

An architectural rendering of a modern, multi-story building. The building features a mix of light-colored panels and darker wood accents. It has a prominent rooftop terrace with a glass railing and some greenery. Several people are visible on the terrace. The building is set against a blue sky with light clouds. In the foreground, there are some trees and a street with a few cars.

STRATEGIC PLANNING

KEY FINDINGS

Santa Cruz Public Libraries
October 31st, 2025

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DATA INSIGHTS OVERVIEW

A Mixed Methods Approach

A primary component of SCPL's strategic planning was to assess how well the Libraries are addressing the community's needs and what opportunities exist. The following methods were used to accomplish this.



INTERVIEWS & FOCUS GROUPS

Meetings and 1:1 conversations with library users, infrequent users, partners, board members, and staff.

114 Participants



STAFF & PARTNER SURVEY

Digital survey of SCPL's staff and community partners who provided feedback and guidance on behalf of their constituents.

154 Participants



COMMUNITY SURVEY

Digital and paper survey to community members about their satisfaction with the Libraries.

1,345 Participants



PEER LIBRARY ANALYSIS

Benchmark analysis of leading comparable libraries and their insights about what has made them so successful.

13 Peer Libraries

Key Insight Findings

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KEY INSIGHT FINDINGS

Patron Satisfaction

	FINDINGS	RECOMMENDATIONS
<p>Patron Satisfaction</p> <p>★★★★★</p> <p>Sources</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Interviews & Focus Groups<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Community Survey<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Stakeholder Survey<input type="checkbox"/> Peer Library Analysis	<p>Community satisfaction of the Libraries is strong with a Community Net Promotor Score® of 67. (This is a good score and is consistent with other public libraries.)</p> <p>The high satisfaction was consistent across nearly all areas of the study including various demographic groups, various locations, and various demographic groups with few exceptions! Satisfaction is likely driven by SCPL’s reputation for trust, accessibility, and value. The new and renovated facilities are frequently praised.</p> <p>The Libraries’ stakeholders (staff, admin, and partners) reported even higher satisfaction with a NPS of 77. The higher stakeholder NPS represents high-esteem for the Library. The library’s partners are very satisfied with a NPS of 92.</p>	<p>Celebrate! Strong satisfaction requires all departments and staff to be aligned in meeting patron needs. Day-to-day, it is easy to forget the positive impacts the Libraries is delivering.</p> <p>Share success stories frequently with staff and stakeholders to show examples of how personal and team efforts align with the Libraries’ Mission and are resulting in positive impacts. Patron testimonials about library impact are powerful.</p>


KEY INSIGHT FINDINGS

Library Purpose

	FINDINGS	RECOMMENDATIONS
<p>Library Purpose</p> 	<p>Some members of the Libraries' ecosystem have voiced a desire for the system to stick to the core mission of libraries. Definitions of what this means vary. Some voice the library should stick clearly to providing information and reference resources.</p>	<p>The SPC should reconfirm and then communicate the Libraries' intention for serving identified populations (including the vulnerable, Spanish speakers, seniors, families, etc.) with library services plus expanded hours, and increased outreach services.</p>
<p>Sources</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Interviews & Focus Groups<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Community Survey<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Stakeholder Survey<input type="checkbox"/> Peer Library Analysis	<p>Focus group discussions could not confirm a consensus on this point when asked to rank the importance of collections, spaces, and programming - all of which consume a considerable portion of library resources.</p> <p>B G hypothesizes that much of the energy on this topic is rooted in the social services activities the library is increasingly providing.</p>	<p>(still looking at the data)</p>

KEY INSIGHT FINDINGS

Workplace Culture


	FINDINGS	RECOMMENDATIONS
<p>Workplace Culture</p> 	<p>The staff Net Promoter Score is 74 which is high and exceeds patron satisfaction (67). The Staff Cultural Assessment is positive across ten dimensions plus overall satisfaction. There are pressing opportunities, however:</p> <p>Staff have voiced concerns about staff personal safety at the Downtown branch and other locations (to a lesser extent). Suggestions for more consistent and stringent enforcement were provided, along with increased support and understanding from management following incidents.</p> <p>Staff perceive the system as understaffed resulting in a chronic workload strain that contributes to inefficiencies. Some staff report 'burnout' and imply this is increasing. The Libraries have had difficulties filling vacant positions due to cost-of-living and salary concerns.</p> <p>Overall, Management and Staff desire improved communications to stay abreast of changes and share</p>	<p>(Note the related <i>Vulnerable Patrons</i> Findings and Recommendations.)</p> <p>Review if the Libraries' code of conduct is being followed and enforced sufficiently; adjust actions as needed.</p> <p>Conduct the planned organization assessment to review and optimize the operating model to reflect the current needs of the service area / community.</p> <p>(Weekly staff meetings are planned to begin in 2026 and are expected to be a forum for constructive library conversations. These meetings will complement the existing internal communications and all staff training days.)</p>

Sources

- Interviews & Focus Groups
- Community Survey
- Stakeholder Survey
- Peer Library Analysis


KEY INSIGHT FINDINGS

Library Hours

	FINDINGS	RECOMMENDATIONS
<p>Library Hours</p> 	<p>Increasing the Libraries' open hours is a top (#1, #2, or #3) request from library users and stakeholders.</p> <p>The Libraries are a <i>third space</i> for many people and a meeting place for groups. Increasing hours is more about access to the library space and less about access to materials.</p> <p>Staff is wary of extending hours due to capacity constraints and also acknowledge the positive impact additional library hours would have.</p>	<p>Add outside hold lockers at select branch locations, and possibly at other public locations (e.g., grocery stores).</p> <p>(Note: Additional hours have been approved at four locations, including extended weekday hours and additional Sunday hours.)</p>
<p>Sources</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Interviews & Focus Groups<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Community Survey<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Stakeholder Survey<input type="checkbox"/> Peer Library Analysis		

KEY INSIGHT FINDINGS

Grow Service to Hispanic Population

	FINDINGS	RECOMMENDATIONS
<p>Service to Hispanic Population</p> 	<p>Over 30% of the people in Santa Cruz County report being Hispanic or Latino per the US Census.</p> <p>The community survey had light engagement (10%) from individuals reporting as Spanish, Hispanic or Latine origin. The survey was promoted and available to complete in Spanish. The scheduled Spanish speaker focus group was cancelled due to a lack of signups.</p>	<p>Add bilingual program staff with particular emphasis on individuals who are familiar with the County's Hispanic population.</p>
<p>Sources</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">✓ Interviews & Focus Groups✓ Community Survey✓ Stakeholder Survey✓ Peer Library Analysis	<p>Community members frequently requested more materials in Spanish and more bilingual staff.</p> <p>Stakeholders identified Hispanics or Latinos, immigrants, and non-English speakers as the least well-served demographic group.</p> <p>The library staff has over 20 bilingual speakers, some of whom are not on the front-line.</p>	<p>Charter a Hispanic advisory group; possibly part of the Library Advisory Board. Include 1 or 2 bilingual staff on the Hispanic advisory group.</p> <p>Implement new communication channels to engage the Hispanic community. WhatsApp, visiting particular parks, and leveraging houses of worship have all been mentioned as proven channels.</p> <p>Big Idea – Add a mobile library that is Spanish-first including signage in Spanish, Hispanic staff, and Spanish materials.</p>

KEY INSIGHT FINDINGS

Vulnerable Patrons

Note: The term 'Vulnerable' is being used here to broadly name a population that may include some combination of unsheltered, mentally ill, addicted, or those with little income.

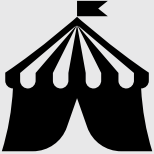
	FINDINGS	RECOMMENDATIONS
<p>Vulnerable Population</p> 	<p>Individuals with challenging behavioral issues, particularly at Downtown, are concerning to some patrons and staff. Numerous patrons have stated they now avoid the Downtown branch due to such individuals.</p> <p>Homeless library users, surveyed at a local homeless shelter, see the Libraries as a welcoming and safe space and express their appreciation for the Libraries and their services. Appreciation is expressed for the staff who are consistently helpful and persistent in finding solutions. The Libraries can be a lifeline for things such as device charging, internet access, printers, restrooms, and spaces.</p> <p>Some of the homeless users were unaware of the Life Literacies Center.</p>	<p>These are complex issues. Establish a cross-community team to evaluate various options and propose recommendations.</p> <p>Some ideas that have surfaced are:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Focus on the entry paths to the Libraries where there is extensive loitering• Have a social worker presence at DTN• Establish a separate day center where people can access human services and basic needs (space, restrooms, etc.)• Ensure the code of conduct is understood and enforced• Provide bike locks and lockers for personal belongings <p>Start now to change behaviors and expectations before the new Downtown branch opens.</p>

Sources

- Interviews & Focus Groups
- Community Survey
- Stakeholder Survey
- Peer Library Analysis

KEY INSIGHT FINDINGS

Awareness and Marketing


	FINDINGS	RECOMMENDATIONS
Awareness & Marketing 	<p>A primary reason the public doesn't visit the library more frequently is because <i>"Visiting the library doesn't cross my mind."</i></p> <p>The public and frequent users <u>consistently</u> express surprise at the extent of free services available.</p> <p>The website, newsletters, word of mouth, bulletin boards, and social media are top communication channels. Some patrons express difficulties identifying applicable programs (content and location) in the newsletter and on the site.</p> <p>Patrons from other library systems frequently rank social media in the top 3 communications channels.</p>	<p>Deep dive into the newsletter's effectiveness and ideate ways to make it even more useful for intended audiences. Evaluate if a quarterly printed newsletter would be justified.</p> <p>Conduct hallmark events which are a proven way to boost engagement (e.g., Comic Con, Festival of the Book, Trunk-Or-Treat).</p> <p>Connect with attendees of meetings held in library spaces (a service that has been recently expanded).</p> <p>Keep up the frequency and quality of social media posts. Inject humor and human interest into posts. Encourage partners, staff, and loyal patrons to be generous with their Likes and Shares. Consider boosting posts for key events. Post on partner sites.</p>

Sources

- ☑ Interviews & Focus Groups
- ☑ Community Survey
- ☑ Stakeholder Survey
- ☑ Peer Library Analysis

KEY INSIGHT FINDINGS

Programming Alignment

	FINDINGS	RECOMMENDATIONS
<p>Programming Alignment</p>  <p>Sources</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Interviews & Focus Groups<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Community Survey<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Stakeholder Survey<input type="checkbox"/> Peer Library Analysis	<p>The Libraries deliver and facilitate the delivery of an extensive array of programs, covering many topics and many sessions. The Libraries offers over 350 topics delivered in over 4,700 sessions. Based on staff observation, some programs could be weeded to free up resources.</p> <p>Input from patron interviews, surveys, and focus groups consistently shows demand for additional programs.</p> <p>Quantitative and qualitative data are limited upon which to evaluate the Libraries' programs.</p> <p>Staff noted that processes for planning and scheduling programs vary between branches.</p>	<p>Implement a program evaluation system to collect and analyze participant feedback.</p> <p>Evaluate the existing program offerings for need (demand) and gaps in topics, program times, ages served, and groups served. (The survey data herein is a good starting point.) Adjust programming as necessary.</p> <p>Closely review programs that require specialization or consume larger amounts of staff time. Evaluate partner programs for effectiveness.</p> <p>Continue to leverage communities of practice where specialization is needed (e.g., seniors, tech help, youth, etc.)</p>

KEY INSIGHT FINDINGS

Partnerships

	FINDINGS	RECOMMENDATIONS
<p>Partnerships</p> 	<p>SCPL's partners praise the Libraries (NPS 92) and express deep appreciation for the opportunity to partner.</p> <p>Peers confirm that leveraging partnerships can be very beneficial to patrons. Many peers expect to expand their partnerships in the foreseeable future.</p> <p>Partners expressed an opportunity for more proactive coordination. Some examples were provided where partners felt the library could have / should have contacted them about opportunities.</p>	<p>Establish a formal partnership program across the Libraries. Assign various staff members to 'own' certain relationships. Owners should have standing check-ins with partners to actively seek mutual opportunities.</p> <p>Some libraries have found formal partnership contracts (MOUs) are advisable to manage the 'feature creep' of expectations that can occur over time and as needs evolve.</p>

Sources

- ☑ Interviews & Focus Groups
- ☑ Community Survey
- ☑ Stakeholder Survey
- ☑ Peer Library Analysis

SURVEY RESULTS

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STRATEGIC PLANNING SURVEY INTRODUCTION



Purpose

The Santa Cruz area was surveyed for their satisfaction, concerns, and ideas about the Santa Cruz Public Libraries to inform the Libraries' forthcoming strategic plan.

Methodology

The survey consisted of two closely related surveys with very similar questions. The first survey was open to all community members and was distributed via the Libraries' existing communication channels including newsletters, Facebook, Instagram, the website, etc. The survey was distributed in English and Spanish. Paper copies of the survey were available to those preferring a non-digital experience. Participants who completed the survey had the option to enter a drawing for \$50 gift card.

The second survey, internally referred to as the Stakeholder survey, was open to the Libraries' staff, administration, Trustees, government officials, library partners, and Friends. The stakeholder survey participants were asked to answer on behalf of the constituents they represent instead of on their own behalf. The stakeholder survey was distributed to all staff members and sent to external stakeholders.

Most questions were optional in both surveys and participants were asked to only answer items they were familiar with. Answers defaulted to 'Unfamiliar' and unfamiliar responses were not counted. Participants were promised their responses would remain anonymous.

Both surveys were open from September 1st through October 12th, 2025.

Responses

1,499 responses were received, including 1,345 from the community survey and 154 from the stakeholder survey. Of the community survey respondents, 924, or almost 89%, answered demographic questions about themselves and the people they reside with.

Interpreting Answers

The number of responses to each question is shown below adjacent to the compiled data. It is important to understand that the results, frequently presented as a percentage (%), are only for the population that answered that question and do not typically extend to the entire survey population or community. The number of responses about the libraries' offerings is indicative of the importance of that offering.

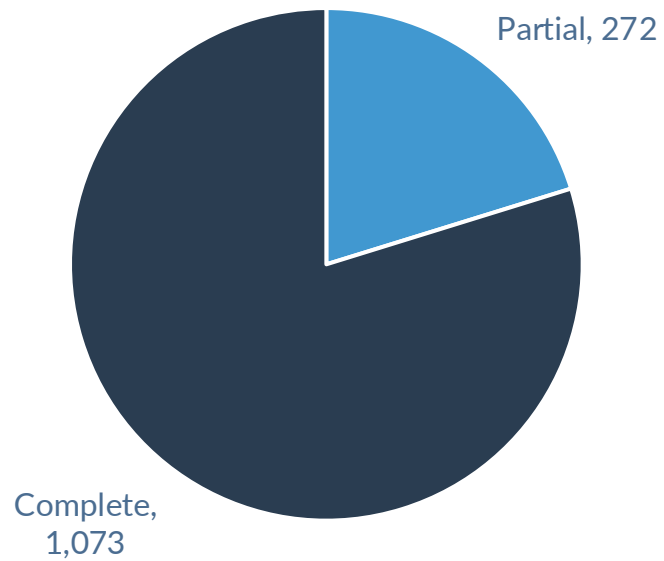
Survey Results

Survey Participation

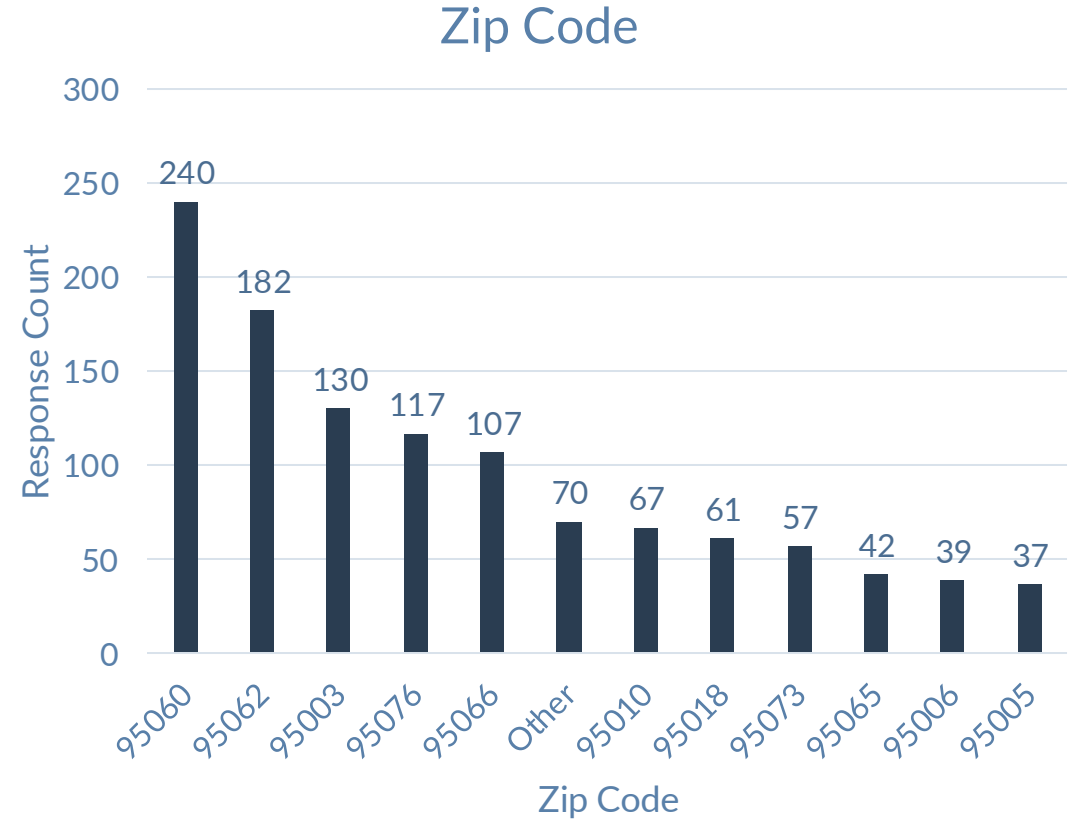
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COMMUNITY RESPONSES

