance increases, and (2) public libraries provide more E-government services with less funding. Regardless of the E-government services provided by public libraries or the statewide evaluation strategy chosen, a clear message should be communicated to public libraries of the value and purpose of E-government data collection. Promotion also would need to include clear directions about the methods chosen to collect data.

Option 1: Quantitative Question Added to the Annual Statistical Survey

Prior to considering statewide evaluation/data collection strategies, the study team collected data collection instruments already in use around the state. Few public libraries and systems provided data collection instruments indicating that few libraries already collect data on E-government services. Those libraries that do collect data only collect counts of E-government reference transactions. Based on the study team's review of the data collection instruments that Florida public libraries already use to count E-government transactions, discussed below, the study team recommends adding one question to the annual statistical survey that asks for a count of all E-government interactions in a fiscal year.

Some libraries go beyond a general E-government reference transaction tally and keep track of the various types of E-government questions asked. The subcategories in use by Alachua County Public Libraries are not mutually exclusive, which might be problematic for a statewide data collection strategy. For example, they include Social Security, food stamps, unemployment, weekly wages, taxes, government jobs, worker's compensation, and veterans within E-government questions and count several E-government-related questions separately such as employment (e.g., unemployment), financial (e.g., taxes), health (e.g., Medicaid), and education (e.g., citizenship). On the other hand, Pasco County Public Libraries and Delray Beach Public Library use subcategories within E-government of education, employment, food stamps, immigration, medical, local government, Social Security, tax forms, unemployment, and veterans. These subcategories work well for the purpose of an all-encompassing E-government interaction count within public libraries.

Tampa-Hillsborough County Public Library (Tampa-Hillsborough) serves as an example of a public library that is aware of its E-government service role. Tampa-Hillsborough provides a list of the E-government services they provide, shown in Table 3. These services provide a basis for the definition of the Basic Service Role discussed in further detail in Task 3. The list includes the E-government services that the study team assumes most libraries provide, whether they are aware or not that these services are the Basic Service Role of E-government. These E-government services offer the State Library services for which data could be collected at a statewide level. The Tampa-Hillsborough list also includes E-government services that libraries

should *not* provide for liability reasons, important information to share with all Florida public libraries.

**Table 3: Basic E-government Services Provided by Most Libraries.**

<b>E-GOVERNMENT SERVICES</b>	<b>PROVIDED</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Providing basic computer instruction;</li> </ul>	May
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Finding information about government programs and services, jobs, education and other government transactions;</li> </ul>	May
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Locating websites with the requested E-government forms;</li> </ul>	May
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Providing limited assistance in completing applications and forms;</li> </ul>	May
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Assisting in obtaining free email accounts;</li> </ul>	May
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Assisting with copying and printing of transactions; and</li> </ul>	May
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Library Staff should refer customers needing additional assistance in completing forms and/or applications to the appropriate Hillsborough County government agency.</li> </ul>	May
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Advising customers as to which forms or applications they specifically need to obtain government services;</li> </ul>	May Not
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Entering data, completing forms in their entirety and/or submitting completed forms or applications for customers;</li> </ul>	May Not
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Serving as witness for any submission or completion of forms, applications or other documents; and</li> </ul>	May Not
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Interpreting questions asked on forms and applications, or advising of appropriate answers to questions asked on forms and applications.</li> </ul>	May Not

Table 3 provides a basic list of E-government services. Working group members expressed the idea that to fully display the impacts on library services and resources all E-government activities must be counted; however, the limitation that most public libraries are not collecting E-government data and the determination above of the most feasible data collection option suggests counting these basic services as a single E-government interaction. Although the *type* of each E-government interaction would be unique to residents and their needs, different combinations of the basic services depend on each library users' skill set and need. This variety of similar transactions makes quantifying all E-government reference transactions as a single unit more feasible. Also, the variation and granularity of question types related to E-government should not complicate any quantitative reporting as long as all systems and outlets would aggregate categories that fit within the State Library's definition of an E-government interaction.

Reviewing the data collection instruments used around the State further justifies the ease of collecting E-government interactions. Thus, counting individual E-government interactions, broadly defined, is a reasonable solution for any statewide evaluation, and the State Library could add such a count to the annual statistical survey. Several other interactions that libraries could count include attendees at E-government trainings, checkouts of E-government dedicated laptops, and hits to an E-government web page, but these options are only viable for certain library systems.

The annual statistical survey already includes a question regarding the total reference transactions per fiscal year. For the reasons discussed in this section, the study team recommends the addition of another question to capture E-government interactions. Unlike other reference transactions, E-government interactions relate to additional Service Roles resulting from the growth of E-government. The quantitative question would read as follows:

**How many E-government interactions occurred in the past fiscal year at your system?**

For the purposes of this question, an E-government interaction is defined as all reference transactions related to contact with the public that involve the knowledge, use, recommendation, interpretation, or instruction in the use of one or more E-government services or resources by a member of the library staff. The question responses would provide a benchmark for the number of E-government transactions occurring per library system per fiscal year and a count to use to assess the value of these services that public libraries are providing for the State.

The addition of any question to the annual statistical survey does take time. The State Data Coordinator told the study team that the process of adding a question to the annual statistical survey takes almost three years. The first step includes polling public libraries to see how many already collect the data and how much of a burden the additional question would be. Each public library would need to understand what constitutes an E-government interaction and how to count these interactions, perhaps, with a statewide form. If the data gleaned from the question is determined to be worth the burden of data collection and reporting, the State Library sends out a notice to announce the impending question. The question goes through a rules process for the State that takes eight months. Then, the survey includes the question for one year as an optional question. After that year, the question becomes required the subsequent year.

This delay gives public libraries time to implement data collection of any new statistic. However, the lag between deciding to add a question to the annual statistical survey and the ability to analyze data from public libraries' survey responses makes this approach the most lengthy for any return-on-investment. This is only one possible data collection approach that the State Library potentially could use as a statewide evaluation strategy of public library E-government services, but the benefits of having this data available at a statewide level may be worth beginning the three-year process of adding a question to the annual statistical survey.

### Option 2: Mine PLFTAS Data

Utilizing Florida findings from the national survey for *Public Library Funding and Technology Access Study 2009-2010*<sup>15</sup> is another approach to potentially use in a statewide evaluation strategy of public library E-government services. The response rate was high enough to generalize for Florida. Mining the survey's responses related to E-government provides data on the following:

- Whether libraries dedicate workstations to E-government or not;
- E-government services and roles provided by library branches;

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<sup>15</sup> <http://0-www.ala.org.sapl.sat.lib.tx.us/ala/newspresscenter/mediapresscenter/presskits/plftas09/plftas09.cfm>

- Challenges that affect public library E-government service provision; and
- Whether libraries provide access to job databases and/or helps patrons complete online job applications.

Appendix G includes descriptive statistics for Florida related to these topics. The benefit of this approach is that data have already been collected and analyzed. A drawback of this approach is the data only exists for library outlets responding to the survey. Perhaps this approach could be used as a supplementary component of any version of a statewide evaluation strategy because it involves the least amount of effort on the part of the State Library. Still, including another approach that collects additional qualitative data could augment this option.

### Option 3: Develop and Deploy Qualitative Questions

Qualitative questions would allow library staff and users to reveal the complexity of E-government service provision in their own words. In exchange for this richness of the data, qualitative data collection and analysis is often more time-consuming than quantitative options. Unlike adding an additional count to the annual statistical survey, qualitative data collection would involve more effort from librarians and researchers in creating, conducting, and analyzing qualitative data. In addition, analysis of qualitative questions and summarizing findings from the analysis is likely to be time consuming.

For these reasons and the fiscal realities of the State, any qualitative E-government services data collection efforts (e.g., a survey on a library home page or having users fill out forms when using computers) could include a small sample of libraries and a limited number questions to minimize the burden of data collection on Florida public library staff and the State Library. The few questions used would be able to capture data from libraries that do not count E-government interactions, as well as eliciting additional detail from libraries that are collecting data on E-government interactions.

The possible questions would address similar topics that are found in the *PLFTAS*, except with the purpose of providing Florida-specific data. Questions from the *PLFTAS* on these topics are included in Appendix H. These topics may include:

- Whether libraries dedicate workstations to E-government and why or why not;
- E-government services and roles provided by library branches;
- Challenges that affect public library E-government provision;
- Training needs for the Basic Services Role of E-government;
- Reference transactions related to various E-government services (e.g., citizenship, unemployment, Medicaid, and so forth); and
- Utilization of E-government resources and services with public library infrastructure.

If qualitative questions are considered, the Information Institute can create specific qualitative questions, data collection instruments, and schedules as an additional project for the State Library. The main benefit of a qualitative question approach is that it may provide more data to augment any quantitative data collected, potentially providing a more illustrative type of data. In

addition, a qualitative question approach would allow data collection to occur more quickly than the three-year process of adding a question to the annual statistical survey.

### Draft Data Collection Strategies

The State Library may incorporate any one or a combination of the three draft statewide evaluation strategies and examples of possible data collection approaches. Data collection approaches may include:

- Adding a quantitative question to the annual statistical survey;
- Mining data from the most recent *PLFTAS*; and/or
- Developing and deploying qualitative data collection methods.

Although utilizing all three approaches would provide the most robust statewide evaluation, the State Library must consider the effect on librarians and libraries, as well as the limitations of the State Library staff's time to devote to such an effort.

Mining data from the *PLFTAS* could be performed by Information Institute staff with little involvement of the State Library or any library system. This single approach would be the simplest to accomplish with minimum investment. The addition of a quantitative question to the annual statistical survey would require minimal assistance from any study team beyond this report for development. The logistics, including the three-year timeline for implementation of an additional question may take too long for return-on-investment to assist public libraries from ongoing budget shortfalls. A faster option to implement may be the development and deployment of qualitative data collection. Qualitative efforts may be more labor- and time-intensive for researchers and librarians, but they are likely to yield valuable data in a timelier manner than the statewide quantitative question. Unlike the addition of a quantitative question to the annual statistical survey, the State Library would benefit from the assistance of a third party for any type of qualitative evaluation.

