

MEMO

October 20, 2025

TO: RAILS Board Consortia Committee

FROM: Anne Slaughter, Director of Technology Services

SUBJECT: Consortia Committee Priorities

Below is a synthesis of the lively and productive conversation about interests and priorities at the July 2025 Consortia Committee meeting. We are interested in your feedback on this synthesis and any additional suggestions or requests you may have for approaches to discussion or prioritization.

Please note that suggestions for agenda items and topics are always welcome. We are also happy to add any consortium representative to an agenda to speak about a project or initiative that may be of interest to the group, as an opportunity to share and discuss more dynamically than the written report format allows.

Current Projects

These projects are in progress and will continue to be topics of discussion for the Committee.

- **ILS Transit Data for Delivery Fine Count**
- **RAILCAR Data Analysis**

Meeting Topics and Ongoing Interests

These items represent issues and topics of ongoing interest to the Committee which could be added to future meeting agendas on a routine or one-time basis.

- **AI in Libraries:** Discussion of how consortia are using or planning to use artificial intelligence tools, including the development of AI ethics policies and best practices for its use in cataloging and other workflows.
- **Conference Updates:** Share updates from the Illinois Library Association (ILA) and American Library Association (ALA) annual conferences and other conferences on topics relevant to consortia.
- **Data-Driven Decisions:** Discuss how consortia are using data to make strategic decisions, with a particular interest in data that can be used for future-focused, proactive decision-making.
- **Multitype Library Data Quality and Consistency:** Discussion of challenges and strategies around inconsistency, lack of standardization, lack of availability, and other data-related issues depending on library type.

- **Reporting:** Discuss the types of reports routinely being provided to libraries, with a focus on reports that are useful for library boards.
- **Serving the Unserved:** Reporting on RAILS Universal Service Committee and Illinois State Library Advisory Committee (ISLAC) priorities, with discussion and sharing on issues specific to consortia.
- **Strategic Planning:** Sharing and discussion of consortial strategic plans, with a focus on implementation and assessment.

Possible Working Group Projects

These topics could be explored by possible future Working Groups of the Consortia Committee, following additional discussion of priorities and dependent on RAILS staff availability.

- **Consortial Landscape:** Monitor projects and innovations from other consortia, with discussion and reporting on potential applications in Illinois.
- **Holds Methodology for Delivery Efficiency:** Examine the feasibility and potential efficiency impacts of system-level prioritization and routing of holds in alignment with delivery routes and hubs.

Longer-Term Ideas

These emerged as items of interest but may not currently be feasible for exploration, due to factors such as alignment with existing initiatives, implications for RAILS staff time, or needing additional clarification and refinement.

- **Documentation Repository:** Create a shared repository for generic ILS- or consortium-specific documentation that can be adapted and repurposed by all member libraries, such as policies on pirated materials or handling non-resident patrons.
- **"LLSAPs by the numbers" Data Project:** Collection and analysis of statewide resource sharing data.
- **Online Patron Verification:** Explore a standardized verification method and platform for reciprocal borrowers.