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STAFF REPORT ACTION REQUIRED

Strategic Plan 2025-2029: External Consultation Phase One Results and Phase Two Consultation Plan

Date: May 3, 2024

To: Strategic Planning Steering Committee

From: City Librarian

SUMMARY

The purpose of this report is to present the remaining results from the first phase of consultations and seek approval from the Strategic Planning Steering Committee of the proposed focus areas for the second consultation phase, for recommendation to the Board. The focus areas were determined based on analysis of the environmental scan findings and results of the phase one consultations.

From March 6 to March 27, 2024, TPL conducted a survey and idea exchange using a digital engagement platform. The survey was open to all Toronto Public Library (TPL) customers, Toronto residents, community stakeholders, and partners. Participants were encouraged to share their thoughts on how TPL can support them and their communities over the next five years. More than 3,000 participants took part in the survey and had the opportunity to share their thoughts and engage with those of others. Over 2,700 thoughts were shared, and more than 82,000 ratings were given, reflecting a deep level of

engagement from the public.

The inputs from the environmental scan findings and the first phase of the consultations informed the development of the focus areas for the second phase beginning in June, which are:

1. Awareness and availability of library services
2. Democracy, civic engagement and information literacy
3. Cost of living and well-being
4. Environmental sustainability
5. Reading, learning and skills development
6. Social and community connections
7. Technology and digital inclusion
8. Welcoming and inclusive public spaces to meet and work

The next phase of the consultations will refine and validate the focus areas and inform draft priorities for the 2025-2029 Strategic Plan.

RECOMMENDATIONS

The City Librarian recommends that the Strategic Planning Steering Committee:

1. receive the first phase of external consultation results outlined in the report (Attachment 1); and
2. approve the focus areas for the second consultation phase resulting from the May 3, 2024 strategy session and recommend it to the Library Board for implementation (Attachment 2).

FINANCIAL IMPACT

This report has no financial impact beyond what has already been approved in the current year's budget.

The Director, Finance & Treasurer has reviewed this financial impact statement and agrees with it.

ALIGNMENT WITH STRATEGIC PLAN

The consultation results and the focus areas for the next phase of consultations will enable TPL to develop an impactful Strategic Plan that will continue to fulfill its legislated mandate of providing a comprehensive and efficient public library service that reflects the unique needs of the community.

EQUITY IMPACT STATEMENT

The focus areas and the consultation plan for the 2025-2029 Strategic Plan have been developed considering TPL's Equity Statement and the City's Equity Lens. This ensures ongoing integration of access and the removal of barriers for equity-deserving groups in the City of Toronto. Accessibility and engagement of equity-deserving groups will be key components of the consultation and engagement process for the development of the Strategic Plan, ensuring that the broadest range of voices are heard through the process, and that the Strategic Plan reflects the perspectives and needs of equity-deserving groups. The approach strives to achieve equitable outcomes for all.

DECISION HISTORY

At its meeting on December 4, 2023, the Board approved [Creating a New Strategic Plan: 2025-2029](#), including the terms of reference for the Strategic Planning Steering Committee and the Roadmap for development of the next Strategic Plan.

At its meeting on January 11, 2024, the Strategic Planning Steering Committee considered the [Strategic Plan 2025-2029: Environmental Scan Focus Areas and Consultation Plan report](#) and recommended that the Board receive the areas of focus for the environmental scan for information and approve the consultation plan and implementation.

At its meeting on January 29, 2024, the Board received the areas of focus for the environmental scan as outlined in the [Strategic Plan 2025-2029: Environmental Scan Focus Areas and Consultation Plan report](#) and approved the consultation plan and implementation.

At its meeting on April 15, 2024, the [Strategic Planning Steering Committee received the Strategic Plan 2025-2029: Environmental Scan Summary and Internal Consultation Phase One Results](#) report for information.

ISSUE BACKGROUND

TPL's vision is to be recognized as the world's leading library by informing and inspiring Toronto and its communities, making Torontonians more resilient, more knowledgeable, more connected and more successful. As the city continues to grow and evolve, the Library plays an increasingly important role in providing the vital ingredients that Torontonians need to thrive.

To advance its vision, the Library is developing a new five-year strategic plan that will guide and shape its work. The plan will be informed by a comprehensive environmental scan, ongoing engagement and consultation with staff, the public, and stakeholders.

The Strategic Plan describes the value and outcomes that the Library will deliver to Toronto's residents and communities. It is developed based on the following strategic planning principles:

1. Grounded in TPL's vision, mission, values, Statements and brand;
2. Responsive to City and community needs;
3. Integrated with the community;
4. Outcome-focused, actionable and drives continuous improvement.

In December 2023, the TPL Board approved the Roadmap for developing the 2025-2029 Strategic Plan. The first consultation phase includes Staff Consultation Forums and a public survey and idea exchange. The consultation results, along with the findings from the environmental scan, helped identify the focus areas for the next phase. The second phase of consultation will begin in June and conclude in August, which will refine and validate these focus areas. The results of this phase will inform the development of the draft Strategic Plan priorities.

COMMENTS

External Consultation Phase One Results

From March 6 to March 27, 2024, TPL conducted a survey and idea exchange using a digital engagement platform called ThoughtExchange. The survey was available online and in library branches for TPL customers, Toronto residents, community stakeholders, and partners to participate. Participants were encouraged to share their thoughts on how TPL can support them and their communities over the next five years. More than 3,000 participants took part in the survey and had the opportunity to share their thoughts and engage with those of others. Over 2,700 thoughts were shared, and more than 82,000 ratings were given, reflecting a deep level of engagement from the public. On average, participants spent eight minutes completing the survey, sharing at least one thought and rating 27 thoughts.

Overall, the residents expressed their gratitude towards the library staff for the services they provide every day. There were a lot of positive comments, with many suggesting that TPL should continue providing existing services and expand even further in various areas.

The library created a webpage (tpl.ca/strategicplan) to provide information about the survey and increase public participation. The survey was shared on various pages of the library's website such as the homepage and the Wi-Fi login page. Additionally, the library promoted the survey through displays and community outreach in its branches, as well as through e-newsletters and social media posts. Community partners and stakeholders, including City of Toronto Councillors, TPL Foundation, Friends of TPL, TPL's Innovation Council, and TPL Board members, were invited to participate in the survey and share the opportunity with their networks. The survey was also promoted on the City of Toronto's Public Engagement & Consultations webpage.

ThoughtExchange is a unique survey tool that offers an innovative approach to engaging participants. Unlike traditional surveys, participants can confidentially and independently share their thoughts and engage with those of others. First, participants are invited to share their ideas and then to review and rate the thoughts of others by adding stars to thoughts that are most important to them.

More than 2,700 ideas shared by members of the public were coded and analyzed using qualitative data analysis tools. Ten themes were identified as the top areas that TPL should focus on over the next five years. The themes are indicated below, and more information about the public survey and idea exchange results are in Attachment 1.

1. Offer more programs to support learning and growth

Comments focused on the library's role in providing access to knowledge and skills development for everyone in the community. Residents shared that TPL should continue to develop a broad range of engaging programs that cater to individuals of all ages, while ensuring they continue to be free to attend. Program topics should include job search skills, financial literacy, reading literacy and arts and culture.

2. Expand and enhance collections

Comments focused on the library's role in providing all community members access to information and ideas through access to a range of different formats. Residents shared that TPL should continue to develop innovative and diverse collections that cater to the interests and needs of the community.

3. Create modern and well-designed multi-use spaces

Library users expressed the need for modern and multi-use library spaces that can cater to their diverse needs, that are well-maintained and physically accessible. They highlighted the importance of having different types of work and study areas, such as group study rooms, quiet spaces, and collaborative spaces. Comments also focused on co-locating libraries to combine various services and resources within a shared physical space.

4. Expand library hours

Comments focused on expanding library hours to provide Torontonians with a place to visit, attend programs, study, work and learn during evenings and weekends in order to increase access to TPL's many services and respond to the diverse needs and schedules of library users.

5. Ensure libraries remain a welcoming and inclusive third space

Comments focused on the library as a collaborative and community space especially during times of financial constraints. Torontonians see the library as a welcoming and inclusive "third space" for individuals to visit outside of

work and home. Residents shared that the Library should continue to provide a fair and equal opportunity for everyone, regardless of their social or economic status.

6. Foster social connection

Comments focused on the library's role in fostering social and community connection through various means, such as offering social activities and programs, hosting community gatherings and providing space for community groups to meet.

7. Increase awareness and access of library services

While TPL provides a wide range of valuable services and resources that can greatly benefit its residents, comments focused on how TPL can do more to promote and create awareness of these services so that Torontonians can take full advantage of them. Comments also focused on ensuring a broad range of services are available in all neighbourhoods throughout the city.

8. Build civic engagement and information literacy skills

Comments focused on how TPL should expand its leadership role in protecting access to reliable information, building information literacy skills and defending intellectual freedom. Comments include offering opportunities for Torontonians to explore and discuss diverse perspectives, engage in dialogue and learn about civic issues facing their communities.

9. Increase technology access and support digital literacy

Comments focused on the importance for libraries to provide access to both basic and advanced technology in order to keep up with the constantly changing digital landscape. Residents shared that the Library should continue to play a crucial role in helping customers acquire the necessary skills to navigate the digital world, and supporting digital literacy and media skills.

10. Promote awareness of climate change and further learning about sustainable practices

Residents shared that libraries should play a significant role in promoting awareness of climate change and building community resilience and sustainable development. Comments include expanding library services to include outdoor spaces and gardens, as well as environmental and sustainable programs such as a seed sharing initiatives.

Top public issues

Additionally, as part of the survey, participants were asked to select the three most significant issues they or their community will face over the next five years. The top issues identified include cost of living, climate change & sustainability, housing, mental health & well-being.

Phase Two Consultation

Focus areas

Cross cutting analysis of the four key inputs from the first phase of consultation - including environmental scan findings, staff consultation themes, top public issues and public consultation themes - were used to identify eight focus areas for the second consultation phase. The focus areas are listed below, and Attachment 2 includes more information about these focus areas and how they were informed by the inputs.

1. Awareness and availability of library services
2. Democracy, civic engagement and information literacy
3. Cost of living and well-being
4. Environmental sustainability
5. Reading, learning and skills development
6. Social and community connections
7. Technology and digital inclusion
8. Welcoming and inclusive public spaces to meet and work

Consultation plan

The purpose of the second consultation phase is to validate and prioritize the focus areas in order to identify the priorities for the Strategic Plan, and to identify potential action items to execute on the plan. The target audiences for the second phase include all staff, underrepresented audiences from the first phase of public consultations, community partners, industry experts, and stakeholders. This phase is scheduled to begin in June and conclude in August. Attachment 3 includes more information about the consultation plan.

Key highlights and tactics of the consultation plan include:

- Staff engagement survey and focus group consultation sessions;
- Public engagement survey;
- A consultation toolkit for use at library and community events to engage residents and community partners in neighbourhoods across the city;
- Focus groups with targeted and underrepresented audiences, e.g. non-library users, equity-deserving groups, vulnerable persons;
- Expert panels on social connectedness and technology;
- Engagement with City Councillors and City of Toronto staff;
- Stakeholder meetings, e.g. TPL Workers Union Local 4948 and TPL Foundation; and
- A benchmarking public survey of Toronto residents conducted by a third party with a statistically valid sample of users and non-users that will aim to gather demographic data, measure service use trends, public awareness of, and attitudes toward the library, and to determine the needs of library users.