These three approaches or a combination of any of them may be a good start to obtaining data on how much Florida public libraries subsidize E-government services and resources in the State. The study team developed the draft statewide evaluation strategy based on feedback from the State Library and members of the statewide E-government working group, a review of data collection occurring in the State, and a consideration of the feasibility for all options. The following section provides a discussion and table of potential component indicators for the LSTA-funded E-government programs that the State Library might use to measure and assess each of the LSTA-funded programs.

### *Component Indicators of LSTA-funded E-government Programs*

During development of the handout distributed at the FLA Conference, the Information Institute learned about the feasibility of collecting E-government service component indicators on a comprehensive basis. These findings, detailed in this project's second interim report,<sup>16</sup>

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<sup>16</sup> <http://ii.fsu.edu/content/download/35618/224452>

## E-government Services in Public Libraries 2010: Final Report of Project Activities

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signify that due to the difficulty of creating a comprehensive assessment of all programs, the State Library will be served best by a more individualized evaluation strategy (i.e., individualized component indicators developed and selected based on the unique nature of each of the LSTA-funded E-government projects). The following discussion features each program and its individual component indicators. Table 4 provides a list of contact information and financial questions that all LSTA-funded E-government programs will collect and report to the State Library.

Beyond these basic data elements, each program retains unique component indicators and a few component indicators that they may share with some other projects. The following sections detail the component indicators for each of the current LSTA-funded E-government projects, alphabetically by library system that have LSTA-funded E-government projects. Each program will collect data via a standardized data collection instrument to provide the State Library. For more detail on each of the LSTA-funded E-government projects, see Appendix A. Each project awarded funding should have offered clear outcomes, and if not can create some. All projects should collect evidence of the realization of their outcomes. Regardless of project, this report suggests most LSTA-funded E-government projects could collect an E-government interaction count, as defined in the preceding section.

**Table 4. Contact Information and Financial Component Indicators.**

COMPONENT INDICATORS	EXAMPLE MEASURES/INFORMATION
<i>Project name</i>	Project and Partnership Branch Library and E-government Services
<i>Contact Person</i>	Sol M. Hirsch
<i>Contact Person's Title</i>	Library Director
<i>Library System</i>	Alachua County Library District
<i>Contact address</i>	401 E. University Ave.
<i>Phone</i>	Gainesville, Florida 32601
<i>Fax</i>	352 334-3910
<i>Website</i>	<a href="http://www.aclib.us">www.aclib.us</a>
<i>Contact Person's e-mail</i>	<a href="mailto:shirsch@aclib.us">shirsch@aclib.us</a>
<i>Narrative</i>	The Alachua County Library District (ACLD) is involved in a collaborative project with the Partnership for Strong Families, Department of Children and Families, Casey Family Programs and United Way that is focusing on families in the 32609 zip code area of northeast Gainesville. The 32609 area has a high rate of need for family social services and the community is working together to create a place where people can get help in a comfortable, non-threatening, one stop, community based location. The library and the Partnership for Strong Families will share a facility and collaboratively offer programs involving many other organizational partners (list attached).
<i>Salaries, travel, equipment, overhead, etc.</i>	Dollar amounts will be collected in LSTA forms

### Alachua County Library District

The Alachua County Library District currently has two LSTA-funded E-government projects, and the applications for both indicate that Alachua may be collecting some of the potential component indicators outlined below. Table 5 contains the potential component indicators for the *North Central Florida E-government Services Project*. This second year of a

an ongoing project that may continue for several years includes trainings and assessment of laptop capacity from the library systems that received laptops in the first year of the project (i.e., Columbia County Public Library; Suwannee River Regional Library serving Hamilton, Madison and Suwannee Counties; New River Public Library Cooperative serving Baker, Bradford and Union Counties; Three Rivers Regional Library System serving Dixie, Gilchrist and Lafayette Counties; Levy County Public Library System; Nassau County Public Library; Putnam County Library System; and Flagler County Public Library). Although E-government interactions are not an outcome of the program, librarians that received trainings may start collecting E-government interaction data at their individual library branches. Table 6 contains the potential component indicators for the project titled *Partnership Branch Library and E-Government Services Project*. This project’s partnership resulted in the creation of an entire new branch—many measures beyond this list could be collected, but this list provides a starting point.

**Table 5. Potential Component Indicators for Alachua County Library District’s North Central Florida E-government Services Project.**

<b>COMPONENT INDICATORS</b>	<b>MEASURES</b>
<i>Changes in usage</i>	Count E-government interactions (e.g., reference transactions related to E-government service provision, E-government training attendees, checkouts of E-government dedicated laptops, and hits to an E-government web page)
<i>Created trainings</i>	Count created trainings, in total and by type
<i>Delivered trainings</i>	Count number of trainings delivered, in total and by type Count participants attending trainings, in total and by type of training Evaluate success of trainings (e.g., survey with measures of staff readiness)
<i>Changes in service capacity</i>	Count laptop checkouts and laptop minutes

**Table 6. Potential Component Indicators for Alachua County Library District’s Partnership Branch Library and E-government Services Project.**

<b>COMPONENT INDICATORS</b>	<b>MEASURES</b>
<i>Changes in usage</i>	Count E-government interactions (e.g., reference transactions related to E-government service provision, E-government training attendees, checkouts of E-government dedicated laptops, and hits to an E-government web page) Count library cards issued Count visits to the library Count circulation records
<i>Changes in resident services</i>	Benchmark the number of users that report receiving the services they needed In subsequent years, count the number of users that report receiving the services they needed and compare to benchmark
<i>Changes in service capacity</i>	Count numbers of workstations and laptops available for residents Count laptop checkouts and length of use of laptops (in minutes) Count computer sessions Calculate computer wait time
<i>Benefits to the community, families, and individuals served</i>	Qualitative data from focus groups and interviews (e.g., collect stories related to improved access to E-government services)

Hialeah Public Libraries

Table 7 contains the potential component indicators for Hialeah Public Libraries' *e-government e-empowerment*. These component indicators stem from their LSTA application and handout description. Like any of the other LSTA-funded E-government programs, they may wish to incorporate more component indicators from other projects when possible. This project includes trainings for staff and residents, laptop purchases, and the creation of a web portal to facilitate E-government services.

**Table 7. Potential Component Indicators for Hialeah Public Libraries' e-government e-empowerment.**

COMPONENT INDICATORS	MEASURES
<i>Changes in usage</i>	Count E-government interactions (e.g., reference transactions related to E-government service provision, E-government training attendees, checkouts of E-government dedicated laptops, and hits to an E-government web page)
<i>Changes in capacity</i>	Count numbers of workstations and laptops available for residents Count laptop checkouts and length of use of laptops (in minutes)
<i>Created trainings</i>	Count created trainings, in total and by type
<i>Delivered trainings</i>	Count number of trainings delivered, in total and by type Count participants attending trainings, in total and by type of training Evaluate success of trainings (e.g., survey with measures of staff readiness and resident knowledge)
<i>Usage of web portal</i>	Web analytics for specific E-government related pages

New River Public Library Cooperative

Table 8 contains the potential component indicators for New River Public Library Cooperative's *Training, continued*. The funding indicated in this program's LSTA application shows the purchase of three Internet safety videos, a subscription database, some library materials and a teacher. These items can be measured but are not similar component indicators to the other E-government projects. Note that the trainings were purchased and *not created* for this program. This project includes surveys (pre-test and post-test) for the trainings. The name of the project indicates past trainings, but the application is unclear on how evaluation of the past project influenced this second year of trainings – if such influence does exist, New River could add comparison measures based on the previous year's data.

**Table 8. Potential Component Indicators for New River Public Library Cooperative's Training, continued.**

COMPONENT INDICATORS	MEASURES
<i>Changes in usage</i>	Count E-government interactions (e.g., reference transactions related to E-government service provision, E-government training attendees, checkouts of E-government dedicated laptops, and hits to an E-government web page)
<i>Delivered trainings</i>	Count number of trainings delivered, in total and by type Count participants attending trainings, in total and by type of training Evaluate success of trainings (e.g., survey with learning outcomes)

Orange County Library District

The Orange County Library District’s program, *The Right Service at the Right Time: Navigating E-Government*, consists of building a tool through which a service consumer can answer an iterative series of questions to create a profile that seeks key matches to available government and public services as well as library resources. The project description from the handout discusses hiring a software developer and creating the tool. Component indicators could include web analytics of the tool; however, there is no indication of when the tool will be operational. The study team was unable to compile potential component indicators for this project because the tool is not built and the project description includes no timeline indicating when the tool might be built and operational.

Panhandle Public Library Cooperative

Table 9 provides the component indicators for Panhandle Public Library Cooperative System’s *Mossy Pond E-Library* program. Like Alachua County’s partnership project, this involves the creation of a new library. Many more measures should be considered for assessing the library services, but the few here provide a framework for beginning to assess the E-government services offered through this program.

**Table 9. Potential Component Indicators for Panhandle Public Library Cooperative System’s Mossy Pond E-Library.**

COMPONENT INDICATORS	MEASURES
<i>Changes in usage</i>	Count E-government interactions (e.g., reference transactions related to E-government service provision, E-government training attendees, checkouts of E-government dedicated laptops, and hits to an E-government web page) Count library cards issued Count visits to the library Count circulation records
<i>Changes in resident services</i>	Benchmark the number of users that report receiving the services they needed In subsequent years, count the number of users that report receiving the services they needed and compare to benchmark
<i>Changes in service capacity</i>	Count number of workstations and laptops available for residents Count laptop checkouts and length of use of laptops (in minutes) Count computer sessions Calculate computer wait time
<i>Benefits to the community, families, and individuals served</i>	Qualitative data from focus groups and interviews (e.g., collect stories related to improved access to E-government services)

Pasco County Library Cooperative

Pasco County Library Cooperative includes two programs – *E-Government Services in Public Libraries* and *Pasco County E-Government Initiative Continuing Year 3*. The first project involves conducting a needs assessment for a web portal, the creation of a web portal, and the usability/functionality/accessibility testing of the web portal (the first and third activities were conducted by the Information Institute and are detailed in this report). Similar to the Orange

County project, the web portal is created through the LSTA funding; however, there is not an indication of the actual launch of the statewide web portal or its evaluation beyond the usability testing. Because Task 1 of this final report details usability testing of the web portal, component indicators of this project can be found in that section. The second project is the third year of funded efforts by the library system. The LSTA application for the second project indicates measures that relate to their E-government efforts, including web analytics for the statewide web portal funded by the first project, detailed in Table 10.

