

2024 User Survey Findings

West Vancouver Residents



In April 2024, we surveyed West Vancouver Memorial Library users to ensure we are responding to the needs of our patrons and community. Within the total pool of responses, **1,466 respondents self-identified as West Vancouver residents**, an increase of 18% over the last such survey, conducted in 2019.

This analysis revealed a healthy and thriving library service that is valued by residents, and in particular, **strong use of and appreciation for staff-supported services.**



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KEY FINDINGS

- Qualitative feedback reflects the Library’s **strong impact on personal wellbeing** across multiple factors.
- **86%** of respondents visit the Library **once a month or more**.
- The way people use the Library **changes throughout the lifespan**.
- **Our highest-rated service is our staff**. From tech help, to readers advisory, to reference, to help with using the Library and its collections, our staff were highly appreciated. We received **hundreds of positive comments** on staff services in this survey, and each year we also field thousands of such comments.
- **Collections were our most-used service**, including getting staff help to locate items (92%), accessing recently published books (89%), or using the broad selection of materials (85%). **The impact of this service is felt long after the library visit has concluded, as people engage in self-directed learning and enrichment at home**.
- **Library spaces** were also important, with 83% of respondents using quiet spaces for individual activities and 71% using lounge spaces to socialize and connect with others.
- **The separate non-user analysis** revealed somewhat lower rates of use in the Western and northern areas of the District, correlated with distance and language factors.
- **The *Time to Grow!* youth space planning consultation and Youth-friendly North Shore independent analysis, in addition to the user survey data**, revealed a strong connection between youth and the Library, and some specific needs including improved spaces and more support for programming for a variety of age groups. The Library’s kids programming is extremely popular and fills up quickly, while teen options are limited.

At the end of the survey, a final **open comment area** asked for any and all feedback, and **close to 700 comments** were received. For this question:

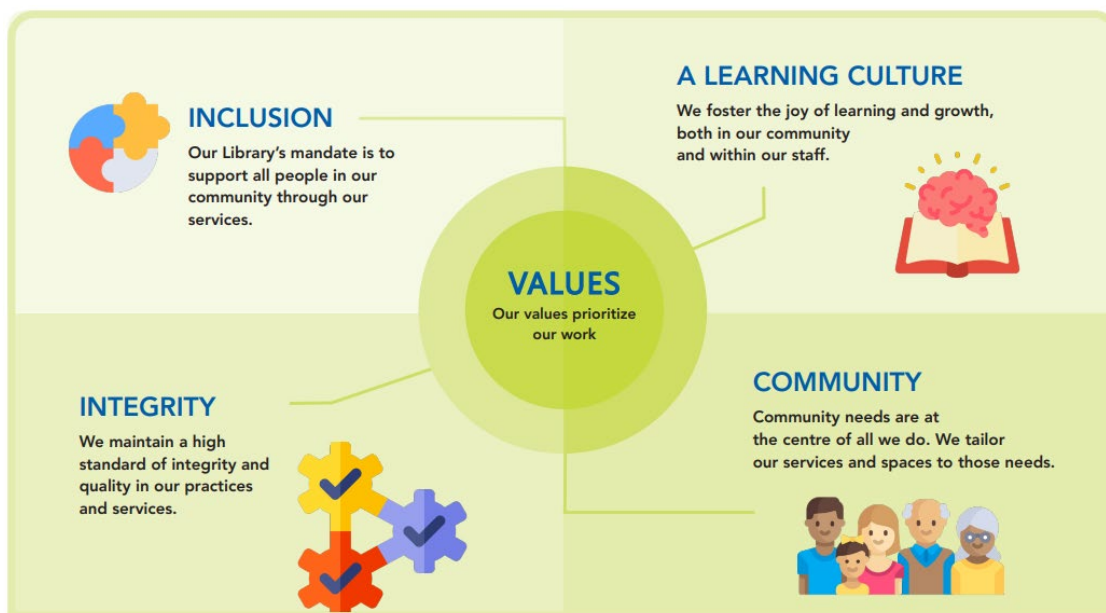
- **61%** of comments received were compliments, with the largest category being overall/general, and the next being staff-related.
- **26%** of comments received **were asking for more**—more space, more open hours, more collections (particularly more copies of books in demand), and more programs.
- **7% of comments were negative** and **7% were mixed**. Topics in these categories were varied and included: collections availability and selections, parking, political opinions, finding a quiet spot to study, and a desire for some updated areas. Some comments on the survey itself called it too lengthy. Mixed comments often had some strong positives embedded along with suggestions for improvement.



THEMES

WVML Core Values

The WVML has four core values which are also our priorities in service delivery:



Libraries & Well-Being: New York Public Library's groundbreaking study

Just as we prepared to release our findings from the survey, an important study was released by the New York Public Library and the University of Pennsylvania, called Libraries & Well-Being ([access the study here](#)). This study looked at factors of well-being based on Dr. Martin Seligman's PERMA model (Positive emotion, Engagement, Relationships, Meaning, and Accomplishment). This is a landmark in library assessment and will likely influence public libraries internationally for years to come. In light of this work, though obviously we can't retroactively alter our survey questions, we have reviewed our open-text survey findings to highlight qualitative feedback in these areas.

The PERMA model's five building blocks of well-being were evaluated in the NYPL study through their sub-factors as follows:

<i>Positive emotion</i>	<i>Engagement</i>	<i>Relationships</i>	<i>Meaning</i>	<i>Accomplishment</i>
<i>Comfort Joy</i>	<i>Discovery Inspiration Enrichment</i>	<i>Connection Care Support</i>	<i>Knowledge Reflection Purpose</i>	<i>Productivity</i>



In addition, the study talks about creating a **strong foundation for well-being** (through factors like *stability, safety, refuge, escape, peace, and focus*) and about **how libraries promote personal development beyond wellbeing** (these are concepts of *expansion and growth*).

Weaving the Themes Together

These two sets of themes don't quite map perfectly. For convenience we'll talk about them in the following sections:

WVML Value	PERMA Model
INTEGRITY: We maintain a high standard of integrity and quality in our practices and services.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• <i>Positive Emotion</i>• <i>Foundation for Well-being</i>• <i>Accomplishment</i>
A LEARNING CULTURE: We foster the joy of learning and growth, both in our community and within our staff.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• <i>Engagement</i>• <i>Personal Development</i>• <i>Meaning</i>
COMMUNITY: Community needs are at the centre of all we do. We tailor our services and spaces to those needs.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• <i>Relationships</i>
INCLUSION: Our Library's mandate is to support everyone in our community through our services.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• <i>Relationships</i>

With the inter-connectedness of these themes in mind, we will categorize the 2024 User Survey Findings by our values: **community, inclusion, learning, and integrity** and refer to the PERMA model throughout the report.

When analyzing the data, we took a curiosity-based approach, comparing majority behaviours to smaller population segments, like the 19 and under group, the 70+ group, people reporting disabilities and chronic conditions, people who speak a first language other than English, and men. **These contrasts begin to paint a portrait of diverse usership and needs.**





COMMUNITY

Community needs are at the centre of all we do. We tailor our services and spaces to those needs.

West Vancouver is a mid-sized urban District Municipality with a population that tends to be older and more affluent than the BC average, with higher levels of educational attainment. Significant portions of the community cite Persian or Chinese languages as their first language. The community places a high value on learning and has consistently supported a thriving and high-quality library service for over seven decades.

The Library is located in a central, higher density area with a high proportion of seniors and people living alone. The District extends over 87 square kilometres, from the Capilano River to Horseshoe Bay, on the traditional and unceded territory of the Coast Salish Peoples, including the Skwxwú7mesh Úxwumixw (Squamish Nation), sə́lílwətaʔt (Tsleil-Waututh Nation), and xʷməθkʷəy̓əm (Musqueam Nation).

Demographics of Survey Respondents

Although we received a large overall response, it’s important to know that the sample analyzed in this report is not random—it’s entirely composed of 1,466 library users who are West Vancouver residents. We sifted this group out from a larger sample of 3,089 responses. Around a thousand respondents in this larger group did not answer the question on residency, while 17% were North Vancouver residents and 6% lived in Vancouver. Findings of this broader group have also been reviewed internally and provided additional insights.

