



March 14, 2022

**TO:** RAILS Consortia Committee – LLSAP Sustainability Working Group  
**FROM:** Anne Slaughter  
**SUBJECT:** Working group priorities

Below is an evolved summary of the priorities that have continued to take shape in previous Working Group meetings and will gradually move toward a set of recommendations. Some topics and items are beginning to move to a more “finished” status as the group wraps up discussions and work in specific areas, or identifies issues that are relevant but outside of the scope of the group and its charge. As with previous meetings, we will have a discussion of this “living document” and confirm, expand on, prioritize, and/or add to it as necessary to further your work toward fulfilling the charge and crafting recommendations.

### Items for further investigation by working group

- An exploration of the benefits, obstacles, and implications of possible mergers of RAILS LLSAPs. RAILS will engage a consultant to work with us on this exploration, possibly leading to a Request for Information from ILS vendors. This investigation should also incorporate in some way the needs of and possibilities for schools and other nonpublic libraries. A subset of the working group may form to discuss organizational issues such as governance as this work progresses.
  - *Current status: consultant proposals are in the meeting packet for discussion.*
- Guidance for libraries as to their RAILS-supported automation options, including assessments of affordability depending on library circumstances and their ability to meet other responsibilities of participation.
  - *Current status: a draft description of deliverables is in the meeting packet for discussion*
- Find More Illinois as a strategic part of the resource sharing landscape, including the importance of ILS software to maximize library services and participation in resource sharing.
  - *Current status: a general update on Find More Illinois is included in the meeting packet.*
- Cataloging costs and services
  - Centralized services and tools provided by RAILS, including Find More Illinois
  - OCLC – how money is spent statewide by ISL and libraries
    - Costs by LLSAP, library, and system
    - Membership and service landscape
    - Potential to move away from Group Services; explore cataloging-only service level
  - *Current status: not yet fully explored*

### Items to include in working group recommendations to RAILS Consortia Committee

- Acknowledgement and recap of divergent LLSAP histories and priorities
- Bigger-picture library funding and advocacy issues that are outside of the scope, but which have significant impact on the issues considered by the working group, such as:
  - ILA Public Library Standards and funding recommendations
  - Value of consortium membership to libraries, and how it relates to library and state-level funding

- Varying public library per capita tax funding levels
  - Effective units of service
- Costs associated with LLSAPs. Data related to the following has been gathered and is available for ongoing use as needed:
  - RAILS support and total cost of operations
  - Library membership costs and fee structures
  - Metrics to assist in defining sustainability and affordability for LLSAPs and libraries
  - Alternative funding options for LLSAPs