

MAY 2018

# CITY OF CHICAGO OFFICE OF INSPECTOR GENERAL

## CHICAGO PUBLIC LIBRARY STAFFING AUDIT



REPORT OF THE OFFICE OF INSPECTOR GENERAL



JOSEPH M. FERGUSON  
INSPECTOR GENERAL

CITY OF CHICAGO  
OFFICE OF INSPECTOR GENERAL  
740 NORTH SEDGWICK STREET, SUITE 200  
CHICAGO, ILLINOIS 60654  
TELEPHONE: (773) 478-7799  
FAX: (773) 478-3949

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MAY 2, 2018

## TO THE MAYOR, MEMBERS OF THE CITY COUNCIL, THE CITY CLERK, THE CITY TREASURER, AND THE RESIDENTS OF THE CITY OF CHICAGO:

The City of Chicago Office of Inspector General (OIG) has completed an audit evaluating the design and implementation of the Chicago Public Library's (CPL) staffing plan, which allocates positions among CPL's 80 library locations. The objectives of the audit were to determine whether CPL's staffing plan followed industry guidance and was an effective and efficient tool for allocating human resources among CPL libraries.

While CPL's staffing plan improves upon its previous uniform staffing approach, OIG determined that due to deficiencies in its design and implementation, the plan is not sufficient to align library branch staffing with community needs.

Referring to staffing industry guidance from the U.S. Government Accountability Office (GAO) and the American Library Association (ALA), OIG identified several flaws in the design of CPL's staffing plan. We also found deficiencies in how CPL implemented the plan, such as not collecting and using all relevant data, and not consistently assigning staff to libraries at the prescribed levels.


These flaws in the design and implementation of CPL's staffing plan may contribute to inefficient use of CPL's human resources. Some staff reported performing tasks that fell outside their job descriptions and for which they were overqualified. For example, Clerks and Librarians reported regularly engaging in sorting and shelving, tasks normally done by Library Pages. In another instance, a Clerk at a library serving a largely Hispanic community told OIG that her status as the only bilingual staff member made it a practical necessity for her to perform tasks outside her job description on a regular basis. One branch manager told us that "many positions perform many roles," which in some cases results in personnel spending time on activities that could be done more cost-effectively by employees holding other titles.

CPL's commendable intention to take a more strategic approach to meeting community needs through a tailored staffing plan still leaves considerable room for improvement. In this report, we make a number of recommendations to enhance the design and implementation of the staffing plan, including involving stakeholders such as library employees, as well as board and community members, in redesigning the plan to utilize measurable factors and ensure that libraries are appropriately staffed to meet local needs.

CPL agreed with some OIG recommendations, stating that it will revise its staffing plan to better align the factors considered with available data, and will develop a policy that codifies application of the plan. Management noted that the staffing plan is not fully implemented, but that CPL seeks to implement it incrementally as vacancies and reassignments permit. CPL disagreed with OIG's recommendation to disseminate the plan to all library employees, and declined to involve the library board and community members in redesigning the plan, stating that senior staff regularly "reports up and down the organizational structure" regarding staffing needs and strategies. As CPL works to improve its staffing plan, we encourage periodic consideration of how changes in community composition and demand for services may affect the staffing needs of each library.

We thank CPL management and staff for their full cooperation during this audit.

Respectfully,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'J. Ferguson', is positioned above the printed name.

Joseph M. Ferguson  
Inspector General  
City of Chicago

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## ACRONYMS

ALA	American Library Association
CPL	Chicago Public Library
DHR	Department of Human Resources
FTE	Full-Time Equivalent
GAO	Government Accountability Office
OBM	Office of Budget and Management
OIG	Office of Inspector General

## I. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The Office of Inspector General (OIG) conducted an audit evaluating the design and implementation of the Chicago Public Library's (CPL) staffing plan, which allocates positions among CPL's 80 library locations. Providing appropriate library staff to meet community needs is critical to CPL's mission of providing "equal access to information, ideas, and knowledge through books, programs and other resources."<sup>1</sup>

The objectives of the audit were to determine whether CPL's staffing plan followed industry guidance and was an effective and efficient tool for allocating human resources to CPL libraries. OIG determined that due to deficiencies in its design and implementation, the plan is not sufficient to align library branch staffing with community needs. By way of background, according to CPL management, prior to 2012 each CPL branch library was staffed with six full-time positions—three Librarians and three Clerks—regardless of branch size, location, or usage volume. In 2012, new management determined that this uniform approach was not sustainable, and developed a plan meant to allocate staff on the basis of factors such as square footage of the facility, number of points of service (e.g., circulation and reference desks), number of visitors, circulation volume, and computer usage level. Also in 2012, City budget cuts led to a 26.3% reduction in CPL staffing from 2011 levels, including the elimination of 146 Library Page positions (the equivalent of 109 full-time equivalent (FTE) positions). Pages are part-time employees responsible for sorting and shelving books and other materials, as well as performing other routine clerical tasks. CPL has since restored some Page positions, although total staffing still remains below the 2011 level. CPL management stated that the loss of Page positions has significantly impacted operations over the last several years, and continues to constitute a major challenge.

Referring to guidance from the U.S. Government Accountability Office (GAO) and the American Library Association (ALA), OIG identified several deficiencies in the design of CPL's staffing plan. First, CPL has not conducted a staff workload analysis, which would provide information necessary for determining how many and what type of staff are required to serve community needs. Second, branch managers and frontline staff were not consulted in the creation of the plan. Third, many of the plan's library classification factors use only qualitative descriptors, such as "large," "heavy," and "moderate," to characterize readily quantifiable information such as population, number of schools, and computer usage. This introduces unnecessary subjectivity and imprecision to the classification process.

OIG also found deficiencies in CPL's implementation of its staffing plan. First, CPL did not collect all the necessary data. Although the plan lists 15 factors to consider when classifying libraries, CPL classified libraries using data on only 5 factors—number of visitors, circulation volume, computer usage level, area population by zip code, and number of area schools. CPL did not use

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<sup>1</sup> City of Chicago, Chicago Public Library, "Mission," accessed January 23, 2018, <https://www.chipublib.org/about-us/>.

data on the other 10 factors, such as the number of people in the community who communicate in languages other than English.

Second, CPL classified some libraries incorrectly based on the data for the five factors it did utilize. Third, CPL did not staff all libraries at the levels prescribed by the plan. OIG compared the FTE positions assigned to each library to the FTE range prescribed for its assigned category based on CPL's five-factor approach. We found that 18.8% of library locations were not staffed as required given their categories. The variances from the requirements were small, ranging from 0.5 to 1.5 FTE more or less than the prescribed range. Nonetheless, these deviations show that CPL did not consistently apply the staffing-plan FTE ranges.

Finally, CPL did not use population data accurately tailored to determine the number of residents served by each library location. CPL measured population by zip code, yet many libraries are located at the edges of zip code boundaries, making this a less-than-ideal method of measuring the size of the population served. Furthermore, relying on zip code boundaries does not provide a unique population measurement for each library, because 21 libraries share a zip code with at least 1 other library. The area covered by zip code 60609, for example, contains 5 libraries. Using U.S. census tracts or blocks would provide more specific service area population data for the area served by each library location.

The deficiencies in CPL's staffing plan may contribute to inefficient use of CPL's human resources. Some staff reported performing tasks that fell outside their job descriptions and for which they were overqualified. For example, Clerks and Librarians reported regularly engaging in sorting and shelving, tasks normally done by Library Pages. In another instance, a Clerk at a library serving a largely Hispanic community told OIG that her status as the only bilingual staff member made it a practical necessity for her to perform tasks outside her job description on a regular basis. One branch manager told us that "many positions perform many roles," which in some cases results in personnel spending time on activities that could be done more cost-effectively by employees holding other titles.

OIG recommends that CPL conduct a system-wide workload analysis to determine the time spent on all activities by staff in each job classification and to incorporate the findings into its staffing plan. CPL should also involve stakeholders, such as library employees, as well as board and community members, in redesigning the plan to utilize measurable factors and ensure that libraries are appropriately staffed to meet community needs. After CPL has redesigned its staffing plan, it should consistently and completely apply the plan's factors to all library locations. CPL should disseminate the plan to its employees so that everyone is aware of the rationale for CPL's staff allocations and has an opportunity to provide input for future plan revisions. Finally, CPL should develop a process to evaluate the effectiveness of the staffing plan on a periodic basis, and should modify it as needed to adjust to changes in library services and community needs.

In response to our audit findings and recommendations, CPL stated that it will revise its staffing plan to better align the factors considered with available data, and will develop a policy that

formalizes application of the plan. Management noted that the staffing plan is not fully implemented, but that CPL seeks to implement it incrementally as vacancies and reassignments permit. CPL disagreed with OIG's recommendation to disseminate the plan to all library employees, and declined to involve the library board and community members in redesigning the plan, stating that senior staff regularly "reports up and down the organizational structure" regarding staffing needs and strategies.

The specific recommendations related to each finding, and CPL's response, are described in the "Audit Findings and Recommendations" section of this report.

## II. BACKGROUND

CPL's mission states:

We welcome and support all people in their enjoyment of reading and pursuit of lifelong learning. Working together, we strive to provide equal access to information, ideas and knowledge through books, programs and other resources. We believe in the freedom to read, to learn, to discover.<sup>2</sup>

In support of this mission, CPL locations provide patrons free access to books, magazines, newspapers, movies, music, research databases, and Internet resources. In 2017, CPL reported serving approximately 8.5 million patrons<sup>3</sup> at 80 library locations.<sup>4</sup> The 80 locations consist of 1 central library (Harold Washington), 2 regional libraries (Sulzer and Woodson), and 77 branch libraries organized into 3 districts (Central, North, and South).<sup>5</sup>

### A. CPL STAFFING AND COSTS

Personnel services are CPL's single largest cost, accounting for 75.7% of the Department's \$74.0 million total budget appropriation for 2017.<sup>6</sup> Figure 1 shows CPL's appropriation for FTE positions from 2011 through 2017.

