

Florida's Public Libraries Build Strong Economies

A Taxpayer Return On Investment Report





Leesburg Public Library
Lake County Library System

Message from Secretary of State Glenda E. Hood



Florida's public libraries return at least \$6.54 for every \$1.00 invested from all sources, including local, state and federal dollars.

I am pleased to present the results of an independent study on taxpayer return on investment in Florida's public libraries commissioned by the Florida Department of State, State Library and Archives of Florida. The study, conducted by researchers at the University of Pittsburgh, the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill and Florida State University, was conducted December 2003 through September 2004. Over 2,380 individuals and 169 organizations participated in this groundbreaking study which was the first of its kind ever completed in the state. The study was funded under the provisions of the Library Services and Technology Act, from the Institute of Museum and Library Services, administered by the Florida Department of State, State Library and Archives of Florida.

Researchers used a variety of data collection and analysis methods to assess the return on investment, including telephone surveys of Florida households, in-library surveys of adult visitors, a survey of organizations that use Florida public libraries, a survey of all Florida public library system directors, and a standard method of assessing return on investment—an input-output econometric model called REMI (Regional Economic Modeling Inc.). The study measured the relationship between total economic benefit and the total investment in

public libraries, or the gain or loss resulting from the existence of public libraries.

Libraries have a history of being held in high regard, but that's not enough as governments make hard fiscal decisions. The public needs assurance that funds spent by its government will be used for maximized and value-added benefits. This study shows that all taxpayers in Florida benefit from libraries through their contributions to education, work force development, tourism, and overall quality of life issues. It gives compelling support for the fact that libraries change not only lives but entire communities.

Librarians have long held anecdotal and empirical evidence that libraries facilitate economic growth, and they have been waiting a very long time for hard evidence that would support these observations. Based on this study, librarians statewide are now working toward increasing public awareness on the fiscal impact of their work. This document is a summary of the study's results. Those who wish to read the entire report can find it on the State Library and Archives of Florida's Web site at <http://dlis.dos.state.fl.us>.

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Glenda E. Hood". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

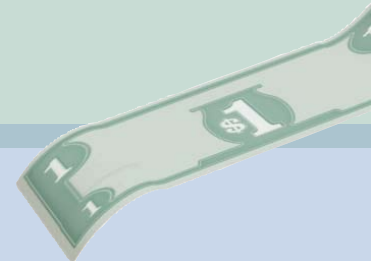
Glenda E. Hood
Secretary of State



creates jobs

increases wages

positively impacts Florida's gross regional product






Florida's public libraries return \$6.54 for every \$1.00 invested

The total revenue investment in Florida's public libraries is \$449 million. This includes federal, state and local public funds (\$2.3 million, \$34 million and \$387 million respectively); other funds such as grants (\$20 million); and funds that support the multitype library cooperatives (\$6 million). The total economic return attributable to the existence of the public libraries is \$2.9 billion.

The economic benefit can be seen in jobs created, increased wages for Florida's residents and positive impact on Florida's gross regional product. The public can be assured that funds spent on libraries will be used for maximized and value-added benefits.



The \$449 million invested in Florida's public libraries yields a total economic return of \$2.9 billion.

Florida's public libraries create and nurture

Florida's public libraries, by their very existence, stimulate an economic ripple effect. The statewide gross regional product is estimated to increase by \$4 billion as a result of publicly-funded library expenditures in the state. These direct in-state expenditures by public libraries include books, periodicals, electronic equipment, and resources, as well as large capital projects such as library construction and renovation.

For every dollar of taxpayer support for public libraries in Florida:

Gross Regional Product increases by

\$ 9.08

Income (wages) increases by

\$ 12.66

economic growth

For every \$6,488 of public support (federal, state and local), one job is created.



The statewide gross regional product is estimated to increase by \$4 billion as a result of publicly-funded library expenditures in the state.





Florida's public libraries benefit Floridians

Every taxpayer in Florida benefits from public libraries' considerable contribution to education, the economy, tourism, retirement, and the quality of life in their community. Adult Florida residents account for 51 percent of the total in-person visits to public libraries, Florida's children account for 44 percent of the visits and tourists account for five percent of the visits.