**Table 10. Potential Component Indicators for Pasco County Library Cooperative’s Pasco County E-Government Initiative Continuing Year 3.**

<b>COMPONENT INDICATORS</b>	<b>MEASURES</b>
<i>Changes in usage</i>	Count E-government interactions (e.g., reference transactions related to E-government service provision, E-government training attendees, checkouts of E-government dedicated laptops, and hits to an E-government web page)
<i>Changes in service capacity</i>	Count number of laptops available for residents Count laptop checkouts and length of use of laptops (in minutes) Calculate laptop wait time
<i>Created trainings</i>	Count created trainings, in total and by type
<i>Delivered trainings</i>	Count number of trainings delivered, in total and by type Count participants attending trainings, in total and by type of training Evaluate success of trainings (e.g., survey with measures of resident knowledge)
<i>Usage of web portal</i>	Web analytics for specific E-government related pages

Summary of Component Indicators Development

For this portion of Task 2, the Information Institute detailed potential component indicators that could be measured across all LSTA-funded E-government projects, including contact information and financial data, as well as other indicators unique to each project. For evaluating the eight LSTA-funded E-government projects, the State Library could distribute a survey or form to collect the potential component indicators to the projects’ contacts in order to assess each project individually and compile these indicators for a statewide evaluation of LSTA-funded E-government programs. Efforts to connect these project evaluations to a statewide evaluation strategy would require feedback from those involved in actual implementation of both the statewide evaluation and the individual projects.

*Summary of Task 2*

This section (1) includes a discussion of a draft of three potential approaches to a statewide public library E-government services evaluation/data collection strategy and (2) provides a template for evaluation of various LSTA-funded E-government programs, both an overall evaluation of all projects and individual evaluations based on the unique nature of each project. This section reviews all activities the Information Institute conducted for Task 2 throughout the entire project and a draft of three potential approaches to a statewide evaluation/data collection strategy, with discussion of the benefits and limitations of those options. A template with component indicators for evaluation of each LSTA-funded E-government programs concludes this section.

### Task 3: E-government Service Roles

Due to many federal, state, and local government agencies referring residents to public libraries for Internet access and assistance in filling out government forms among other E-government activities, public librarians have been drafted to serve as recruits in the provision of E-government services. Persons with no or limited Internet access and/or that need assistance using technology or understanding the forms and other documents rely on public libraries to access E-government services.<sup>17</sup> Based on these and other public need services, the public relates public libraries with free Internet access and trusts library staff members to assist them in the use of E-government services.<sup>18</sup> With the growth of E-government expected to continue, such public library activities should also increase in importance.<sup>19</sup> Again, this report does not contain a formal literature review of E-government and libraries and more background is readily available at the ALA E-government Toolkit (<http://www.ala.org/ala/issuesadvocacy/egovtoolkit/index.cfm>) and via several other articles on this topic.

The term “service roles” was used first in the 1987 Public Library Association (PLA) planning and role setting book.<sup>20</sup> The first service roles and the E-government Service Roles introduced here provide public libraries with a plan to implement and meet community expectations on a national basis, despite the fact that the E-government Service Roles stem from activities occurring in Florida. A few revisions to the service roles have occurred, including the addition of several Internet-enabled service roles discussed in McClure and Jaeger’s *Public Libraries and Internet Service Roles: Measuring and Maximizing Internet Services*. The following section provides descriptions of E-government service roles and offers an E-government service roles figure to serve as visual explanation of the various public library E-government service roles.

The service roles presented here are based on the results of a broadband needs assessment performed by the Information Institute in 2009.<sup>21</sup> Study team members conducted interviews with selected public librarians to define levels of service roles (i.e., basic, moderate, and extensive) and to test and validate the service roles. The study population for interviews consisted of Florida public librarians, and those interviewed

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<sup>17</sup> McClure, C. R., & Jaeger, P. T. (2009). *Public libraries and Internet service roles: Measuring and maximizing Internet services*. Chicago: American Library Association.

<sup>18</sup> Gibson, A. N., Bertot, J. C., & McClure, C. R. (2009). Emerging role of public librarians as e-government providers. In R. H. Sprague, Jr., *Proceedings of the 42nd Hawaii International Conference on System Sciences* [Electronic version] (pp. 1-10). Los Alamitos, CA: IEEE Computer Society. Retrieved June 22, 2009, from <http://ieeexplore.ieee.org/stamp/stamp.jsp?tp=&arnumber=4755562&isnumber=4755314>

<sup>19</sup> Bertot, J. C., Jaeger, P. T., Langa, L. A., & McClure, C. R. (2006). Public access computing and Internet access in public libraries: The role of public libraries in e-government and emergency situations. *First Monday*, 11(9), n.p. Retrieved February 17, 2010, from <http://www.uic.edu/htbin/cgiwrap/bin/ojs/index.php/fm/article/view/1392/1310>

<sup>20</sup> McClure, C. R., Owen, A., Zweizig, D. L., Lynch, M. J., & Van House, N. A. (1987). *Planning and role setting for public libraries: A manual of operations and procedures*. Chicago: American Library Association.

<sup>21</sup> McClure, C. R., Ryan, J., Mandel, L. H., Snead, J. T., & Bishop, B. W. (2009). *Needs assessment of Florida public library E-Government and emergency/disaster management broadband services*. Tallahassee, FL: Information Use Management & Policy Institute, College of Communication & Information, Florida State University. Retrieved February 17, 2010, from <http://ii.fsu.edu/Research/Projects/All/Projects-from-2009-to-1999/2009-Project-Details>

provided numerous E-government services at their libraries including, but not limited to the following:

- Access to and assistance navigating E-government websites;
- Assistance filling in forms and sending e-mails related to obtaining forms;
- Help writing employment letters and resumes, completing employment and unemployment applications, and searching employment databases; and
- Locating government information such as assistance and grants, Medicare benefits, immigration and naturalization regulations, tax forms, vital statistics, etc.

Members of the broadband needs assessment study team developed an E-government service roles matrix in the final report for the *Needs Assessment of Florida Public Library E-Government and Emergency Management Broadband Services*.<sup>22</sup> The Information Institute developed a figure from the matrix for this report that integrates findings from additional interviews, reviews of the LSTA-funded E-government projects and material developed by public libraries in Florida, a literature review, and discussions with State Library staff and members of the statewide E-government working group. The matrix included four potential E-government Service roles for public libraries – Basic Services, Library Driven Services, Agency Driven Services, and Collaborative Services. The revised figure in this report presents a revised visualization of the service roles.

The geographic region of the study limits the generalizability of the results beyond Florida; however, this report is for Florida libraries. Still, due to the massive volume of literature and websites on E-government and public libraries, the study team believes that indeed other states' public libraries perform very similar service roles and these operationalized definitions were written in a broad inclusionary manner with the intent of applicability beyond Florida. To address this generalizability issue both the statewide E-government working group and the ALA E-government committee reviewed a draft document of the service roles, provided feedback, and the study team incorporated their comments into this report. Without further methods of data collection, beyond the scope of this study, the findings presented here may not be generalized beyond Florida but do offer a framework for further exploration. The following further develops the E-government service roles with definitions and examples.

### *Basic Services*

As mentioned in the discussion of Task 2 above, Table 3 lists E-government services provided at their libraries. Although many libraries provide these services, the table provides a good foundation for the Basic Services Role of E-government provision in public libraries. The list in Table 3 of Task 2, includes the basic E-government services that most libraries provide, whether they are aware or not that these services comprise the Basic Services Role. In a national survey, 88.8% of public libraries responded that they help users understand and use government websites and the figure is higher for Florida public libraries at 95.7% of those that responded. Also, 78.7% of responses indicated that public libraries help people apply for E-government

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<sup>22</sup> <http://ii.fsu.edu/Research/Projects/All/Projects-from-2009-to-1999/2009-Project-Details>

services and again Florida public libraries that responded assisted slightly more 81.7%.<sup>23</sup> As the survey indicates, nationally and in Florida, most public libraries provide these types of services and more detail was provided in Table 3. Table 3 also includes E-government services that libraries should *not* provide for liability reasons, including:

- Advising customers as to which forms or applications they specifically need to obtain government services;
- Entering data, completing forms in their entirety and/or submitting completed forms or applications for customers;
- Serving as witness for any submission or completion of forms, applications or other documents; and
- Interpreting questions asked on forms and applications, or advising of appropriate answers to questions asked on forms and applications.

Public libraries assist in E-government service provision by meeting the basic demands for Internet services from library users, which may include accessing, navigating, and/or filling out E-government websites and forms, and a variety of computer assistance, such as general training and/or obtaining and using e-mail accounts. These services require nearly no planning beyond the Basic Services Role of public libraries providing Internet access and assistance. Also, these services usually occur on a one-to-one, as needed basis between a library user and a librarian.

Other basic services include the emergency preparation and response services provided on the fly by public libraries. Several public libraries indicate they assist residents during and after disasters, including serving as a distribution center for supplies and information, providing shelter and physical aid, and providing normal library services for displaced users.<sup>24</sup> Similar to the other E-government services offered in the Basic Services Role of public library E-government services, public libraries offer these emergency services in response to demand from users, rather than as a result of active planning. The library resources, training and support needed to be successful in the Basic Services Role are minimal.

### *Library Driven Services*

Some public libraries take a proactive approach to the provision of E-government services. In a national survey, 8.9% of responding libraries indicated that they offered training classes regarding the use of government websites, understanding government programs, and completing electronic forms, and again Florida reports a higher frequency of those offering trainings at 14.5%.<sup>25</sup> Examples of additional library driven E-government services include those discovered in the review of the LSTA-funded projects (discussed above) and the literature

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<sup>23</sup> American Library Association. (2010). *Libraries connect communities: Public Library Funding & Technology Access Study 2009-2010*. Available at <http://www.ala.org/plinternetfunding>

<sup>24</sup> McClure, C. R., Ryan, J., Mandel, L. H., Snead, J. T., & Bishop, B. W. (2009). *Needs assessment of Florida public library E-Government and emergency/disaster management broadband services*. Tallahassee, FL: Information Use Management & Policy Institute, College of Communication & Information, Florida State University. Retrieved February 17, 2010, from <http://ii.fsu.edu/Research/Projects/All/Projects-from-2009-to-1999/2009-Project-Details>

<sup>25</sup> American Library Association. (2010). *Libraries connect communities: Public Library Funding & Technology Access Study 2009-2010*. Available at <http://www.ala.org/plinternetfunding>

review. See Table 11 for services that may be offered as part of the Library Driven Services Role. Note that libraries should keep in mind that the services listed in Table 3 that libraries should and should *not* provide (i.e., the Basic Services Role) will not be listed in descriptions of the collaborative service roles but are implied in each subsequent service role since each service role includes and builds upon the Basic Services Role.

