



The Seattle Public Library

**LIBRARIES  
FOR ALL**

*A Plan for the Present,  
a Foundation for the Future*

# Report to the Special Committee on the Library Levy February 6, 2012

# Our community has demonstrated that libraries matter to them

- Nearly 70% of voters supported the 1998 Libraries for All bond measure
- New or refurbished libraries opened to huge crowds
- Majority of residents have library cards and use regularly
- 33,000 people participated in 2010 Strategic Plan survey
- High participation at recent 2012 community meetings and online comments on service priorities

# Why do libraries matter?

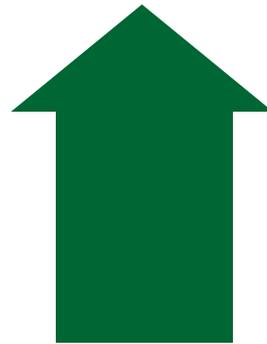
- Nearly 7 million visitors in 2011; another 7 million on-line
- Library provides equal opportunity education & resources
- In a tough economy people depend on libraries for computer access and job search services
- Libraries ensure our children can communicate and compete in the global economy
- Libraries are neighborhood learning, community and civic anchors

# LIBRARY USE IS UP

2000-2009

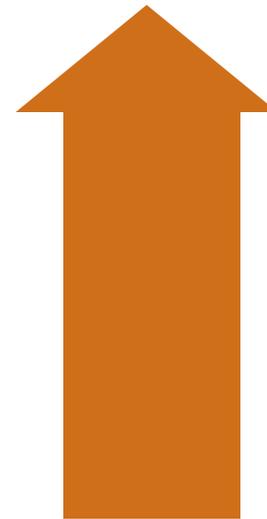
Since  
“Libraries  
for All,”  
more people  
than ever  
are using  
the Library

57%



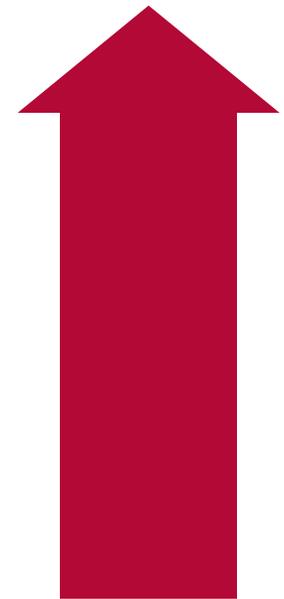
Library  
visits

115%



Program  
attendance

132%



Materials  
circulation

The logo for 'Libraries for All' features a blue square with white wavy lines at the top. Below the lines, the words 'LIBRARIES' and 'FOR ALL' are stacked in white, uppercase, sans-serif font.

LIBRARIES  
FOR ALL

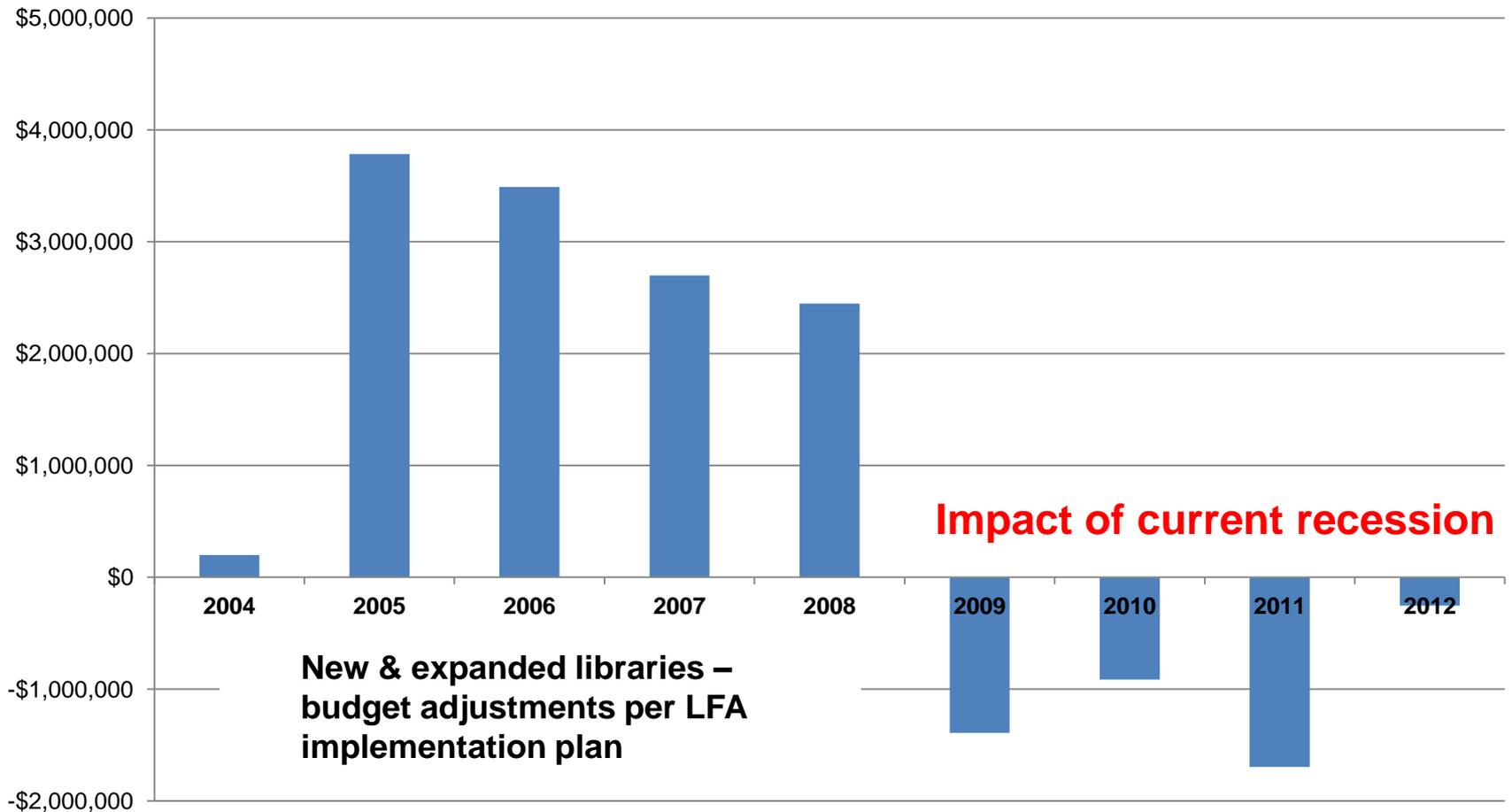
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# Historical review of Library budget