The benefits of Florida's public libraries to their users can be measured in terms of savings in both time

and money. In the past year users indicated a total of 57.6 million hours or \$2.4 billion saved. Florida's citizens save both time and money by accessing the resources available through their public libraries, whether they use them for personal, educational or work-related purposes.

Florida's public libraries meet a community's

Adults report that they use public libraries to meet a variety of informational needs. Some common uses include obtaining health and wellness information, getting assistance with job searches, solving day-to-day problems such as consumer purchasing issues, learning more about personal finance and investing, studying culture and heritage, and finding information for occasional concerns such as relocation and purchasing real estate.

Florida's adult residents use the public library 16 million times per year for personal information needs. About half of these uses are in-person visits and approximately half are through remote Internet connections.

Recreational needs account for a total of 19.2 million uses, of which about two-thirds were in-person visits and about one-third were remote Internet connections to the libraries.

Florida's public libraries provide a number of valuable services and resources that serve the personal information, educational, business and recreational needs of their communities. Patrons save by accessing materials at the library rather than buying them. Libraries also provide patrons with tax and other governmental forms and voter registration materials.

personal or family needs



Florida's public libraries mean business

Research
Business Location
Management
Marketing
Operations
Legal
Financial



Florida's public libraries meet work-related needs including providing information for small, medium and large privately owned companies; non-profit organizations; schools, universities and colleges; government agencies and hospitals. The use of Florida's public libraries for work-related purposes yields substantial benefits to the workplace, including time and monetary savings and resulting in a more readied work force.

Florida's public libraries offer the state's work force access to the training and tools that they need to increase their skills and productivity for long-term economic success. Libraries offer computer resources, Internet access and research materials that are of growing importance to job seekers and business owners. Library staff members provide one-on-one assistance and group training opportunities to help patrons fully utilize the

resources available to them. These services are available in virtually every neighborhood library in Florida free of cost to residents. When used by local and small business owners these resources help stimulate the economy.

In the past year, Florida adults made 6.2 million uses—both in-person and via remote connections—of public libraries for work-related purposes.

Business, government and non-profit libraries in Florida depend on the existence of public libraries, benefiting from their resources and services. Organizations use public library meeting rooms, participate in library-sponsored technology training, and use the public libraries' access to licensed online databases and electronic publications to further the interests of business.