**Table 11: Library Driven Services Role.**

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### E-GOVERNMENT SERVICES

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- Offering training classes regarding the use of government websites, programs, and electronic forms;
  - Collecting and disseminating informative pamphlets on E-government services;
  - Creating Web 2.0 tools to disseminate information; and
  - Becoming an Emergency Information Hub.<sup>26</sup>
- 

In the Library Driven Services Role of public library E-government services, each library meets the Basic Services Role demands and actively seeks out and establishes E-government initiatives. These services go farther than simply helping residents on an as needed basis to build services that better organize E-government service provision for library users. In several of the LSTA-funded E-government projects, libraries create and offer services proactively that include:

- Purchasing laptops dedicated for E-government services;
- Increasing wireless connectivity to utilize E-government services;
- Providing E-government assistance through one-on-one appointments;
- Creating and delivering E-government or basic computer skills workshops for adults (bilingually when necessary);
- Building a web portal with government information;
- Making handouts with government information; and
- Developing online multimedia tutorials.

Many more public libraries beyond those with LSTA-funded E-government may be creating handouts and providing other services related to the Library Driven Services Role. In some of the LSTA-funded E-government projects, libraries built web portals and tools to assist residents in the navigation and use of E-government services with limited interaction from government agencies. A Web Services model of E-government service roles could include active involvement from government agencies. However, when the Web Services model does not include any collaboration and/or coordination with government agencies, it falls within the Library Driven Services Role of public library E-government services, no matter how sophisticated these services may be.

In response to disasters, proactive libraries will take additional steps to be prepared to disseminate print and electronic information concerning disaster-related E-government services. Some public libraries may serve as an Emergency Information Hub that will offer a host of

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<sup>26</sup> <http://hurricanes.ii.fsu.edu/4infoHub.html>

services to streamline disaster response, such as charging of electrical equipment; providing access to computers, copiers, fax machines, Internet access, WiFi, office supplies, phones, printers, and scanners; and offering electricity, furniture, light, and air conditioning.<sup>27</sup> Although hurricanes may be more prevalent in the Gulf and southeastern coasts of the United States, disasters both manmade and natural could occur anywhere in the United States and baseline aspects of Library Driven Services Role may be useful to be prepared regardless of the event.

The distinguishing elements between the Library Driven Services Role and the Basic Services Role are the additional planning and associated costs required to offer these proactive services. These services do not match the definition of the Collaborative Services Role because of the minimal or no collaboration and/or coordination between government agencies and the libraries.

Library resources, training, and support to be successful in the Library Driven Services Role may include:

- Expense of staffing those that create and manage these services;
- Training of the staff related to these services;
- Purchase hardware, software, and technical support of equipment;
- Provision of broadband connectivity; and
- Printing and other overhead costs.

The associated costs incurred by public libraries offering these services are substantial. Clearly, several public libraries may move to this service role out of necessity to fulfill their social role within the community, even without additional funding. The extent of the resources, training, and support expended by public libraries is contingent on the services offered. Each public library will measure successful implementation of this role on a case-by-case basis.

### *Agency Driven Services*

The Agency Driven Services Role of public library E-government services, as the name indicates, describes public libraries that act in a reactive stance to the demands of government agencies. A library may respond the best it can to agency service demands. The distinguishing element of this service role from the Library Driven Services Role is the lack of impetus from the library to implement these services. Types of services may include:

- Agencies providing personnel to assist library users;
- Agencies training librarians on issues related to E-government such as eligibility for various government benefits and services;
- Agencies requesting space in libraries for meetings and trainings;
- Agencies providing and maintaining an information kiosk in the library; and
- Agencies referring customers to the library for assistance via the Basic Services Role.

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<sup>27</sup> <http://hurricanes.ii.fsu.edu/4infoHub.html>

This service role does not meet the requirements of the Collaborative Services Role because of the minimal collaboration and/or coordination between government agencies and the libraries. In most instances, public libraries falling into this category continue to offer services related to the Basic Services Role, remain reactive to the demands of government agencies and residents, and are not proactive in volunteering to offer additional E-government services.

Library resources, training, and support to be successful in the Agency Driven Services Role may include:

- Expense of staffing agency driven services;
- Staff time receiving agency driven training;
- Monitoring of information kiosks provided and maintained by agencies;
- Provision of broadband connectivity and physical space for agency meetings and trainings; and
- Usual expenses of providing Basic Services Role.

Public libraries incur fewer costs from agency driven services than library driven services. However, some expenses do relate to the library resources, training, and support depending on the services offered. Each public library will measure successful implementation of this role on a case-by-case basis.

To provide specific examples of this service role would require further research beyond interviews with public librarians and more discussion with agencies. Examples of this service role include the Social Security Administration's program to encourage citizens to retire online, with the help of Chubby Checker and Patty Duke (<http://www.socialsecurity.gov/>) and the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) utilizing the space, librarians, and resources of many public libraries after hurricanes and disasters.<sup>28</sup> In most instances, these activities may be beyond the control of the public library; however, these agency programs and actions do have an effect on library resources, training, and support.

### *Collaborative Services*

The Collaborative Services Role differs from the Basic, Library Driven, and Agency Driven Services Roles in that it requires the active partnership between government agencies and public libraries. In a national survey, 20.5% of public libraries indicated partnering with government agencies, non-profit organizations, and others to provide E-government services and Florida respondents report at an even higher frequency of collaboration; 37.1%.<sup>29</sup> The percentage of public libraries indicating they partner with government agencies may be misleading because of the different interpretations of the term "partnering." Partnering in the Collaborative Services Role includes activities that result in clear products developed during

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<sup>28</sup> McClure, C. R., Ryan, J., Mandel, L. H., Brobst, J., Hinnant, C. C., & Snead, J. T. (in press). Public libraries in hurricane preparedness and response. In J. C. Bertot, C. R. McClure, & P. T. Jaeger (Eds.), *Public libraries and the Internet: Roles, perspectives, and implications*. Westport, CT: Libraries Unlimited.

<sup>29</sup> American Library Association. (2010). *Libraries connect communities: Public Library Funding & Technology Access Study 2009-2010*. Available at <http://www.ala.org/plinternetfunding>

multiple meetings between the library and government agencies and activities that go beyond those listed in the Library Driven and Agency Driven Services Roles.

Low levels of collaborations include distributing handouts provided by government agencies and providing space for their trainings. In addition, posting links to E-government websites or creating multimedia tutorials may be time-intensive for library staff and costly burdens on library resources; however, these activities lack formal coordination with government agencies. Just as a public library can serve as a place for collaboration between other government agencies and library staff at all times, during disaster response the library could serve as the Cultural Organizations Liaison.<sup>30</sup> Duties related to the disaster response aspects of the Collaborative Services Role of public library E-government services include assisting government agencies and their staff in disaster response and establishing a single point of emergency communication contact with emergency management.

Overall, Collaborative Services proactive collaboration and coordination could take many forms that may include:

- An active library liaison that meets with local, state and federal governments;
- An integrated and collaborative environment among libraries, governmental offices and community agencies towards provision of E-government; and
- Libraries and agencies coproducing instructional materials and educational programs.

Despite the indications from the national survey and the *de facto* collaboration regarding all public libraries providing Internet access and government agencies sending residents to them, the Collaborative Services Role of public library E-government services includes services where sustained dialogue occurs between government agencies and public libraries.

Library resources, training, and support to be successful in the Collaborative Services Role may include:

- Expense of staffing those that create and manage these services;
- Training of the staff related to these services;
- Purchase hardware, software, and technical support of equipment;
- Provision of broadband connectivity; and
- Printing and other overhead costs.

The associated costs incurred by public libraries offering these services are substantial, but agencies may contribute. Clearly, those public libraries and government agencies fulfilling their social role within the community in a coordinated effort will also share in determining a partnerships' success. The extent of the resources, training, and support expended by public libraries and government agencies are contingent on the services offered. Each partnership will measure successful implementation of this role on a case-by-case basis.

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<sup>30</sup> <http://hurricanes.ii.fsu.edu/5csrc.html>

Two of the LSTA-funded projects fall within the definition of the Collaborative Services Role. The Alachua County Library District (ACLD), the Florida Department for Children and Families (DCF), the Partnership for Strong Families (PSF), the Casey Family Program, and approximately 30 social service agencies work together to create and operate the *Library Partnership, a Neighborhood Resource Center*. This library provides an example and Figure 1 provides an image of the outlet.



**Figure 1. Partnership, a Neighborhood Resource Center.**

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Another project that meets the definition of the Collaborative Services Role is the *Mossy Pond E-Library*, which will result in a library building that meets State of Florida criteria as a Hurricane Shelter and will provide jointly public library, health department, Healthy Start, Sheriff's Department, voting precinct, and DCF services through on-site service provision and Internet access. At the time of this report only the foundation for the *Mossy Pond E-Library* has been poured, but future endeavors of that partnership as well as the Alachua County Library District's partnership may provide great examples of what can be done when public libraries combine efforts with government agencies in the provision of E-government services.