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<sup>2</sup> City of Chicago, Chicago Public Library, "Mission," accessed January 23, 2018, <https://www.chipublib.org/about-us/>.

<sup>3</sup> City of Chicago, Chicago Data Portal, "Libraries-2017 Visitors by Location," accessed January 31, 2018, <https://data.cityofchicago.org/dataset/Libraries-2017-Visitors-by-Location/bk6j-nu5x/data>. The City's Data Portal notes that this patron count does not include people using Community Rooms or attending programs in libraries.

<sup>4</sup> City of Chicago, Chicago Public Library, "Mission," accessed January 23, 2018, <https://www.chipublib.org/about-us/>. According to CPL management, even though there are 80 library locations, the Data Portal shows visitor data for 79 locations. This is because the Water Works branch is administratively considered part of the Harold Washington Library, so its data is rolled into that of the Harold Washington Library.

<sup>5</sup> See Appendix D for branch libraries in each district.

<sup>6</sup> City of Chicago, Office of Budget and Management, 2018 Budget Overview, 133, accessed January 23, 2018, [https://www.cityofchicago.org/content/dam/city/depts/obm/supp\\_info/2018Budget/2018\\_Budget\\_Overview.pdf](https://www.cityofchicago.org/content/dam/city/depts/obm/supp_info/2018Budget/2018_Budget_Overview.pdf).



**FIGURE 1 - CPL FTE positions and appropriations**

Fiscal Year	Total FTEs	Personnel Services Appropriation
2011	1,128	\$57,728,193
2012	831	\$51,581,032
2013	906	\$53,953,749
2014	936	\$55,416,389
2015	943	\$57,679,727
2016	954	\$55,777,465
2017	946	\$56,053,229

Source: City of Chicago 2012-2018 Budget Overviews.

In 2012, budget cuts led to a 26.3% reduction in CPL staffing, including the elimination of 146 part-time Library Page positions (the equivalent of 109 FTEs). Pages are part-time employees responsible for sorting and shelving books and other materials, as well as performing other routine clerical tasks. CPL has since restored some Page positions, though total staffing still remains below the 2011 level.

CPL management stated that the loss of Library Page positions has significantly impacted operations over the last several years, and continues to constitute one of the major challenges in staffing libraries. CPL relies on overtime to cover vacancies and meet operational needs; management stated that it typically exhausts the annual overtime budget of \$400,000.

Library branches are staffed by personnel holding nine job titles—Librarian IV, Librarian III, Librarian II, Librarian I, Library Associate, Head Library Clerk, Senior Library Clerk, Library Clerk, and Library Page. CPL may designate librarians as serving adults, teenagers, or children, depending on specialty and training.

## **B. CPL LIBRARY STAFFING PLAN**

According to CPL management, prior to 2012 each CPL branch library was staffed with six full-time positions—three Librarians and three Clerks—regardless of branch size, location, or usage volume. In 2012, new management determined that this uniform approach was not sustainable, and developed a plan to allocate staff on the basis of factors such as square footage of the facility, number of points of service (e.g., circulation and reference desks), number of visitors, circulation volume, and computer usage level. The staffing plan identifies six categories of library locations and recommends an FTE range for each category. The plan, which we provide in Appendix A, is summarized in Figure 2.

FIGURE 2 - CPL staffing plan summary

Category	Description	Example Criteria	Recommended FTE Positions
A	Regional library	Very large facility Open 7 days / 64 hours per week Extensive collections Heavy afterschool and weekend use	45-50
B	Large branch	Circulates 10,000-17,000 items per month Over 10,000 visits per month Two or more reference service points	8-10
C	Medium to large branch	Circulates 5,000-10,000 items per month 6,000-12,000 visits per month	6-8
D	Medium to large branch	Circulates 1,500-5,000 items per month 7,000-12,000 visits per month Challenging security issues	7-10
E	Small to medium branch	Circulates 1,500-5,000 items per month 4,000-8,000 visits per month	5-6
F	Partial or special service location	No set criteria	Based on need

Source: OIG summary of CPL staffing plan.<sup>7</sup>

As shown in Figure 3, the largest category was category C, with 26 libraries, or 32.5% of the total. Although hybrid categories are not defined in the staffing plan, CPL classified some branches as B/D or C/E.<sup>8</sup> CPL did not assign any libraries to category F, and did not classify three libraries.

FIGURE 3 - Number of libraries CPL assigned to each category

Category	Number of Libraries	Percent
A	2	2.5%
B	16	20.0%
B/D	2	2.5%
C	26	32.5%
C/E	3	3.8%
D	18	22.5%
E	10	12.5%
F	0	0.0%
Not Classified	3	3.8%
<b>Total</b>	<b>80</b>	<b>100%</b>

Source: OIG analysis of data provided by CPL. Sum exceeds 100% due to rounding.<sup>9</sup>

<sup>7</sup> CPL's full staffing plan, titled "Branch Staffing Categories," is provided in Appendix A.

<sup>8</sup> Libraries with hybrid classifications were excluded from OIG analysis, as discussed in the Methodology section of this report.

<sup>9</sup> See Appendix C for CPL's Library Classifications.

The map in Appendix B illustrates the number of FTE positions assigned to CPL's branch libraries in 2016. According to CPL management, branch libraries require a minimum of two on-duty staff members to operate, but three or four are usually needed to perform most regular responsibilities. Library branches are open eight hours a day, six days a week. The exact hours of operation vary by branch, but usually alternate between a 10 a.m. to 6 p.m. shift and a 12 p.m. to 8 p.m. shift.

## C. STAFFING INDUSTRY GUIDANCE

As part of this audit, OIG reviewed guidance related to workforce planning and staffing. Our primary resources were the GAO's 2003 report *Human Capital: Key Principles for Effective Strategic Workforce Planning*,<sup>10</sup> and the book *Staffing for Results: A Guide to Working Smarter*<sup>11</sup> published by the ALA. For reference, we summarize below the central guidance provided by these two resources.

GAO's *Key Principles for Effective Strategic Workforce Planning* details five key principles an organization should follow in developing a strategy to deploy, develop, and retain staff to achieve current and future program goals. These five principles are:

- involve top management, employees, and other stakeholders in developing, communicating, and implementing the strategic workforce plan;
- determine the critical skills and competencies that will be needed to achieve current and future programmatic results;
- develop strategies that are tailored to address gaps in number, deployment, and alignment of human capital approaches for enabling and sustaining the contributions of all critical skills and competencies;
- build the capability needed to address administrative, educational, and other requirements important to support workforce planning strategies; and
- monitor and evaluate the agency's progress toward its human capital goals and the contribution that human capital results have made toward achieving programmatic results.<sup>12</sup>

While the GAO report addresses staffing and workforce development broadly, the ALA's *Staffing for Results* applies specifically to libraries, providing information that "can be used by library managers and staff to identify and collect the information they need to make informed staffing decisions and to monitor the results of those decisions."<sup>13</sup> The authors state that due to the

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<sup>10</sup> U.S. Government Accountability Office, "Human Capital: Key Principles for Effective Strategic Workforce Planning," December 2003, accessed December 18, 2017, <http://www.gao.gov/assets/250/240816.pdf>.

<sup>11</sup> Diane Mayo and Jeanne Goodrich for the Public Library Association, *Staffing for Results: A Guide to Working Smarter* (Chicago: American Library Association, 2002).

<sup>12</sup> U.S. Government Accountability Office, "Human Capital: Key Principles for Effective Strategic Workforce Planning," December 2003, 2-3, accessed December 18, 2017, <http://www.gao.gov/assets/250/240816.pdf>.

<sup>13</sup> Diane Mayo and Jeanne Goodrich for the Public Library Association, *Staffing for Results: A Guide to Working Smarter*, (Chicago: American Library Association, 2002), xii.

changing role of public libraries, as well as the constant evolution of technology and services, there can be a disconnect between “[t]raditional library measures, such as number of items circulated or reference questions answered” and the actual workload experienced by staff.<sup>14</sup> *Staffing for Results* stresses the importance of staff workload analysis and provides guidance on how library managers can measure workload to determine optimal staffing levels. The authors explain that an employee’s workload may be analyzed by numeric comparison of inputs to outputs—e.g., items shelved per staff hour—or by analyzing steps in processes to identify backlogs or bottlenecks.<sup>15</sup> Optimizing the use of library staff time is crucial to meeting community needs because,

[s]taff are the most important of the four key resources available to accomplish a library’s goals. (The other three are collections, facilities, and technology.) If you are planning to change the library’s services to meet new or evolving customer needs, then staff will need to do different things with their days. Gathering data on workloads is one way to identify tasks that can be eliminated or streamlined to free up time.<sup>16</sup>

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<sup>14</sup> Diane Mayo and Jeanne Goodrich for the Public Library Association, *Staffing for Results: A Guide to Working Smarter*, (Chicago: American Library Association, 2002), 3.

<sup>15</sup> Diane Mayo and Jeanne Goodrich for the Public Library Association, *Staffing for Results: A Guide to Working Smarter*, (Chicago: American Library Association, 2002), 7-11.

<sup>16</sup> Diane Mayo and Jeanne Goodrich for the Public Library Association, *Staffing for Results: A Guide to Working Smarter*, (Chicago: American Library Association, 2002), 17.

### III. OBJECTIVES, SCOPE, AND METHODOLOGY

The objectives of the audit were to determine whether CPL's staffing plan followed industry guidance and was an effective and efficient tool for allocating human resources to CPL libraries.

#### A. SCOPE

This audit assessed the design and implementation of CPL's staffing plan in 2016. We could not review years prior to 2016 because CPL had overwritten the documents when updating its records and had not retained a copy of the older data.