2004-2012

(opening of new Central Library to  
the present)

# Inflation-adjusted Change to Library Operating Budget

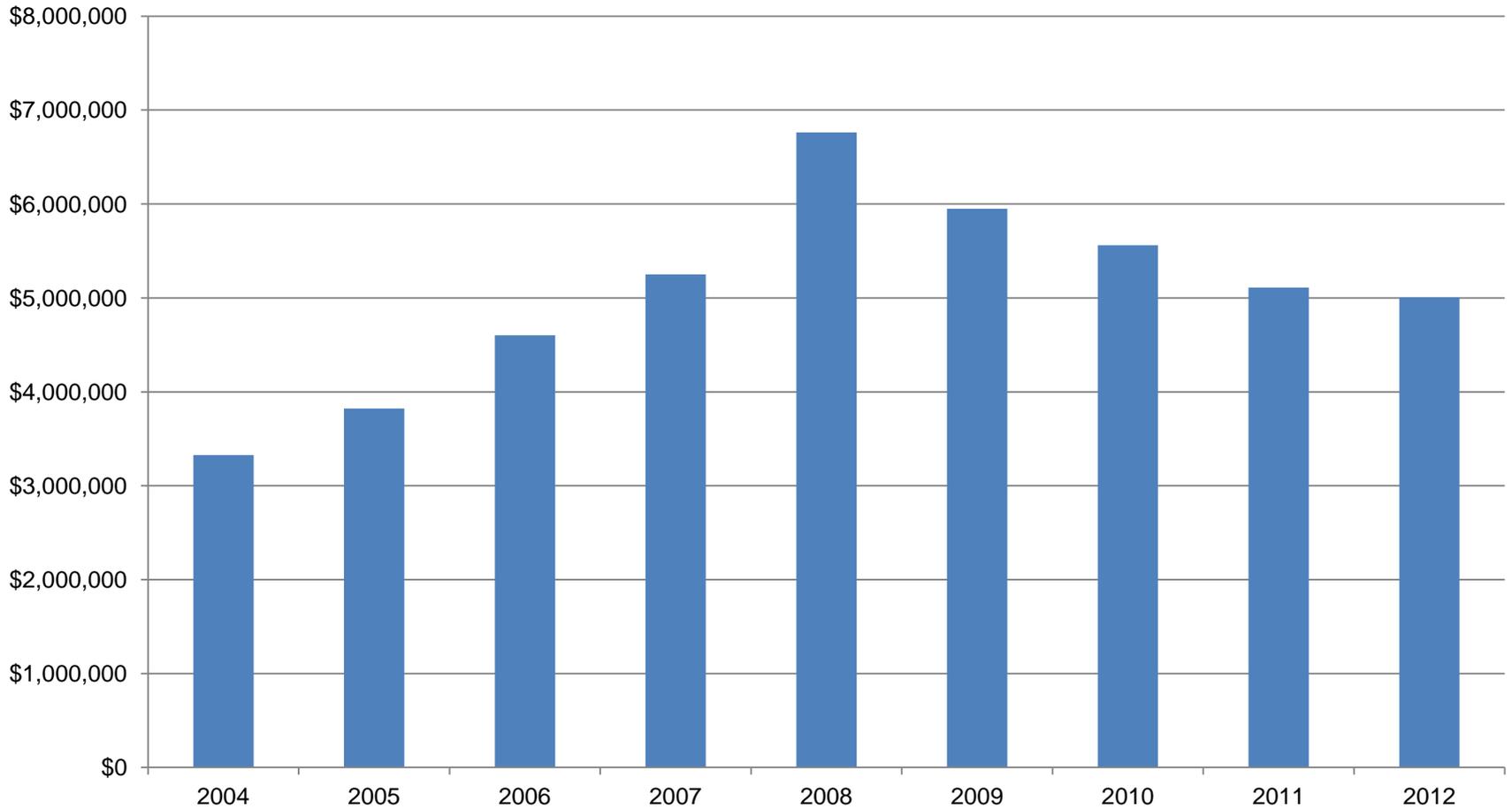


# Cuts in Library hours

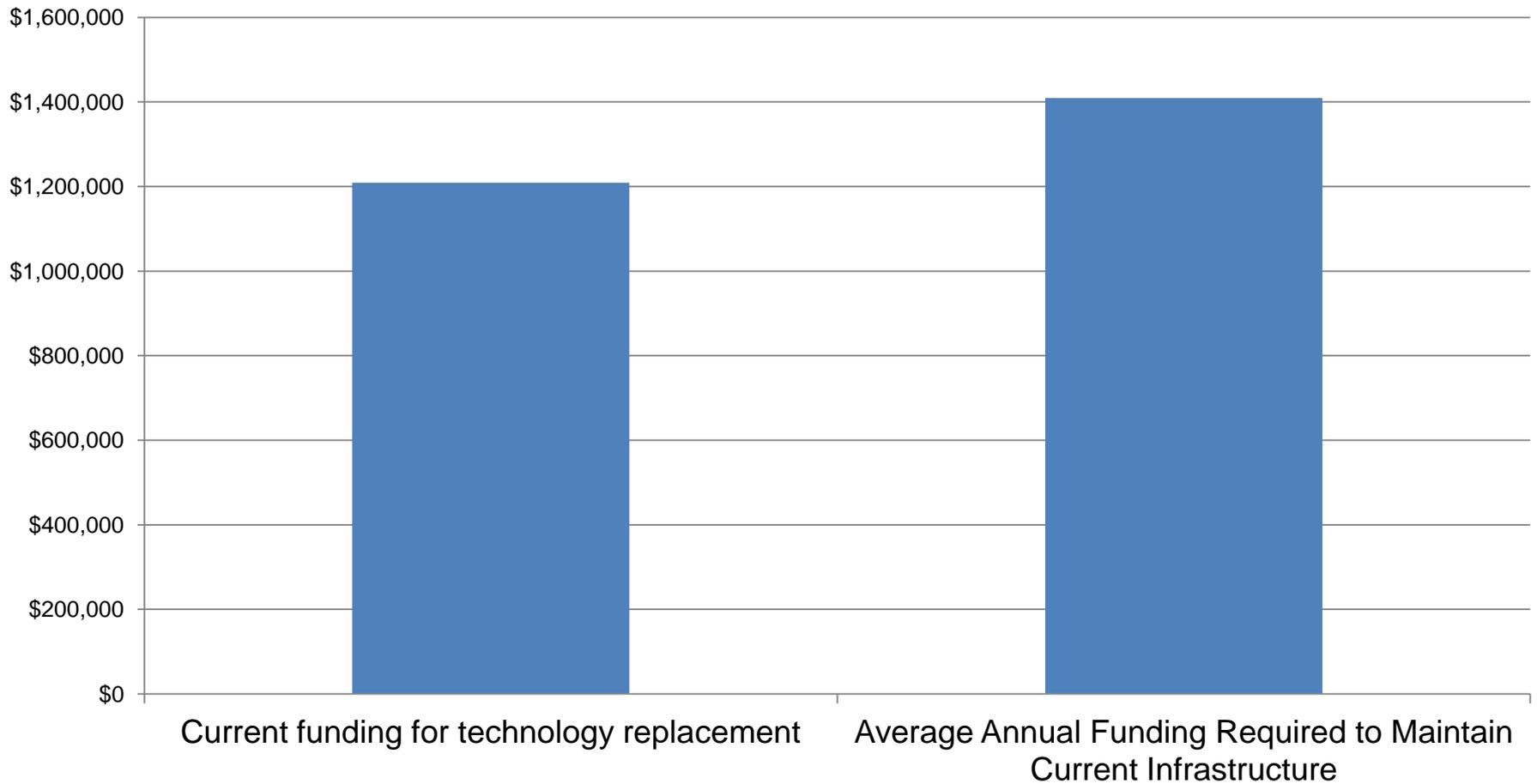
Priority to keep libraries open and accessible  
– still had to eliminate Friday & Sunday hours at 15 branches starting in 2010