- ☑ Community Survey
- ☐ Stakeholder Survey

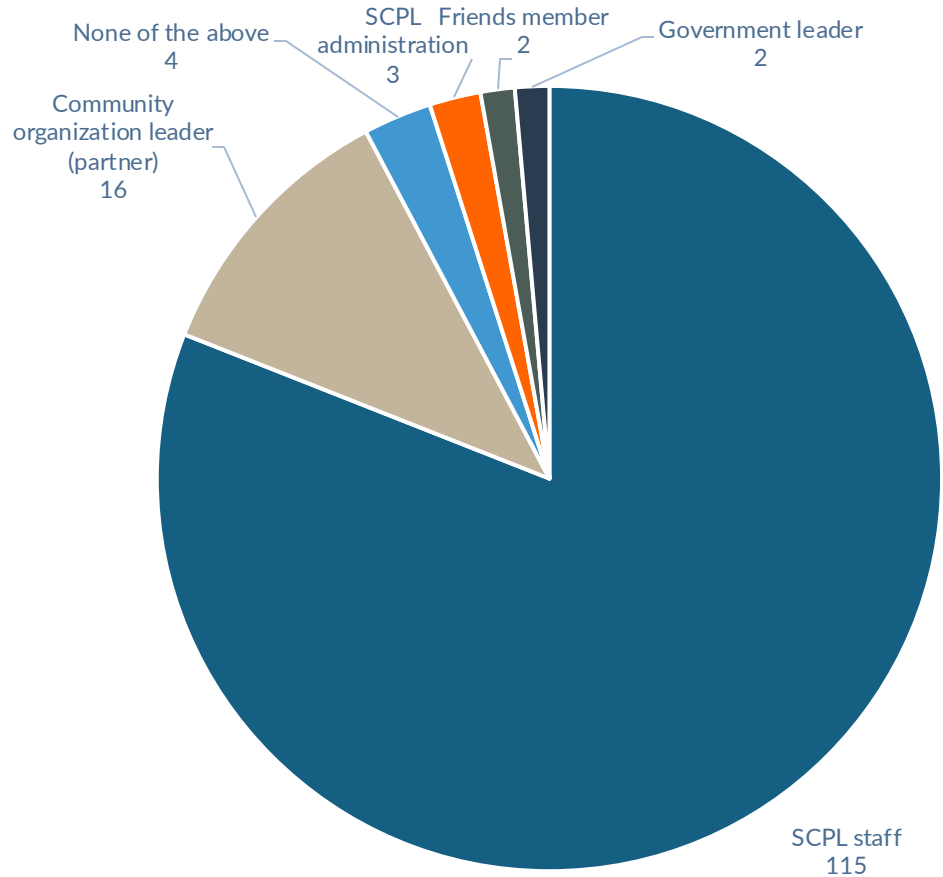


1,345 Total Responses
n = 1,345



n = 1,149

STAKEHOLDER ROLES



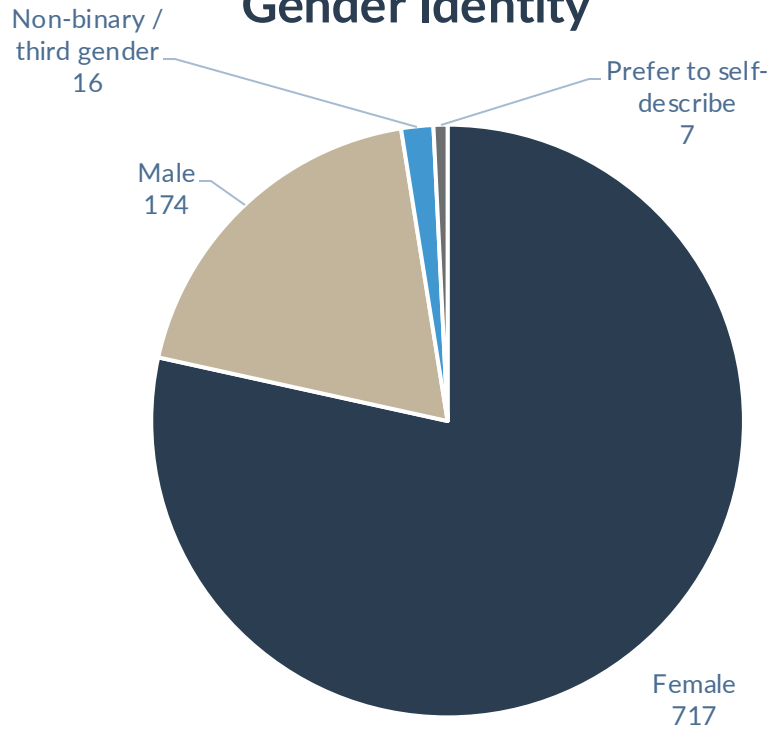
n = 142

What area of SCPL do you work?	
Area	Count
Administration	1
Collection Management Services	8
Library IT	3
Outreach Services	1
Other (Community Relations, Training, Facilities, Programs & Services, etc.)	8
Aptos	7
Boulder Creek	4
Branciforte	2
Capitola	4
Downtown	19
Felton	4
Garfield Park	2
La Selva Beach	1
Live Oak	1
Scotts Valley	5
Total	68

RESPONDENT DEMOGRAPHICS

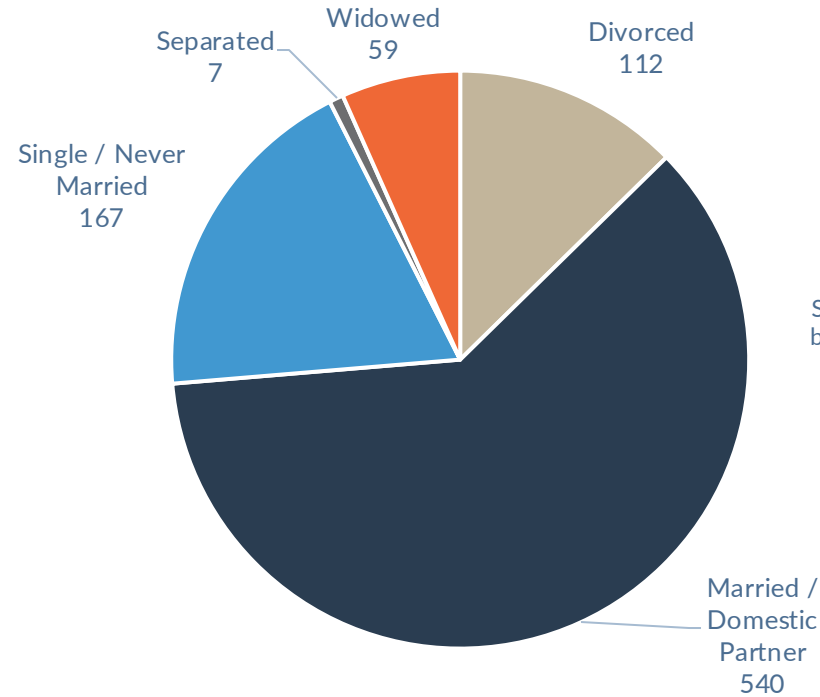
- Community Survey
- Stakeholder Survey

Gender Identity



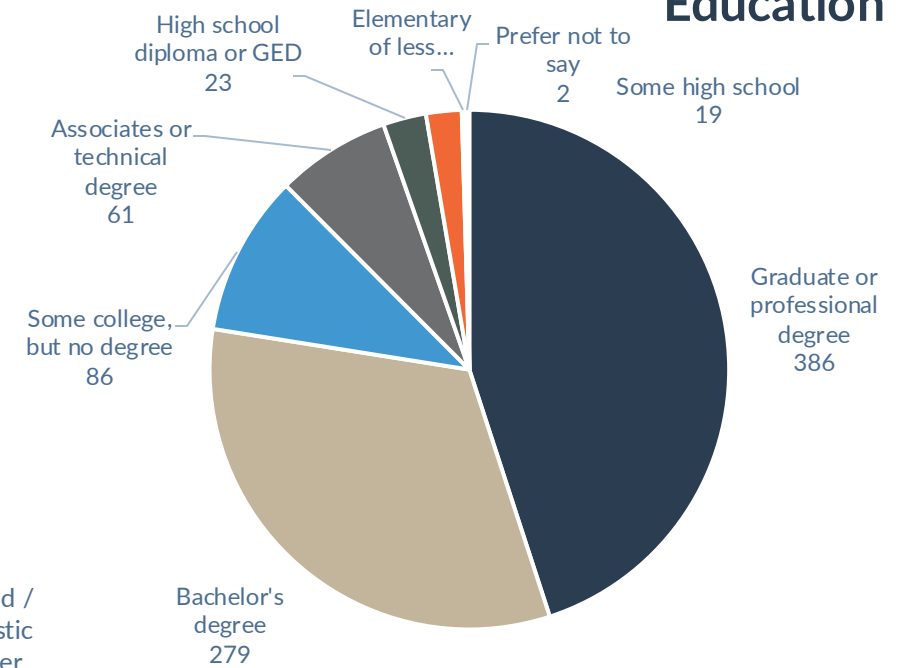
n = 914

Marital Status



n = 885

Education



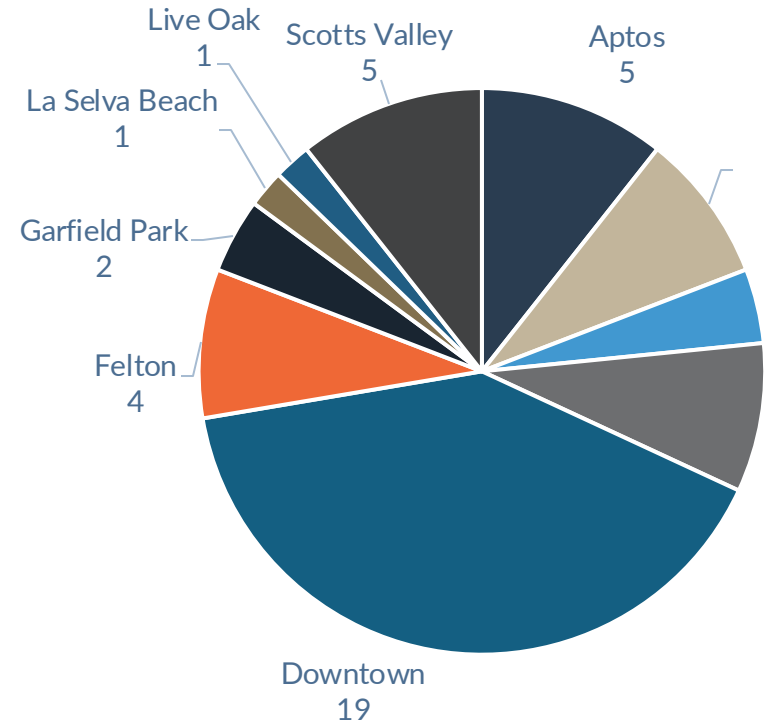
n = 858

STAFF OVERVIEW

Branch, Tenure, & Generation

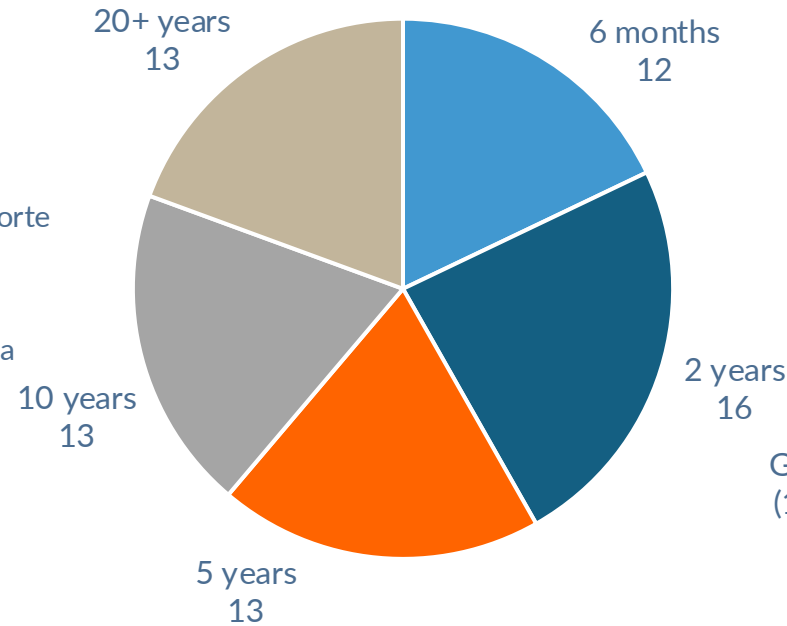
- Community Survey
- Stakeholder Survey

Branch



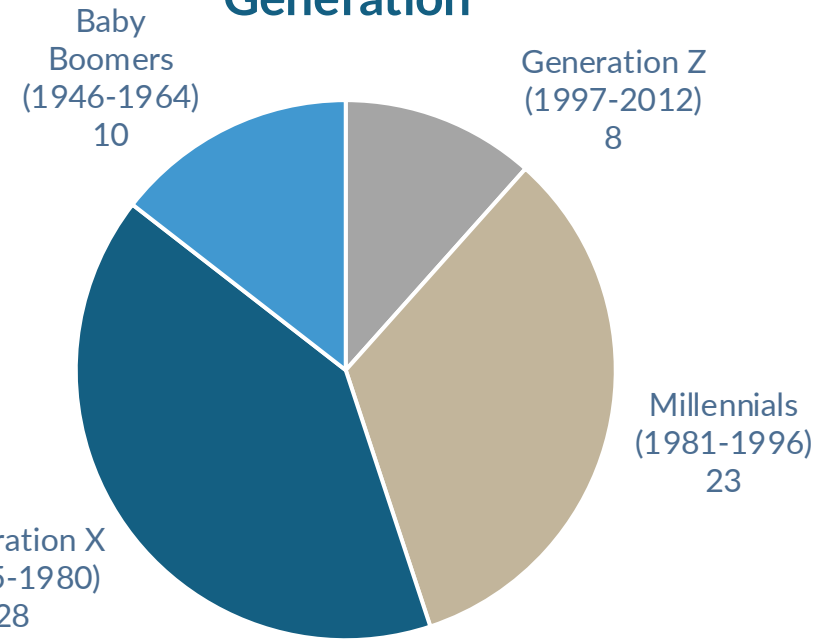
n = 47

Tenure



n = 69

Generation

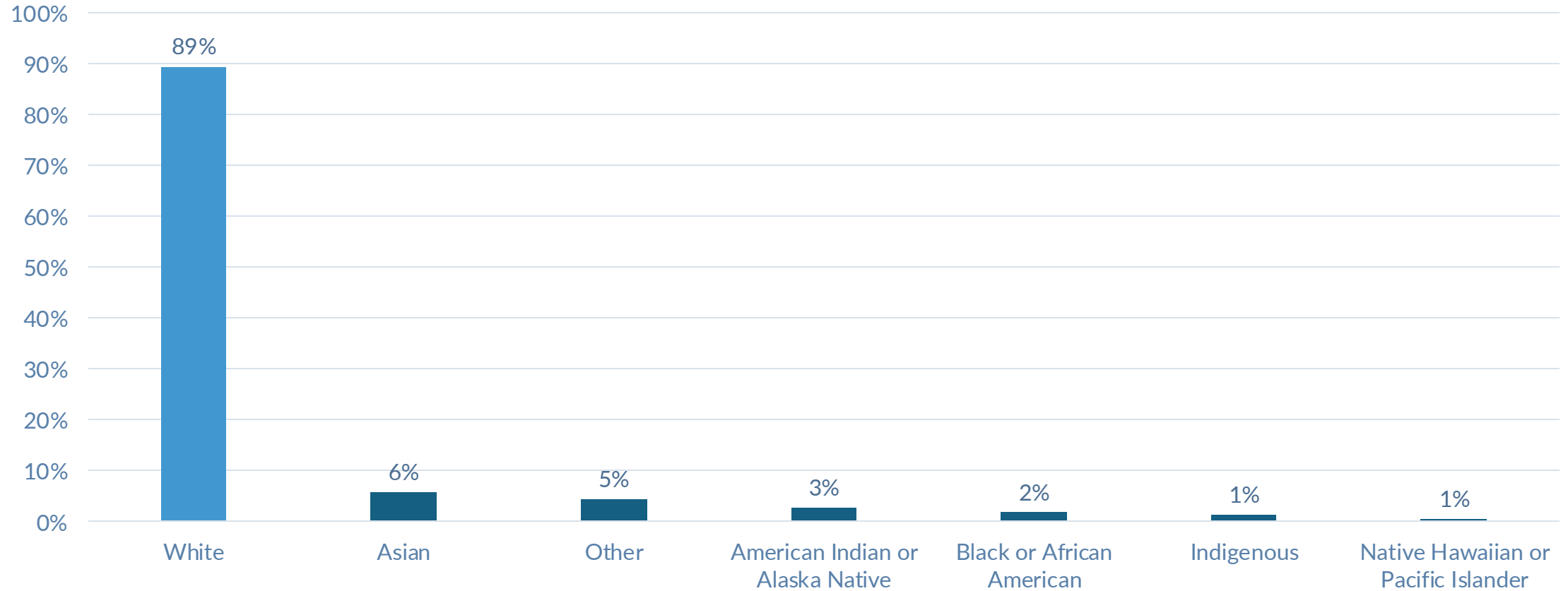


n = 69

RACE

Choose one or more races that you consider yourself to be
(Check all that apply)

- Community Survey
- Stakeholder Survey

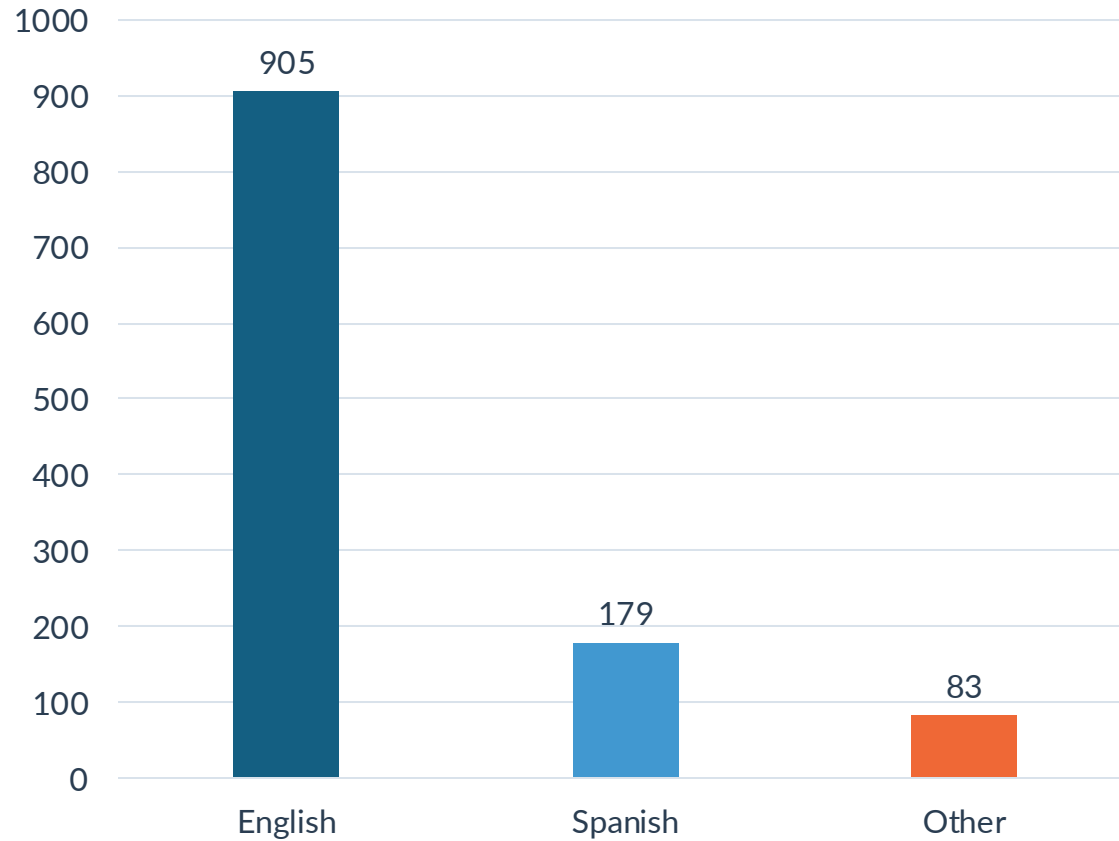


n = 849

LANGUAGES

What languages do you speak and read?