The scope of this audit did not include the roles of the City's Department of Human Resources (DHR) or the Office of Budget and Management (OBM), who are responsible for Citywide aspects of hiring and budgeting, respectively. OBM explained that it does not determine or evaluate appropriate staffing on a branch level, as that is solely CPL's responsibility.

Our analysis also excluded custodial and security staff who work at CPL sites because they are employed by third-party vendors and were not included in CPL's staffing plan.

#### B. METHODOLOGY

OIG interviewed CPL senior management to learn about the design and implementation of CPL's staffing plan. To understand whether staffing levels aligned with facility needs, we interviewed staff from a judgmental sample of five libraries across the City. Specifically, we visited a library from each classification (i.e., A, B, C, D, and E) and each library district (i.e., Central, North, and South).<sup>17</sup>

To identify common practices and guidance for public library human capital management, we interviewed public library personnel from systems operated by peer cities, including San Francisco, Seattle, Queens, Toronto, Dallas, and Houston. We evaluated the design of CPL's staffing plan with reference to guidance from the GAO and the ALA.

To assess how CPL implemented its staffing plan, we reviewed CPL's application of criteria to classify libraries per the plan, the data collected to apply the criteria, and the assignment of FTE positions consistent with the classification. As described in the Finding section below, we could not undertake this review for 13 of the 80 library locations because CPL did not have sufficient data or had assigned the library a hybrid classification (e.g., B/D). To assess factors defined by CPL in qualitative terms—for example, "medium" and "large"—we divided the available data into percentiles and classified libraries accordingly. To determine the number of FTE positions assigned to each library, we counted the positions shown on the 2016 organizational charts CPL provided.<sup>18</sup> Consistent with CPL's practice, we counted part-time positions, including Library Pages, as 0.5 FTE.

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<sup>17</sup> CPL had not classified any libraries as F category, so we did not include one in our sample.

<sup>18</sup> See Appendix D for the 2016 organizational charts.

## C. STANDARDS

We conducted this audit in accordance with generally accepted Government Auditing Standards issued by the Comptroller General of the United States. Those standards require that we plan and perform the audit to obtain sufficient, appropriate evidence to provide a reasonable basis for our findings and conclusions based on our audit objectives. We believe that the evidence obtained provides a reasonable basis for our findings and conclusions based on our audit objectives.

## D. AUTHORITY AND ROLE

The authority to perform this audit is established in the City of Chicago Municipal Code § 2-56-030 which states that OIG has the power and duty to review the programs of City government in order to identify any inefficiencies, waste, and potential for misconduct, and to promote economy, efficiency, effectiveness, and integrity in the administration of City programs and operations.

The role of OIG is to review City operations and make recommendations for improvement.

City management is responsible for establishing and maintaining processes to ensure that City programs operate economically, efficiently, effectively, and with integrity.

## IV. FINDINGS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

### FINDING: CPL's staffing plan does not optimally align library staffing with community needs.

While CPL's staffing plan is an improvement over its previous uniform staffing approach, OIG determined that due to deficiencies in the plan's design and implementation, the plan is not sufficient to align library branch staffing with community needs.

#### 1. Staffing Plan Design Deficiencies

By reference to the guidance from GAO and ALA described in the Background section of this report, OIG identified several deficiencies in the design of CPL's staffing plan. First, the plan is not informed by a staff workload analysis. Instead, classifications are based on measures of library-level activity, such as patron visits and items in circulation. ALA's *Staffing for Results: A Guide to Working Smarter* suggests that, to best meet community needs, a library system must first know the amount and types of work done by its staff.<sup>19</sup> The authors recommend analyzing workload data to determine what employees are doing which tasks, and how much time they spend doing them, as a means of improving organization and resource allocation.<sup>20</sup>

Second, CPL management did not consult with branch managers and frontline staff for purposes of creating the staffing plan, as recommended by GAO. Four of the five CPL branch managers interviewed for this audit were unaware of the plan, and none were consulted in its development.

Third, many classification factors in the CPL staffing plan use only qualitative descriptors, such as "large," "heavy," and "moderate," to characterize quantifiable information such as population, number of schools, and computer usage.<sup>21</sup> This introduces unnecessary subjectivity and imprecision to the classification process.

#### 2. Staffing Plan Implementation Deficiencies

OIG also found deficiencies in CPL's implementation of the staffing plan. First, CPL did not collect all of the necessary data. Although the plan lists 15 factors to consider when classifying libraries, CPL used data on only 5 factors—number of visitors, circulation volume, computer usage level, area population by zip code, and number of area schools.<sup>22</sup> CPL did not use data on the other 10

<sup>19</sup> Diane Mayo and Jeanne Goodrich for the Public Library Association, *Staffing for Results: A Guide to Working Smarter*, (Chicago: American Library Association, 2002), 2-4.

<sup>20</sup> Diane Mayo and Jeanne Goodrich for the Public Library Association, *Staffing for Results: A Guide to Working Smarter*, (Chicago: American Library Association, 2002), 7-12.

<sup>21</sup> See Appendix A for CPL's Staffing Plan.

<sup>22</sup> See Appendix C for CPL's Library Classifications.

factors, such as the number of people in the community who communicate in languages other than English.

Second, CPL did not classify libraries correctly based on the data for the five factors it used. As a result, many libraries were not classified according to the plan. OIG analyzed the library-specific data CPL used to assign libraries to staffing categories, and found that only 4 of the 80 libraries, or 5.0%, were correctly classified according to the staffing plan (meaning that the data for all 5 factors matched the plan criteria). Figure 4 shows the number of factors where the libraries' data matched the plan criteria. For 7 of the 80 libraries, or 8.8%, data for only 1 factor matched the criteria for the assigned category. For one library, none of the data matched the criteria for its assigned category. OIG also identified 13 libraries where the classification could not be assessed because CPL did not have complete data or had assigned the library to a hybrid category, such as B/D.

**FIGURE 4 - Library data compared with assigned category**

Factors Where Data Matches Assigned Category <sup>23</sup>	Number of Libraries	Percent
0 of 5	1	1.3%
1 of 5	7	8.8%
2 of 5	16	20.0%
3 of 5	25	31.3%
4 of 5	14	17.5%
5 of 5	4	5.0%
Incomplete Data or Hybrid Classification	13	16.3%
<b>Total</b>	<b>80</b>	<b>100%</b>

Source: OIG analysis of data provided by CPL. Sum exceeds 100% due to rounding.

The third deficiency OIG found in CPL's implementation of its staffing plan was that it did not staff all libraries at the prescribed levels. Figure 5 summarizes our comparison of the FTEs assigned to each library and the FTE range prescribed for its assigned category. We found that nearly one-fifth of the library locations were not staffed in accordance with their categories. Specifically, 3 libraries were overstaffed and 12 libraries were understaffed. The variances were small, ranging from 0.5 to 1.5 FTE over or under the prescribed range. Nonetheless, these deviations show that CPL did not consistently apply the FTE ranges in the staffing plan. We could not evaluate 10 libraries, because CPL had incomplete data or had assigned them to hybrid categories, such as B/D.

<sup>23</sup> According to CPL's staffing plan, computer usage is not a factor used to classify a library into category B. For purposes of this analysis, in order to preserve a common denominator of five factors for all libraries, we counted category B library data as matching on this factor.



**FIGURE 5 - Budgeted staffing compared with prescribed FTE range**

	Number of Libraries	Percent
<b>Within FTE Range</b>	55	68.8%
<b>Over FTE Range</b>	3	3.8%
<b>Under FTE Range</b>	12	15.0%
<b>Incomplete Data or Hybrid Classification</b>	10	12.5%
<b>Total</b>	<b>80</b>	<b>100.0%</b>

Source: OIG analysis of data provided by CPL. Sum exceeds 100% due to rounding.

Finally, CPL did not use population data accurately tailored to determine the number of residents served by each library location. CPL measured population by zip code, yet many libraries are located at the edges of zip code boundaries (as illustrated in Appendix E), making this an imprecise method of measuring the size of the population served. Furthermore, relying on zip code boundaries does not provide a unique population measurement for each library, because 21 libraries share a zip code with at least one other library. The area covered by zip code 60609, for example, contains 5 libraries. Using U.S. census tracts or blocks—a population measurement commonly used in library science research<sup>24</sup>—would provide more useful service area population data for each library location.<sup>25</sup> OIG found that the San Francisco Public Library creates a community profile for each library location and updates it every three years. The profile includes U.S. census data about the local population, such as the residents’ ages, languages spoken in the homes, and levels of educational attainment, which helps each library serve its unique community.

The deficiencies in CPL’s staffing plan may contribute to inefficient use of CPL’s human resources. Some staff reported performing tasks that fell outside their job descriptions and for which they were overqualified. For example, Clerks and Librarians reported regularly engaging in sorting and shelving, tasks normally done by Library Pages. In another instance, a Clerk at a library serving a largely Hispanic community told OIG that her status as the only bilingual staff member made it a practical necessity for her to perform tasks outside her job description on a regular basis. One branch manager told us that “many positions perform many roles,” which in some cases results in personnel spending time on activities that could be done more cost-effectively by employees holding other titles.

In conclusion, OIG determined that CPL’s staffing plan lacked sufficient detail to identify specific needs at individual branches, that the data used to inform the plan is incomplete, and that the

<sup>24</sup> Francis P. Donnelly, “Regional variations in average distance to public libraries in the United States” *Library & Information Science Research*, 37, no. 4 (October 2015): 281-282, <http://dx.doi.org/10.1016/j.lisr.2015.11.008>.

<sup>25</sup> Census block-level data is available only for decennial census years (e.g., 2000 and 2010). During interim years, the U.S. Census bureau provides annual estimates for block groups, which include several census blocks typically including 600 to 3,000 people. See <https://factfinder.census.gov/help/en/index.htm#glossary.htm> and <https://factfinder.census.gov/faces/tableservices/jsf/pages/productview.xhtml?src=bkmk>, accessed January 31, 2018.

plan was not implemented correctly. While the staffing plan is an improvement over CPL's previous uniform staffing approach, it still does not optimally align library staffing with specific community needs.