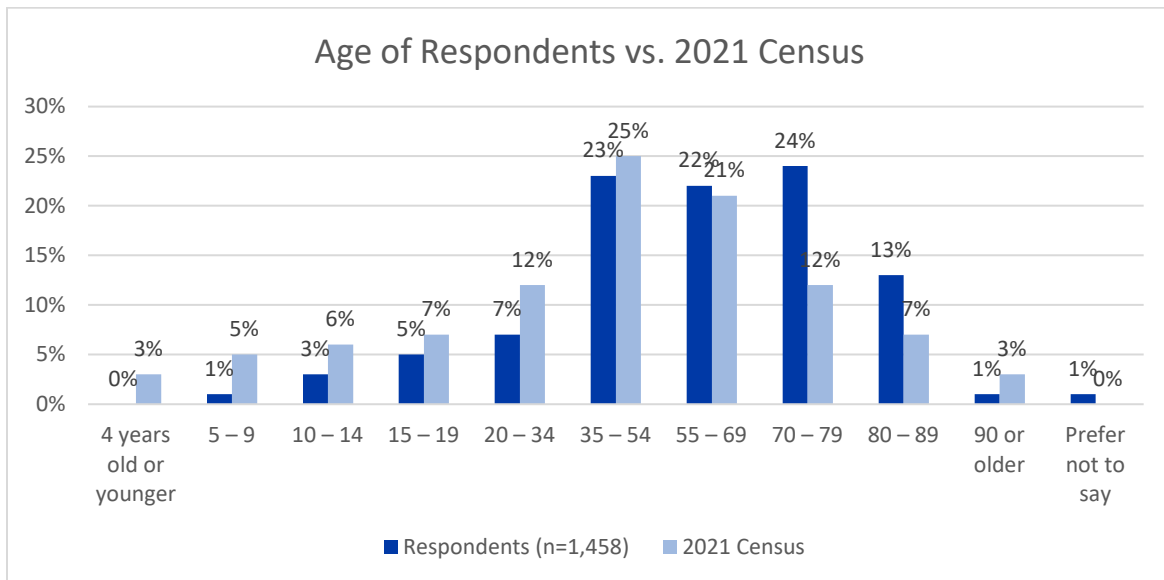
Many of the respondents were **long-term residents of West Vancouver**, with deep roots in the community.

How long have you lived in West Vancouver?	Percent
Less than 1 year	7%
1 – 5 years	18%
6 – 10 years	12%
11 – 20 years	16%
More than 20 years	47%

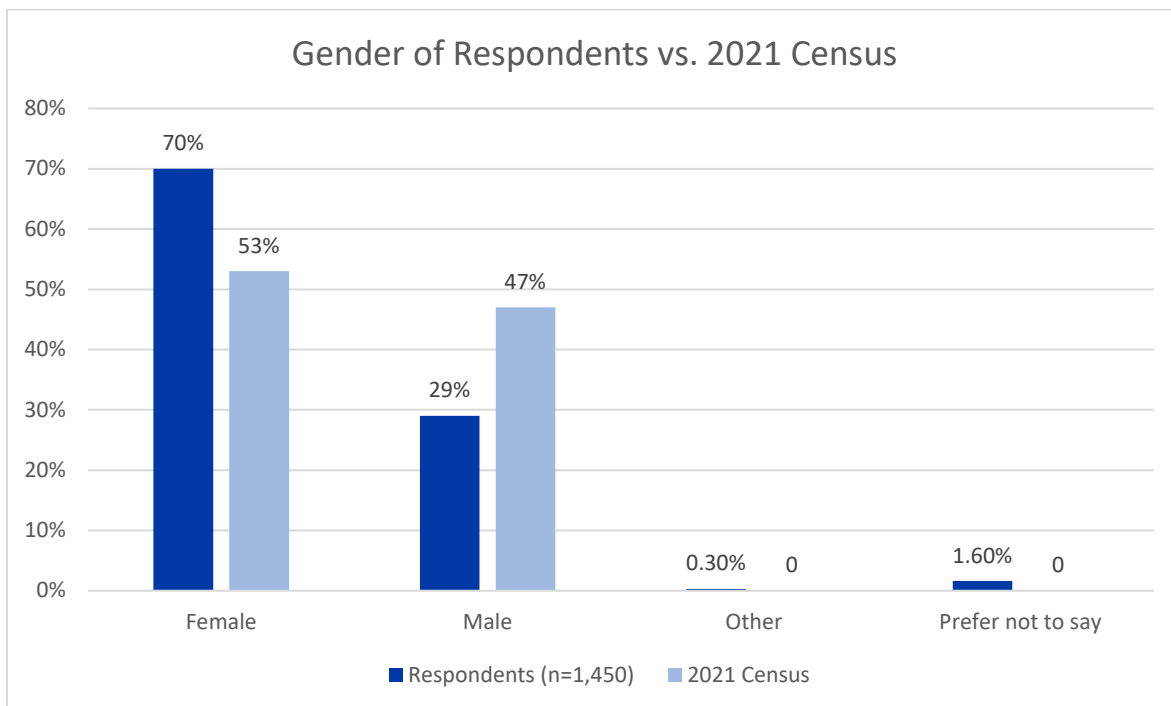


The West Vancouver residents-only sample used in this report also differs from trends we see in the Statistics Canada Census for West Vancouver.

Respondents generally skewed **older** than the Census averages, with 37% of our respondents in their 70s or 80s, versus 19% of the total population of West Vancouver.



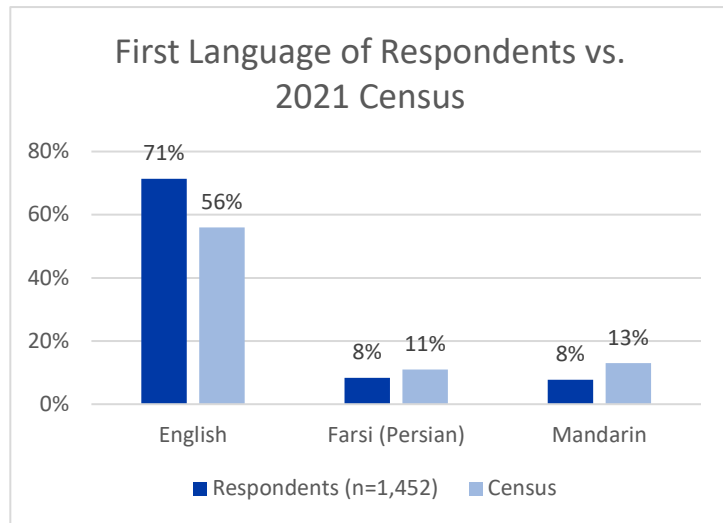
70% identified as **female**, compared to the Census average of 53%.



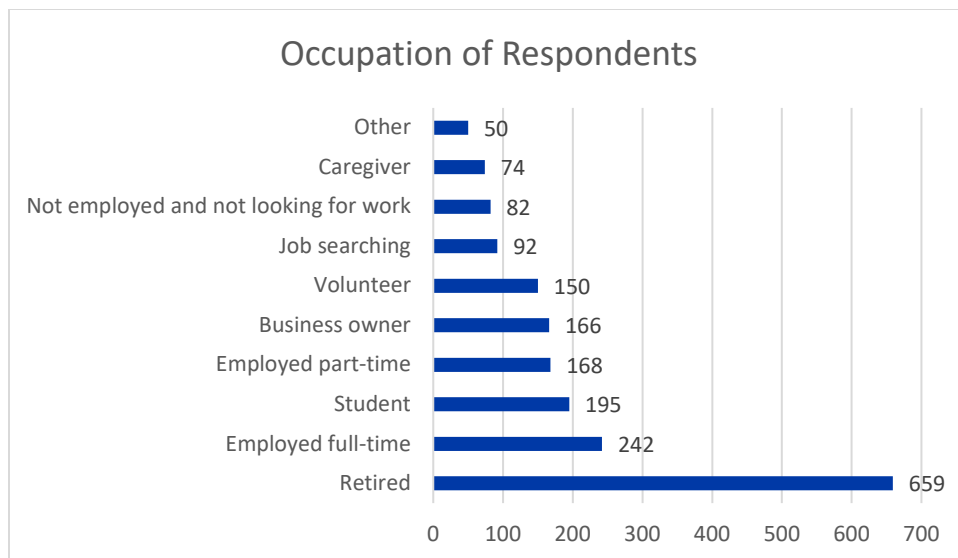


71% listed **English** as their first language.