(Check all that apply)



n = 912

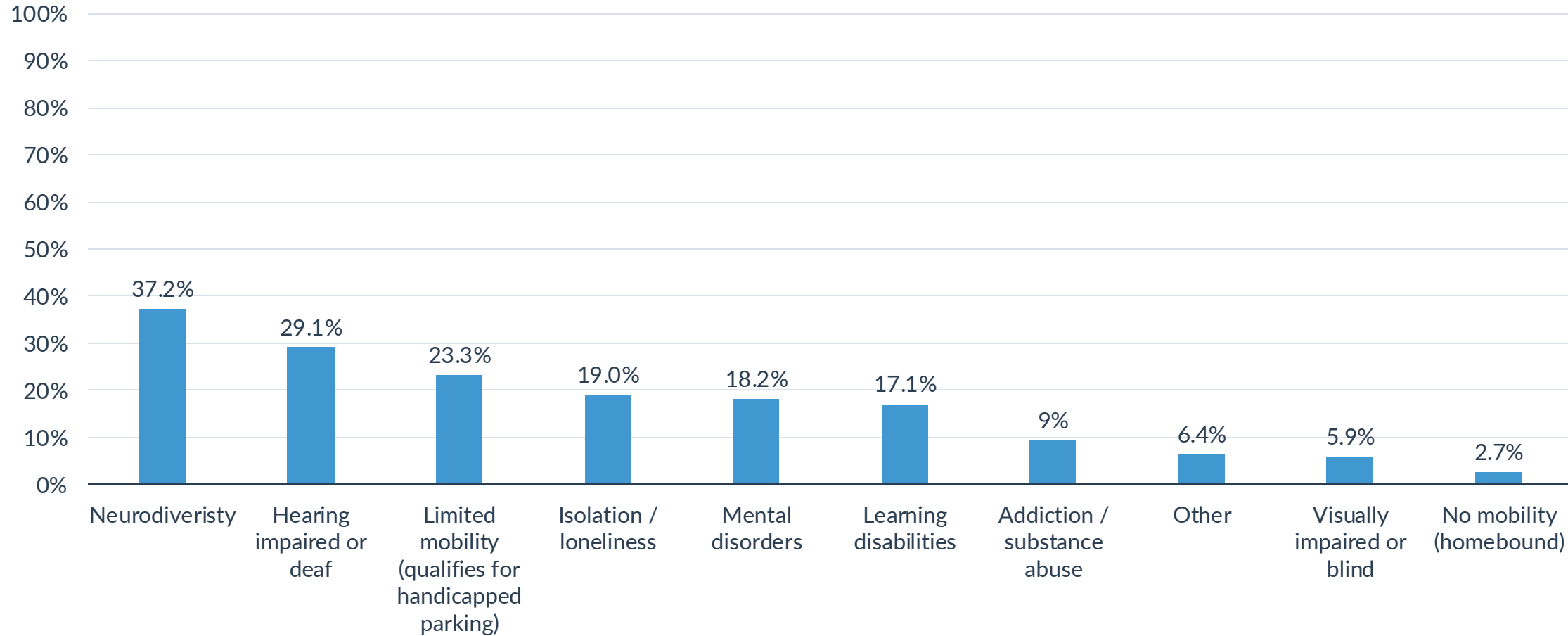
- Community Survey
- Stakeholder Survey

Language	Response Count
French	31
German	8
Tagalog	3
Cantonese	3
Arabic	1
Dutch	3
Farsi (Persian)	1
Finnish	1
Italian	4
Russian	2
Hindi	2
Greek	3
Haitian Creole	1
Hebrew	2
Mandarin	2
Japanese	1
Korean	1
ASL	1
Punjabi	1

DISABILITIES

Do you, or the people you reside with, have any of the following conditions?
(Check all that apply)

Community Survey
 Stakeholder Survey

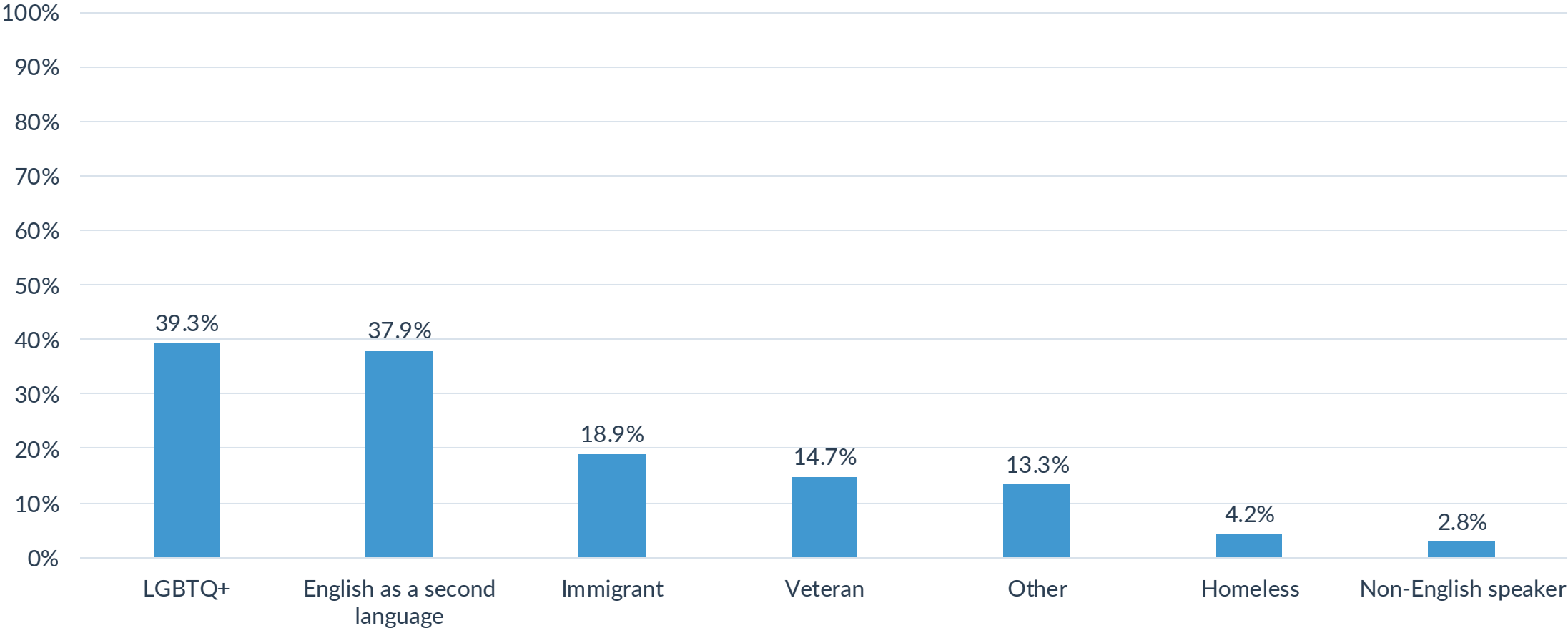


n = 374

OTHER DEMOGRAPHIC GROUPS

Community Survey
 Stakeholder Survey

What other groups do you, or the people you reside with, belong to?
(Check all that apply)



n = 285

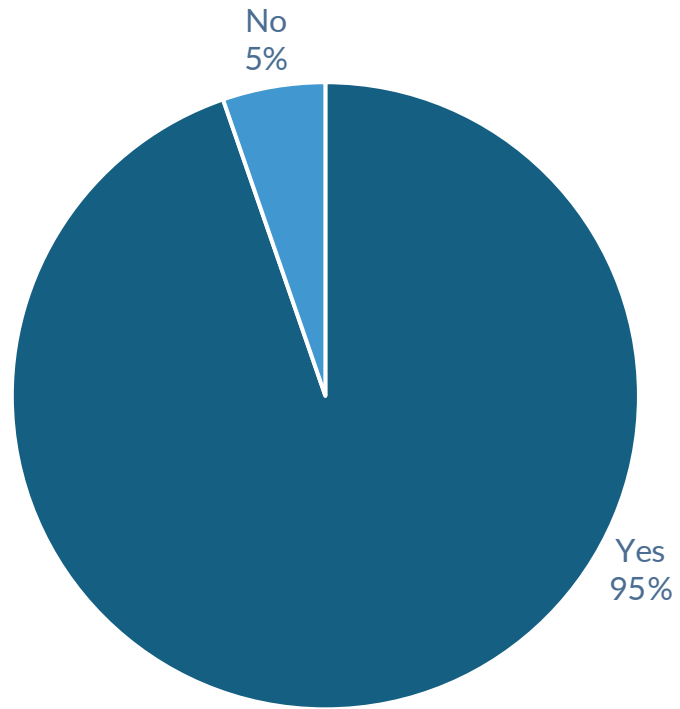
Survey Results Library Use

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RESPONDENT LIBRARY USE

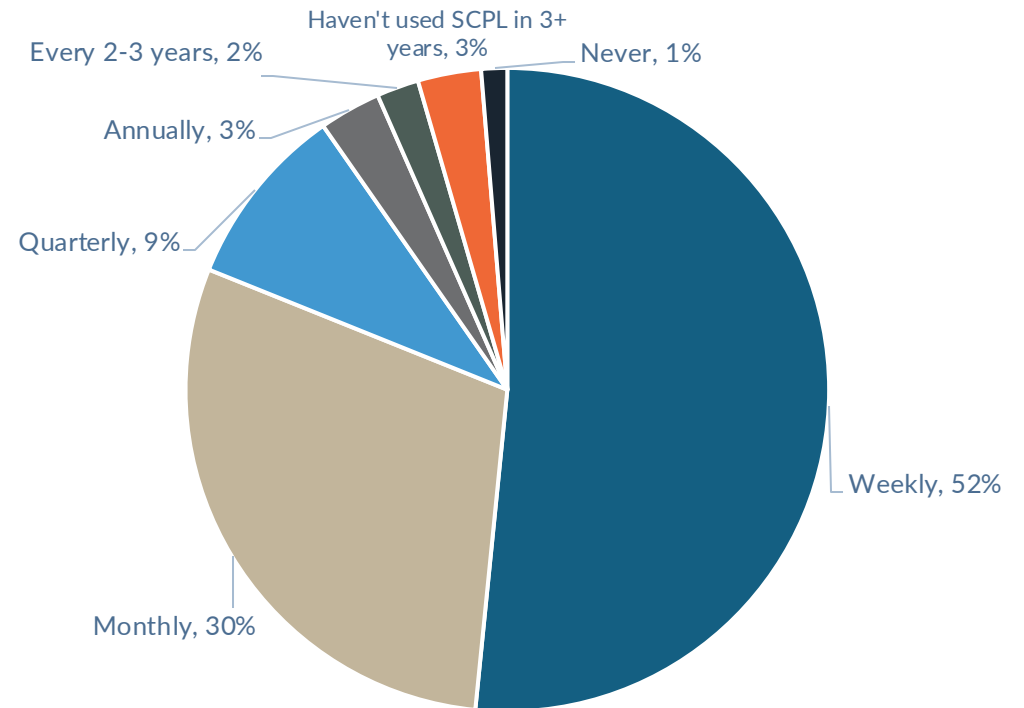
- ☑ Community Survey
- ☐ Stakeholder Survey

Library Card?



n = 1,209

Libraries Use Frequency



n = 1,227

REASONS FOR LOW VISIT FREQUENCY

- Community Survey
- Stakeholder Survey

Why don't you use the Libraries more frequently?

(Only asked of those who visited the library annually or less frequently.)

Reason	Response Count, %
I do not have the time	35 (32)
I use my own technology	32 (29%)
Other reasons (29 write ins)	32 (29%)
Visiting the libraries doesn't cross my mind	30 (27%)
I prefer to buy and own my materials	20 (18%)
My children are grown	19 (17%)
I am an 'online' user of the libraries	16 (14%)
The libraries don't have the books and materials I want	14 (13%)
I don't need library materials, programs, or services	13 (12%)

Reason	Response Count, %
Safety concerns	11 (10%)
I use a non-Santa Cruz library	11 (10%)
Loan times are too short	6 (5%)
Libraries' locations are not convenient	6 (5%)
I have limited transportation	6 (5%)
Libraries' building are not welcoming (one or more locations)	3 (3%)
Libraries are too noisy or distracting	3 (3%)
Staff isn't welcoming	2 (2%)

Highest reasons for not visiting SCPL

n = 111

Survey Results

Net Promotor Score®

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NET PROMOTOR SCORE®

- Community Survey
- Stakeholder Survey

How likely are you to recommend SCPL to a friend or colleague?

Groups	Count	NPS
Library Cardholders	1,136	70.8
Library Non-Cardholders	63	11.1
Female	712	78.6
Male	173	61.3
Ages 11 - 14	8	62.5
Ages 15 - 18	14	78.6
Ages 19 - 24	15	66.6
Ages 25 - 34	70	68.6
Ages 35 - 44	172	76.1
Ages 45 - 54	133	73.6
Ages 55 - 64	111	74.8
Ages 65 - 74	197	74.6
Ages 75+	170	84.1
English as a second language	107	74.8
Non-English speaker	8	87.5
Homeless	12	58.4
Overall	1,231	68.1

Groups	Count	NPS
Immigrant	54	77.7
LGBTQ+	112	73.2
Veteran	40	75.0
American Indian or Alaska Native	23	73.9
Native Hawaiian or Pacific Islander	4	100
Black or African American	14	28.6
Asian	49	67.4
Indigenous	12	75.0
Spanish, Hispanic, Latine Origin	93	76.4
White	754	76.9
Limited Mobility	85	77.7
No Mobility (homebound)	8	75.0
Mental disorders	67	71.6
Neurodiversity	138	74.7
Visually impaired or blind	22	77.3
Overall	1,231	68.1

Below Mean

Mean (+/- 2.5%)

Above Mean

- Community Survey
- Stakeholder Survey

NET PROMOTOR SCORE®

How likely are you to recommend SCPL to your constituents?

Library Role	Count	NPS
Staff	96	74
Administration	3	100
Community Organization Leader	13	92
Government Leader	2	100
Overall	115	77

SERVICE TO DEMOGRAPHIC GROUPS

How is SCPL's service to these various demographic groups?

- Community Survey
- Stakeholder Survey

Groups	Unacceptable (1)	Poor (2)	Acceptable (3)	Good (4)	Excellent (5)	Response Count	Composite Score
Young Families	0%	0%	11%	50	39%	72	4.13
School age families	0%	1%	7%	33%	29%	70	4.15
Working families	1%	10%	42%	29%	12%	65	2.95
Teens	5%	18%	39%	31%	8%	67	2.93
Collage age / early career	2%	17%	45%	26%	11%	65	2.89
Millennials (Ages 29-44)	2%	5%	36%	45%	13%	62	3.55
Gen X (Ages 45-60)	0%	0%	27%	46%	27%	63	3.98
Baby Boomers (Ages 61-79)	0%	0%	17%	46%	36%	69	4.14
Silent Generation (Ages 80+)	0%	5%	23%	48%	23%	64	3.82
Homeless	0%	15%	37%	35%	13%	68	3.18
Limited income / no income	1%	10%	33%	32%	23%	69	3.45
Middle Income	0%	0%	17%	43%	31%	67	4.04
Affluent	0%	1%	19%	42%	39%	65	4.12
White / Caucasian	0%	3%	11%	44%	42%	66	4.14
Hispanic or Latino	6%	28%	35%	22%	9%	65	2.85
African-Amerian	2%	26%	35%	21%	16%	57	2.86
Asian	2%	31%	35%	20%	13%	55	2.83
Other races	0%	34%	34%	16%	16%	44	2.60
Immigrants	4%	38%	29%	18%	11%	55	2.67
Non-English speaker	7%	47%	29%	11%	7%	62	2.88
LGBTQ+	0%	2%	18%	50%	30%	66	4.06

n = 92

LIBRARY LOCATION SATISFACTION

Community Survey
 Stakeholder Survey

Please rate your satisfaction of the Libraries' locations you're familiar with

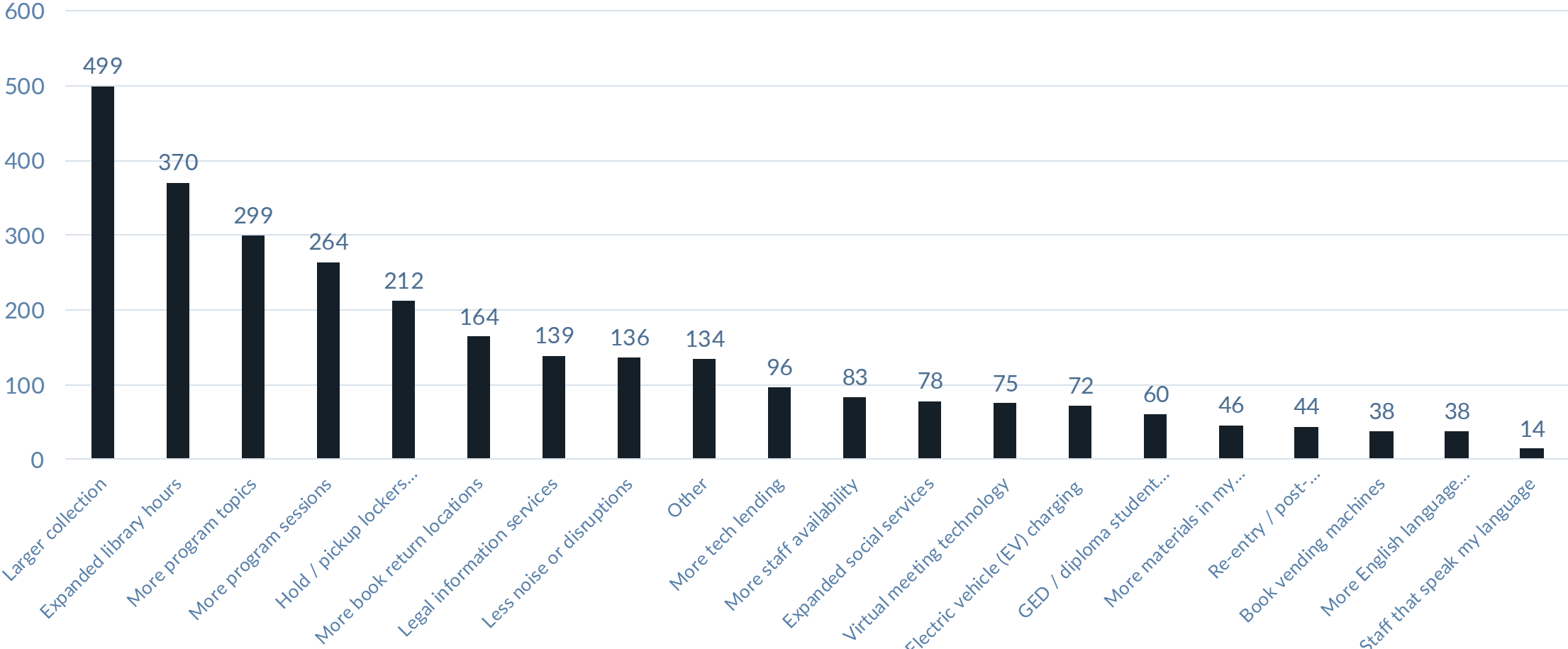
Location	Satisfaction 1-5 Stars	Responses
Aptos	4.5	507
Bookmobile / library outreach visits	3.9	124
Boulder Creek	4.2	159
Branciforte	4.3	301
Capitola	4.5	575
Downtown	3.7	586
Felton	4.5	345
Garfield Park	4.1	245
La Selva Beach	4.3	239
Live Oak	4.5	347
Live Oak Library Annex at Simpkins Swin Center	3.8	149
Scotts Valley	4.5	433
Online	4.3	543