## RECOMMENDATIONS

To better align its resources with the needs of the communities it serves, CPL should first redesign its staffing plan, and then improve plan implementation. Specifically,

1. CPL should conduct a staff workload analysis to determine the amount of time spent on all activities by staff in each job classification. The results of the analysis should be incorporated into CPL's staffing plan.<sup>26</sup>
2. CPL should involve stakeholders such as library employees, as well as board and community members, in redesigning its staffing plan around factors that will ensure libraries are appropriately staffed to meet community needs. The redesigned plan should include only factors for which complete and accurate data is available for all library locations. The plan should be designed to assign each library location to a single category, eliminating the confounding use of hybrid classifications. CPL should also quantify any qualitative factors such as "large" or "moderate" in order to promote consistent application of the factors.
3. After CPL has redesigned the staffing plan, it should consistently and completely apply the factors to all library locations in order to allocate the appropriate staff to each library location. CPL should disseminate the plan to library staff so that everyone is aware of the rationale for CPL's staff allocations and has an opportunity to provide input for future plan revisions.
4. CPL should develop a process to evaluate the effectiveness of the staffing plan on a periodic basis, and should modify it as needed to adjust to changes in library services and community needs. To promote consistent and transparent use of the plan, CPL should implement a policy detailing how the plan is to be applied, evaluated, and updated going forward.

## MANAGEMENT RESPONSE

1. *"On a regular and consistent basis Chicago Public Library (CPL) works with the Department of Human Resources to review positions and responsibilities needed to provide library programs and services. Changes are made, as needed, to address unique program responsibilities and community needs."*

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<sup>26</sup> *Staffing for Results* notes that workload analysis "can be very disruptive in an organization," and that library employees "will be concerned about how management will use the information it gathers." For this reason, the authors, like the GAO, recommend clear communication between management and staff throughout the process. Diane Mayo and Jeanne Goodrich for the Public Library Association, *Staffing for Results: A Guide to Working Smarter*, (Chicago: American Library Association, 2002), 12.

*"As workload reviews are completed for vacated positions, the analysis serves as the basis for the CPL staffing plan.*

2. *"Administrative staff regularly meets and reports up and down the organizational structure. Executive staff responsible for maintaining and managing the workforce will continue to regularly meet and strategize about staffing needs and strategies at bi-weekly Administrative Team meetings as well as at the monthly Senior Staff meeting, where staffing is put through a Performance Metrics analysis at least two times per year.*

*"CPL recognizes that the staffing plan is not fully implemented; however, the department keeps moving in the direction of its preferred staffing patterns based on vacancies and the reassignment of positions.*

*"CPL currently hires staff to fulfill the service needs of our communities. Needs such as language or area specialty are addressed through the hiring process.*

*"The staffing criteria will be reviewed for 'qualitative vs. quantitative' measures and will be revised to represent more quantitative factors. Factors will therefore be aligned with available data. "Additionally CPL agrees that the staffing plan should be designed to assign each library location to a single staffing category.*

*"It should also be noted that CPL participates in an annual budget review and any positions that are added, removed, or changed must be approved by the Office of Budget and Management. And that we follow the guidelines for hiring as established by the Department of Human Resources.*

3. *"As noted previously, staffing criteria will be reviewed for 'qualitative vs. quantitative' measures and will be revised to represent more quantitative factors. Factors will therefore be aligned with available data.*

*"As CPL revises its staffing plan, information is shared with executive staff, senior staff, district chiefs, and branch managers. Senior staff and other decision-makers like staff managers are made aware of branch criteria and that we are staffing for service rather than following a fixed staff for every location. The staffing plan isn't disseminated to all front line staff.*

4. *"CPL conducts regular on-going reviews of positions at every location to assess staffing needs for providing high quality library services and programs. This review serves as basis for updating the staffing plan.*

*"CPL will create a policy to codify how and when the staffing plan is applied, evaluated, and updated."*

## APPENDIX A: CPL BRANCH STAFFING CATEGORIES

This document is the CPL staffing plan. It lists the factors used to classify libraries into categories with recommended FTE ranges.

### Branch Staffing Categories

#### Factors:

- Branch activity levels: traffic, circulation, Holds, information requests, program attendance, collection size, computer use
- Number of service points and service floors in the library
- Unique characteristics of local community
  - Area population
  - # of schools in service area
  - # of persons under 17 in service area
  - # of persons with a language other than English
- User education needs
- Safety and security challenges

#### Category A (45-50 FTE): Regional Libraries

- Very large facility with expansive service areas (60,000 sq. ft+)
- Open 7 days/64 hours per week
- Multiple reference service points on multiple floors
- Extensive fiction and non-fiction collections
- Specialized and archival collections
- Computer Commons with 80+ public PCs
- Heavy afterschool and weekend use
- Large auditoriums w/heavy community room use

#### Category B (8-10 FTE):

- Large branch (14,000+ sq. ft.)
- Circulates 10,000-17,000 items per month
- Sees over 10,000 patron visitors per month
- Two or more reference service points
- Heavy afterschool use
- Heavy community room use
- High number of schools in service area
- Large population in service area

#### Category C (6-8 FTE):

- Medium/large branch (11,000-14,000 sq. ft.)
- Circulates 5,000-10,000 items per month
- Sees 6,000-12,000 patron visits per month
- Two reference service points
- Many schools in service area
- Heavy afterschool use
- Heavy computer usage
- Heavy community room use
- Large population in service area

#### Category D (7-10 FTE):

- Medium to large branch (11,000-14,000 sq. ft.)
- One or two reference service points
- Lower socioeconomic, literacy and school achievement rates
- Sees 7,000-12,000 patron visits per month
- Circulates 1,500-5,000 items per month
- High number of schools in service area
- Heavy afterschool use
- Heavy computer use
- Heavy community room use
- Large population in service area
- Challenging security issues

#### Category E (5-6 FTE):

- Small to medium sized branch (5,000-11,000 sq. ft.)
- Circulates 1,500-5,000 items per month
- Sees 4,000-8,000 patron visits per month
- One or two reference service points
- Moderate number of schools in service area
- Moderate afterschool use
- Moderate computer usage
- Moderate community room use
- Medium population in service area

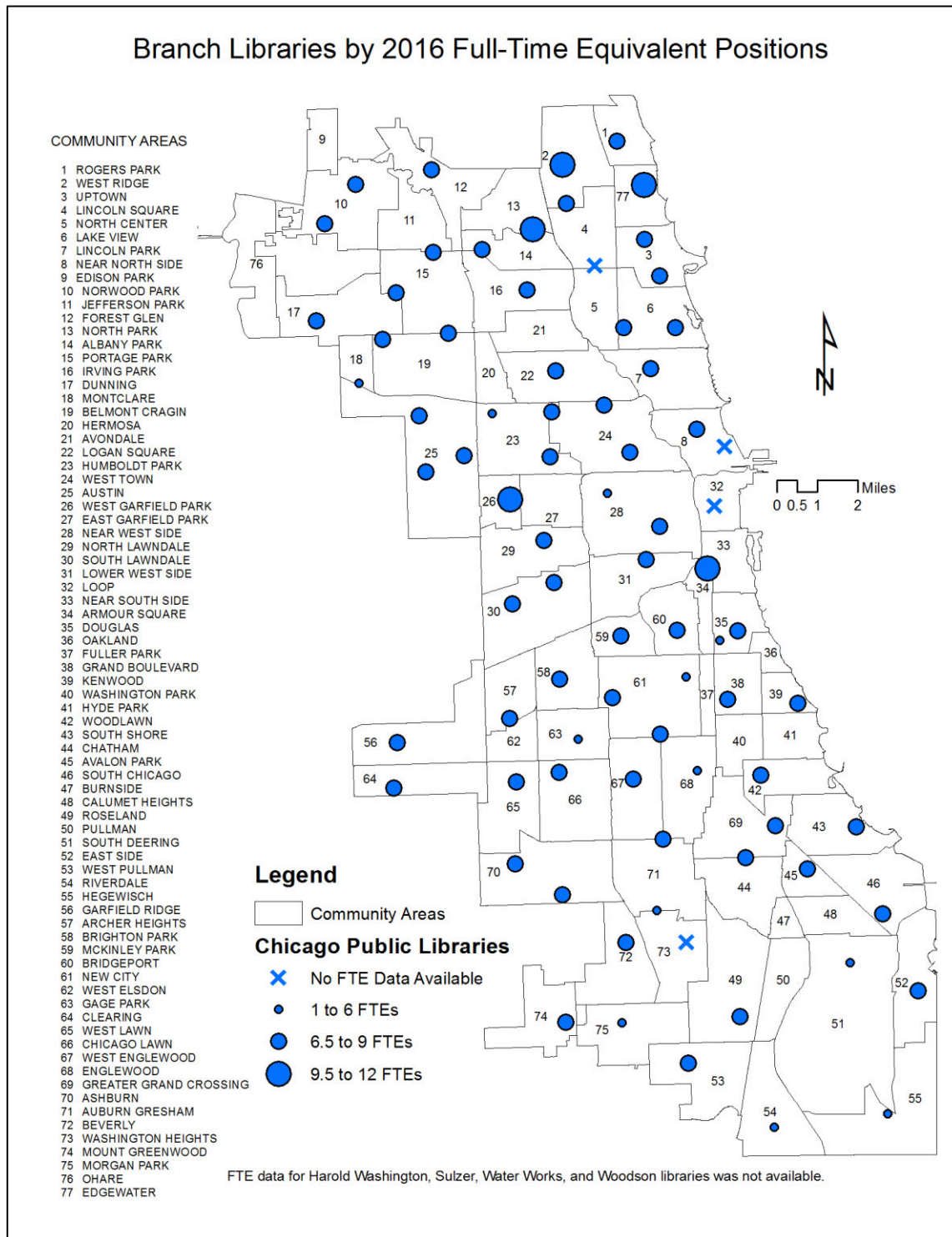
#### Category F: Partial or special service locations

- Staffing TBD based on need

Source: CPL.