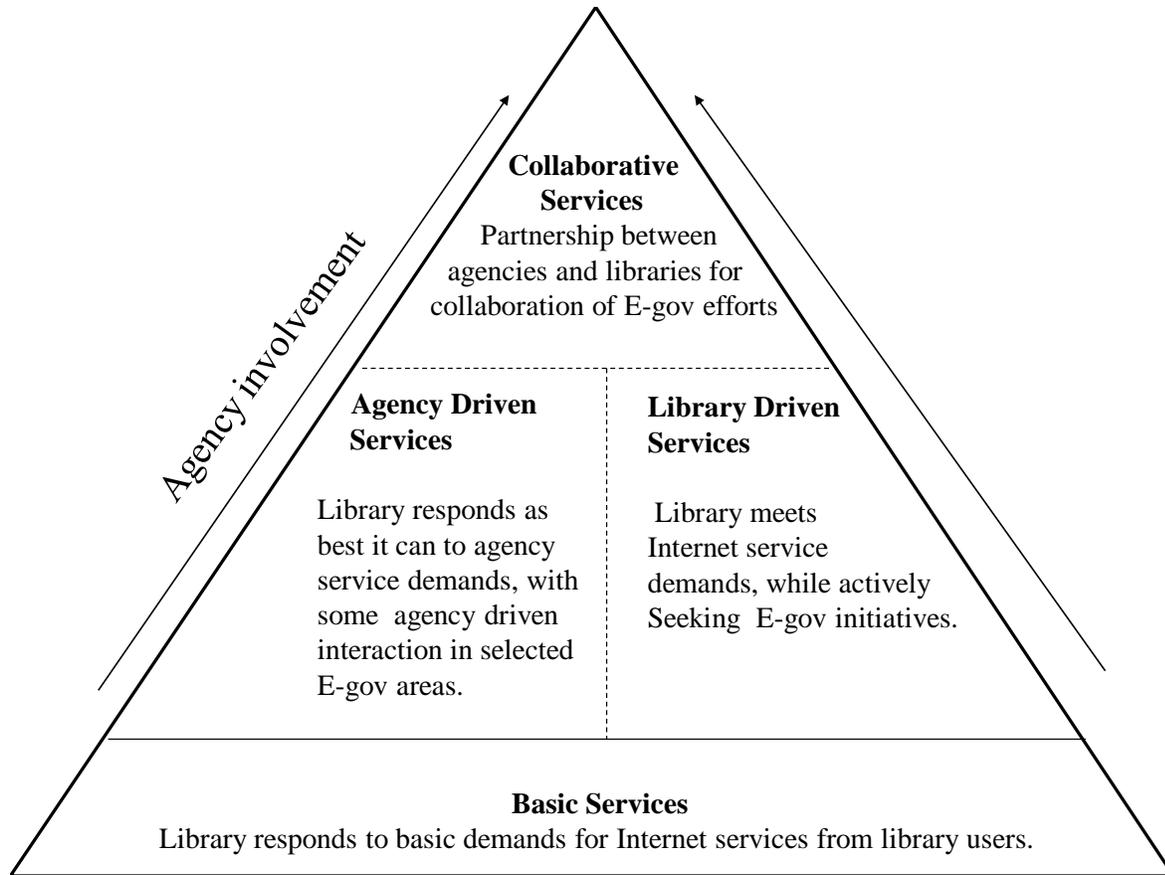
As previously stated, the collaboration of ACLD, DCF, PSF, and the Casey Family Programs and others combine to provide a central community resource (i.e., a library). The partnership's goal is to strengthen families through addressing self-sufficiency, family support and child welfare, and health and safety. This partnership allows the librarians to fine-tune collections, services, and other resources to complement the social service provider and clients visiting the library. The project benefits from multiple agencies and the library seeking a store location in the same geographic region of the county and the other agencies' knowledge of the public library's previous E-government efforts. The co-location of multiple services provides an exemplar for future partnerships, but this opportunity would not have occurred without active library leadership that was both present at county discussions and previously active in the provision of E-government. The *Mossy Pond E-Library* also provides an example of how

libraries can work with government agencies via partnership to offer the Collaborative Services Role of public library E-government services.

The Internet access and assistance provided at these public libraries meets the definition and services of the Basic Services Role, but also includes both Library Driven and Agency Driven Services role elements as evidenced by the presence of government agencies within the operations of these public library outlets. By permanently and collaboratively sharing space with government agencies and having regular dialogue among all partners, library staff and government agency partners may provide coordinated and complementary services to meet residents' E-government needs. Although both of these examples are for physical services, government agencies and public libraries also may coordinate on building Web 2.0 tools to assist residents beyond the brick and mortar facilities with services such as virtual reference.

The Collaborative Services Role distinguishes its associated services from other E-government service roles by including active partnerships with sustained dialogue between government agencies and public libraries. The success of agency and library collaboration on the two LSTA-funded projects results from the effort of the libraries volunteering time and effort in both normal and emergency situations to work with other local government entities and keep an ongoing dialogue to improve services. This mix of agency and library involvement places the Collaborative Services Role of public library E-government services at the pinnacle of a pyramid structure of Services Roles related to E-government (See Figure 2). Figure 2 provides one view and examples of the relationships between agencies and libraries in the provision of services that fall within each of the public library E-government Service Roles.

Figure 2 visualizes the framework of overall findings from Task 3. The figure depicts increases in both public library and agency involvement with arrows pointed toward the top of the pyramid, where, in the Collaborative Services Role, a partnership between the two occurs. The study team selected the pyramid structure because fewer public libraries meet the Collaborative criterion, based upon current national survey data. In addition, all services build upon those reactionary one-to-one, as needed interactions between a library user and a librarian.



**Figure 2. Public Library E-government Service Roles Pyramid.**

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*Summary of Task 3*

To complete Task 3, the Information Institute undertook reviews of the LSTA-funded E-government projects in Florida, conducted a literature review, engaged in discussions with State Library staff and members of the statewide E-government working group, and revised the original E-government service roles matrix based on findings from these activities. This section of the final report also included descriptions and discussion of the four potential public library E-government Service Roles—Collaborative Services, Library Driven Services, Agency Driven Services, and Basic Services.

**Overall Project Findings**

The overall findings from Tasks 1, 2, and 3 indicate that public libraries in Florida are aware of and willing to improve E-government service provision in the state. Task 1 included a needs assessment to determine possible content, organization, and design factors for a statewide public library E-government web portal, as well as usability/functionality/accessibility testing of that portal as of July 1, 2010. Task 2 determined the component indicators to assess the LSTA-

funded E-government projects, individually and overall. Task 3 activities related to operationalizing E-government service roles for practical application in public libraries.

Task 1 findings include discussion and recommendations for a number of issues with the current web portal. The issues raised in that section of the report provide some recommendations to address current shortcomings of the web portal before a public launch. The detailed feedback should provide the website developers guidance to improve the overall usability of the web portal. Without usability testing that involves participants who utilize E-government services via the web portal, some aspects remain a debate between the expert reviewers' feedback related to web design norms and the unique information architecture of the current web portal.

Task 2 findings include (1) a draft of three potential approaches to a statewide E-government services evaluation/data collection strategy and (2) templates for evaluation of various LSTA-funded E-government programs. Task 2 requires further feedback from the State Library to assess options for implementation of a statewide E-government services evaluation/data collection strategy. The templates for evaluation of various LSTA-funded E-government programs also require some review, but component indicators identified in this report allow for the evaluation of the current E-government LSTA-funded projects.

Task 3 findings include the revision and description of four potential public library E-government Service Roles – Collaborative Services, Library Driven Services, Agency Driven Services, and Basic Services. The variations in the service roles are based on the degree of involvement from the library and government agencies. This allows services to be provided with low levels of involvement from the library and agencies (Basic Services), high levels of involvement from the library (Library-Driven Services) or agencies (Agency Driven Services), or high levels of involvement from both the library and agencies formally coordinating efforts (Collaborative Services).

The findings of this report provide further evidence that Florida public libraries are integral providers of E-government services. The assessments (i.e., needs assessment and usability/functionality/accessibility testing) of the statewide E-government web portal provide information on a statewide coordinated effort to improve library E-government services. Efforts should be made to improve the usability of the web portal and then, when suitable for launch, the web portal should receive promotion. To demonstrate and value the E-government efforts of public libraries, some version of a statewide evaluation strategy should be implemented, whether one of the three strategies proposed in this report, or some combination of those strategies. The E-government Services Roles discussed in this report provide examples of what has been and can be done to organize Florida's public libraries to provide these services more efficiently and effectively. The following section, Next Steps, provides more detailed examples of future efforts building upon the three tasks of this report.

## **Next Steps**

The following activities address options to continue the work from this report's three tasks. The following proposed activities are proposed in Florida, but strides in Florida public libraries may provide best practices for other states. These activities include:

- Continue development and usability testing of the statewide web portal;
- Implement one of the statewide evaluation strategies:
  - Adding a quantitative question to the annual statistical survey,
  - Mining data from the most recent *PLFTAS*, and/or
  - Developing and deploying qualitative data collection methods;
- Meet with agency representatives to:
  - Review the E-government Services Roles,
  - Foster collaboration, and
  - Encourage federal, state, and local governments to fund public libraries' E-government efforts; and
- Increase E-government related library staff training.

The key success for most of these activities is increasing the visibility and awareness of agencies that public libraries provide E-government services and valuation of these services. By describing and identifying the costs, benefits, and return-on-investment that result from public libraries' E-government service provision through continued study and evaluation, agencies may take notice and fund these efforts via direct legislative support and funding of public library E-government services. The study team implies, but does not detail, training related to all next steps, from web portal training to education on implementing the Collaborative Services Role.

### *Task 1: Next Steps*

The study team acknowledges the efforts to create the current E-government web portal; however, continued development and usability testing will improve utilization of the statewide tool. The concept of a collaborative, statewide, resource-sharing initiative among public libraries to reduce the burden on individual branches should remain a goal for the state. The current statewide E-government web portal provides an example of this type of effort, yet, advances in collaboration must occur to allow input from around the state and incorporate necessary changes to create a true statewide web portal. In addition, other services such as a statewide E-government chat service would extend the benefits of expertise in the state to more residents of Florida. If current web developers are unwilling or able to do so, other web developers could address the issues raised in this report with a revised statewide web portal.

Regardless of further development, the study team also recommends follow-up usability, functionality, and accessibility testing. This testing may incorporate data from the website analytics in six months. In addition, this next review of the web portal should include a systematic assessment that collects usability data from *real* users as well as supplementary feedback from state and local government officials. Finally, the next assessment should consider the appropriateness of the content and/or need for additional content and the extent to which the website incorporates social networking applications. Despite mixed results from this study's interviews, social networking applications appear as the norm for most websites at this time. Without usability testing that involves participants who utilize E-government services, the usefulness of the current web portal is not validated. Expert staff and affiliated experts of the Information Institute may design, conduct, and analyze this data.