Next Steps

Building on the results of the first phase of consultations, the next phase of the consultations will refine and validate the focus areas and inform draft priorities for the Strategic Plan. The findings from the second consultation phase will be presented to the Steering Committee during its October meeting.

CONTACT

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SIGNATURE

Vickery Bowles
City Librarian

ATTACHMENTS

- Attachment 1: Strategic Plan 2025-2029: External Consultation Phase One Results
- Attachment 2: Strategic Plan 2025-2029: Phase Two Consultation Focus Areas
- Attachment 3: Strategic Plan 2025-2029: External Consultation Phase One Results and Phase Two Consultation Plan Presentation

Strategic Plan 2025-2029: External Consultation Phase One Results

Overview

From March 6 to March 27, 2024, TPL conducted a survey and idea exchange using a digital engagement platform called ThoughtExchange. The survey was available online and in library branches for TPL customers, Toronto residents, community stakeholders, and partners to participate. Participants were encouraged to share their thoughts on how TPL can support them and their communities over the next five years. More than 3,000 participants took part in the survey and had the opportunity to share their thoughts and engage with those of others. Over 2,700 thoughts were shared, and more than 82,000 ratings were given, reflecting a deep level of engagement from the public. On average, participants spent eight minutes completing the survey, sharing at least one thought and rating 27 thoughts.

Overall, the residents expressed their gratitude towards the library staff for the services they provide every day. There were a lot of positive comments, with many suggesting that TPL should continue providing existing services and expand even further in various areas.

ThoughtExchange process

ThoughtExchange is a unique survey tool that offers an innovative approach to engaging participants. Unlike traditional surveys, participants can confidentially and independently share their thoughts and engage with those of others. First, participants are invited to share their ideas and then to review and rate the thoughts of others by adding stars to thoughts that are most important to them.

How we reached people

The library created a webpage (tpl.ca/strategicplan) to provide information about the survey and increase public participation. The survey was shared on various pages of the library's website such as the homepage and the Wi-Fi login page. Additionally, the library promoted the survey through displays and community outreach in its branches, as well as through e-newsletters and social media posts. Community partners and stakeholders, including City of Toronto Councillors, TPL

Foundation, Friends of TPL, TPL's Innovation Council, and TPL Board members, were invited to participate in the survey and share the opportunity with their networks. The survey was also promoted on the City of Toronto's Public Engagement & Consultations webpage.

Participation

3,020 participants took part in the survey and had the opportunity to share their thoughts and engage with those of others. 2,783 thoughts were shared, and 82,233 ratings were given.

Public consultation phase one results

The comments were coded and analyzed using qualitative data analysis tools. Ten themes were identified as important areas that TPL should focus on over the next five years. The themes are indicated below, ranked by both the total number of mentions and then by average rating (out of 5).

Themes by total number of thoughts

Theme	Number of thoughts	Average rating
1. Offer more programs to support learning and growth	719	3.7
2. Expand and enhance collections	368	3.7
3. Create modern and well-designed multi-use spaces	261	3.6
4. Expand library hours	225	4.0
5. Ensure libraries remain a welcoming and inclusive third space	218	3.9
6. Foster social connection	203	3.8
7. Increase awareness and access of library services	197	3.8
8. Build civic engagement and information literacy skills	190	3.6
9. Increase technology access and support digital literacy	144	3.6

Theme	Number of thoughts	Average rating
10. Promote awareness of climate change and further learning about sustainable practices	86	3.7

Themes by average rating

Theme	Average rating	Number of thoughts
1. Expand library hours	4.0	225
2. Ensure libraries remain a welcoming and inclusive third space	3.9	218
3. Foster social connection	3.8	203
4. Increase awareness and access of library services	3.8	197
5. Offer more programs to support learning and growth	3.7	719
6. Expand and enhance collections	3.7	368
7. Promote awareness of climate change and further learning about sustainable practices	3.7	86
8. Create modern and well-designed multi-use spaces	3.6	261
9. Build civic engagement and information literacy skills	3.6	190
10. Increase technology access and support digital literacy	3.6	144

Theme descriptions

1. Offer more programs to support learning and growth

719 thoughts | 3.7 average rating

Comments focused on the library’s role in providing access to knowledge and skills development for everyone in the community. Residents shared that TPL should continue to develop a broad range of engaging programs that cater to

individuals of all ages, while ensuring they continue to be free to attend. Program topics should include job search skills, financial literacy, reading literacy and arts and culture.

Sub-theme	Sample thoughts	Number of thoughts	Average rating
Offer more programs	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • “More programs about learning life skills such as everyday financing, public speaking, etc.” • “Continue providing workshops, resources, lectures to engage the public.” 	332	3.8
Reading literacy	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • “More reading programs for children and youth.” • “Programs to combat declining literacy rates in children and adolescents.” 	124	3.9
Job search and financial literacy	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • “Adults need training to improve job security or retraining.” • “Offer financial literacy education beyond the basics. Most people understand basic budgeting but have no idea how to benefit from strategic financial planning.” 	88	3.7
Arts and culture	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • “Drop in arts programming for all ages. Let’s create something together.” • “Offer more classes for young adults like knitting, sewing, crafts, etc.” 	65	3.8

2. Expand and enhance collections

368 thoughts | 3.7 average rating

Comments focused on the library’s role in providing all community members access to information and ideas through access to a range of different formats.

Residents shared that TPL should continue to develop innovative and diverse collections that cater to the interests and needs of the community.

Sub-theme	Sample thoughts	Number of thoughts	Average rating
Physical collections	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • “Please continue stocking more new physical books. I don’t want ebooks only!” • “Maintain or increase access to reference materials and historical documents.” 	142	3.7
Electronic collections	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • “Continue to increase the number of digital copies of books on Libby.” • “Access to academic journal articles online.” 	103	3.7
Library of things	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • “Continue sharing resources like the instrument library, tool library, etc.” • “Board games available for checkout.” 	64	3.6

3. Create modern and well-designed multi-use spaces

261 thoughts, 3.6 average rating

Library users expressed the need for modern and multi-use library spaces that can cater to their diverse needs, that are well-maintained and physically accessible. They highlighted the importance of having different types of work and study areas, such as group study rooms, quiet spaces, and collaborative spaces. Comments also focused on co-locating libraries to combine various services and resources within a shared physical space.

Sub-theme	Sample thoughts	Number of thoughts	Average rating
Work and study spaces	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • “As a student, I would love it if more libraries have spaces for students to study/get work done. More desks 	106	3.7

Sub-theme	Sample thoughts	Number of thoughts	Average rating
	would be great. This vibe motivates me.” <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • “Provide a safe/quiet place for people to study or go to. If you need to get away from a bad situation and just need a place to work.” 		
Modern library spaces	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • “Keep library buildings up-to-date and renovate where needed.” • “Have more plants/greenery in library designs (in indoor spaces).” 	74	3.5
Co-location	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • “TPL could support “mini-libraries” in condos with older residents.” • “I would like to see library locations share their sites with new affordable housing developments whenever possible.” 	32	3.3

4. Expand library hours

225 thoughts | 4.0 average rating

Comments focused on expanding library hours to provide Torontonians with a place to visit, attend programs, study, work and learn during evenings and weekends in order to increase access to TPL’s many services and respond to the diverse needs and schedules of library users.

Sub-theme	Sample thoughts	Number of thoughts	Average rating
Longer hours	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • “Longer hours. Hours of branches in my area are not convenient.” • “Just keep our libraries open as much as possible!” 	139	3.9

Sub-theme	Sample thoughts	Number of thoughts	Average rating
Sundays	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> “Sunday is a day when many families are together and we would love to be at the library together.” Open Sundays. Working parents don’t have many opportunities to visit the library, opening this one day doubles the time available to visit the library with my child.” 	54	4.1
Evening and weekend programs	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> “More programs for children open on Sundays, especially Sunday morning.” “More programs and workshops in evenings/weekends for adults.” 	32	3.9

5. Ensure libraries remain a welcoming and inclusive third space

218 thoughts | 3.9 average rating

Comments focused on the library as a collaborative and community space especially during times of financial constraints. Torontonians see the library as a welcoming and inclusive "third space" for individuals to visit outside of work and home. Residents shared that the Library should continue to provide a fair and equal opportunity for everyone, regardless of their social or economic status.

Sub-theme	Sample thoughts	Number of thoughts	Average rating
Free public space	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> “Continue to be a free and public space for all. There are less and less free places to go in the city and feel accepted.” 	58	4.1

Sub-theme	Sample thoughts	Number of thoughts	Average rating
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> “Continue to be a free, accessible third space. I think offering a place where folks can go to read, study, connect, be warm, be air conditioned, without having to purchase anything is so important.” 		
Welcoming and safe space	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> “Continue to be a safe space!” “Remain a welcoming centre for in person and online visits in all neighbourhoods.” 	40	4.0

6. Foster social connection

203 thoughts | 3.8 average rating

Comments focused on the library's role in fostering social and community connection through various means, such as offering social activities and programs, hosting community gatherings and providing space for community groups to meet.

Sub-theme	Sample thoughts	Number of thoughts	Average rating
Social activities and programs	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> “More social activities for adults that aren’t “How to do your taxes.” “Facilitate more social activities to make new friends.” 	89	3.8
Community gatherings	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> “Have new to neighbourhood meetings.” “Have more community events that bring people together.” 	58	3.8

Sub-theme	Sample thoughts	Number of thoughts	Average rating
Community room bookings	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • “Free room booking or meeting spaces for resident-led groups.” • “Allow to “borrow” space for community use, e.g. new moms group.” 	56	3.7

7. Increase awareness and access of library services

197 thoughts | 3.8 average rating

While TPL provides a wide range of valuable services and resources that can greatly benefit its residents, comments focused on how TPL can do more to promote and create awareness of these services so that Torontonians can take full advantage of them. Comments also focused on ensuring a broad range of services are available in all neighbourhoods throughout the city.

Sub-theme	Sample thoughts	Number of thoughts	Average rating
Service awareness	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • “More broadly advertise the incredible services that you have!” • “My family is always surprised to read something new the library does in the news but not from the library.” 	85	3.8
Service availability	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • “Libraries should expand services to ensure equitable program availability.” • “Spread out programs to multiple locations more central and east locations (example: Jones, Coxwell). Most of them are north or west Toronto. There are people like myself who would like to attend the 	43	3.8

Sub-theme	Sample thoughts	Number of thoughts	Average rating
	programs but travelling is too costly.”		
Website content discovery	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • “Improve website by adding a program and event calendar and ability to see program registrations in My Account.” • “Improve website information about collections in other languages.” 	36	3.6

8. Build civic engagement and information literacy skills

190 thoughts | 3.6 average rating

Comments focused on how TPL should expand its leadership role in protecting access to reliable information, building information literacy skills and defending intellectual freedom. Comments include offering opportunities for Torontonians to explore and discuss diverse perspectives, engage in dialogue and learn about civic issues facing their communities.

Sub-theme	Sample thoughts	Number of thoughts	Average rating
Civic engagement	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • “Continue to provide accessible space for people to read and think, this is the basis of democracy.” • “Continue to foster a sense of neighbourhood community and civic responsibility.” 	63	3.6
Intellectual freedom	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • “Remain committed to freedom of speech and expression.” • “Ensure access to books that are being banned in other places.” 	53	3.6

Sub-theme	Sample thoughts	Number of thoughts	Average rating
Information literacy	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • “Help communities combat misinformation.” • “Teach critical, analytical thinking and reading skills.” 	35	3.8

9. Increase technology access and support digital literacy

144 thoughts | 3.6 average rating

Comments focused on the importance for libraries to provide access to both basic and advanced technology in order to keep up with the constantly changing digital landscape. Residents shared that the Library should continue to play a crucial role in helping customers acquire the necessary skills to navigate the digital world, and supporting digital literacy and media skills.