## APPENDIX B: MAP OF BRANCH LIBRARIES BY 2016 FTES

The map below illustrates the number of FTEs assigned to CPL libraries in 2016. It does not show FTEs at Harold Washington, Sulzer, Water Works, and Woodson libraries because CPL did not provide data for those libraries.





## APPENDIX C: CPL 2016 LIBRARY CLASSIFICATIONS

This table, provided by CPL, shows the staffing categories to which CPL assigned libraries for 2016, as well as the associated data used to make the assignment.

Branch/Regional	Staffing Category	Local populat'n. by Zip Code	Average monthly circ.	Average monthly traffic	Average monthly PC use @ computer	# schools in service area
Albany Park	B	78,966	12,565	11,530	tbd	tbd
Altgeld	E	28,547	709	5,106	82	8
Archer Heights	B	90,845	7,101	8,929	100	11
Austin	D	47,631	1,950	6,879	tbd	14
Austin-Irving	B	72,718	10,721	9,528	93	9
Avalon	D	83,435	4,735	10,155	116	18
Back of the Yards	C	62,773	4,481	5,396	29	11
Beverly	C	51,836	5,647	8,222	82	12
Bezazian	B	64,365	11,099	12,148	196	5
Blackstone	B	40,745	9,416	10,380	112	26
Brainerd	E	73,235	1,281	4,764	87	13
Brighton Park	C	90,845	5,899	6,534	107	15
Bucktown-Wicker Park	B	87,146	10,477	10,969	82	15
Budlong Woods	B	39,657	11,200	12,859	77	12
Canaryville	E	62,773	2,389	3,838	77	4
Chicago Bee	E	62,773	1,656	5,088	67	11
Chicago Lawn	C	113,833	4,550	6,993	114	14
Chinatown	B/D	49,491	8,669	19,006	99	10
Clearing	C	56,033	4,171	6,816	54	8
Coleman, Bessie	D	48,270	3,350	8,761	160	15
Daley, Richard J.	C	78,794	7,022	7,843	97	8
Daley, Richard M.	D	38,052	4,327	11,760	81	14
Douglass	D	85,158	1,905	9,948	153	27
Dunning	B	72,718	6,172	11,137	84	15
Galewood			1,095	1,558		
Dunning/Galewood			7,267	12,695		

Branch/Regional	Staffing Category	Local populat'n. by Zip Code	Average monthly circ.	Average monthly traffic	Average monthly PC use @ computer	# schools in service area
Edgebrook	C	28,314	8,955	8,499	33	9
Edgewater	B/D	42,060	16,201	16,325	49	14
Gage Park	E	90,845	2,039	4,237	76	8
Garfield Ridge	C	56,033	5,815	7,373	TBD	10
Greater Grand Crossing	C	64,922	2,762	6,119	98	11
Hall	C	40,745	2,081	6,720	77	14
Hegewisch	E	13,474	2,962	5,269	32	5
Humboldt Park	C	87,146	6,345	7,593	39	13
Independence	C	57,866	7,997	5,514	91	19
Jefferson Park	C	57,866	8,303	8,554	73	10
Jeffery Manor	E	83,435	1,202	5,772	90	3
Kelly	E	33,608	1,180	5,764	94	13
King	C	49,491	3,060	6,718	112	7
Legler	D	39,283	1,533	8,077	150	12
Lincoln Park	B	68,363	9,448	10,692	82	14
Lincoln-Belmont	B	68,088	13,716	12,992	91	14
Little Village	D	85,158	7,460	11,955	114	15
Logan Square	B	87,146	11,057	12,780	102	14
Lozano	D	78,794	5,674	14,304	73	16
Mabel Manning	D	36,052	2,819	8,622	115	12
Mayfair	C	57,866	5,678	6,213	70	3
McKinley Park	C	62,773	6,765	9,251	97	8
Merio	C	68,088	8,254	9,198	86	8
Mount Greenwood	C	28,173	6,464	6,811	35	13
Near North	B	38,740	9,912	12,146	104	16
North Austin	D	91,934	2,004	6,754	90	10

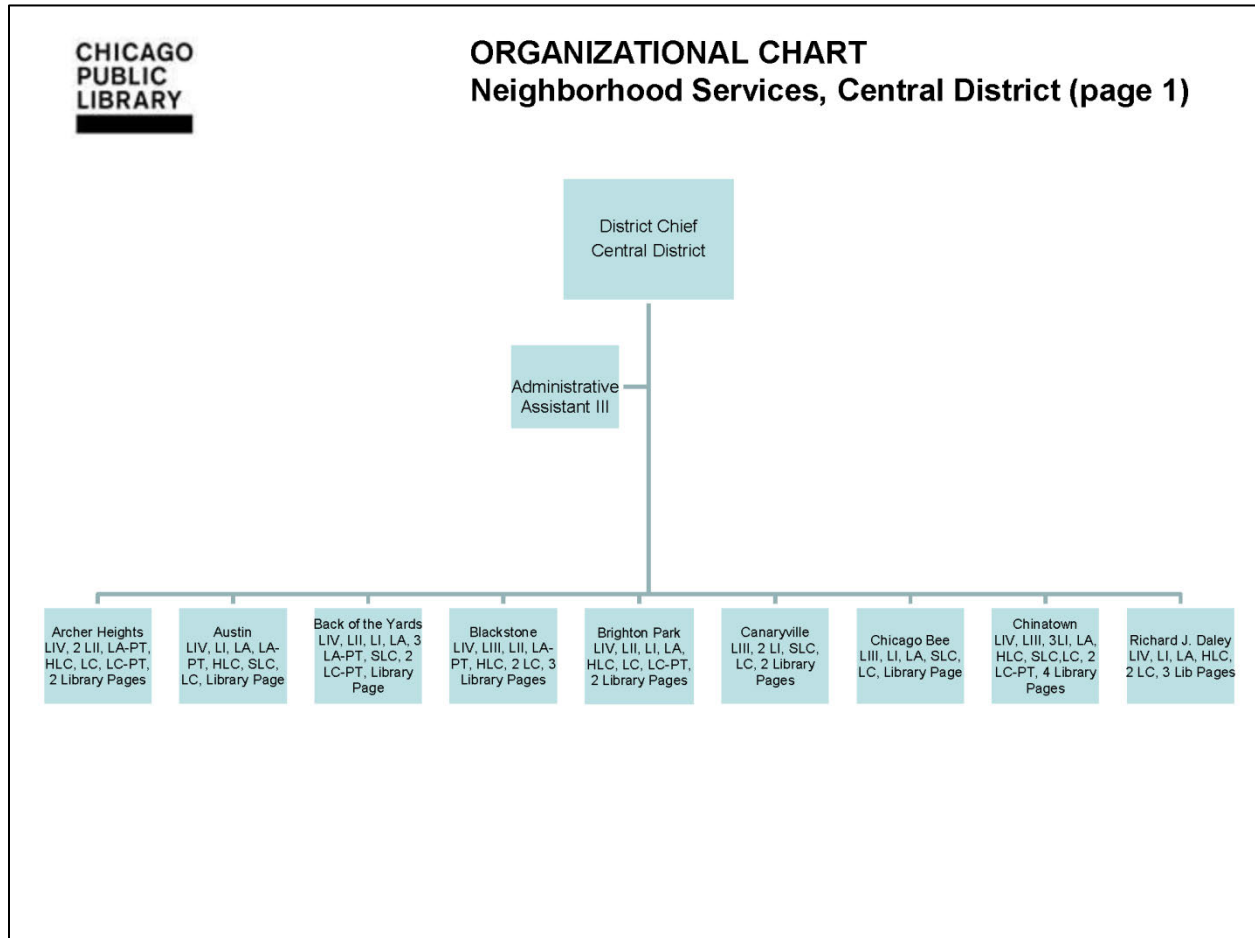
Branch/Regional	Staffing Category	Local populat'n. by Zip Code	Average monthly circ.	Average monthly traffic	Average monthly PC use @ computer	# schools in service area
North Pulaski	C	91,934	3,910	5,758	72	14
Northtown	B	46,913	9,899	11,950	157	17
Oriole Park	C	27,468	7,772	8,264	38	11
Portage-Cragin	C	70,730	7,538	7,454	75	25
Pullman	E	71,710	1,814	6,536	86	19
Roden	C/E	28,889	5,743	5,436	31	14
Rogers Park	B	51,061	11,349	14,435	173	14
Roosevelt	C	25,134	5,976	8,293	80	18
Scottsdale	C/E	42,517	3,892	6,014	53	10
Sherman Park	E	62,773	1,086	5,896	127	21
South Chicago	D	83,435	3,362	8,280	134	15
South Shore	D	45,444	3,952	9,912	112	11
Thurgood Marshall	D	73,253	2,998	10,989	65	24
Toman	C	85,158	7,217	6,232	97	20
Uptown	D	49,536	6,810	12,205	124	13
Vodak/East Side	C	83,435	4,051	7,401	92	11
Walker	C/E	51,836	2,358	5,084	35	16
West Belmont	B	72,718	7,284	9,617	68	10
West Chicago Avenue	D	61,150	1,608	8,058	146	12
West Englewood	D	39,918	1,707	10,247	139	9
West Lawn	C	113,833	5,571	8,103	56	9
West Pullman	D	51,836	2,335	7,234	80	14
West Town	B	54,272	7,158	11,398	65	16
Whitney Young	D	38,740	2,472	9,646	137	14
Wrightwood	C	42,517	2,781	6,812	65	9
Sulzer Regional	A	78,966	40,889	40,495	tbd	tbd
Branch/Regional	Staffing Category	Local populat'n. by Zip Code	Average monthly circ.	Average monthly traffic	Average monthly PC use @ computer	# schools in service area
Woodson Regional	A	71,710	8,181	27,395	tbd	tbd

Source: CPL.