Survey Results Desired New Items

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DESIRED NEW ITEMS

Which new items, if available, would cause you to use the Libraries more frequently?



n = 879

DESIRED NEW ITEMS

Which new items, if available, would cause your constituents to use the Libraries more frequently?

Potential New Items	Percent (%)	Response Count
Legal information services	57%	51
More tech lending	56%	50
Expanded social services	51%	45
Larger collection	50%	44
More English language learning / ESL	45%	40
Less noise or disruptions	40%	36
Expanded library hours	40%	36
GED / diploma student support	40%	36
More staff availability	36%	32
Reentry / post-incarceration services	36%	32
More program topics	33%	29
More non-English materials	29%	26
Staff that speak my language	29%	26
Hold / pickup lockers available 24/7	28%	25
Virtual meeting technology	24%	21
Electric vehicle (EV) charging	20%	18
More program sessions	19%	17
More book return locations around the community	18%	16
Book vending machines	14%	12

n = 89

OTHER DESIRED SERVICES

- Community Survey
- Stakeholder Survey

Are there any additional materials, programs, or services, not mentioned above, that would benefit your constituents?

A full-time social worker with connections to city and county services. At least once a shift, this service would either provide a service to patrons or help library staff manage patron interactions.

The greatest thing that we can do for our constituents is to partner with the County of Santa Cruz' Social Services Department to have regular office hours held by real social workers and caseworkers... It would not only benefit our constituents, but also our overburdened staff.

Meeting rooms are in continuous demand, there is still a great need for tech tutoring among older patrons,

Digital navigation and literacy.

Tech help in Spanish at more locations, and bookmobile.

We could always use more hotspots because there is a great need for internet in the community

More printers. Circulating e-readers (specifically Kobos because they integrate with Overdrive w/ no need for an Amazon account).

Collaboration between City & County Behavioral Health and other mental health support services to support unhoused/struggling population.

Early literacy programs for vulnerable communities.

Spaces & activities including the neurodivergent; more accessible library spaces

Survey Results Community Concerns

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SANTA CRUZ AREA CONCERNS

What do you think are the two or three most important issues facing the Santa Cruz region?

Housing & Cost of Living

- Lack of affordable housing for low/middle income families
- Rising rents are forcing families and young people out

Homelessness & Social Service

- [Connect unhoused residents with information and resources](#)
- [Mixed views on the library as a social service hub](#)

Jobs & Workforce Development

- Few high-paying local jobs
- [Need for training, AI preparedness, and economic opportunity](#)

Education & Access to Information

- [Support for libraries as a learning and resource center](#)
- [Protect access to information and literacy programs](#)

Infrastructure & Transportation

- Overdevelopment, traffic congestion, weak public transportation
- Insufficient bike/pedestrian safety

Environment & Climate

- Climate change impacts (fires, floods, droughts)
- Desire for stronger environment protections

Community & Governance

- [Social division, safety, and civic engagement concerns](#)
- Calls for transparency, inclusion, and local connection

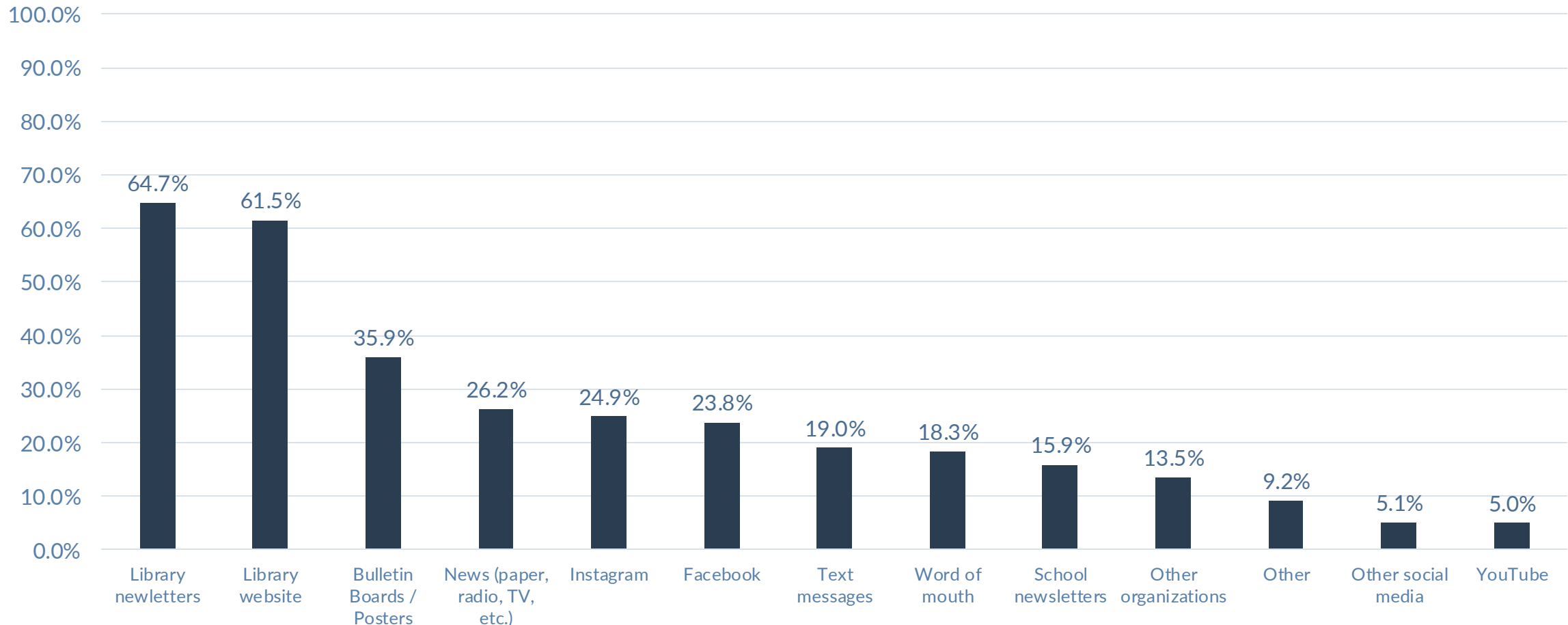
BLUE ITEMS are potential areas that SCPL could impact.

Survey Results Communication Channels

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EFFECTIVE COMMUNICATION CHANNELS

What are good ways to let you know about the Libraries' upcoming activities & events?



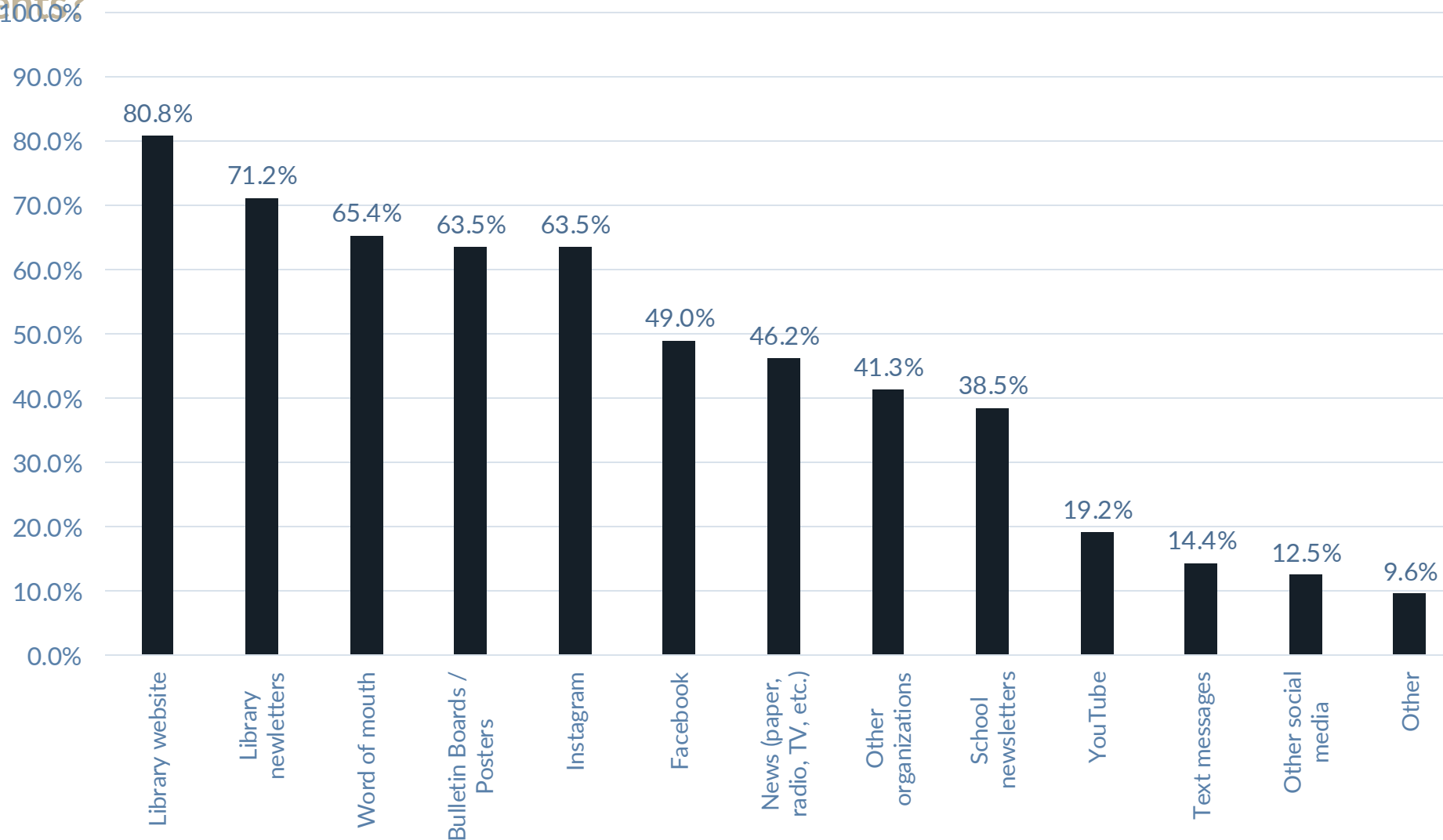
COMMUNICATION CHANNEL SATISFACTION

Rate your satisfaction with the communication channels you selected above

Communication Channel	Unsatisfied (1)	Neutral (2)	Satisfied (3)	Response Count	Composite Score
Bulletin Boards / Posters	0.8%	8.9%	19.8%	356	2.77
Library newsletters	0.2%	3.6%	10.0%	168	2.87
Library website	1.7%	14.5%	36.3%	632	2.76
News (paper, radio, TV, etc.)	1.7%	7.1%	11.8%	250	2.66
Other organizations	0.7%	4.5%	4.8%	121	2.58
School newsletter	1.7%	4.5%	3.6%	118	2.49
Text messages	1.2%	4.6%	5.8%	140	2.61
Word of mouth	1.0%	5.6%	8.4%	181	2.64
Facebook	1.3%	7.8%	8.3%	208	2.60
Instagram	2.1%	7.1%	7.5%	201	2.54
YouTube	0.6%	1.2%	1.1%	35	2.64

EFFECTIVE COMMUNICATION CHANNELS

What are good ways to let your constituents know about SCPL's upcoming activities & events?



Other Social	Count
TikTok	7
LinkedIn	1
Next Door	2
Snapchat	1

n = 104

SATISFACTION OF COMMUNICATION CHANNELS

Rate satisfaction with the communication channels you selected above on behalf of your constituents

Communication Channel	Unsatisfied (1)	Neutral (2)	Satisfied (3)	Response Count	Composite Score
Bulletin Boards / Posters	0.0%	23.6%	31.8%	61	2.57
Library newsletters	1.8%	16.4%	46.4%	71	2.72
Library website	9.2%	16.5%	47.7%	80	2.53
News (paper, radio, TV, etc.)	6.3%	14.4%	11.7%	36	2.13
Other organizations	3.7%	17.4%	6.4%	30	2.06
School newsletter	6.4%	12.7%	3.6%	25	1.94
Text messages	2.8%	3.7%	2.8%	10	2.00
Word of mouth	1.8%	18.0%	35.1%	61	2.67
Facebook	3.6%	16.2%	15.3%	39	2.29
Instagram	6.3%	21.6%	16.2%	49	2.23
YouTube	3.6%	10.0%	0.9%	16	2.05

COMMUNICATION SUGGESTIONS

How could the Libraries' communication to you be improved?

- Community Survey
- Stakeholder Survey

TIMELY & TRANSPARENT COMMUNICATION:

- Provide advance notice for events, meetings, and programs so patrons can plan ahead
- Maintain an up-to-date public calendar with all Board, LAC, JPA, and LFFA meetings
- Send event reminders via text or email shortly before programs begin
- Enable opt-in text messages or push notifications for selected programs
- Ask patrons to choose their preferred communication method (email, text, print, etc.)

EMAILS & NEWSLETTERS:

- Keep monthly e-newsletters as a core channel; include quick links to events and highlights.
- Write shorter, visually appealing newsletters divided by interest or branch.
- Feature staff recommendations, new arrivals, and community stories for engagement.
- Send targeted updates instead of mass emails to reduce overload
- Ensure newsletter frequency is consistent (monthly or biweekly)
- Allow patrons to subscribe by interest or age group (children, teens, adults, seniors)
- Offer branch-specific newsletters with relevant local events

WEBSITE & APP IMPROVEMENTS:

- Make the library website and app easier to navigate, especially for events and classes
- Create a filterable calendar by branch, date, and topic that's accessible on mobile
- Highlight surveys, newsletters, and updates more prominently on the homepage
- Improve the search function and ensure event information is accurate and current

SOCIAL MEDIA AND ONLINE PRESENCE:

- Expand use of Instagram, Threads, Bluesky, and Facebook for wider reach
- Create more engaging and visual content, including videos, staff spotlights and new book features
- Collaborate with local influencers, schools, and organizations to share posts
- Ensure events are announced early and easy to find on all platforms

COMMUNITY & TRADITIONAL OUTREACH:

- Promote events through local newspapers, school newsletters, and radio stations (e.g., Sentinel, Lookout, KAZU)
- Use digital reader boards, posters, and bulletin boards inside and outside branches
- Attend community events and fairs to raise awareness of library services
- Partner with Friends groups and local clubs to spread information

Survey Results Materials

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MATERIALS SATISFACTION

Rate your satisfaction with SCPL's various offerings

- Community Survey
- Stakeholder Survey

	Unfamiliar	Unsatisfied	Neutral	Satisfied	Responses
Physical materials	13.8%	3.8%	14.3%	68.2%	1,090
Online materials & services	28.4%	3.4%	16.0%	52.2%	1,090
Children's programs	55.7%	1.1%	10.7%	32.5%	1,090
Teen programs	75.5%	1.0%	10.7%	12.8%	1,090
Adult programs	44.8%	2.0%	12.9%	40.3%	1,090
In-person services	55.3%	0.6%	10.0%	34.0%	1,090
Technology offerings	61.2%	1.7%	11.0%	26.1%	1,090

n = 1,090

"Unfamiliar" was the default answer

MATERIALS SATISFACTION

Rate your constituent's satisfaction with SCPL's various offerings

	Unfamiliar	Unsatisfied	Neutral	Satisfied	Responses
Physical materials	14.2%	4.9%	10.8%	71.6%	102
Online materials & services	21.6%	3.9%	21.6%	52.9%	102
Children's programs	22.5%	0.0%	13.7%	63.7%	102
Teen programs	32.4%	10.8%	34.3%	22.5%	102
Adult programs	15.7%	1.0%	20.6%	62.7%	102
In-person services	26.5%	2.9%	17.6%	52.9%	102
Technology offerings	25.5%	8.8%	25.5%	40.2%	102

n = 102

"Unfamiliar" was the default answer

MATERIALS COMMENTS

Comments about the Libraries' various offerings (synthesized - 1 of 2)

PROGRAMS AND EVENTS

Book Clubs and Reading Programs:

- More book clubs, including branch-specific and evening options
- Shorter wait times for book club sets
- Encourage intergenerational reading – sharing classics and long-loved titles, especially Downtown

Children and Family Programs:

- More weekend and afternoon story times for working families
- Expanded preschool and homeschool-friendly programming
- Maintain and promote strong summer reading and early literacy programs
- Continue popular programs like Minecraft, VOX books, and bilingual story times

Educational and Skill-Building Programs:

- More adult learning: tech help, digital literacy, language learning, sign language, financial literacy, job search skills
- Broaden arts, crafts, and maker programs (including for adults)
- Add wellness classes such as yoga or tai chi, and environmental education
- More author talks, lectures, and local history sessions

COLLECTIONS AND RESOURCES

Books and Digital Media:

- More physical books (children's, large print, new releases)
- Expanded Libby and audiobook selection; shorter holds; more Lucky Day titles
- Quicker purchasing of new and popular titles; respond to patron requests
- Maintain access to print magazines, DVDs, and CDs
- Promote Link+ / Interlibrary Loan more visibly in catalog searches

Special Collections and Tools:

- Broaden the Library of Things (puzzles, games, kitchen items, tools)
- Adult access to 3D printing and makerspace tools
- More genealogy, historic newspapers, and local history access

TECHNOLOGY AND ACCESSIBILITY

Digital Access and Tools:

- Offer Libby 101 / Tech Help sessions in English and Spanish
- Improve website search and mobile app performance
- Standardize printing and scanning processes across branches

MATERIALS COMMENTS

Comments about the Libraries' various offerings (synthesized - 2 of 2)

FACILITIES AND ENVIRONMENT

Improving Library Spaces:

- More Sunday and evening hours
- Address branch disparities in collections and programming
- Create welcoming spaces for families, teens, and seniors
- Improve parking and accessibility at Downtown and Capitola branches

Café and Social Spaces:

- Add coffee or snack areas where patrons can read or work.
- Support comfortable seating, quiet rooms, and flexible meeting spaces.