First language	Percent
English	71%
Farsi (Persian)	8%
Mandarin	8%
Other or prefer not to say	3%
German	2%
French	1%
Cantonese	1%
Korean	1%
Spanish	1%



Although the survey was translated and promoted in both Persian and Chinese, response rates were lower than average from respondents who cited a language other than English as their first language. For example, in the 2021 Canadian Census, 11% of West Vancouver residents cited an Iranian language as their mother tongue, while 13% cited Mandarin. One issue in this area could have been question wording, as one resident informed us that using the word 'Farsi' does not correctly reflect the language spoken by the majority of Persian speakers in our area. This is very important to correct in any future surveys.

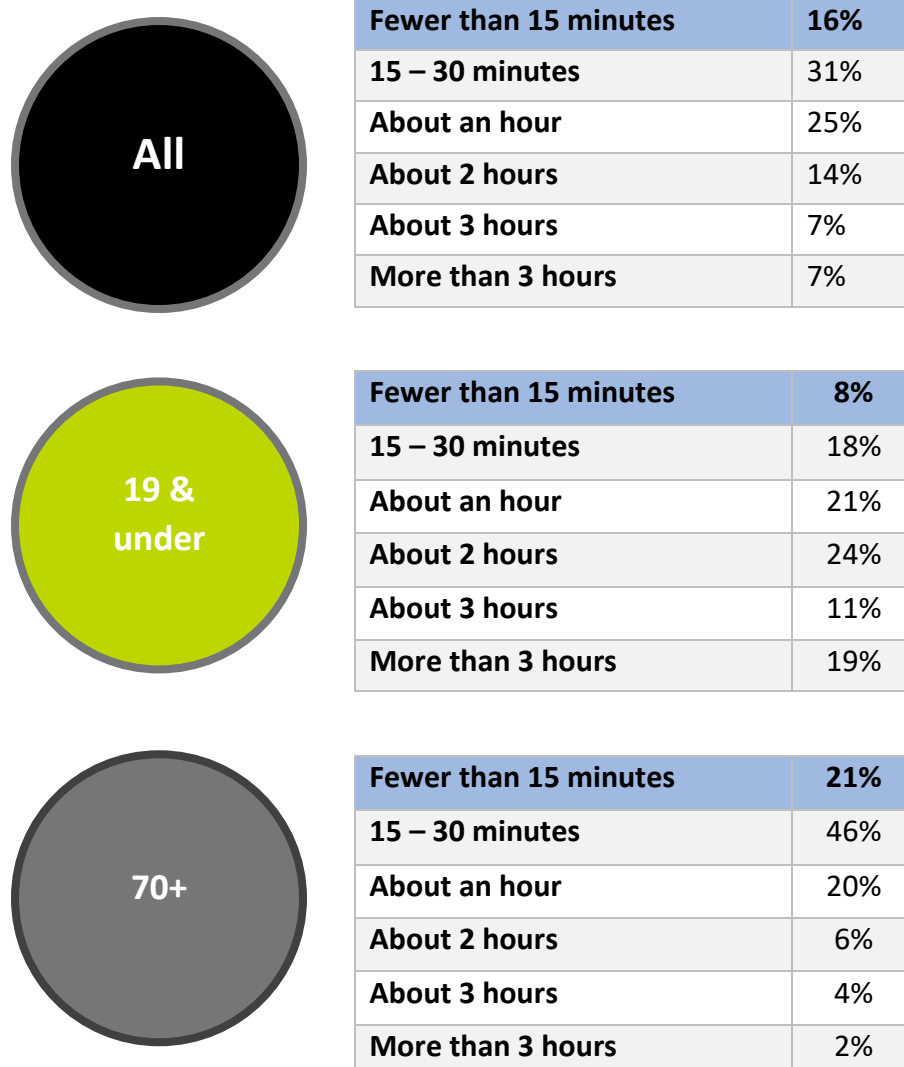




Changes through the Lifespan

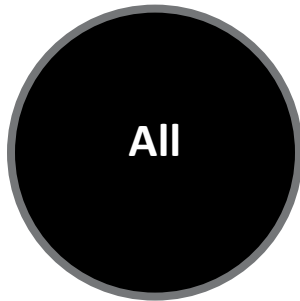
Consistent with previous versions of this survey, we once again saw differences in how people use the Library through the lifespan. One example of this is length of stay, where younger visitors are generally staying longer. Looking at the general or overall resident response, we see that 28% of visitors expected to stay at the Library for two hours or more. Meanwhile, for those 19 and under, that percentage jumped to 54%, or more than half. In fact, **75% of that age group intended to stay for at least one hour**. Looking at the 70+ age group, we can see the percentage planning to stay for two hours or more plummets to 12%.

How long did you expect to be at the Library today?





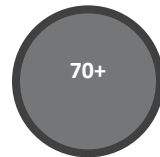
Another example is mode of transport to the Library. Seniors are more likely to walk, while those ages 19 and under are more likely than other groups to take the bus. Men are more likely to drive. **Across all segments, arriving by car and walking are the top ways for residents to get to the Library.**



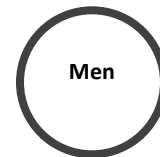
By bus	9%
By bicycle	1%
By walking	33%
By car	56%
Other	2%



19% bus



47% walk



63% drive

Non-User Analysis

In prior surveys, a large amount of effort was expended on seeking out non-users, with little uptake. This round, we took a different approach, conducting a statistical analysis of library membership versus Census data and using marketing data from Environics Analytics to learn more about populations in lower use neighbourhoods in West Vancouver. Due to the proprietary nature of the marketing data, it is not shared here. However, staff analysis of library usership versus location and census data is provided.

High-level Findings

We began by looking at postal code prefix areas, which form four regions within West Vancouver.



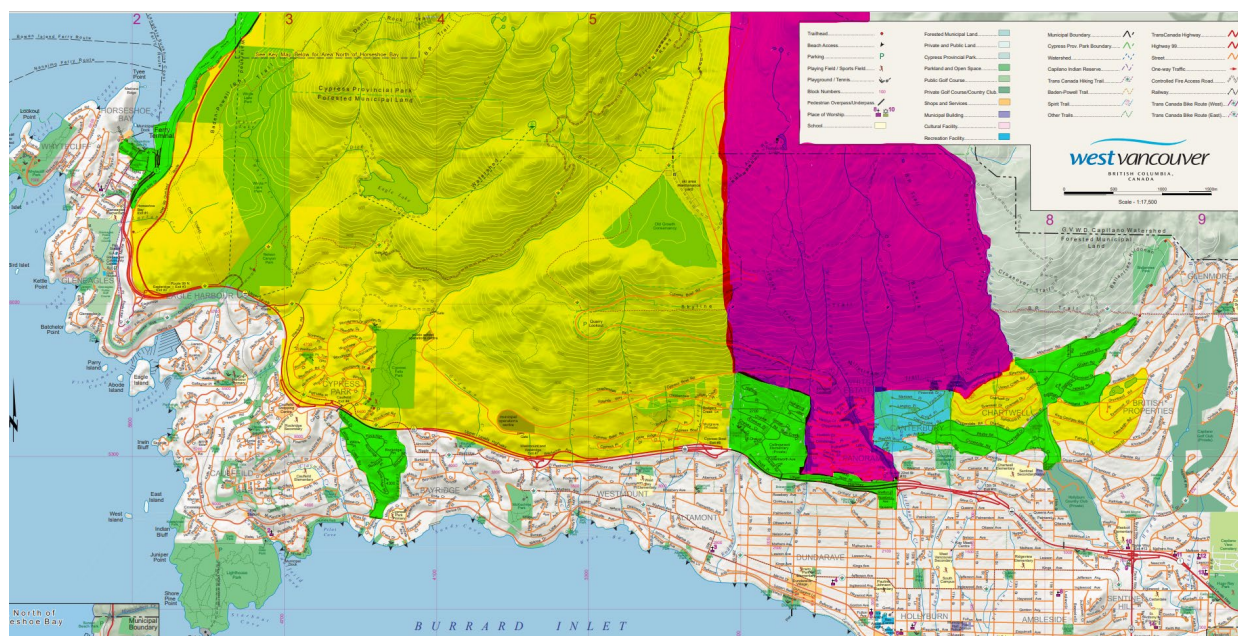
The highest use area was the V7V postal code area which roughly corresponds to Ambleside/Dundarave from 15th street to the West. V7T had around 3.5% fewer cards per capita, while V7W had 7% fewer, and **V7S the lowest, with 12.9% fewer cards per capita.**