Net loss of 190 hours of service/week  
equivalent to closing 4 libraries

# Collections budget fluctuations

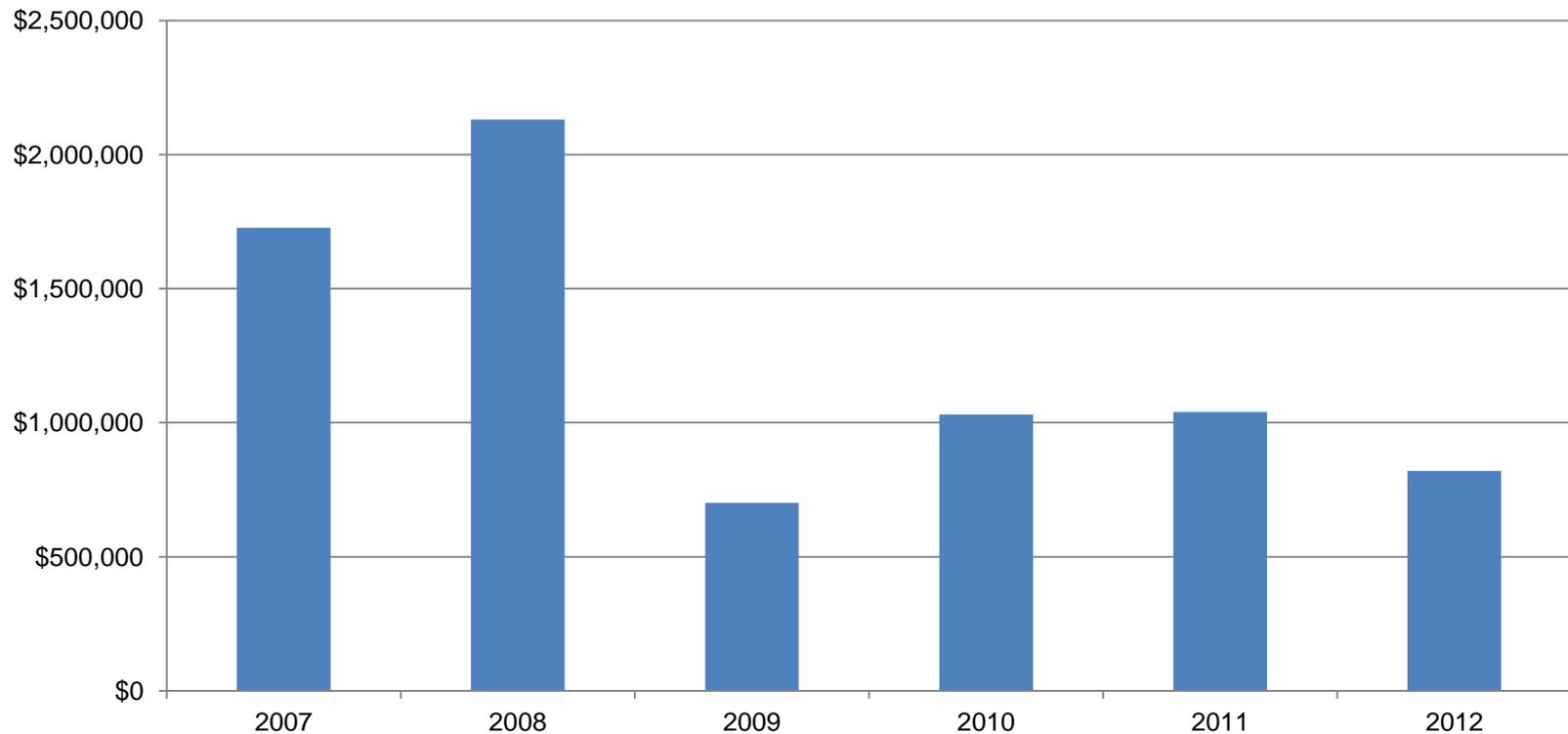


# Technology replacement

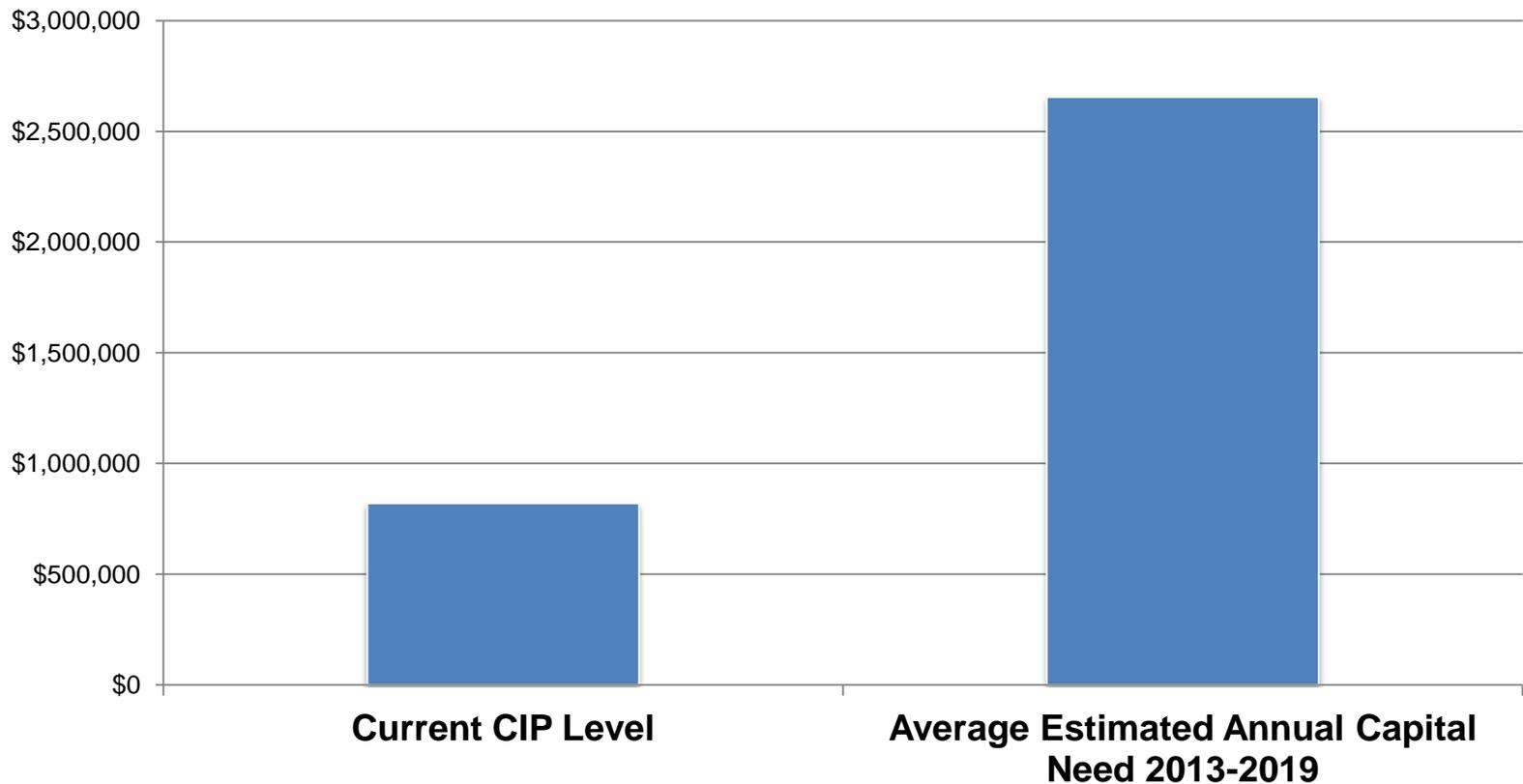


# Major Maintenance (CIP)

Library CIP Budget Post-LFA History



