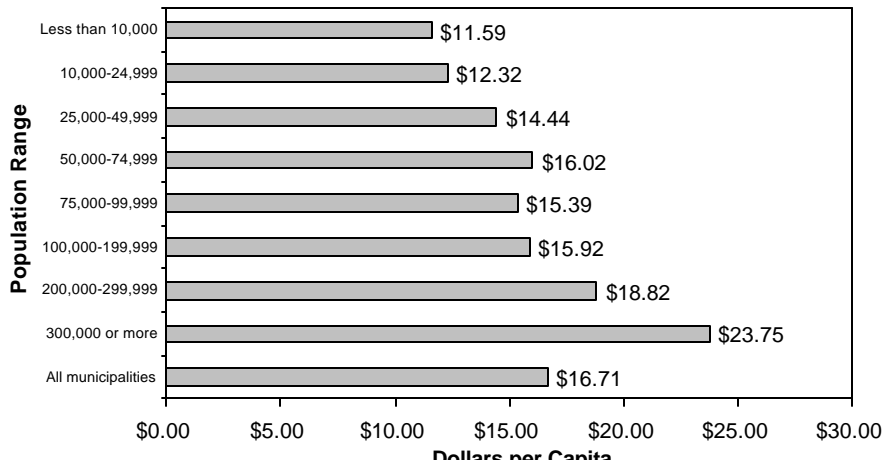


Larger Municipalities Fund Public Libraries Better Library Districts Provide an Option for Smaller Municipalities

Library Expenditures Per Capita for U.S. Municipalities, 1996-97



U.S. Library District Expenditures: Total and As a Percent of Total Special District Expenditures, 1986/87-1996/97

Year	Dollars (millions)	Percent of total special district expenditures
1986-87	\$424	0.8%
1991-92	\$710	1.0%
1996-97	\$1,397	1.6%

According to the Census Bureau's 1997 Census of Governments, larger municipalities fund public libraries better on a per capita basis. (See Figure.)

The inability of many smaller municipalities to fund public library service alone on a viable basis may help to explain another trend revealed by the Census of Governments, the prosperity of library districts nationwide. (See Table.)

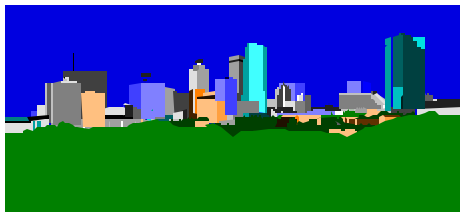
Between 1986/87 and 1996/97, the expenditures of library districts in the U.S. more than quadrupled from \$0.4 billion to \$1.4

billion. At the same time, the expenditures of library districts as a percentage of all special district expenditures doubled from 0.8 to 1.6 percent.

These statistics indicate that public libraries are more likely to prosper when they are organized to serve larger populations and when their fate is determined more directly by the

voting public.

Sources: 1. **Finances of Municipal and Township Governments**, 1997 Census of Governments, September 2000. Available at < <http://www.census.gov/prod/gc97/gc974-4.pdf> >. 2. **Finances of Special District Governments**, 1997, Census of Governments, September 2000. Available at < <http://www.census.gov/prod/gc97/gc974-2.pdf> >.



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