Sub-theme	Sample thoughts	Number of thoughts	Average rating
Digital literacy	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • “Provide learning opportunities for seniors, especially technology.” • “Continue with digital literacy training and education to help citizens stay engaged and connected as new platforms and devices become mainstream.” 	64	3.7
Technology access	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • “Better availability and access to advancing technologies and overall services.” • “More public computers available in the library including ones for children.” 	50	3.6

10. Promote awareness of climate change and further learning about sustainable practices

86 thoughts, 3.7 average rating

Residents shared that libraries should play a significant role in promoting awareness of climate change and building community resilience and sustainable development. Comments include expanding library services to include outdoor spaces and gardens, as well as environmental and sustainable programs such as a seed sharing initiatives.

Sub-theme	Sample thoughts	Number of thoughts	Average rating
Environmental and sustainable programs	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • “Partner with Repair Café TO to run a sustainability program.” • “Programs/workshops related to sustainability within the context of the climate crisis.” 	37	3.7
Outdoor space	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • “Activities in outdoor spaces. Emphasize well-being and importance of natural environments.” • “Transform library grounds into community gardens or green spaces. These areas can serve as peaceful retreats, promote environmental awareness, and even provide fresh produce for local residents.” 	26	3.9
Sustainable practice	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • “The library could promote sustainability practices by hosting environmental scientists and other advocates to give speeches and seminars.” • “Library could implement renewable energy across its branches: install solar panels on its buildings; create green 	23	3.4

Sub-theme	Sample thoughts	Number of thoughts	Average rating
	roofs; install Smart monitoring."		

Top rated and unique thoughts

In addition to the thoughts highlighted for each theme, below are some top rated and unique thoughts that were not highlighted in the top themes.

- "Please maintain wheelchair accessibility at all locations." – 4.5 rating.
- "I use the Home Library Program, as I am housebound with a chronic illness/disability, I've been using this service for years and it honestly makes my life so much better. Please just keep it up." – 4.4 rating.
- "Increase cyber security. The recent cyber attack was extremely disruptive, and preventing future attacks is vitally important to maintaining access to services." – 4.3 rating.
- "Expand the tpl:map program. Add more museums and cultural venues to this amazing program. For some of us, this is the only way we can afford to go to these places." – 4.2 rating.
- "Water fountains/coolers or water-bottle refill stations in every branch." – 4.2 rating.
- "Select materials using the knowledge of library staff, not algorithms. Algorithms get a collection based on the lowest common denominator. Your marvelous library staff seek out the material we didn't even know we want." – 4.2 rating.
- "More volunteer programs. There should be more clearly available opportunities to volunteer at the library with low barrier to entry." – 3.8 rating.
- "More programs that help citizens learn how to make and create to save money (e.g., making your own food sauces, learning how to fix things at home)." – 3.7 rating.

Top public issues

As part of the survey, we asked participants to select the three most significant issues they or their community will face over the next five years. 2,739 participants

responded and the top issues include cost of living, climate change & sustainability, housing, mental health & well-being. Below are the results:


1. Cost of living – 69% (1,893)
2. Climate change & sustainability – 49% (1,354)
3. Housing – 49% (1,336)
4. Mental health & well-being – 42% (1,157)
5. Community and public spaces – 28% (775)
6. Aging population – 27% (747)
7. Social isolation – 22% (592)
8. Public safety – 21% (587)
9. Racial and social equity – 21% (562)
10. Intellectual freedom & democracy – 20% (539)
11. Employment and training to develop new skills – 16% (438)
12. Technology access and use – 13% (346)
13. Literacy for children and youth – 12% (335)
14. Reconciliation with Indigenous Communities – 11% (293)
15. Other – 4% (115)

Appendix: Demographics

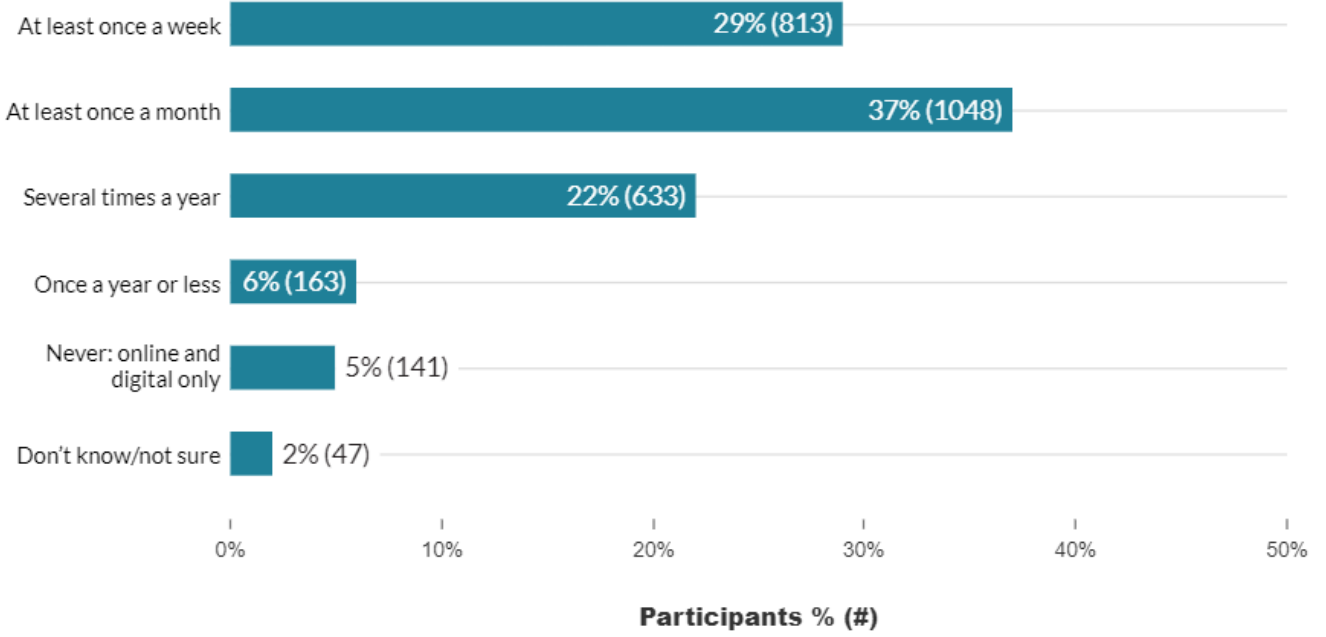
In the past 12 (twelve) months, have you visited a branch of the Toronto Public Library, accessed the library online, visited any of the library's social media sites or contacted the library by telephone? Select all that apply.



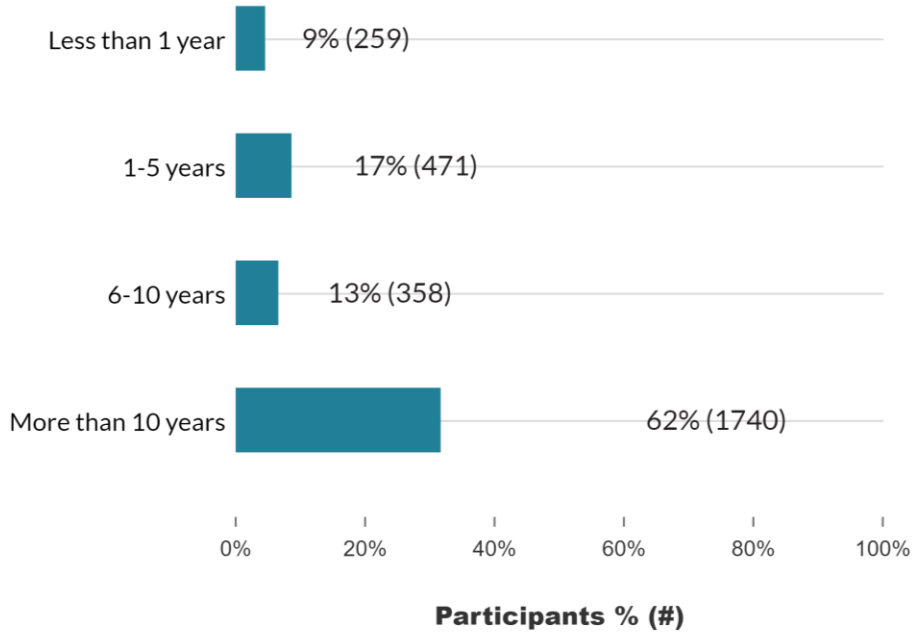
2870
Responses

%		Answer <i>(Multi-select)</i>
91%	(2619)	Yes, visited a library branch
84%	(2404)	Yes, visited the library's website
38%	(1091)	Yes, visited the library's Facebook page, X (Twitter), Instagram or other social media accounts
19%	(531)	Yes, contacted by phone
3%	(95)	No

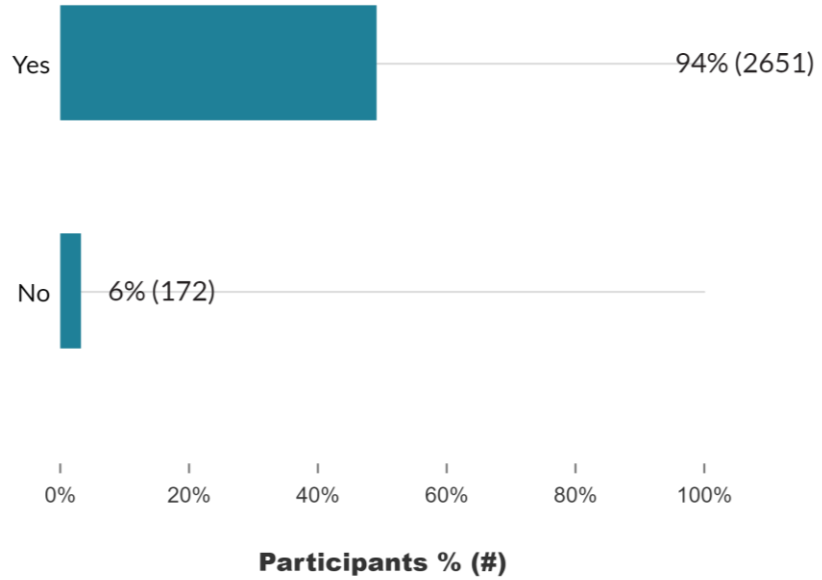
Within the past year, how often have you visited a branch in-person?




How long have you been a Toronto Public Library user?