Niceville Public Library
Okaloosa County Public
Library Cooperative



Main Library
Jacksonville Public Library



Temple Terrace Public Library
Hillsborough County Public
Library Cooperative

Florida's public libraries are a



unique resource for education and lifelong learning

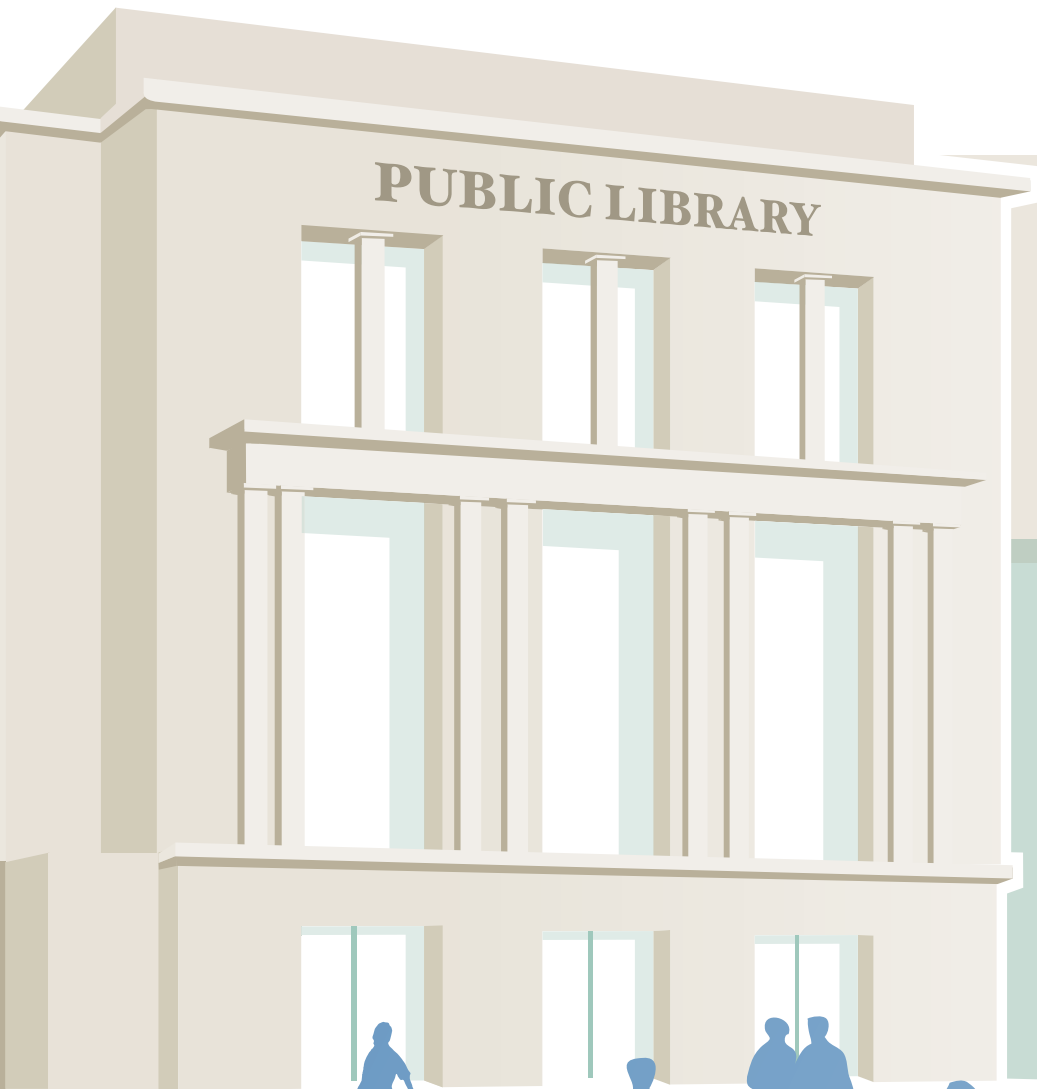
The direct economic contribution of Florida's public libraries to the state's education is \$2.1 billion annually. About 25 million in-person visits to the public libraries are by children (K-12) who use the library as a place to study or as a source of information needed to complete a homework assignment. In addition, about 670,000 visits involve home-schooling or home education activities and over 900,000 visits are for latchkey or aftercare activities.

Parents bring preschool children to public libraries (3 million visits annually) for

children's programs, to read or to check out a book, encouraging early childhood development with the guidance of trained librarians.

Florida's public libraries also contribute to education by serving the information needs of the state's teachers. Florida's public libraries are used 18.4 million times per year by adults in their roles as teachers and students. Of these uses, half were in-person visits and half were through remote Internet connections. Teachers' educational uses tended to be related to undergraduate and K-8 teaching. The

resources available at public libraries help teachers to prepare lessons, presentations and papers, and to keep up with professional literature. Adult students' educational uses of libraries included work on assignments and as a place for study. Other lifelong learning needs, such as adult literacy classes, GED classes and technology/computer classes, account for 5.9 million visits to Florida's public libraries.



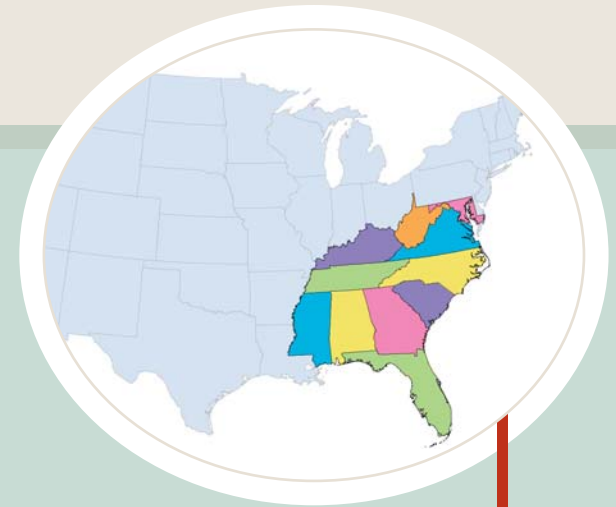
Floridians use their public libraries

In 2003/2004 there were 68.3 million in-person visits to public libraries in Florida. That's as if the combined populations of Florida, Georgia, Alabama, Mississippi, North Carolina, South Carolina, Tennessee, Kentucky, Virginia, West Virginia and Maryland visited Florida's public libraries.