The broad neighbourhoods had a few differing characteristics, including:

	Average Age	% Live Alone	Family size	% Mother tongue: English	% Mother tongue: Mandarin	% Mother tongue: Persian	Avg. Total Household Income
V7V	49.7	15.9	2.2	59.5	10.7	9.9	\$214,400
V7T	50	13.5	2.3	48.1	10.5	13.3	\$150,000
V7W	46.1	6.5	2.7	52.9	7.9	3.0	\$302,000
V7S	44.2	6.9	2.9	41.3	21	15.1	\$187,400

For the V7W and V7S areas, **distance** is a factor, with a 10–20-minute car ride, or 30–60-minute transit travel time being a realistic scenario for these areas. **Larger family sizes** in the suburban areas could also be a factor, with busy schedules for some younger families. V7S, the lowest use neighbourhood, is an outlier when it comes to **language**, and in fact, **26% report not speaking English at home at all**.



There were ten ‘dissemination areas’ (a neighbourhood level division within the Canadian Census) that had the lowest uptake. These are highlighted on the map above (yellow, green, blue, and pink highlighting is used only to differentiate the dissemination areas).

One area not analyzed in the non-user analysis was V7P. This postal code area breaks across jurisdictions, so is less easy to include in a comparative analysis of West Vancouver resident usership of the Library. The area incorporates Xwemelch'stn, or Capilano Indian Reserve 5, as well as properties within the District of North Vancouver. Within Xwemelch'stn lands, a



significant number of residents may be leaseholders or renters who are not members of Skwxwú7mesh Nation. After the completion of the library's non-user analysis, the [Skwxwú7mesh Nation released its own census](#), which provides rich and interesting data that we are currently exploring.

- **Takeaway:** a **long-term infrastructure plan** is needed that takes a whole community approach and includes a consideration of distance and convenience factors.
- **Takeaway:** expanding **staff non-English language skills**, and in particular Persian and Mandarin, could improve service levels to key constituencies.

Factors of Well-being: Relationships – see 'Inclusion'

Although the theme of 'Relationships' also applies to our 'Community' value, we will examine it under the value of Inclusion given its tie to the particular theme of combatting isolation.



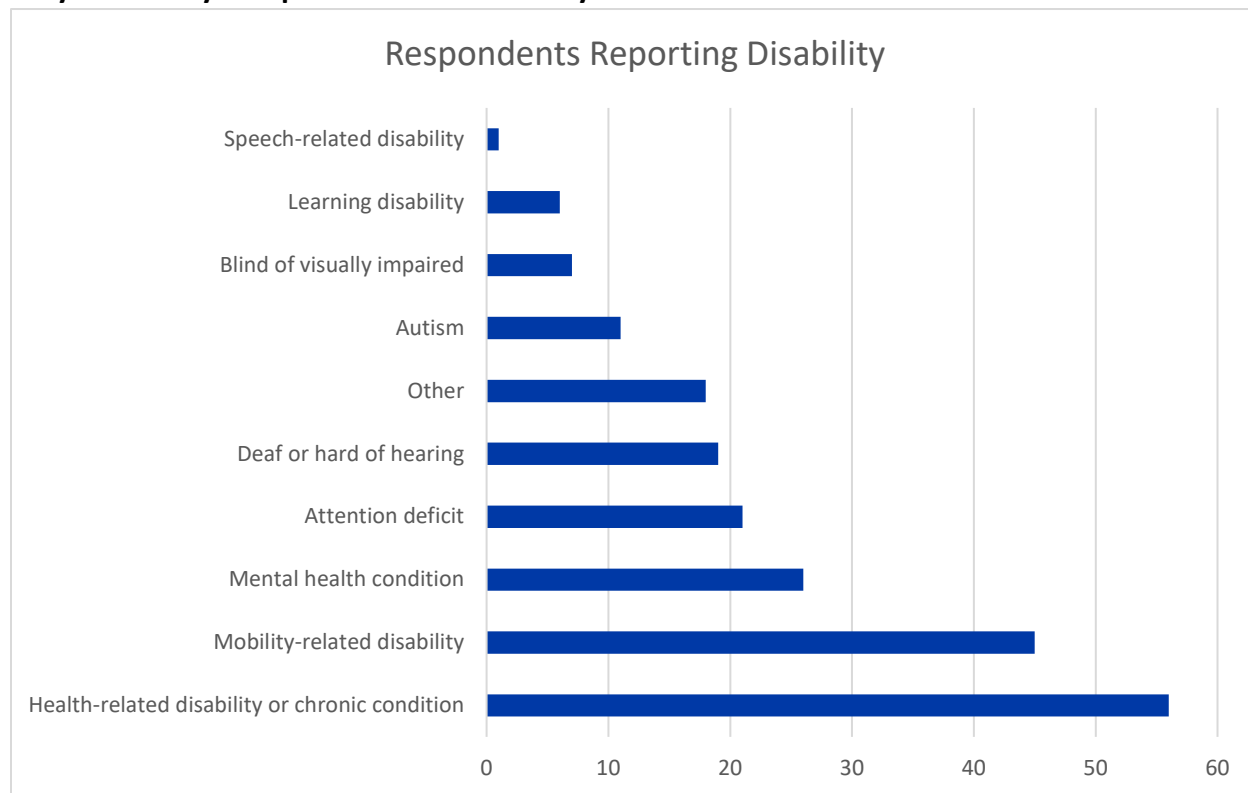
INCLUSION

Our Library's mandate is to support all people in our community through our services.

Accessibility

The Library implemented its first ever accessibility plan in 2024 ([read it here](#)) and one of the deliverables was to consider accessibility when surveying the staff or public. This was the first time that a question on disabilities was included in the User Survey. 143 West Vancouver residents reported that they had a disability or chronic condition.

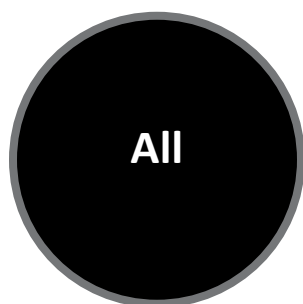
Do you identify as a person with a disability or other chronic condition?



Asking about disability status allowed us to compare the experience of using the library for this group with other groups and the general resident population who answered the survey. A simple example would be the question 'How long did it take you to get to the library today?'. For the general population, the responses were as follows:



How long did it take you to travel to the Library today?



Fewer than 5 minutes	19%
5 – 15 minutes	56%
15 – 30 minutes	21%
30 – 60 minutes	3%
Over an hour	0%

For some people with a disability, merely getting to the Library was a more significant investment in time and energy—so, for example, this group was more than twice as likely to spend between 30-60 minutes getting to the Library:



Fewer than 5 minutes	11%
5 – 15 minutes	56%
15 – 30 minutes	24%
30 – 60 minutes	8%
Over an hour	0%

Some respondents cited mobility challenges or an inability to leave the house as barriers to using the Library. Some patrons receive home delivery through the Library’s Accessible Services department.

“I really appreciate your volunteers, delivering books and DVDs to my Home. Many thanks.”

“I had not been able to get out for 'casual' events since the end of 2015 (due to an extremely long wait for a hip replacement and incomplete recovery since it). Assistive Services was there for me during that period and continues to this day. What WVML has been able to provide for me through Assistive Services has been a LIFE SAVER.”

For others, our digital library services play an increasingly important role.

“E-books in formats where I can customize display properties is pretty much the only category still accessible for me, so the collection, availability, and user experience have grown in importance for me.”



“Covid changed everything for those of us with compromised health. The online broadcasts by the library were a life saver. Wish still included online participation for shut-ins.”