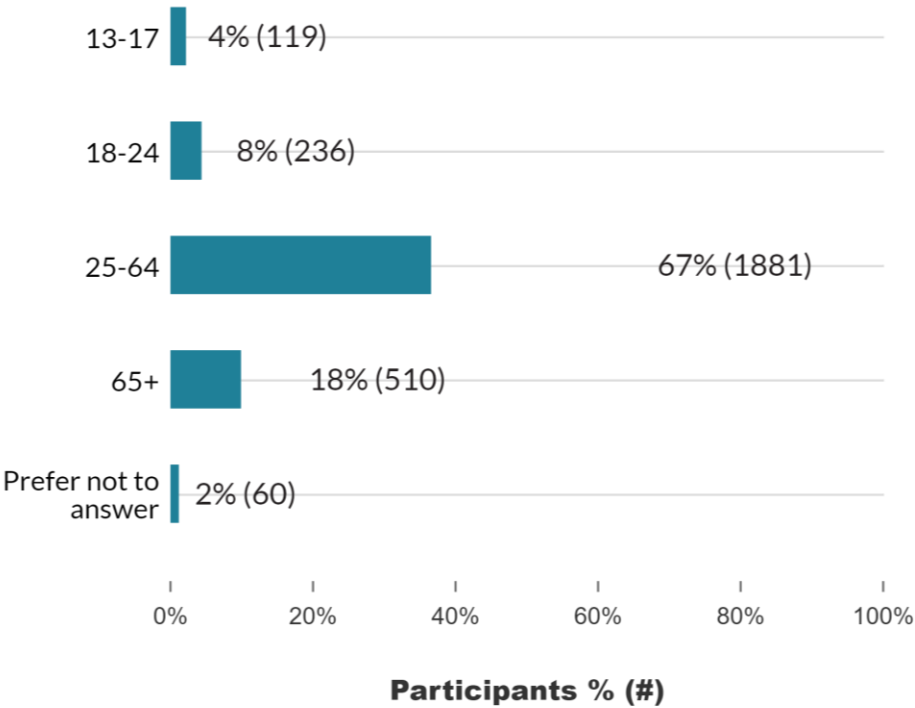
Do you have a library card?



Which part of the city do you live, work or go to school in?

%		Answer
9%	(260)	East York
10%	(276)	Etobicoke
17%	(486)	North York
13%	(360)	Scarborough
36%	(1005)	Downtown Toronto
6%	(174)	York
9%	(246)	Other

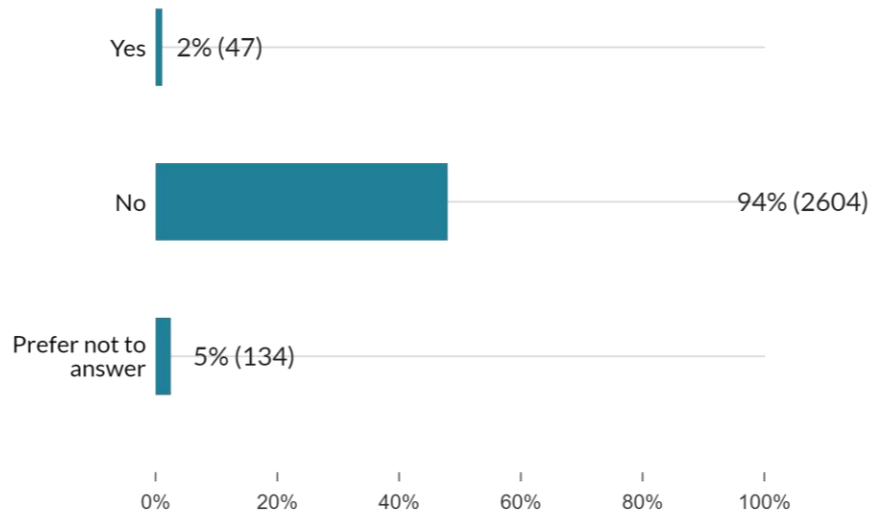
What is your age range?



Gender identity is the gender that people identify with or how they perceive themselves, which may be different from their sex assigned at birth. What best describes your gender? Please select one only.

%	Person Icon	Answer
4%	(101)	Gender non-binary (including gender fluid, genderqueer, androgynous)
21%	(595)	Man
1%	(16)	Trans man
0%	(12)	Trans woman
68%	(1884)	Woman
6%	(157)	Prefer not to answer
1%	(26)	Other

Indigenous people from Canada identify as First Nations (status, non-status, treaty or non-treaty), Inuit, Métis, Aboriginal, Native or Indian. Do you identify as Indigenous to Canada?



People often describe themselves by their race or racial background. For example, some people consider themselves "Black", "White" or "East Asian". Which race category best describes you?

%	Person Icon	Answer
3%	(74)	Arab, Middle Eastern or West Asian (examples: Afghan, Armenian, Iranian, Lebanese, Persian, Turkish)
4%	(101)	Black (examples: African, African-Canadian, Afro-Caribbean)
9%	(244)	East Asian (examples: Chinese, Japanese, Korean)
0%	(8)	Indigenous (examples: First Nations, Inuit, Métis, Aboriginal, Native or Indian)
3%	(81)	Latin American (examples: Brazilian, Colombian, Cuban, Mexican, Peruvian)
9%	(237)	South Asian or Indo-Caribbean (examples: Indian, Indo-Guyanese, Indo-Trinidadian, Pakistani, Sri Lankan)
4%	(98)	Southeast Asian (examples: Filipino, Malaysian, Singaporean, Thai, Vietnamese)
53%	(1460)	White (examples: English, Greek, Italian, Portuguese, Russian, Slovakian)
5%	(144)	More than one race category or mixed-race
8%	(225)	Prefer not to answer
4%	(97)	Other

Strategic Plan 2025-2029: Phase Two Consultation Focus Areas

The environmental scan findings and the initial consultations were used to identify eight focus areas for the second consultation phase. The focus areas are listed below and how they were informed by the inputs.

		Research & Phase One Consultation Inputs				
		Environmental scan findings	Staff consultation themes	Top public issues	Public consultation themes	
Phase Two Consultation Focus Areas	1 Awareness and availability of library services		Building staff capacity		Increase awareness and access of library services	Build staff capacity Equity
	2 Democracy, civic engagement and information literacy				Build civic engagement and information literacy skills	
	3 Cost of living and well-being	Cost of living	Developing skills to address cost of living crisis Supporting vulnerable persons	Cost of living Mental health & well-being Housing		
	4 Reading, learning and skills development		Fostering literacy and lifelong learning		Offer more programs to support learning and growth Expand and enhance collections	
	5 Environmental sustainability			Climate change & sustainability	Promote awareness of climate change and further learning about sustainable practices	
	6 Social and community connections	Social connections	Creating community connections		Foster social connection	
	7 Technology and digital inclusion	Technology and digital literacy skills	Addressing the digital divide		Increase technology access and support digital literacy	
	8 Welcoming and inclusive public spaces to meet and work	Library as a public space	Providing welcoming spaces Improving public safety		Create modern and well-designed multi-use spaces Expand library hours Ensure libraries remain a welcoming and inclusive third space	



strategic plan 2025-2029

external consultation phase one results & phase two consultation plan

Strategic Planning Steering Committee

May 3, 2024

agenda

1. Environmental scan cross-cutting themes and recap of internal consultation results
2. External consultation phase one results presentation
3. Discussion
4. Break
5. Phase two consultation: focus areas and plan presentation
6. Discussion
7. Next steps

consultation progress

Phase 1 Inputs

1. Environmental Scan Findings
2. Staff Consultation Themes
3. Top Public Issues **(NEW)**
4. Public Consultation Themes **(NEW)**

Phase 2 Consultation

- Focus areas
- Consultation plan

Next meeting

- Review results of phase two consultations
- SWOT analysis and Scenario Planning results
- Draft Strategic Priorities
- Draft Strategic Plan and Implementation Plan

consultation progress

Phase 1 Inputs

1. Environmental Scan Findings
2. Staff Consultation Themes
3. Top Public Issues **(NEW)**
4. Public Consultation Themes **(NEW)**

Phase 2 Consultation

- Focus areas
- Consultation plan

Next meeting

- Review results of phase two consultations
- SWOT analysis and Scenario Planning results
- Draft Strategic Priorities
- Draft Strategic Plan and Implementation Plan

steering committee 2024 milestones

chair elected,
environmental scan focus
areas & consultation plan
january

phase one external
consultation results & focus
areas (workshop)
may

finalize strategic plan and
implementation plan
november

environmental scan &
phase one internal
consultation results
april

phase two consultation
results, third-party survey
results, draft strategic plan
and implementation plan
october



environmental scan summary

environmental scan summary

contents

1. Arts and Culture
2. Democracy, Government & Civic Engagement
3. Economy and work
4. Education and Training
5. Environment and Sustainability
6. Housing
7. Mental Health and Well-being
8. Non-profits
9. Public Safety
10. Reconciliation with Indigenous communities
11. Social Development
 - Poverty & Homelessness
 - Diversity, Inclusion, Equity & Human Rights
 - Children & Youth
 - Newcomers
 - Seniors & Caregivers
12. Technology
13. Transportation
 - + Toronto's population
 - + Related industries
 - + Strategic plans from other jurisdictions

13

Focus Areas

300+

Sources

cross-cutting themes

	Increasing inequity	Technology & Digital Literacy	Cost of living	Social connections	Library as a public space
Arts & Culture	✓	✓		✓	✓
Democracy, Government & Civic Engagement	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Economy & Work	✓	✓	✓		
Education & Training	✓	✓			
Environment & Sustainability	✓	✓			✓
Housing	✓		✓		✓
Mental Health & Well-being	✓	✓	✓	✓	
Non-profits	✓		✓	✓	
Public Safety	✓				✓
Reconciliation	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Social Development	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Technology	✓	✓		✓	✓
Transportation	✓	✓	✓		

environmental scan findings

1. Increasing inequity
2. Technology and digital literacy
3. Cost of living
4. Social connections
5. Library as a public space



internal consultation phase one results

staff consultation forums overview

- Six Staff Consultation Forums between February to March
- 461 staff members attended, organized into 68 groups

461

Staff Members

68

Facilitated Tables

6

Forums

- Public service, support service and management staff attended
- Three roundtable discussion questions were asked
- 88% of staff surveyed were satisfied or very satisfied with the forums

roundtable question 1

Based on your experience living and/or working in the city, what is the most important thing TPL can do for people living in Toronto over the next five years?

discuss

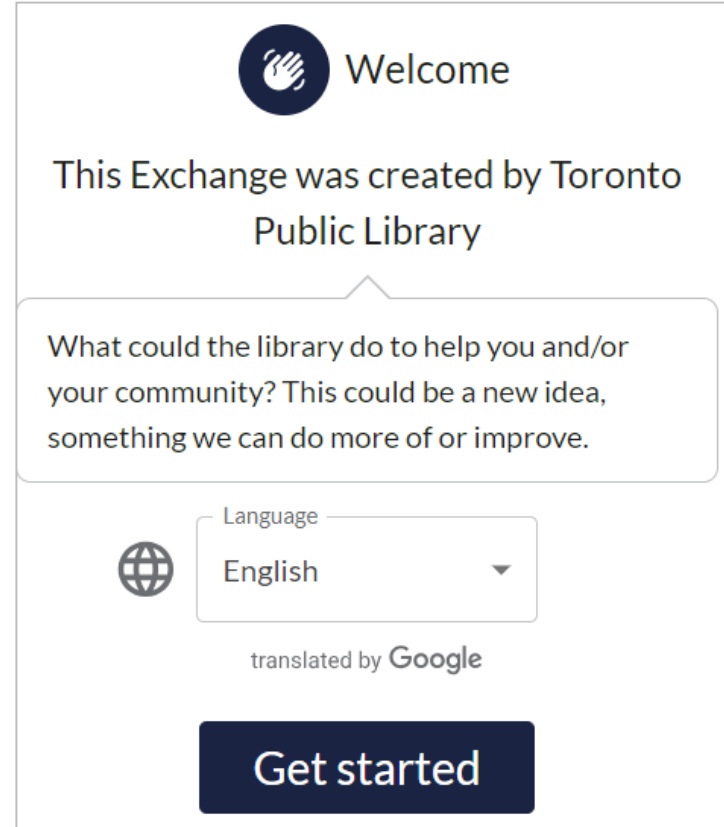
staff consultation themes

1. Addressing the digital divide
2. Providing welcoming spaces
3. Supporting vulnerable persons
4. Developing skills to address cost of living crisis
5. Creating community connections
6. Fostering literacy and lifelong learning
7. Building staff capacity
8. Improving public safety



public consultation phase one results

- Survey period from March 6 to March 27, 2024
- ThoughtExchange platform
- Survey was available online and in library branches for customers, residents, community stakeholders, and partners to participate

A screenshot of a web interface for a survey. At the top, there is a dark blue circular icon with a white hand symbol, followed by the text 'Welcome'. Below this, the text reads 'This Exchange was created by Toronto Public Library'. A white callout box contains the question: 'What could the library do to help you and/or your community? This could be a new idea, something we can do more of or improve.' Below the callout box is a language selection dropdown menu with a globe icon to its left. The dropdown is currently set to 'English'. Below the dropdown, it says 'translated by Google'. At the bottom, there is a dark blue button with the text 'Get started' in white.