COMMUNITY SUPPORT AND SERVICES

Support Services:

- Continue or expand Project SCOUT, Veterans' services, and social worker access
- Offer resources for food security, post-incarceration, and senior support
- Improve collaboration with schools, parks, and social agencies for outreach

GENERAL FEEDBACK

Positive Feedback and Support:

- "Love all the creative classes and story times – we're lucky to have so much."
- "The staff are always so helpful and friendly."
- "I consider current offerings to exceed my needs – the library is a community treasure."
- "I didn't know about half of what's offered – now I'm excited to explore."
- "Stay out of politics and just keep being a great library."

OTHER DESIRED MATERIALS

Are there any additional materials, programs, or services, not mentioned above, that would benefit your constituents?

SOCIAL SERVICES & COMMUNITY SUPPORT:

- Strong need for on-site social workers and partnerships with County services
- More outreach for unhoused, seniors, and vulnerable patrons
- Requests for clearer conduct policies and safety presence

ACCESS & SPACES:

- Ongoing parking issues; desire for more study rooms and inclusive spaces
- Bring back the bookmobile with more stops

TECHNOLOGY & DIGITAL ACCESS:

- High demand for tech help and digital literacy
- Need for more hotspots, printers/scanners, and expanded e-resources

PROGRAMS & LEARNING:

- Expand language, literacy, and seed library programs
- Interest in English conversation groups, DIY/repair workshops, and local history

STAFF CAPACITY:

- More bilingual staff and consistent training to meet community needs

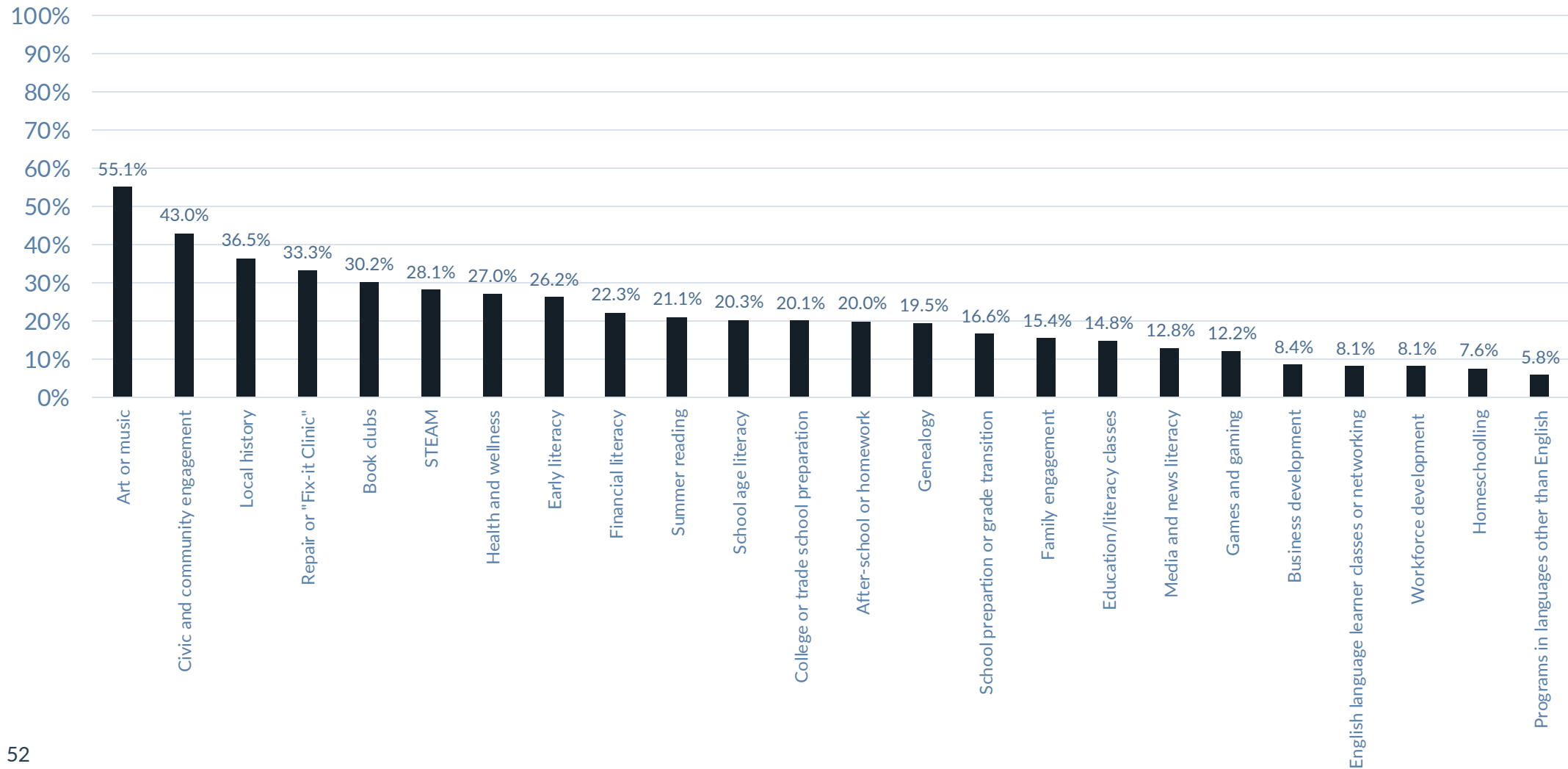
Survey Results Programs

bâton | global

NEW PROGRAMS OF INTEREST

What additional program topics or sessions interest you?

- Community Survey
- Stakeholder Survey



DESIRED ADDITIONAL PROGRAM TOPICS

What additional program topics or sessions would interest your constituents?

Additional Program Topic	%
Health and wellness	96.8%
Financial literacy	90.3%
Book clubs	74.2%
Civic and community engagement	61.3%
Repair or “Fix-it Clinic”	61.3%
After-school or homework programs	54.8%
Summer reading	54.8%
Local history	54.8%
Art or music	51.6%
Early literacy	45.2%
STEAM (Children)	45.2%
After-school or homework programs	45.2%
College / trade school preparation	41.9%
Genealogy	41.9%

Additional Program Topic	%
English language learner	41.9%
Games and gaming	38.7%
Media or news literacy	38.7%
Workforce development	35.5%
STEAM (Teen)	35.5%
Programs in other languages	32.3%
Family engagement	29.0%
Media and news literacy	29.0%
Homeschooling	29.0%
School age literacy	29.0%
School preparation or grade transition	29.0%
Education / literacy classes	25.8%
Summer reading (Teen)	25.8%
Business development	16.1%

n = 31

OTHER PROGRAMS OF INTEREST

What program sessions or topics, not mentioned above, would interest you?

Nature, Environment, & Gardening:

- Native plant gardening and small-space gardening programs
- Workshops on organic gardening, permaculture, and sustainable living
- Birding, hiking, and “Nature RX” (nature and wellness) programs
- Talks on environmental stewardship, climate resiliency, geology, and local ecosystems
- Herbal medicine, mushroom foraging, and fire resiliency workshops

Educational and Skill-Building

- Language learning and literacy programs (English, Spanish, French, sign language)
- Adult literacy and Spanish literacy classes for native speakers
- Technology and computer literacy sessions, including phone, tablet, and internet use
- Coding, AI, and digital design (e.g., AutoCAD, Adobe, 3D printing)
- Financial literacy, business management, and entrepreneurship classes
- Civic engagement and local government information sessions

Arts, Writing, & Culture:

- Writing and poetry groups, author talks, and local author spotlights.
- Book clubs, including genre-specific and multilingual book clubs.
- Cultural exchange events and international-themed programs.
- Art and crafting workshops (painting, sewing, soap making, candle making)
- Music, dance, and film appreciation programs.

Health & Wellness:

- Meditation, mindfulness, yoga, qigong, and gentle senior exercise classes
- Workshops on self-improvement, decluttering, feng shui, and home organization
- Mental health awareness, social connection, senior well-being programs, aging in-place
- Emergency preparedness Technology tutoring for all ages, including seniors
- Workshops on using library e-resources (eBooks, audiobooks, streaming)
- Digital literacy and safe internet use
- Access to creative software and maker technology
- Expansion of “library of things” and digital access resources

Children, Teens, & Families:

- After-school homework help and early literacy programs
- Storytimes, family game nights, and intergenerational activities
- Parenting programs and discussion groups
- Workshops for kids and teens on reading, creativity, and volunteering
- Homeschool-friendly science and educational sessions

OTHER DESIRED PROGRAMS

Are there any additional materials, programs, or services, not mentioned above, that would benefit your constituents?

Social Workers & Partnerships:

“A full-time social worker with connections to city and county services.”

“Partner with the County of Santa Cruz’ Social Services Department to have regular office hours held by real social workers and caseworkers.”

Access to Materials & Technology:

“Our patrons are always asking for more lucky day titles...unsatisfied with the waitlists for digital items.”

“We could always use more hotspots because there is a great need for internet in the community.”

Space & Amenities:

“More private spaces, study rooms, kids’ playgrounds, places to eat/drink coffee. Free and spacious parking at all branches. Reading rooms around the county.”

“Bookmobile back in action and with more stops...Parking availabilities in downtown and Capitola may benefit the constituents.”

Programs & Community Engagement:

“Early literacy programs for vulnerable communities.”

“More one-on-one services like tech help, job/resume help, etc...better advertising the services we already offer like reference and research help.”

Staff & Operational Support :

“We feel we need to ensure staff are well-trained across the board...Our constituents deserve competent service and capable staff at all times.”

“Stricter Code of Conduct, police presence...how would we deal with people keeping stuff in lockers? Could be drugs, explosives, who knows?”

Survey Results Facilities

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FACILITIES SATISFACTION

Rate your satisfaction with the facilities at SCPL

- Community Survey
- Stakeholder Survey

	APT	BCK	B40	CAP	DNT	FEL	GAR	LSB	LIV	SCV
Children area	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Teen area	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Adult area	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Charging locations	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Comfortable seating	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Computers	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Copiers	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Printers	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Scanners	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Parking, auto	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Parking, cycle	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Parking, EV chargers	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Parking, handicap	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Restrooms	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Rooms, community	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Rooms, conference	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Rooms, study	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Self-checkout stations	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
WiFi	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
3D Printer	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

- = Unfamiliar
- = Unsatisfied
- = Neutral
- = Satisfied

FACILITIES COMMENTS

Comments about SCPL's facilities by branch

APTOS

Overall: Beautiful, welcoming, community-oriented space; friendly staff and engaging displays

Strengths:

- Art & puzzles, clean environment, smooth pickups, valued meeting rooms, strong community feel

Challenges:

- Noise: Contain noise in children's & teen areas with glass walls or enclosures
- Access: Low shelving, awkward parking entrance, limited handicap spots
- Tech: Slow Wi-Fi, finicky self-checkouts, confusing copier/scanner setup
- Rooms: More study/meeting rooms, longer reservations, better ventilation
- Design: Safer kids' doors, cleaner toys, more child-friendly shelving

Suggestions: Add charging station, gender-neutral restroom, small tables, piped music, tool library

BOULDER CREEK

Overall: Clean, comfortable, well-maintained, and appreciated remodel; Staff frequently praised as friendly, kind, helpful, and professional

Strengths:

- Inviting atmosphere, good community room offerings, convenient layout

Challenges:

- Reserving Rooms: Unclear process for reserving/using community rooms
- Event Parking: Limited parking during events

Suggestions: Clarify room reservation process and find a solution to tight parking during events

FACILITIES COMMENTS

Comments about SCPL's facilities by branch

- Community Survey
- Stakeholder Survey

BRANCIFORTE

Overall: Attractive, modern neighborhood branch with friendly staff but limited collections and functional issues after remodel

Strengths:

- Welcoming design, natural light; Clean, peaceful, & helpful staff; Nice patio and children's area

Challenges:

- Collections: Reduced adult and teen books, small selection
- Rooms: Poor soundproofing, limited privacy, awkward rules
- Access: Parking confusion, limited bike parking, no Sunday hours
- Maintenance: Occasional odors, hard-to-clean furniture
- Design: Overly large children's area, underused community room

Suggestions: Expand book collections; Improve study room privacy and booking; Add bike parking and cleaner furnishings; Enhance community use and add greenery

CAPITOLA

Overall: Bright, friendly, and well-used community hub with excellent staff and children's programming, but limited parking, small collections, and facility upkeep issues.

Strengths: Exceptionally kind and helpful staff; Inviting design and outdoor spaces; Engaging kids' activities and programs; Popular meeting rooms and community use

Challenges:

- Collections: Fewer popular titles, confusing shelving, limited Spanish and children's materials
- Facilities: Leaking fountain, unclean restrooms, tight parking lot, unsafe Wharf Road exit
- Space: Few cozy reading/study areas, limited room reservations
- Design: High ceilings, low shelving, feels short on books

Suggestions: Expand book and Spanish-language collections; Add more study/reading spots and outdoor seating; Improve restroom maintenance and fix water fountain; Enhance parking safety and traffic flow; Offer more author talks, art/wellness classes, and Sunday hours

FACILITIES COMMENTS

Comments about SCPL's facilities by branch

DOWNTOWN

Overall: Beloved, heavily used hub with excellent staff and strong programs; community is split on the new facility's design/location and wants a better balance of books, meeting space, and safety/comfort.

Strengths: Caring, helpful staff; long-time loyal users; Robust programs (story time, music), tech/printing, Link+; Civic value: welcoming public space, broad services

Challenges:

- Design/Location: aesthetics, "sterile" feel, fewer books
- Safety/Comfort: behavior outside, bathrooms, cleanliness
- Access: limited parking/bike parking, no short-term pickup, limited evening/Sunday hours
- Collections/Tech: long e-waitlists, app/website UX, Kindle support
- Space Needs: more meeting rooms; protect genealogy/local history

Suggestions: Extend hours and add meeting rooms; improve safety, cleanliness, and restrooms; provide short-term parking and more bike racks; expand print and Spanish-language collections; upgrade digital tools and signage; add greenery and warmth to design; increase cultural, wellness, and social-service partnerships

FELTON

Overall: Beloved community hub with caring staff, strong children's programs, and creative resources; patrons seek more books, extended hours, and adult programming.