This last comment reflects the change in emphasis on virtual programs when the Library returned to in-person programming post-pandemic. Although the Library still has some virtual programs, there are many in-person-only programs now. This is an area we will investigate in 2025.

“Be more inclusive for older shut-ins who are physically hampered coming to you but cognitively intact and still need social inclusion...even if safely online. Too isolated post covid. Also need more help to learn technology to stay engaged in modern world. Feeling too left behind, left out, forgotten...especially if have no family or friends left as get older.”

➤ **Takeaway:** investigate the feasibility of expanding the use of **hybrid programming** (virtual and in person options) to improve accessibility

Factors of Well-being: Relationships

Although the theme of ‘Relationships’ also applies to our Community value, we will examine it under the value of Inclusion, given its tie to the particular theme of combatting isolation.

The NYPL study discusses not only the factors of well-being, but also the fact that they can be seen as a lessening of ‘ill-being’. So, in the case of connection, care, and support, a related ‘ill-being’ opposite factor would be isolation.

Isolation can be intensified by living alone, and this tended to vary with age and disability status.

Living Alone	Percent
All respondents	22%
19 and under	0%
First language other than English	12%
70+	40%
Reporting disability	36%

“Library is always welcoming on a day where I am feeling lonely. Thank you to all staff!”

“The WVML is my home away from home. The place to go when lonely.”



In terms of the well-being factors related to Relationships, there were over **350 spontaneous references to this theme.**

“The West Vancouver Library is the heartbeat of this community and provides exceptional resources. Its really the only way that I am connected to the events taking place here. It's my happy place, always enjoy walking in to see what's new.”

“We love our library. It is a welcoming place. Staff are friendly and helpful... Concerts and talks are community events where we meet friends... We are very lucky to have a library that can be a second home for some people.”

“I appreciate much of what the library offers, being fairly new to West Vancouver. It is a very welcoming place and I have found the staff always helpful. I appreciate places where I can connect with others too. Thank you for all you do to make it a great library.”

“It definitely took MORE THAN 10 minutes to do this survey, which is generally why I seldom do surveys. I chose to do this one because of the major importance WVML is in my life. I don't know what I'd do without it. Assistive Services' addition of the Library Tea event had a MAJOR and SIGNIFICANT POSITIVE change in my life”

“I LOVE my library. Always warm and welcoming. Staff are very helpful and I feel I can ask if I need assistance... Having it be so welcoming means so much. As I grow older, I feel accepted and not judged for being older.”

“I am trans and feel most welcome by your staff”

“I always leave the library feeling better than I did when I arrived - it is the best part of our community by far! I can't think of another place I go that makes we feel so comfortable and welcome. The staff make me feel valued every single time I visit - and I have been coming regularly/weekly for over 12 years!”



A LEARNING CULTURE

We foster the joy of learning and growth, both in our community and within our staff.

Factors of Well-being: Engagement and Meaning

In the NYPL/UPenn study *Libraries & Well-being*, the team investigated the self-perception of library users along a variety of measures and concepts, including Engagement and Meaning, each of which had three main sub-themes. In addition, the study looked at how libraries promote personal development beyond wellbeing (these are concepts of *expansion* and *growth*).

While our study was conducted in spring of 2024, well before the release of the NYPL data, we can analyze people's written responses to see if the same themes emerge. Perhaps not surprisingly, given our core mission, our patrons' comments spontaneously reference learning, reading, studying, school, enrichment, curiosity, discovery, completing purposeful work, research, knowledge, and related concepts **more than 400 times**.

"I love my library and consider it as an essential service... I learn, always."

"The library is an invaluable community resource. A trusted, comprehensive and engaging environment that deeply enriches my life. I feel so fortunate you are there!"

"when I go in I am always impressed by the number of teenagers studying there"

"...a welcoming place where there are no wrong questions, and where everyone can come to learn, browse, and explore"

"We love the library and the kids have enjoyed the programs for years! thank you for what your doing and keep it up! you've made 2 little ones loyal life time readers"

"The services provided are crucial and provide a lot of opportunity for personal growth and learning, especially in light of global current events."



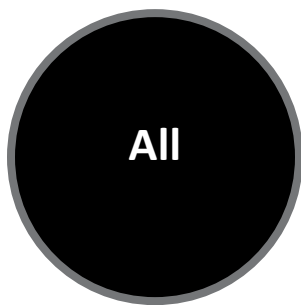
“You have created an incredible resource for seniors from teaching technology to allowing them to feel connected. WVML is always innovative and on trend. I have loved visiting this library since I was a child. Keep up the good work!!”

“...a welcoming place where there are no wrong questions, and where everyone can come to learn, browse, and explore”

Purpose: Why Do People Come to the Library?

Across all groups, the top two reasons to come to the Library were for personal knowledge building or pleasure/leisure/enrichment. The only exception was youth, where the top purpose was school or education-related reasons.

The in-person experience was cited more frequently for key uses.



	Library Facility - Yes	Library Website - Yes
Using the Library or Library website with a child	31%	19%
Pleasure, leisure, hobbies, or entertainment	79%	52%
Personal knowledge building	74%	46%
Learning about health, medical conditions, or wellness	40%	24%
Learning about political, social, or community issues	37%	24%
School or education related purposes	40%	27%



	Library Facility - Yes	Library Website - Yes
Using the Library or Library website with a child	42%	31%
Pleasure, leisure, hobbies, or entertainment	80%	33%
Personal knowledge building	73%	32%
School or education related purposes	84%	51%



Disability

	Library Facility - Yes	Library Website - Yes
Pleasure, leisure, hobbies, or entertainment	79%	50%
Personal knowledge building	82%	46%
Learning about health, medical conditions, or wellness	52%	24%
Learning about political, social, or community issues	49%	29%
School or education related purposes	37%	21%

Non-English

	Library Facility - Yes	Library Website - Yes
Using the Library or Library website with a child	49%	32%
Pleasure, leisure, hobbies, or entertainment	76%	45%
Personal knowledge building	80%	41%
Learning about health, medical conditions, or wellness	38%	24%
Learning about political, social, or community issues	40%	23%
School or education related purposes	63%	40%
Finding information on citizenship, learning English, or newcomer services.	33%	19%

70+

	Library Facility - Yes	Library Website - Yes
Pleasure, leisure, hobbies, or entertainment	79%	49%
Personal knowledge building	74%	47%
Learning about health, medical conditions, or wellness	41%	23%
Learning about political, social, or community issues	40%	26%



Collections

On average, the five aspects of collections most important to respondents were:

- 71% Broad selection of materials
- 71% Recently published books
- 42% ebooks
- 45% Current magazines and newspapers
- 33% Digital audiobooks

Across the board, respondents are satisfied with the broad selection, recently published books, and magazines and newspapers meeting their needs. However, respondents (particularly those over 70) reported that the ebook and downloadable audiobook collections are not meeting their needs. Pricing models for ebooks and downloadable audiobooks target public libraries with significantly higher costs than a member of the public would pay, decreasing spending power.

“The wait times for ebooks are too long!”

Those who speak a first language other than English also reported lower satisfaction with our collections, especially ebooks.

“More English learning and Chinese books.”

“I hope you’ll get more Persian books.”

We also learned that respondents were **least aware** of these collections:

- Streaming music (27%)
- Streaming movies/television (28%)
- Brain Health Collection (29%)
- Technology to borrow (29%)

Events and Classes

Across all resident respondents, the top areas where reported satisfaction was lower than the stated importance of programs were:

- Educational lectures, workshops, and presentations (11% gap in satisfaction)
- Digital learning and technology (9% gap)
- Health and Wellness (9% gap)
- Community issues (9% gap)

Two groups had considerably lower satisfaction across a number of program types, and in particular:



- Patrons reporting a disability or chronic condition noted a 24% satisfaction gap for **Educational Lectures, Workshops, and Presentations**, and an 18% gap for programs on **Community issues**. As is discussed elsewhere in this report, members of this segment also requested more virtual programming options.
- Patrons whose first language is not English reported a 19% satisfaction gap for programs on **Digital Learning and Technology**.

“Have enjoyed Zoom interviews with authors. Technology tutoring is helpful but the wait for an appointment in the Device Clinic is too long...”

“More programs regarding AI and robotics programs for kids.”