Welcome

This Exchange was created by Toronto Public Library

What could the library do to help you and/or your community? This could be a new idea, something we can do more of or improve.

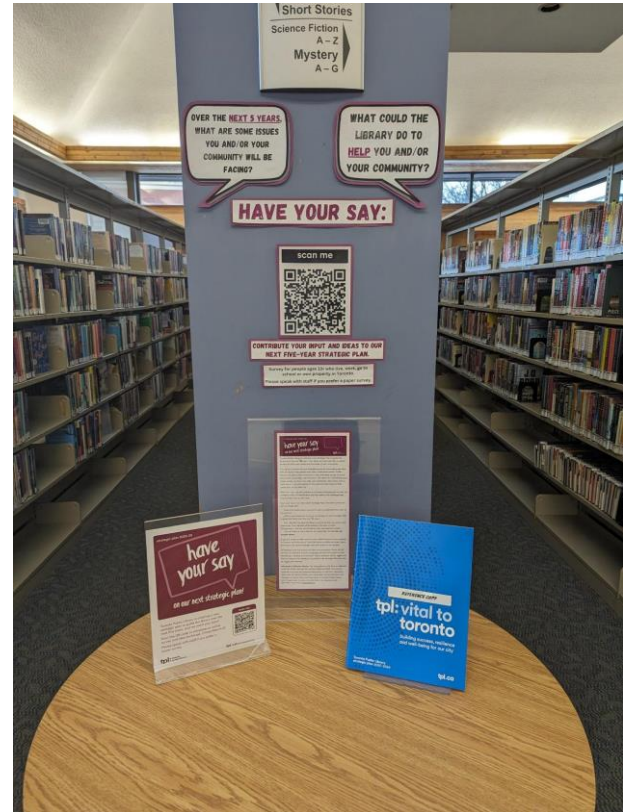
Language
English

translated by Google

Get started

awareness and promotion

- Digital communications (website, newsletter, social, City's webpage)
- Branch displays
- Community outreach
- Partner and stakeholder networks



participation



3,020

Participants



2,783

Thoughts



82,233

Ratings


participation breakdown

visits

In the past 12 (twelve) months, have you visited a branch of the Toronto Public Library, accessed the library online, visited any of the library's social media sites or contacted the library by telephone? Select all that apply.



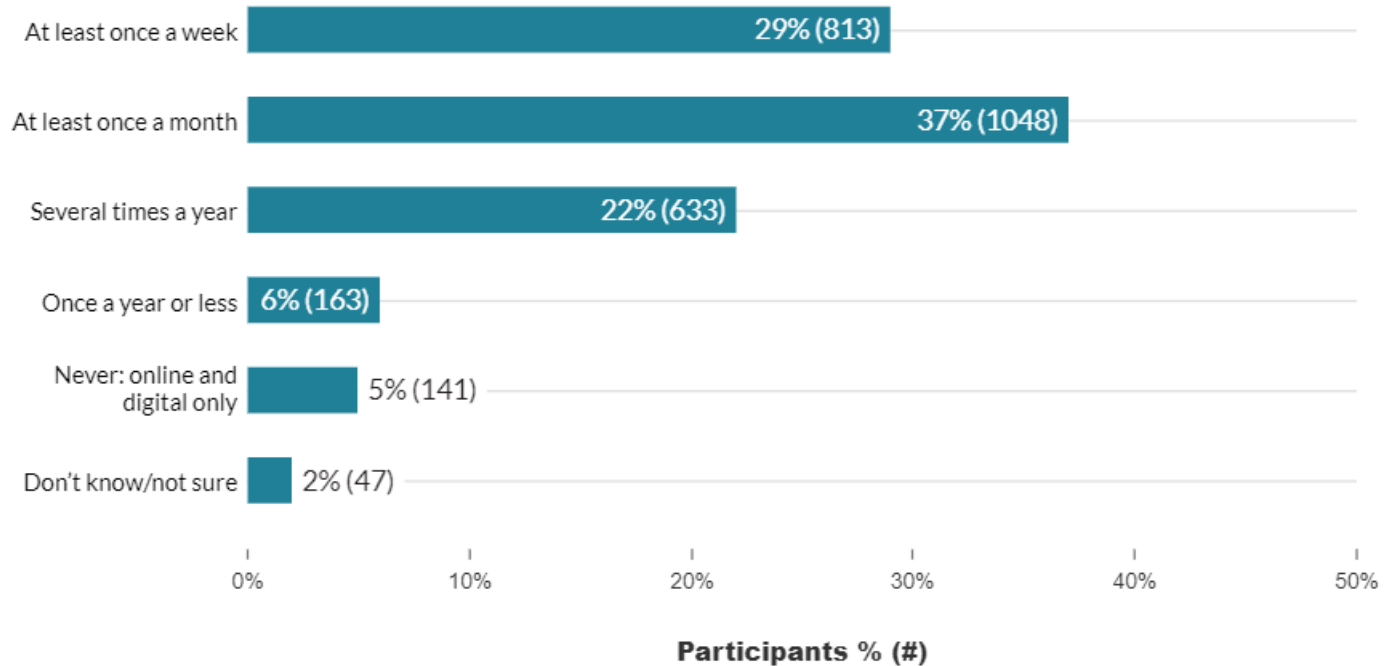
2870
Responses

%		Answer <i>(Multi-select)</i>
91%	(2619)	Yes, visited a library branch
84%	(2404)	Yes, visited the library's website
38%	(1091)	Yes, visited the library's Facebook page, X (Twitter), Instagram or other social media accounts
19%	(531)	Yes, contacted by phone
3%	(95)	No

participation breakdown

frequency of visits

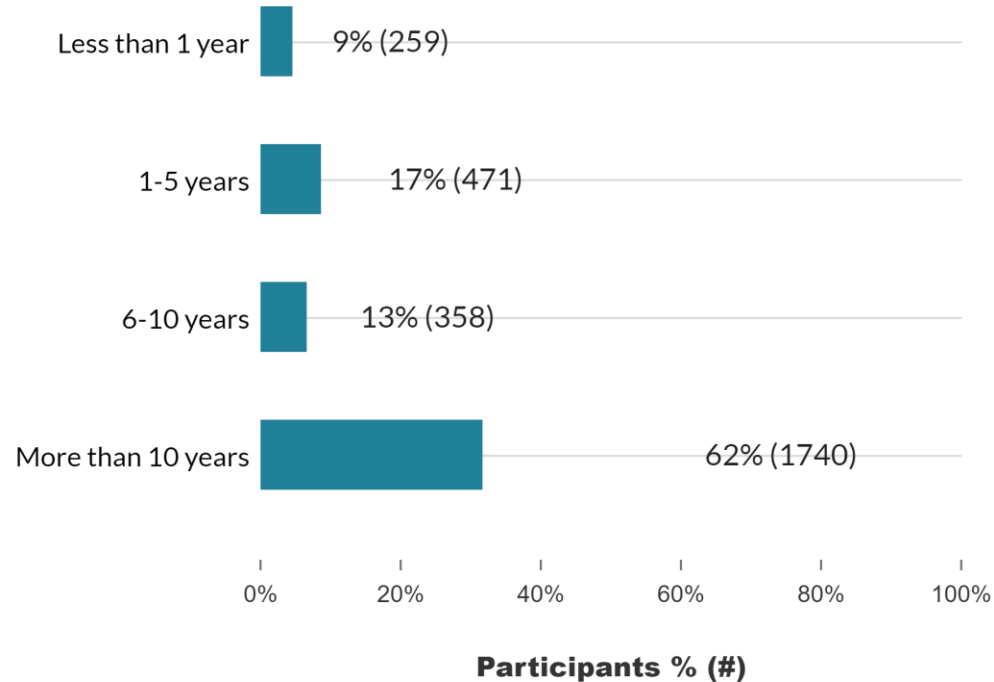
Within the past year, how often have you visited a branch in-person?



participation breakdown

library user

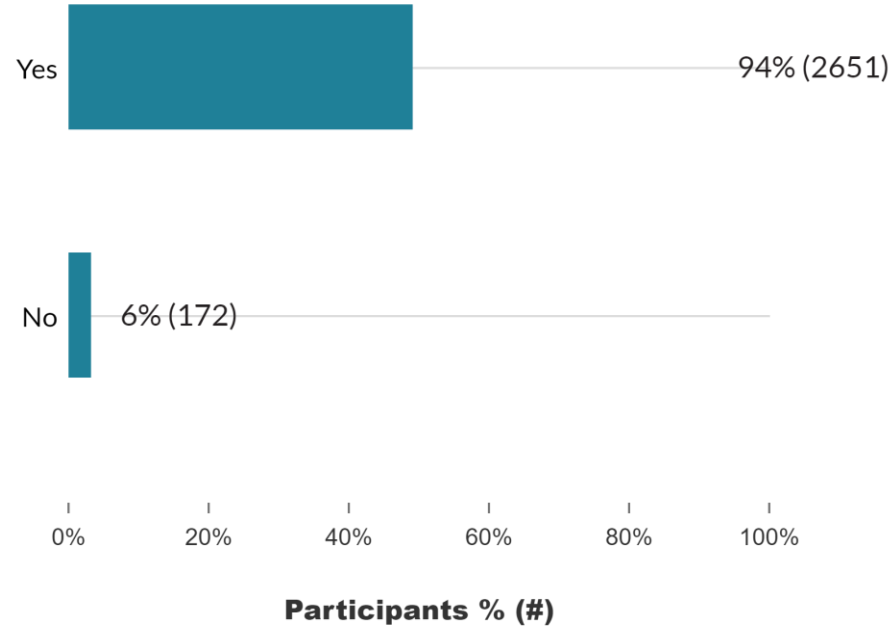
How long have you been a Toronto Public Library user?



participation breakdown

library cardholder


Do you have a library card?



participation breakdown

geographic location

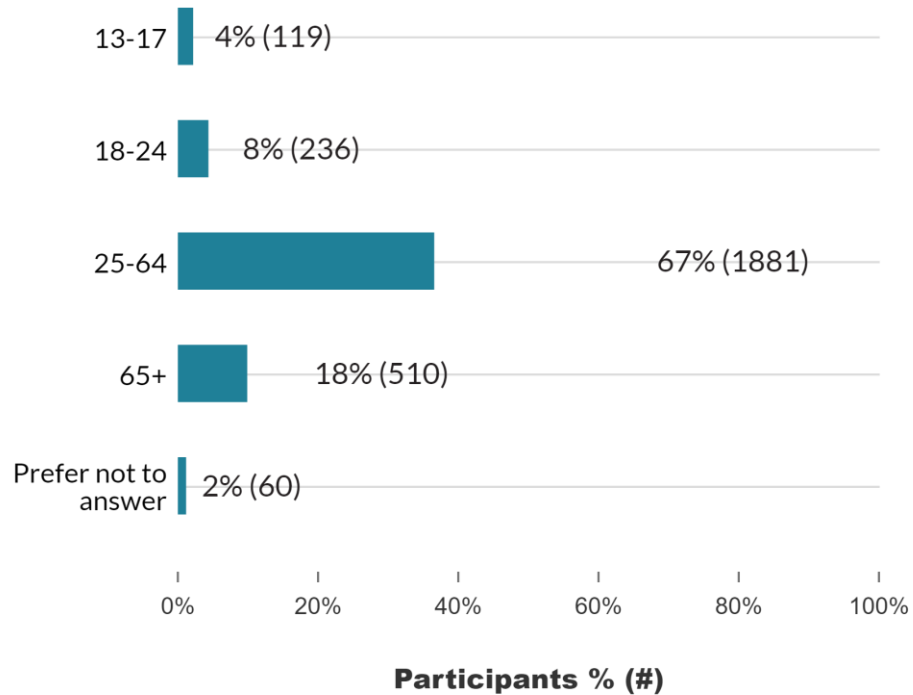
Which part of the city do you live, work or go to school in?