### *Task 2: Next Steps*

These next steps review the (1) draft of three potential approaches to a statewide public library E-government services evaluation/data collection strategy and (2) the templates for evaluation of various LSTA-funded E-government programs, both an overall evaluation of all projects and individual evaluations based on the unique nature of each project. For statewide evaluation, the State Library may incorporate any one or a combination of the three draft statewide evaluation strategies and examples of possible data collection approaches. Data collection approaches may include:

- Adding a quantitative question to the annual statistical survey;
- Mining data from the most recent *PLFTAS*; and/or
- Developing and deploying qualitative data collection methods.

Mining data from the *PLFTAS* could be performed by Information Institute staff with little involvement of the State Library or any library system. This single approach would be the simplest to accomplish with minimum investment.

The addition of a quantitative question to the annual statistical survey would require minimal assistance from any study team beyond this report for development. The logistics, including the three-year timeline for implementation of an additional question may take too long for return-on-investment to assist public libraries from ongoing budget shortfalls. A faster option may be the development and deployment of qualitative data collection. Qualitative efforts may be more labor- and time-intensive for researchers and librarians, but they are likely to yield valuable data in a timelier manner than the statewide quantitative question. Unlike the addition of a quantitative question to the annual statistical survey, the State Library would benefit from the assistance of a third party for any type of qualitative evaluation.

For the evaluation of individual LSTA-funded E-government projects, the Information Institute may perform assessments based upon data collected by each project related to the component indicators detailed in this report. For evaluating the eight current LSTA-funded E-government projects, the State Library could distribute a web-based survey or print form to collect data concerning the component indicators to the projects' contacts in order to assess each project individually and compile these indicators statewide to measure the impact of LSTA-funded E-government programs in total. Efforts to connect these project evaluations to a statewide evaluation strategy would require feedback, but the Information Institute retains a record of accomplishment in providing high quality evaluation and would be ideal for creating data collection instruments, conducting data collection, and analyzing data.

### *Task 3: Next Steps*

Task 3 next steps include a review of E-government Services Roles by additional public Librarians and representatives of various federal, state, and local governments, as well as continued study of public libraries' E-government efforts as they relate to and differ from the current E-government Service Roles of this report. Although several public libraries reach beyond the Basic Services Role, many do not. The State Library or other agencies may develop

incentives and rewards for libraries to take on more E-government services. Funding these additional services provided by public libraries remains an obstacle to growing beyond the reactive approach of the Basic Services Role.

Public librarians could improve the dialogue and coordination between their E-government services and government agencies by holding a state conference or other means meetings dedicated to E-government and public libraries. To facilitate and foster such a discussion, the State Library, Information Institute and other active members involved in public libraries and E-government could create an educational document for the Florida Legislature. This document would cull all data from various projects and create a succinct message with the purpose of demonstrating to the Legislature the importance and measurable impact of public libraries in Florida providing E-government services. Several of the LSTA-funded project staffs, Information Institute staff, and others could present their experiences and lessons learned from E-government provision in public libraries at a statewide conference.

Even without a conference or other promotion, the State Library may seek to determine best practices from successful projects. New models of resource sharing and the various coordinated efforts between public libraries and agencies could lead to improved delivery of E-government services in many areas of the state. Duplication of the most effective and efficient partnership and non-partnership models could improve services for all. Again, a conference may be one way to disseminate these types of best practices; however, the State Library could coordinate trainings via webinars or other means to maximize the impact of the knowledge gained from the various LSTA-funded and other E-government projects in the state. Further study of the validity of the E-government Service Roles, as defined in this report, through more methods and perhaps at a national level, may benefit all public libraries providing E-government services. For all these proposed next step activities, the Information Institute is uniquely qualified to facilitate these efforts and events with experienced staff and affiliated experts.

### **Conclusion**

The Information Institute can help further the State Library's E-government efforts through continued research and evaluation as suggested above and in various sections throughout this report. Regardless of the next steps chosen, the Institute believes that the State Library should work to identify and describe the costs public libraries incur to provide E-government services by offering Internet access, numerous library driven E-government assistance in the form of staff time, handouts, Web 2.0 tools, training, etc. An important story that needs to be told to local and state government officials is the time, effort, cost, and impact of public library provided E-government services.

In E-government provision, Florida remains ahead of the curve. Florida's E-government Workgroup Wiki is an example of a statewide effort on ALA's E-government Toolkit (<http://www.ala.org/ala/issuesadvocacy/egovtoolkit/index.cfm>). This national recognition provides Florida with encouragement to continue as a national leader in these efforts. Continued development of best practices with regard to statewide web portals, evaluation of statewide and LSTA-funded E-government services, and related Service Roles will provide a model for other states to emulate.

**APPENDIX A**  
**A SUMMARY OF FLORIDA'S LSTA-FUNDED**  
**E-GOVERNMENT PROGRAMS, 2009-2010**

April 7, 2010

The Information Institute produced this summary by working collaboratively with all other Florida public libraries with LSTA-funded E-government programs, and the State Library and Archives of Florida, via the *E-Government Services in Public Libraries Grant*. This program is funded under the provisions of the Library Services and Technology Act, from the Institute of Museum and Library Services, administered by Florida [Department of State](#), Division of [Library and Information Services](#). The Information Institute has been involved in a number of E-Government projects in recent years (see Appendix).

For additional detail about the eight LSTA-funded E-government programs in Florida public libraries projects please contact each project's contact person. The projects include:

- Alachua County Library District:
  - North Central Florida E-Government Services Project; and
  - Library Partnership Branch and E-Government Services
- Hialeah Public Libraries:
  - 3. e-government e-mpowerment
- New River Public Library Cooperative:
  - 4. Training, continued
- Orange County Library District:
  - 5. The Right Service at the Right Time: Navigating E-Government
- Panhandle Public Library Cooperative System:
  - 6. Mossy Pond E-Library
- Pasco County Library Cooperative (with FSU Information Institute):
  - 7. E-Government Services in Public Libraries; and
  - 8. Pasco County E-Government Initiative Continuing Year 3

The list is not comprehensive of all the E-government efforts in Florida as several entities offer E-government services and resources that are not currently LSTA-funded.

## Alachua County Library District

### *1. North Central Florida E-Government Services Project 2008-2009 and 2009-2010*

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In October of 2008, the Northeast Florida Library Information Network (NEFLIN) contracted with the Alachua County Library District to lead a project intended to discern the needs regarding E-Government services in the North Central Florida Region, then train library staff and provide support. Rural and economically challenged counties were seen as having the greatest need of assistance and were targeted for the grant. The library systems served by this grant were: Columbia County Public Library, Suwannee River Regional Library (serving Hamilton, Madison and Suwannee Counties), New River Public Library Cooperative (serving Baker, Bradford and Union Counties), Three Rivers Regional Library System (serving Dixie, Gilchrist and Lafayette Counties), Levy County Public Library System, Nassau County Public Library, Putnam County Library System and Flagler County Public Library.

An E-Government Project Team from the staff of the Alachua County Library District was selected to implement the project. The team visited all target library systems and spoke to staff in order to understand the needs and circumstances of the libraries. After needs were assessed, teams traveled and delivered 12 training slideshows to the 8 library systems with 53 library staff in attendance. Each county received a digital copy of the training in order to train other staff in the library systems.

Issues facing rural and economically disadvantaged libraries included training available staff, staffing levels, and infrastructure. The grant helped address infrastructure issues. Twenty-seven laptops were purchased to be used as dedicated E-Government services points for patrons. For the smaller library systems we were able to purchase 1 laptop per location was provided. For the larger library systems, such as Suwannee, the grant provided as many laptops as the budget allowed. Laptop cases, USB drives and security cables were also purchased. Each library system received a computer tutorial for beginners. The idea was that the E-Government laptop could be used to help patrons become computer literate. The team also created and delivered an E-Government brochure that was printed up and delivered to each county. The brochure gave patrons information on what items/information they need to when applying for food stamps, unemployment or employment.

For fiscal year 2009-2010, the E-Government service project was funded again, in order to provide follow through assistance and support for the target libraries. The goals for this project include:

- 1) Ensure the use of E-Government laptops and facilitate use if needed;
- 2) See if additional laptops are needed; and
- 3) Provide additional hands on training and support for E-Government for staff.

*2. Project and Partnership Branch Library and E-Government Services*

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The Library Partnership is a collaboration among Alachua County Library District (ACLD), the Florida Department for Children and Families (DCF), its local lead agency, The Partnership for Strong Families (PSF), the Casey Family Program, and approximately 30 social service agencies working through PSF. The project was initially designed to reduce the number of children removed from homes due to neglect or abuse. Working with the Casey Family Program, DCF and PSF looked at the traditional concept of a neighborhood resource center where social service agencies rotate staff through one facility to assist families in need of support.

Concurrently, the library district was looking for a library presence in the same geographic area. ACLD learned about the project and DCF/PSF desire to have a partner for their venture. From the PSF/DCF side, collaboration with the public library masked any stigma attached to one entering a facility designed just for social service aid. From the ACLD perspective, the venture provided an opportunity to reach new library users coming to the facility for social service meetings.

The Library Partnership expanded the traditional library role ACLD provides in E-government services. By sharing space with service providers and having regular dialogue, ACLD staff and social service partners provide coordinated and complementary services to meet a client's full needs. Many social service workers were unaware the extent to which libraries provide this level of assistance.

The scope of services now reaches beyond foster care issues. As word spread about The Library Partnership, other agencies, including faith-based and local governments, that provide health services, rent and utility subsidies, legal services, tax assistance, substance and domestic abuse counseling, etc. now provide services at this location. The Library Partnership has been used as a distribution point for a back to school clothes drive, food distribution, a book drive to build home libraries, and as a collection point for a weekend backpack food program for elementary school children in the free lunch program.