Strengths: Friendly staff and welcoming atmosphere; Popular story times, VOX books, and family programs; State park passes and Library of Things valued; Beautiful setting and Discovery Park connection

Challenges:

- Limited evening/weekend hours
- Small adult collection; long holds on "Things"
- Underused partnership with adjacent park
- Inconsistent staff engagement
- Limited outreach to schools and older students

Suggestions: Expand hours and adult programming; Increase book variety, large print, and VOX inventory; Coordinate programs with Discovery Park; Strengthen school outreach and library card drives; Offer more weekend events for families; Add name badges and more visible staff presence

FACILITIES COMMENTS

Comments about SCPL's facilities by branch

GARFIELD PARK

Overall: Small but well-loved neighborhood branch with strong staff support and a solid collection systemwide; patrons want more books, teen programs, and visibility for events

Strengths: Helpful staff and reliable hold/request system; Diverse materials and digital tools (Libby, Kanopy, Link+); Popular music and cultural programs (Munching with Mozart, Jazz); Good access to local history materials

Challenges:

- Fewer books after remodel; limited browsing
- Few teen and senior programs
- Low awareness of events and offerings
- Some tech inconsistencies between branches
- Limited Library of Things inventory

Suggestions: Expand print and teen collections; Increase senior and after-school programming; Improve event promotion and outreach; Standardize printing/tech use across branches; Host author talks and cultural events; Grow Library of Things (tools, creative kits)

LA SELVA BEACH

Overall: Small but highly valued neighborhood branch with exceptional staff and a friendly atmosphere; patrons appreciate its accessibility and community feel but want more comfortable seating and a bit more space for reading and display

Strengths: Warm, helpful, and knowledgeable staff; clean, quiet, and beautifully redesigned facility; reliable hold system; strong community engagement through book clubs, puzzles, and the READ program

Challenges:

- Limited comfortable seating and adult reading areas
- Minimal teen space and study options
- Limited book display and shelving accessibility (especially lower shelves)
- Visibility issues for group presentations due to screen placement and glare
- Low awareness of programs or offerings online

Suggestions: Add more comfortable seating near windows; create or enhance a teen/study area; improve layout for displays and technology; provide clearer online promotion of events and services; consider small amenities like coffee or a flyer kiosk; continue excellent staff service and community programming

FACILITIES COMMENTS

Comments about SCPL's facilities by branch

LIVE OAK/LIVE OAK LIBRARY ANNEX

Overall: Active, community-centered branch; patrons value interlibrary loan and tech help but want more books, programs, and deeper tech engagement

Strengths: Reliable interlibrary loan and request systems; solid digital services (Libby, Kanopy, Hoopla); appreciated tech help and facility updates; responsive to feedback

Challenges:

- Reduced physical collections (arts, crafts, travel, language, children's)
- Limited awareness and promotion of offerings
- Few adult, teen, and senior programs
- Shallow tech and maker resources
- Short weekend/evening hours

Suggestions: Rebuild book collections; expand arts, crafts, and tech programs; invest in maker tools (3D, laser, craft cutters); extend open hours; improve outreach and balance resource allocation

SCOTTS VALLEY

Overall: Modern, high-traffic branch valued for its accessibility, printing services, and variety of programs, though many patrons are unaware of the full range of offerings. Families and adults alike appreciate the space but want more weekend, adult, and technology learning opportunities

Strengths: Reliable printing, Wi-Fi, and outlets; welcoming study space; popular genealogy and creative programs; strong interlibrary loan and Link+ access; accessible computers without requiring a card

Challenges:

- Limited awareness and visibility of classes, passes, and programs
- Few weekend story times of adult arts/crafts workshops
- Limited access to 3D printing or tech training for adults and seniors
- Long wait times for audiobooks and e-books
- Noise in children's area and lack of clear behavioral guidance
- Computers used for gaming distracting from study areas

Suggestions: Improve promotion of available programs and resources; expand weekend and adult offerings (art, crafts, writing, technology); add 3D printer access and classes for all ages; offer more support for seniors learning technology; enhance quiet study areas and clarify conduct expectations; consider adjusted open hours for family access

Survey Results Recommended Goals

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RECOMMENDED GOALS FOR THE LIBRARIES

What goals, if any, would you recommend SCPL set for the next 2-5 years? (1 of 3)

SERVICE EXPANSION AND COMMUNITY SUPPORT

Services for Unhoused Patrons:

- Hire on-site social workers and strengthen partnerships with local agencies
- Provide trauma-informed training for staff and establish clear protocols for crisis situations
- Maintain clean, safe, and welcoming spaces at all branches, especially downtown

Community Outreach and Inclusion:

- Expand bookmobile and mobile tech services to reach underserved and rural areas
- Collaborate with schools, churches, and local organizations to connect residents with library resources
- Continue serving as a liaison between community partners and patrons

DIVERSITY, EQUITY, AND INCLUSION

Language Access and Cultural Representation:

- Hire more bilingual and multilingual staff, especially Spanish-speaking employees
- Offer opportunities for current staff to improve language proficiency
- Increase Spanish-language programs and materials.

Inclusive Programming and Staffing:

- Develop more diverse programs, including those for queer youth and BIPOC communities
- Resume EDI initiatives to recruit, retain, and promote staff who reflect community demographics
- Ensure all spaces and programs are welcoming and culturally responsive

RECOMMENDED GOALS FOR THE LIBRARIES

What goals, if any, would you recommend SCPL set for the next 2-5 years? (2 of 3)

PROGRAMS AND PATRON EXPERIENCE

Teen and Adult Engagement:

- Create dedicated teen spaces and expand programming for young adults
- Offer more programs for adults ages 25–45 that are not family-centered and held outside of 9–5 hours
- Build partnerships with schools to engage teens in library activities and study spaces

Core Library Services:

- Refocus on collection development, literacy, and customer service rather than one-off programs
- Strengthen the Collection Management Services team to meet community and technical needs
- Preserve adequate space for materials and collections in all branches

STAFF DEVELOPMENT AND RETENTION:

Workforce Investment:

- Increase pay, benefits, and career advancement opportunities to retain talent
- Develop a more stable staffing model to reduce burnout and support professional growth
- Provide time and resources for ongoing training and development

Communication and Leadership:

- Promote transparency between management and frontline staff
- Encourage leadership visibility and engagement at the branch level
- Foster teamwork and collaboration between departments and branches

RECOMMENDED GOALS FOR THE LIBRARIES

What goals, if any, would you recommend SCPL set for the next 2-5 years? (3 of 3)

FACILITIES AND ACCESS

Building and Space Design:

- Prioritize comfortable, functional spaces for patrons and staff
- Include dedicated areas for children, teens, and quiet study
- Prepare for the new downtown library with improved staff spaces and community areas

Access and Hours:

- Increase open hours, including evenings and Sundays
- Ensure equitable access to services across all regions of the county

MARKETING AND COMMUNICATION

Branding and Outreach:

- Improve marketing and communication to raise awareness of library services
- Enhance social media presence and outreach to schools and community groups
- Develop cohesive systemwide branding and messaging for all branches

Survey Results Final Suggestions

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FINAL SUGGESTIONS

- Community Survey
- Stakeholder Survey

Do you have any final suggestions or comments for the SCPL? (1 of 3)

ACCESS & FACILITIES:

- Need for better parking (especially Capitola); consider short-term or drive-through pickup
- Extend open hours and maintain safe, quiet, welcoming spaces
- Design new downtown branch with warmth, greenery, and accessible layout

COLLECTIONS & RESOURCES:

- Preserve strong physical collections alongside digital growth
- Add more copies and holds capacity on Libby; shorten wait times
- Protect and highlight local history and genealogy materials

PROGRAM & OUTREACH:

- Expand senior and teen programs; more hands-on, social, and creative events
- Increase school outreach, tech training, and adult learning (AI, finance, digital skills)
- Continue arts, music, and intergenerational offerings

STAFF & CULTURE:

- Staff widely praised—ensure competitive pay and consistent welcoming service
- Clarify library's role: community hub vs. social service center
- Promote neutrality, transparency, and strong internal communication

FINAL SUGGESTIONS

Community Survey
 Stakeholder Survey

Do you have any final suggestions or comments for SCPL? (2 of 3)

MISSION & FOCUS:

- Need for clearer role definition: library vs. social service hub
- Focus on core services and avoid overextension; do fewer things well
- Balance innovation with foundational priorities (books, hours, collections)

COMMUNICATION & CULTURE:

- Internal communication breakdown; need for transparency and mutual respect
- Promote a culture of collaboration, respect, and shared purpose

STAFFING & RESOURCES:

- Persistent understaffing, burnout, and low morale
- Calls for competitive wages and stable staffing to sustain quality service

EQUITY & INCLUSION:

- Emphasis on empathy and equity for staff and patrons
- Ensure nonpartisan, inclusive programs and collections

FINAL SUGGESTIONS

Do you have any final suggestions or comments for SCPL? (3 of 3)

PARTNERSHIPS & COMMUNITY ROLE:

- Encourage collaboration with other agencies rather than duplication of services
- Libraries seen as potential connectors and conveners in the community network

FACILITIES & OFFERINGS:

- Support for bike parking, maker spaces, and a stronger Library of Things.
- Ongoing appreciation for renovations, meeting rooms, and adult programs

POSITIVE FEEDBACK:

- “Thank you for the services you all provide! And the care shown to all different community members and agencies”
- “For me, it’s always fun partnering with the library for different events. Let’s do more of the same.”
- “I love the renovations and the community experience. The use of meeting rooms is also a huge convenience. Thank you for all the great work you are doing!”
- “In recent years I am noticing more adult programs that interest me, which is great.”
- “Keep up the good work – libraries play a vital role in addressing the literacy crisis.”

FOCUS GROUPS RESULTS

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FOCUS GROUP INTRODUCTION

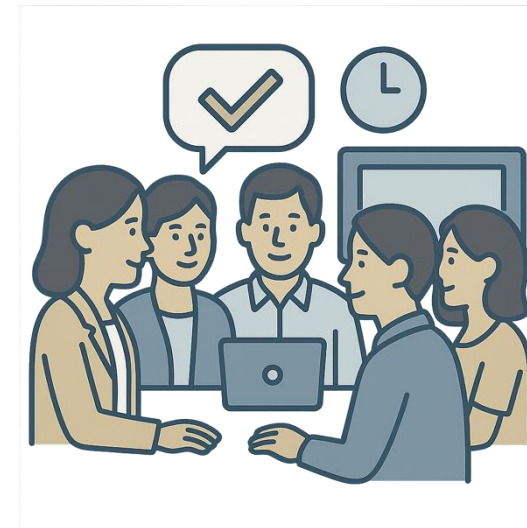
Purpose

To confirm and enrich the findings from earlier surveys and interviews, Bâton Global (B|G) conducted a series of focus groups with community members, library partners, Friends, and staff. These sessions helped validate quantitative results and deepen qualitative insights through open discussion and shared perspectives.

Methodology

Ten focus groups were held, engaging 102 participants across the SCPL community. The focus groups were held both virtually and in-person at four branches and one at Housing Matters. Each 60-minute session followed a consistent protocol to ensure comparability. The discussions emphasized openness and respect, and participants were encouraged to build upon one-another's answers.

Participants were guaranteed the sources of comments would remain anonymous. With participant consent, all sessions were recorded for B|G's internal analysis only.



FOCUS GROUP THEMES (1 of 5)

The Library as a Community Anchor and “Third Place”

Across all groups, participants described SCPL as one of the last remaining **inclusive public spaces** — a place to connect, learn, and belong **without expectation or cost**.

- Patrons praised **friendly, compassionate staff** who foster a sense of safety and trust.
- Many view the library as a **“third space”** — not home or work, but a community hub for social and intellectual engagement.
- Recent **renovations** and modern facilities were celebrated as beautiful, accessible spaces that reflect civic pride and investment in the public good.
- For some, particularly unhoused patrons, the library is one of the few remaining places of **dignity and respect**, where they feel seen and safe.

“It’s a humanity issue. People are becoming disconnected from each other—losing empathy.”

Inclusion, Equity, and Connection

Participants emphasized that the library’s role in **fostering inclusion and belonging** must remain central. However, they also noted gaps:

- **Spanish-speaking and immigrant communities** in some regions (e.g., south SC County; the mountains) are underserved. Signage, outreach, and programming often remain English-centric.
- **Youth, teens, and marginalized groups** sometimes feel that the library isn’t “for them.”
- Calls for **diverse programming, cultural representation, and volunteer-led activities** (e.g., yoga, community cleanups, or arts showcases) reflect a strong desire for **connection across social lines**.
- Many saw opportunities for the library to partner more deeply with schools, social-service agencies, and cultural organizations to strengthen inclusion and equity.

FOCUS GROUP THEMES (2 of 5)

Accessibility and Hours

One of the most consistent themes was a desire for **extended and more flexible hours**:

- Working adults and families struggle to visit when branches close early; many called for **one late evening per week** and **Sunday openings**.
- Some urged alignment of library hours with **community rhythms** (e.g., farmers markets, after-school schedules).
- Convenience features such as **hold lockers** and improved parking were also mentioned as ways to improve access. “Even just that extra hour, open until six, would be amazing for folks.”

Safety, Social Services, and Compassionate Boundaries

Participants acknowledged the **complex social realities** that libraries face — particularly serving unhoused and vulnerable populations.

- Many see SCPL as a **safe refuge**, while staff and patrons also expressed concern over safety and mental-health incidents in branches.
- There was consensus that the library should **strengthen partnerships** with **social-service providers**, not take on their full role.
- Ideas included regular visits from **social workers, benefits navigators, or legal aid partners**, establishing **clear expectations and consistent safety protocols**, and emphasizing **non-criminalizing approaches**.
- Homeless focus group members emphasized that **mutual respect leads to shared responsibility** — when people are treated with dignity, they tend to protect and care for the space. “When you’re treated well, you act better. People don’t trash the bathrooms because they feel ownership.”

FOCUS GROUP THEMES (3 of 5)

Focus, Prioritization, and Identity

Many participants — particularly staff and long-time users — expressed concern that SCPL is trying to do too much.

- They described an “**identity crisis**” leading to a diluted focus.
- There is a call for SCPL to **clarify its purpose**: balancing innovation and programming with the **core library mission** of literacy, learning, and access to information.
- Several suggested returning emphasis to **collections, reference, and reader engagement**, with programming that complements — not overshadows — those fundamentals.

“I wish SCPL could look in the mirror and say: we are enough. We don’t have to do every program under the sun.”

Staff Communication, Collaboration, and Organizational Health

Internally, staff discussions revealed systemic **communication challenges** and structural friction.

- Information flow is often inconsistent — staff at different levels receive uneven updates, creating frustration.
- Perceptions of **silos and inequities** between roles (e.g., librarians, library assistants, managers) limit collaboration.
- Branch culture varies widely: some teams thrive, others report toxicity or low morale.
- Participants advocated for **clearer internal communication, regular all-staff meetings, and more transparent decision-making** to strengthen cohesion and trust.

FOCUS GROUP THEMES (4 of 5)

Marketing, Awareness, and Visibility

A widespread concern was that **many residents don't know what the library offers.**

- Participants praised innovative services — such as the **Library of Things**, meeting rooms, and digital platforms — but said these are underpromoted.
- Community members urged stronger storytelling about SCPL's role as a hub for **free resources, technology access, learning, and wellness.**
- Improved **signage, outreach campaigns, and partnership-based marketing** (e.g., with schools, clinics, and local events) were recommended.

“Libraries are an indicator of community health — but many people still don't know what's available.”

Lifelong Learning, Technology, and Evolving Needs

Participants consistently framed the library as a **lifelong learning engine** — but one that must evolve:

- Growing demand for **technology help**, including **AI literacy**, smartphone skills, and digital safety.
- Support for **seniors navigating technology.**
- Continued investment in **digital collections** (eBooks, audiobooks).
- Desire for **intergenerational programs** and activities that connect youth, adults, and elders — from teen mentoring to travel storytelling nights.
- Recognition that while digital use is rising, **in-person experiences** still drive community connection and discovery.

FOCUS GROUP THEMES (5 of 5)

Community Collaboration and Contribution

Participants across groups wanted more ways to **co-create** the library experience:

- Volunteer programs, civic projects, and partnerships that empower community ownership of the library's mission.
- Examples included **Homeless Arts & Crafts fairs, student job-assistance programs, vulnerable patron volunteers with a path towards paid positions, and intergenerational mentoring.**
- The emphasis was on collaboration – not simply consumption – as the foundation for a thriving library ecosystem.

PEER LIBRARY ANALYSIS

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Peer Library Analysis Introduction

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PEER LIBRARY STUDY INTRODUCTION

Purpose

To aid in the development of Santa Cruz Public Libraries' (SCPL) strategic plan, comparably sized libraries exhibiting strong performance were surveyed to self-identify the reasons for their success and gather their perspectives on what lies ahead.

Methodology

The Institute of Museums and Libraries (IMLS) public library survey data was analyzed to identify top-performing libraries. Libraries serving populations between ~125K and 500K and libraries located in the Bay Area were scanned.

Circulation, library visits, and program attendance were analyzed to identify top-performing libraries, on a per-capita basis, for inclusion in the study. Twenty-one libraries were identified as good matches for a peer comparison with Santa Cruz Public Libraries. (p6)

The directors of the 21 libraries were contacted and asked to share their reasons for success and provide miscellaneous advice via a survey. Fourteen libraries, including SCPL, participated in the survey.

Directors responded to two key questions:

1. What do you believe are the primary reasons for your library's success? (p20)
2. In roughly five years, how do you believe your library will be different? (p24)

To aid directors in thinking strategically, they were presented with a list of common library services (e.g., physical collection, programming, social services offerings, etc.) and asked if these areas are growing or contracting. (p16)

As an added benefit to SCPL, directors were asked to volunteer their lessons learned on seven miscellaneous topics of special interest to SCPL (e.g., supporting digital patrons, marketing, etc.). (p30)

Peer Library Analysis

Peer Library Participants

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PEER LIBRARY COMPARISON

2022 Institute for Museums and Library Services (IMLS) Dataset

LIBRARY	ST	2022 POPULATION	2022 CRDHLDS (per capita)	2022 VISITS (per Capita)	2022 PROGRAM ATTEND. (per 100 Capita)	2022 PHYSICAL CIRC. (per Capita)	2022 TOTAL CIRCULATION (per Capita)
BERKELEY PUBLIC LIBRARY	CA	124,563	1.1	4.5	20.1	11.2	17.4
GLENDALE LIBRARY, ARTS & CULTURE	CA	193,116	1.5	2.1	12.0	3.8	4.6
MONTEREY COUNTY FREE LIBRARIES	CA	227,900	0.4	1.2	2.6	1.6	1.9
SAN LUIS OBISPO CITY-COUNTY LIBRARY	CA	249,545	0.3	1.7	6.1	7.1	8.3
SAN MATEO COUNTY LIBRARIES	CA	273,808	0.8	3.4	51.2	7.9	10.5
SANTA CRUZ PUBLIC LIBRARIES	CA	215,895	0.8	1.3	9.3	5.4	7.5
SANTA MARIA PUBLIC LIBRARY	CA	156,909	0.3	0.9	5.8	1.9	2.3
SONOMA COUNTY LIBRARY	CA	482,404	0.5	1.9	13.9	5.0	7.4
NAPERVILLE PUBLIC LIBRARY	IL	149,540	0.4	5.8	43.1	18.3	21.7
HOWARD COUNTY LIBRARY SYSTEM	MD	325,690	0.7	3.2	49.5	12.4	14.9
ANN ARBOR DISTRICT LIBRARY	MI	177,696	0.4	5.1	23.2	27.8	31.5
CHARLESTON COUNTY PUBLIC LIBRARY SYSTEM	SC	408,235	0.4	2.0	11.6	3.8	6.4
SALT LAKE CITY PUBLIC LIBRARY SYSTEM	UT	200,478	0.5	3.8	13.8	8.9	12.6
HENRICO COUNTY PUBLIC LIBRARY	VA	328,999	0.8	3.3	13.2	7.0	10.1

CALIFORNIA PEER LIBRARY COMPARISON

2024 California Public Library Dataset

LIBRARY	ST	2024 POPULATION	2024 CARDHOLDERS (per capita)	2024 VISITS (per Capita)	2024 PROGRAM ATTEND. (per 100 Capita)	2024 PHYSICAL CIRC. (per Capita)	2024 TOTAL CIRCULATION (per capita)
BERKELEY PUBLIC LIBRARY	CA	125,327	1.3	5.6	55	11.4	22.2
GLENDALE LIBRARY, ARTS & CULTURE	CA	191,586	0.8	4.8	41	5.6	10.0
MONTEREY COUNTY FREE LIBRARIES	CA	230,383	0.9	4.0	18	2.7	4.8
SAN LUIS OBISPO CITY-COUNTY LIBRARY	CA	247,562	0.6	4.4	53	13.3	21.8
SAN MATEO COUNTY LIBRARIES	CA	273,370	0.9	13.5	204	19.1	38.6
SANTA CRUZ PUBLIC LIBRARIES	CA	211,540	1.5	6.3	40	11.2	22.0
SANTA MARIA PUBLIC LIBRARY	CA	158,856	0.3	1.8	12	2.5	4.5
SONOMA COUNTY LIBRARY	CA	478,152	1.9	11.4	128	21.8	45.2

Peer Library Analysis Key Findings

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PEER LIBRARY KEY FINDINGS

Library Service Use Trends



Hot & Expanding Services

- Meeting and study rooms
- Children's programming
- Digital collections
- Partnerships
- Library of things



Dying & Contracting Services

- Reference services
- CD/DVD collections
- Internet computers
- Genealogy

PEER LIBRARY KEY FINDINGS (1 of 3)

Drivers of Success

1. Deep Community Engagement

- **Active listening and co-creation:** Libraries build relationships beyond surveys, embedding themselves in the community and involving residents in shaping services.
- **Community-driven priorities:** Programs and services begin and end with community ideas and aspirations.
- **Strong public support:** Widespread community appreciation for literacy and both traditional and innovative library services provides a solid foundation.