Staff receive feedback on the need for additional tech help regularly, so this feedback is not a surprise. Based on patron comments through a number of channels, it appears the satisfaction gap is more related to available staff capacity rather than quality of existing programs. For example, the Library also collects feedback after each tech program. In 2024, 594 learners completed the feedback survey, with overall very high satisfaction, and 99% of respondents said they learned something new.

A question on teen programming was not included in the survey. However, during the Youth-Friendly North Shore site visits conducted by an independent panel of youth ages 12 – 18, a key recommendation was to expand the amount of programming targeted specifically at youth. As the Library does not have a teen librarian, and the existing staff are already extremely productive and working at full capacity, this would likely mean increasing staffing levels in the Youth department.

“Good job, please have more events for the teenagers”

- **Takeaway:** As noted above, investigate the feasibility of expanding the use of **hybrid programming** (virtual and in person options) to improve accessibility
- **Takeaway:** Look for opportunities to **expand staffing capacity** for tech-related programming
- **Takeaway:** Look for opportunities to **expand staffing capacity** for Youth-related programming
- **Takeaway:** **Analyze post-event patron feedback** for subject areas where there is a larger satisfaction gap. Are we targeting the subjects people want most?



INTEGRITY

We maintain a high standard of integrity and quality in our practices and services.

Integrity is the value that includes service quality, and the highest satisfaction of any service was staff assistance. From tech help, to readers advisory, to reference, to help with using the Library and its collections, our staff were highly appreciated. We received **hundreds of positive comments** on staff services in this survey, and each year we also field thousands of such comments.

Collections were our most used service—including getting staff help to locate items (92%), accessing recently published books (89%), or using the broad selection of materials (85%). The impact of this service is felt long after the library visit has concluded, as people engage in self-directed learning and enrichment at home. Each year, the Library makes close to a million loans, and the average borrowing in West Vancouver is over 20 items per capita, per year.

Factors of Well-being: Positive Emotion and Accomplishment

Positive emotion was a wonderful theme to investigate, with over **400 spontaneous mentions of positive emotions** like love, happiness, warmth, comfort, joy, wonder, amazement, delight, and peace. When it came to accomplishment and productivity, there was significant overlap with the factors described in the Learning section (Engagement and Meaning). Isolating the Accomplishment factor was somewhat difficult. Comments mentioned the ability to focus and complete work and to attain goals, such as studying for a certification or degree. People with busy households valued finding peace and avoiding distraction.

“My neighbour is learning English at the library and I can see it makes her happy and proud.”

“Absolutely love the westvanlibrary - I come here most days after school to socialize and work. Truly brings me joy! Also all of the staff of the friendliest people on this planet.”

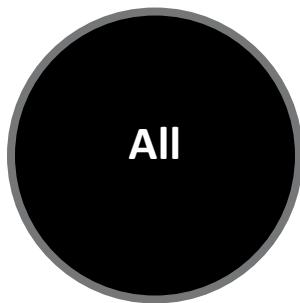
“Thank you for the best library experience I’ve ever had. The WV Library is a constant source of joy and light in our lives and the community!”



“I enjoy coming to the library as it is so close to where I live and I always feel productive, sometimes there aren't enough open tables for me to work with my peers, other than that, everything is good.”

Spaces: Satisfaction

The survey asked respondents to rate the importance of library spaces and then state their level of satisfaction. By comparing these ratings, we were able to determine where the largest satisfaction gaps were. **For all groups, the largest gap was for quiet spaces.**



	Importance 4 or 5	Satisfaction 4 or 5	Variance
Spaces just for kids or teens	40%	33%	6%
Quiet spaces for individual activities	62%	49%	13%
Spaces for group learning and collaboration	36%	33%	4%
Spaces for technology learning	36%	31%	5%
Lounge spaces to socialize and connect with others	38%	36%	2%

**please note: differences in variance calculations are due to rounding*

The least satisfied group across all measures was respondents who spoke a first language other than English (29% of respondents). Library staff should look for opportunities to understand more about this group’s experience of the Library and what they view as the standard for public spaces (perhaps including comparators they see as more successful).



	Importance 4 or 5	Satisfaction 4 or 5	Variance
Spaces just for kids or teens	56%	44%	12%
Quiet spaces for individual activities	74%	53%	21%
Spaces for group learning and collaboration	51%	38%	12%
Spaces for technology learning	42%	33%	10%
Lounge spaces to socialize and connect with others	50%	37%	13%

**please note: differences in variance calculations are due to rounding*



Another group with priorities that differed significantly from the overall respondent group was youth. In particular, they were looking for improvements to the youth-specific spaces, quiet spaces, and lounge spaces for connecting and socializing. They placed a high value on spaces for group learning and collaborating.



	Importance 4 or 5	Satisfaction 4 or 5	Variance
Spaces just for kids or teens	73%	61%	12%
Quiet spaces for individual activities	85%	66%	18%
Spaces for group learning and collaboration	61%	55%	6%
Spaces for technology learning	38%	40%	-2%
Lounge spaces to socialize and connect with others	57%	46%	12%

**please note: differences in variance calculations are due to rounding*

In late 2023, the Library conducted a space planning consultation to hear more from kids and families about our space. The consultation employed age-appropriate ways of gathering feedback and received over 750 responses—significantly higher engagement with kids, teens, and families than 2024 User Survey.

Respondents to this consultation were generally looking for more space for the different age ranges and their needs and a more playful, up-to-date, and exciting overall setting.

Selected findings are provided here, but the full report is available [on our website](#).

The Youth Department already does a lot with 4.2 FTE

<p>18,000 people attended programs</p>	<p>10,000+ questions answered by Youth staff</p>	<p>2,000 kids and teens participated in Summer Reading Club</p>	<p>300,000+ Kids and Teens materials circulated</p>
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- We had the most feedback on the current lack of space available for studying and reading
- Results showed kids and teens mostly use the Library to enjoy collections and study
- We also heard that we need more zones within our existing space to meet varying needs and noise levels for different age levels



In addition to the Youth Space Planning Consultation, the Library was fortunate to be part of an independent review by a youth panel that visited a number of North Shore sites through the **Youth-Friendly North Shore** initiative ([read their full report here](#)).

The youth reviewers noted the confusing layout of the Library and highlighted a need for better wayfinding. In addition, they noted potential barriers to accessibility and inclusion. Other specific highlights included:

Youth Friendly elements

- Easy access to public transportation
- Study spaces catering to different preferences and needs
- Strong and reliable Wi-Fi connection
- Friendly and non-judgmental demeanor of the staff and welcoming atmosphere

Elements that were not as Youth-Friendly

- Some youth felt there were too few books and resources catering specifically to their age group compared to other collections in the Library
- The Library's programs and activities appeared to be primarily geared towards children and adults, with limited offerings specifically tailored to teenagers

Youth recommendations

- More lounge-style chairs
- Improve appearance of study space
- Expand youth book sections

Within the 2024 User Survey itself, there was one more finding related to youth 10 – 19: **Wi-Fi is critical**, and they want reliability and speed. 79% rated Wi-Fi as 5 out of 5 for importance, but only 59% rated us achieving 5 out of 5 on quality—a **20% satisfaction gap**.