%		Answer
9%	(260)	East York
10%	(276)	Etobicoke
17%	(486)	North York
13%	(360)	Scarborough
36%	(1005)	Downtown Toronto
6%	(174)	York
9%	(246)	Other

participation breakdown

age


What is your age range?



participation breakdown

gender identity

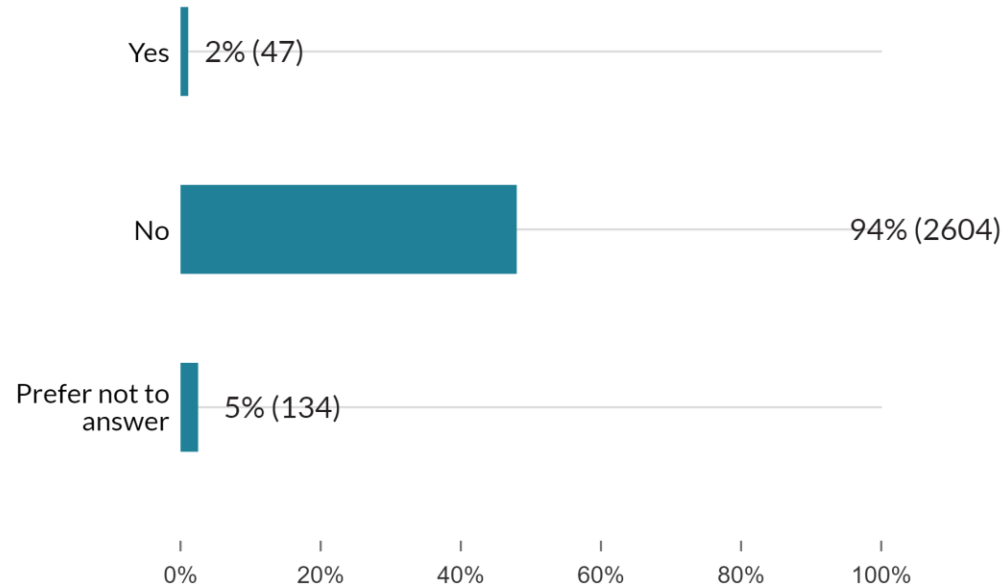
Gender identity is the gender that people identify with or how they perceive themselves, which may be different from their sex assigned at birth. What best describes your gender? Please select one only.

%		Answer
4%	(101)	Gender non-binary (including gender fluid, genderqueer, androgynous)
21%	(595)	Man
1%	(16)	Trans man
0%	(12)	Trans woman
68%	(1884)	Woman
6%	(157)	Prefer not to answer
1%	(26)	Other

participation breakdown

Indigenous identity


Indigenous people from Canada identify as First Nations (status, non-status, treaty or non-treaty), Inuit, Métis, Aboriginal, Native or Indian. Do you identify as Indigenous to Canada?



participation breakdown

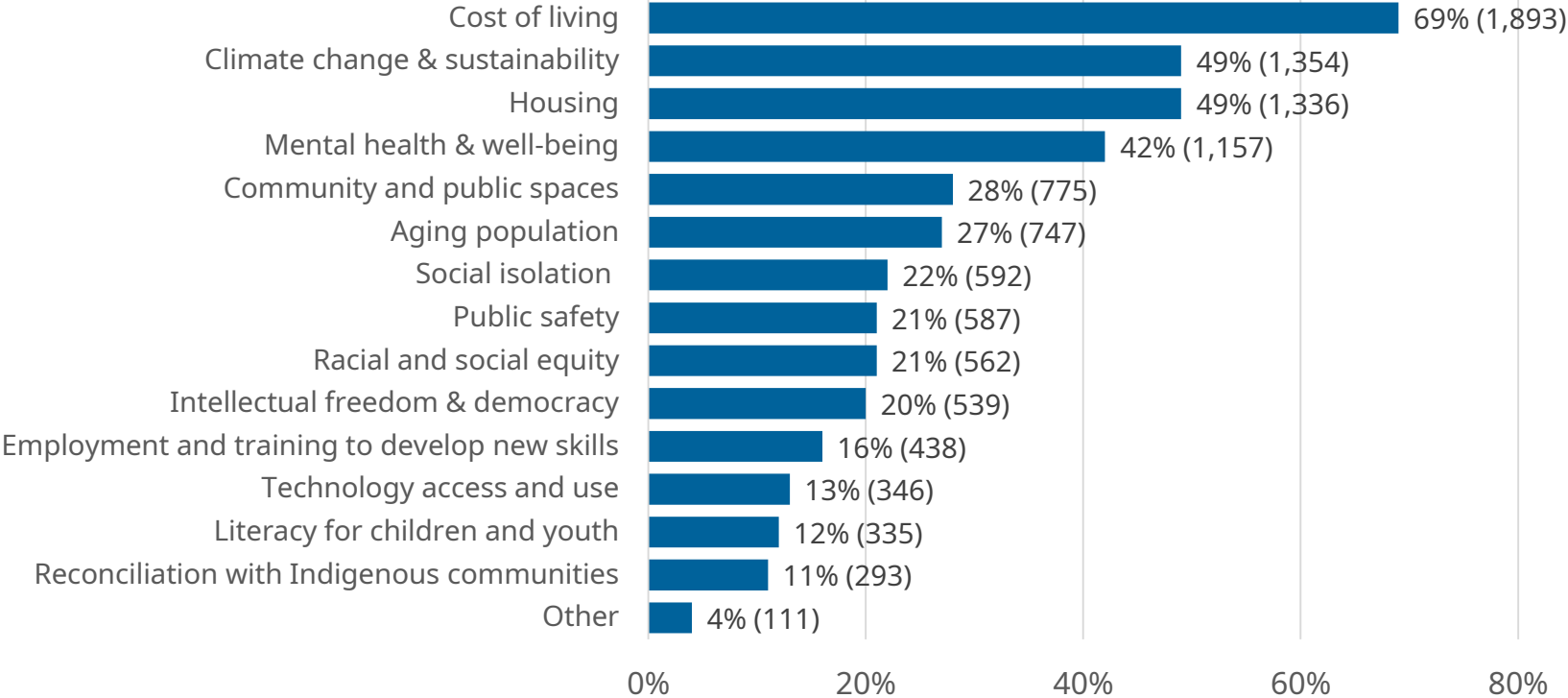
racial background

People often describe themselves by their race or racial background. For example, some people consider themselves "Black", "White" or "East Asian". Which race category best describes you?

%		Answer
3%	(74)	Arab, Middle Eastern or West Asian (examples: Afghan, Armenian, Iranian, Lebanese, Persian, Turkish)
4%	(101)	Black (examples: African, African-Canadian, Afro-Caribbean)
9%	(244)	East Asian (examples: Chinese, Japanese, Korean)
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53%	(1460)	White (examples: English, Greek, Italian, Portuguese, Russian, Slovakian)
5%	(144)	More than one race category or mixed-race
8%	(225)	Prefer not to answer
4%	(97)	Other

top public issues

Over the next 5 years, what are the most significant issues you and/or your community will be facing? Select the top three issues.



thoughts word cloud
top rated





thoughts

key thoughts

Keep doing what you're doing. We love the library. TPL is important for all of us as a public space free of judgement. As one of the few remaining indoor public spaces, libraries must be maintained.

4.5  (38 )
Ranked #1 of 2783



Please maintain wheelchair accessibility at all locations Wheelchair users deserve equitable access and should not need to ask for staff assistance or go through a hassle to enter

4.5  (37 )
Ranked #3 of 2783

I use the Home Library Program, as I am housebound with a chronic illness/disability. I've been using this service for years and it honestly makes my ...life so much better. Please just keep it up. Maybe more services for homebound library patrons, but I'm not sure what that would look like exactly.

4.4  (38 )
Ranked #6 of 2783

Open on Sundays It is a day when many families are together and we would love to be at the library together.

4.4  (37 )
Ranked #9 of 2783

Remain focused on providing access to printed materials and space to read, study or have community gatherings. Libraries act as important community hubs but need to remain spaces for printed media and literacy.

4.4  (30 )
Ranked #15 of 2783

qualitative analysis methodology

- We coded and analyzed over 2,700 thoughts using qualitative data analysis tools in ThoughtExchange.
- Results will be analyzed by total number of thoughts and rating of thoughts.

- Example:

Theme = # of thoughts

= average rating e.g. 3.9 out of 5

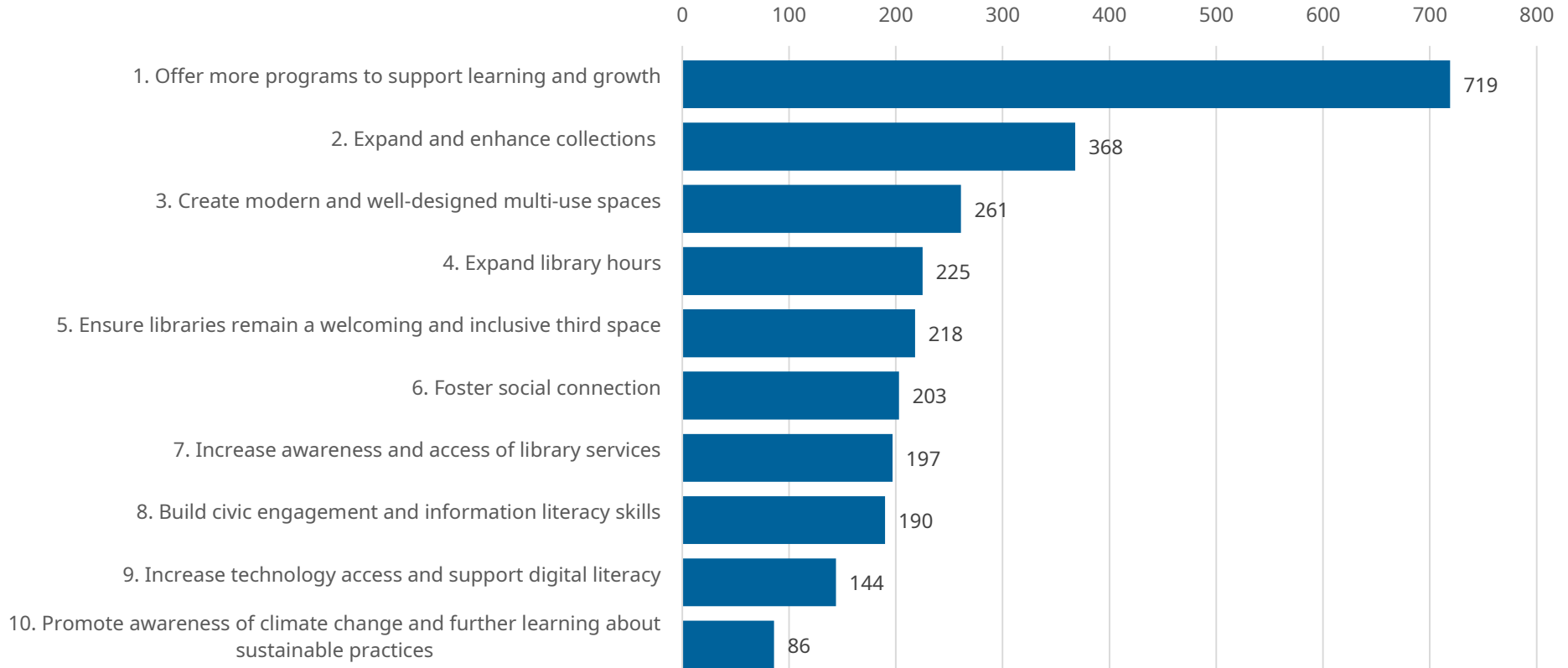
idea exchange

What could the library do to help you and/or your community?
This could be a new idea, something we can do more of or improve.