2. Exceptional Staff and Service Culture

- **Passionate, talented, and motivated teams:** Staff take pride in their role as service providers, connectors, and space creators.
- **Customer-first mindset:** High-quality, consistent customer service is a hallmark.
- **Retention and low turnover:** Stability among staff fosters institutional knowledge and relationships.

PEER LIBRARY KEY FINDINGS (2 of 3)

Drivers of Success

3. Sustainable and Independent Funding

- **Stable revenue streams:** Dedicated property and sales tax funding, along with grant support, ensure long-term planning and innovation.
- **Independent governance:** Structures like Joint Powers Authorities (JPAs) allow for financial autonomy and protection from competing budget priorities.

4. Facilities, Technology, and Access

- **Modern, appealing spaces:** Renovations, study rooms, and meeting spaces address real community needs.
- **Technological upgrades:** High digital circulation rates, strong Wi-Fi access (including 24/7 availability), and resource-sharing across systems.
- **Convenient amenities:** Gathering spaces, entertainment resources, and public Wi-Fi provide essential community services.

PEER LIBRARY KEY FINDINGS (3 of 3)

Drivers of Success

5. Innovation and Adaptability

- **Data-driven decision making:** Regular public engagement helps guide strategic focus.
- **Willingness to experiment:** Libraries try new services, programs, and outreach models.
- **Flexible organizational culture:** Openness to change allows for quick responses to evolving community needs.

6. Partnerships and Outreach

- **Collaborative initiatives:** Partnerships with community groups and organizations broaden reach.
- **Embedded services:** Taking library services outside traditional walls increases visibility and use.

PEER LIBRARY KEY FINDINGS (1 of 3)

What's Anticipated in the Next Five Years?

1. Deeper Community Integration & Partnerships

- Many directors see libraries becoming **more community-led and community-centered**, with stronger connections to diverse populations.
- **Partnership expansion** with schools, colleges, nonprofits, and social service organizations (e.g., United Way) to provide wraparound services like social work, health resources, and financial assistance.
- Serving as **connectors across differences** and conveners for civic dialogue on pressing local issues.
- More **embedded services** within communities, especially in underserved and remote areas.

2. Enhanced Outreach & Access

- Improving access is a key theme, especially for those who cannot easily reach library branches.
- **Mobile and remote services:** more bookmobiles, book lockers, vending machines, and “library outposts” in underserved regions.
- Targeted outreach to **specific groups** such as migrant farm laborers, multilingual learners, and those facing housing or food insecurity.
- Increased **direct delivery services** like “Books by Mail.”

PEER LIBRARY KEY FINDINGS (2 of 3)

What's Anticipated in the Next Five Years?

3. Digital Growth & Technological Improvements

- Libraries anticipate a significant shift toward digital engagement.
- Anticipation that digital users will make up the **largest share of usage statistics**.
- **Expanded digital collections** and electronic materials.
- Stronger **digital services**: improved websites, digital cards, better search/discovery tools, and tailored marketing to digital users.

4. Flexible & Evolving Physical Spaces

- Many directors envision library spaces shifting away from book storage toward **community use**.
- **Flexible, multi-purpose spaces** to accommodate varied patron needs.
- Renovations and new construction to modernize facilities, improve teen areas, and open new branches.
- Designing spaces for **co-location of other community resources**.

PEER LIBRARY KEY FINDINGS (3 of 3)

What's Anticipated in the Next Five Years?

5. Program & Service Adaptation

- More emphasis on **literacy programs** and traditional library services.
- Potential **reduction in certain programs** (crafts, recreational) and materials (DVDs, periodicals) due to shifting usage patterns.
- Sustained focus on **youth services** alongside increased engagement with teens and young adults.
- Adjusting programming to meet changing needs and budget realities.

6. Sustainability & Operational Efficiency

- Directors note the need for **sustainable funding and staffing models**.
- Operational efficiencies to support service expansion without proportional staff growth.
- Defined staffing structures to improve accountability, morale, and deliverables.
- Awareness of **budget challenges** impacting programming capacity.

Peer Library Analysis Trends Of Common Services

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Use Trend of Common Library Services

Service	Dying	Decreasing	Steady	Increasing	Hot	Count	Avg.	Comments
Study rooms (1-4 people)	0	0	3	3	8	14	4.4	• Increased demand but not much space
Programming for children	0	0	1	7	5	13	4.3	
Digital collection (eBooks, eAudiobooks, databases, testing resources, online tutoring, Ancestry.com, etc.)	0	0	2	7	5	14	4.2	
Meeting rooms (6+ people)	0	0	4	3	7	14	4.2	• Increased demand but not much space
Library of things (ukuleles, museum passes, etc.)	0	0	2	5	4	11	4.2	
Library Partnerships	0	0	2	7	4	13	4.2	
Social services coordinators	0	0	1	4	2	7	4.1	
Feeding programs (USDA programs, snacks, food pantry distribution, etc.)	0	0	2	3	2	7	4.0	

Use Trend of Common Library Services

Service	Dying	Decreasing	Steady	Increasing	Hot	Count	Avg.	Comments
Programming for adults	0	0	4	5	4	13	4.0	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Focus on older adults Some of this driven by community-led programming
Social Services (mobile medical, veterans resources, etc.)	0	1	1	5	2	9	3.9	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Agencies are stressed and underfunded
Programming, non-English	0	0	4	6	2	12	3.8	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> State library ESL grant helped
Bookmobiles	0	0	4	3	2	9	3.8	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 3 mobile units
Programming for teens	0	2	1	8	2	13	3.8	
Library social media services (Facebook, Instagram, TikTok)	0	0	6	6	2	14	3.7	
Outreach & homebound services	0	0	4	9	0	13	3.7	
Literary services	0	2	4	4	3	13	3.6	
School/class visits	0	1	7	5	1	13	3.4	

Use Trend of Common Library Services

Service	Dying	Decreasing	Steady	Increasing	Hot	Count	Avg.	Comments
Website	0	1	7	5	1	14	3.4	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> We want to drive patrons to our website; however, many just use the catalog and platforms such as Libby
Technology lending	0	2	5	5	1	13	3.4	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> We ended our program
Student ID based library cards	1	0	4	4	0	8	3.2	
Job search services	1	1	8	2	1	13	3.1	
Physical collection (books, audiobooks, etc.)	0	4	7	2	1	14	3.0	
Exam Proctoring	0	0	8	0	0	8	3.0	
Genealogy	1	3	4	2	1	11	2.9	
Internet Computers	0	5	7	2	0	14	2.8	
CDs & DVDs	1	4	7	1	0	13	2.6	
Reference services	1	7	3	2	0	13	2.5	

Peer Library Analysis Drivers Of Success

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REASONS FOR SUCCESS

What do you believe are the primary reasons for your library's success?

What do you believe are the primary reasons for your library's success?

Four reasons: Our passion is never idle. We never rest on our laurels. We engage, listen to, and co-create with our community. We go beyond surveys and listening sessions - we are in relationship with those we serve. We not only promote lifelong learning, we ourselves are lifelong learners. We deeply believe in our library's ability to uplift and connect everyone in our community. Our passion is consistently actionable. We believe our community knows what's best for them. We begin and end with their ideas and aspirations. We ideate, initiate, celebrate, analyze, and begin the cycle again.

The 201x referendum, backed by broad public support, enabled transformative expansion, modernization, and technological upgrades. Rapid population growth our county created sustained demand for library services and more importantly, provided the community imperative for the referendum in the first place.

The community generally highly values literacy and library services, both traditional and experimental. We are lucky to have such a strong foundation of community support.

Listening to our community members, embedded in our communities, stable and strong funding, independent joint powers of authority structure, flexible, innovative, adaptable organizational culture.

REASONS FOR SUCCESS

What do you believe are the primary reasons for your library's success?

What do you believe are the primary reasons for your library's success?

We are well funded, with both dedicated property tax and sales tax revenues. As a joint powers library, we do not compete with other county departments for general fund revenues. We are well staffed, with a good retention rate and low turnover, and our staff provide a very high level of customer service. We also have an excellent marketing and social media team who maintain our visibility around the County. We also share an ILS with other counties, increasing access to their collections as well. Our digital circulation is quite high -- we are xth in the state of California in Libby usage, and Link+ is also highly successful for us.

We enjoy a very active and supportive patron base, especially among long-time residents. Bookable study rooms and meeting rooms have been hugely popular since our renovations, indicating we tapped into a definite need in our area. Our staff are not just creative and flexible, they hold their role in their local communities with pride as a provider of service, connection and space. Our county is one of the most expensive places to live in the United States, out costing even much of Silicon Valley. Many locals rely on their libraries for entertainment (books, digital media and programs), gathering space, free wifi, etc.

REASONS FOR SUCCESS

What do you believe are the primary reasons for your library's success?

What do you believe are the primary reasons for your library's success?

Great staff and customer service. Willingness to try new services and programs. WiFi 24/7. Passionate FOL groups--12! Robust suggest a title program; we fulfill the majority of items requested

Talented motivated staff; very supportive local government; attractive, progressive facilities; appealing programming and robust services; healthy budget; and great community and Regional support.

We strategically focus on our collection of books and materials and regularly engage with our public to collect information on what they want from the Library.

We place a big emphasis on outreach, community partnerships, and community embedded library services. With these three pillars, we have seen library use steadily increase as awareness of and access to our services has expanded.

Dedicated staff; grant funding; supportive community that loves the library

Independence of Governance and mindset. Financial acumen, strong management, care for staff, ideas and capacity to implement them.

Stable budgeting structure, robust local support, excellent staff.

Peer Library Analysis Next Five Years

bâton | global

CRYSTAL BALL

In roughly five years, how do you believe your library will be different?

In roughly five years, how do you believe your library will be different?

We are making great strides toward the following, which will be achieved within 5 years: Our library will be even more community-led, and therefore, even more reflective of our beautifully diverse community. We'll utilize more of our physical space for people and less for book stacks. Our engagement with teens (13-17) and emerging adults (18-29) will be on par with our engagement with children and families. Already a key partner in education alongside our public school system and community college, our library will be recognized (in policy, funding, and community awareness) as essential to early learning and kindergarten readiness with emphasis on families with unique circumstances (homes headed by a single parent/caregiver, foster families, families experiencing food/housing insecurity, families with one or multiple children with special needs, and multilingual learners). Our library is already a community favorite, and still, our community will note an elevated sense of belonging and welcome (in our spaces and when engaging with us) and increased connectivity and belonging in our community.

Hopefully, much stronger digital services, including an improved website as well as enhancements like digital cards and more seamless search capabilities/discoverability. Hope to create more study room opportunities at least in the central Library. Hope to invest in/explore more pop-up outreach services.

CRYSTAL BALL

In roughly five years, how do you believe your library will be different?

In roughly five years, how do you believe your library will be different?

We will have established a formal partnership with United Way to provide wrap-around services, such as social work, financial assistance, and health resources, that complement our core library offerings. This partnership will allow us to serve the whole person, not just the reader, and to meet our patrons where they are with compassionate, coordinated support. Additionally, all our library buildings will be either newly constructed or fully renovated, completing the vision set forth by a voter referendum.

We will focus on services and programs with meaningful impact, build and refresh our spaces and continue to adapt to the changing needs of our residents

In five years, our library will be more radically community-focused and centered. This will include an expansion of our partnership and collaboration capacity, a rethinking of our library spaces to include collocation of other community resources, and a broadening of our collection development philosophy. It will also include a growth in our library's capacity to serve as a relational connector across different sectors in the city and a convener to address those issues most pressing within the communities we serve.

CRYSTAL BALL

In roughly five years, how do you believe your library will be different?

In roughly five years, how do you believe your library will be different?

We are trying to find ways to increase access to our collections, whether that is through automation (we are putting in automated sorters at several branches) or 24/7 book lockers. I would like to expand locations or outreach to more remote and underserved areas of the county where access to libraries is limited. Our branches are primarily located along the highway corridor, and I would like to have "library outposts" or small book vending machines in areas of the county where there is no library service. We would like to have a second bookmobile, but that is contingent on adequate staffing. At this time, our staff cannot grow in size due to cost, so we will have to find operational efficiencies to enable this to happen.

Growth of literacy program. More focus on conventional/traditional library services. Growth of direct outreach services like Books by Mail. Fewer 'craft' and 'recreational' programs. Fewer desktop computers. Fewer DVD/BluRays. Less periodicals. Even greater YS department programs/collections.

We will likely have far more electronic materials.

CRYSTAL BALL

In roughly five years, how do you believe your library will be different?

In roughly five years, how do you believe your library will be different?

We will have more sustained and sustainable outreach services to constituents who cannot easily reach our branches, especially in parts of the county which employs a large percentage of migrant farm labor. We will better tailor marketing and services to digital users, who will likely make up the highest percentage of usage stats. Our staffing structure will be more defined to achieve our goals, create pathways for opportunity, and have stronger accountability embedded throughout - helping contribute to more achievable deliverables and better morale. We will be known as a premier strategic partner among local government and nonprofit agencies and organizations, working together to best serve our shared constituencies.

Even more digital services and expectations; continually improved facilities with updates to two outgrown teen areas; even more recognition of libraries as informational hubs and physical gathering places and of our ability to connect people and ideas and amplify important messaging to the public. We are doing well and moving in a positive, exciting direction, helping others however we can. I hope that always remains the same over time.

We are facing what will likely be a challenging budget over the next few years. Programming may decrease accordingly just due to staff capacity.

CRYSTAL BALL

In roughly five years, how do you believe your library will be different?

In roughly five years, how do you believe your library will be different?

The Library will continue to respond to and represent community needs, so the changes we see will reflect that. My hope is that we will see more community embedded services, an expanded outreach program, new collections, and flexible physical spaces to allow for varied patron use.

Formats and fads come and go, the Library is always providing value for its patrons. Hopefully, we'll be in the middle of constructing a new downtown library.

At a minimum, two more branch libraries will be open. More communities want bookmobile stops. Local libraries will serve more widespread functions in their communities.

Peer Library Analysis Topics Of Interest

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À LA CART INSIGHTS

Supporting Digital Patrons

Does your library have unique tactics for engaging digital patrons?

No – an area for improvement.

Robust and early increased investment in digital resources, especially eAudio and eBooks. Unique partnerships with new and evolving vendors, Fable bookclubs, etc.

We use Bibliocommons as our discovery layer to help patrons find content in our databases and e-media platforms that they might like.

It sells itself. We have moved away from Hoopla because we cannot afford the volatility and growth of 'pay-to-play' services.

Nothing beyond promoting these collections in tech-connect programs and on social media. I think this is an area we could learn from others.

Ebook demand is high here. We have a strong web presence, active social media, and e-newsletters.

Probably not unique--we do offer lessons on how to use digital collections and advertise through our digital newsletter and social media.

We continue to offer completely virtual programming such as author talks and book clubs. These are offered through third party vendors.

We refuse to participate in pay per click licenses. We have a direct licensing program for independent media that works the way people expect online content to work instead of the ebook nightmare.

Our library offers online programs of our own creation and design (on YouTube). Online participation in Summer Reading Club. Ability for patrons to ask questions via web form, chat, or email.

À LA CART INSIGHTS

Marketing (1 of 2)

What are your library's top marketing practices for driving engagement with the community?

Social media, extremely successful email newsletter.

This past year we worked with a PR firm to invest in professional consulting and paid ads to boost marketing in our county.

We meet digital patrons online, where they are, through email messaging and social media. Our key engagement strategy is to engage people who already use the library. We market programs and services in the branches. Additionally, we use social media and paid advertising in print and on radio, Spotify, Facebook and Google.

We have a dedicated marketing person. She creates monthly newsletters with high click rates. Targeted e-blasts for programs/services have driven participation numbers up.

Our twice monthly newsletters are our primary vehicle. Social media engagement is not as robust as it could be. Our Friends organization has recently stepped up their game in promoting the library which will help us significantly in terms of getting the word out.

We have a strong web presence, active social media, and e-newsletters. We partner with many other government agencies, schools, non-profits and groups.

We've seen great ROI with our quarterly mailer to all residents. We have also changed our tactics for social media marketing to be less program based and more engaging with customers.

À LA CART INSIGHTS

Marketing (2 of 2)

What are your library's top marketing practices for driving engagement with the community?

We are working to expand marketing by adding to our social media presence.

For larger programs we use advertising in the local mall, light pole banners, and targeted print outreach for new residents and areas of the community that "under use" our services.

Our Summer Game is like a promotional laser that illuminates / incinerates anything we point it at.

For many areas, print flyers posted in the community (grocery stores, schools, coffee shops) are the best way to promote events and services. Participation in the County's weekly press briefings, which can get follow up calls from. Participation in events (job fairs, school fairs, etc.).

À LA CART INSIGHTS

Serving non-English Speakers (1 of 4)

Are there any materials, programs, or services that your library has found that are particularly effective in serving non-English speakers?

In addition to bilingual classes and signage in multiple languages (and iconography), our Project Literacy serves adult learners. The program has touched the lives of more than 12,500 students since it began in 1987. In addition to their external high school diploma, students have achieved U.S. citizenship, improved their English skills, and worked on skills to enter the workforce. Equally important, students form and strengthen community ties, further embracing the library and the county. Project Literacy also oversees Career Pathways for Immigrants, an initiative which seeks, in part, to address the more specialized workforce development needs of immigrants who have more work skills and training than traditional Project Literacy students. Among our other programs are our International Grocery Store tours. The program rotates highlighting different international cuisines. A volunteer tour guide leads a small group of participants on a tour of a local ethnic supermarket. Participants receive recipes of cultural dishes, learn what the ingredients are, and where to find them in the grocery store. Additionally, participants receive a list of resources related to that culture, including history, literature, travel information and culinary traditions.