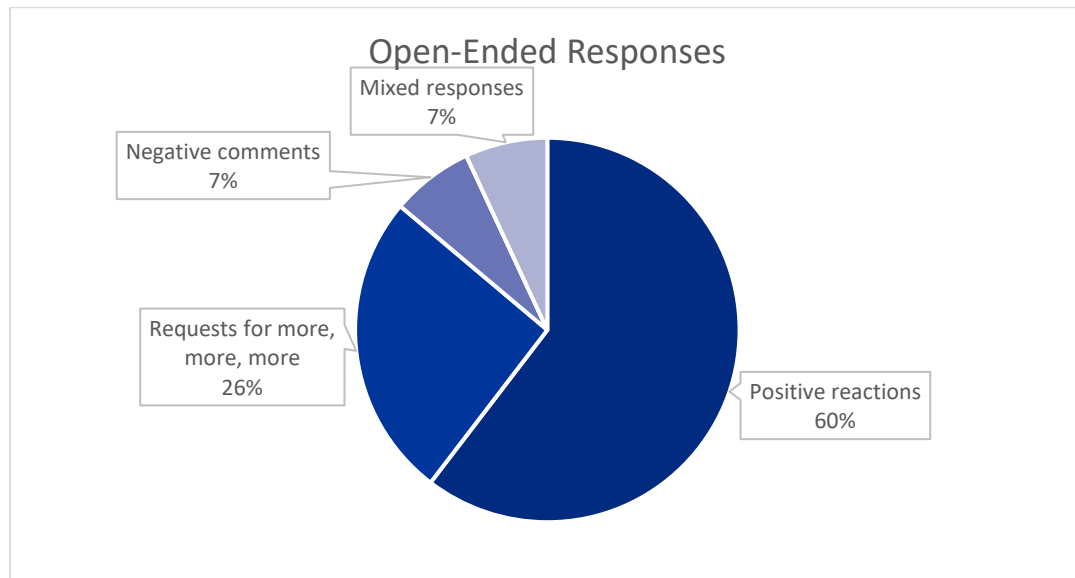
- **Takeaway:** there is a need to create a **clear plan for noise zones** in the Library and look for opportunities to add quieter seating areas.
- **Takeaway: Youth-specific areas are in need of a significant refresh** with better differentiation of spaces and services for different ages.
- **Takeaway:** Improved **wayfinding** is needed. Youth would like to be consulted when re-designing.
- **Takeaway: continuous improvement of Wi-Fi is critically important** to teens.
- **Takeaway:** look for opportunities to better understand space quality expectations and satisfaction of West Vancouver resident library users whose **first language is not English**.



Service Quality: Analysis of Open Responses

In all, there were **689 responses** to this final question. The question did not prompt for any particular topic or evaluation, but merely asked “What other comments do you have for us?”.

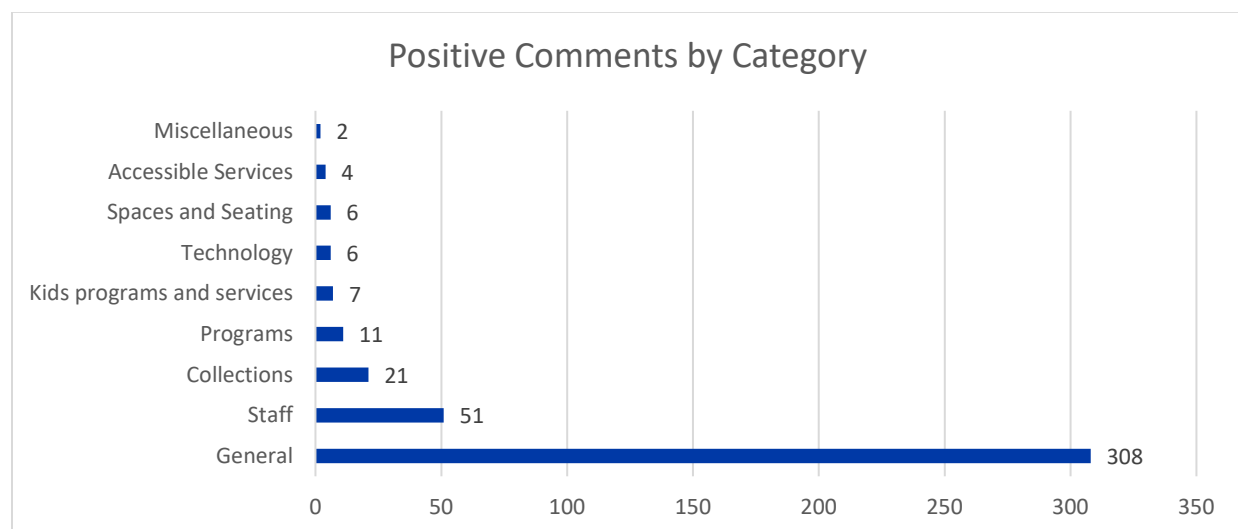
Qualitative analysis found the following broad types of comments:



Each category can be further broken down as follows:

Positives

These comments were truly heartwarming to read and offered a window on the lives of West Vancouver residents.





“West Vancouver memorial library is a gem. It’s hard to imagine a better community resource. Your service was a lifeline during the pandemic lockdown. And my children and my grandchildren enjoy visiting.”

“Thank you downstairs staff by computes. I can't my life without.”

“I absolutely love WVML! It’s great to see so many people using the library for a variety of different reasons... WVML has so many programs (some of which I was not aware of, until I took this survey), which really does bring people closer as a community (very important). Keep up the great work!”

“Our library in West Vancouver is simply one of the very-very best in BC!”

“Your staff are exceptional - especially the children's section. Your people are the jewels in the library's crown!”

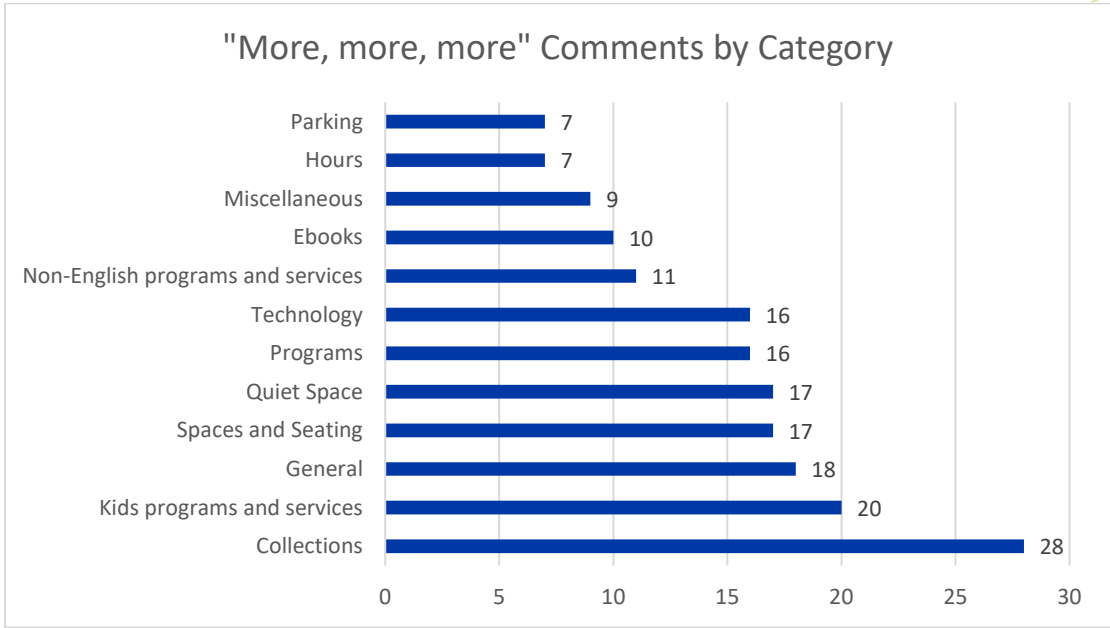
“The services provided are crucial and provide a lot of opportunity for personal growth and learning, especially in light of global current events.”

“I love our library and the leadership is excellent.- forward thinking, empathic to the community needs of culture, ethnicity, opportunity to volunteer . Thank you for your service”

“Beautiful location accessible to the Seawalk, cozy and comfortable atmosphere. One of my great pleasure is spending time in the library with a good book and around nice people. We, seniors, are fortunate having this library accessibility.”

More, More, More

West Vancouver residents are lifelong learners and voracious readers, so it’s not surprising how many comments asked for more—more collections, more hours, more parking, more programs, more... everything! In some cases, the very popularity of the Library posed a challenge as people looked for more seating, often wanting more quiet spaces for individual study, but at other times wanting more social seating.



“More copies of books in demand - the waiting time even to reserve a copy can compete with my life expectancy.”

“Please have more toys and creative spaces for kids.”

“I would love to see the library be used as more of a way to engage with other people from my community; less formal events, more peer-to-peer events, discussion groups, in-person forums and talks by people that live here. Really amp up the community building!”

“More quiet space to study, like more tables”

“My son is 8 years old and ... he wishes there were more programs where he could participate in coding, robotics, crafting/drawing activities at his age group.”