# Major Maintenance (CIP)

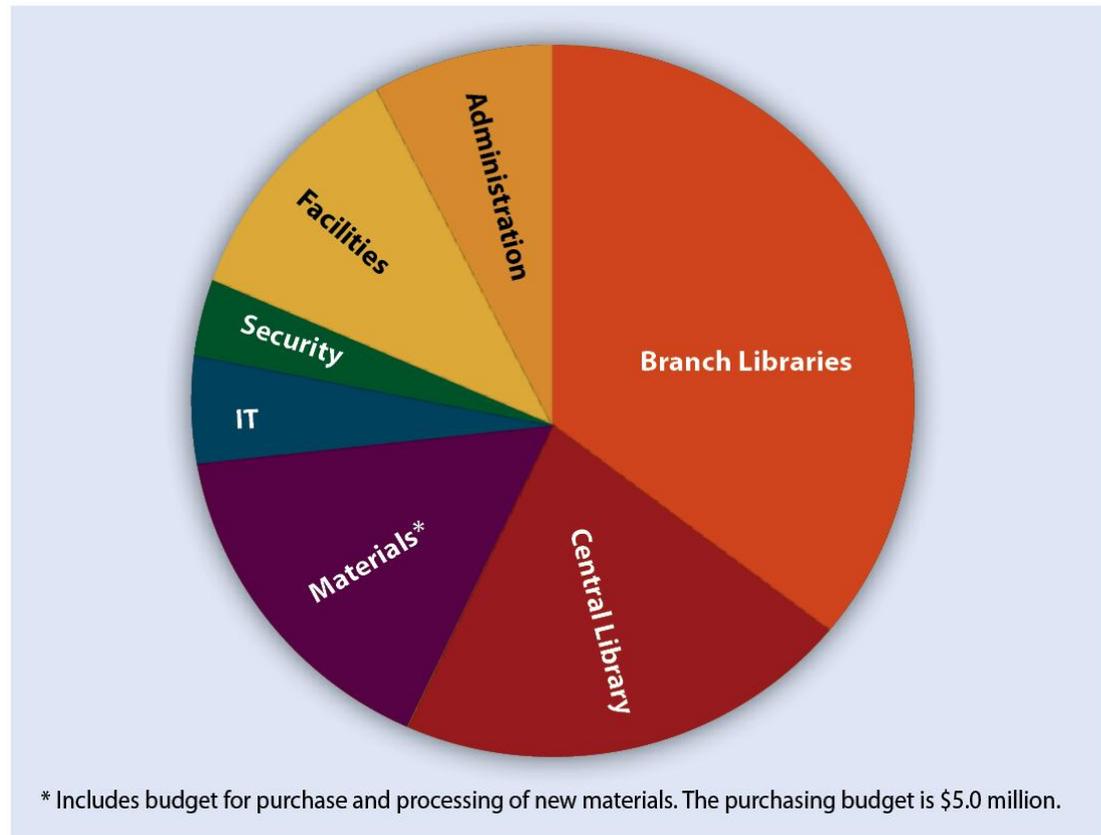


# Library budget basics

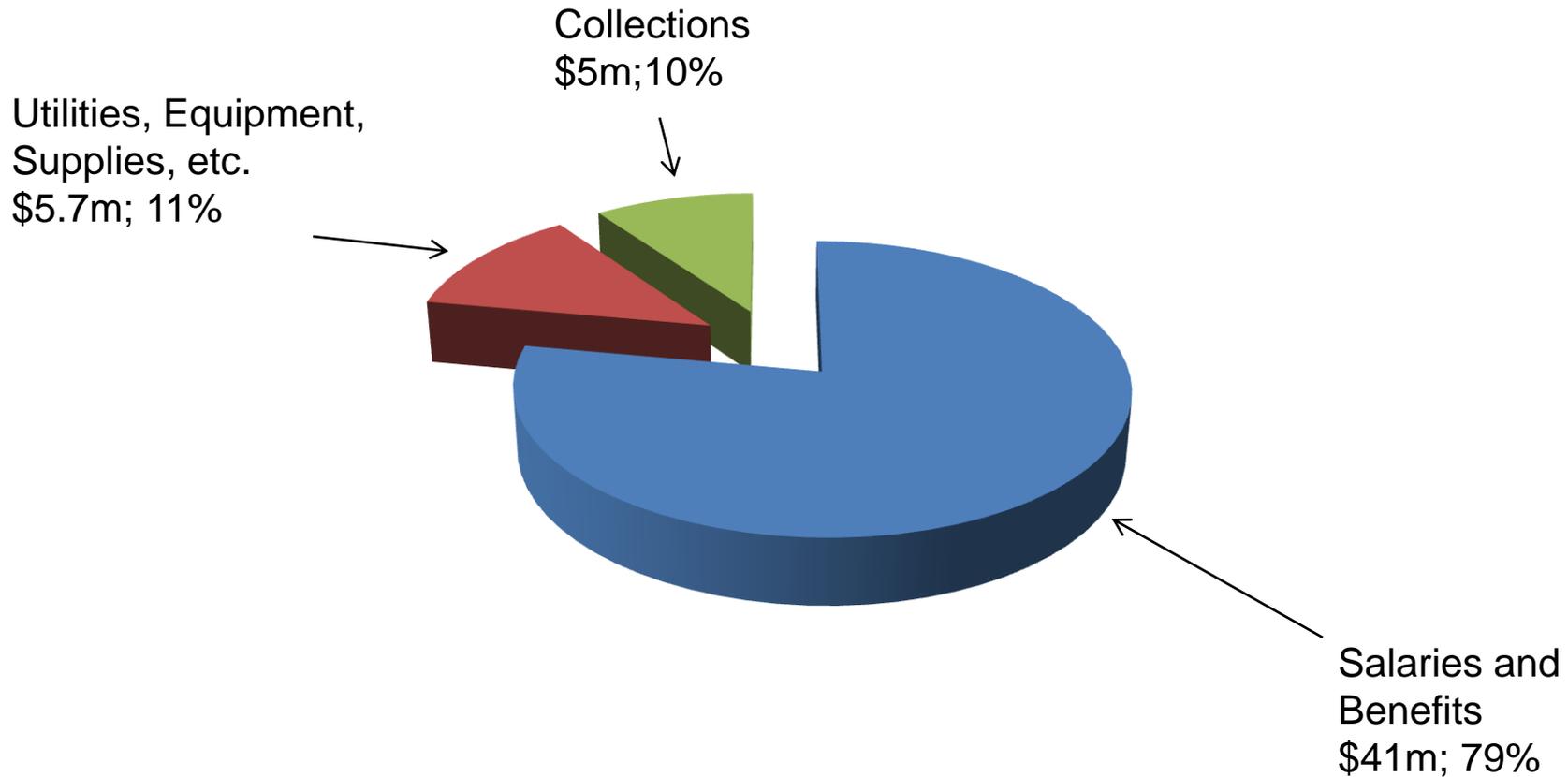
**Total 2012 Budget = \$51.9M**

**City General Fund support \$49.4M, or 95% of the budget**

- Branch Libraries: 34%  
\$17,640,000
- Central Library: 23%  
\$12,161,000
- Materials\*: 15%  
\$7,706,000
- Information Technology: 6%  
\$3,218,000
- Security: 2%  
\$1,095,000
- Facilities: 12%  
\$6,163,000
- Administration: 7%  
\$3,818,000