## Hialeah Public Libraries

### *3. e-government e-empowerment*

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The City of Hialeah Library Division's "e-government e-empowerment" project provides technology and e-government training to residents of the City of Hialeah. Hialeah is the second largest city in Miami-Dade and the fifth largest in the state with an estimated population of 206,931, an unemployment rate of 15.2% and where 94.4% of residents are of Hispanic origin, 72.11% are foreign born and 91.9% speak Spanish as a first language. A large percentage of the City's recent, low-income Hispanic immigrants need access to job-related services, government information and social assistance. The project includes upgrade of Wi-Fi access in the main library (JFK) and expansion of wireless connectivity to two branches, the Curtiss and West e-Libraries, that serve the most heavily populated and impoverished areas of the City. The project also provides laptops to make services available in separate and more discrete places within these three outlets.

The main library has been conducting bilingual e-government workshops in groups for several months. Individual and small group coaching is scheduled to begin on March 29<sup>th</sup>. The library also maintains dedicated sections of its blog with English and Spanish e-government resources.

## New River Public Library Cooperative

### *4. Training, continued*

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New River is in the second year of an LSTA grant to train adults to use computers and assist with e-government and job skills needs. In year one, equipment was purchased, a teacher hired, and classes developed. The mobile lab went to the libraries in three counties and trained

adults on basic computer use. Staff worked to assist people with e-government needs. Though it was hard to catch the people most in need some success was achieved. A webpage with links to government info, <http://www.newriver.lib.fl.us/online.htm> was developed. Working with Alachua County, training was provided for staff as well as handouts for users. The library developed policy for e-gov assistance and a print notebook for staff with copies of most used government forms.

In year two, basic computer training for adults continues. New components were added including intermediate classes and Job Skills with Learning Express, (see Learning Express link on New River webpage) to assist those looking for jobs with information to brush up on job skills. Assistance to those with e-gov needs is still provided. Working with Alachua County, laptops were provided for e-gov use to each library. Training on e-gov issues was provided to all staff at a recent staff day.

A link to class schedules are provided on New River webpage and thru Library Events link, <http://engagedpatrons.org/Events.cfm?SiteID=7766>

### Orange County Library District

#### *5. The Right Service at the Right Time: Navigating E-Government*

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The Orange County Library system (OCLS) project goal is to build a tool through which a service consumer, the “service seeker”, can answer an iterative series of questions to create a profile that seeks key matches to available government and public services as well as library resources. The tool will be called the “Service Seeker Discovery Engine” or SSDE. Without providing personal information (such as SSN), the user answers questions on factors such as status (marital, employment, citizenship), service need, age, preferred language options, etc. Based on responses to these questions this “interactive agent” matches needs, background and eligibility to the right service or resources.

We have issued an RFP for services for a software developer. The system will be built using Open Source tools and the source code will be freely available for review. Library staff are developing a project taxonomy and currently flow charting the entry into various services. When a developer is selected work will begin on the creation of the SSDE as well as the service provider records. We will develop a “provider council” to assist in the development of records for service providers and to help with beta testing of the product.

This product can help services seekers, potentially already overwhelmed by the challenges of E-Gov, to make the process more manageable. By the end of the grant period a fully developed interface for the public with ability to connect to services and library resources initially related to job searching and unemployment will have been developed. Staff will be

trained to assist. Open E-Gov sessions will be held to introduce service seekers to introductory computer skills as necessary and to the SSDE specifically. We hope to see a Phase 2 for further statewide applications should the funding be available.

## **Panhandle Public Library Cooperative System**

### *6. Mossy Pond E-Library*

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The Mossy Pond Library and Park will provide many learning and recreational opportunities for residents with a 3,500 square foot building, playground, picnic areas, hiking/nature trails, walking/bicycle trails, and a basket ball court. There is an identifiable Muskogee-Creek Indian population in the area. The park on completion will have a ceremonial fire circle and a sweat lodge. It is this juxtaposition of cultures, technology, books, rural-environment, and socio-economic levels that will make the provision of e-library service an exciting challenge.

The Mossy Pond Public Library is being developed as an e-library whose primary access to information, health, and economic services will be through the Internet. E-Services are anticipated to include overlapping components of workforce development, Social Security, Medicare, Medicaid, Adult and Family literacy, Food Stamp and Temporary Assistance to Needy Families, FEMA, Income Tax filing, Health Literacy, Social Networking, E-Government, E-Democracy, E-Commerce, and Distance Learning. These services will be made available to the 1,000 people living in Mossy Pond. It will take staff support to enable many of the residents to use the library and to feel comfortable with computers because of the high English and computer illiteracy. Forty-four percent (44%) of Calhoun County adults over 25 do not have a High School Diploma and 29% are considered functionally illiterate according to latest Florida Literacy Data & Statistics ([www.floridaliteracy.org](http://www.floridaliteracy.org)).

The Mossy Pond Public Library building is situated in the far Northwest corner of Calhoun County and is easily accessible to Bay County residents through Highway 231. It is anticipated that in the event of a multi-county disaster, such as a major hurricane, that this building will be heavily used by FEMA to serve both Calhoun and Bay County residents. The E-Library will be a major resource to these efforts. The library building will meet State of Florida criteria as a Hurricane Shelter. Interestingly, this will be the only building in the county that is certified as a Red Cross Shelter. It will also be the only county facility that will jointly provide services of the Public Library, the Health Department, Healthy Start, the Sheriff's Department, Voting precinct, and Department of Children and Families through on-site service provision and Internet Access. The Internet in the absence of service representatives will be the primary access point for families needing help and the only point of access for DCF or U. S. Government sites.

## Pasco County Library Cooperative

### *7. E-Government Services in Public Libraries (with FSU Information Institute)*

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[cmclure@lis.fsu.edu](mailto:cmclure@lis.fsu.edu)

Pasco County Library Cooperative (PCLC) and Florida State University's Information Institute (Information Institute) will conduct the following tasks for the E-Government Services in Public Libraries Grant.

1. Develop a statewide E-government web portal (PCLC)

This portal will include access to E-government resources and services; links to specific Florida and appropriate federal agency E-government resources and services.

The Information Institute will contribute the following to the web portal:

- Conduct Brief Needs Assessment -The Institute would build upon previous work conducted at the Institute as well as work in progress at Pasco County Library Cooperative and other public libraries in the state in determining the suggested content, organization, and design of a statewide E-Government Web Portal; and
- Usability/Functionality/Accessibility Testing for the Statewide E-Government Web Portal- Once the web portal is developed by Pasco County, the Information Institute will test the web portal

PCLC will contribute the following to the web portal: design, develop and initially deploy a statewide web portal. The web portal will include:

- An image of the state of Florida; each library or library system within Florida will have a hyperlink to that library's e-government web page, if available;

- Three Blogspot templates will be created for libraries that do not currently have E-government websites. These templates will be available for download. Once created these Blogspot pages can be linked to the web portal;
- A timeline of the web portal project development;
- A section dedicated to federal resource links and information;
- A section dedicated to Florida resource links and information; and
- A section dedicated for library professionals including a means for librarians to contribute and comment on the web portal.

2. Evaluate Florida Public Library E-Government Programs (FSU Information Institute)  
Develop a statewide evaluation strategy for all the various E-Government awards the State Library has made during 2009-2010.

The Information Institute will contribute the following to the Evaluation project:

Develop a statewide evaluation strategy for all the various E-Government awards the State Library has made for 2009-2010 using LSTA funds. The overall purposes of the evaluation are (1) to assist E-Government program participants fine-tune and improve program activities throughout the project and (2) to provide a means for completing an overall assessment of Florida public library E-Government programs.

PCLC will contribute the following to the Evaluation project:

PCLC liaison for this project will consult with the liaison from the State Library of Florida who will review and approve the Evaluation project.

3. Expand E-Government Service Roles for Public Libraries (FSU Information Institute)  
Expand and better specify the E-Government service roles originally developed by the Information Institute in the Needs Assessment of Florida Public Library E-Government and Emergency/Disaster Management Broadband Services in order to operationalize those service roles for practical application in public libraries.

The Information Institute will contribute the following to the Service Roles project:

- Review E-Government service roles at the basic and collaborative levels;
- Design a data collection schedule of appropriate methods (e.g., surveys, focus groups, interviews, etc.) to discover current best practices and the feasibility of each of the service roles; and
- Specify and operationalize the E-Government service roles for practical application in Florida public libraries.

PCLC will contribute the following to the Service Roles project:

PCLC liaison for this project will consult with the liaison from the State Library of Florida who will review and approve the Service Roles project.

*8. Pasco County E-Government Initiative Continuing Grant Year 3*

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The Pasco County E-Government Initiative Continuing Grant Year focuses on enabling Pasco County residents to gain access to online government information and to learn the skills necessary to effectively utilize these E-government services. These goals are to be accomplished by:

- Providing E-government assistance to Pasco County residents by library public services staff in the library branches and through one-on-one appointments with the E-Government Services Manager;
- Offering E-government services and programs to the public in the library branches and at outreach locations and;
- Developing online multimedia tutorials.

During the first year, laptops were distributed to the library branches and training workshops for the public were conducted. During the second year, PCLC continued providing E-government services offered during the first year with the addition of outreach programs. PCLC developed E-government tutorials, blogs, and other tools, which can be accessed via the E-Government Tools page (<http://pascolibraries.org/egovtools.shtml>)

In recognition of the importance of sharing the challenges and successes of the E-Government Initiative, PCLC has been sharing best practices and lessons learned with other libraries statewide and nationally. Seminars were presented by PCLC at various library consortiums in Florida, at the State Library and Archives of Florida, and at Florida Library Association Conference 2009. PCLC also provided training materials to Webjunction (<http://www.webjunction.org/gi21-intro-egovernment/-/articles/content/91741367>) and to the American Library Association Committee on Legislation's E-government Services Toolkit.