## APPENDIX D: CPL ORGANIZATIONAL CHARTS SHOWING 2016 BUDGETED POSITIONS BY LIBRARY LOCATION

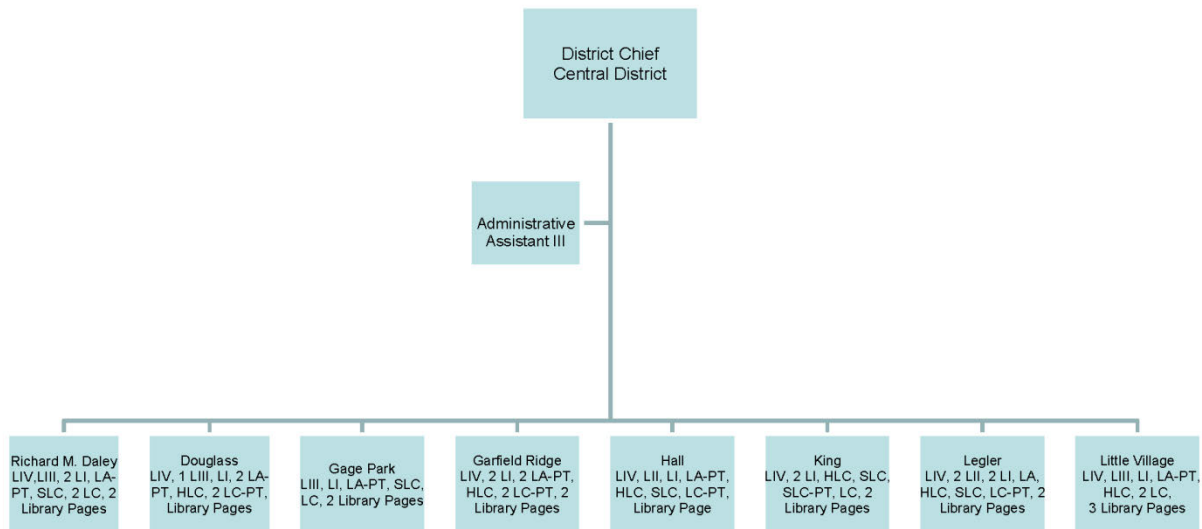
These CPL organizational charts show the 2016 budgeted positions for each library location as of July 2016.

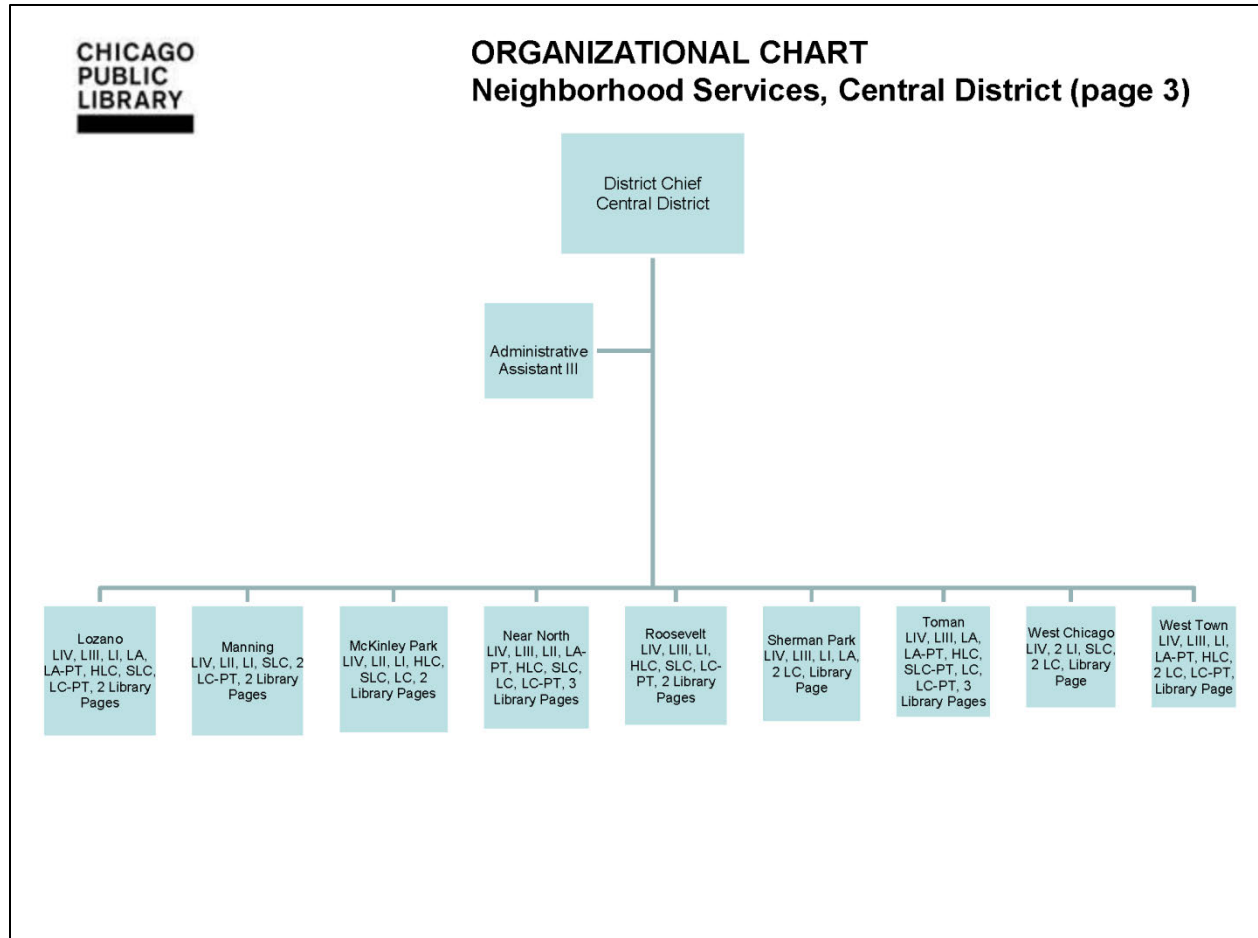




## ORGANIZATIONAL CHART

### Neighborhood Services, Central District (page 2)

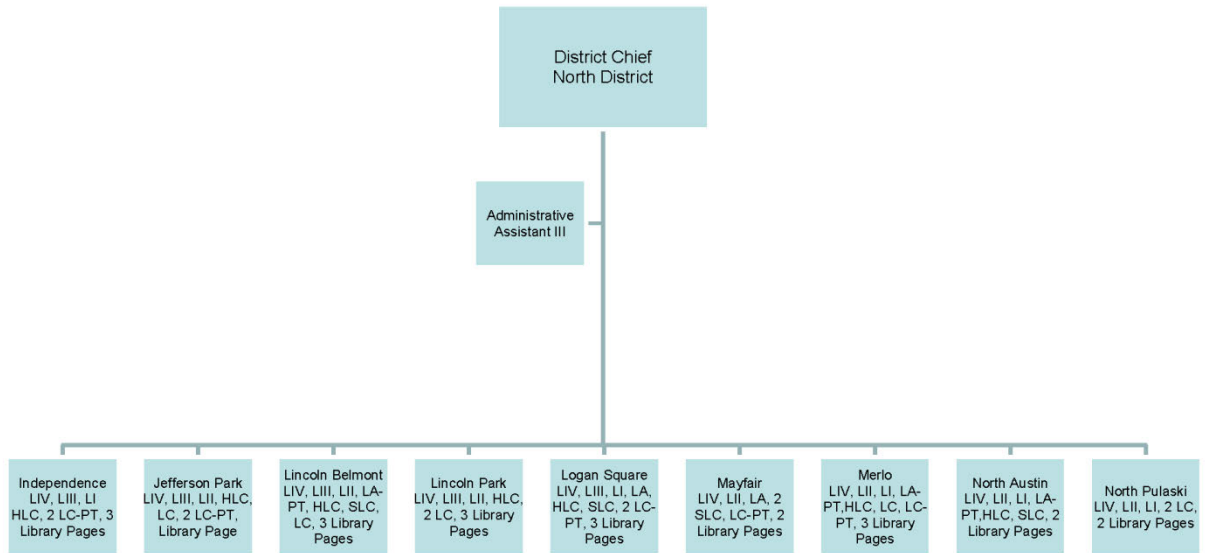








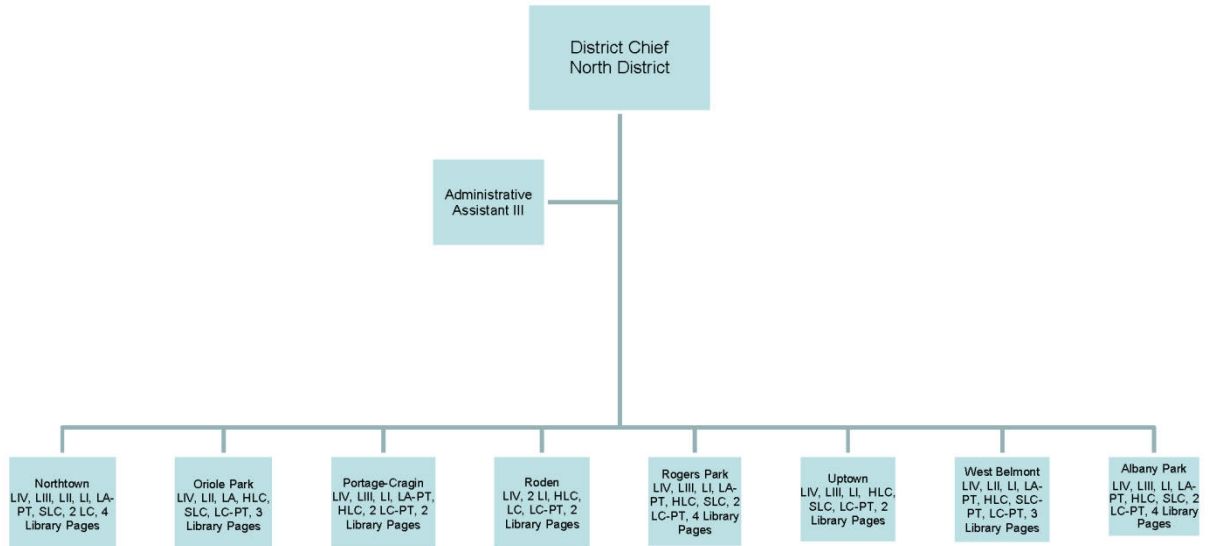
## ORGANIZATIONAL CHART Neighborhood Services, North District (page 2)