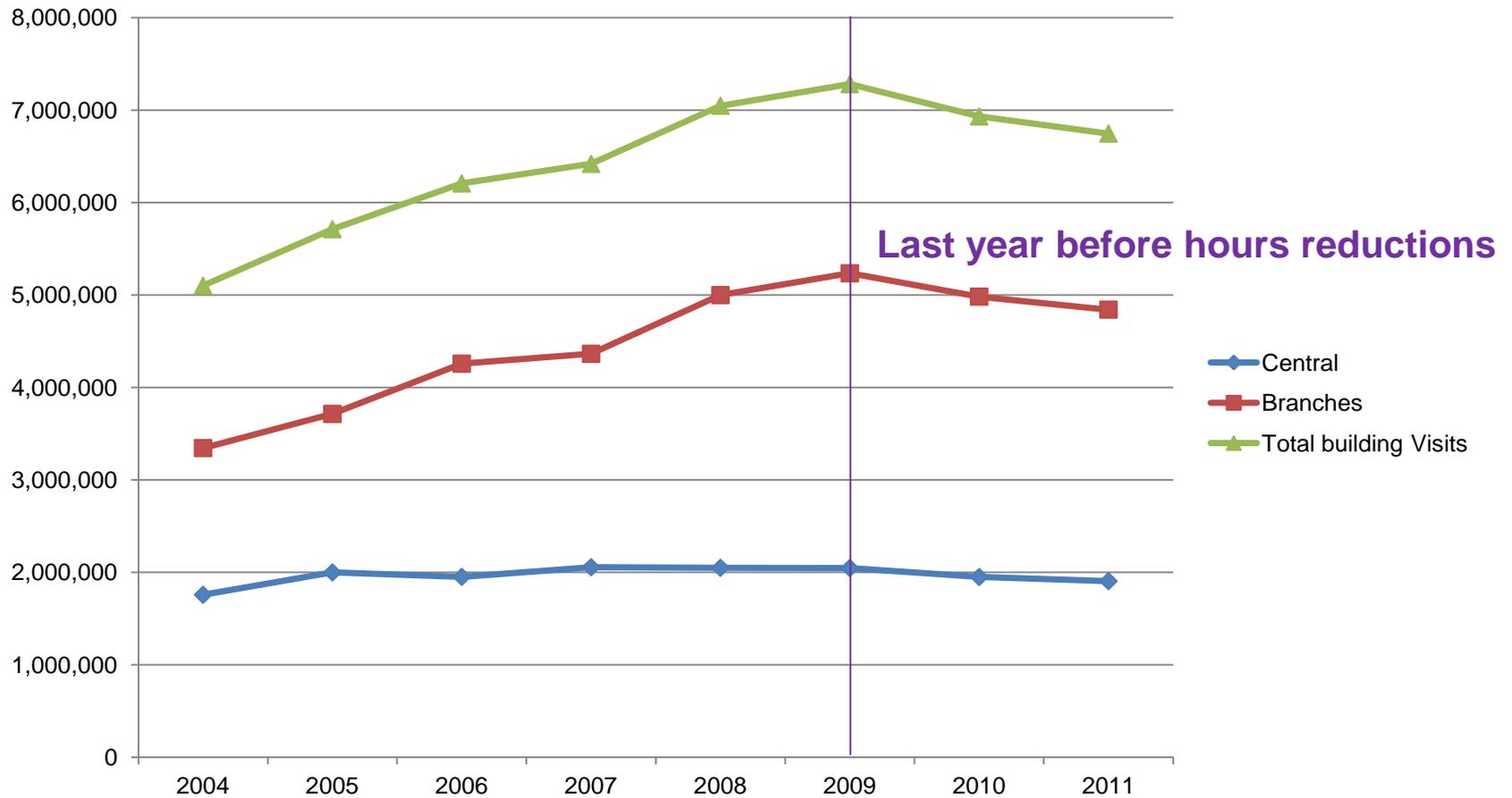


# 2012 Budget Major Cost Categories



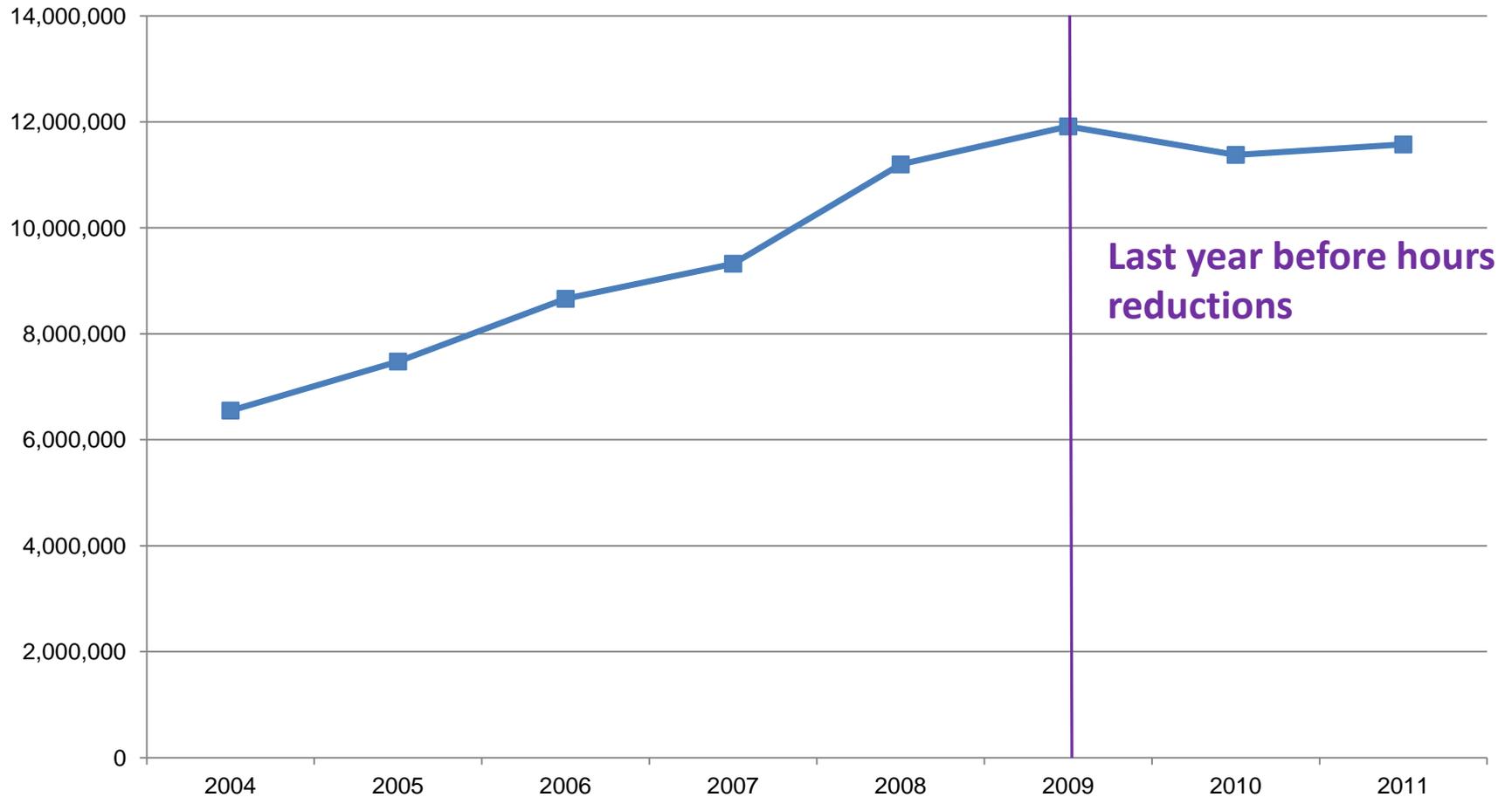
# **Library usage trends 