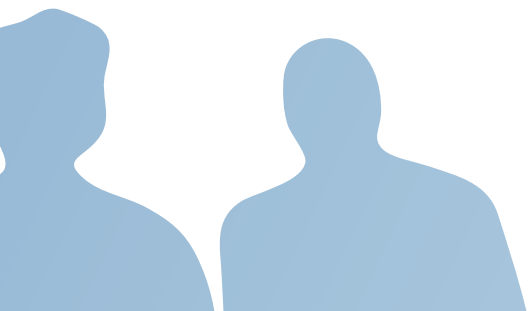
Adult Florida residents form the majority of library visitors. Tourists account for five percent of in-person visits. Over half

of Florida's adult population and over one-third of all Florida children make visits to Florida's public libraries.

The most common uses of public libraries was for checking out materials, using reference services and materials, and using public access computers.



In-person visits to Florida libraries total 68.3 million—the combined populations of these 11 states





East County Regional Library
Lee County Library System



Florida's public libraries bridge the digital divide

Adult Florida residents who use Florida's public libraries via remote Internet connections do so much more frequently than people who visit libraries in person. Those who visit the library using the Internet visit 15 times annually as compared with those who visit only in person, approximately five times per year.

In 2003/2004 adults made over 25 million remote connections to public libraries.

Online activities included searching the library's online catalog, reserving books, searching online databases, viewing or downloading articles, using the "Ask a Librarian" service,

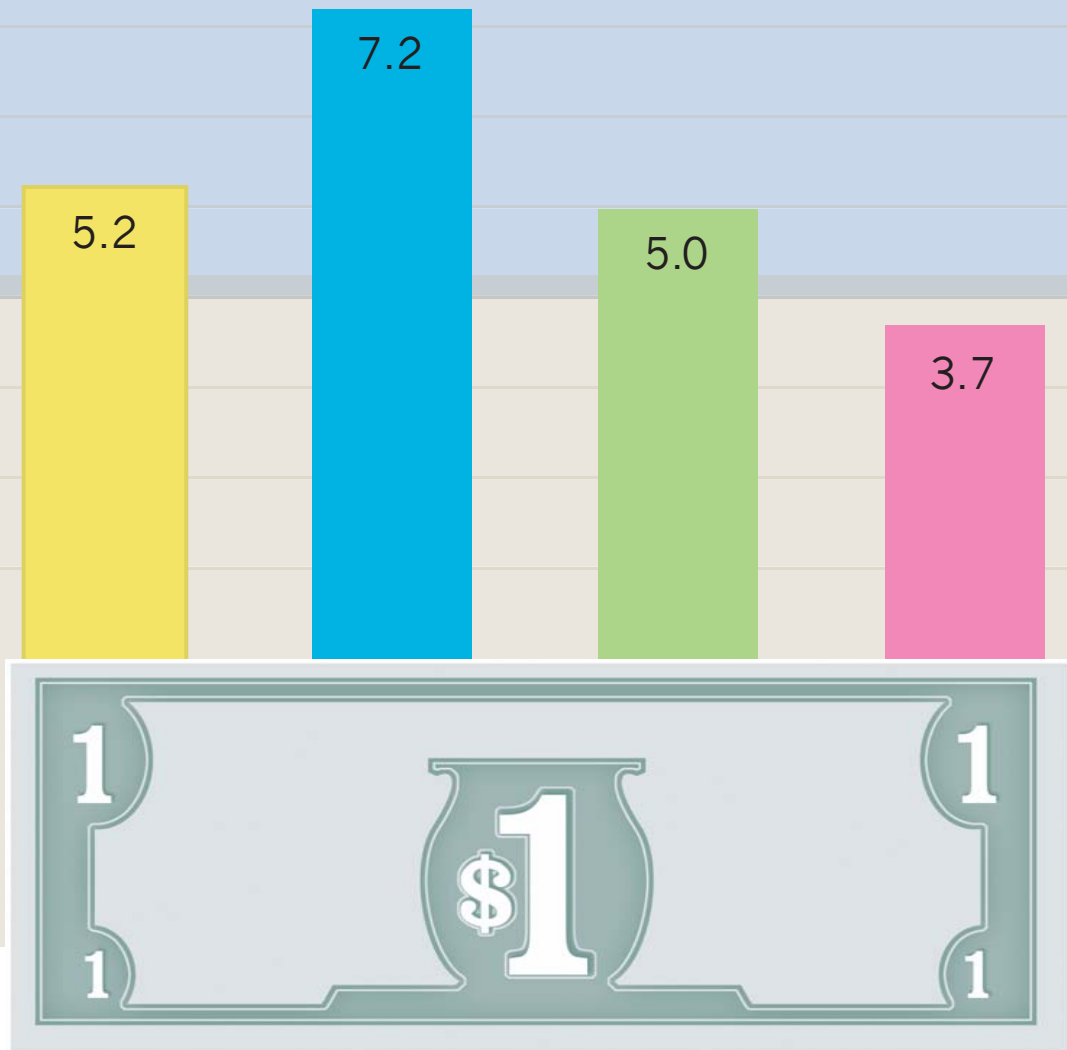
viewing or downloading e-books, and receiving reference services via e-mail.