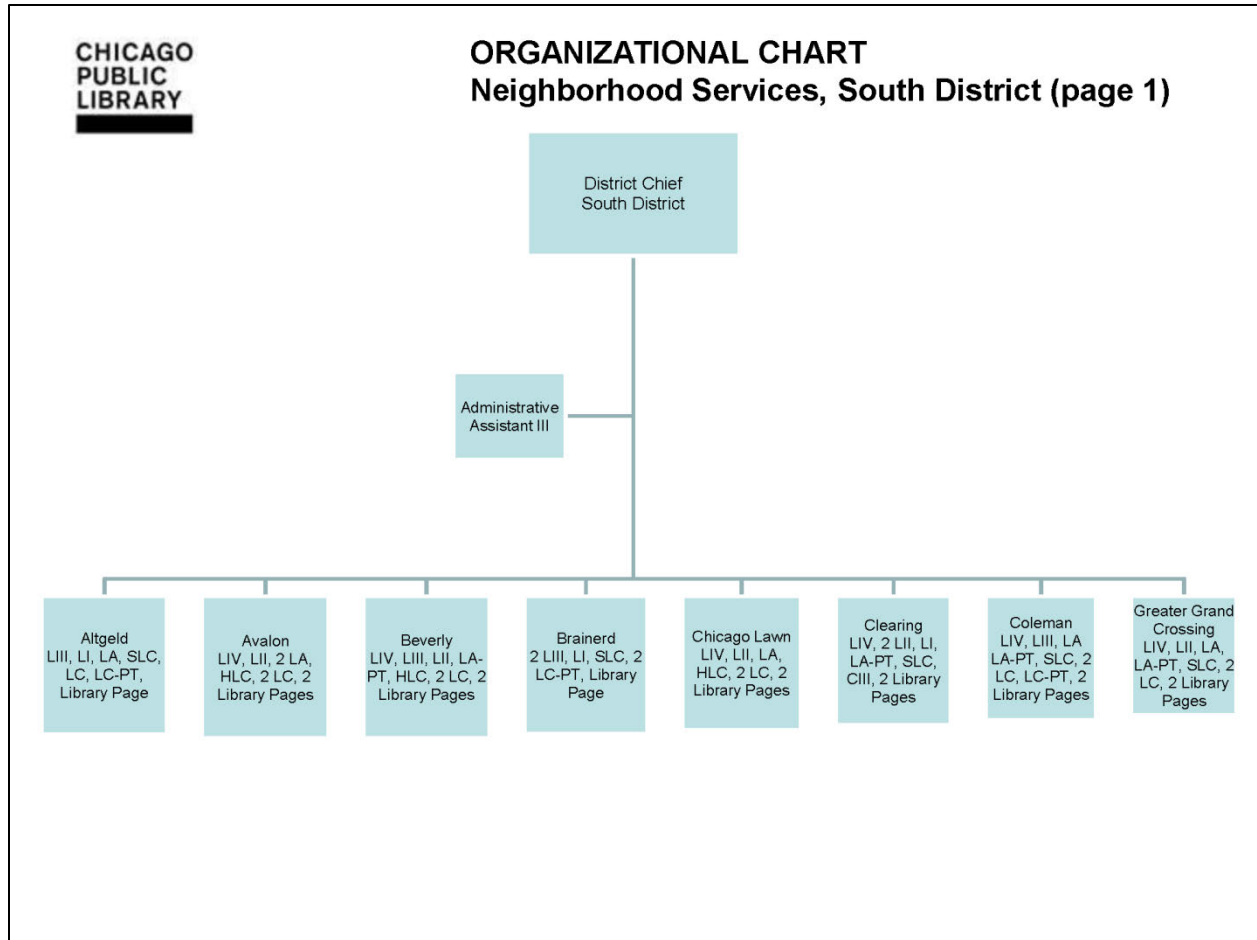


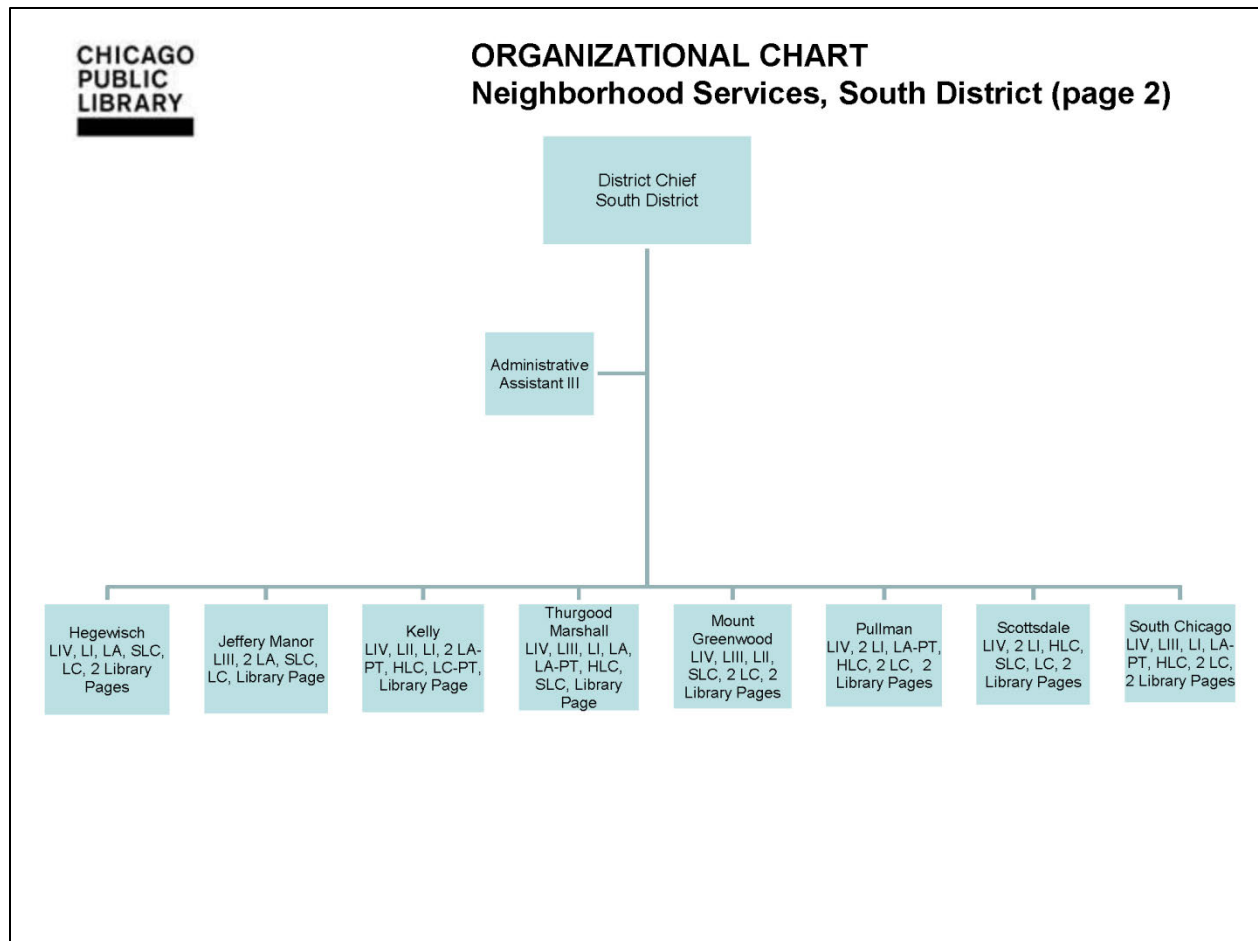


## ORGANIZATIONAL CHART

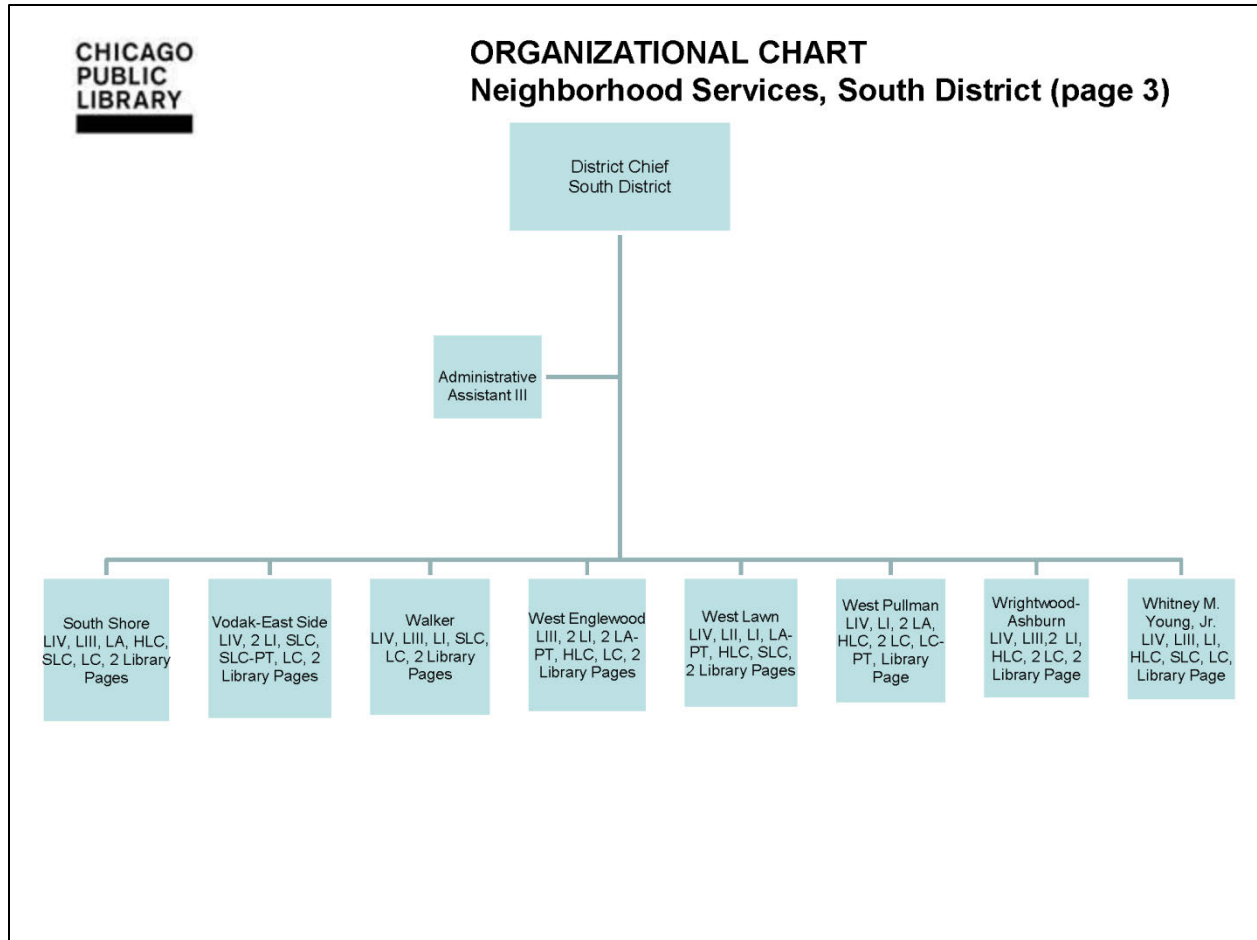
### Neighborhood Services, North District (page 3)







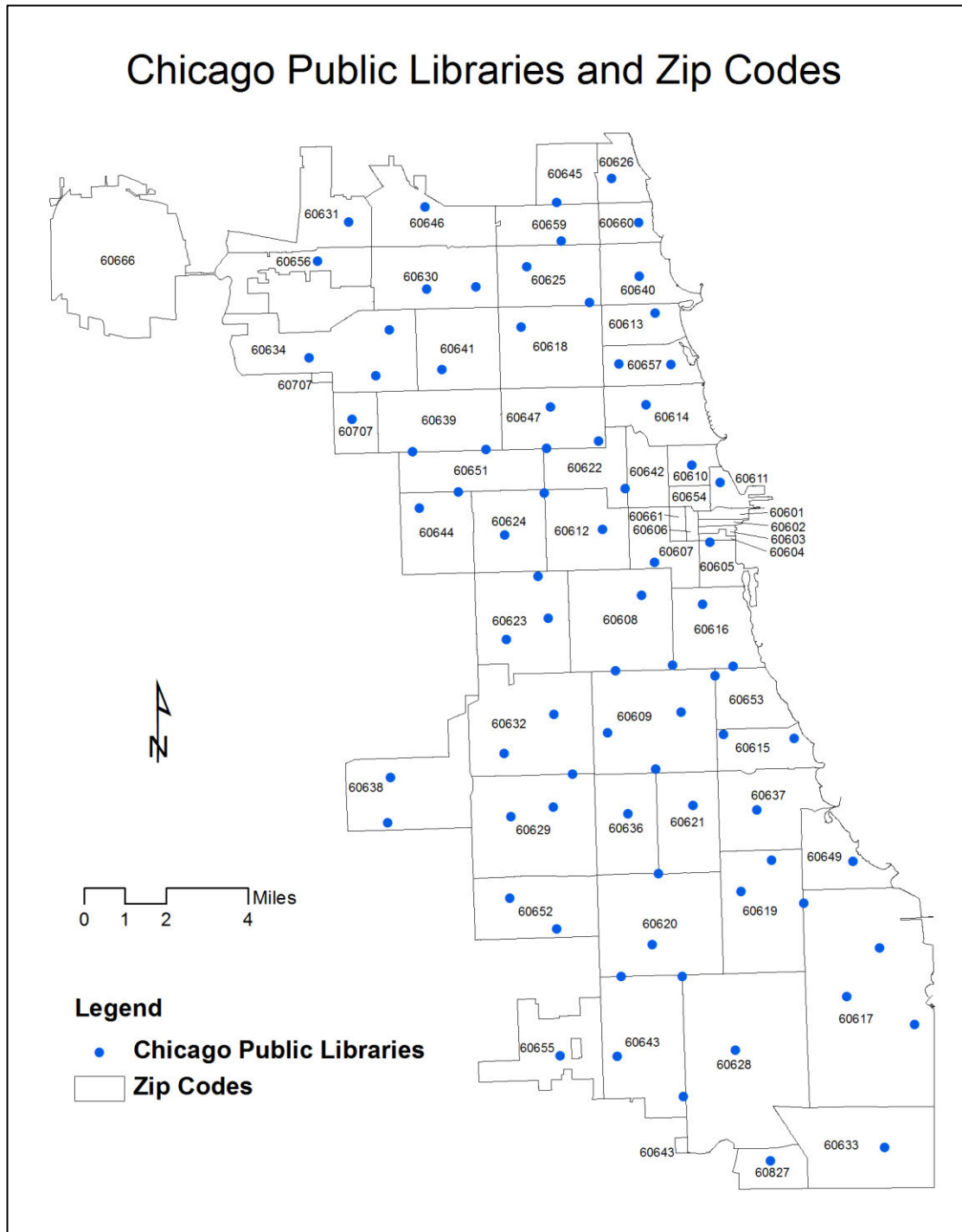




Source: CPL

## APPENDIX E: LIBRARY LOCATIONS AND ZIP CODES

This map illustrates the locations of libraries in zip codes. As described in the Finding, zip code is not an ideal measure of the population served by a specific library because many libraries are located on zip code boundaries and some zip codes contain multiple libraries. The table on the following page lists libraries by zip code.



Source: OIG using City data.

Zip Code	Library Name
60605	Harold Washington-HWLC
60607	Roosevelt
60608	Daley, Richard J.-Bridgeport
	Lozano
60609	Back of the Yards
	Canaryville
	Chicago Bee
	McKinley Park
	Sherman Park
60610	Near North
60611	Water Works
60612	Daley, Richard M.-W Humboldt
	Manning
60613	Uptown
60614	Lincoln Park
60615	Blackstone
	Hall
60616	Chinatown
	King
60617	Avalon
	Jeffery Manor
	South Chicago
	Vodak-East Side
60618	Independence
60619	Greater Grand Crossing
	Whitney M. Young, Jr.
60620	Brainerd
	Thurgood Marshall
60621	Kelly
60622	West Town
60623	Douglass
	Little Village
	Toman
60624	Legler
60625	Albany Park
	Sulzer Regional
60626	Rogers Park
60628	Pullman
	Woodson Regional
60629	Chicago Lawn
	West Lawn

Zip Code	Library Name
60630	Jefferson Park
	Mayfair
60631	Roden
60632	Archer Heights
	Brighton Park
	Gage Park
60633	Hegewisch
60634	Austin-Irving
	Dunning
	West Belmont
60636	West Englewood
60637	Coleman
60638	Clearing
	Garfield Ridge
60639	North Austin
	North Pulaski
60640	Bezazian
60641	Portage-Cragin
60643	Beverly
	Walker
	West Pullman
60644	Austin
60645	Northtown
60646	Edgebrook
60647	Bucktown-Wicker Park