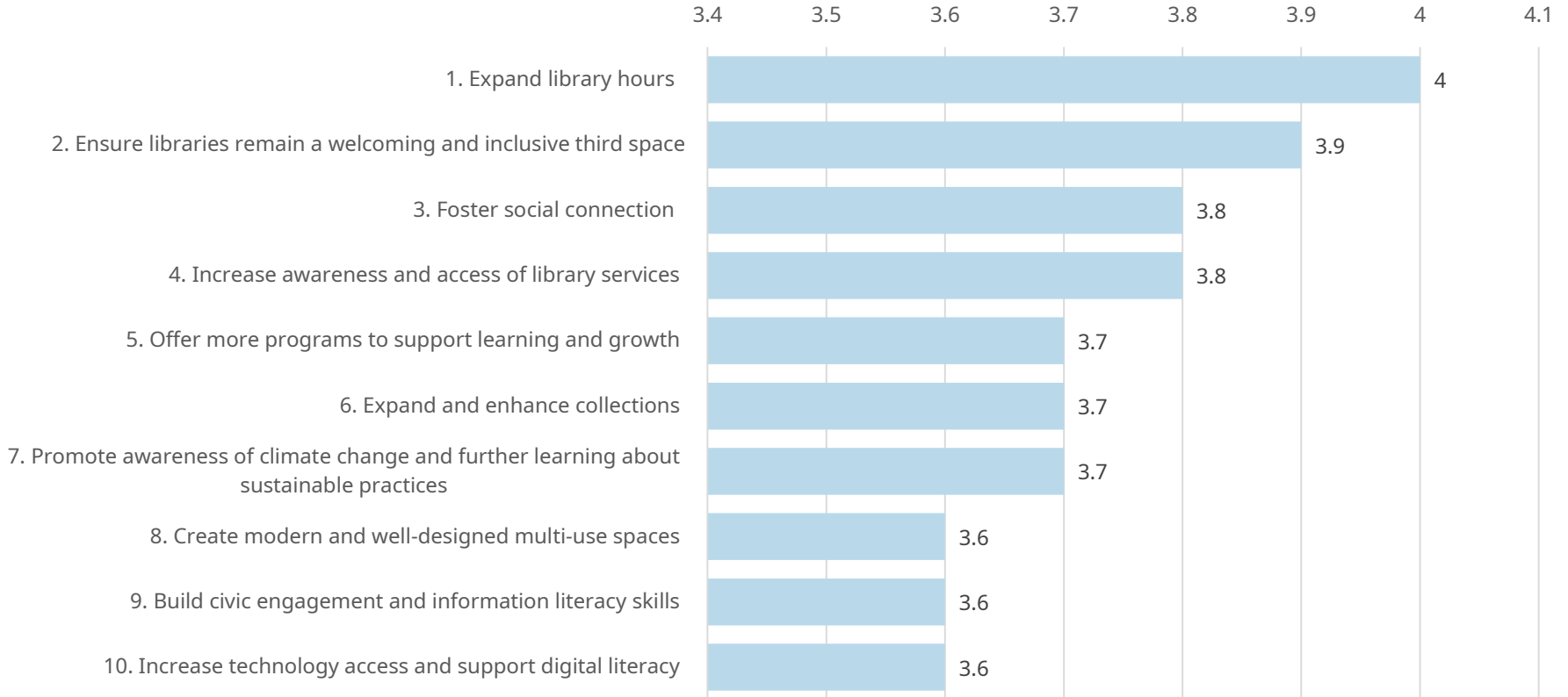
Based on the analysis, **ten themes** were identified.

Theme	Number of thoughts	Average rating
1. Offer more programs to support learning and growth	719	3.7
2. Expand and enhance collections	368	3.7
3. Create modern and well-designed multi-use spaces	261	3.6
4. Expand library hours	225	4.0
5. Ensure libraries remain a welcoming and inclusive third space	218	3.9
6. Foster social connection	203	3.8
7. Increase awareness and access of library services	197	3.8
8. Build civic engagement and information literacy skills	190	3.6
9. Increase technology access and support digital literacy	144	3.6
10. Promote awareness of climate change and further learning about sustainable practices	86	3.7

themes by total number of thoughts



themes by average rating



1. offer more programs

719 thoughts | 3.7 rating

Comments focused on the library's role in providing access to knowledge and skills development for everyone in the community. Residents shared that TPL should continue to develop a broad range of engaging programs that cater to individuals of all ages, while ensuring they continue to be free to attend. Program topics should include job search skills, financial literacy, reading literacy and arts and culture.

Sub-theme	Sample thoughts	Number of thoughts	Average rating
Offer more programs	"Continue providing workshops, resources, lectures to engage the public."	332	3.8
Reading literacy	"More reading programs for children and youth."	124	3.9
Job search and financial literacy	"Adults need training to improve job security or retraining."	88	3.7
Arts and culture	"Drop in arts programming for all ages. Let's create something together."	65	3.8

2. expand & enhance collections

368 thoughts | 3.7 rating

Comments focused on the library's role in providing all community members access to information and ideas through access to a range of different formats. Residents shared that TPL should continue to develop innovative and diverse collections that cater to the interests and needs of the community.

Sub-theme	Sample thoughts	Number of thoughts	Average rating
Physical collections	"Please continue stocking more new physical books. I don't want ebooks only!"	142	3.7
Electronic collections	"Continue to increase the number of digital copies of books on Libby."	103	3.7
Library of things	"Continue sharing resources like the instrument library, tool library, etc."	64	3.6

3. modern & well-designed multi-use spaces

261 thoughts | 3.6 rating

Library users expressed the need for modern and multi-use library spaces that can cater to their diverse needs, that are well-maintained and physically accessible. They highlighted the importance of having different types of work and study areas, such as group study rooms, quiet spaces, and collaborative spaces. Comments also focused on co-locating libraries to combine various services and resources within a shared physical space.

Sub-theme	Sample thoughts	Number of thoughts	Average rating
Work and study spaces	"As a student, I would love it if more libraries have spaces for students to study/get work done. More desks would be great. This vibe motivates me."	106	3.7
Modern library spaces	"Keep library buildings up-to-date and renovate where needed."	74	3.5
Co-location	"TPL could support "mini-libraries" in condos with older residents."	32	3.3

4. expand library hours

225 thoughts | 4.0 rating

Comments focused on expanding library hours to provide Torontonians with a place to visit, attend programs, study, work and learn during evenings and weekends in order to increase access to TPL's many services and respond to the diverse needs and schedules of library users.

Sub-theme	Sample thoughts	Number of thoughts	Average rating
Longer hours	"Longer hours. Hours of branches in my area are not convenient."	139	3.9
Sundays	"Sunday is a day when many families are together and we would love to be at the library together."	54	4.1
Evening and weekend programs	"More programs for children open on Sundays, especially Sunday morning."	32	3.9

5. ensure libraries remain a third space

218 thoughts | 3.9 rating

Comments focused on the library as a collaborative and community space especially during times of financial constraints. Torontonians see the library as a welcoming and inclusive "third space" for individuals to visit outside of work and home. Residents shared that the Library should continue to provide a fair and equal opportunity for everyone, regardless of their social or economic status.

Sub-theme	Sample thoughts	Number of thoughts	Average rating
Free public space	"Continue to be a free and public space for all. There are less and less free places to go in the city and feel accepted."	58	4.1
Welcoming and safe space	"Continue to be a safe space!"	40	4.0

6. foster social connection

203 thoughts | 3.8 rating

Comments focused on the library's role in fostering social and community connection through various means, such as offering social activities and programs, hosting community gatherings and providing space for community groups to meet.

Sub-theme	Sample thoughts	Number of thoughts	Average rating
Social activities and programs	"More social activities for adults that aren't "How to do your taxes."	89	3.8
Community gatherings	"Have new to neighbourhood meetings."	58	3.8
Community room bookings	"Free room booking or meeting spaces for resident-led groups."	56	3.7

7. increase awareness & access

197 thoughts | 3.8 rating

While TPL provides a wide range of valuable services and resources that can greatly benefit its residents, comments focused on how TPL can do more to promote and create awareness of these services so that Torontonians can take full advantage of them. Comments also focused on ensuring a broad range of services are available in all neighbourhoods throughout the city.

Sub-theme	Sample thoughts	Number of thoughts	Average rating
Service awareness	"More broadly advertise the incredible services that you have!"	85	3.8
Service availability	"Libraries should expand services to ensure equitable program availability."	43	3.8
Website content discovery	"Improve website by adding a program and event calendar and ability to see program registrations in My Account."	36	3.6

8. civic engagement & information literacy

190 thoughts | 3.6 rating

Comments focused on how TPL should expand its leadership role in protecting access to reliable information, building information literacy skills and defending intellectual freedom. Comments include offering opportunities for Torontonians to explore and discuss diverse perspectives, engage in dialogue and learn about civic issues facing their communities.

Sub-theme	Sample thoughts	Number of thoughts	Average rating
Civic engagement	"Continue to provide accessible space for people to read and think."	63	3.6
Intellectual freedom	"Remain committed to freedom of speech and expression."	53	3.6
Information literacy	"Help communities combat misinformation."	35	3.8

9. technology access & digital literacy

144 thoughts | 3.6 rating

Comments focused on the importance for libraries to provide access to both basic and advanced technology in order to keep up with the constantly changing digital landscape. Residents shared that the Library should continue to play a crucial role in helping customers acquire the necessary skills to navigate the digital world, and supporting digital literacy and media skills.

Sub-theme	Sample thoughts	Number of thoughts	Average rating
Digital literacy	"Provide learning opportunities for seniors, especially technology."	64	3.7
Technology access	"Better availability and access to advancing technologies and overall services."	50	3.6

10. climate change & sustainable practices

86 thoughts | 3.7 rating

Residents shared that libraries should play a significant role in promoting awareness of climate change and building community resilience and sustainable development. Comments include expanding library services to include outdoor spaces and gardens, as well as environmental and sustainable programs such as a seed sharing initiatives.