People who visit the library in person also report using the library's Internet access computers for activities such as checking their e-mail, using the library's catalog, viewing or downloading articles, and using online bibliographic databases.

Florida's public libraries are helping to close the digital divide by offering technology trainings to their communities. Almost 1 million people received technology training at a Florida public library last year alone.



Every dollar invested in Florida's public libraries



In addition to examining return on investment, the study also looked at benefit to cost ratios for Florida's public libraries. The benefit to cost ratio represents the relationship between the benefits derived from the use or existence of the public library and the cost to taxpayers to make the libraries available.

- The benefit to cost ratio for the availability of Florida's public libraries is 5.2 to 1. The benefit to the state in terms of the availability of Florida's public libraries is \$2.3 billion while the cost of operation is \$449 million.
- The benefit to cost ratio for the use of Florida's public libraries is 7.2 to 1. The benefit to the state in terms of time and money saved through the use of the libraries is \$3.2 billion while the cost of operation is \$449 million.

builds a stronger economy

- The benefit to cost ratio for wages for Florida's public libraries is 5.0 to 1. The benefit to the state in terms of wages is \$9.2 billion while the cost for wages is \$1.83 billion.
- The benefit to cost ratio for the gross regional product for Florida's public libraries is 3.7 to 1. The benefit to the state in terms of gross regional product or output is \$6.7 billion while the cost is \$1.83 billion.

It is clear that the Florida public library benefit to cost ratios are impressive, regardless of the approach used.



Cape Coral-Lee County Public Library
Lee County Library System

Acknowledgements

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Key stakeholders

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The 2,388 adults and 169 organizations that responded to the surveys

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The libraries and architectural firms who contributed many of the photographs and drawings used in this publication

Cape Coral-Lee County Public Library
Lee County Library System

Citrus Ridge County Library
Lake County Library System

East County Regional Library
Lee County Library System

Harvard Jolly Inc.

Leesburg Public Library
Lake County Library System

Main Library
Jacksonville Public Library

Niceville Public Library
Okaloosa County Public Library
Cooperative

Temple Terrace Public Library
Hillsborough County Public Library
Cooperative

Thank you all!

The State Library and Archives of Florida is the designated information resource provider for the Florida Legislature and state agencies. It coordinates and funds public libraries; implements statewide reading, information and literacy initiatives; provides records management services; and collects, preserves and makes available the published and unpublished documentary history of the state.





FLORIDA DEPARTMENT *of* STATE

Jeb Bush, Governor
Glenda E. Hood, Secretary of State
Florida Department of State
State Library and Archives of Florida

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