	Humboldt Park
	Logan Square
60649	South Shore
60651	West Chicago Avenue
60652	Scottsdale
	Wrightwood-Ashburn
60655	Mount Greenwood
60656	Oriole Park
60657	Lincoln Belmont
	Merlo
60659	Budlong Woods
60660	Edgewater
60707	Galewood-Mont Clare
60827	Altgeld

Source: OIG using City data

## MISSION

The City of Chicago Office of Inspector General (OIG) is an independent, nonpartisan oversight agency whose mission is to promote economy, efficiency, effectiveness, and integrity in the administration of programs and operations of City government. OIG achieves this mission through,

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- inspections, evaluations and reviews of City police and police accountability programs, operations, and policies by its Public Safety Section; and
- compliance audit and monitoring of City hiring and employment activities by its Hiring Oversight Unit.

From these activities, OIG issues reports of findings and disciplinary and other recommendations,

- to assure that City officials, employees, and vendors are held accountable for violations of laws and policies;
- to improve the efficiency and cost-effectiveness of government operations; and
- to prevent, detect, identify, expose, and eliminate waste, inefficiency, misconduct, fraud, corruption, and abuse of public authority and resources.

## AUTHORITY

OIG's authority to produce reports of its findings and recommendations is established in the City of Chicago Municipal Code §§ 2-56-030(d), -035(c), -110, -230, and 240.

*Cover image courtesy of the City of Chicago Department of Fleet and Facility Management.*

### PUBLIC INQUIRIES:

NATALIE A. KURIATA: (773) 478-8417 | [NKURIATA@IGCHICAGO.ORG](mailto:NKURIATA@IGCHICAGO.ORG)

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