2004-2011**

# Branch and Central Library Visits



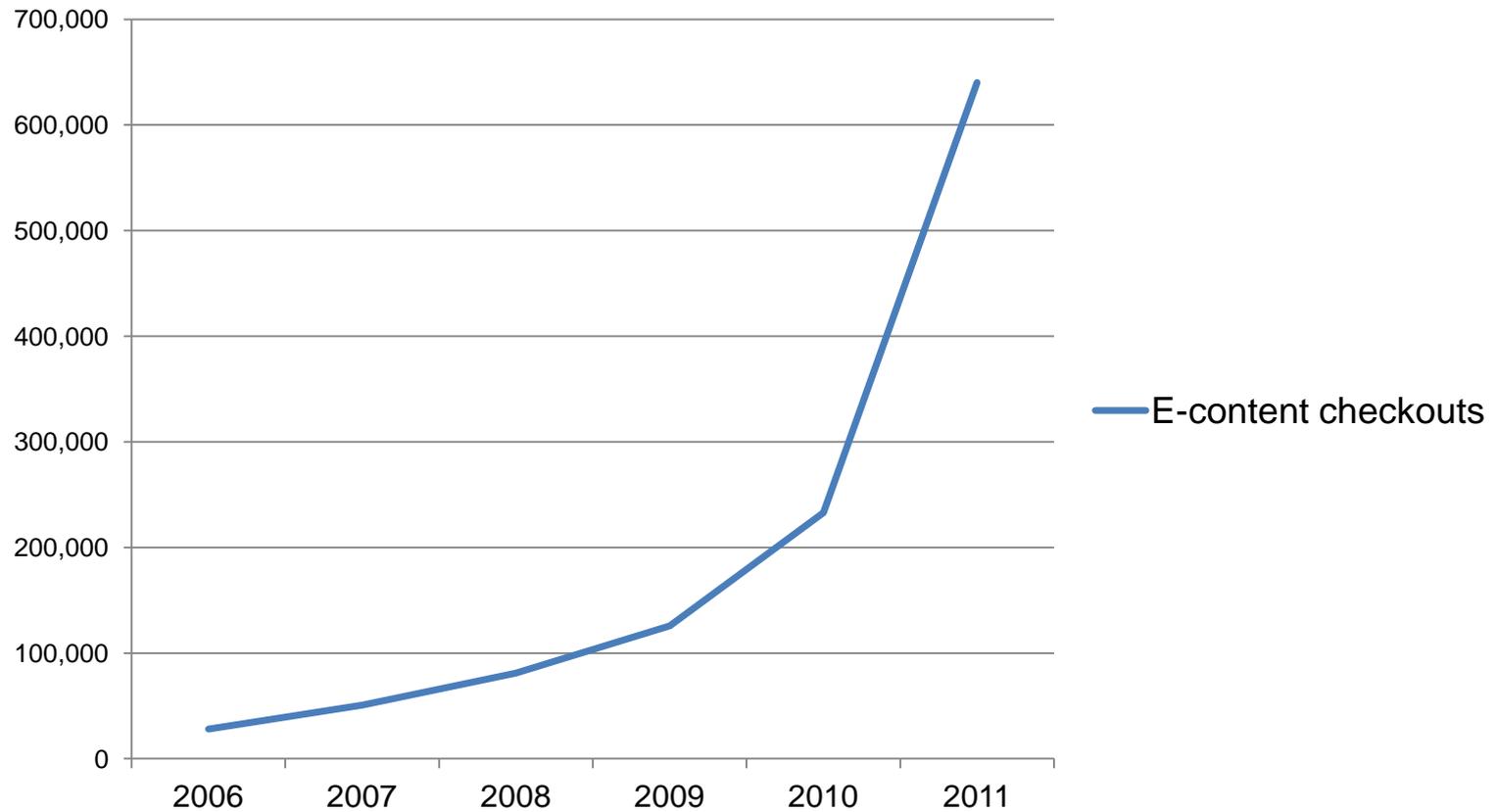
Data points show total annual visits for each year presented.