Incorporating translated content into flyers for recurring programs in primary languages. Will explore multilingual media outreach.

Meeting people where they are at, for our strategic planning work, we visited laundromats, dollar stores, local markets, farmer markets, churches, etc.

À LA CART INSIGHTS

Serving non-English Speakers (2 of 4)

Are there any materials, programs, or services that your library has found that are particularly effective in serving non-English speakers?

1. Language Learning Resources: Mango Languages – Available both in-branch and remotely with a valid library card, Mango offers courses in numerous languages, including Spanish, English for Spanish Speakers, French, Mandarin, Italian, Japanese, Brazilian Portuguese, and even American Sign Language (ASL).
2. Bilingual & Spanish-Focused Databases: LearningExpress Library features a dedicated section tailored for Spanish speakers, offering test prep, skill-building resources, and tools in Spanish. Core Collection en Español assists librarians in developing high-quality Spanish-language and bilingual (Spanish/English) materials for all ages, complementing The Library's broader collections.
3. Early Literacy & Children's Multilingual Content: Arbordale eBooks delivers read-along storybooks in multiple languages, supporting early learners in engaging, multimodal ways. The Library Britannica Escolar Online (Spanish) provides a trusted Spanish-language encyclopedia curated for elementary-aged readers.
4. Engaging Bilingual Programming: The Library's Dial-A-Story initiative includes story recordings in Spanish, allowing patrons to dial in and listen to stories across different age categories—including one specifically in Spanish for younger listeners.
5. Inclusive Collection Building: Our Collection Development Policy expressly acknowledges cultural diversity and prioritizes selecting materials that reflect the needs and interests of the library's linguistically diverse communities.

À LA CART INSIGHTS

Serving non-English Speakers (3 of 4)

Are there any materials, programs, or services that your library has found that are particularly effective in serving non-English speakers?

We translate 100 percent of marketing and messaging materials for children and teens, and many adult programs as well into Spanish. We provide both bilingual and monolingual Spanish programming for children, teens and adults

We strive to hire more Spanish-speaking staff members in our branches. We have added more funding to acquire Spanish-language titles. For example, we purchase at the Guadalajara Book Fair every year to purchase native titles as opposed to translated ones.

We translate most promotional material but like others we suffer from a lack of Spanish speaking staff so our actual engagement with Spanish speakers is limited. Additionally many of this constituency are not able to easily visit us due to our limited hours or lack of transportation.

Our "ESL Cafes" program where people practice speaking English in an informal setting, Bilingual, "Hello", and story times in Spanish, ULG interpretation and translation service and our Mobile Library and Outreach Division is effective in serving non-English speakers at special events.

Signage, collaboration with Central Coast Literacy Council, bilingual and Spanish programs such as bilingual story time and Spanish tech help.

Ensuring we have staff who speak the languages our community speaks is the greatest asset in serving our non-English speakers.

À LA CART INSIGHTS

Serving non-English Speakers (4 of 4)

Are there any materials, programs, or services that your library has found that are particularly effective in serving non-English speakers?

Partnerships with nonprofits within the target communities. Storytimes in languages other than English. Providing premium space for tutoring and language learning activities. Honoring and programming around underserved identities year round, not just during designated heritage months.

Bilingual staff, and mandatory bilingual translation (Spanish) of vital printed materials and signs. Language Line is available instantly in all our branches if they do not have bilingual staff on site. Point and talk cards for emergency, medical, and disaster needs on site at each branch.

À LA CART INSIGHTS

Serving Seniors (1 of 3)

Are there any materials, programs, or services that your library has found that are particularly effective in serving seniors and retired individuals?

Our seniors and retired community members request to be seen and treated as the active, intelligent individuals they are. They don't want to be separated from the community (our community senior centers offer separation for those who desire it). Accordingly, our seniors and retired community members join in our offerings for adults.

Effective Services for Seniors & Retirees

1. **Books-by-Mail for Homebound Patrons:** Our Books-by-Mail service delivers books, audiobooks, music CDs, DVDs, and Blu-Ray movies directly to residents who are permanently or temporarily homebound. This ensures access for seniors who might be unable to visit branches in person.
2. **Lobby Stops at Senior Living Communities:** Through Lobby Stops, outreach staff regularly visit community locations—including senior living centers—to provide materials, programming, Reader's Advisory, and tech help onsite. This brings library services directly to where seniors live or congregate.
3. **Free Computer Classes:** We offer free computer classes through our Technology Learning Center, open to all age groups—including seniors. These classes help older adults develop digital literacy and confidence in using technology.
4. **Tax Assistance Partnership with AARP & VITA:** We host free tax preparation help in collaboration with AARP and IRS VITA at select branches. These services are especially beneficial for retired individuals navigating tax season with guidance from trusted advisors.

Computer basics/cell phone classes, rich array of adult programming.

À LA CART INSIGHTS

Serving Seniors (2 of 3)

Are there any materials, programs, or services that your library has found that are particularly effective in serving seniors and retired individuals?

We are currently experimenting with senior field trips, social activities and craft programs as well as health and wellbeing workshops are popular

Our county also has a high percentage of seniors. We find that book clubs are wildly popular with this age group and participants often participate in the same group year after year. We also host local agencies to talk about services that are of interest to seniors, such as Medi Care info, Hearing Loss Association, and UC Master Gardeners. The Computer Basics classes mentioned above are also popular with seniors who appreciate the human touch and moderate pace of the workshops (which use the PLA Digital Learn materials).

Library by Mail program works to get materials into hands of those who cannot make it into the library. We have also added Playaways as they are easier to use for non-tech savvy patrons.

This demographic is our most active and engaged, both as patrons and as volunteers/Friends. We do offer a thread of senior programming but we could do better at articulating our goals with this group. In our county, much of this population is rather affluent.

À LA CART INSIGHTS

Serving Seniors (3 of 3)

Are there any materials, programs, or services that your library has found that are particularly effective in serving seniors and retired individuals?

Our lobby stops with checkout at Senior Centers and Assisted Living facilities; technology classes and programs where we provide device tech support

We did a series on aging well with a variety of community partners to offer topics such as estate planning, scam avoidance, health care and more.

We offer a monthly "Solo Aging" course that covers different pertinent topics through a local university. We also visit senior living facilities regularly.

Making sure we have robust services for live-in senior centers and homebound seniors. Ambulatory seniors tend to do an excellent job making use of the library.

Adaptive technology (large print reader/magnifiers in some branches), mobile technology, mobile manual assistance in reading and listening (magnifiers, earbuds). Playaways are a great audio format. Library By Mail is offered free to any mailing address in the County. Demonstration equipment and the ability to register people for service with the Braille and Talking Books Library in our city. Outreach to other groups in the County through groups such as Aging and Disabilities Resource Center. Partnerships with Alliance on Aging.

À LA CART INSIGHTS

Outreach (1 of 3)

What are your library's most effective outreach methods?

Most Effective Outreach Methods

1. **Mobile & Community-Based Outreach: Pop-Up Libraries & Events** - We set up mobile outreach tables and pop-up libraries at festivals, schools, housing communities, and public parks—bringing books, library cards, and programming directly into neighborhoods. **Outreach Specialists** - Staff deliver personalized support—including library card sign-ups, digital help, and basic needs like snacks and produce—at community partner locations such as health clinics, food banks, and shelters.
2. **Books On The Go & Community Collections: Books On The Go Boxes** at bus stops and community hubs offer free, no-return-needed books to ensure access to reading materials, especially in underserved areas. **Community Collections** are maintained in partnership with local organizations to provide rotating materials for all ages in high-need locations.
3. **Home Delivery & Lobby Stops: Books-by-Mail** provides delivery of books and media to patrons who are homebound or face mobility challenges. **Lobby Stops** bring curated materials and support to senior living facilities, housing developments, and other residential sites.
4. **Dedicated Services for Youth & Families:** Outreach librarians visit schools, afterschool programs, and detention centers, offering programming and curated materials. **L2 (Limitless Learning)** gives every School District student a virtual library card, expanding their access to both physical and digital resources.
5. **Inclusive, Equity-Driven Engagement:** Bilingual services and materials are prioritized in outreach efforts, including Spanish-language storytimes, materials, and **Dial-a-Story** programming. We use equity mapping and partnerships to prioritize outreach in historically underserved communities.

À LA CART INSIGHTS

Outreach (2 of 3)

What are your library's most effective outreach methods?

This will vary by community. For us: our Racial Equity Alliance, relationship building inside and outside our branches and via our signature events, mobile units, bilingual staff, reducing barriers (incl. not requesting/collecting information we don't absolutely need). We maintain a formal, robust partnership with our public school system and Head Start classrooms that includes outreach to connect all students and their caregivers with our staff and resources.

Our library offers multiple modes of outreach. Our best-known is our mobile library, which offers books, DVDs, audiobooks, and more for all ages in English and Spanish. We visit communities in underserved areas or unincorporated parts of the county where a physical library isn't present. Additionally, we take the mobile library to visit schools, prioritizing those in rural locations and those with socioeconomically disadvantaged students. Our youth services librarians tackle schools in their library branches' service area with visits to classrooms, attendance at school events, and hosting when classes come to their library for a visit. By participating in fun community events like festivals, parades, and farmers' markets, the Library demonstrates that it is more than a building—it is a vibrant part of the community staffed with people who care about others. We also recently developed a speaker's bureau series as part of our public education plan prior to our sales tax measure appearing on the ballot. We have a PowerPoint slide deck that can be adapted for a variety of different audiences. Furthermore, our library director frequently gives presentations about the library to community groups as part of our fundraising efforts for the new our new regional library.

À LA CART INSIGHTS

Outreach (3 of 3)

What are your library's most effective outreach methods?

Working with partners, senior living facilities, and early learning centers to provide direct service rather than showing up at "catch-all" events like Farmers' Markets. It is focused outreach.

Our bookmobile is popular but to date is limited in its reach due to staffing. Our most impactful outreach is to the 4 local jails with books and programs as well as to homeless/addiction/mental health centers.

Mobile Library Service to 25+ senior facilities each month and daycare book delivery and story times with priority given to those feeding Title One schools. Visits to "Connect" programs for school-aged children and teens in apartment complexes recognized by the County's Mental Health prevention division.

Partnering with schools and large local partners.

The bookmobile--regular stops, community events, school literacy fairs, parades, and more. Coupled with embedded services, this makes a big difference in our engagement.

Partnerships with schools, social services partnerships, participation in large community events.

Our bookmobile is very popular and will be replaced this year, also several small outreach vans to serve our remote coast side populations. We also schedule and have defined expectations for sending staff out to partner organizations. Showing up at any and all community gatherings and workshops, also an emphasis over the last 5 years on hiring bilingual staff.

À LA CART INSIGHTS

Partnerships (1 of 3)

Who are your library's most important partners?

We partner broadly. Among our most important partners are: Community members, Public school system, County Government, State Delegation, local entertainment venue, local health foundation, Chamber

Partner | Role in Supporting our Library:

- County Government: Core funding and capital project support
- United Way: Co-developing wraparound service partnerships
- County School District (CCSD): Education access through Limitless Learning library cards
- AARP / VITA: Free in-branch tax assistance for seniors and low-income patrons
- Local Nonprofits (e.g., Food Bank): Outreach and community engagement partnerships
- Cultural Institutions: Co-sponsored programming and family pass opportunities
- Friends of the Library: Fundraising and community advocacy

School district, City partners, public science center, local cafe, local musical venue, local community college

Our cities that make up our JPA, County departments, work and priorities, CBOs that complement our strategic goals and further our work.

Other County departments such as DSS, Sheriff, Probation, CSS, Parks.

À LA CART INSIGHTS

Partnerships (2 of 3)

Who are your library's most important partners?

County Library Foundation, Northern California Public Media, League of Women Voters, County Law Library, County Dept of Public Health (for some of the L@L programs), County Office of Education, NAACP, Latino Service Providers, Los Cien, County Regional Parks, Food Bank, Clean Power, First Five/Community Action Partnerships, Community Child Care Council (4Cs), Children's Museum, Local Museum, Positive Images, LGBTQ Connection, Russian River Sisters of Perpetual Indulgence, County Sheriff's Office, Department of Juvenile Justice, Master Gardener Program of our County, Boys & Girls Club

The Sheriff's office for the Jail outreach services, local nonprofits that serve vulnerable communities in terms of connecting them to benefits, healthcare, etc. Our school systems are great partners for class visits, etc. We've recently opened a facility co-located with County Parks & Rec which has deepened that working relationship. We are an integral presence at the numerous Farmer's Markets around the County.

County: Schools, Recreation and Parks, Extension, Mental Health, Social Services, and many more.

Schools, city, park district, local museums and cultural orgs.

À LA CART INSIGHTS

Partnerships (3 of 3)

Who are your library's most important partners?

Literacy Council, Natural History Museum, Transitions Mental Health, American Association of University Women, Children's Resource and Referral, County Housing Authority.

Local colleges/universities, YWCA, local organization dedicated to teens

Our Summer Festival, the Friends of the Library, the hundreds of underresourced Umich departments, our governmental / institutional peers in town.

Friends of Libraries and Foundation. Many non-profits have MOUs with us including Alliance on Aging, United Way, etc. Partners within the County include the Social Services, Health, Elections, and Information Technology Departments.

À LA CART INSIGHTS

Vulnerable Patrons (1 of 3)

What tactics has your library used to meet the needs of both unsheltered and sheltered patrons?

Patron Group | Tactics Employed:

- Unsheltered patrons: Outreach events, Books On The Go, Community Collections—to meet people where they are
- Sheltered/residential: Regular visits (e.g., detention centers), on-site libraries in foster care settings
- General vulnerable groups: Pop-ups, mobile outreach, essential supplies delivered at community hubs

We welcome all and connect folks with resources when they request that.

We use a variety of methods, policies, and procedures to meet the needs of all patrons, including:

- Recent revision of Safe Library Use policy using a trauma-informed approach and a focus on safety
- Following the policy consistently
- Staff training, re-training
- Incident Reporting system
- Providing Organizing Project “Red Cards” and “Yellow Cards” to public (re ICE reporting)
- Mental Health First Aid training for Public Services supervisors
- Monthly disability training optional for all staff
- Trauma-Informed Training for all staff
- Follow-up scenario work
- Boundaries Training for all staff
- Patron referrals to crisis response services
- MOU with County for Emergency Cooling/Warming Centers at library meeting rooms
- Participation in County Homeless Coalition
- Security cameras outside all locations
- Public hours security guards at select locations
- Overnight security patrols at select locations
- Year-round food drives
- Summer Lunch at the Library
- Bike repair stations
- On-demand language interpretation
- Video relay service for the Deaf
- Summer Lunch at the Library at seven locations (2025)
- REFB Food barrels at several branches *
- Hygiene supply drives at several branches.
- BiblioBus at Caritas and we’re about to start at The Palms (also run by Catholic Charities, permanent, supportive housing) and The Living Room Life Center.
- Juvenile Justice Librarian .5FTE serving Juvenile Detention Facility
- Contracted services at Main Adult Detention Facility
- Adult Literacy and Language Partners Department

À LA CART INSIGHTS

Vulnerable Patrons (2 of 3)

What tactics has your library used to meet the needs of both unsheltered and sheltered patrons?

We offer a Life Literacies Center in Downtown which offers drop in hours with a variety of area non-profits serving these constituents. We also do outreach services to strategic care facilities. This is in addition to the regular services they are able to use in any of our branches as members of the public.

We hired a social worker and contracted a case manager through a local CBO. We also partner with non-profit organizations. Lastly, we host "dignity drives" for donated items that can be given to people in need.

We have one on-staff social services liaison and have one contracted social worker through the local homeless shelter. The latter individual can help with resources and aid that a city worker cannot.

Staff works together to identify those that may be in a vulnerable position and helps refer them to local resources.

Social services in libraries, close partnerships with social agencies, working closely with community HOT teams and the County's Center for Homelessness.

À LA CART INSIGHTS

Vulnerable Patrons (3 of 3)

What tactics has your library used to meet the needs of both unsheltered and sheltered patrons?

Examination and updates to all policies, partnerships and ongoing communication with the County's Homeless Services Director and providers, ongoing attention to incidents and issues in libraries, ongoing training for staff in related areas.

Enforce our rules of behavior as compassionately and fairly as possible while keeping patrons and staff safe. Make sure patrons facing suspension or trespass know what they're risking and what happens next, and how to appeal.

Circulating laptops/w/ internet connection, lots of in-house social service and medical offerings offered through partnership, a social worker on staff, extensive training to build staff capacity

A card category that grants access to library services; referrals to other agencies that can help, both governmental and non-profits that support

À LA CART INSIGHTS

Other Growing Services (1 of 1)

Are there any other services that your library provides that are rapidly growing or contracting?

Teen engagement (classes and events).

Tutoring, creating welcoming spaces, focus on cultural programs, mental health first aid.

Part of our programming growth has been with additional librarian-level staff who carry out this work.

Meeting spaces of all sizes are in high demand. Partnerships and collaborations with other governmental agencies and non-profits are vibrant and growing. Programs for those with special needs are increasing. Examples: Next Chapter Book Clubs, Art for All Abilities, and Adaptive storytimes, etc.

We have a goal of beginning home bound services, as we receive many requests for that. Outreach in general is very hot.

Growing - use and services in disasters and emergencies; growing - assistance in Countywide endeavors and initiatives (housing, homelessness, environmental)

Peer Library Analysis Final Thoughts

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FINAL THOUGHTS

Is there anything else you would like to share? (1 of 1)

Final Thoughts:

Yes! While facilities, technology, and partnerships are all vital, the best resource will always be our library staff. Their dedication, creativity, and compassion are what truly bring our mission to life. Whether assisting a first-time reader, guiding a job seeker, supporting a family in crisis, or connecting a student to vital digital resources, our staff are the heart of our Library. Their commitment to service is what makes our library system not just successful but essential.

Thanks for your patience and I hope our input is helpful!

No!

Our library is coming off its previous strategic plan, with many successful outcomes. We could benefit from the wise experience of others to help us build on, or as necessary, refine those outcomes so that we as an organization are delivering sustainable, measurable, and controllable programs and services that reflect quality over quantity.

Thank you.

The Library is a great partner for us.

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