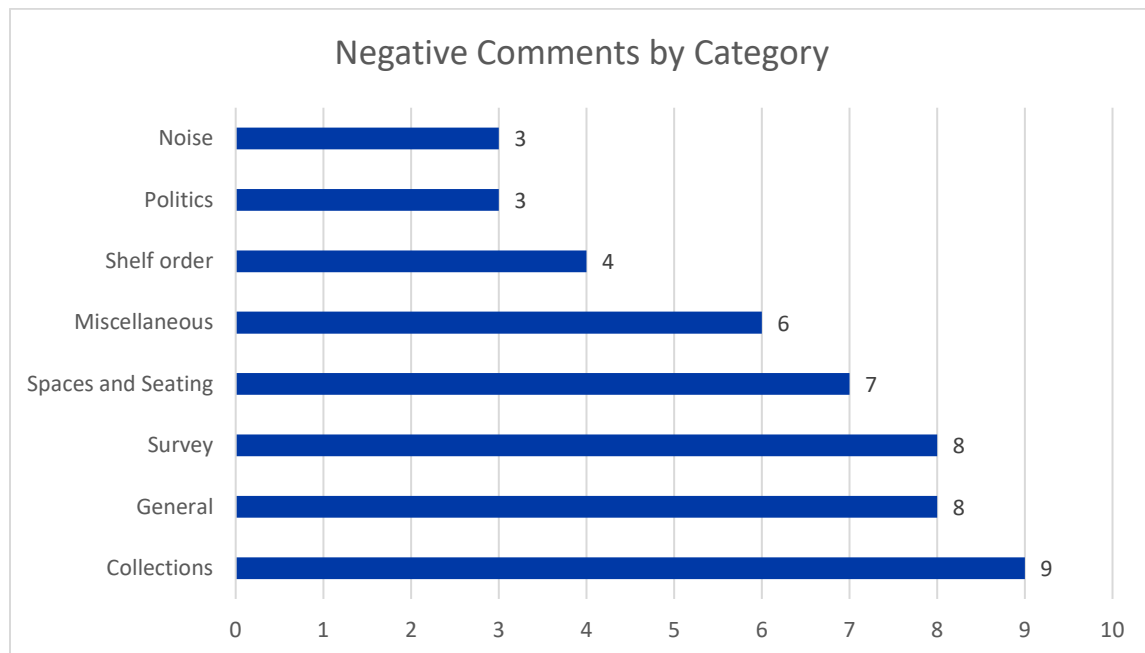
“Have signage for spaces which we are allowed to talk in, and spaces we are not. Creating smaller nooks and spaces for groups is also appreciated. Earlier and later opening hours (and weekends) !!!”

➤ **Takeaway: Collections** are the top area where patrons want more. Maintain or increase funding levels and evaluate spending priorities.



Negatives

Negative comments about the survey questioned its length and clarity. We are grateful the writers persevered and will think about this for a future iteration (typically we conduct these surveys every 3 – 5 years). Other negative comments covered most aspects of library service either regarding capacity, personal preferences, resource decisions, or accessibility, and show a variety of perspectives. Patrons are observant and opinionated, which makes for some spirited civic participation. Most, but not all, comments remained civil.



“Interesting and important topic but far too long. Better to have more, shorter more pointed questionnaires.”

“I have tried and failed to join a group that would help me with learning about the computer and phone. It is always full and I’ve stopped asking about it.”

“I do not believe sufficient resources are being directed to the purchases of e books licenses.”

“It is recommended to open the age or flexible policy for children who can read independently with the permission of the guardian. For example, library exemption, etc”

“Please advise people not to talk loud in the library!”

“I love the library but I think the books on the shelves are very messy and often out of place.”



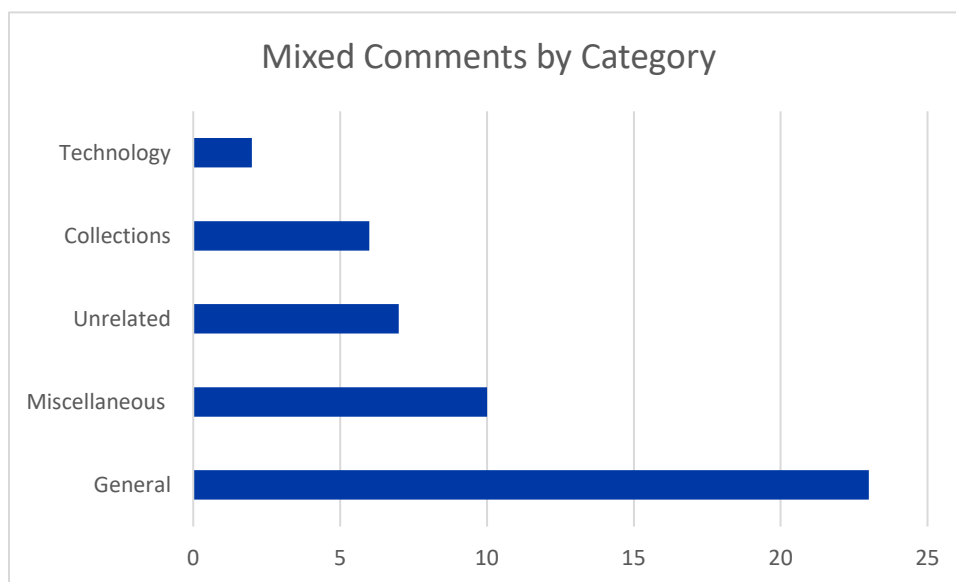
“The library prioritises seniors in most of their decisions. I suggest considering all ages equally. Thank you!”

“I really loved the previous library layout which seems to be changing. This may already be available but if there is an opportunity to provide feedback or view the direction the library is going as a physical space this would be great.”

➤ **Takeaway:** The survey was considered too long by some. Consider a revision in a future iteration.

Mixed Comments

This section included comments that were neither positive nor negative or had a mixture of both.



“Consider one phone booth to have booking schedule for VOIP calls or ZOOM.”

“Please make public the efforts you take to clean the air in the library. It makes a real difference to clinically vulnerable people.”

“The West Vancouver Memorial Library is among the best public libraries... I find the recent acquisitions, as well as many of the programs, to be focused exclusively on social activism. It is good to bring together diverse voices: in fact, a public library is the best place for it. True diversity, though, demands



different perspectives, and (crucially) different interests. There is more to life than politics! Why not also add something Shakespearean to the calendar? or set out a collection of nature poetry (for spring), without consideration of who the authors are? or display books that offer competing interpretations of a pressing issue (together with a clear explanation of what the display is meant to do)?”

Too long a survey, but good. nearly 90, library was hugely important weekly visit. No TV etc. radio only. Very happy to see children coming out with books but is there a limit? Excitement on new immigrants faces is great to see.”



FINAL TAKEAWAYS

Blue boxes listing takeaways from patron feedback are provided in-context throughout the report and are also gathered here for easy reference.

- **Takeaway:** a **long-term infrastructure plan** is needed that takes a whole community approach and includes a consideration of distance and convenience factors.
- **Takeaway:** expanding **staff non-English language skills**, and in particular Persian and Mandarin, could improve service levels to key constituencies.
- **Takeaway:** investigate the feasibility of expanding the use of **hybrid programming** (virtual and in person options) to improve accessibility.
- **Takeaway:** Look for opportunities to **expand staffing capacity** for tech-related programming.
- **Takeaway:** Look for opportunities to **expand staffing capacity** for Youth-related programming.
- **Takeaway:** **Analyze post-event patron feedback** for subject areas where there is a larger satisfaction gap. Are we targeting the subjects people want most?
- **Takeaway:** there is a need to create a **clear plan for noise zones** in the Library, and look for opportunities to add quieter seating areas.
- **Takeaway:** **Youth-specific areas are in need of a significant refresh** with better differentiation of spaces and services for different ages.
- **Takeaway:** Improved **wayfinding** is needed. Youth would like to be consulted when re-designing.
- **Takeaway:** **continuous improvement of Wi-Fi** is critically important to teens.
- **Takeaway:** look for opportunities to better understand space and program quality expectations and satisfaction of West Vancouver resident library users whose **first language is not English**.
- **Takeaway:** **Collections** are the top area where patrons want more. Maintain or increase funding levels and evaluate spending priorities.
- **Takeaway:** The **survey was considered too** long by some. Consider a revision in a future iteration.