## Handout Appendix: Information Institute Selected E-Government Activities

The Information Use Management and Policy Institute (Information Institute)<sup>31</sup> at Florida State University has been involved in both the assessment and development of E-government services in public libraries for a number of years. In 2006, the Institute published a paper describing the importance of public libraries in the delivery of E-Government services based on national survey data collected as part of the Public Library Funding and Technology Access Survey<sup>32</sup> (funded by the Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation).<sup>33</sup>

Other work, reported in *Library Journal* later in 2006 summarized the various challenges faced by public libraries in the delivery of E-Government services.<sup>34</sup> In December 2006, the Information Institute and American Library Association sponsored a national conference on the role of public libraries in E-Government presenting a national plan for action that was described in a 2007 report.<sup>35</sup> Recently, the Institute described strategies for libraries to provide more efficient, effective, and citizen-centered E-Government services.<sup>36</sup> This work was based, in part, on a 2008 study that summarized *Florida Public Libraries and E-Government: Services, Issues, and Recommendations*.<sup>37</sup>

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<sup>31</sup> <http://www.ii.fsu.edu>

<sup>32</sup> <http://www.ala.org/ala/aboutala/offices/ors/plftas/plfundingoverview.cfm>

<sup>33</sup> Bertot, J. C., Jaeger, P. T., Langa, L. A., & McClure, C. R. (2006). Public access computing and Internet access in public libraries: the role of public libraries in e-government and emergency situations. *First Monday*, 11(9), n.p. Retrieved April 21, 2009, from <http://www.uic.edu/htbin/cgiwrap/bin/ojs/index.php/fm/article/view/1392/1310>

<sup>34</sup> Bertot, J. C., Jaeger, P. T., Langa, L. A., & McClure, C. R. (2006). Drafted: I want you to deliver E-Government. *Library Journal*, 131(13), 34-37. Retrieved August 12, 2009, from <http://www.libraryjournal.com/article/CA6359866.html>

<sup>35</sup> McClure, C. R., McGilvray, J., Barton, K. M., & Bertot, J. C., (2007). *E-Government and public libraries: Current status, meeting report, findings, and next steps*. Tallahassee FL: Information Use Management & Policy Institute, College of Information, Florida State University. Retrieved August 12, 2009, from [http://www.ii.fsu.edu/announcements/e-gov2006/egov\\_report.pdf](http://www.ii.fsu.edu/announcements/e-gov2006/egov_report.pdf)

<sup>36</sup> Bertot, J. C., Jaeger, P. T., & McClure, C. R. (2008). Citizen-centered E-Government services: Benefits, costs, and research needs. In S. A. Chun, M. Janssen, & J. R. Gil-Garcia (Eds.), *Proceedings of the 9th annual International Digital Government Research Conference* (pp. 137-141). Digital Government Society of North America. Retrieved June 15, 2009, from <http://www.ii.fsu.edu/~cmclure/publications/Citizencentered15March08.pdf>

<sup>37</sup> Gibson, A. N., Bertot, J. C., McClure, C. R., Mandel, L., & Snead, J. T. (2008). *Florida public libraries and E-Government: Services, issues, and recommendations*. Tallahassee FL: Information Use Management & Policy Institute, College of Information, Florida State University. Retrieved August 12, 2009, from [http://www.ii.fsu.edu/documents/reports/FL\\_Egov\\_2008Report.pdf](http://www.ii.fsu.edu/documents/reports/FL_Egov_2008Report.pdf)

**APPENDIX B  
CONSENT FORM**

Development of Florida Public Library E-government Services

The Information Institute is collaborating with the Pasco County Public Library's E-government initiative, on a research project concerning Florida public libraries and their provision of E-government services and resources. The purpose of the project is to explore the factors related to the provision of E-government services through public libraries, increase the success of E-government service delivery via public libraries, and improve access to knowledge about E-government services and resources. This ten month project begins October 1, 2009 and July 31, 2010.

As a critical agent in the provision of E-government services and resources, we would like to solicit your help by inviting you to participate in a 15 to 30-minute interview or focus group or project website field review.

Your participation in this research project is **COMPLETELY VOLUNTARY**. Please be assured that all of your responses will be **KEPT CONFIDENTIAL** and any data collected from this interview will be reported in aggregate form. Only study team members involved in this project will have access to the data and encoded data will be kept on secure servers at the College of Communication and Information for a period of two years after the project ends.

There will be no cost to you from participation in the research. I understand that I may contact Dr. Charles R. McClure, Francis Eppes Professor by email at [cmclure@lis.fsu.edu](mailto:cmclure@lis.fsu.edu) for answers to questions about this research or about my rights. If you have questions about your rights as a subject/participant in this research, or if you feel you have been placed at risk, you can contact the Chair of the Human Subjects Committee, Institutional Review Board, through the Office of the Vice President for Research at (850) 644-8633. Additional information on human subjects can be found at the Office of Research Human Subjects Committee home page located at <http://www.research.fsu.edu/humansubjects/index.html>.

Please indicate your consent for the following:

I, \_\_\_\_\_ (your name), agree to participate in the above study.

Your Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Your Signature: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

**APPENDIX C**  
**INTERVIEW QUESTIONS**

Name:

Date and Time:

EXAMPLE QUESTIONS

1. Which web 2.0 and/or social networking applications would you like to see included in a statewide E-Government web portal?
2. How might a statewide E-Government web portal best incorporate web 2.0 and/or social networking applications?
3. How might government agencies participate directly or indirectly on a statewide E-Government web portal?
4. Has your library partnered or collaborated with any government agencies?
5. What strategies do you suggest for partnering and collaborating with government agencies?
6. Should the E-Government web portal be designed for public librarians or residents of Florida or both?
7. What types of content (resources and service roles) would you like to see included in a statewide E-Government web portal? Please be specific.
8. How should information be organized on the statewide E-Government web portal? Can you give specific examples?
9. Should the statewide E-Government web portal provide direct links to city and county websites throughout Florida?
10. What types of instructions (if any) would you like to see included in the statewide E-Government web portal?
11. What types of constraints exist to providing E-Government services via the statewide E-Government web portal?
12. What types of training would you need to improve E-Government service through the statewide E-Government web portal?
13. Anything else?

**APPENDIX D  
FIELD REVIEW**

Visit <http://www.pascolibraries.org/egovtools.shtml> and respond to the following questions:

	Strongly disagree	Disagree	Undecided	Agree	Strongly agree
1. The home page provides easy to locate access to the site's content.	1	2	3	4	5
<b>Please comment:</b>					
2. Navigation through the site was easy.	1	2	3	4	5
<b>Please comment:</b>					
3. The site's search feature provides relevant results.	1	2	3	4	5
<b>Please comment:</b>					
	Strongly disagree	Disagree	Undecided	Agree	Strongly agree
4. The site's resources adequately provide links to needed information.	1	2	3	4	5
<b>Please comment:</b>					
5. Navigation back to the home page from areas in the website is easy.	1	2	3	4	5
<b>Please comment:</b>					
6. I would use this site as a primary resource for E-government information.	1	2	3	4	5
<b>Please comment:</b>					

**APPENDIX E**  
**FOCUS GROUP QUESTIONS**

QUESTIONS

Undergraduates will be shown on a laptop or GO on their own computers to <http://power.pasco.lib.fl.us/egovt.shtml>

1. How would you change the current web portal's design?
2. How would you change the current web portal's organization?
3. How would you change the current web portal's content?
4. Would you ever use the web portal?
5. How could the web portal change to increase your use of it?



**APPENDIX G  
FLORIDA RESULTS FROM PLFTAS**

<b>Question from PLFTAS</b>	<b>Florida Response Statistics*</b>
o Library staff provided assistance to patrons applying for or accessing e-government services (e.g., completing Medicare Part D, unemployment benefits, social services benefits forms; applying for licenses; accessing tax forms)	<b>81.7%</b>
o Library staff provided assistance to patrons for understanding how to access and use government Web sites (e.g., assistance navigating the Website)	<b>95.7%</b>
o Library staff provided assistance to patrons for understanding government programs and services (e.g., helping users understand programs such as Medicare Part D; immigration/residency requirements)	<b>46.8%</b>
o Library staff provided assistance to patrons for completing government forms (e.g., unemployment benefits, social services, filing immigration or visa forms)	<b>74.7%</b>
o The library developed guides, tip sheets, or other tools to help patrons use e-government websites and services	<b>33.3%</b>
o The library offered training classes regarding the use of government Websites, understanding government programs, and completing electronic forms (e.g., U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Service InfoPass appointment system, State Children’s Health Insurance Program - SCHIP)	<b>14.5%</b>
o The library offered translation services for forms and services in other languages	<b>9.1%</b>
o The library partnered with government agencies, non-profit organizations, and others to provide e-government services	<b>37.1%</b>
o The library worked with government agencies (local, state, or federal) to help the agencies improve their websites and/or e-government services	<b>9.7%</b>
o The library had at least one staff member with expertise and skills in the provision of e-government services	<b>32.3%</b> *frequencies from responses of 206 public libraries

**APPENDIX H**  
**QUESTIONS FROM *PLFTAS***

1. Please indicate the e-government roles and services THIS LIBRARY BRANCH provided to its patrons during the last twelve (12) months: (MARK  ALL THAT APPLY)

- o Library staff provided assistance to patrons applying for or accessing e-government services (e.g., completing Medicare Part D, unemployment benefits, social services benefits forms; applying for licenses; accessing tax forms)
- o Library staff provided assistance to patrons for understanding how to access and use government Websites (e.g., assistance navigating the Website)
- o Library staff provided assistance to patrons for understanding government programs and services (e.g., helping users understand programs such as Medicare Part D; immigration/residency requirements)
- o Library staff provided assistance to patrons for completing government forms (e.g., unemployment benefits, social services, filing immigration or visa forms)
- o The library developed guides, tip sheets, or other tools to help patrons use e-government websites and services
- o The library offered training classes regarding the use of government Websites, understanding government programs, and completing electronic forms (e.g., U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Service InfoPass appointment system, State Children's Health Insurance Program - SCHIP)
- o The library offered translation services for forms and services in other languages
- o The library partnered with government agencies, non-profit organizations, and others to provide e-government services
- o The library worked with government agencies (local, state, or federal) to help the agencies improve their websites and/or e-government services
- o The library had at least one staff member with expertise and skills in the provision of e-government services
- o Other (please specify):

19. Please describe how THIS LIBRARY BRANCH helps patrons seek employment: (MARK  ALL THAT APPLY)

- o The library provides access to jobs databases and other job opportunity resources
- o The library provides access to civil service exam materials
- o The library helps patrons complete online job applications
- o Library collaborates with outside agencies or individuals to help patrons complete online job applications
- o The library helps patrons develop business plans and other materials to start businesses
- o Library collaborates with outside agencies or individuals to help patrons develop business plans and other materials to start businesses
- o The library offers classes (either by librarians or others working with the library) on job seeking strategies, interview tips, etc.

- o The library offers software and other resources to help patrons create resumes and other employment materials
- o Other (please specify):