# Circulation of materials



Data points show total annual circulation for each year presented.

# E-content circulation

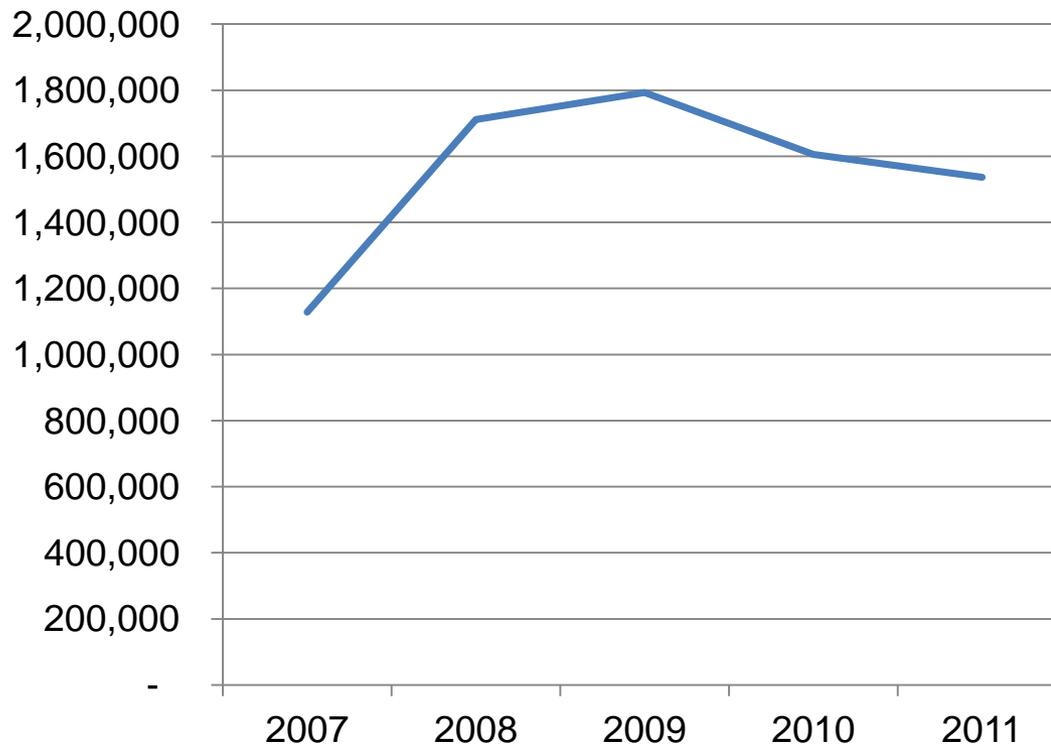


# Sample Library Programming

- Children's early learning - story times, Summer Reading, Global Reading Challenge
- Homework help (in person and on-line)
- Author readings, cultural events, Seattle Reads
- *Talk Time* for English language learners
- Computer instruction, resume preparation classes
- Civic discussions – election forums, social issues
- Community assistance -- tax preparation, emergency preparedness, green construction, workshops on health care, parenting, DIY topics
- Book clubs, online discussions, the list goes on!

# Public Computer Sessions

The public has logged over 1.2 million 90-minute sessions at Seattle Public Library computers every year since 2007



# Alternate funding explored in 2010

- 1) Independent library district
- 2) Base funding from City General Fund augmented by special property tax levy
- 3) Dedicated portion of existing tax or revenue source
- 4) Local option sales tax

**Public libraries  
across the country  
are dealing with  
severe funding  
challenges**

A 2011 survey by *Library Journal* found that 86% of public libraries had suffered funding cutbacks and 93% reported staff reductions

# There is no easy fix

- San Francisco and Los Angeles: voter-approved dedicated set-aside portion of existing property tax
- Port Townsend: voter-approved levy
- Multnomah County: requesting a levy increase in May and asking voters to approve creation of a library taxing district in November
- Denver: 2012 budget held flat, no new cuts; exploring long-term sustainable funding solution

# The Library brings huge benefits to the City