Sub-theme	Sample thoughts	Number of thoughts	Average rating
Environmental and sustainable programs	"Partner with Repair Café TO to run a sustainability program."	37	3.7
Outdoor space	"Activities in outdoor spaces. Emphasize well-being and importance of natural environments."	26	3.9
Sustainable practice	"The library could promote sustainability practices by hosting environmental scientists and other advocates to give speeches and seminars."	23	3.4

unique thoughts

- “Increase cyber security. The recent cyber attack was extremely disruptive, and preventing future attacks is vitally important to maintaining access to services.” – 4.3 rating
- “Expand the tpl:map program. Add more museums and cultural venues to this amazing program. For some of us, this is the only way we can afford to go to these places.” – 4.2 rating
- “Water fountains/coolers or water-bottle refill stations in every branch.” – 4.2 rating
- “Select materials using the knowledge of library staff, not algorithms. Algorithms get a collection based on the lowest common denominator. Your marvelous library staff seek out the material we didn't even know we want.” – 4.2 rating
- “More volunteer programs. There should be more clearly available opportunities to volunteer at the library with low barrier to entry.” – 3.8 rating
- “More programs that help citizens learn how to make and create to save money (e.g., making your own food sauces, learning how to fix things at home).” – 3.7 rating

public consultation themes

1. Offer more programs to support learning and growth
2. Expand and evolve collections
3. Create modern and well-designed multi-use spaces
4. Expand library hours
5. Ensure libraries remain a welcoming and inclusive third space
6. Foster social connection
7. Increase awareness and access of library services
8. Build civic engagement and information literacy skills
9. Increase technology access and support digital literacy
10. Promote awareness of climate change and further learning about sustainable practices

discussion questions

- Is there anything that stood out or surprised you?
- Does this align with your understanding of the challenges that the city is currently facing?

break





phase two consultation focus areas

our vision

Toronto Public Library will be recognized as the world's leading library by informing and inspiring Toronto and its communities, making us all more resilient, more knowledgeable, more connected and more successful.

our mission

Toronto Public Library provides free and equitable access to services which meet the changing needs of Torontonians. The Library preserves and promotes universal access to a broad range of human knowledge, experience, information and ideas in a welcoming and supportive environment.

our values

Equity
Diversity
Intellectual Freedom
Innovation
Inclusion
Integrity
Accountability
Service Orientation

our commitment statements

equity

reconciliation

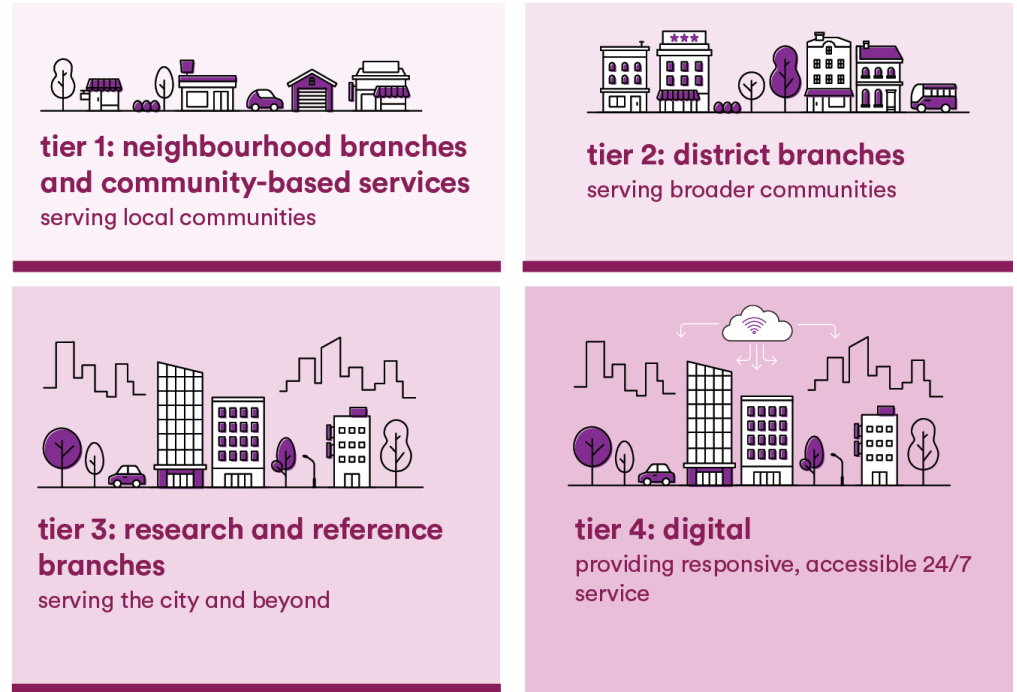
intellectual
freedom

service delivery model

six library service pillars



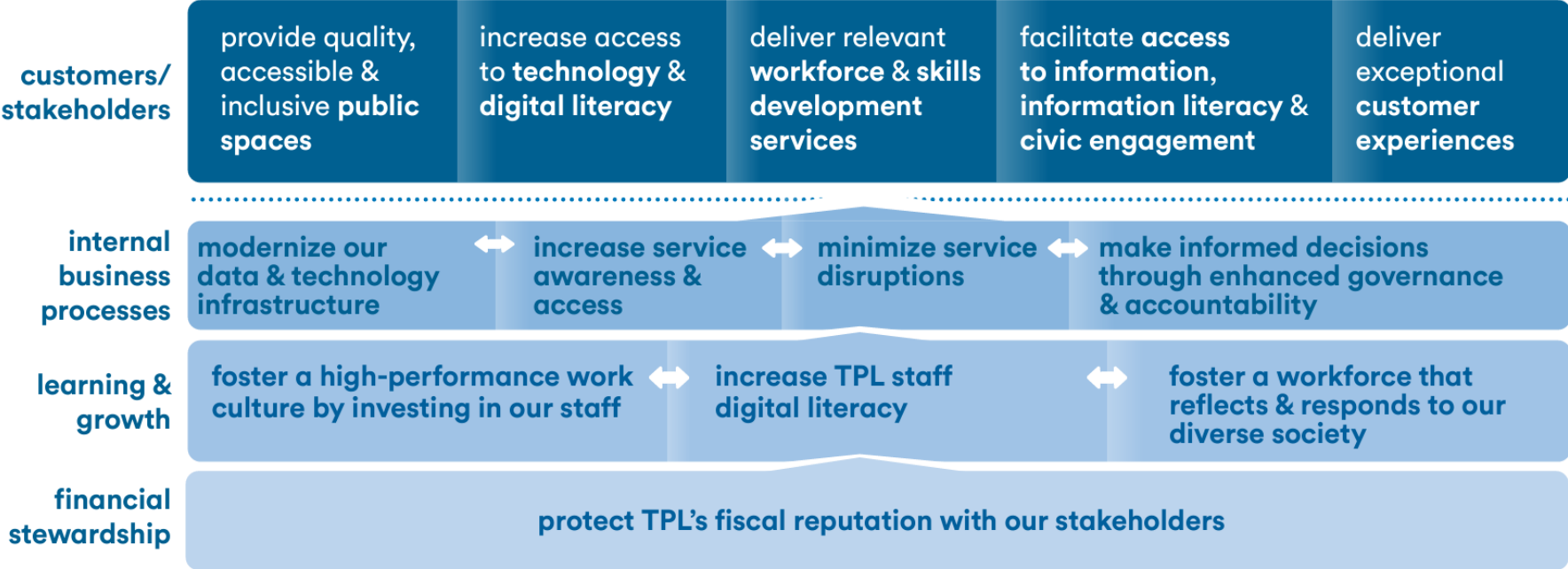
four tiers of service delivery



strategic plan development process



strategy map



environmental scan findings

1. Increasing inequity
2. Technology and digital literacy
3. Cost of living
4. Social connections
5. Library as a public space

staff consultation themes

1. Addressing the digital divide
2. Providing welcoming spaces
3. Supporting vulnerable persons
4. Developing skills to address cost of living crisis
5. Creating community connections
6. Fostering literacy and lifelong learning
7. Building staff capacity
8. Improving public safety

top public issues

1. Cost of living
2. Climate change & sustainability
3. Housing
4. Mental health & well-being

public consultation themes

1. Offer more programs to support learning and growth
2. Expand and enhance collections
3. Create modern and well-designed multi-use spaces
4. Expand library hours
5. Ensure libraries remain a welcoming and inclusive third space
6. Foster social connection
7. Increase awareness and access of library services
8. Build civic engagement and information literacy skills
9. Increase technology access and support digital literacy
10. Promote awareness of climate change and further learning about sustainable practices

inputs for phase two focus areas

		Research & Phase One Consultation Inputs				
		Environmental scan findings	Staff consultation themes	Public top issues	Public consultation themes	
Phase Two Consultation Focus Areas	1 Awareness and availability of library services		✓		✓	Build staff capacity Equity
	2 Democracy, civic engagement and information literacy				✓	
	3 Cost of living and well-being	✓	✓	✓		
	4 Reading, learning and skills development		✓		✓	
	5 Environmental sustainability			✓	✓	
	6 Social and community connections	✓	✓		✓	
	7 Technology and digital inclusion	✓	✓		✓	
	8 Welcoming and inclusive public spaces to meet and work	✓	✓		✓	

focus areas for phase two

1. Awareness and availability of library services
2. Democracy, civic engagement and information literacy
3. Cost of living and well-being
4. Reading, learning and skills development
5. Environmental sustainability
6. Social and community connections
7. Technology and digital inclusion
8. Welcoming and inclusive public spaces to meet and work



phase two consultation plan

purpose

- The purpose of the second consultation phase is to validate and prioritize the focus areas and identify potential action items to execute on the plan.
- Target audiences for the second phase include all staff, underrepresented audiences from the first phase of public consultations, community partners, industry experts, and stakeholders.
- This phase is scheduled to begin in June and conclude in August.

key highlights and tactics

- Staff engagement survey and focus group consultation sessions;
- Public engagement survey;
- A consultation toolkit for use at library and community events to engage residents and community partners in neighbourhoods across the city;
- Focus groups with targeted and underrepresented audiences, e.g. non-library users, equity-deserving groups, vulnerable persons;
- Expert panels on social connectedness and technology;
- Engagement with City Councillors and City of Toronto staff;
- Stakeholder meetings, e.g. Local 4948 and TPL Foundation;
- A benchmarking public survey of residents conducted by a third party.

phase two survey questions

1. Where should the library focus in the next five years? Rank the following focus areas based on their importance to you and/or your community.
2. What can the library do to support the top three focus areas you identified? This could be a new idea, something we can do more of or improve.

workshop format

- You will be divided into two groups and assigned 4 focus areas
- Assign a scribe
- Assign a reporter
- 20 minutes to discuss
- 5 minutes to report on key points from your discussion

discussion questions

- What unique value can the library add in these focus areas?
- What information should the library gather in the second consultation phase to ensure we are being responsive to changing community needs in these focus areas?



next steps

tpl:

october meeting

- Review results of phase two consultations
- SWOT analysis and Scenario Planning results
- Draft Strategic Priorities
- Draft Strategic Plan and Implementation Plan

recommendations

The City Librarian recommends that the Strategic Planning Steering Committee:

1. receive the first phase of external consultation results outlined in the report (Attachment 1); and
2. Approve the focus areas for the second consultation phase resulting from the May 3, 2024 strategy session and recommends it to the Library Board for implementation (Attachment 2).



thank you
questions?

tpl: