Public Mandates and Priorities

PMAP - 6: Emerging e-Government Services

e-Government (from electronic government, also known as e-Gov, digital government, and online government) refers to the use of internet technology as a platform for exchanging information, providing services and transacting with citizens, businesses, and other arms of government.

Four kinds of activities take place:

1) Pushing information over the Internet - e.g. announcing services and public hearing schedules;
2) two-way communications between the agency and the citizen, business or other government agency- e.g. answering questions;
3) conducting transactions -e.g. mechanism for submitting tax returns, applying for employment/unemployment and applying for benefits;
4) governance- e.g. online polling and voting.

With the implementation of the IN Gateway project in 2009, Indiana's local government entities are required to file all pertinent public records, including but not limited to budgets and reports, electronically. The information is now available through the state portal, making local government data more accessible and transparent.

The most important anticipated benefits of e-Government are improved efficiency, convenience, and better accessibility to public services. Government agencies are encouraging citizens to "go to your local library" for online access.

Implications for JCPL

- JCPL is becoming an important portal for public access to e-Government, thereby providing another vital and visible public service to the community.
- Since 10% of our local population is hindered with low reading levels, JCPL needs to consider offering more programs to the public to aid it in gaining the needed skills to fully participate in e-Government.
- JCPL will be called on to provide access (space and equipment) to those on the wrong side of the "digital divide."
- JCPL staff will need time and training to learn how to best assist patrons in utilizing e-Government.
- JCPL has trained staff to assist other local units in filing through Gateway.

- JCPL may need to investigate the legal implications, including Freedom of Information and privacy, that e-Government exposes.
- JCPL could investigate recouping the financial burden of support of e-Government by charging a fee for this service.